

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 education programs, and operate the History Center for educational outreach and historical research.

A Quarterly
Newsletter from



Winter 2023
Volume 32, Issue 1

BeavercreekHistoricalSociety.org

The Pioneer Family of 1840

By Ruth A. Tobias
(BHS member)

Reprinted from the Beavercreek Chronicles, a 244-page publication that includes historical facts, stories, and family history about early life in Beavercreek; available for purchase through bhsOhio@gmail.com.

The philosophy of the pioneer settler in the early 1800s was this:

Eat it up,
Wear it out,
Make it do,
Or go without.

This bit of homespun wisdom begins Barbara Greenwood's book, *Pioneer Sampler: The Daily Life of a Pioneer Family in 1840*. Her book, with illustrations by Heather Collins, gives an excellent look into life 150 [now 182] years ago. Of particular interest was the clearing of the land, the kinds of food grown, and the raising of animals.

The first task the pioneer set for himself was the clearing of enough land on which to build his shelter. One would probably live in the [covered] wagon or a tent until the rude log cabin was completed. But before the cabin could be built, the underbrush in the forest had to be cleared away, to give room to fell the trees. It's said that one man could clear one acre of underbrush in six days. Then trees could be cut for logs for the cabin and for fences. Some of the cut trees were burned and the ashes were sold to makers of soap, thus becoming an important money maker. With the neighbors' help, 22 acres of forest could be cleared in about three years. The log cabin was never intended to be the permanent home for the family; it was just enough to get them through the first winter and into the next year or so when the crops would come in. Remarkably, some of these log homes are still visible today.

The farmer would then plant his first crop, working around rocks and stumps of trees. With the roots of the stumps and weeds still in place, the fields would be harrowed (almost barely scratched) to make them ready for seed. The seed was broadcast at first by hand until the invention of seeding machines. The best seed from the previous year was saved to plant the next, always looking for the most yield per acre. When the stumps and roots had been cut out, the land was deeply plowed.



Photo: The Solomon Shoup Springhouse is the only springhouse still standing in Beavercreek (on the Hagenbach property). The upper room was used as a smokehouse and the lower level is where the cool spring water continuously flows at a constant 50-degrees on its way to Little Beaver Creek.

Important crops were potatoes, corn, beans, and squash. Potatoes could be planted between the stumps, as that first crop. Corn was useful in many ways. It could be boiled for porridge (hominy) or ground for meal and flour. The stalks could be used for animal fodder, and the husks for mattresses and mats. The cobs were burned to ash and used as baking powder. Cob pieces were used for toilet paper, dolls, corks, and spoons.

Beans, squash and corn, "the three sisters," were often planted together. The beans grew up the cornstalk for support and the squash vines kept the weeds down around the corn. Extra crops were sold to pay taxes and to buy necessities that the family couldn't make themselves.

For most of the year, the average diet was pretty bland. Boiled potatoes, fried pork, stews, soups, and porridge were the mainstays of meals. Food was livened up a little with dried herbs, maple sugar, and honey. White sugar from West Indies sugar cane was too expensive to buy. Cooking was done in the fireplace until the advent of the iron cook stove. Many scorched clothes and burns were the rewards of the family cook. Chimney fires were also common. Many chimneys were made of wood packed with mud, so most families made it a practice to climb on the roof twice a year to scrape down the chimney with a broom, which made a fine mess inside the cabin.

Farm animals played their part in the life of the pioneer family. The ox plowed the field. The family cow provided calves to sell or eat, and milk to make butter and cheese to sell. Little of the milk was drunk. It was hard to keep it fresh, without ice or a cold spring nearby. (Many Beavercreek farms were fortunate to have springs and built a "spring house" for cool storage.) Most of

the milk was processed for sale, so as a result some people had a serious calcium deficiency and lost all their teeth at an early age. The geese provided quills for pens, and feathers for pillows and mattresses; they were sold at market or eaten at home. Goose grease was used for wheezy chests and to rub on rough hands and skin. Chickens were the responsibility of the women, who sold the extra eggs and chicks. The money earned was their wages. Hogs were the mainstay. The old saying that everything was used except for the squeal was true for the pioneer. Strangely enough, cats and dogs were not plentiful. If the peddler came by with a new pup or kitten in his wagon of goods, they were a welcome addition to the family. The dog was the family watchman and the cat was the scourge of mice who would eat up the stored feed.

The peddler's arrival was an important event. His wagon was full of hard-to-find items, like nutmeg, needles, pots, and pans. He would accept homemade items in trade, and would sell those for other homemade items on his journey. The itinerant tailor and the shoemaker were welcome, as was the tinker who made tinware—mugs, dippers, plates, and candlesticks—and the preacher.

Life was not easy in those days when the weather could ruin the crop and the family could face starvation during the winter. But by perseverance, cooperation, and community spirit, these pioneers settled the land, raised their families, and gave us a future.

Jarusiewicz Cabin (circa 1805) at Wartinger Park

The Jarusiewicz Cabin was discovered in April 1972 on North Fairfield Road, when property owner George Jarusiewicz found it hidden under the modern veneer of a building he was razing to make way for his new restaurant, Scotties. He realized the significance of the structure and wanted to preserve the old house as a significant artifact of early Beaver Creek history. He



Jarusiewicz Cabin

oversaw the meticulous dismantling and rebuilding of the house at Wartinger Park. In the spring of 1997, the 16 by 24-foot structure was determined to be unsafe due to insect infestation and was removed from the park. Only the fireplace

was salvaged. Thanks to a community fundraising project, a replica of the cabin was later built, bringing new life to a symbol of early Beaver Creek living.

Note: We are saddened to learn of the passing of George Jarusiewicz in November 2022. We are forever grateful for his generous gift of the Jarusiewicz Cabin to Wartinger Park and his support of the Beaver Creek Historical Society.

Winter Welcome at Wartinger Park



December 17 was a beautiful winter day at the park! Over 650 visitors had plenty to do: see Santa and his reindeer at the newly rebuilt Tobias-Zimmer Barn, enjoy the Limelight Sweet Adeline Quartet strolling Christmas carolers, make crafts, and warm up with hot chocolate and cookies. In the Jarusiewicz Cabin, member Amy Rohrback showed children how to make winter bird feeders the old-fashioned way, with pinecones, lard, and bird seed. In the Ankeney Cabin, member Bobbie Carpenter helped children with the holiday custom of decorating boy and girl gingerbread cookies. Thank you to these additional member volunteers: Mark Wiley and son Ben, Mary Henry, Rodger Reedy, Chrisonna Anderson-Lutz, and Brett Williford.

*Top: Bobbie Carpenter's cookie decorating activity
—over 155 were done!*

Middle: Amy Rohrback's bird feeder activity

Bottom: Tobias-Zimmer Barn prepared for Santa's visit

It was wonderful to see so many BHS members and their families enjoying the park that you help to support and sustain through your membership and donations!

A special thank you to these additional organizations for hosting the event:

- Beaver Creek Parks, Recreation and Culture
- Beaver Creek Kiwanis
- Beaver Creek Lions
- Greene Co. Public Library
- The Greene Optimists

Your Early Spring Cleaning Can Help Living History

Submitted by *Amy Rohrback, Living History Director*

There are still four months until the Spring Living History Program for Fairbrook, Parkwood, and Shaw elementary schools, but volunteers are already preparing for the program. These third-grade students will be attending between April 24 and May 12, 2023. A big "Thank You" goes out to Gold Heart Quilters for donating fabric for making quilt squares, Terrie Corley for donating fabric for rag doll clothing, and Doris Mitchell (and family) for donating time and materials for creating rag doll kits.

Board of Trustees

President, Mark Wiley
bhsohio@gmail.com

Vice President, Bobbie Carpenter
bhsohio@gmail.com

Secretary, Mary Henry
bhsohio@gmail.com

Treasurer, Rodger Reedy
rreedy1923@gmail.com

Historical Buildings Director, Vacant
– consider volunteering

**History Center Director,
Brett Williford**
brett@brettwilliford.com

**Living History Directors, Amy
Rohrback & Shawnah Tibbs- Sergent**
livinghistorybhs@gmail.com

**Membership Director,
Chrisonna Anderson-Lutz**
chrisonna.anderson@greenecountyohio.gov

Newsletter Director, Vacant
– consider volunteering

**Program Director and Special
Events Coordinator, Vacant**
– consider volunteering

Publicity Director, Vacant
– consider volunteering

**Webmaster and Technology
Director, Greg Asman**
gozman@mac.com

**Beavercreek City Schools Liaison,
Ruth Wiley**
ruth.wiley@gocreek.com

**Beavercreek Parks Liaison,
Kim Farrell**
farrell@beavercreekohio.gov

**Beavercreek Township Liaison,
Carolyn DiGiandomenico**
cdigiandomenico@beavercreektownship.org

Doing some early spring cleaning? We are always looking for “old fashioned” small print cotton fabrics, plain cotton, and muslin for the quilting and rag doll activities. As small as 2 ½ inch strips or yards can be used. We can use leftover yarn (or large amounts) for finger knitting. If you are cleaning out a closet and have materials that can be used for the program, please contact Amy Rohrback at (937) 477-1007 or email livinghistorybhs@gmail.com. New volunteers are always welcome, too! Just reach out to Amy.

In Memoriam

Our deepest condolences to the families of

George Jarusiewicz, donor of the Jarusiewicz Cabin

Robert Manske, longtime BHS member

Volunteers Needed!!

If you have an appreciation for the unique and colorful history of Beavercreek and a willingness to work with others, you are a prime candidate to join our volunteer team! We need volunteers to make our team complete and share the workload. If interested, please email bhsohio@gmail.com. You will not work alone—existing board members are ready to provide support. Please consider helping in the following areas:

- **Historical Buildings Director:** Oversees the maintenance plan for all historical buildings and develops and maintains a long-range plan, including new ideas and concepts for the Society.
- **Newsletter Director:** Oversees the content and publishing of the *Log by Log* quarterly newsletter. (The basics are already set up. We use a template and World Digital Imaging does the layout and printing. All you need to do is collect articles and information for the quarterly publication.)
- **Program Director/Special Events Coordinator:** Schedules programming for the quarterly meetings and works with the directors of special events.
- **Publicity Director:** Works with all committees to publicize quarterly programs and other activities.

**Thank You Lifetime
Business Sponsors:**

*IH Credit Union
TA O'Neal & Sons, LLC*

**Thank You Lifetime
Business Members:**

*Beavercreek Township
Beaver-Vu Construction
Daytona Mills
Knollwood Florist, Inc.*

Log by Log Submissions Due March 10, 2023

As always we are interested in hearing your stories about life in Beavercreek! Log by Log is accepting submissions of historical stories and interviews, little-known facts, and even personal stories about growing up in Beavercreek. Please submit articles and photos to bhsohio@gmail.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monthly Board of Directors Meetings

First Tuesdays, 4:30 P.M.
Lofino Plaza Meeting Room

Log x Log Submissions Due March 10

Submit to bhsohio@gmail.com

2023 Quarterly Program Dates

January (no program)
April 25, July 25, October 24

Join us on Facebook to keep updated on
Society news and activities and to post your
Beavercreek historical items of interest:
[Beavercreek Historical Society](https://www.facebook.com/BeavercreekHistoricalSociety).



1368 RESEARCH PARK DRIVE
BEAVERCREEK, OHIO 45432
BeavercreekHistoricalSociety.org

Thank You for Your Support

THE BEAVERCREEK
HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S

Next Steps for the Tobias-Zimmer Barn

*Thanks to the entire Beavercreek community
we've come a long way since the devastation of the 2019 tornadoes!*



The community voiced its overwhelming support through a 2020 community survey, confirming the importance of the Tobias-Zimmer Barn as a prominent historical structure in Beavercreek, which led to the historically accurate rebuild completed in July showcasing the white oak, mortised and pinned frame typical of early Ohio barns. Since coming to the park in 1996, the barn has been the site of many community events and played an integral part in the Living History Program which has hosted over 15,000 third-grade students.



Although the original barn structure was covered by insurance, the Historical Society is working with the City Parks, Recreation and Culture Department to finish out the rebuild by adding amenities and enhancements such as restrooms and a prep kitchen that will make it more usable for gatherings, meetings, events, and park visitors. In addition, it will be well-equipped to become an income-producing rental venue with proceeds used for the maintenance of the park.

Phase I of the improvements is the installation of water/sewer lines for attached park restrooms scheduled to begin in spring 2023 thanks to early funding contributions. Phase II is building the restrooms.

**** We need your financial contributions to add restrooms to the barn.****

See insert for ways to give.