



Old Tyme Chronicle

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Thanks to Those Who Voted

Holding an election for officers of the coming year was challenge. We appreciate those who took the time turn in ballots by mail or email. Brian Moore will be the new president and Mindy Pyle will be the vice president. Their terms are two year each. Mel Meyer and Damon Bower ran for another three year term and Bill Comisford finishes his term as President and has filled the third Trustee chair in the Class of 2023.

Hornbaker is New Trustee

Regretfully Quinn Thomas had to resign with two years remaining on her term as BWAHS Trustee. Ashley Hornbaker has agreed to complete her term.



Ashley Hornbaker

Ashley grew up in Upstate New York. She and her husband, Nathan, had an electronics business. When hurricane Sandy flooded out their business in 2014, they moved to Delaware, Ohio, her husband's hometown.

“We started PC Knights in early 2015 and specialize in computer, smart phone, tablet and gaming console repair,” noted Ashley.

“In addition to keeping my computer running,” commented Polly Horn, “Ashley is instrumental in helping Roger Roberts convert our programs to YouTube for your at home viewing.

Welcome, Ashley!

December's Online Program

Doritty Shows Evolution of Infantryman's Gear Since W.W. I

“Military Equipment Connections Between Wars,” is the topic for Big Walnut Area Historical Society's December program. Richard Doritty will present the evolution of the infantryman's equipment from WWI to the present. The program is recorded in the Myers Inn meeting room and will be available on YouTube. Go to <http://BigWalnutHistory.org> and click on link to the program.

Doritty was born in Erie, Pa in 1941, graduated from Erie Technical High School in 1959, entered the Air Force in 1960 where he served with the 60th Fighter Interceptor Squadron as an electrician until January 1964. He came to Columbus to work for Western Electric. He attended Ohio Technical Institute where he earned an Associate Degree in Electronic Technology. In 1967 Dick married Sharon and moved to Sunbury.

He has served time with the Sunbury Police Department and B.S.T. & G. Fire Department. He is active in Sparrow Masonic Lodge and American Legion Post #457. He supports and is actively involved with many activities for military veterans.

Doritty will have an exhibit of uniforms, eating equipment, personal equipment, combat gear, specialty items and combat weapons to show the evolution of the equipment.

The program link will be on the website by December 10th so you can enjoy the program on YouTube.

DUE TO COVID THERE WILL NOT BE CHRISTMAS-ON-THE-SQUARE. PLAN TO ATTEND IN DECEMBER 2021!

Throughout most of covid pandemic, a group of us have been meeting via Zoom to encourage each other to write the stories of our lives for our grandchildren. I talked to my sister Penny in Chicago a couple of days before Thanksgiving. We recalled some of our early holidays which I shared with the group on November 24, 2020

Growing Up Near the Railroad by Polly Horn

Our Dad told about Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show coming to town in 1911 on the railroad when he was about six. The train pulled onto the siding near the Sunbury Manufacturing Company (now Great Midwest Yacht Company). The side show tents were set up in the lower field with animals. The main event was easily seen from the street and area around but you had to pay to get into the big tent. He had a quarter to get in but his friend did not so they both crawled under the tent and were caught by their belts and taken to the 'office.' Dad tried to pay but they would not take his money so he missed the show because he tried to cheat. The lesson he frequently told if he thought we were thinking of doing something we shouldn't, "Be Careful, you'll miss the show."

The railroad was a good source of bragging among the young men. Dad told about men 'riding the rods' to avoid paying for a train ride. When they were teens, he

<p>Big Walnut Area Historical Society OFFICERS Bill Comisford, President Brian Moore, Vice President Chip Welch, Secretary Bill Kavage, Treasurer Polly Horn, Curator, Webmaster and Editor of Newsletter TRUSTEES Alice Lacher Brock Schmaltz Carol Wood Damon Bower Mel Meyers Mindy Pyle Quin Thomas Roger Roberts For Information Call 740-965-1154 leave a message or email Info@BigWalnutHistory.org</p>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NO CHRISTMAS-ON-THE- SQUARE IN 2020

December 8 at 6 p.m. Board of Trustees,
via Zoom

December 8, Program "Military Equipment
Connections Between Wars,"
with Richard Doritty via YouTube
get link at <http://BigWalnutHistory.org>



*Steam Engine Pushing a Second Engine over
Vernon Street - Early 1900s*

and some of his friends crawled under a train to ride on the brake rods just inches above the wheels. They made

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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**

(Near the Railroad continued from page 2)
it to Galena. Once was more than enough. They walked back to Sunbury grateful no one was hurt.



***First Railroad Station
Showing Fence Around One
Farmer's Field - Rest is
Fenceless***

Farmers donated their land to the railroad for the right-of-way. Fences along the railroad did not exist during the early days so trains had a triangular part called a cow-catcher which was attached to the engines like a snowplow. Literally

animals were shoved off the tracks.

One day a young Carleton Burrer went to Centerburg and took a dare to ride the cow catcher to Condit. When the train started to move and the driver could not see, Carleton jumped on the cow catcher. What started



***This Trestle Fell
before Burrer's Ride
but the New One Was
Just as Scary***

out to be a fun dare became scary when the engine picked up speed and went right through Condit without stopping. Carelton could not get off until the train stopped in Sunbury where the usual crowd that met the train cheered the embarrassed young man.

Growing up in 210 E. Granville Street was very close to the railroad in Sunbury. We could sit on the steps which went down to 37 and watch the trains go over the trestle bridge at the bottom of the hill. One set of our favorite babysitters were Mr. and Mrs. Newt Tracey who lived next to the railroad. We loved to visit them and feel the house vibrate when the train rolled by.

In the summer and fall sparks would fly from the steam engine powered trains and set the dry grass on fire. Sunbury had a totally volunteer fire department so this would keep them busy. We would listen for the fire truck siren as the men rushed to save a house or barn.

Railroads were a favorite way for hobos to travel free. Tramps usually walked across the countryside and begged or stole food. Hobos often stowed away on a

train and hopped off in small towns where they would work for a meal. I understand the term Hobo came from men actually carrying a hoe with a bag of their belongings tied to it. This way they were ready to hoe a garden for a meal. I remember some carried a whetstone to sharpen knives or a file to sharpen mower blades. When they stopped at our house for food, they would sit on the well stone

near the back door and sharpen knives or scissors for a meal. Mom did not let them in the house but there was a pump on the well and an outhouse not too far away which that they were welcome to use. I remember us watching them and listening to their tales. I always heard they left a mark near the drive if the people in the house were good to them. We never saw a sign but then I don't remember ever seeing the same hobo twice.

Living with a newspaper editor for a father made for some interesting holidays. When the railroad changed from steam engines to diesel engines we missed the grass fires. Because they could not turn the new engines on and off quickly on holidays they were left running. The round houses were usually full so the engineer would bring a train to Sunbury to idle on the siding while the crew was met by their families to go home for the holidays. A few men were left with the train.

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Featured Business Member **OPTEK, INC.**

Since 1970 Optek, Inc., under the leadership of Bill Kavage and Marvin Monroe, has engineered manufactured solutions to measurement and control applications in several industries. Their primary effort since 1992 has been to design specific hardware and software to provide a cost effective solution to seed corn drying.

Bill serves as Treasurer for BWAHS historical society.

Optek, Inc. is located at 5229 Cheshire Road in Galena and can be reached at 800-533-8400 or at WTKAVAGE@Optek-inc.com.

Of course Dad had to go talk with the remaining men. One Christmas he brought the men to our house. They watched us play with our toys and then joined us for dinner. I remember feeling bad when tears ran down their faces because they missed their homes.

I remember one Thanksgiving Dad brought a hobo in to eat at our dining room table. He had joined the engineer inside the caboose while the others had gone home for meals. Since one man had to stay with the train for safety sake, just the hobo came. He told us he was “king of the hobos” and had been traveling back and forth across the country for many years. He said he carried very few of his belongings with him. He talked about places he had seen. When he left he took a meal to the engineer. Years later when I was freshman in college, Mom’s Girl Scout Troop went to New York the day after Christmas and returned home the day after New Year’s. While we were taking a bus tour of the different areas of New York we visited the Bowery. I saw a newspaper on a stand with the heading *King of the Hobos* and a picture of the man who had eaten dinner with us. He was real!

I remember my first train ride. We went from Sunbury to Orville which was the end of the line. We got off and ate lunch and returned to Sunbury. Think I might have been 10.

When I was in Big Walnut High School our band was asked to play for the Cleveland Browns Football Game. Some locals chartered a train to take us up and return us after the game.



Waiting for the train to Cleveland in 1956

Enough Memories! It’s Thanksgiving 2020

This Thanksgiving 2020 will also make the memory books. Covid 19 is rushing through the countryside. Brother John and Georgann are recovering from it. I have stayed on my property while my daughter does my shopping and leaves my groceries on the porch. Bradd, my son, came last week to replace some locks and change the smoke alarm batteries I can’t reach. All the time he was here we wore masks and stayed 10’ apart (he did not want to take a chance with the 6’ recommended.) He ordered pizza which we put on the swing on the front porch. We loaded our plates and ate still 10’ apart, then replaced the masks and talked until I was too cold to stay outside. We came into the living room and sat 15’ apart still in masks for about a half hour then he went to say hello to David, my other son, and his wife Renee who were eating at Surve.

So I will be home for Thanksgiving 2020. Stephanie was considered inviting her in-laws and me for dinner since we have all stayed home but she was stressed because her son Nick has been quarantined when an ice hockey teammate tested positive. It was over Wednesday before Thanksgiving. I told her not to invite me. It is too much stress. After all it is just a day.

I’ll eat pork I roasted and froze, sweet potato and cranberry-relish. I don’t need pie crust so I thought I would make pumpkin filling and bake it but I forgot Renee ‘borrowed’ the canned milk last summer and I forgot to replace it. So I’ll have homemade cinnamon applesauce over ice cream instead and think about all the Thanksgivings I fixed turkey with regular and oyster dressing.

The Rest of the Story

The Zoom meeting was not over very long when I heard a car in the drive. Pam Sheets, a member of the Zoom group, had delivered a can of pumpkin and canned milk to me.

Wednesday evening, David called to say they were bringing me Thanksgiving dinner at 2 on Thursday. At 11 a.m. he called to say his daughter Alex woke up with a fever and wasn’t feeling well. So I got out the pork and made the no crust pumpkin pie. Our entire family met at 5 on Zoom. Definitely a memorable Thanksgiving!