

Log by Log

**Beavercreek
Historical Society**



**Spring 2016
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BeavercreekHistoricalSociety.org

Announcing Beavercreek History Center Open House: Sunday, April 17, 2016, 2:00–4:00 p.m.

Submitted by Jill Kincer

The new home of the Beavercreek Historical Society has been appropriately named the Beavercreek History Center. Members of the Society and the community are invited to an Open House on Sunday, April 17 from 2:00 – 4:00 in the afternoon. Light refreshments will be served. Please be sure to mark your calendars.

As announced in our last newsletter, the new location is 1981 Dayton-Xenia Road, east of Alpha, directly across from the Beaver United Church of Christ. The site was formerly known as the Beavercreek Township Center. In late 2015, our Society signed a use agreement with the Township Trustees which enabled us to move into this space. It offers more room for our displays and research collection and is heated and air conditioned on a 24/7 basis year-round which makes for better preservation of those assets. We're excited about the options it holds for us.

Please come see our new Beavercreek History Center where we have room to grow our collection and continue to preserve our community's past for the future.



Pictured is the new display area.



Photo of the new research room.

Saluting Our Volunteers: Jeanne Wensits

This is a continuation of a series of articles that focus personally on the many volunteers that together make the Beavercreek Historical Society a vital part of our Beavercreek community. We thank and salute ALL who in any way contribute to the Society's mission of preserving the past for the future.

Jeanne Wensits shares that she has two major interests: history and research. When she was a young girl growing up in Fort Wayne, Indiana, her father would take her and her older sister on camping trips to Michigan and the Smokies. Along the way when a historical marker came into view, the car would screech to a halt and everyone would pile out to read the sign. Thus, she says she was “getting stoked on history” at an early age.

She headed off to college at Purdue and majored in Foods Research. At that time the Cold War was heating up and she had visions of perhaps developing food for the budding space program. But then, as life sometimes brings us a different turn of events, she met and married her husband, John, and moved to the Dayton area where he was employed as a GM engineer. The family expanded with the births of their two children. Always interested in learning and intrigued at discovering how things work, she later decided to go back to school and earned her MBA at Wright State in Marketing Research. She was hired at Miami Valley Hospital and later became Director of Marketing Research. Jeanne has another gift: a strong talent for writing--studying and inquiring into the background of the subject area, then crafting the words together to weave interesting stories that entertain as well as inform.

With those skills and interests, she has become a true asset to the Beavercreek Historical Society, pulling together her talents to write various interesting articles for our Log by Log newsletter. After being encouraged to write for the newsletter by a friend who recognized her writing talents, Jeanne's curiosity got the best of her. In her travels around the Beavercreek community, she had always been intrigued by the trio of old concrete posts that stand to the left side of the sharp curve on Alpha-Bellbrook Road as it rolls down the hill past Tara Estates before its intersection with Factory Road. Jeanne says, “Those darn concrete posts put me on to my first story for the Log by Log; I knew there had to be

something there.” Then she laughs, as after parking her car and investigating the site, she knew what was there: chiggers! As she investigated more, she learned those old posts are actually the remnants of the old Shoemaker Dairy Farm, as she shared with our readers.



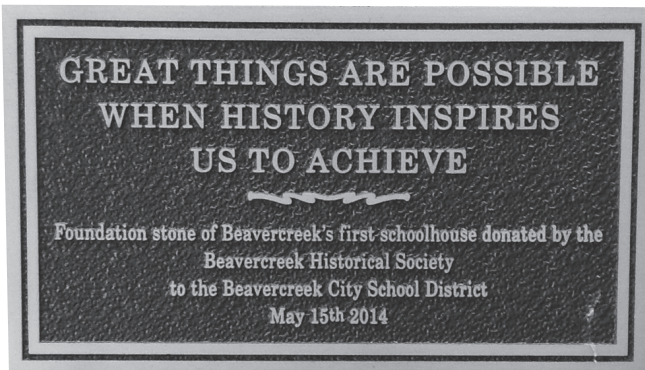
One article she particularly enjoyed writing was the story of the late John Scott's involvement with founding the Beavercreek Fire Department and the family business of Knollwood Garden Center in the 1940s. She loved the human interest side of hearing the stories John's sons, Dave and Bob, shared of their childhood in that environment. Jeanne asks that if anyone is curious about some aspect of Beavercreek's history—whether recent or from the past—please contact her at 429-0759 or email jwendayton@aol.com. She's willing to put on her investigator's hat and see what information she can find for you, and perhaps share through an article.

We are most thankful to Jeanne for her time and efforts to write for our newsletter. We enjoy her articles and hope she will continue to share her talent with us. And, as always, we thank all of our volunteers, as we could not do what we do in our community without the willingness to serve that is modeled by so many of you.

First Schoolhouse Foundation Stone Now Welcomes Early Learners

Submitted by Jill Kincer

Little ones three to five years old and their parents entering the Beavercreek Pre-School Center adjacent to the Board of Education offices on Kemp Road pass an old stone embedded into the brick wall of that newest school building in our community. The inscription (below) on the plaque above it reads:



The Beavercreek schools had stated at the time the stone was donated that they planned to include it in the exterior entrance of the new preschool, and we compliment them on their presentation of that stone. It looks great!

The Log by Log Summer 2014 issue carried the full story of how that and other stones from the foundation of the first school in Beavercreek were first discovered, and the subsequent donation of that particular stone to the Beavercreek City Schools. That first schoolhouse was

erected on property donated by Jacob Coy in the early 1800s. If you'd like to revisit that article, go online to www.beavercreekhistoricalsociety.com, go to Main Menu on the left, scroll down to Newsletters, and click on Summer 2014, Vol. 23, No. 3.



We are happy to welcome new member Ken Simon of Beavercreek. Glad to have you join us, Ken! We also are pleased to add Joe Zimmerman of Alpharetta, GA to our list of Lifetime Members.

It is with sadness that we report the passing of Charlotte Pantan. Charlotte passed away on January 19, 2016 after a long struggle with a neurological disease. She was a long time active member of our Historical Society, serving effectively on the Board as Publicity Chair. She additionally volunteered countless hours with the Living History Program, Heritage Day celebrations and was a contributing member of the Chronicles II committee. Our condolences to husband Roger and family.

Short term assistance requested: We are seeking a non-board member volunteer to serve on a short-term assignment for the Sign Committee for a permanent sign to mark the location of the new Beavercreek History Center on Dayton-Xenia Road.

Please call Jill Kincer at 429-0291 if you are willing to help us out.

Acquisitions

For many years we have concentrated on collecting items that reflect life in the 19th century as that is the period of the buildings in Wartinger Park. With our recent move from the Coy House to 1981 Dayton-Xenia Road we now have the ability to extend our collections of life in 20th century Beavercreek. Our new location has room for more displays, a large research area, is on a major road and has a large parking area.

As in the past, we rely heavily on donations by our members and others who have an interest in preserving Beavercreek's history. If you have items that fit this time period (or earlier) and you think they may be of interest to others, won't you consider donating them to our society. We are especially grateful for items that have a connection to Beavercreek. For more information on donating, call Lorraine Wagley at 426-8325.

Behind the Information Signs *Submitted by Bob Bader*

(This is the second of two articles about the Information Signs at Wartinger Park. Refer to the Fall 2015 issue of the Log by Log for the first article.)

The Beavercreek Historical Society (BHS) Board of Trustees gave birth to the idea of providing informational signs to our visitors at Wartinger Park in 2012. So it's been three years from the time the board named a committee to begin to put together what was then just a seed of an idea until it grew to its fruition here in 2015!

Wartinger Park including the log cabins & barn belongs to the City of Beavercreek, and as such, the public park is open to all who stop by to enjoy it—perhaps as a quiet little spot to have lunch, as a perfect backdrop for lovely family photographs, or just to let the kids run, jump and move about. The BHS furnishes and cares for the insides of the structures and offers programming for the community relating to our history.

But there was an obvious concern about the park, because the Historical Society as an all-volunteer group, simply could not support providing a staff of folks that would be needed to keep these park structures open for tours on a regular basis; thus many visitors to the park were often here when there was no large event, and they could only walk about and wonder—where were those homes originally located before they were moved here; who built them; how old are they, etc.

Enter the idea to create and erect signs to share those types of facts, along with little tidbits of information you might enjoy learning about life in Beavercreek around 200 years ago. Each of the five buildings' signs contains a brief history of that particular structure, Photo 1, plus some interesting things you'll discover as you walk about and read them.

The large general information signs, Photo 2, in the center lawn area of the park are sure to be of interest to many, showing off an 1855 map of Beavercreek on one side and on the other side, a recent Google Earth satellite map of the same area today. On that Google Earth map, you can see where each of these preserved structures was originally located, as well as where other important sites were located in the early 1800s. These general information signs are situated to attract attention to folks who drive into the parking area, and also they can be readily seen from those who enter the park from the school administration parking area.

The historical setting for the information dates back to 1787, when the United States Congress passed the Northwest Ordinance. It specified how territories and states were to be formed from the land gained as a result of the Revolutionary War. It also outlawed slavery and encouraged public education. The NW Territory was bounded by the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers and the Great Lakes. With the signing of the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, the indigenous Native American tribes of the area ceded their rights to land in Southern Ohio, which encouraged many settlers to come. By 1803 Ohio had sufficient population that it could be established as the 15th state of our United States. Families were soon coming to Beavercreek to claim the rich farmland that was then covered by dense forests, built their log homes and began the arduous task of clearing fields for farms and raising their families.



1

The BHS Board is so pleased with how the project evolved and how much value is added to a visit to Wartinger Park—whether you are here with a group of students attending one of our Living History programs, we sponsor for over 600 Beaver Creek third graders each year, or if you are just driving by on a quiet afternoon and decide to stop by for a solitary moment. You will hopefully be touched by the history that you feel in this setting, and have a new appreciation for the heritage upon which our community was founded. The Beaver Creek Historical Society is dedicated to the task of preserving the past for the future—and we are proud to be able to enrich our park visitors' knowledge about that past with these new signs.

The Signage committee would like to acknowledge the folks—volunteers, contractors and city employees—who contributed to the Signage project. Brianna Johnson accomplished the preliminary design of the signs for the structures. She is also editor of the Log by Log, the Society's newsletter. Randy Burkett works in the planning department for the City of Beaver Creek. Randy accomplished preliminary design for the general information signs. One of the more interesting aspects was the extraction of the Beaver Creek Township map from the 1855 map of Greene County—the first official map of Greene County. Steve Baldwin took the work of Brianna and Randy and accomplished the detailed design of the Structures signs and the General Information signs and integrated them into a coordinated set. Steve also enlisted the help of members of the staff from his company, Baldwin Creative & Co., a local Beaver Creek Company.

Paul Kuenle: Paul, a retired educator, is a blacksmith and he designed and manufactured the sign brackets to our specifications. Signs Now, another Beaver Creek business manufactured the signs. As you read them, note the clarity of the printing on particularly the maps. Signs Now also supplied the memorial plaque.

Robert & Deborah Hartley: Bob and Deborah donated the rocks that form the standing pads for the signs. These rocks came from the foundation of the first school house in Greene County, which was located in Beaver Creek. John Rhodehamel has researched the origin of the foundation rocks. The limestone rocks

are believed to be from a quarry that was located on Darst Road. Knollwood Garden Center & Landscaping: Pat Flannigan and his work crew installed the rocks for the standing pads and planted the Hameln Dwarf Fountain Grass.



David Suber, Don Test, Jeff Stine and members of their work crews Steve Bergman, Thomas Siva, Jerry Russell, Todd Snyder and Marty Miller are employees of the City of Beaver Creek. David is the signage project coordinator and the Public Services Foreman. Don accomplished the detailed layout design work on the post assemblies and is the Buildings, Grounds and Fleet Foreman. Jeff supervises the work at Wartinger Park and is the Parks Department Section leader. All of these folks did the heavy lifting for the project in their shops and at the park. They removed the old posts, manufactured the new posts, painted the brackets and posts, mounted the lights, ran electrical wiring to the new locations of the posts and signs, installed the new posts in concrete, mounted the brackets and

installed the signs, and repaired the lawn from the damage caused by the construction equipment and reseeded the lawn. Jackie Dell is the Secretary in the Parks Department in the City of Beaver Creek. She was invaluable in providing assistance to the signage committee during our work on this project.

Financial donations were received from of the Beaver Creek Women's League and members of the Wartinger Family. And last but not least, the persistence of the members of the Signage Committee is appreciated: Steve Baldwin, Jill Kincer, Mike Thonnerieux and Nancy Wagner and Bob Bader, Chair.

Daffodil Show and Open House: *A Colorful Spring Event at the Park*

Saturday, April 30 and Sunday, May 1, 1:00–4:00 p.m.

Join us for the 47th Annual Southwest Ohio Daffodil Society Daffodil Show. This event, free and open to the public, is co-sponsored by the Southwest Ohio Daffodil Society, the Beavercreek Historical Society and the Greene County Master Gardeners. The daffodils entered into the show will be on display to the public in the barn, and the historic log homes and cabins located in the park will be open for tours at the same time. Just how the early spring affects the status of area daffodils is unsure, however, it is hopeful that this event will attract daffodil collectors from the area and surrounding states, particularly those further north of us.

Curious about how a daffodil show works? This will be an American Daffodil Society sanctioned event. In addition to daffodil collectors and growers, anyone can enter their cut daffodils in the show, even if you only have a few. Children's entries are especially welcome. The daffodils can be cut and stored in a refrigerator for as long as two weeks. If you do not know the identity of your daffodil variety, one of the major collectors in attendance may likely be able to assist you in making that determination. Entries will be accepted in the barn at the park on Saturday, April 30 from 7:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. Judging of the various entries by category will be from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m., after which time the entire collection of the many blooms will be available for public viewing.

Two informational presentations along with question and answer period will be held on Saturday afternoon led by recognized experts on daffodils:

1:30 p.m. *Joe Hamm* will present "Daffodil Species and Cultivars to be found On Historical Sites." Joe is an internationally recognized expert on historic daffodils and has published numerous articles.

2:30 p.m. *Mary Lou Gripshover* will present a talk on "Miniature Daffodils." She has served as the editor of the Daffodil Journal for eight years and is a recognized hybridist.

Whether you enter flowers, just want to look at them, want to stroll the park and tour the historic homes or partake in an interesting discussion, it will be a great way to enjoy a spring day at historic Wartinger Park.



Spring Living History Program Seeks Volunteers

Eleven classes of Beavercreek third graders will individually spend a day visiting Wartinger Park in May. Come be a part of welcoming and sharing with these bright eyed inquisitive children a bit about their heritage at historic Wartinger Park. This is the major educational activity of our Society that has been ongoing since the early 1990's.

The program begins on May 5 and runs through May 20 on weekdays, excluding May 16. Most of the volunteer slots are for the morning hours only, finishing up around 11:30. We need approximately 8 to 10 volunteers for each day, and hope you will give consideration to be a part of the program. You may sign up for as many or as few days as fit your schedule. If you have helped in the past, we hope you will sign up again. If you haven't ever participated, you will be pleasantly surprised at how easy and fulfilling the day can be. Please call **Amber Carlos**, our Spring Living History Director at 937-912-5766 for further information. You may also email her at bhsohio@gmail.com.

Black Hoof, Primary Chief of the Shawnees to Visit

Saturday, June 25, in Beavercreek

Wartinger Park barn at 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, June 26, in Xenia

74 West Church Street at 2:00 p.m.

As part of the celebration of the second annual Greene County History Week, the Beavercreek Historical Society and the Greene County Historical Society are excited to announce the groups will collaborate to bring William “Rusty” Cottrel, an area actor/presenter, appearing as Black Hoof, the Primary Chief of the Shawnees. Black Hoof, who lived over a century dying in 1831, was witness to and participant in many pivotal events that determined the direction of the old Northwest Territory, and in turn, that of the fledgling United States of America. As many of you knowledgeable of the Shawnee tribe know, they had a major village right here in Greene County, just north of Xenia at the current location of Old Town. Mark your calendars now as you and your family will not want to miss this one!

Excerpt from the Beavercreek Chronicles, Vol. 2: *Life Forms in Beavercreek*

The natural scheme, mentioned earlier, includes the unexpected appearance and disappearance of life forms. In the Pleistocene Era both occurred in our area. The first clear indications of human activity emerge, and several species of large mammals, among them the mastodon and the sabre-toothed cat, become extinct. Was there a relationship between these two occurrences? Researchers cannot tell for sure. What life forms did exist within the confines of Beavercreek in those earliest post-glacial times is difficult to establish with any certainty. However, fossil finds and skeletal remains of mastodons and other prehistoric animal life (even giant beavers) discovered elsewhere in the Midwest prior to the glacier 15 million years ago make it reasonable to assume that the earth of Beavercreek crawled and shook with the stirrings of those same creatures. We cannot be certain of their presence in this area, but it is known that among the beaver's favorite foods are aspen bark,

birch, cottonwood, willow and alder which were almost certainly found in significant numbers in the thick and abundant forests that covered almost the entire Beavercreek area except where prairies existed. When local forests developed, oak, walnut, beech, ash, hickory, elm and “sugar” trees were plentiful. So it seems likely that beaver, tree, and water came together early in Beavercreek. While trees are mentioned in informal historical accounts, writers are often unfamiliar with formal names of particular species of trees or use a name different from the common one used today. (For example, is “sugar” a maple?) This makes conclusions about the presence or absence of particular tree types difficult.

As water boundaries retreated, both wild animals and the humans who hunted them congregated closer to remaining water sources. The earliest human inhabitants in this area, it is generally assumed, because of their small numbers, their use of simple tools, their minimum requirements for life support, and often their nomadic lifestyle, had little impact on the natural environment. It is recorded, however, that, on occasion, indigenous communities cleared their land for planting by girdling whole stands of trees (putting bands around the tree bark to deprive them of a flow of nutrients), leaving them to die, and then setting fire to the dead wood. An out-of-control conflagration is not hard to visualize. Usually, they hunted, fished and consumed only what was needed for food, clothing, and shelter for themselves and their families. Little was wasted; only the smallest percentage of what was taken found its way to the refuse pit, and because it decomposed by natural processes, it did not become debris in the surroundings they called home, so there is little evidence of their lifestyle.

Later, animals such as deer, bear, buffalo, marten and raccoon were plentiful in the fields and forests. So too, were moose. (It is told that in the days of the early settlers, fall and spring moose migrations obstructed travel along the Ohio River.) But several causes produced a decline in native animal populations. Local natives reported that “the great cold” that occurred sometime in the 1700s caused the death of whole herds of local buffalo. But of greater long-term significance was the arrival of fur traders who offered tools and other rewards to the local inhabitants in exchange for fur pelts, encouraging them to hunt beyond their personal and tribal needs and changing forever the historic cultural values and natural thrifty habits of indigenous communities. Beaver pelts were most highly prized, so, in a very short time, beavers were in scarce supply. Another event also impacted a local animal population. With the arrival of almost the very first settlers, in August 1803, the court ordered a bounty of fifty cents to be paid from the treasury for each wolf killed in the county.

Have an article you want in the Log by Log? Deadline for submissions into the next issue is June 17.

We're always looking for volunteers! To inquire about available opportunities, email BHSOhio@gmail.com.

Upcoming Events:

Board Meeting, April 14

1981 Dayton-Xenia Rd. – 6:30 p.m.

Open House Beaver Creek History Center, April 17

1981 Dayton-Xenia Rd. – 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Quarterly Meeting, April 26

Dr. Noeleen McIlvenna presents General Nathanael Greene, our County's Namesake

Daffodil Show & Open House, April 30-May 1

Wartinger Park, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Living History, May 2-20

Board Meeting, May 12

1981 Dayton-Xenia Rd. – 6:30 p.m.

Board Meeting, June 9

1981 Dayton-Xenia Rd. – 6:30 p.m.

Log by Log Article Submission Deadline

June 17 – 5:00 p.m.; E-mail submissions to the editor at b.joh88@gmail.com



1368 Research Park Drive
Beaver Creek, Ohio 45432

"The objectives of the organization are to preserve structures of historical significance, to develop and present community education programs, and to create a learning center for historic education."

Beaver Creek Historical Society Quarterly Meeting

April 26, 2016 | 7:00 p.m. | Peace Lutheran Church | 3530 Dayton-Xenia Rd.



Why Was Our County named Green(e) County?

Many residents of Greene County have no idea how their county got its name or why the name has an extra letter "e" at the end. Dr. Noeleen McIlvenna, History Professor at Wright State University, will share many details about the life of extraordinary patriot, Nathanael (even his first name is an unusual spelling) Greene, the county's namesake, when she speaks at the Beaver Creek Historical Society's April Quarterly Meeting on April 26, 2016. Dr. No, as she is fondly known to her students at WSU, makes history interesting and brings it alive. She will detail the many ways that General Greene served George Washington and our young America during the Revolutionary War, which led him to be honored by many American communities and counties, including our own, as our nation grew. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall of Peace Lutheran Church, 3530 Dayton-Xenia Rd.