

Newspaper
1993

Due to the sudden death of Curator Elizabeth Denney, the museum was closed during the summer of 1992. I began my duties as curator/administrator after Labor Day. My first duty was to organize the membership drive. The letter was written and mailed out with membership blanks and return envelopes included. The membership mailing list was put on the computer including addresses and years of membership. We have 119 members on the computer.

This past year's membership drive was held in September because it was already 15 months late. At the Annual Meeting May 25, 1993, the Board of Trustees elected to move the time for the yearly memberships back to June 1 to May 31 to comply with the BY-Laws.

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Museum hours during the fall were 1:00 to 5:00 in an effort to draw visitors lost during the hiatus. The newspapers gave exceptional coverage to the change of curators. An excellent core group of volunteers gave of their time and in some cases their funds to assist with putting the museum back in working order. Shelves were moved, reorganized and cleared to develop an archives room where the storage room had been. 17 bulbs were replaced in the overhead lights, and the bulbs and eventually the light sensor in the outside sign were replaced. Weeds and leaves were removed from the entrance landscaping. Pots of roadside dried plants were arranged and placed in the museum. A spinning wheel repairman came to the museum and gave estimates and histories of wheels belonging to the museum and others belonging to visitors. The wheels and yarn winder belonging to the museum were taken to Monroe, Michigan, and put into working order. Finally, the museum was decorated for the Christmas season with an indoor tree decorated with old ornaments and ribbons, an outdoor tree 15 feet tall decorated with edibles for the birds, and a wreath on the entrance. The newspapers were once again generous with publicity about the Christmas decorations. Unfortunately, visitors were few.

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After the Christmas Holidays the museum went to winter hours of 2:00 to 4:00 Tues., Wed., and Thurs. Visitors continued to be sparse, but with the help of our hard-working volunteers the museum has been cleaned and the shelves reorganized. The Indian collection has been entirely reworked and although not completely finished, it has attracted the attention of nearly every visitor. The armory has been re-labeled and all the guns assigned values. The rock collection is in the process of being reworked to

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represent Ottawa County and Ohio. Half the case has been reorganized with many specimens of rock stored in baggies for the present. The rest of the case will require the help of a geologist whom I have yet to enlist.

The archives have drawn a few researchers. Donations of books have given the archives publicity. Placement of the First Families of Ottawa County materials here has further drawn researchers. I am continuing to encourage county residents with written genealogies and histories to share them with the museum.

We have resurrected many of the tools donated to the museum and are trying to find a way to display them. Shelves have been added to the East Room wall, but we are still working on a safe method of display above the glass cases. Vibration from passing trains does move unanchored items.

For the coming year there are plans to rebuild the Waterworks Fountain which was donated to the museum by Mr. and Mrs. Don Stinchcomb by Bernice Gates and Paul Rhiel. It is deteriorated beyond containing water, so plans are underway to plant both the fountain and the surrounding area with material which will simulate water.

Further efforts must be made to attract the schools. Only members of the excellerated studies have come in to research projects. No field trips were requested from any county school. There were several visits from cub scout dens, brownie scouts, the GED class from St. John's Port Clinton, and various clubs. I assisted with arrangements for a busload of 44 children from Caledonia, Ohio, who visited the Johnson's Island Cemetary between visits to the Marblehead Lighthouse and Put-In-Bay. I hope that in the coming year we can attract more county interest in its own history. I sent out material to all the high schools concerning a county history competition, but received no response.

I have secured a grant application from The Ottawa County Visitors Bureau with which I hope to be able to have a brochure printed that will attract visitors to all the museums of Ottawa County in 1994. In the meantime, I will

have a flier out before July 1st to be passed out locally and to be given to visitors.

The Kiwanis Club of Port Clinton has sent a final contract for an arrangement with the museum to locate their xerox machine in the museum at the cost to the museum of the warranty contract. A charge of .25 per copy will be levied to off-set part of the expense.

Following Memorial Day Weekend, the Museum will be open Mon. through Fri. from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm, and Sat. 12:00 to 4:00 except holidays through Labor Day Weekend. I hope this will prove to be an attraction for tourists, even though there is no brochure so far. If it becomes a financial necessity, I would suggest that the museum be closed for the non-tourist months with special hours by arrangement.

I would like to thank Lock and Jane Zeis for their labors in washing all the windows on the museum - a very difficult job; Pat Cook and Sue Pope for cleaning and re-labeling the display cases; Randy Worthington for cleaning out the maintenance room and many trips to LaCarne to reorganize our materials; Sam Miller for installing shelving in the East Room; Don and Joanne Rhodes for reorganizing the Indian artifacts; Mr. and Mrs. Earl Wiseman for reviewing and appraising the coin collection; Henry Jacoby and Scott Reynolds for reviewing and appraising the gun collection; Elbert Gill and Mark Belknap for putting the indoor and outdoor lighting back into working order; Alice Holly for holding painting days; Pat Cook for holding spinning nights, and Jean Solam, Elaine Petersen and Eva Jean Petersen for clerical work. On our very limited budget, it is the volunteers who make this a living museum. Several new volunteers have joined their ranks for the summertime.

I'm sure all of you who are past members of the Ottawa County Historical Museum are aware that our governing body, responsible to you for the use of the funds which you have contributed, is the Port Clinton Area Heritage Foundation. The Foundation was established when the City of Port Clinton, founders of the museum, no longer had safe and secure space to house the artifacts collected over 28 years. For five years they had been housed in the basement of the City Hall and many items had been damaged, destroyed, or had disappeared. When the Belknap Building became available,

the Foundation incorporated and secured a non-profit status, and with your generous help, raised the funds to pay off the building with a nest egg left over to support the museum in lean times and begin the funding of the addition to be built to the west of the present structure. According to the Foundation constitution, the museum will not be supported by, and thus controlled by, any political organization. Since 1980, the museum has had to rely on you for all expenses - curator and overhead - that were previously paid by the City of Port Clinton. Your memberships, memorials, donations, and bequests are the sole support of the Ottawa County Historical Museum. You are welcome to attend any meeting of the Board of Trustees held on the second Tuesday of every other month beginning with the Annual Meeting held in May.

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I would like to give special thanks to all those people who designated the Port Clinton Area Heritage Foundation as the recipient of memorial funds. At the time of loss, it is difficult to make those decisions and the museum doesn't necessarily come to mind. I was surprised to learn that in the last two years memorial donations have accounted for one-third of the museum's income.

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Many thanks to the following people who donated items to the museum during the past year:

Carl Bino	Books and Photos
Mrs. Omar Meyer	Books
Helen Wedekind	Books and Plate
Vanda Wahlers	Photo of Fern Wendling
Virginia Turner	Wicker Sewing Basket
Robert Englebeck	Meat Inspection Stamp-Danbury
Ruth Steiner	Cookbook, Port Clinton 1900
William Miller Heins	Doll Bed and Rocker
	David McRitchie materials
	Index of Miller Papers at B.G.
Russell Denney	File of Port Clinton Negatives
Mrs. Charles Anderson	Coin Silver Spoons-Elmore

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The Ottawa County Historical Museum wishes to represent the families and history of all of Ottawa County. Genealogies, memoirs, historical papers, and historically significant items are enthusiastically welcomed!

It has recently been brought to my attention that the fishing industry of Ottawa County is woefully under-represented in the museum. If anyone has items they might consider donating, please call me. We don't have

room to display large items until the addition is built, but
it is never too early to plan and secure them.

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