



Old Tyme Chronicle

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From the President's Desk . . .

Central Ohio in September 1776: A Frontier Between Peace and War

by Mike Wise

By September 1776, the American Revolution was becoming increasingly difficult for the people of the Ohio Country to avoid. Two months had passed since the Declaration of Independence, but in central Ohio the most pressing question was not simply whether Britain or the Americans would win. For the Native peoples, the deeper issue was what the conflict would mean for their lands, communities, and political independence. The Shawnee occupied important towns along the Scioto and farther west; the Delaware were concentrated along the Muskingum; and the Wyandot held communities farther north toward the Sandusky. These nations now found themselves between British power at Detroit and the increasingly independent Americans at Fort Pitt and along the Ohio River.

In September, British pressure from Detroit grew more ominous. Lieutenant Governor Henry Hamilton, commanding Britain's western interests from Detroit, began encouraging small parties of Native warriors to attack American settlements along the Ohio and its tributaries. The widespread frontier warfare that would characterize 1777 and later years had not yet fully begun, but the direction of events was becoming clearer. British officials held an important advantage: Detroit remained a major source of trade goods, ammunition, and diplomatic influence among the western Native nations.

The Americans responded primarily through diplomacy rather than invasion. George Morgan, Congress's Indian agent at Fort Pitt, traveled through the Ohio Country in the summer, meeting Delaware leaders at Coshocton and seeking assurances that the western nations would remain neutral. Representatives were invited assemble at Fort Pitt beginning September 10, though the major council ultimately took place in late October. American commissioners distributed gifts and sought to persuade the tribes that their interests were better served by staying out of what many Native leaders regarded as a war between competing groups of white people.

Congress itself recognized how fragile the situation had become. On September 19, 1776, it directed frontier officers to gather intelligence on Native (Goto Page 2)

Coming October 13. . .

The Berlin Airlift and Its Galena Connection

Presented by Mike Wise

October's program will explore a defining early Cold War crisis: the Berlin Airlift of 1948–49. When Soviet authorities blockaded land access to West Berlin, the Western Allies responded not with tanks, but with aircraft—supplying food, coal, medicine, and hope to a city under pressure.

Our program will include how a former Galena-area serviceman participated in the airlift. In 1948, U.S. Army veteran George Meyer of the 502nd Engineering Company, and his company helped build an airstrip in the French sector of Berlin. They returned to Germany for the 40th Anniversary Reunion.

George Meyer passed away in December 2025. His widow, Joan, has graciously donated his personal mementos and materials from the 40th Anniversary Reunion which will be on display during the program.



George Meyer

Heritage Day Rained Out Rescheduled 4 to 6 p.m. Oct 10

Unfortunately the heavy rain gusts caused us to cancel the outside activities so the five who braved the elements to come to the Myers Inn got wet arriving but enjoyed the indoor activities and children's author, Karen Meyer.

Come to the Myers Inn to see displays, hear local history and do crafts to remind us of our heritage. Visit the blacksmith's forge, get in the covered farm wagon, enjoy make-it, take-it pioneer crafts.



From The President's Desk

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activities and urged settlers and soldiers to treat peaceful Native people with “kindness and civility.” These instructions were both practical and diplomatic. American forces around Fort Pitt were thin, and Congress could scarcely afford to turn the Ohio nations collectively toward Britain.

Yet there was no single “Indian position.” Delaware leaders such as Netawatwees and White Eyes worked to preserve peace, while Moravian missionaries and Christian Delaware communities at Schoenbrunn, Gnadenhutten, and the newly established Lichtenau near present-day Coshocton formed another important center of neutrality. Among the Shawnee, influential leaders such as Cornstalk also continued to favor avoiding war, although growing American settlement south of the Ohio River made neutrality increasingly difficult to maintain. British influence was stronger among segments of the Wyandot and Mingo populations.

Meanwhile, ordinary life continued. September marked the start of harvest season, food storage preparation, hunting, trading, and winter preparations. Yet increasingly, even these ordinary activities took place under the shadow of war. Travelers brought rumors from Detroit, Fort Pitt, and Kentucky; diplomatic messengers carried wampum and speeches between villages; and movements once seen as hunting or trading expeditions could now arouse suspicion.

September 1776 brought no major battle to central Ohio, but it marked an important transition. British recruitment, American settlement, and growing distrust were steadily narrowing the possibility of neutrality. Central Ohio stood on the edge of a much more violent phase of the American Revolution—one that would soon bring the war much closer to home.

Our Remembering 9/11

Very soon after we sent out the last newsletter, it became apparent we would probably have a bigger attendance at our program, “**Remembering 9/11 by Men Who Were There,**” than our meeting room in the Myers Inn could accommodate. President Mike Wise and Roger Roberts secured the All-Purpose Room at Sunbury United Methodist Church for the program.

We sent out another email to our members, The Delaware Gazette gave us excellent coverage. Mike prepared the speakers with questions about the event, Roger set up the venue. We forgot to double check the speaker system but once we got it working, all was well,

Many thanks to all who came out to Remember 9/11 with us on September 8th. We estimate there were 75. While neither man really wanted to be a speaker, they were ready to answer questions which brought back memories of that time we will never forget.

BWAHS Awarded \$15,000 Toward Roof Replacement

President Mike Wise has been informed Delaware County Commissioners' Community Enhancement Grant program funds have been awarded to BWAHS to help with the replacement of the roof on the Myers Inn Museum. A standing seam metal roof was installed this fall and is still being tweaked. We are all very grateful to receive these funds. Thanks Commissioners.

Harlem Tackles Old Headstones

Harlem Township Board of Trustees and Harlem Township America 250–Ohio Community are sponsoring a Military Headstones Restoration Workshop in Fancher Cemetery on Saturday, Sept 19th 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Mark Morton, Gravestone Guardians of Ohio, will lead the workshop to provides basic education on use of proper restoration tools. “The more we learn about proper restoration procedures and tools, the more the community will be able to work together to strengthen our township’s preservation and protection of our cemeteries.” Sign-up Required: Send Name, Contact Information, and Event Name to dave.snyder@sbcglobal.net,

Wise Portrays Fighting Chaplain

Mike Wise made a Civil War Appearance at the Harlem Civic Association Picnic on Sept. 13. He portrayed Rev. Russell B. Bennett, who enlisted in the 32nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry with other men from Delaware County. His comrades elected him first sergeant of Company I. That meant he began this war as they did—as a soldier. When their Chaplain resigned, the regiment selected Bennett to be their Chaplain.

C.C.C. Camp in Mount Vernon

Someone gave me a photo of the C.C.C. camp in Mt. Vernon but it was so long ago. I have gotten my facts mixed up. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was a federal work relief program created in 1933 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt during the Great Depression to employ young, unmarried men in conserving public lands. It ran from 1933 to 1942 in the United States for unemployed, unmarried men ages 18–25 and eventually expanded to ages 17–28, who volunteered amid widespread unemployment. Through the course of its nine years in operation, three million young men took part in the CCC, which provided them with shelter, clothing, and food, together with a monthly wage of \$30 (equivalent to \$746 in 2025), \$25 of which (equivalent to \$622 in 2025) had to be sent home to their families.

If you gave the photo to me, please contact me. Polly Horn, 740-965-3582.