

Suffield Historical Society

Volume 3 FALL 2009

Your Family Histories are the History of Suffield

Suffield Heritage Sentinel

Speaker Series Begins Sept 21st

September 21st - The Peopling of America and Their Weapon of Mass Destruction will be the topic of **Skeeter Kish**, archeologist and author as the kick-off for the Suffield Historical Society Speaker Series. Kish will bring his vast knowledge of the first Americans and share fascinating aspects of their life with us.

October 19th - Jeff Kisamore, Suffield resident and owner of **Back to Nature Taxidermy**, will provide a hands on lesson in mounting a deer head for the October 19th program. Jeff, an avid hunter and now a well-known taxidermist, has a growing business doing excellent work in displaying hunters' trophies.

November 16th - John Bozick will speak on "Building the Railroads". His topic will focus on the AC&Y railroad.

Meetings at 6:15 with program at 7:00 pm.

Town Hall Memories

by Pat Mettle

On the southwest corner of St. Rt. 43 and Waterloo Road stands one of the last historic buildings of Suffield, the Town Hall. It was built in 1908 by Charles Pero of Conley Road, owner of a saw mill. Pero used local maple and oak for its construction.

In 1951, the township hired Christensen Construction of Kent to dig out a basement, and Harry Miller provided the backhoe. Bob Clark, a Christensen's employee, was worried that the young operator would bump the edge of the building causing it to fall off the original seven supports, but all went well and as a result, a new kitchen and restrooms were added. Soon a heating system was also installed.

The Town Hall became the community center with parties, community dinners, and many square dances. Stan Shanafelt recalls the wood floor shaking up and down as the dancers stomped the floor with their "happy feet".

I passed by the building for many years going to Suffield School from 1947 - 1960, but never took notice of the character of the old building until high school. We were given it to use as a community teen dance center. We jitterbugged and be bopped to rock 'n roll music and slow danced to *Earth Angel* and *Sixteen Candles*.

Life marched on, working, going to college, getting married, raising children, but through it all, our Town Hall remained a constant. The siren of top of the Hall was the signal that called the firemen, warned of an emergency, and for many Suffield residents, told us that it was lunchtime, as the siren went off daily at noon. I liked walking upstairs, the dark wood on the walls and the plaques listing our war veterans. Walk across the maple wood floor that creaks under your feet as your shoes echo your steps. The stage at the south end looks like it

belongs to an old theatre. My wedding reception was held there in September of 1960 with a large gathering of family members with lots of food and music. I have been to many gatherings there since then. It serves Suffield well. In an age when old often means useless, let us celebrate our Town Hall and the warmth it generates. Be thankful it is still standing as a tribute to our heritage and as an integral part of our community. It belongs to us.

Suffield Historical Society Gives a Special

Thank You To

- *the **Suffield League** for a great music festival!
- *the **Lion's Club** and the **Field Falcon** teams for their help!
- *the **Kreiner** families for putting together the many children's games!
- *for **all** the volunteers and organizations who helped make the festival a success!

New Acquisition on Display

Thanks to the **Brimfield Historical Society/Kelso House**, our group has been given a loom that is now housed in our museum. Complete with weaving materials, it is an item from another period in history that gives us insight into our past. Thank you, **Brimfield**, for helping us enlarge our collection.



In Memoriam

The Suffield Historical Society extends its deepest sympathies to the families of these residents who recently passed away.

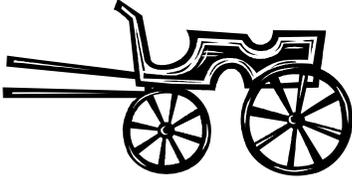
Ed Marshall
Johnny May
Bill Bednar
Doug Huth
Howard Arnette
Leslie Sunday

Did You Know...?

- Owen and Hiram Shanafelt were paid \$5.00 a day to clear the land with teams of horses for the blimp hangar and landing field?
- Quail were so plentiful near Bob Clark's farm that he was able to stalk them and once threw his coat over five at one time?
- The cross that sat on top of the old United Church of Christ is buried in the floor of the current sanctuary?

Suffield Historical Society Museum is open by appointment only.
Call Jo Demboski at 330-628-3695

Lutztown Tales



Lutztown refers to that area of Suffield located at the intersection of Martin and Randolph roads, so named because of the many Lutzes who lived there. Many stories of that area and the people who lived there were recorded by Fred Lutz who was born in 1892 and died in 1974. Frank Lawrence edited them and we'd like to share one with you.

"Uncle Ez (Ezra) Lutz was always jolly, in spite of the many pranks youngsters played on him. He had an old top buggy he used to drive to town. He regularly parked it in the orchard behind his barn – at least it was there part of the time – when it wasn't in Saal's Lane, Vince Harter's or Frank Kelso's meadow, Pulaski Ticknor's front yard or in Amos Saxe's orchard. It was a common sight for the neighbors to see Uncle Ez coming home at night from work in the fields with the buggy hitched behind his wagon. And they'd comment: "I guess kids must have been coasting downhill in Ez's buggy again." But none of the boys seemed to know what their parents were talking about. One morning after Halloween, he spied his buggy on top of District No. 9 schoolhouse."

Reminds me of some of the tricks Suffield students used to do at the old school. Remember?

Grotto at St. Joe's

You don't have to travel to Lourdes, France to see the world famous Grotto. St. Joseph's has an exact duplicate behind their church. In 1927 groundbreaking took place which turned an old gravel pit into a replica of the original Grotto in France. The initial cost was \$12,000 and at the dedication a piece of rock from Lourdes was placed into the wall.

Randolph Historical Speaker

The United States Constitution – 1791 – will be the topic of the Randolph Historical Society which meets on September 22nd at the Randolph Town Hall at 7:30 pm.

Curator's Corner

The last few years have brought many changes here in our new home at the "original" fire station. Many items of historical interest have been acquired through donations of many of our citizens and especially senior citizens. Many have items of interest that their families do not want and could be placed in the care of the STHS to serve the heritage of the Suffield community. We thank them profusely for their donations. To complement these donations, we are working on developing history through genealogy of many of the early families in Suffield. In addition to the 1850 Census of Suffield through 1930, we have been adding information from existing family histories and information provided by living senior citizens. If you have or know some who has written family history data and would be willing like to share it with us, please contact me at 330-628-4435. **Bob Longbottom, Curator**

Small Town Highlights

Members of the Suffield Historical Society relish discussions on the advantages of living in a small town. Suffield is unique. We offer that strong community feeling, but are located in an area that has easy access to "big city" amenities. Much of Suffield still can be classified as rural, a reason why many choose to live and raise their families here. Come join us as we share our thoughts on small town life and our memories of growing up in Suffield.

3rd Annual Suffield School Gathering

With Bill Holland continuing his stint as Master of Ceremonies, about 175 former Suffield

students and guests will enjoy an evening of food and reconnections at the Hartville Kitchen. Former teachers Mary Baker, Eugene Roliff and Walt Evans will be recognized along with honoring the memory of Ed Marshall who passed away recently. The class of 1959 will be highlighted for their 50th year. Thanks to Pat Mettle and Pauline Persons for planning this event.

JUST A REMINDER... ..

If your nose is close to the grindstone rough
And you hold it down there long enough,
In time you'll say there's no such thing
As brooks that bubble and birds that sing.
These three will all your world compose
Just you, the stone, and your darned old nose!



The **Suffield Historical Society** does not meet in December, but we encourage all of the families to attend the **Suffield Leagues** annual arrival of Santa Claus on Dec. 13th. It is an exciting event, well organized, and fun for all! We hope that all your holidays are happy, healthy and joyous!



Do you have a story about Suffield history or your family history that you would like to share in our next newsletter? Send it to Judy Calcei, 2020 May Road, Suffield, Ohio by November 15th. Please include a phone number or email. Writings may have to be edited to fit the newsletter.

Do you remember....

- ✓ sock hops and bobby sox?
- ✓ 16mm films always breaking?
- ✓ Friday afternoon football games?
- ✓ the steps going to Mr. Nelson's office?
- ✓ cake walks and chicken dinners?
- ✓ Red rover, Red rover on the play ground?
- ✓ paper drives?
- ✓ his and her matching shirts?
- ✓ decorating the gym with tons of crepe paper for homecoming and the prom?