



Old Tyme Chronicle

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Durham's Talk was Delightful

By Polly Horn

John Durham gave two talks about his book, "The Belling" on July 21 which is based on the belling of Winagene Granger and Lloyd Ross in Sunbury in 1938. About 18 members and people from the community attended the first presentation at 4 p.m. He gave the background of his book then read the story with background comments throughout.

Then he began to collect tales of bellings and life in Sunbury from the guests. Alice Chapan and Diana Trigg made cookies to go with my punch which was served while guests bought books, got autographs and extended their visit with John and his wife Nora.

At a little past five the program was repeated for 15 members of his family and friends before the group went to dinner at Firehouse Tavern, on the site of Granger's Saloon which was once owned by Winnie Granger's uncle.

John and his family were very appreciative of our museum and Sunbury's hospitality.

FRUSTRATION

Sometime before 9 a.m. May 12, the Myers Inn electrical system took a power surge which has led to weeks of troubleshooting the system. The surge was light enough to not cause everything to go out at once but as each item was fixed, the next one failed.

It started with the kitchen GFS blown, then moved to the microwave, to the air conditioner, to the bathroom lights on thru the electrical box. When it looked as

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They Missed Their Chance

by Roy Nichols



Roy Nichols

In August, Big Walnut Area Historical Society will host Roy Nichols who will present a program "They Missed Their Chance" about those who could have been President of the United States. The program begins at 7:30 on Tuesday evening, August 8, in the Myers Inn Museum Meeting Room. The program is open and free to the public.

Nichols' talk features Aaron Burr, John C. Calhoun, Willie P. Mangum, Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, Lafayette Foster, Benjamin Wade, Samuel Tilden, Levi P. Morton, Adlai Stevenson I, Hiram Johnson, Frank Lowden, John Nance Garner, Henry C. Wallace, Alben Barkley, Nelson Rockefeller.

Several of these were VP's whose President survived assassination attempts; some were Presidents Pro Tem of the Senate who would have succeeded if the President had been killed or removed; and some declined the VP offer from a President who died in office. Tilden, of course, won the popular vote but lost the electoral count in a disputed election.

Roy 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 on page 2)

(Nichols continued from page 1)

From 1972-75 Roy served as the Assistant Counsel for Ohio Secretary of State (in Elections division). From 1975 to 1979 he was Chief of the Corporations Division for Ohio Secretary of State. From 1979-1983 he served as Chief of Legal Services Division of Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (Legislative Liaison for DRC). From 1983-2007 he was in private law practice but taught classes at Columbus State and other local colleges.

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; Westerville Historical Society; Delaware County Historical Society and the Griswold Center in Worthington.



200th

Birthday Celebration

**October 21
in Van Dorn Inn**

Big Walnut Area Historical Society
OFFICERS
Bill Comisford, President
Carol Norris, Secretary
Bill Kavage, Treasurer
Polly Horn, Myers Inn Curator
TRUSTEES
Alice Lacher
Amy Welsh
Carol Wood
Charlotte McGowen
Damon Bower
Mel Meyers
Roger Roberts
Suzanne Allen
Leave messages at 740-965-1154
To get information email
Info@BigWalnutHistory.org

Docents and Guides Need to Get Ready for Fall Classes

With Big Walnut Schools beginning August 16, 3rd graders will soon be scheduling classes to come to the Myers Inn Museum. Try to keep Fridays open but of course the visit dates are up to the schools.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August
August 8 at 6:00 Program - Roy Nichols:
They Missed Their Chance
August 19 Sizzles and Sounds

September
September 4 OPEN HOUSE for Labor Day
September 6 at 1:00 Board Meeting
September 12 at 7:30 Program- Carol Wood:
Oil Lamps of the Kerosene Era

October
October 4 at 1:00 Board Meeting
October 10 at 7:30 Program- Brent Culver:
15 Open House for Sunbury
Heritage Festival
October 21 200th Birthday for Van Dorn Inn

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**

(FRUSTRATION continued from front page)

though everything was working properly, the Sunbury Police arrived on June 1st to tell us the Sheriff was getting 911 hang-up calls from our address.

Since no one was in the building when many of the calls were made it was determined maybe there was water on a telephone line causing it to short. We began endless phone calls to CenturyLink to get the lines checked.

Meanwhile nothing had happened to the smoke alarm so Damon Bower and Polly Horn tried to set it off and that could not so we called for it to be checked. Although the technician did not find anything wrong with the alarm, he replaced batteries in most of the emergency lights.

Treasurer Bill Kavage noted the CenturyLink bill was showing \$70 in directory assistance calls at 3.99 a call. The calls were made from the same number as the 911 calls.

Meanwhile the Sheriff was getting three to eight 911 hang-up calls per day. We asked him to ignore the calls until we could be the problem solved.

Damon, Bill and Polly were in the Inn every day trying to find a solution. The alarm company said the problem was the phone and the phone company said it was the alarm box.

Finally last week Bill got the phone company to come on site and replace some wires then Bill disconnected the surge protectors on the wires and we are replacing them. No alarms for a week.

Many thanks to Damon and Bill for staying on top of the problem. Lets hope the minor surge does not happen again.



There are several new items in the Gift Shop. Be sure to look for them.

Rick Helwig has made some new hooks for flowers baskets or lanterns in the B.W.A.H.S. forge.

In addition to John Durham's "The Belling," and Karen Meyer's historical fiction for children, some paper doll books and coloring books have been added for children. There is also a Norman Rockwell coloring book for adults.

Docents and Guides Needed for Labor Day, Sunbury Heritage Day

Be thinking of crafts you would like to demonstrate or help children make for the October Heritage Day. We need lots of help. Call Polly 740-965-3582.

THROUGH THE DECADES
THE GREAT BIRTHDAY
TELEGRAM

200 years old

200 years old

You are invited to join us for
200th Birthday Celebration Of The Center
(Van Dorn) Inn

Saturday, 21st October, 1:00pm- 4:00pm
14659 E State Route 37
Sunbury, Ohio 43074
United States

THE BIRTHDAY MAIL
200 YEARS OLD
1817
POSTAL SERVICE

Celebration	Kindly Reply
IMPORTANT!	PLEASE REPLY BY OCTOBER 15TH TO AWELSH937@ME.COM OR 614-560-6953

Proceeds go to Big Walnut Area Historical Society

Southeastern Trenton Township

In 1800, Aaron Van Dorn of New Jersey bought 1333 1/3 acres for \$1 an acre in what would become Trenton from John Cleve Symes, a big Ohio Land investor in Cincinnati. In 1810 he sold 333 1/3 acres to his brother William Van Dorn.

In 1816, Aaron's son, Gilbert, then 33, married Magdalena Voorhees, 19. Their daughter Gasha was born on September 25, 1817, New Jersey.

In 1817, Gilbert brought his family to Ohio and settled on his 1000 acres in Sunbury Township. At the crossroads of the future 605 and 37, he built a log cabin. At the time there were only 2 families between Licking County and Sunbury. Gilbert began selling property around the intersection to new families moving west. The area became known as Van's Valley.

In 1818 he opened a tavern and put a gilt sun on the sign for his "Center Inn." Eventually he added 3 more log cabins all connected to the Center Inn. This was the first place for public gathering and entertainment in the area. He added a small general store and eventually a post office to his business.

Meanwhile his family grew. They had 6 more daughters: Lamatta in 1819, Mary Magdalena in 1823, Caroline in 1825, Jane in 1837, Octavia in 1840 and son Peter Gilbert in 1835. Peter died at the age of 15.

Gilbert had a kiln on his property and in 1829 he began building a brick building onto his log structure. When Delaware County was formed in February 1808, the county commissioners recognized Berkshire, Radnor and Liberty Townships. In June of the same year they lumped the rest of eastern Delaware County into Sunbury Township. In 1810 Harlem Township was formed from Sunbury Township, Kingston in 1813, and Genoa in 1816. The village of Sunbury was founded in Berkshire Township in 1816. Porter Township was formed from Sunbury Township in 1826/27.

According to local legend some time between 1830 and 1835, Messrs, Van Dorn, Leak and Condit all early settlers and prominent men of the township, were sitting on a log discussing a new name of the township.



Gilbert and Magdalena Van Dorn
photo from Fay Armstrong

Leak wanted it changed to Chester after his former home town and Condit wanted Orange after his home (but there was already on in the county) and Van Dorn suggested Trenton after the capital of his home state of New Jersey. The County Commissioners confirmed the name change to Trenton.

Van Dorn was named Justice of the Peace for the Trenton Township and held court in his Center Inn.

Many thanks to Fay Armstrong, a direct descendant of Caroline Van Dorn Armstrong for her history, Baskins "1880 History of Delaware County Ohio" and various documents collected on <http://BigWalnutHistory.org>

Plan to visit Van Dorn's Center Inn October 21.

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>

Follow us on Facebook!

