



# Delaware County Historian

VOLUME 66 ISSUE 2  
Fall 2021

## Ashley, Ohio: Honoring the Past, Looking Ahead

By Becky S. Cornett

The Village of Ashley's annual Corn Show (which was August 5-7, 2021), sponsored by American Legion Post 518, celebrates the village's past and present commitment to agriculture (and to fairs and festivals) bringing the community together with food, music, and fun. It represents the essence of Midwestern small-town Americana. Events include pork and chicken dinners, youth and adult corn eating and cob tossing contests, FFA kiddie tractor pull, three bands, games, carnival rides, and a raffle.

The Corn Show is reminiscent of Ashley's Independent Fair - known for many years as "the biggest little fair in Ohio" until it ended in 1949. A twenty-fifth-anniversary commemorative edition of the Delaware Gazette (1937) reported that the fair was an outgrowth of a group of Ashley men who staged horse races in the streets in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The 21-acre tract that housed the Ashley Fair was first organized as a racing track by the Ashley Driving Association.

A major milestone occurred in 1923 when

vocational agriculture teacher R.B. Warner and thirty-five students exhibited swine at the fair, which quickly evolved to form the first Junior Fair in the United States (1925). In 1929, the Ohio State Fair added a junior fair. Ashley's junior fair became a model for similar fairs across the U.S.

Although some people have said that Ashley is somewhat isolated and growing slowly because its heyday was during the rail era and was later bypassed by any major highway, others want to maintain the character of a small village as other areas of Delaware County are rapidly "built out" and are becoming exurbs of Columbus. Ashley's 2005 Comprehensive Plan (the year of the village's Sesquicentennial) included the following vision statement:



DCHS Collections



Downtown Ashley in the early 20th Century  
(Photo from DCHS Collection)

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**Delaware County Historical Society**  
Our History, Our Heritage

*Celebrating our acquisition and planned restoration of the Historic Jail and Sheriff's Residence*

**Friday, Oct. 8**  
\$50/person OR  
\$500/table of 8

**5-6 p.m. Jail Tours**  
(at the Historic Jail in downtown Delaware)

**5:30 p.m. Cash Bar**  
**7:00 p.m. BBQ Buffet**  
(at the Barn at Stratford)

**Your ticket includes:**

Jail and Sheriff's Residence 15-minute tours from 5 – 6:00 p.m.  
Cocktails at the Barn at Stratford at 5:30 p.m.  
Buffet at 7:00 p.m.—*catered by Kat's Kraft BBQ*—at the Barn at Stratford  
An enjoyable program with Emcee Jeff Robinson featuring:

- Music
- Live auction with Dan Boysel, auctioneer
- Brent Carson's Historic Account of Delaware's Crimes
- A visit from Elvis' cousin, Pelvis!

**Business casual attire**  
Direct any questions to Donna Meyer,  
740-369-3831 ext. 3  
R.S.V.P. by October 1 through EventBrite at  
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**THE BARN at Stratford**  
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## DELAWARE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established 1947

**Our Mission:** To promote and sustain interest in the history of Delaware County, Ohio, through historic preservation and education.

**Our Vision:** To be a continuing, self-sustaining source of and a repository for historical information and artifacts which fosters lifelong interest in Delaware County history through community engagement, education and historic preservation.

*Donna Meyer, Executive Director*

*Melissa Stroupe, Sales and Event Manager*

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Layout: Donna Meyer

Contributions of original historical research concerning Delaware County, Ohio, are welcome. Send your contributions to the attention of the Newsletter Editor at the above address.

## Summer Speeding by...

Did you hear that wooshing sound? It was summer, speeding by. No surprise that people rarely say that winter has gone by so quickly. This summer, like most seasons, has been a busy time for us. The Nash House and Meeker Homestead Museums have been open by appointment, which has worked well for us. We have been able to pair a docent with visitors for a better understanding of what the areas of interest are. This also prevents volunteers from sitting around with nothing to do – not a rewarding experience for them.

We continue to host weddings and parties in the Barn, and we wish there were more Saturdays in the month of October, our most popular wedding month.

Our Meeker Homestead Museum Curator, Benny Shoults, has been hard at work changing the exhibits in the museum. So, if you visited the museum before, schedule another visit soon. Email us at:

Meekermuseum@delawareohiohistory.org. The Museum will close for the winter from November 28, 2021 – April 4, 2022.

Our newest exhibit for the Meeker Homestead Museum is on the Archaeology Camp, which took place in August 2019. Fourteen students, age 8 to 14 uncovered more than 12,000 artifacts on the west side of the Meeker House.

For the last 18 months or so, all our programs have been virtual except for our Oak Grove Cemetery Walk. This has been very difficult for us as it has greatly diminished donations that we typically receive during programs (this is the part when I beg for money and pass the basket). We had our first (in a while) live program, held last month and the donations from the “pass the basket”, were great, thanks to our generous donors. The program was titled “That’s Entertainment”, presented by DCHS volunteer, Beny Shoults and detailed the history of the opera houses in Delaware, including the amazing 1,050 seat City Opera House located on the second floor of the old City Hall, which sadly burned in 1934.

We still have a few programs left this year, including the Rutherford B. Hayes walking tour on Sunday, October 3rd, and a program on Ghost Towns on Oct 19. Our Annual Meeting held on November 17th will feature Barbara Powers, the Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, presenting information about architect Frank Packard houses and the homes he designed and built in Delaware. We may require masks to be



Director's  
Column  
by  
Donna Meyer



worn at our indoor programs. The current info will always be posted on our website.

I was very pleased to learn we will receive an Outstanding Achievement Award given by the Ohio Local History Alliance

(OLHA) in the category of History Outreach - Public Programming. The selected program, titled “Cultural Communities of Delaware County: Early Settlers and American Indians 1770-1850” featured costumed reenactors and was produced by members of the Society’s Curriculum Support Committee. The program illustrated the interactions between the Lenni Lenape (Delaware People) and our early pioneers. Our Curriculum Support Committee worked for many months to prepare this program which was designed to be performed for a live audience, however due to Covid-19 restrictions, the program was recorded and edited into a 90-minute program viewed on YouTube and Facebook in March.

The award will be presented to Delaware County Historical Society project coordinators - Nancy Fleming, Francine Butler, and Cindy Kerr at the OLHA Annual Meeting Awards ceremony on October 2, 2021. This program was funded by the Ohio Arts Council and by the Charles and Betty Sheets Family Fund through the Delaware County Foundation. We would not have been able to purchase the costumes and musical instruments without their support.

Come see us at the FAIR – we had a great exhibit planned for last year which has been carried over to this year. Celebrating the 75 (+1) years of the Little Brown Jug Race, our booth in the Merchants Building will feature posters and graphics giving the history of the Jug, a video about the Jug, and artifacts about the Race including the racing colors which belonged to Ostrander native Curly Smart who won the first Little Brown Jug.

In other news, we are in the process of having an analysis of our operation conducted by the Ohio History Connection. Called a “Needs Assessment”, this will be the basis for our future strategic plan, so very important as we assume ownership of the Historic Jail and Sheriff’s Residence.

We are always looking for volunteers, especially docents. We provide flexible schedules, training, and the opportunity to work with a fun group of people. Let me know if you would like more information about this great position.

Good-bye to Summer. As my very wise mother used to say “Life is like toilet paper. The closer you are to the end, the quicker it goes” Boy, isn’t that the truth?!

*Donna*



(Continued from page 1)

*"As the Village of Ashley experiences growth pressures, we would like it to retain our historical village character, with a mixed-use pedestrian-friendly downtown. We wish to add a "central park" space that is connected to the rest of the village through a network of green spaces. By increasing community functions, we wish to sustain the friendly residents and encourage local involvement and commercial support. There should be a mixture of housing styles that house a diverse population and allow for reasonable community safety. Neighborhood-style commercial development should be encouraged and emulate the scale, architecture, and pedestrian-oriented design of the original plat wherever appropriate."*

The Village of approximately 1,660 people has the opportunity to build upon a rich, intriguing history. Ashley is located in Oxford Township (originally Marlborough Township), organized in 1815 by the petition of John Shaw. The Methodist Episcopal Church became the first church in the area that same year. The first school opened in 1828. Ashley was called the Town of Oxford originally, but the name was renamed Ashley when L. W. Ashley and J. C. Avery created the original village plat (June 1849) by subdividing their land. The town prospered when in 1850 the Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati & Indianapolis Railway (CCC&I) was built through the village. Shipping of grain and livestock via rail was Ashley's primary business. In the late 1800s, Ashley had an opera house, a distillery, two hotels, several dozen diverse businesses, and a series of newspapers (Record, Tribune, Argus, Ashley Times, Ashley Star).

The Spiritualist White Lily Chapel of Ashley was founded in 1950 by a group from the National Spiritual and Religious Camp Association that had developed Woolley Park in Ashley— a large summer camp incorporated in 1892 by S.J. Woolley and two colleagues. It was open to the public and had a restaurant, a pool, skating, and dances at a large hall. Summer homes were built around the park. Today, White Lily Chapel holds weekly services and programs and offers community dinners every Wednesday evening.

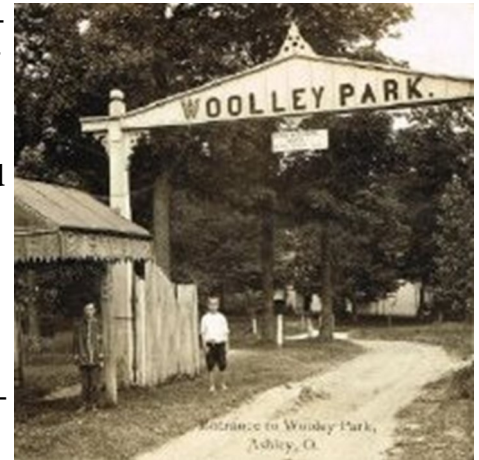
The R.B. Powers Company is one historic Ashley business, that is currently thriving – and adding employees. Founded in 1907 and housed in an 1880's brick school building, Powers makes and ships ribbon awards, including its famous rosettes, for competitions across the U.S. and in countries around the world. An oral history about the company is being prepared by volunteers of the Delaware County Historical Society.

Four of Ashley's homes are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and reflect the prosperity of the period. The pink Bartha House, located at 500 East High Street, was built in 1901 and is the most elaborate. The others are Opel House (1891) 223 West High Street; Lynn House (1892) 101 North Franklin Street; and Wilson House (1892) 505 East High Street. It is generally accepted that all four Eastlake-style houses were built by Toddy Porterfield, a local woodworker who built many Ashley buildings at the time. The Ohio Historic Preservation Office Register (2003) tells us that "the Eastlake Houses of Ashley are significant as outstanding examples of turn-of-the-century architecture in this small Delaware County community and for the quality of design, craftsmanship, and ornamentation displayed by all four individually and as a grouping."

Another historic home at 120 E. High St. was the home of Dr. Ella Dennis Welch (1863-1935), who was one of Ohio's first female physicians. Dr. Welch practiced at this house from 1894 until her death at age 72. Her son, a dentist, practiced dentistry at the house for 48 years, sharing space with his mother.

The Village is duly proud of its independent Wornstaff Memorial Public Library, constructed in 1928 with funds bequeathed by Chesley Wornstaff in memory of his son who died at age 27. Wornstaff offers an array of programs and services for children and adults, including online services. See <https://www.wornstafflibrary.com/>.

Since 1849, Ashley has been a community that managed to maintain a small town feel as well as providing business, industry and education opportunities for its citizens. In the 21st Century, Ashley will provide the hometown feel and still have continued growth in this Northern Delaware County community.



Photo—DCHS Collection

## Delaware County Historical Society to Receive Award

The Delaware County Historical Society was recently informed they will receive an Outstanding Achievement Award given by the Ohio Local History Alliance (OLHA) in the category of History Outreach - Public Programming.

The selected program, titled "Cultural Communities of Delaware County: Early Settlers and American Indians 1770-1850" is an entertaining and educational experience, geared for both school-age and adult audiences. Featuring costumed reenactors and produced by members of the Society's Curriculum Support Committee, the program consists of eleven vignettes which illustrate the interactions between the Lenni Lenape (Delaware People) and early pioneers who settled Delaware County. A narrator introduces us to historical experiences of early settlers and American Indians which are depicted through multi-media presentations incorporating re-enactment, art, dance, and music.

The vignettes include William Little and his knowledge of the American Indian settlers in Delaware County, early settlers' migration to Delaware and Africa Ohio, Rev. James B. Finley's contributions to the Wyandot settlements, the roles women played and the interactions of Mrs. Moses Byxbe and Laura Carpenter with different tribes, the story of "Drakes Defeat", rights of African-American settlers, Benjamin Franklin Thomas and the Crawford Band, games derived from the American Indians, the War of 1812 and the forced march of the Lenni Lenape through Delaware to Piqua, and music and dance forms of the Lenni Lenape. The program also includes an artifact cart of objects in use during the time period.

The award will be presented to Delaware County Historical Society project coordinators - Nancy Fleming, Francine Butler and Cindy Kerr at the OLHA Annual Meeting Awards ceremony on October 2, 2021.

This program was designed to be performed by Delaware County Historical Society volunteers for a live audience. Due to Covid-19 restrictions the vignettes and descriptions of the artifacts were recorded and edited into a 90-minute program viewed on YouTube and Facebook on March 25th, 2021. The live version is available to be performed for groups. Contact us at [info@delawareohiohistory.org](mailto:info@delawareohiohistory.org) to schedule this program for your group or school. Program fees may apply.



*Curriculum Support Committee volunteer Mark Butler portraying Benjamin Franklin Thomas as part of the Crawford Band,*



*Curriculum Support Committee volunteer, Nancy Fleming reenacts Dolly Byxbe, wife of Delaware Founder, Moses Byxbe*



# The History of Blue Limestone Park

By Steve Schmitt

Blue Limestone Park is now a pleasant park tucked away in the City of Delaware. It has a long and interesting history to get to its 21st-century version. William Little, a very early resident of Delaware, purchased two farm lots in 1828 from Thomas Butler. Both lots were on the western edge of the town at approximately King Ave. (which was named Louis Ave. at the time) and extended from Oak Hill Ave. north to Central Ave. and west to approximately Gruber St. It was soon learned that the stone underneath was as valuable as the farmland.

In the 1830s, Little began operating a 12-acre tract as Blue Limestone Quarry in the Delaware Run valley. The blue limestone was used to build St. Peter's Episcopal Church on W. Winter St. in 1844. The first wedding held there was Little's daughter, Elizabeth Little to George W. Campbell. William and his wife Catherine built a home for George and Elizabeth, using his blue limestone which we know as the Delaware County Cultural Arts Center (The Arts Castle.) William died in 1848 and his land holdings were inherited by his wife, Catherine and their children.

Elizabeth's older brother George W. Little operated the quarry until the 1890s. During this time several significant buildings in Delaware were constructed using stone from the quarry: Merrick Hall (1873) and Gray Chapel (1893) on the OWU campus and Asbury Church (1890). The October 14, 1870, Delaware Gazette posted a notice advertising products available at the quarry that ranged from door and window sills to steps, and even cistern covers.

An 1880 Special Schedule of Manufacturers for Delaware City listed under quarries, provided many details about the business. "\$3500 capital invested, opening year 1860, cubic yards quarried 10,600, blue limestone (blue), rock is partially dressed at the quarry, principal market is Delaware, mode of transportation is wagon, steam power is used for drainage, number of employees is 20, working 10 hours per day during summer and 8 during winter". A skilled mechanic made \$2 per day and ordinary labor made \$1.10 per day.



*This image is excerpted from a Delaware County Historical Society 1890 print showing the quarry with the railroad trestle over the Delaware Run.*

Some notable events occurred after Elizabeth's son Frank Campbell began operating the quarry in the 1890s, including the replacement of the Hocking Valley Railroad trestle with an embankment in 1895. A stipulation that a tunnel, wide enough to allow a wagon to pass through was placed in the contract. In 1906, the Hocking Valley Railroad added a second track so the embankment was widened and additional land was transferred by Frank and his wife. During this time, Wain Hazelton, operated a 2.5-acre quarry on the west side of the railroad, which is now considered the "second quarry" at Blue Limestone although it doesn't appear he owned the land. CSX Railroad currently owns the site.



*Hazelton Quarry - west side after the trestle was removed in 1895*

*Photo - DCHS Collection*

*(Continued on next page)*

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The 1911 Sanborn Fire Map shows a stone sawing plant on the east side of the railroad and a stone crushing plant on the west side. There were tracks that connected them through the Delaware Run Tunnel at the quarry.

Around 1920, the operation of the quarry transitioned to the Samuel C. Kissner family, however, it was still owned by Frank Campbell and his family. In 1925, Samuel's son Russell purchased the northwest corner of the tract for a building materials business. The deed transfer stipulated that at the south end of the lot (the Delaware Run) Frank Campbell would be allowed to maintain and operate a track. A trestle and a short rail siding south of Central Ave. for unloading coal and other bulk materials for the Kissner business remained for many years.

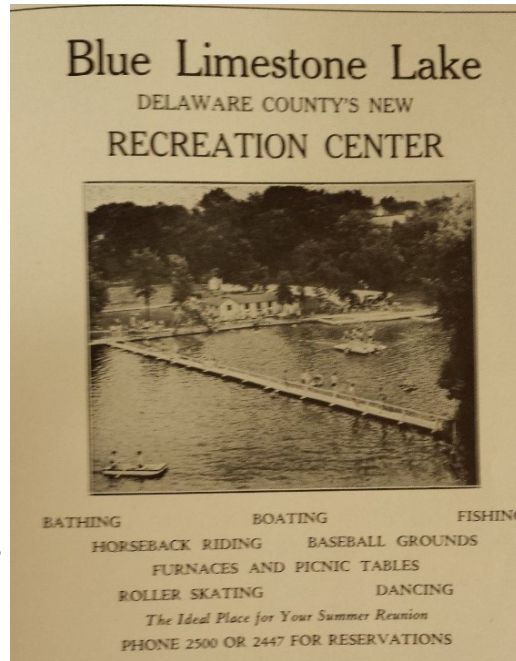
In 1930, Frank's two sons, Herman and Dudley transferred the land to the Delaware National Bank. It is not clear what was going on in the quarry during the depression, but in the early 1940s ownership transferred to businessman



Delaware Arts Castle made of Blue Limestone

William S. Tilton who developed the site into the Blue Limestone Lake private park, and a cottage was built on the bluff at the north end of the lake.

An ad was placed in the 1945 Willis High School and the Ohio Wesleyan yearbooks, which illustrated the change from business use to recreational use.



DCHS Collection

reational use. The Park was home to little league baseball and summer softball leagues for years.

Facebook postings about the history of the Park included wide-ranging memories which included chlorinating the swimming area by rowing a boat around the lake dragging a bag of chlorine behind, riding horses, and playing putt-putt golf.

In 1955, Tilton offered to sell the park to the City of Delaware for \$17,500. The city asked for donations to purchase the park and by January 1956, the Delaware Gazette reported that citizens and organizations contributed to the

purchase price. Donors included industry, OWU, individuals, organizations, and businesses. The deed transfer was recorded on May 4, 1956.

The community provided a huge volunteer effort to fix up the park. The Delaware Gazette reported that the Jaycees were taking the lead on the project and focusing on the ball diamond. The Sportsman Club was refurbishing the bleachers and the Fish and Game Club was involved with safety fencing and possibly a casting range. Over 30 businesses were listed along with their contributions of material and labor to the project. The city improved drainage in the park and a plaque was created to honor the donors, which can still be seen at the park.

Blue Limestone is always part of the discussion when the subject of hauntings in Delaware comes up. Visitors to the tunnel report disembodied voices coming out of nowhere. Unexplained sudden temperature drops and glowing shapes in the water have been recounted. One of the most circulated stories is of a train accident in 1927 which caused the death of many passengers who fell into the quarry with the cars. It was even suggested that there is still a train car at the bottom of the quarry lake, however further investigations seem to disprove that story.

In any case, folklore is combined with centuries of history and community support to create both the legend and the amazing beauty of Blue Limestone Park, for many generations to come.



## Another Summer...

*by Donna Marston Meyer*

Another Delaware County summer is over and always seems to speed by too quickly. I recall a time when summer seemed to deliciously drag on and days crept by much slower. Growing up in this wonderful Delaware community, summer was a magical time for my sisters and me. Long lazy days stretched out before us as we woke up each morning wondering what adventures the day would bring. After breakfast, we got on our bikes and only came back home for meals (or some injury that required a cool washcloth, band aid, and a kiss from our patient mother). The summer sun baked my skin brown but my younger sister, much fairer than I, usually only got a sunburn.

The summer of 1963 was not particularly notable, except to say that it was a time of innocence – Kennedy had not yet been assassinated, the country was “between wars”, and we rarely locked our front door at night. When I wasn’t selling Kool-Aid on a card table in front of our house (my mother was my best customer), my favorite summer destination was the Delaware Pool. Then, located behind the current Delaware County Fair office, it offered a cool respite from the intense heat, and some fun time with friends. Those of us who were lucky to have a season pass, proudly sported that status with a sewn patch on our swimming suit. I recall it was a round “D”, for “Delaware”. That meant we could strut through the pool entrance, without paying, and receive a knowing nod from the attendant.

Our great grandmother (who lived with us) purchased the pass for us each year. She said it was so we could get lots of good exercise, but I think it was to keep us from being underfoot all summer – a true win-win situation. We took swimming classes when we were younger. Progression was marked by fishy names - (minnows, tadpoles – or was it the other way around?), but at 10 years old, I was way beyond that. We scheduled eating our lunch each day so that we would meet the necessary 1 hour waiting period after eating, before we swam.



*1950-1960 Photo of the Delaware Pool behind what is now the Delaware County Fair office*

*Photo—DCHS Collection*

“You’ll get cramps” was usually the threat from my mother, if that appropriate time period was not observed. (I never knew anyone who got cramps from swimming too soon after eating.)

We carefully arranged our towels on the grass at the pool. Most kids had a favorite spot. Mine was by a shrub near the shallow end. I usually brought several quarters used to purchase cheese or peanut butter crackers from the vending machine. These were carefully stashed in a tennis shoe or rolled up in a corner of our towel. And we were off and running. The first stop was the 3 foot side.

We would hold hands as we jumped in the pool, (which usually warranted a whistle blow). We would squeal as we plunged in, the cold water rushed over our hot skin. The shock took our breath away but we quickly moved towards the deeper end – after all, at 10 years old, I was much too old to hang around with the younger kids and besides, most of our friends were in the 4 foot or even deeper. The adrenaline rush that came when we were finally brave enough to jump off the “low dive” or eventually off the “high dive” was huge and made us giddy with triumph.

One of our favorite things to do in the pool was playing the diving game, where we would throw in a coin, usually a quarter and someone would dare to go down to the bottom to fetch it. This required opening your eyes under water, not always easy to do, but the rarely-seen view of hopping or tangled legs

*(Continued next page)*



*(Another Summer continued)*

plus the wonder of muffled underwater sounds made it worth the risk of (supposed) drowning.

Other games we played were Mermaid, Frog, or swimming between each other's legs. My older sister taught me that last game, though technically it was not really a game since it had no winners, losers or rules. Occasionally, someone would close their legs and you were "stuck" until you could wriggle free.

Then there came a mid-August day, when it did not get as warm as usual. A cruel reminder that summer was about over. We usually still made it to the pool but the sun seemed dimmer and the wind was chillier. Our lips turned blue and our teeth chattered but we stretched out like

lizards on our towels, attempting to absorb the last few rays of sunshine before this wonderful time of year was actually over. A growing knot in my stomach was another reminder that school was about to start (though always AFTER Labor Day) as I tried to catch the remainder of summer in my hands and hang on to it for as long as possible.

1963 marked a small hometown kind of summer in Delaware (as did many summer seasons before and after), full of lightning bug catching, mosquito bites and scraped knees. I was blessed to grow up in such a wonderful community full of happy memories. And blessed to still be creating them.

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The following have made financial donations to the Delaware County Historical Society between 4/1/21 and 8/31/21. Their gifts help us create programs and exhibits, preserve our historic buildings, and pass along our rich heritage to future generations. **Learn how you can help us make a difference in a most meaningful way by creating a legacy gift, visit [www.delawareohiohistory.org](http://www.delawareohiohistory.org).**

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*DCHS Collection*

## Ralph Van Deman – The Father of American Military Intelligence

By Steve Shaw

Ralph Henry Van Deman was a Delaware native who stood large on the world stage as a military officer. He holds an unofficial title as “the father of American Military Intelligence”. He is credited with increasing the United States intelligence gathering capabilities, from the Spanish American War through World War I. Van Deman was born into a prominent Delaware family of John Dodridge Van Deman and Lydia Van Deman. He grew up on North Sandusky Street in Delaware.

Van Deman graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1886 and from Harvard in 1888. He started to follow his father’s profession of the law but instead he became a medical doctor. He enlisted in the United States Army to use his medical skills but after becoming an officer in the U.S Army he shifted his interests to military intelligence in 1891. This was the beginning of

what was to be his life’s work. A storied career was to take him all over the world and earn him many honors.

At the time, there was no formal information gathering system about potential foreign adversaries in the United States Military. Van Deman became a proponent of establishing an intelligence gathering capability. By the beginning of the Spanish American War, he was considered too valuable to be in the field and began working in the Military Information Division (MID) in Washington D.C. and his first assignment was in the mapping section. In 1899, he was sent to the Philippines and began to put his skills to work in the field. He identified that the Japanese were actively gathering information in the Philippines and would be a growing regional security threat. He was instrumental in foiling a local guerilla plot to assassinate General Arthur McArthur (father of General Douglas McArthur.)

In 1904, he was selected to be one of nine officers for the initial Army War College along with General Jack Pershing. After graduation in 1906, he was sent on a covert mission to China to reconnoiter and map lines of communication and railroads around Peking. He returned to Washington in 1907 to become the Chief of the Mapping Section in the Second Division of the new General Staff in Washington D.C. and was assigned to report information on the Japanese directly to President Theodore Roosevelt’s White House. During that year, politics led to a deemphasis on military funding and as a consequence, MID was defunded.

Van Deman lobbied various agencies to begin developing a system of information gathering through Washington’s back channels. His lobbying persistence led to the support to establish a Military Intelligence Section (MIS) for which Congress provided \$1 million dollars in funding. He developed a command structure that include divisions for positive information gathering, providing negative intelligence and denying intelligence to the enemy. A principal espoused by him was “that information must be actively sought, traced out and proved”.

After the 1917 Declaration of War that took the country into World War I, Van Deman’s new unit had the organizational ability to begin gathering useful information to head the war effort. Some examples sound like cliches from spy novels. Thwarting sabotage on military plants, finding invisible ink messages in spies clothing and tracking radio messages being sent out through Mexico. A lieutenant in one of the set up a code breaking group credited with cracking German codes - an important piece to aid the war effort.

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*French Legion of Honor Medal*

In June of 1918, now Lieutenant Colonel Van Deman received orders from General Pershing to come to the European War theatre. There, Van Deman spent time coordinating intelligence efforts with the British and French, making an information sharing effort with operatives in neutral Switzerland. After the November 11, 1918, Armistice there were still standing armies in Europe, and Van Deman became responsible for security and counter espionage for the American Peace Commission. He received the French Legion of Honor Medal for his wartime service in Europe.

Between the World Wars, Ralph Van Deman worked as a civilian gathering counterespionage information for Army Intelligence Naval Intelligence, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In March 1920, he returned to the army and commanded the 31st Infantry in the Philippines. He also spent three months on detached service with the British Army in India. He returned to the US and served in several tours with the National Guard. He worked in the Washington headquarters of the Militia Bureau, then served as an instructor with the 159th Infantry Brigade in Berkeley, California.



*Unveiling of the plaque at the Army Intelligence Center honoring Van Deman for his service. Photo source—Army.mil*

As a Brigadier-General he commanded the 6th Infantry Brigade at Fort Rosecrans, San Diego, California beginning in 1927. He was promoted to Major-General in May 1929, and commanded the 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Lewis, Washington. He retired in September 1929 after 38 years of service. After retiring, he used the contacts he had established during World War I in the American Protective League to privately compile files on suspected subversives and foreign agents. In December of 1941, Van Deman became an adviser on intelligence to the War Department. No details of the scope of his wartime service are openly available. For those

services he received the Legion of Merit for "activities of highest importance for having materially assisted the war effort". Notable among his recommendations was a passionate defense of Japanese-American citizens to President Roosevelt stating he didn't think they were a threat, however, it was ignored (leading to the Japanese American internment).

He died in 1952 and is buried in San Diego. After his death he continued to receive recognition for his lifetime of work. In 1988, he was honored by being an initial member of the Military Intelligence Hall of Fame and in 1992, he was memorialized by having the Eastgate of the U.S. Army Intelligence Center named after him.

## Donors to the Delaware County Historical Society Collection

A big thank you to the recent donors to our collection. Your generous gifts of artifacts and photos help make the past tangible by adding to our displays and research. We are forever grateful.

DCHC Collection Donors April 2021 – August 2021

Pam Allen  
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## Local Clock Repairman Donates His Services

Dan Grumbling of Dan's Clock Repair in Powell, Ohio cleaned and restored the works of the 1758 Starr Tall Clock that is showcased in the Meeker Homestead Museum. Dan commented what remarkable good condition the 263-year-old clock was in. He did his work completely

without charge. Please support vendors who are willing to give money or services to the Historical Society.



### **Snyder/Starr Tall Case Clock**

Donated to the Society by Edward Starr. Purchased by Aaron Snyder, (Great, Great Uncle of Edward Starr) in Germantown, PA, in 1758. Made by Augustine Neisser. Case is Mahogany in the style of Chippendale.

Augustine Neisser came to Georgia in the second immigration of the Moravians from Saxony, in 1736, with his brother George. The Moravians left Georgia soon afterward, most of them settling in Pennsylvania. Augustine Neisser came to Germantown, Pennsylvania. He was born in 1717, in Moravia, and died in Germantown in 1780. While living in Germantown he became widely known as a clockmaker. In 1747, he made a steeple clock for the Moravian Church in Bethlehem, the works of which were still in operation in 1934. There is a fine Neisser clock in the museum of Germantown Historical Society.





# Let Us Host Your Holiday Party!



**Holidays...**

Times for getting together to celebrate the season. So many family, company and church gatherings dot our calendars. If you're hosting, your next holiday party will be truly memorable

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[www.BarnAtStratford.org](http://www.BarnAtStratford.org)  
**Ph: 844-369-2276**

The Barn at Stratford is owned and operated by the Delaware County Historical Society. All proceeds from events benefit historical preservation and education in Delaware County.

## Upcoming Events

### Nash and Meeker Museums

Tours of both museums are available by appointment, preferably on Sundays and Wednesdays from 10 am -4 pm. We are requesting at least a 3-day notice. Museum tours may be scheduled by emailing [info@delawareohiohistory.org](mailto:info@delawareohiohistory.org). Under the current situation, we request all visitors to wear masks. This is to ensure the safety of our docents and guests.

### Programs

At the time of this writing, our programs are being held, once again, in person. We are requesting masks be worn at indoor programs. Reservations for these programs may be made at Eventbrite or by following the link on our website.

\* Young and Old Rutherford B. Hayes Walking Tour  
Reenacted by Devon Hardwick and Bill Rietz, Society Volunteers  
Sunday, October 3 at 1pm, 2:30pm, and 4pm

Ghost Towns and Stories in Delaware County  
Presented by Rick Helwig, Director of the Center for Ghost Town Research in Ohio  
Tuesday, October 19 at 7pm at the Barn at Stratford, 2690 Stratford Road in Delaware

Delaware County Historical Society Annual Meeting: Frank Packard Homes in Delaware  
Presented by Barbara Powers, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer and Architectural Historian at the Ohio History Connection  
Wednesday, November 17 at 7pm at the Barn at Stratford, 2690 Stratford Road in Delaware

\* Ticketed event

Check our website for more information or call Donna Meyer at 740-369-38341 ext. 3

**Delaware County Fair** - Come see us in the Merchants Building as we celebrate the 75th (+1) anniversary of the running of the Little Brown Jug. Visitors will see an illustrated history in book form, a nine-minute video produced by Spectrum News Ohio called "The Jug is It!" which examines the importance of the Little Brown Jug to the county, and an exhibit of artifacts associated with the race including the silks of driver/trainer "Curly" Smart who won the first Little Brown Jug race.

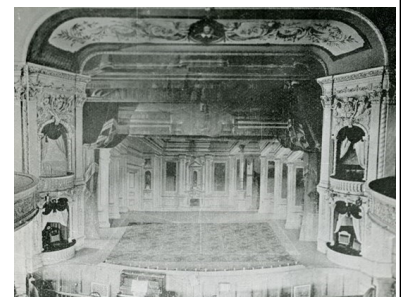


### "That's Entertainment!"

On August 18, the Delaware County Historical Society held our first live program this year. Titled "That's Entertainment!" and presented by volunteer Benny Shoults, this well attended program presented the audience with information about the 19th Century Opera Houses in the City of Delaware.

The presentation covered a time from 1879 to 1934, and highlighted the once grand City

Opera House—a 1,050-seat auditorium which graced the second floor of the City Hall building. It was the city's social center for graduations and theatrical productions. Here, also, John Philip Sousa led his band in "Stars and Stripes Forever." Other celebrities who appeared here included Mark Twain, William McKinley, temperance advocate Carrie Nation, statesman William Jennings Bryan, Hollywood director Vincente Minnelli, Ben Hur author General Lew Wallace, and abolitionist Henry Ward Beecher.



Interior of the 1,050 seat City Opera House which was destroyed by fire in 1934 and replaced with the current City Hall building



## *More Ways To Help The Society*



The Society has a critical need for volunteers! Our opportunities provide social distancing, sanitization, and facemask safety as well as flexible hours for any schedule.

### **Communication Committee volunteer**

Posting on social media, writing and sending press releases, creating and writing newsletters, and marketing. Time commitment - 3 to 5 hours per week.

**Office Volunteer** - Working in an office setting on a variety of projects. Time commitment - about 6 hours per week.

**Gardening Volunteer** - Adopt a Garden at the Meeker Homestead. Schedule is flexible. Hours - about 4 per week, depending on the size of the bed.

**Museum Docent** - we have a need for docents at both the Meeker Homestead and Nash House Museums. Training and flexible schedules are provided.

### **We also need members for these committees:**

Buildings and Grounds, Education, Museums & Exhibits, Collections, Curriculum, Historic Preservation, Membership, special events, and Resource Creation.

We have the perfect opportunity for every schedule, interest and experience!

To find out how you can serve, contact Karen Cowan at [volunteer@delawareohiohistory.org](mailto:volunteer@delawareohiohistory.org).

## **Support the Society for FREE While You Shop**

There are 2 ways:

### **Kroger**

Kroger is committed to helping our organization grow and prosper by donating funds through Kroger Community Rewards. All you have to do is shop at Kroger and swipe your Plus Card! The only catch is you have to remember to re-enroll each year in May, but it is easy to do so:



1. Visit <https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow/>
2. Click the View Details button under "I'm a Customer"
3. Login to your Kroger account (create a new account or reset your password if necessary)
4. Use code 84793 to select the Delaware County Historical Society as your rewards organization

### **AmazonSmile**

When you shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to the Delaware County Historical Society for any product marked "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on the product detail page. You use your same Amazon account, and your shopping cart and other account settings are also the same.



On your first visit to AmazonSmile, you need to select the Delaware County Historical Society as your charitable organization before you begin shopping. We are listed as "Delaware CO Historical Society". Amazon will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make will result in a donation.

### **We want your COVID-19 stories**

During this unprecedented time, we are making history that will be studied for years to come. Since our mission is to preserve and educate about our history, we want to preserve the stories of the pandemic and how it affects our life. If you would like to share your experience, go to our website at [www.delawareohiohistory.org](http://www.delawareohiohistory.org) for more details.

Delaware County  
Historical Society

2690 Stratford Road  
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Phone: 740-369-3831  
Email: [info@delawareohiohistory.org](mailto:info@delawareohiohistory.org)  
[www.delawareohiohistory.org](http://www.delawareohiohistory.org)

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Our Heritage*

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Type**

Adult Membership (Individual)	\$25	_____	Adult Membership (Household)	\$50	_____
Senior Membership (60+ yrs)	\$20	_____	Senior Membership (Household)	\$40	_____
Life Membership (Individual)	\$300	_____	Life Membership (Household)	\$500	_____
Student Membership	\$5	_____	Business/Corporation	\$50	_____

Newsletter preference (circle): Printed E-mail Both

For Student Membership, name of your school: \_\_\_\_\_

In addition to your membership noted above, please consider an additional gift to the Society:

\$100.00 \_\_\_\_\_ \$250.00 \_\_\_\_\_ \$500.00 \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

For/In Honor or Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to Delaware County Historical Society and mail to 2690 Stratford Road, Delaware OH 43015