

Affiliated with the City of Beavercreek

THE BEAVERCREEK HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S

Log by Log

Our objectives as an organization are to preserve structures of historical significance, develop and present community educational programs, and to create a learning center for historic education.

A Quarterly
Newsletter from

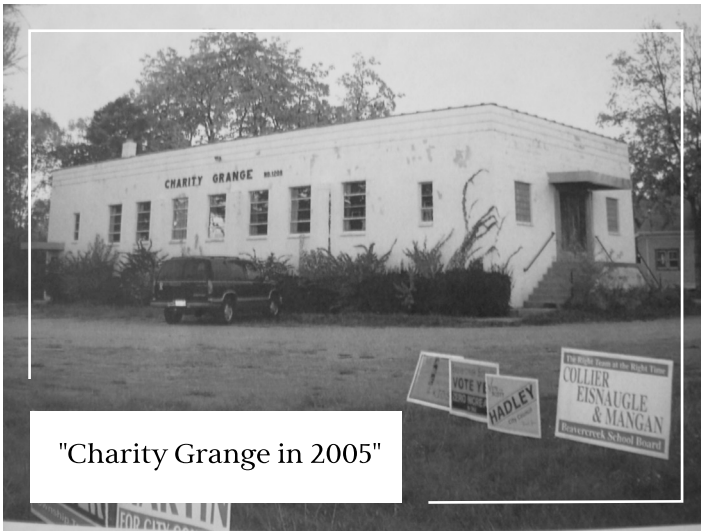


Fall 2018
Volume 27, Issue 4

BeavercreekHistoricalSociety.org

The Changing Times of Charity Grange

Submitted by Jeanne Wensits



"Charity Grange in 2005"

The plot of ground on the northwest corner of Dayton Xenia and Grange Hall Roads has a story to tell. In the late 1800s it held a two-story frame building, one that embraced worried people and frustrated people. Later a new structure arose there that held happy and energized people. Even later, after sitting empty and forlorn, the building morphed into a different kind of gathering place. This is a glimpse into the story of Charity Grange and the activities on that corner. One has to go back to the ending of the Civil War to understand how it all came about.

Between 1861 and 1865 when Beavercreek was mainly a farming community, that devastating war drew husbands, sons, brothers and single men away from their Beavercreek homes and farms to fight for a

united nation. Those who returned found their farms suffering from a host of woes brought on by the war: neglected fields and buildings, low prices for things they had to sell, high prices for necessities, and isolation from others who could offer support and solutions. In rural areas around the country this despair gave rise to a collective need for organization and cooperation in the agricultural arena. Nationwide, the Grange movement bloomed steadily to meet those needs.

Locally, the Charity Grange 1208 charter was issued on October 13, 1875 with forty-two charter members and William M. Wolf as Master. At first they held their meetings in the basement of Hawker Church, a structure with two front doors, one for men and one for women. This church, now called Cavalry Chapel, still stands at the far western end of Dayton-Xenia Road and watches over the church cemetery and the activities on Creekside Trail.

A few years later the members built a two-story frame building that stood on a 67' X 72' lot on that corner of Grange Hall Road and Dayton-Xenia Turnpike. (It's been documented that, in those early days, Grange Hall Road was designated as National Road). A toilet was attached to the structure and in the rear was a coal shed. Hitching posts were along the turnpike. The building stood so close to the road that horse and buggies had to be especially careful there to avoid side-swiping the building. The property was later enlarged when Henry Burkhart bought the Hawker farm and sold enough land to the Grange to make the property a full acre.

Continue reading article on page 3.

Volume 27 • Fall, Issue 4

Saluting Our Volunteers: Karen Wolf

This continues 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.

Karen Wolf is a fairly new member of the Beavercreek Historical Society, and fortunately it did not take her too long to agree to allow her name on the ballot to serve as board Secretary. Karen admits to being an active person who likes to be involved and says with a smile that she always has trouble saying "no." We welcome her as an officer and are happy she is now officially elected and beginning her service on the board.

Born in the town of Brunswick, OH in Medina County, Karen notes that her hometown is similar in make-up to Beavercreek. She came to Beavercreek to attend Wright State University where she earned both her bachelor and masters degree. Fortunately for Beavercreek, she remained here ever since. She married and raised her two daughters, both of whom are graduates of Beavercreek High School, and she is now a proud grandmother to three boys and a girl. Karen's professional career as a high school business teacher in West Carrollton extended a bit over 30 years before her retirement.

Her former husband, Dwight, is the son of Barney Wolf, whose personal recollections of early Beavercreek are recounted on Pages 216-17 of our local history book, Beavercreek Chronicles.

Karen shares that her marriage into the Wolf family resulted with her forming a very close bond with Dwight's grandparents, and as a by-product, increased her interest in all the aspects of the family's Beavercreek farming heritage.

Karen was a very active member of the Beavercreek Jayceettes (now known as Jaycee Women), a group that was involved heavily in civic affairs in the 1970-80's, working on many of their local projects such as the Haunted House, etc. She served as President



Photo of Karen.

of the group and received a state award as Ohio's Outstanding Local President of Jayceettes. She served for 28 years (non-consecutive) on the Wright State Alumni Board of Directors and is a Past President of that group.

She's also a member of the Beavercreek Women's League.

Not one to sit around, Karen has been an avid golfer for 30 years, and she can regularly be found hitting the links. She is a member and past president of the LPGA Women's Amateur Golf Association (formerly known as the Executive Women's Golf Association). She states that she has made many friends through golfing and enjoys the camaraderie and physical activity of the game.

We thank Karen for her bringing her cheerful smile, energy and talents to serve as our new board Secretary. And as always, we thank all of our volunteers, as we cannot continue to serve our community without you.

Continued from page 1. The Grange addressed the urgent need to combat high prices for farming materials by its members pooling funds to buy coal, fertilizer and other necessities in bulk. For instance, rather than every farmer owning his own plow, the Grange would purchase several plows and share them among the members.

The early years were indicative of strong leadership nurturing the Grange through some of its more difficult years by having ice cream socials, picnics, oyster suppers, spring garden parties, annual flea markets/rummage sales, rentals of the hall, and other events to raise money.

Minstrel shows were all the rage across the country in the mid-1800s to early 1900s. As the professional shows ran their course, amateur minstrel and vaudeville shows began to flourish as fundraisers for clubs and civic organizations. In 1947 Charity Grange jumped on the bandwagon, so to speak, with their first show for the community.

Minstrel show performances introduced a new entertainment style geared towards working-class folks. They were literally song and dance shows – with attitude. Corny jokes and gags delighted audiences, much like the TV rapid-fire sketch comedy show, *Laugh-In*, did in the late 1960s and later, *Saturday Night Live*.

Here's a sample from the 1956 Charity Grange show program:

"Did they take an X-ray of your wife's jaw at the hospital?"

"They tried to but they got a moving picture."

If the performers were too outrageous, out came a giant hook that whisked them away. All of the cast members were Charity Grange members. The annual shows were hugely popular, many taking place on three consecutive evenings.

Although social activities were an essential element from the very beginning, members knew that the Grange meant something more than a good time. At almost every meeting there were discussions of agricultural topics and household problems. Efforts extended to collaboration with local schools,

including training juveniles and organizing Junior Granges, encouraging 4-H Clubs and Vocational Agriculture in the schools, and fostering home economics.

As far back as 1924, Charity Grange was instrumental in holding a Fall Fair to which members brought exhibits of their produce and creations for display, judging and competition with others in the community for small prizes. Later on the Fall Fairs were sponsored by the Beaver Chapter of the Future Farmers of America and Future Home-Makers of America and were held in the Beavercreek School. Fall Fair officers were high school seniors and members of FFA or FHA.

In 1954 a new two-story Charity Grange building replaced the old, framed building of yore. Instead of borrowing money, the Grange sold notes to the members, quite a unique method in that everyone had a special motive to help the grange earn money in order to pay themselves back.

For the next 25 years Charity Grange prospered. But alas, towards the end of the century membership dwindled as the agrarian community transitioned toward a more suburban society. Around 2003 the utilities were cut off and the building languished, an easy target for vandalism and vagrants.

On October 28, 2005 Charity Grange sold the building and property to Steven Mangan who painstakingly renovated, cleaned, and painted the structure and gave it new life as the Mangan Banquet Center. Upstairs it still has the original stage where minstrel shows had been produced and the hardwood floors that supported dancing and activities. The downstairs still contains the huge kitchen that had brought together Grange members and the community for delectable meals and parties, only now it's equipped with modern appliances and kitchen goods. All manner of gatherings—weddings, reunions, church events, graduation parties—are still going strong there.

The feel of Grange life carries on in a new era in a new format on that corner in Beavercreek.

The 2018-19 Program Moves Forward— President is Still Needed

Efforts continue to find a willing volunteer to step forward to serve as President of our Beavercreek Historical Society for a one-year period of time. Please give this serious consideration, as having leadership of a President is vital to the success of the organization. Simply stated, the position involves facilitating monthly Board meetings (with no winter meetings) and serving as a point person to maintain communication within the Board of Trustees and the membership as the needs arise. Outside of those two requirements, the depth of further involvement is up to the individual. Two on-going principal initiatives (Living History and the Log by Log newsletter) are currently being handled by experienced members, and programs for Quarterly Meetings are already scheduled through the coming year. If you cannot serve but have a person in mind who might (regardless of whether they are a current member) please pass this information along.

While we are still actively seeking a new President, we are pleased to welcome three new members to our Board of Trustees and announce some changes in responsibilities on the Board. Karen Wolf was elected as our new Secretary at the July Annual Meeting, and two other new Board members are assuming duties. Sonya Veta is our new Membership Chair as Zelma Robinson has moved to a new

position serving as co-chair of Acquisitions with Nancy Wagner. Anita O'Neal now serves as a co-chair of the Publicity Committee with current chair Gerry Petrak. We are seeking a person to chair the Program Committee.

Officers and Board of Trustees 2018-19

President: (vacant)
Vice President: Roger Coy
Secretary: Karen Wolf
Treasurer: Wendy Kirchoff

Acquisitions: Zelma Robinson & Nancy Wagner
Archives: Carolyn Fourman & Cathy Robinett
Education: Amber Carlos & Amy Rohrback
Long Range Plan: John Rhodehamel
Membership: Sonya Veta
Newsletter: Brianna Johnson
Programs: (vacant)
Publicity: Anita O'Neal & Gerry Petrak

Other members who are actively helping the organization in the absence of a President are Bob Bader, our Facilities Coordinator, and David Shumway who is assisting with communication between BHS and the City when outside parties are seeking information.

JOIN THE BEAVERCREEK HISTORICAL SOCIETY TODAY!

Help preserve Beavercreek's past for the future. Complete this form and choose your membership type below. Please write a check payable to Beavercreek Historical Society and mail along with this form to:
1368 Research Park Drive, Beavercreek, OH 45432.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: (Please print carefully) _____

Annual Memberships (Jan. thru Dec.) ☐ \$20 Individual ☐ \$25 Family
☐ \$50 Group or Organization OR Lifetime Membership ☐ \$500 and above



Annual Meeting and the Year Ahead

The Society's annual meeting (and ice cream social) was held in late July at the Tobias-Zimmer Barn in Wartinger Park. Outgoing and long-serving President Jill Kincer was enthusiastically recognized.

Karen Wolf was formally elected Secretary, and Wendy Kirchoff will continue as Treasurer. Roger Coy stays as VP. Sonya Veta has agreed to serve as membership chair. Anita O'Neal will assist Gerry Petrak on publicity, and then chair when we sadly lose the Petraks who plan to move to Colorado in a few months.

Other chairs are: Acquisitions, Nancy Wagner and Zelma Richardson; Archives, Carolyn Fourman and Cathy Robinett; Education, Amy Rohrback and Amber Carlos; Facilities and City Liaison, Bob Bader; and Long-range Planning, John Rhodehamel. Brianna Johnson will continue with this newsletter. (Sorry if we left anyone out.)

However, the Presidency is still unfortunately unfilled. We're trying some division of duties and it seems to be working. Bob Bader and Karen Wolf are putting together Board meeting agendas and VP Roger Coy is conducting the meetings. Jill is still active and will assist with data bases and other things ... it's hard for her to completely "retire."

So the future will present challenges, but we're up to it. We needed new blood and that's happening already. Now if we just had someone who would like to hone their own skills and gain experience as president ...

In the coming year the Society will be stressing membership and publicity, with less emphasis on new programs and acquisitions. We want to get the word out about the importance of history and what the Society is doing. To this end, we've even started a monthly column in the News-Current called "Historical Society Happenings."

Get to Know the Presenters

Karl Colón is the Director of the award-winning Greene County Public Library system and has the finest staff in the business. A graduate of Oberlin College, the University of Cincinnati College of Law, and the Kent State University School of Library and Information Science, Karl's diverse career has spanned private legal practice, service in the Ohio Attorney General's Office, and technology and administrative work in Ohio's libraries for 17 years. Karl is a member of the Ohio Library Council Government Relations Committee, the Friends of WYSO, the Greene County Job and Family Services Board, the Board of Directors of Xenia Rotary, the Board of Directors of Greene, Inc., the Greene County Law Library Board, and serves on the Advisory Board of the Greene County United Way. Most importantly, Karl is the father of Lilly Clair and Adelia Colón and a very happy Dad indeed.



Photo of Karl Colón

Carol Graff has been a resident of Beavercreek for 52 years. She participated in the incorporation effort of the City of Beavercreek and was a Beavercreek Township Trustee for 26 years. She served on the Beavercreek City Council for 10 years and was mayor twice. She is currently on the Greene County Library Board and is serving as President since 2007. She is a member of the Beavercreek Friends of the Library and was a Township Trustee when the present library was built, renovated enlarged and re-renovated.

Do you have an article, photo(s) or item(s) of interest you want featured in the Log by Log? Deadline for submissions into the next issue is **December 14**. Email submissions to **b.joh88@gmail.com**.

Flatboats on the Ohio

An excerpt from the Beavercreek Chronicles Vol. 2

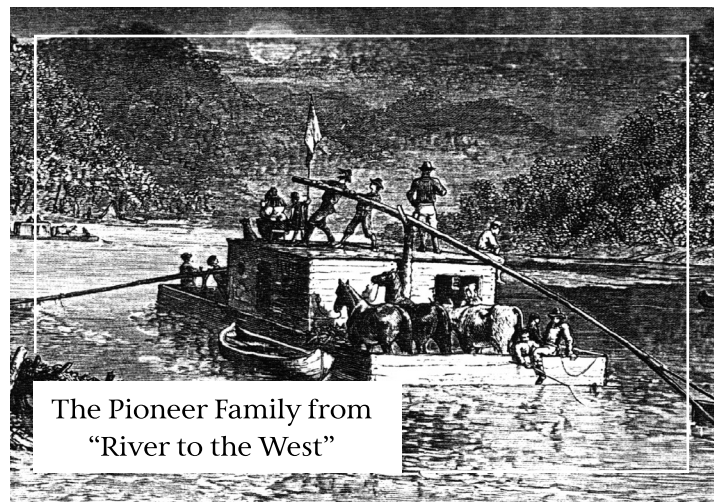
When settlers came to the shores of the “New World,” they found the land covered with huge forests so dense that some said a squirrel could travel the breadth of the country without once touching the ground. The trees in this forest were so large that a 20-man canoe could be hewed from one trunk. For this reason, getting “there” from “here” could take considerable time and effort. Transporting commodities, household goods, and people was a challenge that could result in lost cargoes and lost lives, due to broken wagons, dying draft animals, and the uncertainties of traversing a land populated by Indians, bandits, and wild animals. Footpaths didn’t make good roads.

In 1782, an enterprising man found a means to an end: he built a “flatboat,” loaded it with produce from the surrounding area and floated it from the Monongahela River to the Ohio River to the Mississippi River, ending up in New Orleans, where he sold his goods. He returned to Philadelphia by sea. His innovation helped to open up the interior of the country to settlement.

The flatboat, also called an ark, a Kentucky boat, a New Orleans boat, or a broadhorn, had a basic design, although some were larger than others. They could range from a 10-foot scow with a canvas cover to a roomier 15- by- 40-foot model with a “house” on it, furnished with chairs, beds, tables, and a kitchen equipped with a stone or brick fireplace. Some flatboats became a floating store, which would be poled into the river bank wherever there was a settlement. The entrepreneur would sell or trade his goods for handmade articles, which he would sell farther down the river.

The pioneer of 1800-1820 who had acquired land in the Ohio territory found his way to the waterfront in Pittsburgh, or Wheeling, or Brownsville to check out flatboats, none of which survive today. He had two choices: he could make his own or buy one already made. Making his own could take all summer. He would have to chop down trees, have them sawed for boards, then use his hand tools to construct the flatboat. Usually this took too long; autumn and winter would arrive before he could be settled on his land in Ohio. He had to be careful when choosing an

already-built flatboat. One with shoddy workmanship or rotten timbers could maroon the family along a barren stretch of waterway, at the mercy of the elements and wildlife of all kinds. The cost of a ready-made flatboat was anywhere from \$1.00 to \$4.00 a foot. The rectangular flat- bottomed “ark,” as the family flatboat was called, was made of planks fit together by wooden pegs. Caulking made of hemp, oakum or cotton, smoothed over with tar or pitch, filled any gaps between the planks. In one design, a square “house” was fastened on top a two-week trip from Pennsylvania, he could sell his flatboat, pole it up to his land and live on it until he had cleared off some of the forest, or break up the boat and use the wood for something else. It might take the pioneer six weeks to travel overland from Cincinnati to Greene County and beyond. Some pioneers liked living on the river so well that they converted their flatboat to a shantyboat, and spent their whole time on the river. At times when the river was low, they might be stranded on land for awhile, just long enough to grow and harvest a garden, then they’d be off to the easy life again.



The keelboat was used during this same time frame. It had pointed ends, had a rudder, and a sail on a pole. It could be sailed, hauled, poled, or winched back up the river, a grueling task. There was big rivalry between “flatboaters” and “keelboaters,” and many stories have been written about them. The advent of the steamboat in 1811 saw the end of the keelboat, but the flatboat continued to be used until the 1880s. A survey done in 1814 showed that steamboats carried

cargoes of 2,000 tons to New Orleans. Flatboats and barges carried 90,000 tons. By 1821 steamboats, in 287 arrivals in New Orleans, carried 55,000 tons of cargo compared to the flatboats' 53,000 tons. Steam was the way to go thereafter.

- By Ruth A. Tobias

Bibliography: *Flatboats on the Ohio: Westward Bound*, by Catherine Chambers, 1984; *The Frontier State: 1803-1825*, William Utter, 1968; *The River Book: Cincinnati and Ohio*, edited; *River to the West: Three Centuries of the Ohio*, by Walter Havighurst, 1970

Two Generations Ago: Summer 1968

A shortened form of a regular column by member David Shumway, published in the Beavercreek News-Current.

This turbulent summer of 1968 saw riots and protests following the assassinations of MLK and RFK, and increasing violence in anti-war protests. Bringing it forward, that summer is forever a part of us who lived through it.

But here in quiet Beavercreek Township things are a bit calmer, with more localized concerns. Beavercreek is growing, fast. Housing, apartments, and commercial development applications, with accompanying issues of zoning, esthetics, etc., are inundating the harried Trustees, who are more adept at rural issues.

And on the continuing incorporation front, a relaxation to the three-mile rule governing annexation has emboldened Beavercreek's adversaries, primarily Fairborn and Dayton, to initiate a new spate of destined-to-fail legal challenges and suits.

But there are lighter moments too. The newly-formed Beavercreek Chamber of Commerce is hosting a dance with an Indy 500 theme. Also partying are the Athletic Boosters, with an Ox-Roast fundraiser, and 5000 attended the Independence Day celebration at Frank Zink field (no parade). Not to be left out, my busy Jaycees is hosting their first "Battle of the Bands" competition at Beaver-Vu Skate arena, with six bands (with names like Filet of Soul and Prolific Mynd). And 490 happy kids were just graduated from BHS, and perhaps (appropriately) saw "Promise her Anything" at the Belmont Auto Theater. Hmmm?

Tuna 19¢/can. (Bringing that forward, tuna is being depleted as demand grows and prices rise.) Remember the Colonial Restaurant? They offer a New York strip steak dinner, \$1.85. I don't remember this one, but "The Sombrero" Mexican restaurant on Dayton-Xenia is advertising "Mexican burgers" for 30¢. It's no longer there. I guess it was ahead of its time; the Tex-Mex craze hadn't taken hold.

Home Federal is paying 4.5% on savings accounts and 5.0% on a six-month CD (Bringing that forward, those numbers would be about 0.1 and 0.5 today, were Home Federal still here.) Also in banking, Winters Bank is introducing (in words which would be unacceptable today) "new double checks to pamper a woman" because "a woman thrives on extra care." Yuck!

Mother's day is appropriately recognized of course, but interestingly we are asked to buy Beau Brummel ties, Swank jewelry, and Jade East cologne for Father's Day.

Ah ha! Here's a telling tidbit: A major push is underway locally "for a strong enforceable gun control bill." Pending Senate crime bill S-917 says "...and prohibit the mail-order sale of handguns and over-the-counter sale to persons who do not live in the dealer's state." (Bringing that forward, well, as expected, the bill died).

Some things change; some things stay the same.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Living History Program Fall Session Final Days
October 2, 4, 9-10

Quarterly Meeting, October 23
Peace Lutheran Church 7:00 p.m.
Karl Colon presenting the history of the
Beavercreek and Greene County Libraries

Board Meeting October 11, November 8
1981 Dayton-Xenia Rd. at 6:30 p.m.

Log by Log Submission Deadline, December 14
Send to Editor no later than 9:00 p.m.

Quarterly Meeting, January 22, 2019
Peace Lutheran Church 7:00 p.m.
Andy Hite, Historic Site Manager
Johnston Farm & Indian Agency
located in Piqua, OH



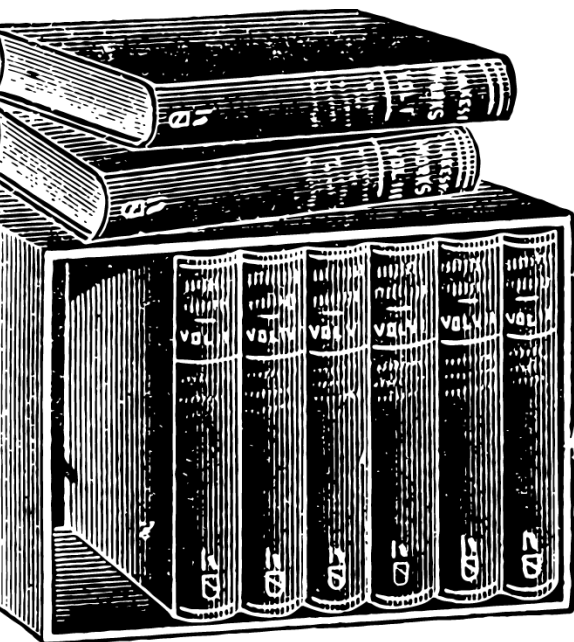
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BEAVERCREEK, OHIO 45432
BeavercreekHistoricalSociety.org

Thank You for your continued support!

THE BEAVERCREEK
HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S

Quarterly Meeting

When: October 23, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. | **Where:** Peace Lutheran Fellowship Hall



Life and Times of the Beavercreek Library

Greene County Public Library Director Karl Colón, Greene County Public Library Board President Carol Graff and Beavercreek Community Head Librarian Emeritus Toni White will present the history of the Beavercreek Community Library, with a focus on its history from 1979 to 2018. Topics covered will include the conception and construction of the current building in 1979 and subsequent renovations, the services and programs offered through the years and personal recollections of the people and personalities that have made the Beavercreek Community Library a treasure for nearly 40 years. Karl Colón has an abundance of interesting information to share about the long history of Greene County Public Libraries. He is knowledgeable, warm and engaging. It will be an evening of facts and entertaining dialogue.