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From the President's Desk . . . Central Ohio in January 1776: Winter, Waiting, and the Turn of the Year

by Mike Wise

In January 1776, central Ohio entered the new year locked in winter and uncertainty. Snow covered the forests, rivers edged with ice, and travel slowed to a crawl. Yet the conflict between Great Britain and the American colonies continued to press upon the Ohio Country, transforming what might otherwise have been a season of dormancy into one of tense calculation. Though no pitched battles were fought in central Ohio that month, the Revolution's growing weight was felt in diplomacy, rumor, and preparation.

The holidays of Christmas and New Year passed quietly on the frontier. Among American settlers and traders along the edges of the Ohio Valley, Christmas was observed modestly, if at all. Many colonists—particularly those shaped by Presbyterian, Baptist, or other dissenting traditions—did not emphasize Christmas as a significant religious feast, and the hardships of frontier life further muted celebration. Where the day was marked, it was usually with a shared meal, Scripture reading, or private prayer rather than public festivity. The turning of the year brought little sense of renewal; January opened instead with apprehension.

British officials operating out of Detroit used the winter months to shore up alliances. Despite snowbound trails and strained supply lines, they continued to communicate with leaders of the Shawnee, Wyandot and Delaware, holding councils that combined diplomacy with traditional seasonal gatherings. British agents renewed warnings about the advance of the American “long knives” from Virginia and Pennsylvania. They reassured Native leaders that the Crown would restrain colonial settlement once the rebellion was crushed. Yet winter exposed British vulnerabilities. Distance, scarcity, and uncertainty led some Native Leaders to question whether British power could truly protect their homelands.

American authorities at Fort Pitt faced similar constraints. Ice-choked rivers and deep snow limited movement, but the fort remained a hub of intelligence and planning. Scouts were dispatched cautiously, watching for signs of Native mobilization or British intrigue. Frontier families, isolated and (Goto Page 2)

**Big Walnut Area Historical Society
Did Not Meet in January**

Beams From Original Stagecoach Inn

When the old floor beams from Lawrence Myers' 1820 Stagecoach Inn were sent to his heirs via Larry Myers in Colorado. Damon Bower ask him to tell us what they planned to do with them. Larry wrote back, “The beams and door arrived safely and in great shape! We found a place that specializes in reclaiming antique wood and we plan to have the beams evaluated for potential as lumber. Our hope is to get enough lumber to make a desk, cabinet, or some other furniture that our family can treasure for another 200 years. Finding the right craftsman may take a while, but let's keep in touch and I'll share updates as we make progress on the plan.

Very best,
Larry Myers

POSITIVES FROM CARRIAGE HOUSE WORK

by Damon Bower

Initial clean up efforts have resulted in:

- All non useable or sellable items have been removed
- A Lawrence Myers distant relative (see Larry Myers above)
- The hand built stage originally made for Community Library for village use was returned to the city and recently used for the “Christmas on the Square” event.
- All other doors and some windows were either purchased or given to area residents for use in their homes.
- Over \$1,600 was collected from sales & donations

Restoration work will continue in the Spring. Still a long way to go for practical use, but at least we can see if the structure is repairable.

Mesa Verde Artifacts On Loan In Myers Inn Tavern Room

These artifacts were collected by the late George Meyer before it became illegal. His wife, Joan Meyer has loaned the Myers Inn this pottery and stone collection for a short time.





From the President's Desk

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and anxious, fortified cabins and relied heavily on rumor. A single report of a council fire or a missing trader could spread, amplifying fear well beyond the facts.

For Native communities in central Ohio, January 1776 was a time of sober reflection. The Delaware continued to urge neutrality, hoping winter might delay war. The Shawnee, still recovering from Lord Dunmore's War, debated whether restraint or resistance offered the best chance of survival. Winter scarcity sharpened every decision, and diplomacy carried heightened risks.

Thus, the Revolution settled into the Ohio forests like the cold itself—slow, persistent, and unavoidable. January brought no decisive action, but it hardened attitudes. When the thaw came, the decisions made during this quiet, frozen season would help determine whether central Ohio remained a contested borderland or erupted into open war.

Westerville Public Library Has Display On Making Log Cabins

by Polly Horn

The display shows early log cabins in the area as well as a pit sawn beam from the Myers Stagecoach Inn which was built in anticipation of the Wolfhonding Indian Trail being made into a road in 1820 from Mt. Vernon to Franklinton. This two story building contained one room upstairs for women and one downstairs for men. It had an outside stairs to reach the second floor. The pit sawn beams ran north - south on the stone foundayion and silll. Also on the property was a one room house Lawrence built for his family in 1816. It sits on .)now reinforced with steel I beam.

When Community Library was renovating the building, the State of Ohio made us replace the pit sawn beams with 3"x6" beams. We stored the old beams in the Carriage House. I was pleased to have the Myers family get some of the. When the 1894 room was added to the building the pit sawn beams ran east to west and were longer under what is now the Meeting Room. I was very glad I photographed these before they were removed so Doug Linnabary and our Trustees could see the beams as they were used in construction of our building. Doug helped the Westerville staff with the display.

Future Route 37

As the Community Library historian, I began looking into the history of the building even before the deal was finalized. We think the Myers brothers came in 1816 along the trail Moses Byxbe had Azariah Root survey.

Thanks for Year End Donations

In answer to the Year-End Solicitation letter we received \$2,080. Additionally, \$6,000 in earlier donations in December were received before any mailing or Newsletter were sent. Thanks for over \$8,000 to help us with the upkeep of the facilities.

We receive no money from the City, County, or State, so we rely on donations from visitors and our very supportive members. Many thanks for caring.

Trustees Voted To Not Lease Our Extra Room

Each year we have rented out this south-east room to cover our utilities on the building. This was an easy decision because for many years after all the only thing we seemed to do was have fund raisers to get the building ready to occupy.

Our collection has grown and items are stored off site so we want to bring them home so visitors may enjoy them.



Several drawings and even a 1820 pit sawn beam from the Myers Inn are on display in their feature on local log cabins. Visitors can use the QR Code to learn more about us. It is a pleasure to have them come to Sunbury to see the Myers Inn.

1819 Taxes Reveal Our History

Gilbert Adams had Lot 73 - no house

Lawrence Myers had Lot 1 with **1 house = \$1,25**
(The 1816 frame house)

Lot 45 value 25 (where Stage Coach Inn will be built.
Lot 37, Lot 44, Lot 16, Lot 21 and Lot 36 each = .10 cents. Lot 8 and Lot 9 = 12 cents each.

William Myers Lot 51 , house and cattle NO Taxes
Lot 59 = 25 cents, Lot 58 20 cents, Lot 62 12 cents,
Lot 65 10 cents and lot 76 was .75cents.
Hezekiah Rogers Lot 60 -This is beside new parking lot.

