

# HALLMARKS

Newsletter of The Marion County Historical Society

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**ONE  
NIGHT  
ONLY**

## NATIVE AMERICAN COLLECTIONS ON VIEW

The Society's next membership meeting will be held at the home of Willis and Gwen Thomas on Tuesday, July 30, at 7:30 PM. The Thomases will host an open house and garden, showcasing Willis's impressive collection of Native American artifacts and the rock gardens he has created. MCHS members will have time to view the displays on their own. A brief program will begin at 8:15.

The Thomas home is located 1010 Forest Hill Drive (off Barks Road) in Marion.

## PRAIRIE TOUR IS AUGUST 4

by *Trella H. Romine*

The annual tour of the Claridon Prairie will be held on Sunday, August 4 starting at 1:00 P.M. On hand will be Kensel Clutter, Robert Harter, and Trella Romine to interpret the prairie species growing along the one-mile strip between the railroad tracks and County Road 114 – the old Marion-Galion Road.

Parking is near the Claridon Prairie marker at the railroad tracks and State Route 98 just north of the intersection with State Route 309. Since the road paralleling the prairie is little used it is ideal for walking or driving to view the over 125 species of plants growing there –over 50 of them identified as prairie specific. Even with the dry season visitors will find blooming, among others, Sullivant's and butterfly milkweed, prairie dock, blazing star, flowering spurge, black-eyed Susan, bergamot, partridge pea, sneezeweed, pale lobelia, and Virginia mountain mint.



*Virginia mountain mint*

This is a small remnant of the vast Sandusky Plains that covered northern Marion County and southern Crawford and Wyandot Counties at the time of settlement about 1820. Kensel Clutter has created a map of the Sandusky Plains, along with a booklet explaining how the map was created. This will be available to purchase during the tour.

The tour and map are projects of the Marion County Historical Society Prairie Committee.

## SUMMER INTERNS SERVE MCHS

The Marion County Historical Society has received a grant from the Ohio Humanities Council to fund the summer internship of Lauren Woodruff, a student at Ohio Wesleyan University. Lauren is working full time, learning about many aspects of museum work, including collections registration and storage, exhibit preparation, and historical research. Her internship is supervised by Jane Rupp, MCHS Director, and J. D. Britton of the Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museums.

Jason Nickler, a history major at The Ohio State University at Marion, is working at MCHS two mornings per week as part of the university's Cooperative Education and Internship Program. He is conducting historical research, preparing traveling exhibitions, and assisting with outreach programs.



OHIO  
HUMANITIES  
COUNCIL

## CABIN FEVER CRUISE-IN

by Keith Kohler

Saturday, August 24 is slated as the date for the Cabin Fever Cruise-In at the Marion County Fairgrounds. We have combined efforts with the Central Ohio 4 x 4 Club in an attempt to raise money for the Wilhelm/Seiter log cabin restoration project. A full day of family fun and is being planned. The cruise-in will be open to the public from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Registration for participating vehicles will begin at 9:00 AM.

Preservation of the cabin is critical to our continuing efforts as a society to hand down to future generations our heritage of prairie ways and pioneer life. It is in this spirit that we are asking volunteers to assist on August 24 with the many tasks required to put together a fundraiser of this magnitude. Please call Heritage Hall (740/387-4255) or Keith Kohler (740/287-1776) to volunteer. Let's make this fundraiser a great success and save our cabin!

## OHIO MEMORY PROJECT

The Marion County Historical Society is one of 250 Ohio organizations that have contributed images of historical documents and artifacts for the Ohio Memory Online Scrapbook. More than a century of Ohio history can be found in the scrapbook, located online at <http://www.ohiomemory.org/>.

The Ohio Memory Online Scrapbook is a project coordinated by the Ohio Historical Society that presents online items dating from prehistory to 1902, including letters, diaries, historical photographs, clothing, furniture, prehistoric artifacts, and government records. The collections document important milestones in history and offer glimpses into the everyday lives of past generations of Ohioans.

Visitors to the electronic scrapbook can search for specific information by subject, contributing organization, and geographic area. In addition, the scrapbook is organized into five subject categories.

Items provided by MCHS include an 1888 catalog from The Marion Steam Shovel Company, a wood cradle brought to Marion County in the 1840s by the Brockelsby family, a silk and velvet crazy quilt made by Rosa Ellen Earnest Brown, a patent issued to Henry Barnhart and Edward Huber in 1883, and Huber Manufacturing Company catalogs.

The Ohio Memory Project is a collaborative effort involving the Ohio Historical Society, Ohio Public Library Information Network, OhioLINK, Ohio Library Council and Information Network for Ohio Schools, and the Ohio Bicentennial Commission.

## "HARVESTING THE PRAIRIE" OPENS AT MCHS MUSEUM

The latest in MCHS's series of Township Heritage Project exhibitions is on view through October 31 at The Marion County Historical Society Museum. "Harvesting the Prairie: Big Island, Grand Prairie, and Salt Rock Townships" opens with a description of the prairie which covered much of these townships prior to the arrival of Euroamerican settlers. It includes a brief overview of the history of the Wyandot and Delaware tribes. This section of the exhibition features artifacts on loan from the Wyandot County Museum. Other themes include pioneer life, the development of each of the townships, the Village of Morral, and hybrid seed corn production in Marion County. Amusing stories of pioneer days are a special feature of the exhibit.



On Saturday, August 3, a traveling "mini-exhibition" dealing with the history of Morral will be on view at the Morral Fire Station as part of the village's 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Firemen's Festival.

Approximately 35 individuals have contributed in some way to the creation of the exhibition. Some provided oral or written histories, some loaned photographs or artifacts, and others assisted with research and exhibit preparation.

The Marion County Township Heritage Project, an Ohio Bicentennial Project, is now in its fourth year. Preliminary work has already begun for the final installment of the project, focusing on Scott, Tully, and Claridon Townships. If you or someone you know has information, photographs, or artifacts that could be shared, please contact Jane Rupp at the MCHS office.

**THANKS to everyone who helped  
at the Wilhelm/Seiter log cabin  
during the Steam and Gas Engine  
Show and Marion County Fair, in-  
cluding all who contributed to our  
bake sales.**

**Your efforts helped us raise more  
than \$1,300.00 for log cabin  
restoration!**

## A BLAST FROM THE PAST

by Jan Augenstein

If you had been passing by the *Blast from the Past* sessions for 8 to 12 year olds this summer you would have seen and heard some excited and interested kids learning about history and having fun while doing it! With the sponsorship of Rotary and the help of many volunteers, Carol Robinson, Nancy Whitaker, and Jan Augenstein are coordinating five sessions of hands-on history for kids. Themes include Ohio Indians, the Palace Theatre, the Marion Cemetery, the Underground Railroad, and Ohio weather.

The enthusiasm of the kids is rewarding and so is the fact that so many parents and grandparents want to stay for the sessions because they want to learn too!

We are serving around fifty children and parents a week, doubling our attendance from last year. The program runs from the preview session on July 3 at the log cabin during the fair through the five regular programs from July 11 through August 8 each Thursday with a morning and afternoon session being offered.

It is so enjoyable for all of us helping with the presentations to see kids who can hardly wait to come back the next week because they've discovered history can be fun!

*Editor's note: MCHS recently received financial support from the Junior Service Guild which will enable the Education Committee to offer selected Blast from the Past programs in area schools during the 2002-2003 school year. Teachers should contact the MCHS office for details.*



## MCHS TO HOST SMITHSONIAN EXHIBITION

The MCHS Museum is one of eight venues in Ohio selected to host the Smithsonian Institution's Museum on Main Street exhibition, "Yesterday's Tomorrows: Past Visions of America's Future," in spring, 2003. The exhibition's Ohio tour is coordinated by the Ohio Humanities Council.



The exhibition uses popular culture objects such as toys, books, movie stills, World's Fair memorabilia, car designs, advertisements, and architectural models to examine ways in which Americans have envisioned the future.

MCHS will collaborate with local organizations to provide supplementary programming during the exhibition's run. If you would like to help with planning or fundraising for this very special event, please contact Jane Rupp at the MCHS office.

## MCHS AWARDED GRANT FOR HISTORIC MARKER

Thanks to a grant from the Longaberger Legacy Initiative of the Ohio Bicentennial Commission and support from area businesses, The Marion County Historical Society will erect an Ohio Bicentennial Historic Marker in Waldo to commemorate General William Henry Harrison's Military Road.

A portion of the marker text reads as follows:

*The first road through Marion County followed the Scioto Trail of the Native Americans. During the War of 1812, the troops of General William Henry Harrison's Army of the Northwest traveled this road en route to Fort Meigs and the British fort at Detroit, using it to transport supplies to the army and to the chain of forts and blockhouses that protected the road. After the American victory, this area was opened for settlement by the 1817 Treaty of the Maumee Rapids, and soldiers who discovered the area while traveling the Military Road were among the first settlers.*

The Society thanks the businesses that provided financial support for the erection of the marker: Central Ohio Farmers' Co-op, Delmar Distributing, Groll Furniture Company, and Ohioagro, Inc.

Watch for information about the dedication ceremony for this new marker.

## TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME

Marion County Children Services is celebrating its centennial this year. It dates its origin to the opening of the Marion County Children's Home, whose construction was funded by Benjamin Waddell.

On Saturday, August 10, from 1:00 to 5:00 PM, Children Services will host its Centennial Day at its headquarters, 1680 Marion-Waldo Road, Marion. The celebration will include a free ice cream social, rededication of Children Services, family entertainment, tours of Waddell Village, genealogical information from the Marion Area Genealogy Society, and children's games and crafts. A mini-exhibit, "Marion, 1900-1910," and vintage toys and games will be provided by MCHS.

Keith Kohler has organized the Marion Picke Nine, a local team, which has challenged the Ohio Village Muffins to a base ball (historically two words) game following 1860 rules. The game will start will begin at 3:00 PM. Among other differences from the present game, 1860 rules stipulated that the ball be pitched underhanded, as requested by the batsman, who must stand on or straddle a line through home plate.

An afternoon of history and fun awaits all who attend Children Services Centennial Day.

# MARION COUNTY HISTORY IN PRINT

by Trella H. Romine

In 1969, when our Society was founded, the early publications on the history of Marion County were unavailable except rarely at auctions, or among the carefully guarded copies in the families who originally purchased them. This lack was addressed by The Marion County Historical Society's Publication Committee, and the reprinting of the early histories was among our first projects. This included reprints of the 1878 *Atlas of Marion County*, followed by The 1883 *Marion County History* and the 1907 (Jacoby) *History and Biographies of Marion County*. These were not originally indexed, but the reprints include that valuable information.

These publications were followed by the publication a new history – the 1979 *History of Marion County History*. It contains 684 pages, and has an index of 26,000 names. In 1984 MCHS sponsored the publication of Dr. Robert Whitman's book, *Jim Thorpe and the Oorang Indians*. In celebration of our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the book by George T. King, *The Marion Steam Shovel Family*, was reprinted. Our latest publication is the *Map of The Sandusky Plains*, and the accompanying booklet, *How the Map of the Sandusky Plains Was Created*. These are all available for research in the Rinker/Howser Resource Center at Heritage, and with the exception of the 1883 History they are available to purchase in the Museum Gift Shop at Heritage Hall, or by mail.

During this time, other Marion authors issued books on aspects of our history, including *Life and Letters of Judge Thomas J. Anderson and Wife*, by James H. Anderson; *Soldiers of Marion County* by David Hartline; *Biographies of Many Residents of Marion County, Ohio* by Sylvia and Ruth Wilson; *Day Before Yesterday* by Trella H. Romine, *Tales from the Sage of Salt Rock*, by Charlton Myers; *There's No School Like An Old School*, by Donna Lawrence. These also are available in the Resource Center, and the Romine and Myers books are available to purchase. Several booklets are now being prepared for publication including ones on the Owl Creek Trail, Historical Markers, Indian Heritage, and a map of school sites.

In the future this column in *Hallmarks* will reprint stories from these publications. For a start here are excerpts from Chapter 6, page 51, from *Jim Thorpe and The Oorang Indians*.

*The Oorang Indians Invade the N.F.L (and Marion)*

After several weeks of assembling players and practicing, the 1922 Oorang Indian's professional football team was ready for its first outing against the Dayton Triangles. Unfortunately, the game started badly for the Indians and became worse, and they lost 36-0. For whatever reasons, Jim did not play the game. His presence probably would not have made a difference between winning or losing.

The second game on the Indians' schedule was the first of two "home games" at Lincoln Park in Marion, Ohio. All the other games were played on the road to maximize the potential to publicize the Oorang Kennels. . . . On a bright sunny day on October 8, 1922, 1200 fans, paying \$1.25 each, crowded into Lincoln Park to see the Indians play the Columbus Panhandlers. There were no bleachers so all the fans stood around the field. . . . They played serious football against the Columbus team and won 20-6.

## Publications available from MCHS:

(Ohio sales tax and shipping costs, where applicable, are additional.)

*Marion County 1979 History*, ed. Trella H. Romine. 864 pp., hardbound. \$35.00.

*Day Before Yesterday, A Collection of Marion, Ohio Vignettes* by Trella H. Romine. 145 pp. \$15.00 paper; \$25.00 hardbound.

*Jim Thorpe and the Oorang Indians: NFL's Most Colorful Franchise* by Robert L. Whitman. 124 pp., paper. \$15.00.

*A History of Marion Power Shovel's First 100 Years* by Keith Haddock. 113pp., paper. \$10.00.

*The Marion Steam Shovel Company Family* by George W. King. Published 1915, reprinted 1990. 104 pp., illustrated, indexed. \$12.50 paper; \$20.00 hardbound.

*History of Marion County, Ohio and Representative Citizens* ed. J. Wilbur Jacoby, 1907. Reprint edition published 1999. 953 pp. plus index, hardbound. \$60.00.

*Tales from the Sage of Salt Rock* by Charlton Myers. 340 pp., hardbound. \$25.00.

*1878 Atlas of Marion County, Ohio*, 1994 reprint edition. 150 pp., hardbound. Indexed, illustrated. \$25.00.

*The Strange Deaths of President Harding* by Robert H. Ferrell. 203 pp. \$14.95 paper; \$24.95 hardbound.

*The Marion County Courthouse, 1884-1984* by Trella Romine. 60 pp., softbound. \$5.00.

## SPEND SATURDAY IN THE PARK

This year's edition of Saturday in the Park will begin at 11:00 AM on Saturday, August 31, at Lincoln Park in Marion.

Once again, The Marion County Historical Society is coordinating activities at the "Historic Marion" area. Participating organizations include the 121<sup>st</sup> Ohio Volunteer Infantry, OSU Marion's Prairie Nature Center, Friends of the Harding Home and Memorial, and Wyandot Popcorn Museum. Each group offers entertaining and educational displays and hands-on activities for all ages.

Those wishing to volunteer at Saturday in the Park should contact the MCHS office. A splendid time is guaranteed for all!

## 1790 INDIAN VILLAGE TO BE RECREATED

The historical organizations of Wyandot County are sponsoring an Indian Village at Harrison-Smith Park, U.S. Route 30, Upper Sandusky on Saturday October 19 from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM and on Sunday October 20 from noon to 5:00 PM. The village will depict Indian life in Ohio circa 1790 and will feature handmade wigwams and twenty Indian re-enactors. Visitors will be able to taste various American Indian foods, make cornhusk dolls, weave cattail mats, and play lacrosse, moccasin games, and the two ball game. There will be displays of native art forms and weapons of the frontier. Special presentations will be given each hour, including a performance on the native flute, a gauntlet demonstration and adoption ceremony, and a demonstration of native dress.

Dr. Larry Nelson, site manager at Fort Meigs, Perysburg, will give a slide show and hold a book signing for his most recent book. On Saturday evening, from 8:00 to 10:00, there will be a lantern tour of the village. Admission to the village is \$5.00 per car. Admission for the lantern tour is \$2.00 per person. Reservations for the lantern tour are required. All proceeds benefit the historical organizations of Wyandot County. For more information, or to reserve your space for the lantern tour, contact the Wyandot County Museum at 419/294-3857 or go online at <http://www.wyandotonline.com/wchs>.

### *In Memoriam*

We extend our sympathy to the families and friends of John Deffenbaugh, Vada Gibson, Christine Lewis, and Mary Mitchell, who have recently passed away.

## SAM BRITTON'S WOLF STORY

*Sam Britton, an eccentric young man, who was not afraid of anything or anybody, used to lend a hand in the sugar-making season and make himself generally useful, and sometimes, when he took it into his head, obnoxious. On one occasion, a dark and rainy night, he became irritated by something that occurred and bade the boys good-bye, saying that he was going home, when, in fact, his intention was to visit a neighboring sugar camp. He had not trudged his way through the darkness long, before a pack of wolves took after him, and he was obliged to drop in at an old, deserted cabin, at one end of which was a shelf about thirty inches wide, and some eight or ten feet from the ground. Sam lost no time in securing this place of refuge, for he had hardly got into his quarters before the whole cabin floor was crowded with wolves, some howling, some snapping their teeth and others jumping up for their prey. When Sam looked down on those "varmints," he saw their eyes glistening in the darkness like balls of fire, and had serious fears of becoming food for the beasts; but as he had about eight inches to "count on," he hugged the cabin wall so close as to make him sweat.*

*All night long the wolves kept up their revelry, seemingly taking their turns in jumping at him. It was fortunate for him that the shelf was so high from the floor, or he would have been a "gone Sammy, sure!" As daylight approached, his tormentors left him - greatly to his relief. On examining the front part of the shelf, it was found that at least two inches of it had been torn off in pieces by the wolves, in their desperate efforts to capture their prey.*

*Sam returned to the camp he had left in such high dudgeon the previous night, a wiser boy, and relished a square meal of fat pork and corn bread. (History of Marion County, Ohio, 1883)*

## FLEA MARKET AT POPCORN FESTIVAL

The Marion Popcorn Festival will take place Thursday, September 5, through Saturday, September 7. The MCHS Museum is open extended hours during the festival, noon to 8:00 PM on Thursday and Friday, and noon to 6:00 PM on Saturday. Once again, there will be a flea market, with the proceeds benefiting the Society's operating fund.

Volunteers are needed to staff the museum during this time of increased visitation. Also needed are items in good condition that may be sold at the flea market. If you can help, contact Margaret Gracely or the MCHS office.

*The Society thanks the following, who have become 2002 Pride Members since the last issue of Hallmarks: Trella H. Romine and Fred & Betty White.*