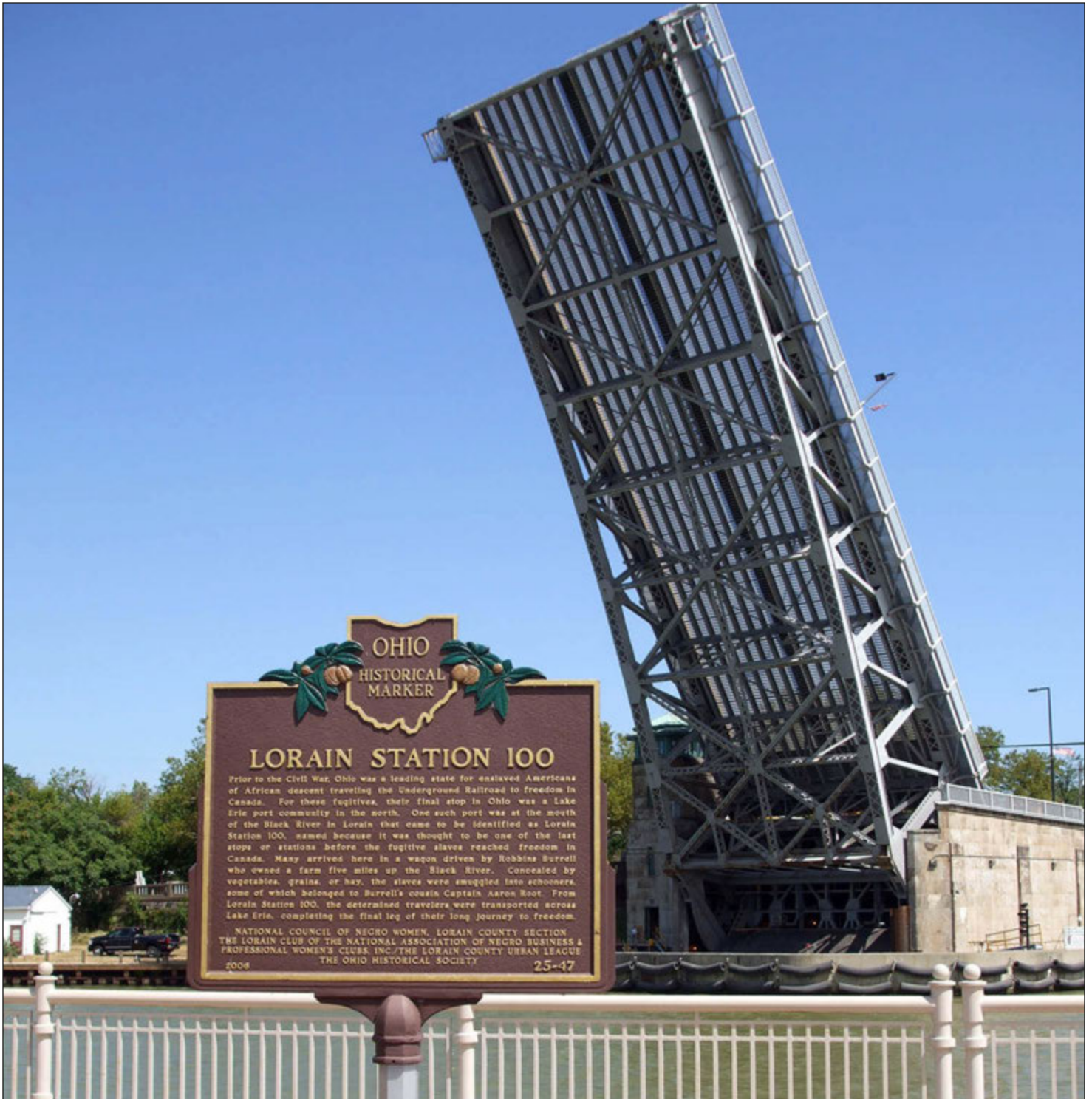


THE VILLAGE PIONEER

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



Historical Marker for Underground Railroad Station 100 at the mouth of the Black River with the raised Charles Berry Bascule Bridge in background. This marker commemorates the heroic deeds of two Sheffield men, Robbins Burrell and Capt. Aaron Root, in transporting runaway slaves to freedom.

Burrell Homestead Picnic

On Saturday, August 2, 2008 the Lorain County Metro Parks hosted the Annual Picnic at the Burrell Homestead. For 100 years these annual gatherings were known as the Day-Austin-Root August Reunion. The first of these family reunions was held at the home of James Austin on the lakeshore. The occasion was to honor 10 family members born in August. The idea caught hold and over the next century the August Reunion and Picnic was hosted by various family members throughout Sheffield, including Arthur Austin, George Day, Orville Root, and Tempe Garfield Burrell. In 1930 the families published a *History of the Day-Austin-Root August Reunions*, which contains a wealth of information on the early history of the Village as well as accounts of the picnics. The reunion held

Branches.” Several chicken pies were served, including at least one made with an original recipe from the family. Of the 100 plus persons in attendance, H. Kellogg Day was the oldest at 92 and the youngest was Gretchen Lynn Hammer, 3 months, daughter of David and Patricia Hammer of the Root Family. Speakers at the reunion were Robert Hibbard of the Orville Root Family, consultant for the National Academy of Engineering, who theorized on life styles during the next 100 years, and Dr. Charles E. Herdendorf of the Milton Garfield and Aaron Root Families, director of Ohio State University’s Center for Lake Erie Research, who discussed his research aimed at restoring the quality of Lake Erie. Family members elected Meredith Williams as the 1975 president.

could easily get a feeling of what life was like for the pioneer Burrell Family. The picnic and tours were open to everyone and keeping up the tradition, descendants of the Day, Root, and Garfield Families enjoyed a picnic lunch—fried chicken this time, along side the old cheesehouse. After lunch, visitor’s were invited on a walk to the old orchard site where archaeological work was performed this summer and down the steep shale bluff to inspect the beaver dam and pond on Big Bottom were the Burrells once raised their crops.

This year’s gathering also featured a special event—an address by First Lady Lucretia Garfield, wife of our 20th president, James A. Garfield. Appearing in a beautiful Victorian dress of violet satin, Miss Anita Benedetti’s intimate



Burrell Homestead visitors on August 11, 1915 attend the Annual Picnic and celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the founding of Sheffield, Ohio.

at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Austin of Lake Breeze on August 12, 1897 is typical of the entries:

The guests began to assemble early in the day and were warmly greeted by host and hostess. Dinner was served at 12:30 on long tables set on the lawn under a canvas canopy. The guests filled by the tables twice. Words would not do justice to the excellent dinner which was served. Chicken pie was one of the leading features. Fortunately Orville Root did not get down until the second table, so there was an abundance for all.

The last official Day-Austin-Root August Reunion, held on August 11, 1974, was hosted by Doris, Eleanor, Virginia, and Kenneth Burrell at the homestead completed by their great great grandfather, Capt. Jabez Burrell, in 1826. Billed as the *100th August Picnic 1874-1974*, each guest was given a violet ribbon with the theme “New England Roots and Buckeye

At this year’s August Picnic, the Burrell Homestead was open for guided tours by Matt Kocsis, Metro Parks historian and Tom Hoerrle, Sheffield Village Historical Society trustee. The sitting room, dining room, parlors, and bedrooms were handsomely decorated with 19th century furnishings and one

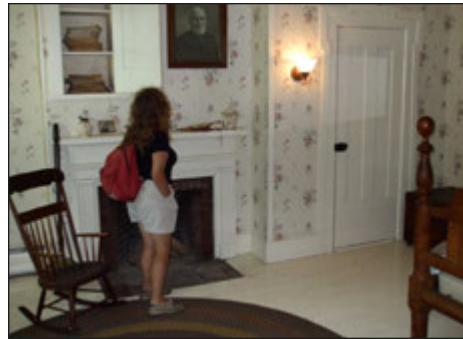
portrayal of Lucretia’s life with General Garfield revealed not only the trials of her marriage, but also how her love and faithfulness won the nation’s admiration when her husband was mortally wounded in 1881. President Garfield, a Civil War hero, was assassinated just four months into his administration.



Members of the Day, Garfield, and Root Families enjoy lunch at the 2008 August Picnic.



Robbins Burrell's desk and biblical portrait Rebecca at the Well by artist Enrico Fanfani in the South Parlor of the Burrell House. Robbins was Jabez Burrell's eldest son who managed the farm after his father's death in 1833.



Ricki Herdendorf admires a photograph of Robbins Burrell in the upstairs master bedroom of the Burrell House.



Family members hike to the Big Bottom to see the beaver dam.



Lucretia Garfield, portrayed by Miss Anita Benedetti, addresses those gathered at the 2008 August Picnic.

Dedication of Steel Mill Trail

The Lorain County Metro Parks opened the 2-mile Black River Steel Mill Trail with a dedication ceremony on May 10, 2008. The weather was bright and sunny, a perfect spring day to walk from the 31st Street Bridge to Colorado Avenue via the new asphalt trail. Several hundred eager visitors walked, ran, biked, and skated the 4-mile round trip. After one crosses 31st Street at a new pedestrian light, the trail leads through a wooded area along the west bank of the Black River for perhaps a quarter of a mile, then as one enters U.S. Steel property with extremely high protective fencing, the trail dips under the Lake Terminal Railroad bridge and crosses the river on a high-level steel-frame bridge. On the other side, the trail winds through the steel mill's slag fields with the river far below on the west and mountains of slag on the east. Seeing all that slag one can only imagine the tremendous amount of steel the mill has produced since 1895.

The trail continues on to the confluence of French Creek and Black River, about half a mile west of the Burrell Homestead on East River Road. Future Metro

Parks plans call for a connector trail from the mouth of French Creek to the Burrell Homestead that will then lead across East River Road and Sugar Creek to join the trail system at the French Creek Reservation and Nature Center. The proposed trail passes by an active beaver dam and an extensive pond created by these animal engineers. But, getting back to the present, at the confluence another 40-foot high steel-frame bridge takes the trail across French Creek into a beautifully wooded area. The Black River turns and flows west here and the trail follows the north bank of the stream. A scenic overlook platform has been constructed here, which affords travelers not only a normally unseen vista of the steel mill operations, but also the remaining natural setting of the valley on the Sheffield side of the river. From the overlook, the trail continues on for another half mile through woodlots and over a ravine to the temporary trail head at Colorado Avenue—temporary in the fact that the Lorain County Metro Parks plans to extend the trail all the way to Lake Erie within the next seven years.



Steel Mill Trail overlook at the confluence of the Black River and French Creek on Dedication Day, May 10, 2008. Left to right: Greg White, Councilwoman Carolyn White, Mayor John Hunter, Ricki Herdendorf, Eddie Herdendorf, Metro Parks Director Dan Martin, and ODOT District 3 Supervisor John Hart.

Archaeological Excavations in Sheffield Village

For five weeks this summer (June 9 to July 11) Dr. Brian Redmond, Curator of Archaeology at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, directed a field school to investigate a prehistoric Indian village site at the Burrell Homestead on East River Road. Students from several universities, as well as educators and avocational archaeologists, opened six excavations (called units) that measured up to two meters on each side and extended down to the subsoil, a depth of about half a meter. Dr. Redmond was assisted by Brian Scanlan, Glen Boatman, Jim Bowers, Ciera Herron, and Mary Lou McGuire, each being assigned to work with four or five students in individual units. The project was suggested by Dr. Eddie Herdendorf and was co-sponsored by the Sheffield Village Historical Society and the Lorain County Metro Parks.

The site, known as the Burrell Orchard Site, is located on top of a triangular promontory of land created by the confluence of the Black River and French Creek. The steep cliffs of the promontory afforded natural protection for the Indians from attack on two sides. The excavations have revealed cultural deposits that most likely



Shale bluff along French Creek west of East River Road. At the top of this steep cliff Archaic Indians occupied a naturally protected promontory some 4-5,000 years ago. The same type of siltstone cropping out at stream level was found in several excavations indicating use by early inhabitants.



Glen Boatman excavates a 2x2 meter unit at the Burrell Orchard Archaeological Site in June.



Eddie Herdendorf maps the location of fire-cracked rock and siltstone platforms in an excavation unit at the site in June.

date to the Late Archaic Period, about 4 to 5 thousand years ago. A sizeable village appears to have been located at this site, based on the extensive midden (refuse) deposits uncovered. The most common artifact recovered was fire-cracked rock, which indicates that food preparation, hide tanning, or perhaps heating of dwellings was taking place at the site. Animal bones, particularly deer and catfish, were also found in most units. Stone tools found in the units include lanceolate projectile points, knives, scrapers, and drills. Carbonized post molds in one unit may represent a defensive stockade on the third side of the triangle. Alternatively, they may be the remains of a housing or cooking/deer hide tanning structure. More work will be needed to determine their function, but enough material was recovered to obtain radiocarbon dates to confirm the age of the artifacts.

On June 19 and July 2, members of the Sheffield Village Historical Society were invited to visit the Burrell Orchard Site. Approximately 25 members took advantage of the opportunity to observe the archaeological excavations taking place there. Dr. Herdendorf led the two groups to the site from the parking lot in James Day Park, discussing the history of the 1880 District No. 1 Schoolhouse and the 1820s Jabez Burrell Homestead that were passed along the way. Dr. Redmond briefed the visitors on the activities and findings at the site, and then the groups were taken on a hike around the perimeter of the promontory.



Glen Boatman records archaeological measurements being taken by Brian Redmond in an excavation unit.



Brian Redmond takes measurements of buried cultural deposits (strata of midden or trash layers) at the Burrell Orchard Site in July. Strata: A—plow zone, B—midden layer with fire-cracked rock, C—subsurface clay layer placed on top of a fire-pit feature, D—fire-pit feature with charcoal deposits, and E—possible post-mold feature.

A few of the more adventurous guests and students followed Dr. Herdendorf down a steep path to the valley floor of French Creek to inspect a beaver dam.

On July 10, as part of the summer meeting of the Sheffield Village Historical Society, Dr. Redmond presented a stimulating lecture at the French Creek



Brian Redmond photographs a smudge-pot feature that was possibly used to cure (preserve) deer hides.

Nature Center on the preliminary results of the Burrell Orchard Site excavations. An enthusiastic audience of about 90 viewed the informative illustrations of the fieldwork and listened to descriptions of the pains-taking tasks performed by



Sheffield Village Historical Society members and guests visit the Burrell Orchard Site in June.

the school participants. Dr. Herdendorf introduced the guest speaker and after the lecture, with enthusiastic concurrence of the audience, he asked Dr. Redmond to return next year to present what new things he has learned from more detailed study of the field maps and laboratory analysis of the recovered artifacts.



Flint drill tool recovered from a unit at the Burrell Orchard Site in June.



Chert lanceolate projectile points indicative of Late Archaic Indians that once occupied the promontory.

Brookside Football “Mythical State Champs”

From the 1944 to 1948 football seasons, Brookside had an unbeaten victory string of 25 games. The 1947 team was rated best in the State and proclaimed “Mythical State Champs” by *The Leader*.

The year was 1940, and Brookside decided for the first time to field a team in the Lorain County Six Man Football League. Alas, the team had only one victory that first year, but better seasons were yet to come—though not for several years. After getting off to a shaky start in the 1944 season—being defeated by Avon Lake and Avon—Brookside broke their losing streak by winning a grudge battle with South Amherst (20-14). From there on, still the underdog, Brookside wasn’t stopped for the rest of the season, taking Ridgeville (14-2) and then beating Grafton in a hard-fought battle on their home field (21-19).

The next year, the Brookside football team battled through their schedule of five games, emerging as the undefeated champions of the 1945 season in the Lorain County Six Man Football League. In the final game of the season, Brookside battled to a 19-14 victory over Avon Lake. Brookside Full Back, Dick Ackerman made some notes in his graduation program about each game, noting that during the Avon Lake game “I was knocked out twice.” Five lettermen, including Ackerman graduated in the spring, but it was hoped that the remaining lettermen, together with the rest of the squad, could uphold the fine 1945 record the next year—in 1945 Brookside compiled at total of 146 points to their opponents’ 54 points.

The 1946 season was even more spectacular! In the first three games, against Avon Lake, Grafton, and South Amherst, Brookside’s opponents failed to score a single point while Brookside racked up 97 points. In the final game of the season Brookside defeated Avon by a single point (20-19), winning its second consecutive league championship and



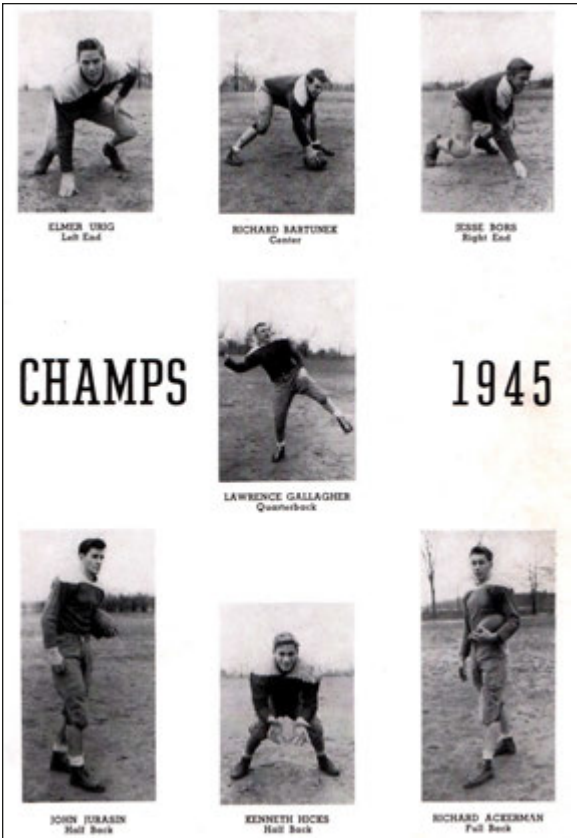
Brookside High School’s first team for the 1944 football season—the start of the 25 game winning streak. Line: Elmer Urig, Richard Bartunek and Sam Radyk. Back Field: John Jurasin, Joe Moldovan, and Lawrence Gallagher (The Leader 1945).

its second undefeated season in a row by garnering 147 points with only 32 points being scored against them. *The Leader* described the Brookside–Avon clash as “a fight-to-the death game” with a “capacity crowd in attendance to cheer the arch-rivals in spite of the bitter cold weather.” Again, five lettermen graduated.

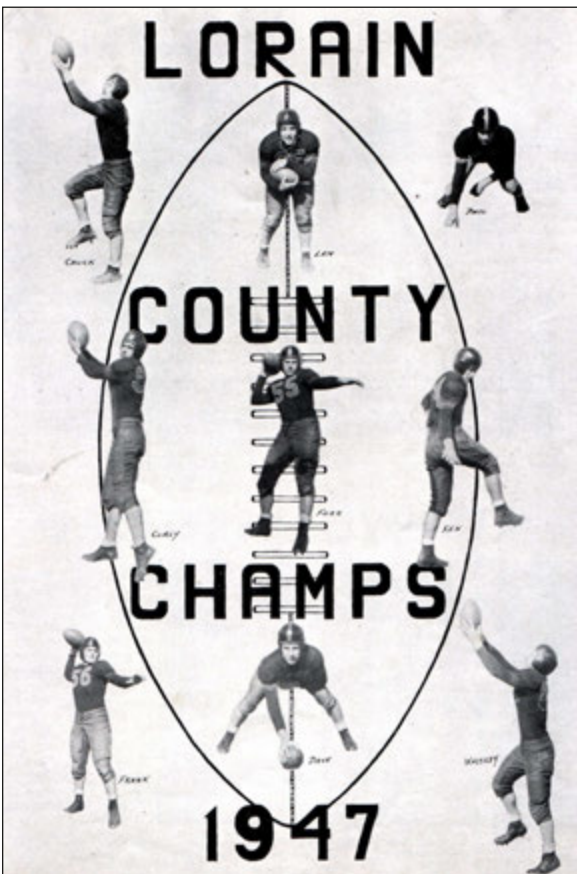
The 1947 season was down right phenomenal! Brookside started with an unbeaten victory string of 13 games and two league championships. With the pressure on, Brookside’s largely untested team was expected to crack, but instead it showed its mettle by “powerhousing” its way to a third consecutive county championship and extending its winning streak to 20 games. While doing so, Brookside compiled a record of 366 points to only 50 for their opponents. This was perhaps the most enviable record in the State of Ohio, leading to the popular recognition of Brookside as the best team in the State and the title, “Mythical State Champs.” Len Pando, a recent inductee to the Brookside Hall of Fame, recalls that the newspapers also ranked the team as fifth in the nation that year.

The 1948 season started off great with Brookside winning the first five games, including a 28-0 victory over Avon. Unfortunately the golden era didn’t last forever. In a stunning upset, Ridgeville defeated Brookside (19-14) in the sixth game of the season, snapping the winning streak at 25. Thus, a record unequalled in county athletics was brought to an end, but Brookside still finished second in the league.

The following Brookside football players participated in the 1944 to 1948 seasons: Dick Ackerman, Ollie Ackerman, Walter Ackerman, Ken Alten, Carl Asp, Gilbert Barnhart, Richard Bartunek, Ralph Bring, Bud Brown, Jesse Bors, Dick Cifranic, Vernon Duffield, Glenn Fuller, Kenneth Hicks, Lawrence Gallagher, Mark Giel, Bud Gray, Albert Jordon, Tom Jordon, John Jurasin, Phil Kauffman, Chuck Leidenheimer, Dale Lloyd, Louis Logar, Douglas Lukesic, Joe Moldovan, Jack Northrup, Len Pando, Harold Parker, Sam Radyk, Charles Rahn, Joe Reiner, David Sellers, Jerry Schmidt, Frank Schwarz, Elmer Urig, Andy Vanche, Bill Weisheit, Edward Weisheit, Harold Weisheit, Bob Wharton, Joe Yuhos, and John Yuhos. Coaches were Bob Carver, Joseph Hudak, and Dimitri Kunch and managers were Kenneth Beko, Jesse Bors, and Jim Steadman.



Brookside's 1945 Lorain County Six Man Football League championship team (The Leader 1946).



Brookside's 1947 Lorain County Six Man Football League championship team (The Leader 1948).



BROOKSIDE'S 25-GAME WINNING STREAK

1944 Season		1948 Season	
Brookside ..20	S Amherst14	Brookside ..46	Lodi.....0
Brookside ..14	Ridgeville2	Brookside ..57	Grafton.....22
Brookside ..21	Grafton.....19	Brookside ..12	S Amherst0
1945 Season		1947 Season	
Brookside ..22	Grafton.....0	Brookside ..78	Lodi.....19
Brookside ..26	Avon.....20	Brookside ..46	Grafton.....0
Brookside ..45	S Amherst6	Brookside ..18	Avon.....6
Brookside ..34	Ridgeville ...14	Brookside ..62	Columbia12
Brookside ..19	Avon Lake...14	Brookside ..63	S Amherst ...13
		Brookside ..49	Ridgeville0
		Brookside ..50	Avon Lake.....0

**25-GAME
TOTALS**
Brookside **915**
Opponents **236**

Just What is Six-Man Football?

Six-man football was developed in 1934 at Chester High School in Nebraska by coach Stephen Epler as an alternative means for small high schools to field a football team during the Great Depression when enrollments were small and money for uniforms and equipment was scarce. By 1960 there were more than 160 six-man teams in Texas alone. On October 5, 1940, Windham High School of Windham, Ohio defeated Stamford Collegiate of Niagara Falls, Ontario, 39-1 in the first international six-man football game. Brookside High School fielded its first six-man football team that year and phased it out 17 years later when the county league went to 11-man teams.

Six-man is a fast-moving game played on an 80-yard long by 40-yard wide field (instead of the normal 100-yard by 160-foot field used in 11-man football). Furthermore, the game specifies a 15-yard distance from the line of scrimmage to gain a first down, instead of the normal 10 yards. As in 11-man football, a first down must be made in four attempts or the ball is turned over to the opposing team. All six players are eligible to be receivers. On offense, three linemen are required on the line of scrimmage at the start of the play. The person to whom the ball is snapped cannot run the ball past the line of scrimmage; however, if the ball is tossed to another player, that player can run or throw the ball and the person to whom the ball was snapped is still an eligible receiver. All forward passes to the player who snapped the ball (center) must travel at least 1 yard in flight.

Scoring is the same as in 11-man football, with the exceptions being on the point after touchdown attempt and the field goal. A point-after kick is worth two points, while a conversion made by running or passing the ball is worth one point—opposite of 11-man football. In addition, a field goal is worth 4 points instead of 3. These rule changes were made because of the difficulty of successfully getting a kick off with so few blockers on the line compared to the number of defenders. In Lorain County competition, a 45-point “mercy rule” existed to prevent embarrassing, lopsided scoring deficits (no such rule exists in the 11-man game). The game is ended under this rule if a team is losing by 45 or more points at halftime or at any point thereafter. The mercy rule is alluded to in the title of the David Morse 2002 film about six-man football in Montana, *The Slaughter Rule*. Some of Brookside’s wins in the mid-1940s utilized this rule.

The editor acknowledges Joan Ackerman, Jack Hoag, Tim Molich, Matt Nahorn, Len Pando, and Coach Dick Sevits for their input to this article, as well as the sports coverage in Brookside’s yearbooks from 1940 to 1949. When the editor talked to Coach Sevits so many fascinating stories emerged, such as how his underdog 1952 team snapped Avon Lake’s long winning streak, that they will appear in a future issue of *The Village Pioneer*. The editor wishes to express condolences to the Ackerman Family for the loss of Dick Ackerman (Class of 1946) in July of this year. Dick was a superb teacher and school administrator. He served as the 8th grade homeroom teacher for this editor and instilled in me an undying love of history. I will be forever grateful for his guidance.

An Early Account of an Englishman's Visit to the Western Reserve

In 1832, Englishman D. Griffiths, Jr., in the company of 40 other steerage passengers embarked on a sailing vessel from Liverpool on March 28 and landed at New York on May 4. The reason for Griffiths' journey to America was to visit the Western Reserve and write a guidebook for his fellow countrymen who might want to settle there—*Two Years in the New Settlements of Ohio*. He describes, with touches of humor, the cramped and uncomfortable accommodations that he and his fellow passengers endured on the voyage across the Atlantic.

The steerage compartment was only 18 feet square and 7 feet high, with 2 tiers of berths around the sides, one above another like packing cases. The only way to descend to the compartment was by a ladder through a small hatchway. All the light that found its way below came through either the hatchway, which had to be covered during rough weather, or through 2 small pieces of thick glass—called deck lights—that were mounted in the deck above. Old provision boxes were nailed to the floor, which served as tables, chairs, and cupboards for the

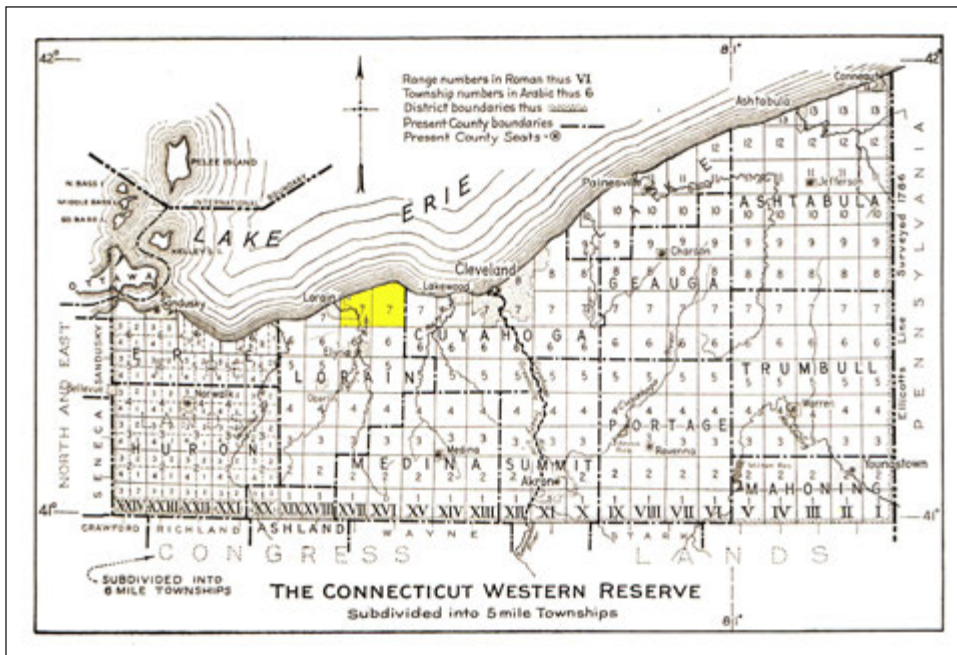
steerage passengers. Given these rather austere accommodations, Griffiths still writes, "... upon the whole it was called a favourable voyage," primarily because he didn't drown.

In describing the terrain around Sheffield some 176 years ago, Griffiths comments, "That part of the Western Reserve lying along the Shore of Lake Erie, between the rivers of Cuyahoga on the east and Huron on the west, may be termed level country properly enough, yet, strictly speaking, it is undulatory. The land rises gently from the lake into ridges along which the inhabitants for the most part locate, attracted by the conveniences of public roads and good water—on these ridges too it is generally healthy."

The public road along North Ridge through Sheffield, described by Griffiths, had its origin as an aboriginal trail utilized by several Native American cultures over the past 10,000 years. In his classic 1914 monograph, *Archaeological Atlas of Ohio*, William C. Mills of the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, pointed out that the importance of aboriginal trails to the settlement

and development of Ohio could hardly be overestimated. In many instances they determined the location of early European-heritage settlements, forts, and military roads, many of them becoming permanent roads. It was along these trails that aboriginal Ohio peoples traveled across the region, whether engaged in migration, hunting, trade, or warfare. Later they served, along with navigable streams and Lake Erie, as the only means of entrance for white traders and settlers as they pushed westward.

Thus, the trails in great measure determined the course of improved highways such as Detroit–North Ridge Road (State Route 254). The aboriginal name for this trail was Pettquotting, named for the Indian town of the same name that was located near present-day Milan, Ohio in Erie County. Pettquotting Trail was a segment of the Shore Trail system along the southern shore of Lake Erie that linked the eastern end of the Lake with Sandusky Bay and on up to the Detroit River. For much of its length, this trail followed the northernmost ancient beach ridges, geologically known as glacial Lakes Warren and Wayne, formed



C. E. Sherman's 1925 map of the Connecticut Western Reserve showing Sheffield (left) and Avon (right) Townships in yellow.



Model of Sheffield Township's District No. 1 Schoolhouse that was located on East River Road near the Burrell Homestead. Built about 1880, grades 1 through 8 were taught upstairs and the Board of Education was headquartered downstairs. The building was demolished in the 1930s, but the sandstone foundation stones and well are still visible on the east side of the road just south of James Day Park (model courtesy of *The Cat's Meow*, 2001).

between 12,800 and 12,500 years ago. These ridges lie at an elevation of about 100 to 120 feet above present Lake Erie.

Getting back to Griffiths account of the early 1830s, his comments were primarily laudatory. He found that economic opportunities abounded and that life in the Western Reserve was attractive, stating, “The emigrant need not fear that he will be treated with contempt by persons higher in society. It is a common saying among farmers, ‘If a man is good enough to work for me, he is good enough to eat with me.’” Griffiths also points out that the emigrant should not hesitate because he had heard of the existence of slavery in the United States, stating, “He shall not hear the ‘smack of the whip, and the responding cry of slaves’ when he arrives in Ohio because the law prohibits slavery in that region.”

Griffiths detailed approvingly the seriousness with which many of the inhabitants viewed their religion. He also extolled the high level of education available to the youth of the Western Reserve, mentioning in particular the District Schools, such as the seven schools that were eventually established in the original Sheffield Township. Among the laws relating to the incorporation of townships [Sheffield Township was incorporated in 1824], the Ohio Legislature made the following provision for schools—The trustees are hereby authorized as soon as they think it necessary, to lay off their township into convenient districts for the purpose of establishing schools therein; and each school thus established shall be entitled to receive an equitable dividend of the profits arising from their reserved section [commonly a one mile square area set aside in each township to be use to generate funds to operate schools] according to the number of scholars and in proportion to the time they have been taught.

Griffiths observed that the teachers of the District Schools were chosen by the township and licensed by an examining committee. The teachers were generally the sons and daughters of the most respectable farmers in the communities. The sons were employed in the winter and the daughters during the summer months. At times young men also took teaching assignments at District Schools for a year or two prior to beginning regular study of law, medicine, or divinity; as it afforded them “not only a comfortable maintenance, but much leisure time to prepare for seminaries and colleges.” Griffiths noted that once half a dozen families settle in a township, they build a schoolhouse that is used for religious worship on the Sabbath, schooling of the children through the week, and occasionally for all kinds of meetings. At appointed times, for example, all the white males above the age of 21, excepting foreigners not naturalized, meet at the schoolhouse to elect their township, county, and state officials.

Griffiths took particular note of an annual event, “On the 4th of July the township schoolhouse thunders with republican invective against tyrants and tyranny throughout the world.”

The Independence Day celebrations seemed to be a minor irritant for the Englishman as he admitted in his writings, “This annual repetition of injuries, sustained during the Revolutionary War, is too well calculated to keep alive the bitter feelings of Americans toward the British Government...and on this account is to be lamented.”

In describing the District Schools of the early 1830s, Griffiths wrote, “Passing along roads and amidst scenery that promise no better guides than wild beasts, or Indians at best, the traveler sometimes comes suddenly upon a neatly painted frame schoolhouse, and on applying for direction is answered by a well dressed and well spoken young woman of 18 or 20 years of age, who is none other than the school teacher. Entering the schoolhouse he will be pleased to see 40 or 50 boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 10, with their neat clothing and pretty little bare feet, diligently occupied in reading, writing, and ciphering. Should he wonder how so young a female manages to preserve the admirable subjection and order which prevails, I cannot tell him, unless the secret be contained in the reply of a young girl when asked by her mother, ‘Do the children mind their teacher my dear?’ ‘Oh yes!’ she replied, ‘We mind her because we love her.’”



District No. 1 schoolteacher Maude Day and her students in the early 1880s. Maude was the great granddaughter of Capt. John Day, one of the founders of Sheffield, Ohio (courtesy of Lorain County Historical Society).

Sheffield's Early Mills

In January 1815, Captain Jabez Burrell and Captain John Day of Sheffield, Massachusetts purchased a large tract of land designated as Township 7 of Range 17 in the Connecticut Western Reserve. They formed a partnership with several other Massachusetts families. Later that year and the following spring, settlers began to arrive in the valley of the Black River where they founded a community they named Sheffield, Ohio. Living up to a provision in the purchase agreement, Captains Burrell and Day erected the township's first mills in the Black River valley about one-half mile upstream of the French Creek mouth. The project consisted of a dam across the river and a water tunnel to carry the water to "undershot" waterwheels, turned by water flowing under them, for a gristmill and a sawmill. The mills were located adjacent to one another, the gristmill on the west side of the raceway and the sawmill on the east side (see 1874 map). Settlers brought their logs to be sawed and their grain to be ground—seldom was the pay in cash, the miller took a portion of the lumber or corn for his services.

William H. Root (1803-1889), son of Henry Root and Mary (Day) Root, ran the mill on the Black River near the mouth of French Creek in his early years. He married Fanny (Day) Root in 1834 and they later built a fine Greek Revival-style house (c. 1845) that still stands on the Lake Erie bluff near the foot of Root Road.



Portion of an 1874 map of Sheffield Township showing the locations of the grist and saw mills, with raceway between them, in the Black River valley upstream of French Creek mouth (atlas by D. J. Lake).

Edward Pigeon Burrell, born in Sheffield, Ohio in 1835, made daily entries in his diary (probably for practical reasons rather than for self expression) for the years 1869 to 1891. He farmed the approximately 400-acre homestead where his grandfather Jabez Burrell settled. He consistently recorded the weather, seasonal plantings, harvesting, marketing, care of livestock, maintenance of fences and farm buildings, and home, church, family, and social matters. A sample of the diary entries for November and December 1869 shows the dominant activity to be husking corn on the Black River flats (known as the Big Bottom) and taking the harvest to the mill to be ground.

In 1874, D. J. Lake, a civil engineer, surveyed and published an atlas of Lorain County. The map of Sheffield Township [Range 17, Township 7] shows the ownership of all township parcels of land and the locations of dwellings [~170], schools [7], sawmills [5], gristmill [1], cemeteries [2], churches [2], hotel [1], railroad [1], and store [1]. The red dots on the map above indicate the location of Day's gristmill and sawmill, just upstream of the 31st Street Bridge.



Rapids in the Black River near the location of Day's Dam (March 2008).



Day's Dam on the Black River; once located upstream of Day's mills to provide a constant head of water for operating the waterwheels (courtesy of Lorain County Historical Society).

Sumner Burrell Day (born in 1842), grandson of Sheffield co-founder Captain John Day, operated the grist and saw mills in the later part of the 19th century.

The sawmill supplied timber to the early shipyards along the river and to the U.S. Government during and after the Civil War. Later, he founded the Lorain County Bank and the Elyria Lumber & Coal Company. His nephew, H. Kellogg Day in his 1980 memoir, *About Ninety-seven Years and a Day*, writes that in 1880 S. B. Day,



Tunnel cut in the shale bank of the Black River to form a raceway to conduct river water from behind the dam to the waterwheels at the mills (courtesy of Lorain County Historical Society).



Shale bluff of the Black River near the 31st Street Bridge— believed to be location of the former water tunnel to the mills (May 2008).



Day's mills on the Black River (courtesy of Lorain County Historical Society).



South approach to Day's Dam bridge over the Black River (~1910), once located just downstream of Day's mills (courtesy of Black River Historical Society).

having gone to his barn on the Big Bottom near the mills to feed his stock, was trapped overnight by the rapidly rising water of a Black River flood and was forced to pile up hay to keep dry. In the morning a boat was launched from above to rescue him, but the current prevented its landing. Finally a long rope was used, one end held by several neighbors far upstream and the other end carried to the barn by two men in a boat. Finally the very hungry man was rescued.

This was not the only daring rescue made near Day's Dam. The March 1913 flood trapped John Gerber (32), his sister Emma (30), and Peter Ashleman (65), an invalid living with the Gerbers, in their home on the river flats near the dam. After a Coast Guard rescue boat capsized in an attempt to reach the Gerber house—the boatmen (Marin Rasmussen and J. A. Johnson) narrowly escaped drowning—Capt. William Griesser sent for a breeches buoy and a small cannon. A line was shot to the house and Rasmussen and Johnson again risked their lives, climbing hand-over-hand on the line to make it fast to the

house. Miss Gerber was seen in the upstairs window and she kept pointing to the barn that was 100 yards from the house. When the rescuers climbed through the window they found the woman and Ashleman in an upstairs room with the water already several inches above the floor. Miss Gerber told the Coast Guardsmen that her brother had gone to the barn the night before and had been trapped there by the rising water.

Ashleman was placed in the breeches buoy and slid safely to shore. Despite her desire to stay there until they found her brother, she too was sent ashore before the Guardsmen left the house. With the water rising and rushing with greater and greater force as each hour passed, it was decided to bring a large surfboat with a crew of nine from the Lorain life-saving station. They were able to pull along side the haymow window from where Gerber was taken and brought safely to shore. As a side note, later in Coast Guardsman Rasmussen's career he was placed in charge of the Prohibition Era alcohol interdiction program on Lake Erie, headquartered at Buffalo, New York.

The editor wishes to acknowledge Al Doane for supplying articles written by Jim Mahoney of the *Lorain Morning Journal* (February 19, 1984 and December 17, 1995), which describe the March 1913 flood.

The early mills have long since fallen into disrepair and no sign of them remains. The Black River has changed course over the years and the site of the mills may now be under the riverbed. The dam experienced a peculiar demise. H. Kellogg Day writes that in the late 1880s “Elyria fisherman, thinking the old dam kept fish from coming up to the falls, brought dynamite and a keg of beer and were prepared to blast the old structure.” Being let out of school to watch the proceedings, he stood on a high bank where a boulder the size of one's head flew up to land about twenty feet from where he was standing. Considering the incident, Day commented, “Elyria fishing was not much improved.”



Young H. Kellogg Day, with his father Hubert, at about the age when he witnessed Day's Dam being dynamited (courtesy of the Day Family).

A Quarter of a Century of Waterfowl Carving

Sheffield is fortunate to have a master waterfowl carver living in our Village. A native of New Jersey, Bruce DiVaccaro carved his first decoy in 1982 while a student at Clemson University in South Carolina. Since that time Bruce has carved dozens of duck decoys and shore birds, becoming very proficient at his craft and winning some 25 major awards at regional and national competitions. Eight of the awards are for Best of Show. Bruce and his wife Sue (nee Klingshirn) and their 13-year old daughter Stephany live on Linda Lane where Bruce has a well-equipped workshop off the back of their home.

Bruce still has his first carving, which he claims is a “terrible rendition of a Mallard,” but this editor thought it was a remarkable first effort in the incredibly painstaking process of carving and painting a finished product. For competition, the decoys even need to float at just the right depth and not lean to one side or another. To accomplish this, Bruce attaches



Bruce holds his first decoy, a male Mallard carved in 1982.



Bruce DiVaccaro in his workshop on Linda Lane.

a wooden keel to the bottom of each decoy that encases lead of the proper weight to make the decoy appear “life-like” in the water.

After college, Bruce put his carving aspirations aside until 1990—while he and Sue were on their honeymoon at Cape Cod they ventured into shops displaying antique decoys and his interest in carving was renewed. A few years later Bruce learned about the Ohio Decoy Carvers & Collectors Association’s annual March decoy show and competition at the Holiday Inn in Westlake, Ohio. As it turns out, the Westlake show is one of the top competitions in the nation. Bruce attended the show in 1993 and learned much about the art of decoy carving and the suppliers of carving materials. By 1998, Bruce was ready to enter the Association’s competition and in 2000 he won his first Amateur Level Best of Show in San Bernardino, California. After several awards at the Amateur Level, he advanced to the

Open Level where his awards continued in several categories, including: (1) Contemporary Hunting Decoys, (2) Traditional Hunting Decoys, (3) Pickleweed Heads, and (4) Shorebirds. Interestingly, decoys of non-sport species are often used with hunting decoys as “confidence decoys” to help attract target species.

To carve a duck decoy, Bruce typically starts with a block of basswood or tupelo about 20 inches long, 8 inches wide, and 4 inches high. For small shorebirds the blocks are proportionally smaller. On the block he sketches a side view and top view of the bird he wishes to carve. The sketches come from his own observations or photographs, supplemented by illustrations from the many waterfowl books and other sources in his library. Bruce approaches carving like an engineer, paying particular attention to proportions and fine details. He cuts out the rough shape on a band saw, and then he uses a variety of power carving tools to round out the features. On some decoys he uses a small comb-like device to texture the basecoat of paint to resemble the feathers on the duck’s back. Bruce admits that for him, the final paint process is the most difficult, but the results are spectacular.



An exquisite pair of Pintail ducks (female left and male right).



A collection of decoys carved by Bruce: (left to right) Pacific Brant, female Pintail, male Black Scoter, male Redhead, female and male Northern Shoveler, male Pintail, male Lesser Scaup, and Eared Grebe (front row).

Bruce is employed as a project manager for a local concrete contractor, thus carving decoys is purely an avocational pursuit for him. He gets to spend about an hour each night and more time on weekends with his carving. At this rate he averages about two to three decoys per year. When this editor arrived to interview Bruce, he was kind enough to have a dozen or so of his prized decoys setting out for display. In addition to local ducks, several were West Coast species and shorebirds, demonstrating Bruce's diversity of interest in water birds. To name a few, they included a Barrow's Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*), Black-bellied Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*), Black Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*), Eared Grebe (*Podiceps nigricollis*), Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*), Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*), Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*), Redhead (*Aythya valisineria*), and Pacific Brant (a sea goose, *Branta bernicla nigricans*). He is currently working on another Pintail, which he hopes to enter in competition next year. Bruce has kept most of his carvings, but a few have been sold at prices ranging from \$500 to \$750. Considering the time and skill required to produce these elegant replicas of nature—what a bargain!



Female Northern Shoveler demonstrates the painting required to produce life-like decoys.



Carved Black-bellied Plover compared with a photograph of a live bird.



A Black-bellied Plover in the process of being carved.

Summer Open House

On Saturday July 12, the Sheffield Village Historical Society and Cultural Center held its Summer Open House at the Sheffield History Center, 4944 Detroit Road. The event gave our new Trustees and members of the Society an opportunity to view the historic collections of the Society and socialize while they enjoyed punch and cookies. The event was scheduled from 1 to 4 pm, but some members lingered longer and it evolved into a pizza party that pleasantly went on until 9:30 pm. Our new Board of Trustee members are Dennis Bryden, Andrew Minda, Carol Minda, and Meredith Williams, elected at the July 10 meeting of the Historical Society that followed the archaeology lecture by Dr. Brian Redmond at the French Creek Nature Center.



New Trustee Denny Bryden proudly exhibits his carefully restored 1930 Ford Model-A touring car.



Ricki Herdendorf shows a dress once worn by Ruth Tempe Root in 1914 to new Trustee Carol (Day) Minda at Summer Open House.



Gladys Wisnieski and Jean Ackerman enjoy the exhibits at the Summer Open House.



Child's dress and boot worn by Henry Garfield Root in 1886.

the years following the War for Independence, a hand drawn certificate presented to Hannah Hall by her writing teacher, a ledger containing handwritten enrollment and Board of Education records for Sheffield's District No. 1 Schoolhouse, as well as the teacher's bell from the school, and a Burrell Family Bible.

Dennis Bryden, one of the Society's new Trustees and long-time resident of Sheffield Village, was so kind as to donate a number of the Gubeno-Bryden Family articles that were once in the family homesteads on Detroit and Abbe Roads. With Denny's gifts the Historical Society has a complete historic entertainment center ranging from a 1915 RCA Victor phonograph with "morning glory" horn, a 1934 General Electric floor-model radio, and 1949 RCA Victor floor-model television—all of which still work. At the Open House we all enjoyed listening to the 1937 *Pinocchio* records featuring Jiminy Cricket singing *When You Wish Upon a Star*. Denny gave the Society many other family items that we were pleased

to exhibit at the Open House, but the real hit of the day was when Denny and his friend Linda Urig arrived in his perfectly restored 1930 Model-A Ford automobile.

The list of historic items that were on display is nearly endless, including a reproduction of a Copley painting of Capt. William Day on loan from new Trustee Meredith Williams, a series of computerized images of the former homes along Abbe Road from photographs taken by Gladys Wisnieski and arranged as a digital show by Donnie Hammer, histories of the Brewster-Brown Family from Bud Brown, Schueller Family genealogy from Pam Rihel, historic farm tools donated by the Beebe, Forster, and Little Families, and dozens of photographs, posters, maps, books, and other documents graciously donated by members of the greater Sheffield Village community.

The Society is extremely appreciative these many artifacts that are helping us preserve the Village's heritage. We hope they will continue to flow into the Society's collections. Please remember our slogan—**What's in Your Attic?**



Linda Urig and new Trustees Andy and Carol Minda at Open House.



Eddie Herdendorf, Michele Minda, and Denny Bryden at Open House.



Michele Minda looks through a Day Family genealogy book while Kathy Keefer and Matt Bliss read about Capt. Aaron Root's voyages to transport runaway slaves to freedom in Canada.



New Trustees Denny Bryden and Meredith Williams at Summer Open House.



1915 RCA Victor phonograph (in operation) from the Gubeno House that once stood on Detroit Road.

Sheffield's Autumn Wildflowers

The days are growing shorter and soon fall wildflowers will be in bloom. The next several pages illustrate some of the colorful autumn wildflowers photographed throughout the Village last fall. Each wildflower has its own story and we hope the following descriptions and images will help you appreciate the variety we are blessed to have in Sheffield.

Canada Goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*)

—SUNFLOWER FAMILY (Asteraceae)

This showy autumn plant produces small golden-yellow flower heads on outward-arching branches that tend to form a pyramidal cluster. It forms dense, 3-veined leaves that are lance-shaped and sharply toothed. Canada Goldenrod typically grows from 3 to 5 feet tall. The numerous flower heads are so close together that insects crawling across the cluster can efficiently pollinate large numbers of flowers, yielding sufficient seeds to sustain the plant from year to year. Its habitat consists of abandoned fields, thickets, and roadsides. Goldenrod is thought to cause an allergic reaction such as “hay fever” in some individuals.

Chicory (*Cichorium intybus*)

—SUNFLOWER FAMILY (Asteraceae)

Native to Europe, this plant is now firmly established in Ohio. The leaves are somewhat dandelion-like, to 6 inches long, while the showy sky-blue flowers are arranged along the upper areas of the stems. The flower heads are about 1.5 inches in diameter with 15 or more notched-tipped rays (petals). Flowering time is from July to October, usually in the morning hours. Roots can be dug, ground, roasted, and brewed as a coffee substitute or as a deliberate adulterant of coffee. In Louisiana and nearby states it is routinely used in coffee. During the Civil War and the World Wars, chicory was used as a means of extending coffee supplies.

Common Cocklebur (*Xanthium strumarium*)

—SUNFLOWER FAMILY (Asteraceae)

The leaves and stem of this plant have a rough, sandpapery texture. The leaves are ovate to triangular in shape and are arranged in an alternate pattern on the stem. Small green flower heads appear in clusters in the axils (where leaves join the stem) of the upper leaves. Leaf-like structures found below the flower (bracts) eventually become the wall of a spiny fruit. This autumn fruit is bur-like, armed with strong hooked spines. Large plants may have over a thousand burs. Cocklebur is a weedy species of cultivated fields, floodplains, moist meadows, and old fields. Young plants are extremely poisonous.

Daisy Fleabane (*Erigeron annuus*)

—SUNFLOWER FAMILY (Asteraceae)

This fleabane produces numerous white flower heads that are about 0.5 inch wide, with 40 to 70 rays (petals). The central disc is yellow. The leaves are hairy and toothed. Distinct from some of the other fleabanes, the leaves do not clasp the stem. The stem itself is covered with spreading hairs. The plant grows to a height of 1 to 5 feet and resembles a small aster with its many flower heads. It expends large amounts of energy on reproduction to assure survival in disturbed areas. The blooming period for this fleabane is from June to October. Common habitats are open fields, roadsides, and other disturbed areas.

Evening-primrose (*Oenothera biennis*)

—EVENING-PRIMROSE FAMILY (Onagraceae)

This biennial plant establishes its basal leaves the first year and flowering occurs the second year. The lemon-scented, yellow flower is 1 to 2 inches wide, with 4 petals and a crossed-shaped stigma (female receptive surface at the pistil tip to which pollen grains attach). The flowers open at twilight and wilt the next day. Soon after opening, the flowers are visited by night-flying hawk moths in search of nectar—thus pollinating the flower. The blooming period is July to October. The leaves are lance-shaped and slightly toothed. The stem is red-tinged and grows to a height of 1 to 6 feet. The fruit is an oblong capsule, ~1 inch long, that often persists through the winter. Habitats include open fields, roadsides, and disturbed areas.

Feverfew (*Chrysanthemum parthenium*)

—SUNFLOWER FAMILY (Asteraceae)

This is a bushy plant with broadly toothed pinnate leaves (compound leaf with leaflets arranged on both sides of the stalk). The flower heads have a relatively large yellow central button and somewhat stubby white rays (petals). The plant is noticeably aromatic, giving off a pungently odor. It is a fairly low plant, growing to a height of only 1 to 2 feet, which blooms from June through September. A taprooted perennial, this plant is native to Europe and wild specimens found in Sheffield are probably escapes from nearby gardens. A tea made from the whole plant is a folk remedy for arthritis, colds, cramps, and fevers. A few chewed leaves alleviates migraine headaches.

Field Thistle (*Cirsium discolor*)

—SUNFLOWER FAMILY (Asteraceae)

This common thistle has a solitary, pink to light purple flower head, 1 to 2 inches in diameter. The upper leaves embrace the flower head, while the lower leaves alternate on the stem, are deeply cut, and have white woolly hairs on the underside. The stem is grooved and hairy. The entire plant grows to height of 3 to 7 feet. The blooming period is from July to October. Its commonly found in farm fields, woodland borders, roadsides, and other disturbed areas. The seeds provide important food for Goldfinches (*Carduelis tristis*), however, it is a troublesome weed for agriculture. This is a perennial, native plant.

Green-headed Coneflower (*Rudbeckia laciniata*)

—SUNFLOWER FAMILY (Asteraceae)

Also known as Golden Glow when cultivated, this plant is native to Ohio. Often found in moist thickets and lowlands, the flowering time for this showy coneflower is from July to October. The solitary, yellow flower head is 2 to 4 inches wide, with 6 to 10 drooping rays (petals). The button-like center disc is a prominent greenish knob. The smooth stems are tall and highly branched, reaching 3 to 10 feet high. The upper leaves are simple without lobes, while the lower leaves are deeply cut with 3 to 5 lobes. The cultivated variety, which may escape in fields, is easily distinguished by having “double flowers”—2 to 3 times as many rays.



Canada Goldenrod



Chicory



Common Cocklebur



Daisy Fleabane



Evening-primrose



Feverfew



Field Thistle



Green-headed Coneflower



Heath Aster



Jimsonweed



Lady's Thumb



New England Aster

Heath Aster (*Aster pilosus*)

—SUNFLOWER FAMILY (*Asteraceae*)

This aster has numerous white flower heads, 0.5 to 1 inch diameter, with 15 to 30 rays (petals). The central disc is typically yellow, turning lavender or reddish purple. The leaves are lance-shaped and relatively small. The stems are hairy with many branches and reach a height of 1 to 5 feet. This bushy plant, also known as Awl Aster, is native to Ohio and very common in Sheffield. It occurs in fallow fields, dry meadows, open woodsides, roadsides, and other disturbed areas. The blooming period is from August through November. The seeds are important food for songbirds throughout the fall and winter.

Jimsonweed (*Datura stramonium*)

—NIGHTSHADE FAMILY (*Solanaceae*)

This strongly scented annual herb, also known as Devil's-trumpet, produces a funnel-shaped white to purple flower on a short stem. The main stem of the plant is stout with spreading branches and unevenly toothed leaves. The green egg-shaped fruit is spiny, up to 2 inches long, and consists of a capsule bearing large seeds. All parts of this plant are poisonous to cattle, horses, sheep, and humans, even contact with leaves can cause severe dermatitis. The solanaceous alkaloid poisons cause headache, vertigo, nausea, loss of sight and coordination, convulsions, and death. The *Cleveland Plain Dealer* (November 7, 2007) reported that last year three brothers from southern Ohio became violently ill after eating seeds from this plant. Jimsonweed is named for Jamestown, Virginia, where early settlers became crazed after eating it.

Lady's-thumb (*Polygonum persicaria*)

—SMARTWEED FAMILY (*Polygonaceae*)

This knotweed plant produces a tiny pink flower in spikes about 1 inch long. Blooming occurs from June through October. The leaves are long and narrow with a dark triangular spot near the center. At every point where a leaf is attached to the stem, there is a fringed tubular sheath, which resembles a knot. The top of the sheath is fringed with long hairs and the stem is reddish in color. The plant commonly grows from 0.5 to 2 feet. The common name refers to the dark spot on each leaf, resembling the bruise made by a "lady's thumb." The habitats for this plant include damp meadows, roadsides, cultivated fields, and other disturbed areas.

New England Aster (*Aster novae-angliae*)

—SUNFLOWER FAMILY (*Asteraceae*)

The attractive purple flowers of this plant are borne in heads at the ends of the uppermost branches and consist of 30 to 50 brilliantly colored rays (petals) that are slender and about 0.75 inch long. A yellow disc occupies the center. The plant can be tall, some reaching 8 feet. The time of flowering is August through October. It is the largest and most showy of the autumn-blooming asters. The stems are stout with abundant sticky hairs and well covered with toothless, lance-shaped leaves that clasp the stem. The primary habitats of this aster include abandoned fields, thickets, and swampy meadows.

Nodding Foxtail (*Setaria faberi*)

—GRASS FAMILY (*Poaceae*)

Also known as Giant Foxtail Grass, this plant can grow up to 6 feet tall, often falling over if not supported by other plants. The blade-like leaves are 10 to 20 inches long and 0.3 to 0.7 inches wide. The nodding flower cluster (panicle) is spike-like and composed of numerous spikelets closely crowded together. Each spikelet has 3 to 6 greenish bristles. The single-seeded fruit is called a grain or caryopsis. An annual plant, it is a weed in cultivated fields and is also found in other disturbed areas and old fields. It was introduced from China in 1931 as a contaminant in Chinese Millet (*Setaria italica*) and rapidly spread throughout Ohio in the 1950s.

Pink Smartweed (*Polygonum pensylvanicum*)

—SMARTWEED FAMILY (*Polygonaceae*)

This smartweed produces small pink flowers that are packed together on spikes up to 2.5 inches long. Blooming of this annual plant occurs from May through October. The leaves are 4 to 6 inches long, lanceolate in shape, and form a cylindrical, reddish sheath at the leaf base, which resembles a knot. Although similar to Lady's-thumb, this plant has somewhat larger leaves and flower spikes, and lack the fringes at the top of the sheaths. The plant commonly grows from 1 to 4 feet tall. The habitats for this plant include damp meadows, roadsides, and fields. The seeds of many smartweeds are important food items for songbirds and waterfowl.

Pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*)

—POKEWEED FAMILY (*Phytolaccaceae*)

This plant is the only representative of the Pokeweed Family that occurs in Ohio. It produces small white flowers, 0.25 inch wide with 5 petal-like sepals, growing in a long cluster on a red stalk. The plant has a distinctive reddish-purple stem that is massively coarse in appearance and grows to a height of 4 to 10 feet. The attractive berries are dark purple hanging in long drooping clusters. Unfortunately the berries are poisonous, however, the emerging shoots can be gathered before the pink color appears, cooked, and eaten as greens. Damp thickets, clearings, and roadsides are likely habitats. Civil War soldiers often wrote letters home using red pokeberry ink and a hand-made turkey quill pen.

Queen Anne's Lace (*Daucus carota*)

—CARROT FAMILY (*Apiaceae*)

The tiny cream-white flowers of this plant occur in an umbrella-shaped, flat-topped cluster, often with a single reddish-brown floret at the center of the umbel. Old flowers clusters curl to form a cuplike "birds nest." The leaves are fern-like, being finely divided and subdivided. The plant has a bristly stem that grows to a height of 1 to 3 feet. A long taproot forms the first year and is edible. Cultivated carrots are the same species—if garden carrots are allowed to go to seed the similarity of the flowers becomes apparent. The blooming period is from June through November along roadsides, open dry fields, and other disturbed areas.



Nodding Foxtail



Pink Smartweed



Pokeweed



Queen Anne's Lace



Red Clover



Soft-stemmed Bulrush



Steeplebush



Sulphur Fungus



Tickseed-sunflower



Turkey-tail Fungus



White Snakeroot



Yellow Wood-sorrel

Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*)

—PEA FAMILY (*Fabaceae*)

This reddish-purple (magenta) clover has a round, globe-shaped cluster head of 0.75-inch diameter. Each flower in the cluster produces a pod containing 1 yellow or purple seed. The spoon-shaped leaves are composed of 3 leaflets, each with a distinct, whitish “V” or chevron marking midway along the upper surface of the leaflet. The plant is a relatively large clover, growing to a height of 0.5 to 1.5 feet. This perennial plant is pollinated primarily by long-tongued, yellow bumble bees (*Bombus fervidus*). As with all members of the Pea Family, it stores nitrogen in its root nodules and is used in crop rotation to improve soil fertility. Habitats include old fields, roadsides, meadows, and disturbed areas.

Soft-stemmed Bulrush (*Schoenplectus tabernaemontani*)

—SEDGE FAMILY (*Cyperaceae*)

Formerly known as *Scirpus validus*, this wetland bulrush can grow to a height of 8 feet, but typically 3 to 5 feet. Fruiting stems arise from stout, horizontal scaly root-stocks that form dense interlocking mats near the low-water mark. A cluster of reddish-brown, drooping spikelets form at the upper ends of the stems. The stems are grayish-green and can be easily crushed between one’s fingers. The spikelets consist of scales about the same size as the brownish-gray ripe seeds, which are partly exposed beneath them—one seed under each scale. Found at ponds, streams, and wet meadows, bulrushes provide food and shelter for many forms of wetland wildlife.

Steeplebush (*Spiraea tomentosa*)

—ROSE FAMILY (*Rosaceae*)

This plant is an erect shrub with dense, steeple-shaped, branched clusters of pink to reddish-purple flowers. The individual flowers are less than 0.25 inch wide with 5 petals and numerous stamens giving the plant a fuzzy appearance. The reddish leaves are 1 to 2 inches long, oblong, toothed, and very wooly on the underside. The small, dry fruit is incased in a woody follicle within the clusters that persists though the winter. The plant grows to a height of 2 to 4 feet and flowers from July to October. The habitats for this plant include old and fallow fields, wet meadows, and sterile low ground. This plant also has the common name of Hardhack.

Sulfur Fungus (*Laetiporus sulphureus*)

—POLYPORE FAMILY (*Polyporaceae*)

Also called Chicken Mushroom because of its taste, this edible fungus often grows on fallen oak trees in woodlots. The caps range from 2 to 12 inches wide, usually in overlapping, fan-shaped shelves or brackets, which can be orange, salmon, or sulfur-yellow in color, zoned outward, that weather to a whitish color. The shelves can occur in large clusters of 5 to 50 or more. Only the tips of the young fungi are generally eaten, as the other parts are too tough. It becomes somewhat indigestible as it ages, and can cause an allergic reaction, such as swollen lips. The best time to observe this beautiful fungus is from summer to autumn.

Tickseed-sunflower (*Bidens coronata*)

—SUNFLOWER FAMILY (*Asteraceae*)

This plant has a bright yellow flower head, about 2 inches in diameter, with 6 to 10 rays (petals) that have rounded tips. The central disc is moderate in size and yellow in color. The leaves are positioned opposite on the stem, toothed, and deeply divided. The stems are leafy, much-branched, and bear several flower heads. The plant ranges in height from less than 2 to nearly 5 feet. The genus name comes from Latin meaning “two teeth” referring to the 2 strong spines on the seeds that stick to animal fur or clothing—thus aiding in seed dispersal. This native plant grows in wet meadows, roadside ditches, floodplains, and other moist areas. Blooming is from August to October.

Turkey-tail Fungus (*Trametes versicolor*)

—POLYPORE FAMILY (*Polyporaceae*)

This attractive fungus has 1 to 4 inch wide caps that display many multicolored zones. This color pattern gives rise to another common name for this fungus—Many-zoned Polypore. The upper surface of the cap consists of concentric zones of black, blue, brown, red, and yellow bands that undulate and appear velvety. The stalkless caps are usually overlapping or arranged in flat to wavy rosettes that are roughly circular in shape. The flesh is thin, leathery, tough, and white in color. Commonly seen from May to December, this fungus typically grows on dead deciduous wood.

White Snakeroot (*Ageratina altissima*)

—SUNFLOWER FAMILY (*Asteraceae*)

The fuzzy white flower head of this plant grows as a somewhat flat-topped cluster arising from a single point. Sharply toothed leaves have 3 main veins and are positioned opposite each other on the stem. The habitats for this plant, which blooms from July to October, are rich woods and thickets. In the early nineteenth century, pioneer families would often permit their milk cows to graze in woodlands before they had been cleared for pastures. Cattle that feed on White Snakeroot incorporate toxins from the plant into their milk. Anyone who consumes the tainted milk will be poisoned. This “Milk Sickness” is thought to be the cause of Abraham Lincoln’s mother’s death in 1818. Sandusky High School science teacher Edwin Lincoln Moseley, in 1905, was the first researcher to prove the cause of this disease.

Yellow Wood-sorrel (*Oxalis stricta*)

—WOOD-SORREL FAMILY (*Oxalidaceae*)

This perennial plant produces a yellow flower that is about 0.5 inch wide and has 5 petals. The bright green leaves are divided into 3 heart-shaped, clover-like leaflets. Stems stand erect from 6 to 15 inches high, but the plant can be prostrate and sometimes creeps and spreads. The fruit (seed pod) is borne in a small, 5-chambered capsule. This plant is also known as Sour-grass because of the sour taste of the leaves, which contain oxalic acid—an acid used for bleaching and cleaning. This common lawn and garden weed prefers a moist, acid soil. Frequently its seeds are impurities in lawn grass seed.

Historic Plaque for Garfield Bridge



Garfield Bridge spans the Black River along State Route 254, connecting Sheffield Village with Sheffield Township. The bridge is a prominent feature along the new North Ridge Scenic Byway. The original Garfield Bridge was constructed in 1936 as a high-level viaduct replacement for the old steel-truss bridge that crossed the river at flood plain level. After some 67 years of service, the viaduct succumbed to corrosion and metal fatigue and was itself replaced by a modern concrete-pillar bridge in 2003. When completed, the original viaduct displayed a bronze plaque stating the bridge's name. Unfortunately, during the demolition process the plaque disappeared and the new bridge lost its identity.

At the suggestion of the Sheffield Village Historical Society, and the support of Village Mayor John D. Hunter, Lorain County Engineer Ken Carney agreed to have a new sign fabricated for the reconstructed bridge. On July 18, 2008 the new bronze plaque was mounted on the south wing wall at the east approach, proudly proclaiming the name of the bridge. The Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the efforts of the County Engineer's Office to keep the identity of Garfield Bridge alive!



Historical Plaque commemorating the original bridge and its recent reconstruction.

Garfield Bridge (State Route 254) over the Black River valley.

Society Organization

The Sheffield Village Historical Society is a charitable nonprofit 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 Kathy Keefer, Secretary (440-934-6015), Eddie Herdendorf, President (440-934-1514 herdendorf@aol.com), or Ron Forster, Vice President (440-949-7638).

Society newsletters can be found on the Village of Sheffield, Ohio official website: www.sheffieldvillage.com (click on Sheffield Village Historical Society, then *Village Pioneer* Newsletters, then download). Page Layout is by Ricki C. Herdendorf, EcoSphere Associates.

Society members are encouraged to submit items for future issues. Please send your stories or ideas to the Editor. The Society thanks Edgar Day Gates and The Gates Fund for providing financial support for the publication of this newsletter.

Charles E. Herdendorf, Ph.D.
Newsletter Editor
Sheffield Village Historical Society
Garfield Farms, 4921 Detroit Road
Sheffield Village, Ohio 44054

Ask Your Friends to Join The Sheffield Village Historical Society

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

SHEFFIELD VILLAGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Garfield Farms—4921 Detroit Road, Sheffield Village, Ohio 44054—(440)-934-1514

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____ Email _____

Individual (\$10.00/year)

Family (\$15.00/year)—2 Adults & children under 18 years old

Business/Corporate & Organization (\$25.00/year)

Family Members _____

Special Interests in Sheffield History? _____