



## Election of Officers November 12

President Bill Comisford presented the Slate of Officers to be elected at the meeting of the historical society at 7:30 Tuesday, November 12, in the Myers Inn Meeting Room.

Porter “Chip” Welch is running for the 2 year term of Secretary. Bill Kavage is rerunning for Treasurer for a 2 year term. These terms expire December 31, 2021.

Carol Wood is running for another three year term as Trustee. Damon Bower is also running for a three year term as Trustee. Both terms will expire December 31, 2022.

## Hanging of the Greens

Traditionally the last event in November is Hanging of the Greens in the Myers Inn. We will gather together shortly after noon on Friday, November 29th to decorate the Inn for Christmas.

We need fresh evergreens, pruners and wire cutters, and your imagination to decorate the building. We try to keep the decorations to an early period which our visitors look forward to seeing when they arrive for Christmas on the Square.

Please let Alice Lacher at or Polly Horn at 740-965-3582 know if you are willing to donate greens, red ribbon, etc., and if you can assist with the decorating.

**Christmas on the Square is  
4 to 8 Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>**



*Engraving of Camp from Heidelberg University*  
<https://johnsonsisland.heidelberg.edu/about.html>

## Johnson’s Island

How and why an island in Lake Erie became a POW camp for Confederate officers is the topic for Roy Nichols’ program to the Big Walnut Area Historical Society at 7:30, Tuesday, November 12, in the Myers Inn Museum Meeting Room. The program is free and open to the public.



**Roy Nichols**

Johnson’s Island is a 300 acre island in Ottawa county in Sandusky Bay near Marblehead. It is about 300 acres and almost a mile long and ½ mile wide. Known as Bull’s Island after an early owner, E. W. Bull., it was sold to L. B. Johnson in 1852. According to the Duff Papers in Ashland Library, the government leased 40 acres for a Confederate prisoners of war in 1861.

Nichols graduated from Ashland High School and got his B.A. from Gordon College in Massachusetts in 1967 and a M.A.T from Oberlin College in 1968. He taught history and American government in Midview High School in Grafton, Ohio, while he attended law classes and earned his law degree from Cleveland Marshall Law School in 1972. **(Continue page 2)**

## Calendar of Events

12 November 6:00 Board of Trustees Meeting  
12 November 7:30 Program - Roy Nichols will talk about "Johnson's Island" and Election of Officers for 2020.  
29 November 12:00 Hanging of Greens in Inn  
See page for details  
No December Meeting or Board Meeting

**OPEN HOUSE FOR  
CHRISTMAS ON THE SQUARE  
December 7th**

**All Events Are in Myers Inn Museum  
unless noted**

### *Nichols continued from page 1*

Upon retirement he formed Nicholsworth Presentations and gives historical talks on a variety of subjects, is a Professional Storyteller and plays Santa. He is a member of Vaudvillities cast member (3 shows per year); Hanby House volunteer; Church choir; Silvertones Chorus; enjoys karaoke and ballroom dancing; Forever Young Theater Group (once per year); Gillie Payers (3 plays per year); Underground Railroad Study Group.

Roy is active in Faith Covenant Church, Blendon Senior

Center,  
Westerville  
Senior Center,  
Gillie Rec  
Center,  
Storytellers of  
Central Ohio, 2  
Civil War Round  
Table Groups;  
Ohio History  
Connection;  
Hanby House in  
Westerville;  
Delaware County  
Historical Society  
and the Griswold  
Center.

**Big Walnut Area Historical Society**  
**OFFICERS**  
Bill Comisford, President  
Brian Moore, Vice President  
Damon Bower, Secretary  
Bill Kavage, Treasurer  
Polly Horn, Curator and Webmaster  
**TRUSTEES**  
Alice Lacher  
Amy Welsh  
Carol Wood  
Chip Welch  
Mel Meyers  
Mindy Pyle  
Roger Roberts  
Suzanne Allen  
Polly Horn, Newsletter Editor  
For Information Call 740-965-1154  
leave a message or  
email [Info@BigWalnutHistory.org](mailto:Info@BigWalnutHistory.org)

## Membership Update.

Welcome to our New Members  
**Angie Grossenbacher  
Brock and Allison Schmaltz.**

Virginia Helwig has returned home  
following rehab,  
Rosella Ault is now living in

## Krogering Helps B.W.A.H.S.

By making Big Walnut Area Historical Society the recipient of your Kroger Community Rewards, you are contributing to our treasury every quarter. Kroger takes a small of the money they make when you shop at Kroger and distribute it through the Community Reward program.

Check the bottom of your receipt after shopping at Kroger and see if you donated to us. If not please use your Kroger card & email address to register at [www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow/](http://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow/)

*Now remember to go Krogering and help us.*

## You and Amazon Smile Foundation

### Help Big Walnut Historical Society

Amazon Smile Foundation ([smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)) will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to the eligible charitable organization of your choice. Big Walnut Area Historical Society is registered with them. Your Amazon account or Amazon Prime account will have Smile on it if you are registered to take advantage of this donation. Instructions to register are online.

WATCH  
FOR  
BLACK  
FRIDAY  
DEALS!



**Black Friday hack:**  
Shop Black Friday deals at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and Amazon donates  
You shop. Amazon donates.  
[amazon.com/smile](http://amazon.com/smile)

# What Was the Racket Store?



In June, Nathan Reynolds visited the Myers Inn with 2 coins he found with his metal detector. They were made of zinc to use as shopping tokens for The Racket Store in Sunbury. He had seen the photo at the right on the Big Walnut History website.

The Racket Store was on the northwest corner of Cherry and Vernon Streets facing Sunbury Square from 1912 to about 1918. It was an all purpose department store officially called M. Weiss and Sons. Weiss' daughter recalled the store in her vignette in "The People Book."

Mildred Weiss Tarnish wrote, "Most everyone made their own clothes, so there were shelves and shelves of all kinds of bright fabrics and I learned to distinguish one from the other, There were also dress trimmings, buttons, spool cabinets with their array of bright colors, hat pins which women wore to anchor their hats or just to embellish them, laces and embroideries.

"The men's department was not so interesting to me but the grocery department at the rear of the store was handy for a mealtime snack when my mother was busy working. There was the pickle barrel of sweet pickles, large wheels of yellow cheese, peanut butter in tubs, cookie and cracker barrels to reach into (cookies were sold by the pound and not prepackaged in those days) and fruit in season such as bananas and grapes.

"On the second floor of the store were rugs and since they were only shown occasionally, the big pile of carpets was a soft place for a nap on a long Saturday afternoon."



## THE RACKET HONEST METHOD

In 1915 Mr. Weise suffered a severe heart attack which forced him to retire. His son Joe ran the store until he was called up in WWI. It was sold to Chancey A. Root.

The frame building burned in the 1927 fire of the north side of Cherry Street. The new brick building was Root's Department Store, and is now Linda Powell's.

### Bibliography:

The People Book. Compiled by Doris Truxall and Esther McCormick in 1976 for USA Bicentennial.

The Shopping Tokens are in the Myers Inn Museum.

## *Joining BWAHS is Easy . . . .*

### Circle One:

*Individual \$20, Family \$35, Business 10 or fewer employees \$50,  
Business 11-99 employees \$75, Business 100 or more employees \$100,  
Patron \$100, Other ?*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address or P. O. Box \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Send with check for dues to BWAHS**

**P.O. Box 362  
Sunbury, OH 43074**

# Volunteers Make A Big Difference

On Thursday, October 24, BWAHS hosted 75 Big Walnut Elementary School third graders, their teachers and many parents in the Myers Inn Museum for six historical presentations. This took Alan and Carol Norris, Alice Chapan, Bill Kavage, Damon Bower, Lynda O'Quinn, Marie Lacher, Polly Horn, Jan Pierson, Mary McRury, Pat Kletrovetz, Sheldon Lacher and June Campbell an hour and a half each plus the time to don costumes and set up the presentations. All of these are volunteers and for many this was the third time in less than a month they had put on the program. Alice Lacher and Brian Moore helped with the General Rosecrans third graders and Roger Roberts presented to the Harrison Street third graders.

## Volunteers Tend Flower Beds

Alice Chapan, changed clothes and raked the pine needles from the flower beds getting them ready for winter. Warren Owen and Alice Lacher have helped her with the flower beds which bloomed all summer.

## Volunteers Keep Up the Grounds

Two of the volunteers, Damon Bower and Bill Kavage changed their clothes after the children left and tackled the mass of brush growing around the rocks behind the barn and a dead apple tree near the ramp with a chain saw, loppers and lots of elbow grease. Three hours later, they loaded a trailer and put bags of cuttings in the back of Bower's car and drove off to a dumpster.

Roger Owen came as they were leaving to mow the grass and fallen leaves. Roger has mowed the yard since we got the building. Warren Owen removes the ice and snow in the winter,

## All Docents and Guides are Volunteers

After the classes left, Polly Horn remained in costume and served as the docent on duty from 12-3. Our mission will not work without volunteers. Sign up in the Inn or call 740-965-3582.

### Beginning . . .



### During . . .



### . . . . After 3 Hours



## Myers Inn Museum & Gift Shop

OPEN

12-3 Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays

10-3 on Saturdays

facing southwest corner of Sunbury Square

740-965-1154

<http://BigWalnutHistory.org>



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