

The Ferry Landing

*The Martins Ferry Area Historical Society, Inc.
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*Tom Thomas, President
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A Message from the President ...Tom Thomas

Once again we are beginning our spring and summer months at the Sedgwick House Museum. Thanks to support from many individuals and several organizations and a lot of hard work by the members of the MFAHS, we are back operating as usual.

We have been extremely busy in April and May with students from the Martins Ferry School District. I have visited the Eighth Grade classrooms to share the history of Martins Ferry with them. They also later toured the museum, as have students from South Elementary, North Elementary, and Hilltop Elementary. In order to entice the students to return on their own, we offer free admittance to any student in the school district. It is very important that they learn of the history and heritage of our community.

The Martins Ferry Rotary Club has provided us with funds to employ Betty Douglas as a guide during the weekends. We are open every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from noon until 4:00 p.m. Two dollars will get you into the museum and you can stay as long as you wish. There isn't any better bargain to be found in this area.

The weekend of June 9-11 will be a busy one for us. The Martins Ferry Soap Box Derby event takes place that weekend, with the main activities on Sunday, June 11. The Sedgwick House Museum will have extended hours that day and we will be selling root beer floats as a cooling and delicious way to watch the derby. We will also have a special display available for viewing. Linda Flanagan of Bellaire has loaned us memorabilia from her father's participation in the 1947 derby in Akron. Also, the Martins Ferry Chamber of Commerce will have pictures of the past derbies and the winners from each year on display.

Work on Annie Tanks' book is continuing. The museum staff has decided to do much of the work, with help from Alan Hartman at Martins Ferry Office Supply. We are eagerly looking forward to providing this book to those who enjoyed Annie's first book, "A Town of Grandeur."

The biggest and best news concerns plans for an expansion of the museum building. The Belmont County Tourism Council has given us a grant of \$2,500. The money will be used to turn the back porch area into a room for better storage of our numerous paper items and various books and other records that we have. This will allow us a more efficient handling of those historical items. The construction will take place in the fall.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY BRIDGEPORT!

The Bridgeport Bicentennial Weekend was held on May 4-7 with carnival rides, a parade, historical re-enactors and balloon rides among other activities.

The village of Bridgeport has endured as a vital part of Belmont County for 200 years and it continues to grow. The village was first developed by Ebenezer Zane on May 9, 1806 and was originally called "Canton". It proved to be a prosperous port on the Ohio River because it served as a landing for the ferry from Wheeling.

Bridgeport was incorporated on March 14, 1836, and in 1873 the area of Aetnaville became part of the village.

In 1836, a covered bridge was built across the back channel of the Ohio River that linked Bridgeport and Wheeling Island. At that point the name Canton was changed to Bridgeport and the rest became history.

Kirkwood, a small section in Bridgeport, is named after a Revolutionary War hero, Captain Joseph Kirkwood who decided to settle on the western banks of the Ohio River. Because of his service during the war, he was given the tract of land on the south side of Wheeling Creek. Kirkwood's descendents, who came under attack several times by the Indians that lived and traveled in the area after the captain built his cabin in 1789, are laid to rest in a small cemetery there.

Bridgeport, like many other area communities thrived on industry, including Standard Iron Co., Etna Iron and Steel Co., Bridgeport Iron Works, LaBelle Glass Works, Woodcock Brothers Foundry, R. j. Bags and sons; Diamond Mills Flour, Bridgeport Machine Shop, Scott Lumber Co., Extruded Metal Products Co., and the American Sheet and Tin Plate Co.

The Bridgeport downtown area has seen much major highway construction including U.S. 40 in 1818, Interstate 70 in the 1960s, and later, Ohio State Route 7. The U.S. 40 relocation was undertaken to eliminate two right hand turns, but it meant the destruction of several downtown buildings including the Bridgeport National Bank, the Cilies office and store building, the Freter office building, the Milen five-and-dime store, a tavern, gas station, hotel and several other small businesses. Also destroyed were the A&P Supermarket, most of the Scott Lumber plant, and the Bridgeport Eagles Club. Ohio Route 7 took out Bridgeport's only large industry, the Cleveland Graphite Bronze Company, but the company relocated to Lansing.

Many families moved out of the downtown and formed other communities such as Brookside, which dates back to February 12, 1900. "Soaptown", now Lansing was founded in 1903, Barton was founded in 1905, and Wolfhurst dates back to 1910.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY NATIONAL ROAD!



Commissioned by President Thomas Jefferson March 29, 1806, the National Road, U.S. Route 40, was America's first federally funded interstate highway.

George Washington and Thomas Jefferson saw a need for a road from the East Coast to the interior as they charted a course for the new nation. They believed a trans-Appalachian land link was essential for moving crops and goods to the marketplace, thus unifying the first states of America with its swiftly expanding interior.

By 1818, the new road was completed to Wheeling. By then the project had become embroiled in controversy over the federal government's authority to appropriate money for internal improvements. It wasn't until 1825 that the next stage was funded. The new road was laid out from Wheeling to Maysville, Kentucky over a course first charted by Ebenezer Zane and his brother Jonathan in 1796.

For several decades the National Road was America's busiest land artery to the West. It was the "Main Street of America"-the road which opened the heart of the nation. Dotting the roadside along the route were inns with such names as The Sheep's Ear and The White Goose, where coaches stopped to "water the horses and brandy the gentlemen."

Countless herds of livestock were driven to market along the road. Huge Conestoga wagons hauled freight to the East Coast and returned with staples such as coffee and sugar for the western settlements. Stagecoaches traveled the route on regular schedules, and thousands of families headed west on the road, their possessions packed into covered wagons.

When the railroads pushed west in 1854, the National Road slipped into a long decline. But the popularity of the bicycle in the 1880's and the invention of the automobile rescued the road from oblivion. New vehicles led to demand for new bridges and better pavement. In 1926, the National Road became part of U.S. Route 40 and was again an artery of activity.

Today, traffic speeds by on Interstate 70, paralleling the old route. But for a quieter trip along a historic pathway, take U.S. Route 40 from Cumberland to Vandalia and follow the National Road.

Parts of this article were taken from a pamphlet from the Ohio Historical Society, "National Road/Zane Grey."

DO YOU REMEMBER THESE?
From the Business File at the Sedgwick House Museum

T. H. Acres, Jr. Plumbing, Gas and Steam Fitting

4th & Washington Sts.
1903

Adams Express Office

C&P Railroad Depot
W. S. Dillworth, agent & telegraph operator William H. Wood
1871-1872

Adams Railroad Company

Adena to Martins Ferry
Capital: \$1,000,000
1901

Allen, James

Dry goods, groceries and variety
1853

Allison, E. J.

Grocer
Broadway & Jefferson
1921

Amalgamated Association of Iron & Steel Workers

Carroll Lodge #26
Mutual aid to its members
1884

American Tin Plate Company

Main Street
1900

Anchor Inn

H. Sommers, proprietor
Billiards and tonsorial parlor
1915

Arbaugh, G. W.

Grocer
Hanover Street
1897

Archibald, Edward

Photographer
Second Street
1879

The Art Tonsorial Parlor

Harry Sommers, proprietor
Get A Shave While You Wait
Children's Hair Cutting A Specialty
Pool Room, Cigars and Tobacco
1911

FOR SALE FROM THE SEDGWICK HOUSE MUSEUM

NOTE: The Zane Genealogy in the Ebenezer Martin Line has been retyped to make reading easier. It has been bound differently and a few articles have been added.

	Museum Pick Up	Mailed
(includes S/H)		
<u>A Town of Grandeur</u> By Annie C. Tanks	\$13.00	\$14.50
<u>Lillie</u> By Jacob C. Williams, Jr. (hardcover)	\$16.00	\$18.50
<u>Bulltown</u> By Andy Shemenski	\$4.00	\$ 5.00
<u>The Zane Genealogy in the Ebenezer Martin Line</u> Compiled by A. Alma Martin Phyllis Kane, Myra Martin, Diane Nichols	\$20.00	\$22.50
<u>Martin Genealogy</u> Compiled by A. Alma Martin	\$11.00	\$13.50
<u>Through One Man's Eyes</u> By Paul E. Rieger	\$ 7.00	\$ 9.00
<u>Remembrances of Nutbusters and Beauty Queens</u> By Bill Burge	\$11.00	\$13.50
<u>Harry Northwood The Early Years 1881-1900</u> By William Heacock, James Measell, Berry Wiggins	\$20.00	\$22.50
<u>St. Mary's Cemetery</u> from Wheeling Area Genealogical Society	\$15.00	\$15.00
Note Cards, pkg. of eight	\$3.00	\$4.00

Mail orders to:
Martins Ferry Area Historical Society
P.O. Box 422, Martins Ferry, OH 43935

A NOTE ON MUSEUM TOURS

Because of the illness of our regular hostess, Betty Douglas, the Sedgwick House Museum may not have regular hours this summer. Until Betty recovers, the members of the Board of Directors will try to keep the doors open most weekends. If you are planning a visit, please call in advance to make sure someone will be there. Call Tom at 740-633-5559 or Barb at 740-633-3430.