

THE VILLAGE PIONEER



*Journal of the Sheffield Village Historical Society
& Cultural Center*



Sheffield Artist Tim O'Connor's painting, Her Mother's Voice. Tara, the girl in the painting, reflects on her mother's admonishment.

Tim O'Connor—Sheffield's Resident Artist

You may have never noticed, but there's a neat "saltbox" style building on Harris Road, not far north of Brookside High School that serves as Tim O'Connor's artist studio, *Willow Tree Studio*. Tim built the studio some 20 years ago behind his parent's home on land they donated for the project. They also gave Tim's brother, Terry, land nearby to construct a master carpentry shop where he works on fascinating projects, including restoration of historic organs for Holtkamp Organ Company of Cleveland. Tim explained that a saltbox building is one having up to three stories at the front and one fewer at the back with a steeply pitched roof. The advantage of such a design is natural air circulation, in that warm air rises in the high section, cools, then flows downward in the back section of the building completing the cycle. Saltbox houses were popular in New England in the 18th and 19th centuries. An excellent example that still survives, the Colonel John Ashley House of 1735, was the first house built in our namesake village, Sheffield, Massachusetts.

Where does an artist get the spark to create? Tim thinks it happened when he was only 4 years old. While accompanying his father to Dorothy and Elmer's, a local tavern in Sheffield Lake, he saw an Anheuser Busch print of *Custer's Last Fight* by artist Otto Becker. The magnificence of the painting convinced Tim that this would be his life's work. On further reflection, Tim remarked, "My father has always said I was destined to be an artist since birth." When Tim was born in Lorain's St. Joseph Hospital, his mother telephoned his dad with the newborn's statistics. Not being able to reach a pad to write them down, he grabbed a painting off the wall and jotted them down on the back. That sealed Tim's fate.

Tim feels that artistic talents are something you are born with, but they need to be nurtured and practiced if they are to be perfected. His talents were first noticed while he was a student at Brookside High School in the late 1960s. Tim spent much of his free time doodling and sketching which drew the attention of the faculty, particularly art teacher Ray Libengood. He was encouraged to keep on drawing and soon he was known as the school artist.

Tim recalls that the Sheffield schools were overcrowded at the time and the district was attempting to pass a construction levy. Tim was called upon to draw a poster to emphasize the need

for new classrooms. His creation was a doghouse bulging at its seams with puppies running out of the openings. Superintendent Don Stockum liked the idea. He ordered the poster mounted on the school buses to promote passage of the levy as they traversed the district. The levy passed and Tim O'Connor was proclaimed, "Brookside's own Norman Rockwell."

After graduating from Brookside in June 1971, Tim continued his artistic pursuits that autumn at the Cooper School of Art in Cleveland. Completing his training, Tim was ready to begin

his career as a professional artist, but it was difficult for a young artist to make a living on art alone. He took a job making electrical cable and in his spare time worked at his craft. Eddie Solomon, owner of McGarvey's Restaurant in Vermilion [now Quaker Steak & Lube] hired Tim to make signs and posters. Tim is particularly proud of one of his creations—a caricature of Mr. Solomon dubbed *Captain Eddie*, that for years was mounted on top of the restaurant.

Next, Tim found work with Pro Arts in Medina designing lithographic posters, mostly comic caricatures that were popular in the 1970s, but might not be politically correct today. He followed this with work for James Lister's Creative Studio in North Olmstead drawing greeting cards. All of this time Tim was building up his portfolio, hoping to land a permanent position.



Tim O'Connor stands by a print of his masterpiece of *Tara, Her Mother's Voice*.



Willow Tree Studio, Tim O'Connor's saltbox-style studio on Harris Road in Sheffield Village.



Sheffield Line Shack—Tim O'Connor's painting of the old Nickel Plate Railroad shack that stood at the Harris Road crossing until 1984.

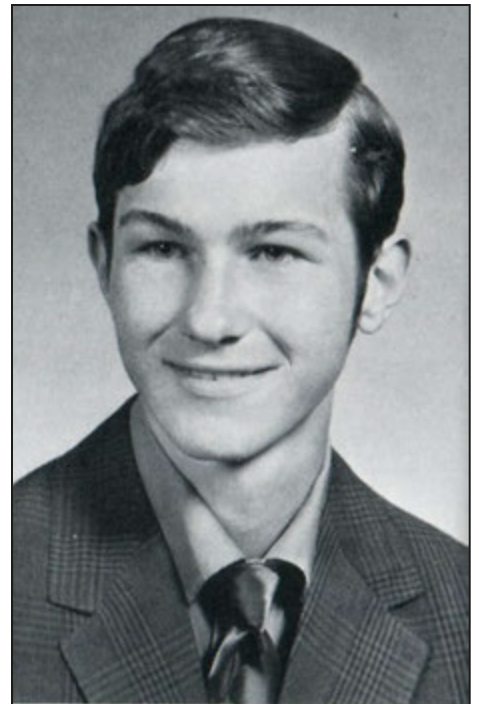


Tim O'Connor holds his first clay sculpture, a gorilla head he created in 1969 while a sophomore at Brookside High School. Tim used his entire art class budget on the clay to make the model, which he named Sam Simeon.

Tim dreamed of working on television animations like *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. With Lister's help, he contacted the organization of Charles Schultz, creator of Charlie Brown. He was referred to Bill Melendez, head of the production company for shows, who invited Tim to come to Hollywood for an interview in 1979. After looking through Tim's portfolio, Melendez offered to let him stay at the studio for a week to observe the production of a show. Tim learned that it took 8 months worth of work to produce a single a 30-minute show. Melendez was nearing retirement and



Jonathan and the Fourth Gift—a Christmas book written and illustrated by Tim.



TIMOTHY O'CONNOR
Audio Visual 1
"Brookside's own Norman Rockwell."

Tim O'Connor's high school graduation photograph and caption from the Brookside High School yearbook, *The Leader* for 1971.



My Sunny Day, a nursery rhyme book written by V. Gilbert Beers and illustrated by Tim O'Connor. On the shelf to the left rests several other books illustrated by Tim O'Connor.



The Christmas Storybook: A Celebration of God's Gift of Love. This work not only contains a book written by Stephen Elkins and illustrated by Tim O'Connor, but a cassette narrated by Larnelle Harris.

was quite willing to share his “secrets” of the trade to an aspiring young artist. At the end of the week Melendez had some tough, but sound advise. He reminded Tim that 7 out of every 10 animators in Hollywood were out of work at the time. His advise was to “go back to Ohio and build your own market where one doesn’t exist.” Tim took the advice and by 1989 he had created a market sufficient to allow him to construct his *Willow Tree Studio*.

Tim’s philosophy is that a painting stops time, while a book creates the elusion of life. He has created a successful career in both ventures. At his studio Tim has done the artwork for some 25 children’s books, two of which he authored the text and several others he collaborated with noted author V. Gilbert Beers. He has done the artwork for numerous soft covered and hard backed scholastic books. Over the years Tim has discovered his drawings need to catch the eye of parents—they buy books, not the kids.

He doesn’t do commission paintings, but he has painted some exquisite portraits of extended family members. One titled *Her Mother’s Voice* catches young Tara in a private moment of reflection. Another painting depicts the *Sheffield Line Shack* of the old Nickel Plate Railroad that once stood at the Harris Road crossing. Tim captured it just before it was torn down in 1984—he still recalls the potbelly stove and floor strewn with playing cards. Several of his prints are available from *Wobblefoot Gallery* in Lakewood. Currently Tim is working on a new project for Cracker Barrel Old Country Stores—development of the *Uncle Hershel* product line, including collectibles and bluegrass CDs. You may be seeing them soon in our local Cracker Barrel on Detroit Road at the I-90 interchange. While you are there, check out the local history display, which includes the *Images of America: Sheffield Village* book produced by the Historical Society.

The Editor wishes to thank Tim O’Connor for graciously opening his studio to the Historical Society and for sharing his career adventures with us. His artistic talents have been internationally recognized for over 20 years. We are indeed fortunate to have him and his wife Becky as members of our community. The Editor also thanks Historical Society member Jim Conrad for suggesting this article. Tim O’Connor and Jim Conrad were classmates in the 1971 Brookside graduating class. Jim was kind enough to donate his Brookside yearbook to the Society, which contains an amusing note and cartoon from Tim to Jim.



Tim O’Connor at work in his studio on a new concept for Cracker Barrel Old Country Stores.



Tim’s Cracker Barrel icon, Uncle Hershel, is being developed for a new product line that will include collectibles and bluegrass CDs.

**Wobblefoot® Gallery
Presents:
The American Image
by: Tim O'Connor**

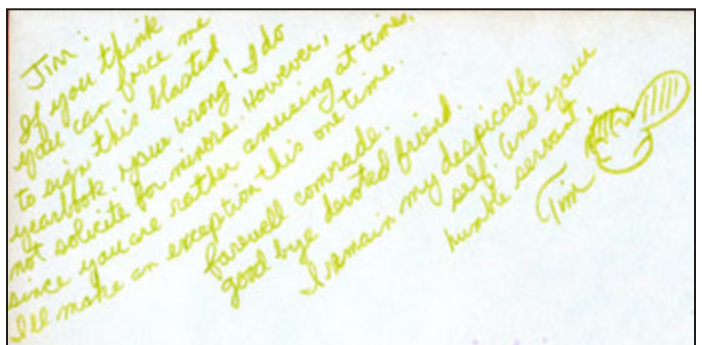
OUR HOUSE

Reception: Friday, Sept. 16, 2005, 6:00-9:00 p.m. Come and meet the artist.

Location: Wobblefoot Gallery, 1662 Mars Avenue, Lakewood, OH 44107
Phone: (216) 226-2971 www.wobblefoot.com
Business Hours: 10-6 Tues-Fri & 10-4 Sat.

(Show runs Sept. 16 - Oct. 15, 2005)

Catalog for a 2005 exhibition of Tim’s works at Wobblefoot Gallery in Lakewood, Ohio. His works are currently available from this gallery.



At Brookside High School, Tim penned this note and cartoon in his classmate Jim Conrad’s yearbook.

William Root Home Furnishings Donated to Historical Society

Historical Society members David and Elaine Hibbard of Medina, Ohio have made a significant donation of historic items that once furnished the home of William H. Root (1803-1889) to the Sheffield Village Historical Society. William, son of Henry Root and Mary (Day) Root, was a boy of 13 when his family traveled overland through the wilderness from Sheffield, Massachusetts to arrive here in the early spring of 1816—one of the first families to settle Sheffield. David Hibbard is the great, great grandson of William Root.

William Root was a prominent citizen of Lorain County, serving as Auditor of the young county. William's accounts of the overland journey and the early years of Sheffield, along with those of his cousin Norman Day, are among the best records of the formative years of our community. In the 1840s William built an elegant Greek Revival-style home on the Lake Erie shore in what was then Sheffield Township. The property now straddles the line between the cities of Lorain and Sheffield Lake [see the June 2010 issue of *The Village Pioneer*, Vol. 5, No. 2, pages 7-9 for more details on the William Root House]. Four generations of the William H. Root family are buried in Sheffield Village's Garfield Cemetery.

The Historical Society is extremely pleased to receive several furnishings from the William H. Root Home and to have them on display at the Sheffield History Center. David and Elaine have also prepared detailed descriptions and histories of each item, which are part of the displays. The items include eight pieces of historic wood furniture, in addition to a candle chandelier with delicate glass globes and deer-head ornamentation. Three furniture pieces are children items: (1) an antique child's crib over 200 years old with slots for hand-held rocker rails, (2) a child's high chair from the 1800s, and (3) an infant's rocking chair that was likely cherished and well used based on the multiple repairs to the piece. The adult furniture consists of: (1) a library table once used by the Root family for correspondence, (2) two Eastlake-style chairs with deep red leather seat covers, and (3) two wash stands from the late 1800s—one designed as a combination chest of drawers. The Society expresses its sincere appreciation to David and Elaine for this outstanding contribution.



William Root House, on the lakeshore at the foot of Root Road.



Chandelier with glass globes.



Child's rocking chair.



Elaine Hibbard, Ricki Herdendorf, and David Hibbard (left to right) at the Hibbard home in Medina, Ohio. They are holding a piece of stockade wood from the Confederate prison at Andersonville, Georgia. David's great aunt, Maria Root, was a volunteer who assisted the recovery of Union prisoners there after the Civil War and brought the stockade artifact back to Sheffield. Ricki is elated that the Hibbards crouched down so they wouldn't tower over her.



Child's crib with slots for hand rockers.



Library table of sturdy construction.



Combination wash stand/chest of drawers.

Society Vice President Inducted into Brookside Hall of Fame

On June 8, 2012, Andy Minda, Vice President of the Sheffield Village Historical Society was inducted into the Brookside High School Athletic Hall of Fame. At the ceremony, Mayor John D. Hunter also presented Andy with a Proclamation describing his accomplishments and declared Monday June 11, 2012 as Andrew N. Minda, III Day in Sheffield Village.

Andy had a sterling sports career at Brookside High School from 1955 to his graduation in 1959. He participated all four years in football, baseball, and basketball, and was on the track team for two years. Andy was a key player on the 1957 and 1958 Inland Conference Championship Football Teams. He was designated the Most Valuable Player on the 1958 Championship Team and named to the All-Conference Football Team for that year.



Graduation photograph of Andrew N. Minda, Brookside High School Class of 1959.

Andy was a major contributor to the 1958 Baseball Team's highly successful season, including a distinguished showing in the State Playoffs. He served as co-captain with Bob Johnson in 1957 and captain in 1958. Brookside was Inland Conference Baseball Champions in 1958 and 1959. Coach Dick Sevits once said, "Andy hit a ball so far at a practice session that the outfielders couldn't find it in the weeds beyond the field."

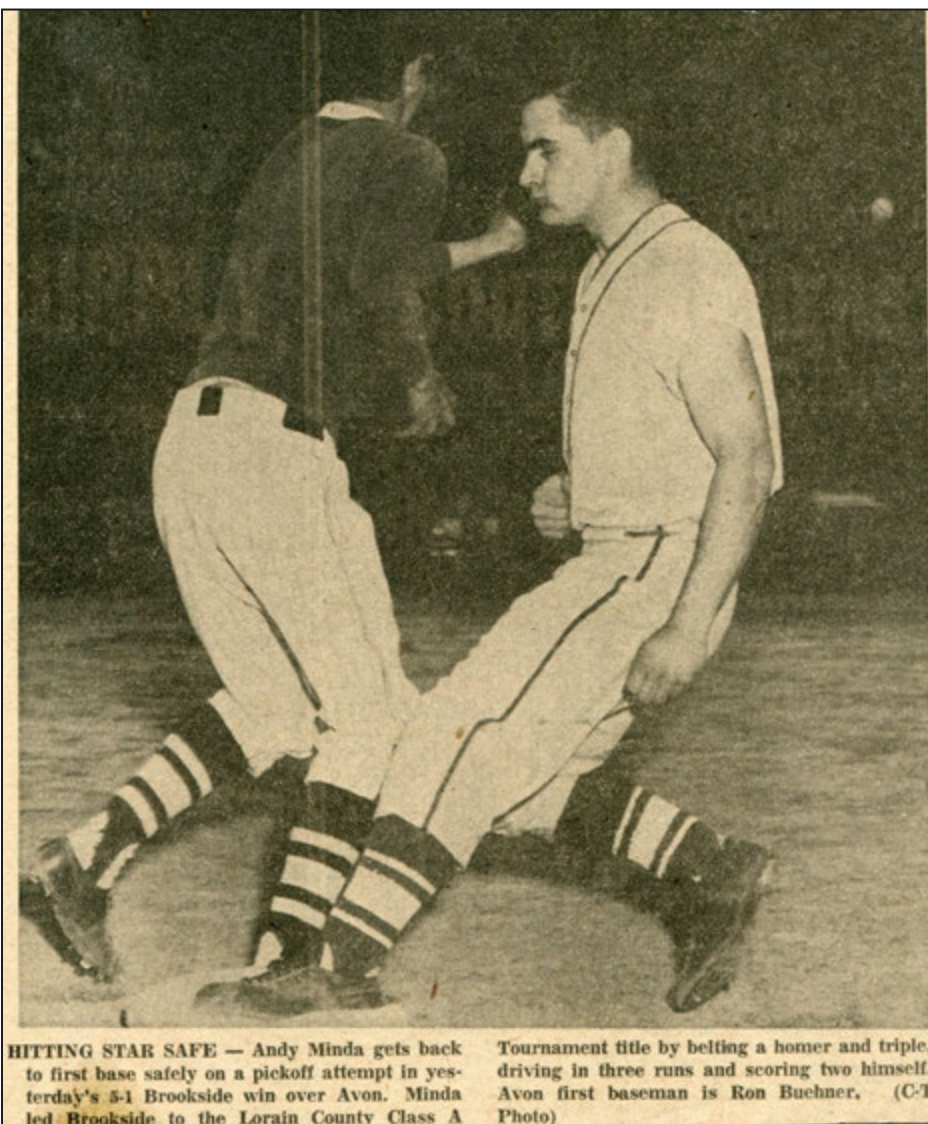
On the Brookside Track Team, Andy was a member of the 880-meter rely squad. The squad took first place in the Lorain County Track Meet held at Oberlin Collage and set a County record. Andy would have liked to

continue his participation in track, but after his second year on the team, the sport was discontinued at Brookside.

When 11-man football came to Brookside High School in 1957, Andy was a member of the first squad. The next year he was chosen Team Captain and distinguished himself on both the offense and defense squads—he kicked a 37-foot field goal, a record at the time. After graduation Andy continued his football career at Idaho State University where he received a 4-year football scholarship. In the 1959 collegiate issue of *Sports Illustrated* Andy was listed as a player to be watched. Out West, Andy enjoyed the opportunity to devote his spare time to big game hunting.

In addition to athletics, Andy was Junior Class President and Senior Class Vice President. He was elected to the National Honor Society and was active in Hi-Y, B-Club, and the *Cardinal Courier* newspaper and *The Leader* yearbook staffs. In 1956, he received honorable mention in algebra at the District State Scholarship Tests.

Andy makes his home in Sheffield Village with his wife Carol (Day) Minda, descendent of the 1815 founder of Sheffield, Capt. John Day. They live in the historic Italianate-style William A. Day House, built in 1879 on East River Road. The Mindas have two children,



HITTING STAR SAFE — Andy Minda gets back to first base safely on a pickoff attempt in yesterday's 5-1 Brookside win over Avon. Minda led Brookside to the Lorain County Class A Tournament title by belting a homer and triple, driving in three runs and scoring two himself. Avon first baseman is Ron Buchner. (C-T Photo)

This photograph, originally printed in a 1958 issue of the *Elyria Chronicle-Telegram*, depicts Andy Minda on base at a Brookside-Avon baseball game held at Oakwood Park in South Lorain. Brookside defeated Avon 5-1 by virtue of Andy's home run, triple, and 3 runs batted in to clinch the victory and the County Class 'A' title (clipping courtesy of Ralph C. Lattig).

Michele and Drew, and two grandchildren. The entire family was present at the award ceremony on June 8th.

At the Historical Society, in addition as serving as Vice President, Andy serves as Coordinator of the restoration work on the Village's 1946 fire truck. Andy and Carol also serve as Society representatives on the Sheffield Village Family Pride Day Planning Committee.

Congratulations Andy—an honor well deserved!

The September 2010 issue of *The Village Pioneer* (Vol. 5, No. 3, page 10) lists all of the inductees to the Brookside Hall of Fame from 1989 through 2010. To bring the list up to date, the following recent honorees include:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2011 | 2012 |
| Ray Beese | 1963 Boys Basketball Team |
| Robert Markovich | Carl Asp |
| 1984-85 Girls Gymnastics Team | Andrew Minda |

The Editor thanks Brookside Athletic Director Dick Kerschbaum for supplying information used in this article.



Mayor John Hunter's Proclamation presented to Andy Minda declaring June 11, 2012 as his day in Sheffield Village.

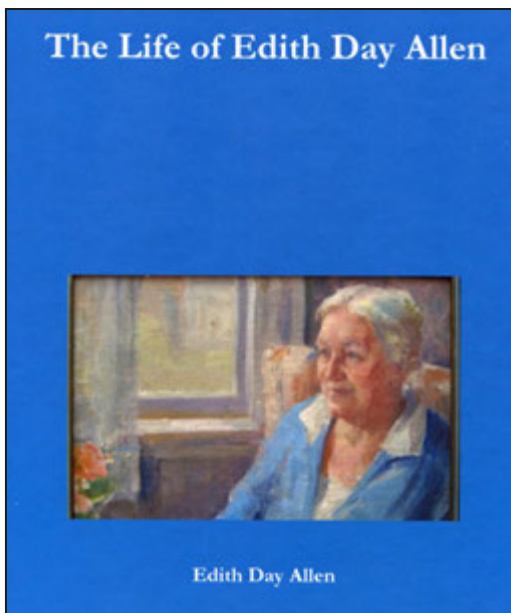


Andy Minda proudly displays his Brookside Hall of Fame plaque at his home on East River Road.

The Life of Edith Day Allen Published

Edith Day, born in Elyria in 1860, was the great granddaughter of Captain John Day, founder of Sheffield Village. She married Dr. Asa A. Allen in 1882 and traveled with him as he pursued a medical practice in Michigan, Wisconsin, Colorado, and finally Rhode Island. Mother of nine children, she was admired and loved by all who knew her. Edith died in 1939 and her fascinating journals and diaries were passed on to her daughter, Eleanor (Allen) Welch. When Eleanor died in 1969, her daughter, Mildred (Welch) Clough, inherited a box of old photographs, diaries, journals, and notebooks that her grandmother, Edith (Day) Allen, had accumulated over the years. From these, Mildred has lovingly compiled not only the story of Edith's life, but the early history of the Day, Root, Austin, and Burrell families as they journeyed from New England to found our Village.

Mildred Clough has now published *The Life of Edith Day Allen* as a handsome hard-backed book of 514 pages. Although she lives in Redwood City, California, Mildred is a charter member of the Sheffield Village Historical Society and has graciously donated a copy of her book to the Society's library. Mildred's book can be ordered online at <http://lulu.com/spotlight/DayAllen> for \$27.85. Edna Lawrence, a prominent artist in Rhode Island, did the lovely painting on the book's cover in the early 1930s.



The cover of Edith Day Allen's autobiography, edited by her granddaughter Mildred Clough. Cover painting by Edna Lawrence (circa 1930).

Cletrac Crawler Tractors

Have you ever heard of a CLETRAC? We have over a dozen of them right here in Sheffield Village. They are a marvelous invention of Rollin H. White (1872-1962), founder of a Cleveland company that eventually became known as Cletrac, Inc., which produced thousands of these unique crawler tractors for military and civilian use from 1916 to 1965. White's brilliant career, which included this and several other inventions, was recognized last year with his induction into the *National Inventors Hall of Fame*. Thomas Edison, another Ohioan, was the first in 1973 when the Hall of Fame was founded in Washington, DC.

Rollin Henry White

Rollin Henry White was born in Cleveland and educated at Brooks Military Academy, a college preparatory school for males that operated in Cleveland from 1874 to 1891. The academy was established by wealthy Clevelanders in honor of Rev. Frederick Brooks, rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church. He had dreamed of opening a prep school for young men. The school admitted boys and young men from 7 to 20 years of age and was first located on Prospect Avenue at the southwest corner of East 14th Street. Its first headmaster was John S. White, a Harvard graduate. After 1882 Amos H. Thompson served as President of the school. In 1875 the school moved into a new building on Silbey Avenue, funded by men such as financier and railroad magnate Jephtha Homer Wade. The new structure included a drill hall, armory, gymnasium, and chemical laboratory. Military training was conducted by a U.S. Army officer. The school closed in 1891 and the building was destroyed by fire in 1908.

Following his education at Brooks, White attended Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. In 1898 he went to work at his father's factory in Cleveland, the White Sewing Machine Company. The following year he invented a flash boiler to generate steam rapidly and safely in passenger vehicles. A few years later he designed an engine with high and low pressure cylinders, for which he won a gold medal at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis. White's automobiles, known as *White Steamers*, produced by his White Motor Company garnered respect winning several competitions and setting speed records. In 1912, Rollin White turned his talents to designing a crawler tractor—one with articulated steel bands passing around the wheels for travel on rough ground.

Cletrac Crawler Tractors

In 1916, with a capital investment of \$6 million, Rollin H. White organized the Cleveland Motor Plow Co. on Euclid Avenue, to produce the crawler-type tractor he had developed for general farm use four years earlier. Renamed as the Cleveland Tractor Co. in 1917, he sold 40,000 tractors in the United States and 70 foreign countries during the first decade of manufacturing, many for military applications in World War I. During the Great Depression of the 1930s the needs of the Civilian Conservation Corps and public works projects kept the plant open. By 1937 the firm, which then employed 1,500 workers, enjoyed record tractor



Cleveland Tractor Company general offices and works, consisting of 7 acres of floor space at 19300 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio, operated at this location from 1916 to 1961 (courtesy of Mike Stockard).



Rollin H. White (1872-1962), inventor of the Cletrac crawler tractor; was inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame on May 4, 2011.



View of the assembly line inside the Cleveland Tractor Company factory in the late 1930s (courtesy of the Floyd County Historical Society, Charles City, Iowa).

sales in America and abroad. Before World War II, the company had introduced several lower-priced tractors with 4-cylinder engines for use by the small farmer.

The military application of Cleveland Tractor's products became dominant during World War II when the firm manufactured a new, high-speed tractor for hauling artillery. Another specialized military tractor, the MG-1 (nicknamed the "Bomber Nurse"), was produced with rubber cleats for use on grass airfields. This unique tractor came equipped with a high-pressure air compressor, 24-volt generator, nitrogen bottle, winch, and center-mount drawbar for maximum traction that allowed it to tow B-17s around soggy English airfields with relative ease. Although the company received a steady flow of orders, low defense-work profits and research costs for new products convinced President White to sell the company to the 96-year-old Oliver Corp. of Chicago in 1944.

Oliver invested \$3.5 million in the aging Cleveland plant to develop new products. However, Cleveland Tractor remained unprofitable until the Korean War revived its business. Oliver produced tractors branded Oliver-Cletrac into the 1950s renaming its Cleveland facilities Cletrac, Inc. in 1959. The demise of the Cleveland plant came in 1961 when White Motor Company bought the local Cletrac inventories, engineering designs, and machine tools, then closed the plant. The site of the Cletrac plant at 19300 Euclid Avenue is now the home of the massive Indian Hills Senior Community, one of the largest retirement complexes in the mid-west. Cletrac tractors continued to be produced for a few more years in Charles City, Iowa, with the last one "crawling" off the line in 1965, ending 49 years of production. Over the years some 57 model-variations of Cletrac tractors were produced.

Cletrac Peak

A special honor has been awarded to Cletrac tractors—the naming of a geographic feature. Cletrac Peak (latitude 64°20'S; longitude 59°38'W) is a conspicuous, steep-sided peak at the northwest corner of Larsen Inlet on the Antarctic Peninsula. A Cletrac was the first tractor to be used successfully in the Antarctic, specifically Model 80-60 employed by Admiral Richard Byrd during his 1933–35 expedition. The peak was first mapped by the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey (1960–1961), and named by the United Kingdom Antarctic Place-Names Committee for Cletrac tractors made by the Cleveland Tractor Company.

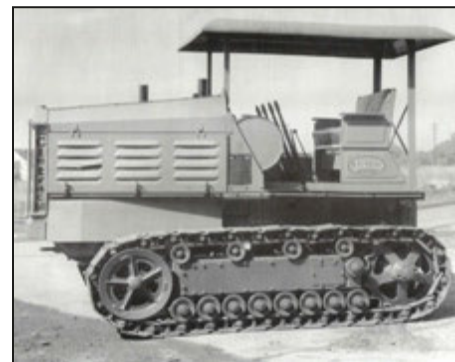


Map of Antarctica showing the location of Cletrac Peak.



Cletrac Peak, named for the use of Cletrac tractors by Adm. Byrd's Antarctic Expeditions in the 1930s, is located in this mountain range on the Antarctic Peninsula (photographed by author in February 1989).

Model 80-60 Cletrac, built from 1930 to 1932, was the type used by Adm. Byrd in Antarctica. It was fitted with a Wisconsin DT-3 gasoline engine and optional canopy. This tractor was shipped to the Philadelphia Navy Yard in September 1931 to serve in Antarctica (courtesy of the Floyd County Historical Society, Charles City, Iowa).



James Schilens Cletrac Collection

James Schilens, Jr. has collected 14 Cletrac tractors in the last 10 years. Jim, born in 1961, was raised in Sheffield Village on the Charles DeChant Homestead and his father, James Paul Schilens, Sr., still lives on North Ridge. Jim's mother, Clara Marie (DeChant) Schilens, passed away in 1989 at the young age of 48. Jim now makes his home in Avon Lake. He is a registered landscape architect with offices on Center Ridge Road in Westlake. He started collecting Cletrac tractors about 10 years ago, encouraged by his Uncle Philip DeChant. Philip owned a farm on Abbe Road that was purchased by the Ford Motor Company as part of its Avon Lake factory. Philip, a World War II veteran, was so enamored with his Cletrac tractor that when he died in 2006, he instructed that an image of a Cletrac be carved into his gravestone. The attractive black granite stone is in the new section of St. Teresa Cemetery. Philip's son, John DeChant of Wooster, Ohio, also has a collection of 12 nicely restored Cletrac tractors. Collectors, like Jim and his cousin John, who are infatuated with Cletrac, refer to themselves as having "Iron-itis."

How does one acquire a Cletrac? Jim scans the Internet, tours county fairs, hears of them by "word of mouth," and follows the newsletters of the many Cletrac clubs throughout the country. He has found Cletracs for his collection as far away as California. He houses his collection in a storage building on North Ridge in

Sheffield Village. Jim’s “long-term goal” is to collect two each of the various Cletrac tractor styles produced in Cleveland. He envisions restoring one of each model and leaving the other in its used condition. His current collection includes early models from about 1917 to others in the 1940s. He doubts if he can find them all because only 300 were produced for a few rare models. In total about 20 models were built, and with styling innovations for some models, some 50 iterations are out there somewhere.

The Editor had the opportunity to photograph Jim’s collection last summer. Some of Jim’s Cletrac tractors are illustrated with this article as well as a 1940 photograph of another one of Jim’s uncles, Charles DeChant, Jr. (1937-2011), seated on a Cletrac at the family farm on North Ridge in Sheffield Village.

Tom Walther’s Cletrac Adventure

Long before Schilens began collecting Cletracs, another Historical Society member, Tom Walther of Harris Road, was driving one—the year was 1942. Tom, at the tender age of 12, worked on the Nusdorfer farm in Avon Lake at the northeast corner of Route 83 and Walker Road. Here, Farmer Nusdorfer operated a 100-acre orchard of apple and peach trees. Young Tom was assigned the job of periodically spraying the trees with insecticides and fungicides. Most of the time he would do this alone by pulling an automatic sprayer behind the farmer’s green Cletrac tractor. One day when Nusdorfer was gone, Tom’s job was to mix the spray solution, attach the sprayer to the power takeoff on the tractor, and undertake the task of going up and down the rows of trees, coating them with a fine spray.

All went as normal until Tom made an exceptionally sharp turn. Snap! One of the tracks was thrown off a front wheel. Tom was horrified. What would Nusdorfer say? But

he was determined to get the track back on the wheel before the farmer returned—not an easy task for a grown man. It seemed impossible for a boy alone. Not sure of what to do, Tom loosened the tension bolt on the main spring and somehow with a long pry bar and a lot of fortitude was able to ease the track back on the front wheel. When Nusdorfer returned all was well and Tom had completed his task with no one the wiser. That was 70 years ago. The corner of Route 83 and Walker Road is quite a different place today, but Tom still remembers fondly driving the Cletrac up and down the rows of apple and peach trees that once stood there.

The Editor wishes to acknowledge the contribution of Richard Borgaro, a Cletrac collector from Grass Valley, California, in the preparation of historic aspects of this article. Another collector of Cletrac memorabilia, Mike Stockard, resides near Veteran’s Park in Avon. Mike was helpful with Cletrac information and he was kind enough to permit photographs of his collection, several of which accompany this article.



Models K-20 and A-30 Cletrac tractors were successfully used on farms (a) and for road grading (b) in the United States and Europe in the 1920s–1940s (courtesy of Mike Stockard).

Cletrac tractor sales promotional memorabilia (courtesy of Mike Stockard).



Chuck DeChant (1937-2011), Jim Schilens’ uncle, seated on his father’s Cletrac tractor (Model K-20) in 1940 at the family homestead on North Ridge in Sheffield Village (courtesy of the Charles DeChant family).



Philip DeChant (1922-2006), Jim Schilens’ uncle, was so taken with Cletrac tractors that he had an image of one carved on his gravestone at St. Teresa Cemetery.

Several of the Cletrac tractors in Jim Schilens' collection



Cletrac tractor Model 12 (W), built from 1919 to 1932, was powered by a Weidley-Cletrac gasoline engine.



Cletrac tractor Model K-20, built from 1925 to 1928, was a popular model powered by a Wisconsin gasoline engine.



Cletrac tractor Model 55, built from 1932 to 1936, could be fitted with a scraper blade and an air compressor. This model was powered by a Wisconsin gasoline engine.



Jim Schilens proudly exhibits his Cletrac tractor Model 40-D, shown here with a Sergeant overhead loader used for mining. This model, built in 1935 and 1936, was power by a Hercules diesel engine.



Cletrac tractor Model BG, built from 1937 to 1945, was powered by a Hercules gasoline engine.



Cletrac tractor Model MG-1, known as the "Bomber Nurse" during World War II, was fitted with rubber tracks for use on sod airfields. This model was built for military applications from 1941 to 1943.

Double Celebration for Bunsey Family

On Memorial Day, May 29, 2012 Agnes and Robert Bunsey were treated to a double celebration at their home on Old Abbe Road. Friends and relatives gathered at a party held in their backyard as Mayor John Hunter presented the couple with a Proclamation honoring 65 years of marriage signed by U.S. Representative Betty Sutton and read into the Congressional Record on April 10, 2012. Agnes and Bob were also presented with an American Flag that was flown over Nation's Capitol on that day.

Bob Bunsey was also honored with another mayoral Proclamation for his years of World War II service as an American Merchant Marine and his 13 years of service to the Merchant Marine veterans association. Bob's son, also Bob Bunsey, described his father's service in the Pacific Theater during the war, mentioning that the Merchant Marines suffered the highest percentage of fatalities of any of the branches of military service. After the presentations, lunch and cake were served under a tent and live music filled the air.



Agnes and Bob Bunsey's wedding photograph, February 15, 1947.



Bob Bunsey in WW II Merchant Marine uniform and a drawing of his Liberty ship.

About a week before the celebration, the Editor received the following letter from Bob that relates to his wartime service:

May 16, 2012

I received a copy of the Journal the other day and was pleasantly surprised to find the sailings of Captain James Cook featured.

In WWII, I served in the Merchant Marine. My first trip was on the SS James Cook, newly built and commissioned in December 1943. My first trip was to Honolulu, and I arrived on the anniversary date of Cook's discovery of the Hawaiian Islands. Quite a co-incidence.

The Cook was a Liberty tanker, one of about 60 such types. She lasted out the War and was sold to private owners who lengthened her to 511 1/2 feet and converted her to dry cargo. She grounded off Spain in 1967 and she was subsequently scrapped.

Quite a life for a ship built in perhaps 30 days for a cost of about \$2,000,000. They were considered expendable during the War. A single voyage was pay-off for the cost to build. Signed off when she was in New York for fitting out with a gun. She had been unarmed til then.

Thanks for the Journal. It brought back memories of nearly 70 years ago.

Sincerely,
Bob Bunsey

Congratulations Agnes and Bob on lives well lived!



Bob and Agnes Bunsey receiving Proclamations and an American Flag from Mayor John Hunter.



Celebration Cake, Memorial Day 2012.

Garfield Cemetery Restoration Project

The Village of Sheffield in association with the Sheffield Village Historical Society has embarked on a project to improve the appearance of historic Garfield Cemetery. Established in 1851, Garfield Cemetery was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 along with the adjacent Sheffield Village Hall. Over the years a number of historic gravestones in Garfield Cemetery from the mid- to late-1800s and a few more recent ones have deteriorated or have been damaged and are in need of repairs. At the request of Mayor John D. Hunter, the Sheffield Village Historical Society conducted a survey in March 2012 to determine the gravestones most in need of restorative actions. A report prepared by the Historical Society documented 40 candidate markers with photographs and location coordinates. The survey also noted that many of the grave markers were in need of cleaning.

Each spring Lorain County sponsors a Pride Day to spruce up public properties. Mayor Hunter decided that a portion of the restoration project at Garfield Cemetery would fit nicely into this year's Lorain County Pride Day set for May 19, 2012. The overall cemetery project consists of three components: (1) cleaning the

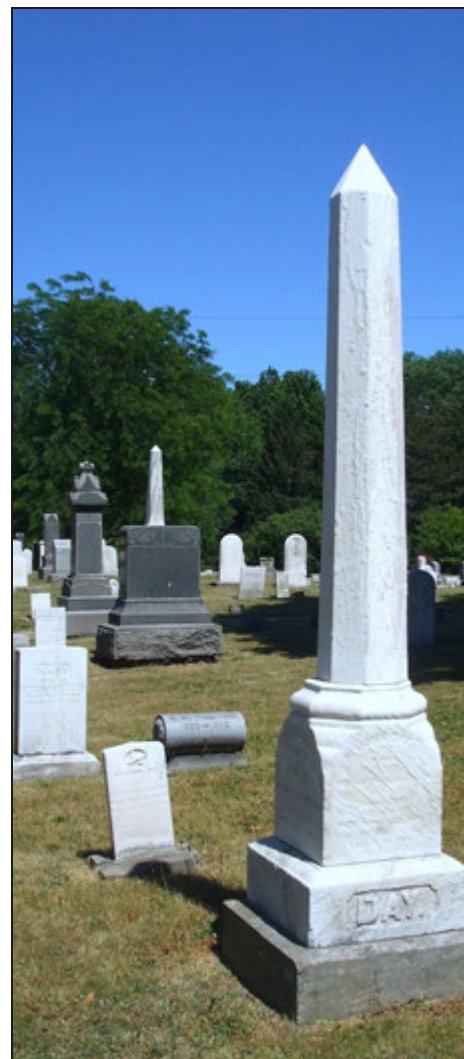
grave markers throughout the cemetery, (2) placing fresh mulch along the fence line and around trees, and (3) repairing fallen and damaged gravestones. The first two activities were initiated on Pride Day and the longer-term effort to repair the markers is to be undertaken by the Village Service Department. Fifteen Historical Society members and six community service volunteers from the Village Magistrate's program, with assistance from the Service and Police Departments, did an exceptional job of cleaning over one hundred markers and completing the mulching tasks. Nick Martello from *ZymeAway* provided 40 gallons of his company's enzyme cleaner for the project and participated throughout the cleaning process with instruction on the effective use of his product. The following Historical Society members are thanked for their diligent efforts on this project: Matt Bliss, Kreig Brusnahan, Kevin Carr, Jared Charlton, Joshua Charlton, Mark Charlton, Eddie Herdendorf, Ricki Herdendorf, David Hibbard, John Hunter, Roy Kudrin, Andy Minda, Carol Minda, Michele Minda, Tim Pelcic, and Larry Sheets. Village of Sheffield officials are to be congratulated for taking the initiative to restore one of the hallmarks of Sheffield's proud heritage.



Example of damaged grave marker—Haines Family in Block B of Garfield Cemetery.



Michele Minda scrubs the base of a grave marker in Block C of Garfield Cemetery.



John Day monument shines after treatment with enzyme cleaner and heated power wash.



Ricki Herdendorf cleans the inscription on a gravestone in Block C of Garfield Cemetery.



Andy Minda cleans one of the Day Family monuments in Garfield Cemetery.

Garfield Cemetery Restoration Project (continued)



Mark Charlton wheeling mulch to the fence.



Community service volunteers and Matt Bliss (center) load mulch for placement.



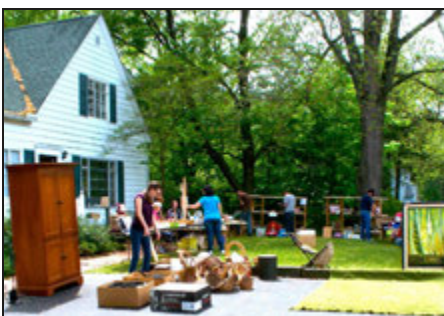
Joshua Charlton, Kevin Carr, and Tim Pelcic spread mulch along the cemetery fence.



Kevin Carr, Mark Charlton, volunteer, Joshua Charlton, and Jared Charlton finish placing mulch along the cemetery fence.

Historical Society Yard Sale

On May 12th & 13th the Sheffield Village Historical Society held a very successful Yard Sale at the Sheffield History Center. This winter the Board of Directors faced the difficult task of raising \$7,800 to pay property taxes for the History Center at 4944 Detroit Road. In February word was received that the Society's 2009 request for an exemption was denied by the State Department of Taxation. The County Auditor had advised the Board not to



Yard Sale at the Sheffield History Center on May 12, 2012 (photograph courtesy of John Edwards).

pay any taxes while the application for exemption was pending, which resulted in a very large bill.

The Board decided that a yard sale was one of the best fund-raising techniques available to the Society. The membership of the Society generously donated hundreds of items for the sale. An article by member and newspaper reporter John Edwards in *The Press* resulted in calls from several non-members, donating items such as a like-new entertainment center from Kevin McKelvey of Village Reserve.

The weather cooperated beautifully, a pleasantly sunny Mother's Day weekend—in fact several mothers picked out their gifts at the yard sale. One young mother was thrilled to purchase a barbecue grill donated by Roy Kudrin. A peculiar donation was a load of scrap metal from Bill Johnson for which the Society received \$88 from the recycling center in Elyria. All in all the Society cleared over \$2,200 from the event. The annual property taxes for the History

Center are slightly over \$3,000, thus the yard sale will go a long way toward paying the bill. The Board hopes that the Spring Yard Sale will become an annual event to support the History Center.

Many members are to be thanked for their contributions and help during the sale, particularly the set-up and sales staff: Christine Huffman (Chair), Jack & Patsy Hoag, Andy & Carol Minda, Michele Minda, Matt Kocsis, Roy Kudrin, Tom Hoerrle, Kathy Yancer, and Eddie & Ricki Herdendorf. —SAVE UP YOUR TREASURES FOR NEXT YEAR! —GIVE THE SOCIETY A CALL AND WE WILL PICK THEM UP THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

This summer and fall Kathy Yancer will welcome visitors to the History Center on Tuesdays from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm and on Thursday evenings from 6:00 to 8:00 pm; other times available by appointment (440-934-1514). There is no charge to visit the Sheffield History Center.

In Memoriam

Harry R. Gerent (1933-2012)

Harry R. Gerent of Trails End in Sheffield Village was born on February 3, 1933 in Archikov, Poland (at the time known as East Prussia) and died here on April 4, 2012. Harry was a civic leader and strong supporter of the Historical Society. He was 79 years old.

Harry's parents were Emil and Emma (Gatske) Gerent. In his late teens he left Europe and came to Cleveland, Ohio in 1952 where he first worked in a tool and dye shop. He then spent two years in the U.S. Army, stationed in Panama, during the Korean War. He attended Western Reserve University and after graduation he took a position with the Cleveland Athletic Club, serving as Athletic Director for 17 years. Next he started his own businesses in real estate and investment. He married Christa E. Wilke on February 9, 1959 and they raised three children in Westlake, Ohio.



Harry Gerent carrying pies for the baking contest and auction at Sheffield Village Family Pride Day in 2010.

Harry then moved to and became an involved citizen of Sheffield Village, where his real estate company initiated many of the residential subdivisions along Abbe Road. He loved traveling, hunting, fishing, keggeln (German bowling) and the outdoors. Harry recently acquired the historic 1850s Foster/Schüeller house and farm on Abbe Road where he was in the process of developing *Green Acres Dude Ranch* at his untimely death.

Harry was a proud sponsor of Sheffield Village Family Pride Day each September. At these events, Harry and his family organized pie baking contests and auctions in support of the Historical Society. Harry was an honorable, hard-working gentleman, of dedicated character who will be fondly remembered and greatly missed.

Sister Mary Coreen Jungbluth, (1919-2012)

Born Alice Marie Jungbluth on July 11, 1919 in Sheffield, Ohio, Sister Mary Coreen Jungbluth, SND died on May 23, 2012 in Notre Dame Care Center in Chardon, Ohio. Sister Mary Coreen was 92 years old. She was raised on the Jungbluth family farm on Abbe Road and became a sister of Notre Dame in 1940. She taught primary grades in many northeastern Ohio parishes before beginning 43 years of teaching at Julie Billiard School in Lyndhurst, Ohio. Her sister, Gladys (Jungbluth) Wisnieski, and Gladys' children and grandchildren remember Sister Mary Coreen's ever present smile and her love for family and children were an inspiration to all.

Sister Mary Coreen is survived by her sister Gladys of East River Road and Gladys' family; and by the Congregation of the sisters of Notre Dame, with whom she shared her life for 72 years.



Memorial quilt being presented to Sister Mary Coreen Jungbluth (center); Beverly Essex (left) and Gladys Wisnieski (right).

A special event in the life of Sister Mary Coreen took place on Sunday July

11, 2010—she was celebrating her 91st birthday and also her 70th year Jubilee of Grace as a Sister of Notre Dame. Beverly Essex, Gladys Wisnieski's daughter, presented her aunt Sister Mary Coreen with a magnificent memorial quilt. Beverly had photographed the stain glass window in St. Teresa Church that had been placed there in memory of her great grandparents, Anton and Katharina Jungbluth and she had used the photograph to design the pattern for the quilt. Sister Mary Coreen cherished this thoughtful gift and was thereafter pleased to display the quilt in her room.

David L. Post (1932-2012)

Long time resident of Sheffield Village and member of the Sheffield Village Historical Society, David L. Post, died on May 21, 2012 at Center Ridge Nursing Home in North Ridgeville from complications associated with Parkinson's disease. Dave, born in Elyria on November 26, 1932, was 79 years old. He served in the U.S. Air Force and retired from Harshaw Chemical in Elyria after 43 years.



David and Susan Post's home on Detroit Road in Sheffield Village with Dave's prominent flag pole.

Dave married Susan D. Langthorp in 1978 and they made their home on Detroit Road in Sheffield Village. In 2005, Dave and Susan moved to Rosealee Avenue in Elyria, preferring not to live next to the automobile dealership that was being built on property immediately adjacent to their home. Dave was a member of the Abbe Road Baptist Church and as long as his health permitted he was a driver for *Meals on Wheels*. Dave was an avid golfer, bowler, and reader who enjoyed making and repairing things in his workshop. He was particularly proud of the tall flag pole he erected at his home on Detroit Road in Sheffield and even took it with him and placed it at his new home in Elyria.

Society Organization

The Sheffield Village Historical Society is a charitable nonprofit 501(c)(3) and educational organization dedicated to discovering, collecting, preserving, interpreting, and presenting Sheffield's rich heritage. Membership is open to anyone who wishes to support the Society's mission. For more information contact Eddie Herdendorf, President (440-934-1514 herdendorf@aol.com), Andy Minda, Vice President (440-537-0547 anmin36@aol.com), or Patsy Hoag, Secretary (440-934-4624 phoag@me.com).

Society journals can be found on the Village of Sheffield website: www.sheffieldvillage.com (click on the Sheffield Village Historical Society logo, then Pioneer newsletters. Page Layout is by Ricki C. Herdendorf, EcoSphere Associates, Put-in-Bay, Ohio.

Society members are encouraged to submit items for future issues. Please send your stories or ideas to the Editor.

Charles E. Herdendorf, Ph.D.

Journal Editor,

Sheffield Village Historical Society

Garfield Farms, 4921 Detroit Road

Sheffield Village, Ohio 44054

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Applications for membership in the Society are welcome and can be obtained (\$10/individual, \$15/family, & \$25 corporate) from the Society office (440-934-1514).

Announcement

The Historical Society is pleased to announce that author-signed copies of *Images of America: Sheffield Village* are now available at the Cracker Barrel gift shop, 5205 Detroit Road in Sheffield.

The Historical Society's other book, *Guide to the North Ridge Scenic Byway*, is available at the Sheffield History Center, 4944 Detroit Road for a \$20 donation to the Society. The History Center is open Tuesdays from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm and Thursday evenings from 6:00 to 8:00 pm, or by appointment (call 440-934-1514). There is no admission charge to visit the History Center. Come see the Society's collections. Our resident researcher, Kathy Yancer (216-543-3651), will be available to assist visitors.

Guide to the North Ridge Scenic Byway takes the reader on a tour of State Route 254 through Lorain County, Ohio with over 200 color images as well as numerous historic photographs from the 19th and 20th centuries. North Ridge is the crest of an ancient beach ridge created 12 millennia ago along the southern shore of glacial Lake Warren—a predecessor of modern Lake Erie. Originally a trail used by Native Americans for many centuries, the ridge was settled in the early 1800s by New Englanders as part of the Connecticut Western Reserve. Over 100 historic homes from the settlement and Victorian period have been preserved along this State designated Scenic Byway. The *Guide* acquaints the traveler with the natural and historic setting of North Ridge and provides a mile-point by mile-point illustrated description of numerous noteworthy features along the Byway. The *Guide* also contains an illustrated glossary of architectural styles, as well as a complete checklist of plants, birds, mammals, reptiles, and fish that are likely to be encountered in the vicinity of the Byway. The *Guide* is authored by Dr. Charles E. Herdendorf, professor of biological and geological sciences at The Ohio State University.

Calendar

Burrell Homestead Annual Picnic (August 10-11, 2012)

Join Metro Parks for a unique exploration of the past as we partner with the Firelands Archaeological Research Center (FARC) to answer one of the burning questions surrounding the homestead—was there a tunnel located here that was used for the Underground Railroad? On Friday there will be two opportunities to get your hands dirty. FARC researchers will lead us as we dig around one of the old barn foundations looking for evidence of a tunnel as described by family members. Participants will observe the techniques and be allowed to assist in some basic archaeological tasks. The event is for all ages and abilities. Friday dig times are 10:00 am or 1:00 pm, and because space is limited, preregister early to reserve your spot (call 1-800-LCM-PARK or register online at www.MetroParks.cc).

On Saturday, August 11, Metro Parks welcomes everyone to join in celebrating the August Picnic, a memorial of the family reunions of the Burrell and Sheffield pasts that were often held at the Burrell's home. From Noon to 3:00 pm, enjoy games on the front lawn. At 1:30 pm, we will reveal the results of our dig, how we got there, and possibly trace the route through the property that runaway slaves used as they reached the end of their long journey to freedom.

Sheffield Village Family Pride Day and Family Music & Arts Fest (September 8, 2012—11:00 am-4:00 pm)

On Saturday the 8th of September Sheffield Village will celebrate its 5th annual Family Pride Day. This year the event will take place at three locations: (1) Metro Parks' French Creek Nature and Arts Center, (2) Sheffield Village Municipal Complex, and (3) the Jabez Burrell Homestead. All three are within easy walking distance via the newly paved hike/bike trail connecting them, but this year free tram service will also be available. Concessions and craft activities will take place at the French Creek Center, explanations of the Fire and Police Departments' equipment will be available at the Muni Complex, and tours of the Burrell Homestead will be guided by members of the Historical Society. An auction will be held at 3:00 pm to benefit restoration projects at this historic Homestead. Those wishing to donate items for the auction are asked to contact Lynne Jones in the Mayor's office at 440-949-6325.



Historical Society exhibit at the 1st Family Pride Day.