



Established 1984

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Our Focus and Goal Is to PRESERVE OUR HERITAGE

Spring 2012

Open houses, July 4 parade celebrate town's 175th

The Historical Society joined with the community to celebrate New Knoxville's 175th anniversary with a float in the July 4 parade and six themed open houses during the summer and early fall in 2011.

The first open house, held Sunday, May 29, honored the military. Board member Myron Fledderjohann gave a tour of the five museum buildings to the Class of 1961. The class first attended the high school graduation and then spent the rest of the afternoon at the museum. Many enjoyed looking at a scrapbook about the Youth Center, which the historical society obtained last year. Fledderjohann also spoke at the American Legion's Memorial Day celebration, held at the World War I memorial beside the Town Hall. Fledderjohann shared his knowledge of the town's veterans and noted that many of the men returned to the village to become contributing citizens in the mid-twentieth century.



Photo taken by Mike Burkholder. It originally appeared in *The Evening Leader* on July 5, 2011.

June's open house focused on farming. Visitors to the center's barn could look at and read about many old tools and other farming supplies. Edythe and Bill Henschen and Diane and Tom Fledderjohann also made available an Allis Chalmers G, a small, horse-drawn grain seeder, a New Bremen-built furrowing plow and a wooden wheelbarrow from the Kuck Brothers molasses farm. Doug Hoelscher brought in a John Deere L tractor for display.

Board members decided to focus on farming for their float for the July 4

New Knoxville Historical Society President Kirk Stienecker operates a schnitzelbank while trustee Janean Oberlander and granddaughter Sadie Lekan ride at the back of the float and demonstrate a wooden butter churn.

been a staple of the Fall Festival, held Labor Day weekend, was revised by Historical Society member Donna Larson.

Society president Kirk Stienecker, trustee Janean Oberlander and her granddaughter, Sadie Lekan, donned old-fashioned clothes and rode aboard the float, which included a cutting bench, called a schnitzelbank, a plow and a butter churn among other items. Driving his 1947 Farmall M, trustee Mike Neuman pulled the float down Main Street.

Local inventors were the focus of July's open house. Thirty-three patents are held by New Knoxville residents dating from 1888 to the present, according to an Internet search by board member Larry Niemeyer.

(cont. on page 2)



The upstairs of the barn on the Heritage Center's property holds numerous farm items.

parade. The parade, which had formerly

MEMBERSHIP: Single - \$10/Year \$50/Lifetime
Couple - \$18/Year \$100/Lifetime
Student - \$1/Year

Checks may be mailed to Edythe Henschen, 07653 St. Rt. 219.
New Knoxville, OH 45871

Attention, NKHS members!
Would you be interested in serving as a society officer or board member? Contact Janean Oberlander at 419-753-2077.

Herman Henry Holtkamp was issued a patent in 1888 for a bicycle attachment that would “provide an exceedingly simple, cheap, and durable attachment . . . [so that a bicycle] may be run upon ice or upon snowy ground.”

William Wesley Katterheinrich was issued two patents in 1901 and 1910. The first was for a plow attachment “whereby the ground turned by the plow is broken and smoothed and leveled.” His second was for a cigar holder for a hat, which could hold up to six cigars.

In 1952 Leroy Schroer, who operated a local chicken egg hatchery, received a patent “to provide a nest that is clean, sanitary, free of vermin and one that insures clean eggs.” The nest also allowed the eggs to “automatically roll away from a hen immediately upon the hen arising from the egg,” and provided “a means for preventing eggs from breaking when they roll away from a hen.” Schroer’s special egg nest can be seen in the lower level of the barn.

Schroer’s nest was based on an earlier roll-a-way nest that was invented by Henry Huckeriede. It, too, is on display in the barn at the Heritage Center.



This chicken laying nest plus information about Leroy Schroer’s patent can be found in the Historical Society’s barn.

Local nurseryman, A.K. Manbeck, received a patent in 1971 for a new variety of a linden tree.

Several New Knoxville men have been issued patents either individually or as part of a team in conjunction with area companies. Those men include Marvin Clamme, Jesse Dillon, Don Fiegel, Larry Niemeyer, Mark Schumacher and David Tinnerman.

The August open house continued with the focus on entrepreneurs in our community as it highlighted more businesses.

Both the house and the barn include memorabilia from the New Knoxville Telephone Company, Adolph’s AA Restaurant and the People’s Savings Bank.

Denise Testa, who was raised in Jenera, Ohio, in Hancock County, was the featured speaker. Ms. Testa has done research on the Cannonball safes, developed after the Civil War by the Mosler Company, originally

of Cincinnati and later of Hamilton, Ohio.

The Cannonball safe, so named because of its round shape, was developed of steel instead of iron, making it more burglar-resistant. With its continued development, the Cannonball safe became resistant to safe crackers. According to Testa’s hand-



William J. Hinze, Christy D. Katterheinrich and Samuel B. Katterheinrich were granted a patent in 1919 for the mechanism pictured above. It attaches to a hand pump, allowing for a motor to operate the pump.

out on the subject, “most floor model ‘Cannonball’ safes now weighed in somewhere between 3500 to 5000 pounds, which along with their almost water-tight door seal, made them difficult for robbers to blow.”

Testa continues, “By the time Herman Kuhlman decided to open the Peoples Savings Bank of New Knoxville in 1910, the purchase of a ‘Cannonball’ safe was one of the best selling points he could use to assure folks that their money would be safe and secure. He was proved correct nine years later.

“On the night of October 3rd, 1919, a gang of robbers who plagued parts of Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan broke into his bank



A Message from the President

Dear Friends and Society Members,

This past year was very special for New Knoxville, celebrating its 175th anniversary. At each open house our historical society paid tribute to our ancestors who worked hard to make our community successful.

We take pride in the Heritage Center. The windows have been upgraded and our five buildings are maintained to reflect our treasured heritage.

A special thank you to the officers, trustees, board members, volunteers and supporters. All of you make our historical society a success.

Invite a friend or neighbor to the annual meeting and see how we preserve our heritage.

Kirk Stienecker, president

After having served four years, Kirk is stepping down as president of the historical society, but will continue to serve as a trustee. The trustees and members of the board thank Kirk for his contributions as president.

and cut through the vault door lock with an acetylene torch. Although it had been discovered during World War I that manganese steel was vulnerable to acetylene torches, the 'Cannonball' was used only as a candle stand while the thieves focused their efforts on the safe deposit boxes.

"Although the robbers got away with



Denise Testa has done extensive research on the cannonball safes, like the one above from the Peoples Savings Bank. The Leroy, New York, resident presented information during August's open house.

around \$5,500 worth of registered liberty bonds and \$1,500 of unregistered bonds, Kuhlman's 'Cannonball' kept the majority of the bank's assets safe. Other banks in the area weren't so lucky. A little over a month later, the Rockford, Ohio, bank lost over \$75,000. They didn't have a 'Cannonball' safe."

The September open house, focusing on education, saw the opening of the gymnasium in the old school, now owned by Hoge Lumber Company and used by Hoge Brush.

Display curator Rusty Elsass filled the gym with many items that had never been on display. Visitors flocked to the gym to view Washington, D.C., T-shirts, old band uniforms, and numerous items from the years when the original high school was used. These included poll books from school board elections, teacher contracts, senior class books from 1915 through 1937, class pictures, athletics pictures, and programs from class plays, musical programs, and sports events.

Once again visitors enjoyed Mike Neuman's kettle-cooked chili and donuts, corn bread and cider. In addition,



Visitors at the September open house study old documents that were on display in the school's old gym. The brick structure was erected in 1914. The gym, which also served as the auditorium, was constructed in 1926 and served the community until September, 1938.



Members of the New Knoxville school band, under the direction of Mr. Cory Canan, entertain visitors at the September open house with a song from their pep band repertoire. Photo provided by Rick Samuel



At the September open house Indianapolis resident Daniel Fledderjohann reads a chart designed by graphic artist Jessica Katterheinrich for the village in celebration of the 175th anniversary of New Knoxville's founding.

Mayor Keith Leffel helped Katterheinrich with the information, which included significant events in the town during the last 175 years. It is now on display in the Town Hall.

tion, the high school band entertained with a concert under the old white oak tree.

In October New Knoxville students in grades 3, 4, 7 and 8 were able to tour the old gym and learn about the history of education in New Knoxville. (See related article on page 4.)

The Historical Society finished their celebration of this anniversary year with their final open house on October 30. The gym displays were again available and included historical pictures and items from both the United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ.

These open houses helped us to celebrate the village's 175th birthday and remember the rich heritage that the New Knoxville community enjoys.

Early one-room township schools dotted countryside during early days of area's education

Editor's note: The following reminiscence, written by Lenora Gritzmaker, recounts her days as a student at the little red schoolhouse in Sub-District 1, Van Buren Township, Shelby County, located at the corner of Botkins and Fledderjohn roads.

The one room school house that remains throughout the countryside brings fond memories of days gone by. Many of these schools were two miles apart. Children who attended were in grades one through the eighth grade. Some children walked the distance of a mile while others traveled only a short distance. Every child brought their noon lunch and was expected to stay all day. School began at nine o'clock and was dismissed at three-thirty in the afternoon. The bell rang promptly at nine o'clock, and it was time to begin the day.

As one entered the school through a double wooden door, you were in a long narrow room which had two swinging doors that took one into the large classroom. This long narrow room was sometimes called a hall because if students were on their bad behavior, the teacher made them stand in the hall. A large United States flag was displayed on the front wall with the chalk boards directly beneath. Story books were found in various bookcases along the walls. There was also an organ and a wind-up Victrola.

The pledge of allegiance was said, Bible stories were read to the students and the Lord's Prayer was said in unison. On certain days all students took part in marching through the

aisles to the tune of Repaze Band on the Victrola. The music teacher came once a month to instruct students. The songs were from books common to all one-room schools. *The Golden Book of Favorite Songs*, *The Uncle Sam Book*, *The Diadem*, *The Crown*, *The Lute* were among the books that were used. The teacher would accompany the students on the organ.

The teacher's desk was up front in the center of the room. The recitation bench was located directly behind her desk where the students learned reading, writing and arithmetic. Each grade during the day had a chance to use this bench. Some grades had two, three or four students and some only one. It could also happen that there were no students at all for a particular year. The total number of students at a school ranged from eighteen to somewhere in the twenties.

The desks for students in the first to fourth grade were located in the center of the room. Fifth and sixth grade were to the left of the center desks and seventh and eighth grade were to the right. The only source of light in the school was daylight. There was no electricity at the time. **(Ed. note:** Another

former student, Lavina Stolte, remembered kerosene lamps along the side walls.) There were usually three large windows on either side of the room.

Fire drills were common to all of

Eleven one-room schools existed in what is now New Knoxville School District

*Poppe
Carter Creek,
Silver Maple (Fledderjohn),
Woodland (Holtkamp),
Walnut Grove (Shinbone),
Brookside (Hoelscher),
N.K. Village,
Cloverleaf (Lutterbeck),
Sunnyside (Henkener),
Owl Creek (Burk),
Burr Oak (Stroh-Montgomery)*

the students as they marched outside through what was called the "Fire Escape" door. The county superintendent, the health nurse and the truant officer made their visits from time to time.

In one corner of the room was a huge stove with a metal jacket. It was more like a furnace than a stove. The teacher served as janitor, who took care of keeping the fire going, swept the floor, dusted the desks and usually kept a smiling face through all the hard work.

Softball was the main game that was played at recess and during the noon hour. Other games consisted of Tag, Board Off, Prison Base, Andy Over, Kick the Can and Jack Stones. In winter, skating was enjoyed under a nearby bridge. At Christmas



The above photographs were printed on postcards that were given as souvenirs for school attendance. This 100-year-old card for the 1911-1912 school year includes a picture of the teacher, Elizabeth Fledderjohn. (Picture provided by Marilee Eversman)

time the students presented a program for parents and others in the area that were interested in coming. The tree was decorated with candles and tinsel, perhaps popcorn strung on a string. Box suppers were common at a certain time of the school year.

The last day of school was a fun day. It was usually a potluck affair. Games were played throughout the day. Report cards were handed out. Students were allowed to bring friends. Sometimes a neighboring school was invited to join in the celebration of the long summer vacation.

Many of the one-room schools were discontinued during the late 1920's. Over the years some were made into dwellings, some were used for meetings, while others were used to store farm machinery. Some have deteriorated to the extent that they no longer exist and others can still be seen throughout the state in disrepair.

Some students attended school for only six or seven years at the most, then quit to help parents with the farm work. Today every child has the opportunity to acquire as much education as it desires. We salute these grand opportunities that exist in our nation. May God bless America.

The following article was written by Annett Kuck, who interviewed the people mentioned in the article.

Lenora Gritzmaker's account has many similarities with other reports from former country school students in the area and so can be considered an accurate description of school days in little red schoolhouses in the first third of the twentieth century.

Built in 1901, the brick schoolhouse in Lenora's article was known as Silver Maple or Fledderjohn School. The name Silver Maple was derived from the silver maples which grew along the banks of the creek west of the



This photo, taken on the last day of school, appeared on a postcard from the Silver Maple School. It shows the children enjoying a potluck dinner like the one described in Lenora Gritzmaker's article. (Picture provided by Marilee Eversman)

school.

Township schools were located on land belonging to a property owner in each sub-district. When the schools were closed, the land (but not the schools themselves) reverted back to the farmers. Frederick H. Fledderjohn owned the land on which the school that bears his name was built. He and his family lived where Mike Neuman and his family now live. His daughter, Elizabeth, was the teacher at Silver Maple at least six years, from 1906-1912. Another daughter, Matilda, was Silas Lammers's mother.

Teachers during the 1920's when Lenora and Lavina Stolte were students at Silver Maple were Elizabeth Holtkamp, Irene Koepke, Edna Katterheinrich, and Edna Fledderjohann.



This picture of the Silver Maple School at the corner of Fledderjohn and Botkins roads appeared on a post card sent to Wesley Eversman from his teacher Elizabeth Fledderjohn as a souvenir for school attendance in 1910-1911. It is part of a collection now owned by Marilee Eversman.

When the school was closed at the end of the 1926-27 school year, the students in that sub-district were to be sent to Kettlersville and Anna schools. Parents of the students presented a petition requesting that the students be assigned to New Knoxville School instead. Catechism classes were held at the Evangelical and Reformed Church in New Knoxville at 4 P.M. on Wednesdays,

and if the students went to Anna or Kettlersville, they would not be home in time to attend. The petition was approved.

George Vordermark and Wilson Stork bussed the students to New Knoxville. One can speculate that had it not been for this petition, Sub-District 1 and Sub-District 4 (Woodland/Holtkamp School) school districts, located in Van Buren Township in Shelby County, could be in a Shelby County school district today.

The late Lester Henschen reported that a local threshing company bought the school for storage of the thresher. When the threshing ring disbanded, Lester bought the building. The building is still standing and owned by the Henschens.

Many a student who had V. E. Katterheinrich as teacher, principal, or superintendent no doubt wondered how he ever got the nickname Turp.

Lenora related this explanation: V. E., a student at Silver Maple School, came to school one day with a rag around his neck that smelled of turpentine. This was his mother's remedy for a sore throat. Because of the strong smell of turpentine, kids started calling him Turpentine. Later the nickname was shortened to Turp.

And now you know.

Note: The information in this article was reported to the writer by Lenora Gritzmaker, Lavina Stolte, Lester Henschen and Diane Fledderjohann.

APRIL'S ANNUAL MEETING OFFERS VARIETY OF SPEAKERS

Thursday, April 19, is the date set for the New Knoxville Historical Society's annual meeting. In addition to the regular business meeting, local residents will be sharing information on the village's history and books written by people with New Knoxville connections.

Local eighth grade student and Girl Scout Lana Bizet has been doing research about the Girl Scouts in New Knoxville, and on the one hundredth anniversary of the Girl Scouts of America, Lana will be sharing what she has discovered.

Gary Katterheinrich will be speaking about the history of his father Bennie's barn, which was recently razed. He will also share information about his grandfather, Ed Kuck, a brick and stone mason. Some of his work included the school now occupied by Hoge Brush. Gary's childhood home on East German Street and monuments at Ft. Recovery and Ft. Amanda.

Roberta Tanzini and Myron Fledderjohann will share information about some of the more recent books by writers with local ties. These include Dr. Spencer Meckstroth, Donald Meckstroth, Anne Meckstroth Menter and Dean Hoge.

In addition, Rusty Elsass will again provide you with some interesting displays for your perusal. Refreshments will be served.

Visit us during our open houses in 2012.

Sunday, May 27

Sunday, July 29

Sunday, September 30

Sunday, June 24

Sunday, August 26

Sunday, October 28



SLATE OF OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

President - Janean Oberlander

Vice President - Allen Schroer

Secretary - Diane Fledderjohann

Treasurer - Edythe Henschen

Trustees

2012-2015 - Mike Neuman and Lloyd Kuck

2011-2014 - Myron Fledderjohann and

Kirk Stienecker

2010-2013 - Ali Carpenter and Vernon Feldwisch

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Display Curator & Cataloging - Rusty Elsass

Farm Items - Myron Fledderjohann

Membership, Web Site, and Historical Records

Larry and Karen Niemeyer

Historians & Memorial Plaque

Myron Fledderjohann, Kirk Stienecker, Roberta Tanzini

SPEAKERS AVAILABLE

Myron Fledderjohann - Genealogy and History

Glenna Meckstroth - Author of *Tales from Great Grandpa's Trunk*, *Surviving World War II*, and *Giggles and Grins*

Tours available upon request.

Contact any board member.

Thank you to Vernon "Ducky" Feldwisch for his 17 years of service as treasurer of the New Knoxville Historical Society. Ducky has agreed to continue serving the society as a trustee.



A large number of Historical Society members and other visitors spent a Sunday afternoon on the museum grounds on September 25. They could enjoy Mike Neuman's open kettle-cooked chili and listen to a concert by the high school band in addition to touring the grounds and the old school gymnasium, located across the street and filled with twentieth century memorabilia.

One of the five historical buildings of the museum complex includes the summer kitchen, filled with kitchen items used by early residents.

Memorial Plaque honors those who died during past year

The following names will appear on our Memorial Plaque in our Heritage Museum.

Hilmer W. Zuege	May 9, 2011
David F. Hegemier	July 4, 2011
Norman H. Schrolucke	July 27, 2011
Lee R. Deerhake	August 29, 2011
Janice Eversman Schroeder	September 11, 2011
Margaret S. Henschen	October 4, 2011
Kenneth R. Elshoff	November 24, 2011
Dr. Ronald Jan Stauffer	November 25, 2011
Robert W. Huckeriede	December 9, 2011
Adrian R. Settlege	December 12, 2011
James Eversman*	December 28, 2011
Gladys Stroh Fledderjohann	January 15, 2012
Virginia Fledderjohann Stoeckel	January 19, 2012
Evelyn Harmeyer Grimes	January 23, 2012

**Jim Eversman was the last surviving family member who had lived in the house that is now the heart of the Heritage Center. He was a strong supporter of the New Knoxville Historical Society and a frequent visitor at the open houses, where he enjoyed sharing his memories of his years spent living in New Knoxville.*

New Lifetime Members

Gene Deerhake, Marblehead, Ohio
 Paul and Teresa Bambauer, New Knoxville, Ohio
 Karen Eagle, Morrisville, North Carolina
 Patricia and Dale F. Grimes Jr., Vandalia, Ohio
 Brian and Gina Hans, Chicago, Illinois
 Sandy Hoelscher, New Knoxville, Ohio
 Cathy Schreima, Sebring, Florida
 Duane Stienecker, New Knoxville, Ohio
 Rev. David A. Williams, New Knoxville, Ohio

Yearly Members

Jeff Eversman, Oregon, Ohio
 Ruth Kettler, St. Marys, Ohio
 Denise Testa, Leroy, New York
 Ned & Barb Wibbeler, Wapakoneta, Ohio

Student Members

Lana Bizet, New Knoxville, Ohio
 Dana Miles, New Knoxville, Ohio
 Kyle Prenger, Minster, Ohio

*Do you have any pictures or stories of the past you would like to share? We'd be glad to consider using them in future newsletters.
 Contact Janean Oberlander at 419-753-2077
 or joberland@nktelco.net.*

*A special thank you for memorial gifts and anonymous gifts.
 Make your family members aware of your membership in the NK Historical Society and remember us when considering memorial gifts.*

Your Valuable Donations Make Our Historical Society an Active Museum

2011 Acquisitions

- *1938 Evangelical Reformed congregation panaview photo
- *1986 New Knoxville Sesquicentennial tapes of the festival
- *1986 Ladbergen shirts from the Sesquicentennial
- *Fred Grewe's straw hat
- *old store ad crates, potato crates, baskets, scales, old clay tiles
- *Hoge Lumber ball bats
- *shelves, carrel cart, grain painting tools, crocks
- *primitive work bench
- *B. E. Cook yardstick
- *Kuhlman Store entrance door
- *Henkener Service Station ice scraper
- *Wellman Nursery sign
- *E. H. Katterheinrich ad fan
- *old post cards and church booklet
- *wooden plaque from Ladbergen, Germany
- *ink pen from Harold Shuster
- *old Kiwanis poster, brochures and meeting notes
- *Kiwanis plaque
- *thirteen hand-painted panels from 1986 Sesquicentennial painted by Pat Wietholter
- *1943 Windjammer school paper
- *small baby bonnet
- *Bible picture cards
- *Sunday school cradle card
- *wooden beaded toy
- *old child's quilt
- *1920's children's shoes
- *child's pillow cover
- *man's hat
- *old medicine bottles

New Knoxville Historical Society

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New Knoxville, OH 45871

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Editor of Historian
Janean Oberlander
Photography
Larry Niemeyer

HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, April 19, 7:00 P.M. New Knoxville American Legion

Speakers: Myron Fledderjohann, Roberta Tanzini,

Gary Katterheinrich and Lana Bizet

AVAILABLE FROM THE NEW KNOXVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

COMMEMORATIVE AND MEMORIAL BRICKS

This is our means of financial and visual support from the many families and friends that desire to preserve our heritage. Contact Betty Henschen at 419-753-2142 or 101 Hanover Ct., New Knoxville, OH 45871.

BOOKS AND GIFTS

Books and gift items are available from our society and also at the community library. See our web site for available items.

[www.nktelco.net/historical society](http://www.nktelco.net/historical%20society)

ADDRESS CHANGE

Notify Karen Niemeyer of a change of address in one of the following ways:

P.O. Box 301, New Knoxville, OH 45871 or phone at 419-753-2215 or e-mail at niemeyer@nktelco.net.

Member of the Southwestern Auglaize County Chamber of Commerce