

New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

July – December 2022

TOP GUN NAVAL AVIATOR DISPLAY



The Historical Society proudly showcased some of the Matt Myhal Navy aviation collection at the Ealy House on August 20 and 27. Matt was born in Youngstown on November 13, 1969, and passed away on August 26, 2021 from Covid-19. He had a keen eye and knew more about the value of an item than almost anyone he encountered. Learning to fly at an early age led to Matt's interest in aviation, especially WWII as his grandfather was a Naval Aviator. Matt attended many military shows with his collector father Mike and both searched the internet for new additions for their collections. At Matt's passing, the family discovered Matt's house in California was full of militaria. Matt's father easily saw that his son had taken his collection to a grand level. Flying helmets, A-2 jackets, Purple Heart medals, and on and on were there amidst photo albums and uniforms. He could spot a deal from a mile away and had used his knowledge to build his collection.



*** * * UPCOMING EVENTS * * ***

THE EALY BROTHERS IN THE CIVIL WAR

NOVEMBER 10 -- 6:30 p.m. Meeting -- 7:00 p.m. Presentation

New Albany Methodist Church, 20 Third Street, New Albany

Author Larry Strayer will dive into the history of the Ealy brothers who all left New Albany, Ohio, to fight for the Union. This event is open to the public.

BLACK FRIDAY OPEN HOUSE AT THE EALY HOUSE

NOVEMBER 25 -- 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

HOLIDAY DINNER

DECEMBER 8 -- 6:15 p.m.

New Albany Methodist Church, 20 Third Street, New Albany

MENU

Ham Loaf OR Chicken OR Vegetarian (choose one)
Tossed Salad OR Crispy Slaw with or without Nuts (choose one)
Twice-baked potato, vegetable, dessert, and beverage

RESERVATIONS @ \$17.50 PER PERSON

DUE BY NOVEMBER 25

Make your reservations at the November meeting

OR mail check, made payable to NAPTHS,

and choices of Entrée and Salad to Helen Pestel,

8355 New Albany Condit Road, Westerville, OH 43081-9702

BOARD MEETINGS

NOVEMBER 3

DECEMBER 1

JANUARY 5

FEBRUARY 2

6:30 p.m. at Franklin Church,

7171 Central College Rd, NA

If bad weather, meeting

will be held via zoom

Check www.newalbanyhistory.info

for updates. Notice of meeting

cancellation will be sent by email.

A FUNNY WAY TO CELEBRATE VETERANS DAY

by Marilyn Saveson

Historical Society members might be interested in learning how our solemn and serious Veterans Day, formerly known as Armistice Day, is (or, at least, used to be) celebrated by the students of Cambridge University in England. On November 11, 1951, during our first autumn there, John and I were taken totally by surprise at what went on in the streets of that ancient city to celebrate what the English call "Remembrance Day."

Poppies were sold everywhere, and each of the then 23 (now 31) colleges making up the University organized some eye-catching and ridiculous way of selling them. The students had processions through all the streets, held up traffic, and demanded contributions at every point. Ordinary citizens who were prepared for this started out with a big pocketful of pennies and halfpennies (pronounced 'haypennies') and threw them into the cans, umbrellas, chamber pots, firemen's canvases, or whatever other containers were provided. The students were dressed as Arabs, beggars, nursemaids and babies, Scottish bagpipers, and so on. There was even a Lady Godiva (complete with horse, nude-colored tights, pink bra, and yellow wig). I had great fun watching our otherwise sedate Cantabridgians acting like typical American fraternity and sorority kids. Meanwhile, John was trapped by his Fitzwilliam College into wearing desert-trooper shorts and selling poppies on a street corner. This amused him until he got cold, he said.

JIM BRYANT - NEW ALBANY'S LAST REMAINING WWII VETERAN

by Douglas Brahler

I recently had the great honor to meet and spend some time with Jim Bryant, the last remaining WWII veteran who resides in New Albany, Ohio. Jim was hosted at a very special Historical Society event on August 27th at the Ealy House, which consisted of a large exhibit of original US naval aviation artifacts and mementos, spanning from just before WWI, up through the Vietnam years. Lots of great stuff to see, with Jim being the highlight!! He was originally from Harlan County, Kentucky, born into a coal miner's family, living in a so-called "company town." Jim grew up during the Depression years, and at age 17 enlisted in the US Navy. After his war service, Jim moved to Columbus, Ohio, and then to New Albany, where he has resided for the last 50 years. After the war, he worked first as an auto mechanic, then as a sales rep for auto repair tools and equipment.



Jim trained at Great Lakes Naval Training Station, after which he was assigned to the USS Marcus Island (CVE-77, an escort carrier). These so-called "baby flat-tops" were one of the miracles of the war, in that they were designed specifically to be mass produced, in order to replace heavy early-war losses of ships. It's easy to forget that in the early war years of 1942 and into 1943, the Japanese wave of aggression and conquest seemed like an unstoppable tide expanding east across the Pacific, with the US forces on land, sea, and air being thrown against the enemy at great cost, inadequately provisioned, and suffering as many defeats as they did tenuous draws. Fear of the Japanese was real and palpable. Slowly, however, as war production ramped up and military planners were able to gain their first few footings, the tide was stemmed, although a long road lay ahead. And it was men like Jim who answered the call. On board the Marcus Island, Jim served as crew chief for Wildcat fighters and Avenger dive bomber aircraft, assuring that when plane and pilot were called upon to launch, the plane was prepared and in tip-top shape to take off and fly its mission. Jim was in the South Pacific during most of 1944 and 1945. The Marcus Island was engaged in operations in far-flung islands and campaigns, including the following:

- Mariana & Palau campaigns (pre-invasion air strikes and ground-support strikes)
- The landing on Leyte Island (the first step in the re-taking of the Philippines) (261 sorties over Leyte)
- The Battle of Leyte Gulf (strikes against Japanese ships, and five Japanese planes shot down)
- Battle of Mindoro Island, P.I. (air screening for the landing task force). Remarkably, it was during this time, that on December 15, 1944, the Marcus Island came under heavy Kamikaze attack. At 0800, two "Zero" planes locked site on the escort carrier. The first Zero glanced a lookout platform, killing one sailor, and crashed into the sea. The second plane also just barely missed the flight deck and crashed into the sea.
- The Invasion of Lingayen Gulf, Luzon, P.I. (air cover to fend off kamikaze attacks, then air support of ground forces)
- Ulithi Harbor (repair, retrofit, and re-grouping)
- Battle of Okinawa (air support and ground force support)
- The final mission of the Marcus Island was ferrying troops back to the US, after the surrender of Japan.

Needless to say, Jim was a part of, and witness to, so many major events in the South Pacific, luckily coming through unscathed and with memories that would last a lifetime! Jim remarked several times that one of his most vivid memories was witnessing firsthand the unparalleled and amazing production capability that was put forth by America's war economy — endless ships, planes, ammo, and supplies, stretching all the way across the vast expanse of the Pacific. Even more importantly, to this day, Jim was in awe of the bravery, skill, and capable nature of the naval pilots and aircrew who flew the planes from his carrier, day in and day out, calling them "America's finest." (Interestingly, Jim being as humble as he is, seemed to not count himself amongst those "finest." But his role was just as important, and just as potentially dangerous.) Jim was also able to vividly recall that crazy day in mid-December, when the two kamikazes set their sights on his ship. No doubt, Jim is one of the last few living souls able to personally recount one of the most harrowing phenomena of the war in the South Pacific — the kamikaze attack.



Talking to Jim, hearing his stories, and appreciating his humble demeanor, it's easy to understand why his generation is referred to as "The Greatest Generation." And even at age 96, Jim may just well be spryer and have a keener memory than many half his age! It was a pleasure to make his acquaintance and was a day that I will not forget. Jim was gracious enough to not only let me get a photo or two with him, but to sign and dedicate a wonderful image of the Marcus Island to me.



“FINDING SCONIERS”

by Pam Whitelock

The question of “coincidence versus providence” likely was answered for many during the September 8th meeting of the New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society, as the award-winning documentary “Finding Sconiers” was presented by member Pam Sconiers Whitelock. The Historical Society followed Pam’s ten-year journey with the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) as they searched for and recovered her uncle, Lt. Ewart T. Sconiers. Whether it was the not-so-coincidental date of October 21, 2008, when destiny seemed determined to yank Pam into the middle of her uncle’s unfinished story, the many obvious “signs” that shaped the path to his discovery, or the August 21, 2015, revelation of his grave, Ewart’s story was determined to be told.

Lt. Sconiers was the bombardier aboard the Johnny Reb when it was attacked by Germans on August 21, 1942, the co-pilot killed, and the pilot gravely injured. Sconiers took control of the plane, brought it safely back to England, and saved the crew. His heroism earned him the Distinguished Service Cross. However, on October 21, 1942, his plane, the Johnny Reb, Jr., was shot down off the coast of France, the crew was captured, and Sconiers was among those imprisoned in Stalag Luft III, the German camp made famous by the movie “The Great Escape.” Sconiers mysteriously died while imprisoned and was declared unrecoverable in 1955. Dismissing photos of his supposed burial as propaganda, Sconiers’ family was convinced he had been shot and thrown into a mass grave.

But Ohio came calling and Pam answered, along with an international team of “promise keepers.” While visiting Dayton’s Air Force Museum with her husband Richard and friends from Florida on October 21, 2008, Pam discovered many books with articles about her uncle’s heroism, so intriguing that one of the friends encouraged her to Google Ewart’s name that fateful day. That’s when Pam’s life changed course. She learned a monument in Ewart’s honor had been erected in Allies Park in Lubin, Poland, and was soon led to researchers who had been helping DPAA with Sconiers’ reopened case. Ohioan Marilyn Walton (pictured to right of Pam), daughter of a fellow SLIII POW, was one of those researchers. The Pentagon gave Marilyn permission to reach out to Pam, and their shared journey began. Marilyn introduced Pam to Dr. Jarrod Burks of Ohio Valley Archaeology, Inc., and he voluntarily worked with DPAA to survey Allies



Park where Sconiers had indeed been buried on January 27, 1944 (at left). And, though Dr. Burks and his crew were engaged with DPAA in a mission to recover Sconiers from Allies Park in August 2015, Sconiers’ remains were nowhere to be found... until, on the August 21st anniversary of Sconiers’ heroism, Marilyn discovered a cross with Sconiers’ name on it in a French military cemetery in Gdansk, Poland. After the war, when the French were given permission to recover their fallen from Allies Park, they rescued Sconiers’ remains as well.

Though Sconiers could have been buried at Arlington National Cemetery, his family chose to fulfill the wishes of his letters from SLIII... to go home. Thus, after being exuberantly welcomed by the citizens of his hometown of DeFuniak Springs, Florida, he was laid to rest, with

full military honors, next to his mother and sister. The date was January 27, 2018, seventy-four years from the date of his original burial in Allies Park. In unprecedented fashion, children/grandchild of the POWs pictured graveside at Sconiers’ original burial, stood in their father/grandfather’s places.

Journalists Jennifer Holton and Ky Sisson had covered the Sconiers story for years and, convinced of the impact of its message regarding America’s promise to its service personnel and their families, committed to create a documentary about it. Their compelling documentary, “Finding Sconiers,” won “Outstanding Documentary” from the 50 documentary submissions to the prestigious 2019 International WWII Film Festival in Normandy, France.

To view the film, go to the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FbxNIYjNp3A> or search “Finding Sconiers” on YouTube.





WILBUR “WIB” KINDLER

June 25, 1927 – June 28, 2022

Wib was born in New Albany, Ohio in 1927. He was a resident of New Albany for 84 years before moving to Gahanna where he resided for 11 years. He graduated from New Albany High School in 1945, where he was president of his senior class, played varsity sports, and was all-county in basketball. He then joined the Navy and was stationed in Puerto Rico for 16 months. He attended The Ohio State University and was then employed by the Haverfield Company, a women’s apparel company, where he eventually became CEO. In 1972, Wib formed his own retail business, which he operated for 40 years with retail stores specializing in high-end women’s apparel. He was a longtime member of the New Albany Methodist Church and was a two-time member of the New Albany School Board.

WILLIAM “BILL” RESCH

February 4, 1941 – July 1, 2022

In the community, Bill was affectionately known as “Nature Bill” for his passion for environmental science education and stewardship. He was considered by all to be a wonderful man and a trusted friend. He was a constant example of positivity and friendship in how he lived his life. His proudest accomplishment in life was the family he built with his beautiful wife, Pauline, of 54 years. Other proud accomplishments included being a graduate of St. Charles Preparatory School and The Ohio State University, a high school science teacher for 35 years at Groveport Madison and Westerville North, and an environmental educator for the Environmental Science Program at the New Albany-Plain Local School District. You could always find Bill fishing at his pond or listening to music in his chalet set to the backdrop of Swickard Woods or riding his bike along Rose Run Park, both of which he saved from development and are widely enjoyed by the community. Bill always enjoyed adventure and making memories with his family and friends.



MY BUDDY BILL RESCH

by his friend Richard E. Whitelock

If you want to know about the innovator, teacher, community activist and scientist that Bill was, all those details are outlined on his facebook page and numerous newspaper articles and commendations he received over the years. They were many and so well deserved. Instead, I want to write about the man and the friend I came to know just seven short years ago. We were so alike in so many ways: having a Catholic education, being altar boys and choir members, and getting a secondary education deeply steeped in the natural sciences. But there was so much more, a lot unseen, but just ready to burst out if you gave us a chance to interact.

A few years back, Marilyn Regrut, my wife Pam, and I were preparing a presentation to be given by the New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society to our Intermediate fifth graders. I needed presenters to cover the topics of The One-Room Schoolhouse, Early Ohio Topography, Farming Culture, and The Dress and Habits of the early Ohioans. Bill was my choice to present the topic of Early Ohio Topography which described what the land and plants looked like many centuries earlier in a young Ohio Territory. Bill took to this assignment like a martin to its gourd. He was a fabulous teacher and the kids loved him. And he put on a presentation that was Oscar worthy. In fact, when I wasn’t presenting the One-Room Schoolhouse, I would sneak into the back of his group and listen to Bill talk of times gone by. He was a superb teacher and loved the children. And we all loved being taught by one of the masters in education.

Once Bill introduced me to his lovely wife Pauline and one of his sons who was always around their home during late afternoons, I knew this was a class family that took pride in serving its community. One winter afternoon, my wife and I were conducting a Primary Grade garage sale in the school’s auditorium to raise money for the classes. Around two in the afternoon, I receive a call from Bill. He informs me that he is on his way downtown to pick up some Nature Folders to be given out to the primary grade students. He said he would meet me at the auditorium around 4:30 that afternoon and pass the materials on to me for distribution. We are in the middle of a blinding snowstorm that afternoon. Bill makes the effort to drive downtown, pick up five heavy cartons of literature, load them in the back of his car, and drive back to the Primary School auditorium for distribution to the school kids. Had it been me, I would have been snugly tucked under a blanket by a warm fire. But not Bill. He was out spreading the word as he had done for over five decades throughout our community.

Bill loved taking vacations into the wild with his family. He was even fonder of sharing those pictures. With his dog Riley in my lap, I spent many an afternoon in his home office viewing scrapbooks of when Bill stood straight and actually had a head full of hair. He loved his new home on Morgan Road. His pond stocked with God only knows what and his gazebo brought him great joy. And he always wanted to share his good fortune with others. He always wanted me to go for a walk in the woods with him. I was able to beg out of that adventure. And he always wanted to dip a line in his pond regardless of the season.

The first time I met Bill, he rode his three-wheeler bicycle over to Wendy’s in New Albany to meet with my wife and me concerning our fifth-grade project. He lost control of his three-wheeler and we had to help him fish it out of the bushes. I had never witnessed anyone laugh as hard as Bill did that day. From that time on, we would visit with one another and spend a great deal of time hashing over the good ole days.

By the time of his death, Bill and I were both limited in mobility. We both maneuvered our 4-wheel Rollators in and out of rooms with great agility.

We were both in our early 80's the day that Bill passed. We had talked about our coming date with eternity, but I had no idea Bill's time would come so soon. We both attended the Memorial Day service the end of May 2022 at the local cemetery. It was a hot morning, and I was anxious to get back home into the comfort of my Barc-O-Lounger for a mid-day nap. Bill insisted that we trek up to the top of the cemetery under a pair of beautiful shade trees. There was a magnificent headstone with his name and Pauline's inscribed on it. He took a great deal of pride in the location and its beauty. He remarked to me, "Isn't this absolutely beautiful?" I should have sensed that Bill was trying to tell me something important. A few days later we were out and about, and I asked him about his health. Bill told me that when the time was right, he would tell me. And he did the day I received a call from his family that Bill had passed.

Bill and I never went anywhere when we didn't have to make at least three stops along the way to take a look at one of his school projects he had underway. A two-hour outing soon became a four-hour or longer adventure. One day we were below the Ealy House cleaning up around Resch Park when along comes a teacher with about 20 students on a field trip to Resch Park. When she recognized her old teacher and for whom the park was dedicated, Bill Resch, she nearly had a panic attack. At which point Bill picked up and began to conduct a class on rivers, streams, and rocks. Teaching young children was such an obvious labor of love for him.

My daddy always told me that if at the end of my life I could count the number of true friends on the fingers of one hand, I should consider myself blessed. I told Bill that I counted his friendship on two of my fingers because I didn't have that many close friends, and Bill replied, "I understand and don't count me as one of your middle fingers." That's how I wish to remember my buddy, Bill. Like a comet flashing through the sky, he became my friend for a very short period of seven years or less. I wonder what kind of "good trouble" we would have gotten into if we had known each other over a lifetime. When his family informed me of his death, I was literally dumbstruck and remained that way for many days. I couldn't bring myself around to the belief that he was gone. And yet with time, his memory is a part of my everyday consciousness, especially when I pass places we visited.

"If I could make days last forever and my words could make dreams come true," (from Jim Croce *Time in A Bottle*) I would wish that Bill was once again amongst us and we could relive all the good times that we knew. Rest in peace my friend, Bill Resch. You are truly a loyal friend and a credit to all the goodness in mankind. THE END

REMEMBERING TWO HUGE ROYAL EVENTS OF 70 YEARS AGO

by Marilyn Saveson

The recent death of Queen Elizabeth II in England very much reminded me of the death of her father, King George VI, in February 1952, when John and I were in England. We had been in Cambridge since September 1951, embarking on studies leading four years later to our Ph.D. degrees. We were pretty well settled in an apartment halfway between Fitzwilliam College (John's) and Girton College (mine), making friends, riding our bicycles to the colleges and to the University Library, and occasionally to quaint old villages. But the radio on the morning of February 6th brought really big and sad news: the King had died. We reported in our letter home about the public displays of grief and the closure of cinemas, theaters, Rugby matches, and even the BBC (except for infrequent news broadcasts). All over town, including on our own Oxford Road, the front bay windows of all the homes were decorated with purple drapery and photos of the King. I ended that letter with the hope that we would be in England long enough to be able to see the Coronation procession of the new Queen.

Yes, we were still in England when the Coronation took place more than a year after the death of the King. Our letter describing our night on the London sidewalk and details about the Coronation procession is missing, even though apparently John had typed it in triplicate for the various members of our families. My description therefore depends upon my actual memory. I remember that Miss Clark (a friendly middle-aged lady who lived in the apartment below ours) had done this sort of thing before, for other royal processions. She came well prepared with a large satchel filled with blanket, cushions, sandwiches, fruit, and something interesting to drink. We, too, following her advice, brought very warm clothes, a blanket, and some contributions toward a picnic meal. We took a train to London. Miss Clark knew in advance exactly where the best spot would be for us to have a good view of the big event, so we were, I think, on Oxford Street, and we got there early enough to be really close to the street itself. We spread out a blanket and sat on it, but took turns getting up and walking around, looking for a portable "loo," and talking to other spectators.

I don't think any of us slept a wink that night, and very early in the morning of June 1, 1953, after a very cold night, the thrilling news came in over a loudspeaker that the New Zealand mountaineer Edmund Hillary had reached the top of Mount Everest. Big cheers from our crowd on the sidewalk. The crowd got bigger and bigger, forcing us to exert a lot of strength to maintain our position close to the front. The procession itself was tremendously long and impressive. I remember Queen Elizabeth, absolutely radiant, looking out of her window of the fairy-tale gold coach. And I also remember, farther along in the parade, the Queen of Tonga, the largest woman I had ever seen, with a huge smile on her face. There were countless other coaches and other kinds of vehicles holding countless other kings and queens and leaders of many countries from what used to be called the British Empire. And I even remember the scooper-upper teams following each set of horses in the long parade. Seeing that procession replayed on television following the Queen's death this past September brought back those memories from, gasp, 70 years ago. (But they didn't show the Queen of Tonga.)

NOTES & NEWS



INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

On July 4th, the Ealy House was open while on the front lawn two artists enjoyed plein air painting of the Ealy House with different styles and mediums from each other. Georgia Hicks used oil for her painting (above left) and Marvin Daniels used acrylic paints (above right). Marvin (at right) later donated his framed painting to the NAPTHS. Robert and Debbie Dean represented the Historical Society by riding in a beautiful horse-drawn carriage.

JULY 14th OUTING

Fourteen members enjoyed *The 70's Musical Explosion in Columbus, Ohio*, an exhibit at the Columbus Historical Society that brought back many memories.



Left to right: Debbie Dean, Robert Dean, Betty Maynard, Chandler Kiesel, Dave Maynard, Debbie Tracy, Helen Pestel, Frank Knore, Beckie Knore, Valerie Bevelhymer, Steve Bevelhymer, and Connie Carr. Seated: Doug Brahler
At left: CHS President Mike Frush and Doug Tracy



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Colleen Briscoe
Jim Bryant
Michael & Linda Myhal

NAPTHS BOARD

PRESIDENT	
Dennis Keese	614-563-5228
VICE PRESIDENT	
Doug Brahler	614-906-1122
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Chandler Kiesel	614-915-1222
Catherine Saveson	614-843-9505

NEWSLETTER EDITORS

Betty Maynard & Marty Saveson

ANNUAL POTLUCK PICNIC

On August 13th, 19 of us enjoyed scrumptious food and wonderful company in the big old Saveson barn at the end of Clouse Road. We celebrated Marty Saveson's birthday of the previous Saturday with a delicious, decorated cake.

EIGHTH-GRADE TOURS

The eighth-grade classes, consisting of about 400 students, toured the Ealy House on September 12, 15, and 16. Docents were Nichole Foreman, Helen Pestel, Marilyn Regrut, and Doug Tracy.





New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society
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(614) 855-9861
www.newalbanyhistory.info

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Grant funds provided by the City



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JULY – DECEMBER 2022

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