

New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society ***April - June 2025 Newsletter***

New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society ***CELEBRATES 50 YEARS***

1975

NAPTHS FOUNDED

Thank you, Rudy Sever!

FIRST ELECTED OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Elwood "Slim" Kennaw

VICE PRESIDENT

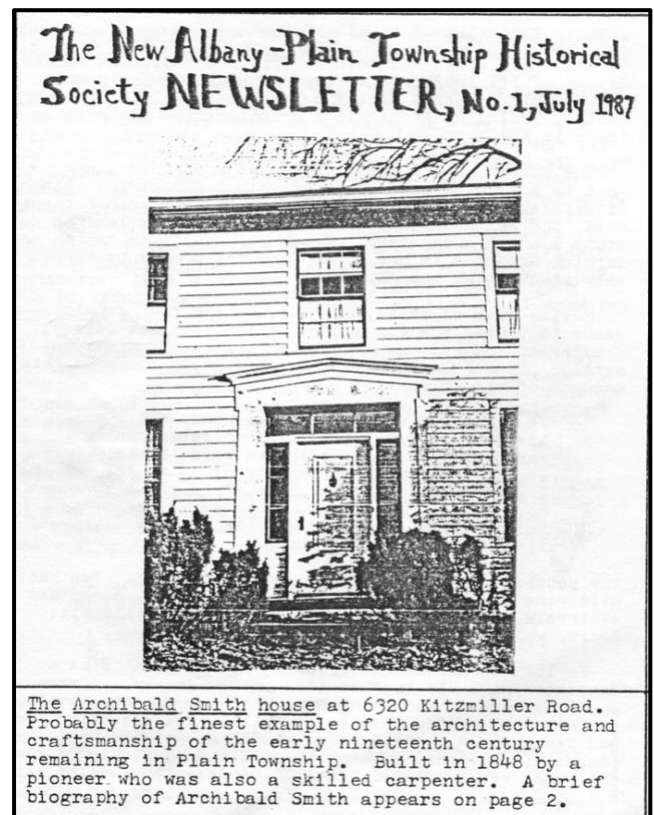
Arloia Walton

SECRETARY-TREASURER

Beth Coble



JULY 1987 - FIRST NEWSLETTER



50TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY

On June 4th, 45 NAPTHS members and guests looked back and celebrated the first 50 years of the New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society. We had a delicious dinner catered by City Barbecue, followed by cake. A slideshow created by Betty Maynard showed many events, programs, and activities that we enjoyed over the years. We sang Happy Anniversary during the pleasant evening, while reminiscing about the past and looking forward to many more wonderful years ahead.

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

INDEPENDENCE DAY

July 4 (Friday)

Parade -- 11:00 a.m.

Open House -- 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

OPEN HOUSES AT THE EALY HOUSE

SUNDAYS IN JUNE, JULY, AND AUGUST

(except July 6) -- 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.



Ealy House, 6359 Dublin-Granville Road, New Albany



ANNUAL POTLUCK PICNIC

AUGUST 16 (Saturday) -- 5:00 p.m.

Saveson barn, 8370 Clouse Road, New Albany

Members and guests are invited to this very friendly and informal event.

Please bring a main dish, salad, side dish, or dessert to share, and its serving utensil. Table service and water will be provided.

WALKING TOUR: HISTORIC NEW ALBANY

SEPTEMBER 3 (Wednesday) -- Meet 6:30 p.m.

New Albany Library, 200 Market Street, New Albany

NAPTHS President Dennis Keesee will lead a walking tour of historical sites in New Albany.

The tour will meet at and return to the New Albany Branch.



SAVE THE DATES

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND A PROGRAM

OCTOBER 1 (Wednesday)

HALLOWEEN FAMILY DAY

OCTOBER 26 (Sunday)

BOARD MEETINGS

JULY 2 (Wednesday) -- 6:30 p.m.

New Albany Library, 200 Market Street, New Albany

AUGUST 6 (Wednesday) -- 6:30 p.m.

New Albany Library, 200 Market Street, New Albany

SEPTEMBER 25 (Thursday) -- 6:30 p.m.

Franklin Church, 7171 Central College Rd, New Albany

NOVEMBER 5 (Wednesday) -- 6:30 p.m.

New Albany Library, 200 Market Street, New Albany

Check www.newalbanyhistory.info for updates
Notice of meetings and cancellations will be sent by email

A HISTORY OF THE NEW ALBANY-PLAIN TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

by Arloia Walton

Reprinted from October and November 2012 NAPTHS Newsletter

Rudy Sever, New Albany High School Social Studies instructor, thought that his students would like to know about the community in which they lived. Thus, in August 1974 he ran a short 'blurb' in the local paper, the *New Albany-Plain News*, that read, "Everyone interested in forming a local history society please attend a meeting to be held in the administration office of the New Albany High School."

A good number of residents came. Among them were the following: Clark and Martha Ranney, who donated the first money to be used for future needs; James and Willis Doran, who were brothers and who had both taught in the school system; Alice and Herschel Boesch, new residents in 1974; Reggie Beurnier, also new to the area; Beth Coble, who later became the Secretary-Treasurer and kept splendid records (her first book is in the Society's inventory); Naomi Swickard Fodor, whose Swickard ancestors were among the first arrivals in Plain Township; Cecil and Arloia Baughman Walton. The Baughmans came to Ohio in 1803. Naomi, Cecil, and Arloia had all graduated from New Albany High School. Cecil was a Lieutenant Colonel, retired from the U.S. Air Force and a veteran of WW II. And there were others. Our Society has newspaper photos and articles on file about the formation of the Society.

Rudy did all the work to organize the Society. The name was debated, but "New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society" was decided upon as indicating clearly that the Society was meant to be a community-wide organization. Rudy also served as President for a while (and even furnished refreshments!).

Jean Barnes, the editor of the *New Albany-Plain News*, joined, and totally supported the new organization. Many of her weekly issues featured news of our group on her front page. The owner of the paper was John Ashbrook of Johnstown. He was also the U.S. Representative from our district and a friend of New Albany.

As the local people became more interested, we began to meet in members' homes. Students joined the Society. History (in the form of photos, antique objects, diaries, old schoolbooks, toys, a wedding gown, furniture, etc.) began coming out of the closets of long-time residents, to form a growing collection. A great amount of information about the history of our area was gained, and eventually published in a booklet: *The History of New Albany . . . A Framework* (1984), now out of print.

The first elected officers were Elwood ("Slim") Kennaw as President, Arloia Walton as Vice President, and Beth Coble as Secretary-Treasurer. Dues were set as follows: Students, \$1.00; single adults, \$2.00; married couples, \$3.00; corporations, \$5.00; "sustaining members," \$10.00. A life membership cost \$25.00. Our most successful early fund-raiser was delivering telephone books.

The *New Albany-Plain News* had put together a Telephone Directory to be given free to all residents, and the newspaper offered a payment to the Society to deliver them. An idea sprang into Hersch Boesch's head: In order to get the free book, you had to join the Historical Society. The membership leaped in numbers, but none of the rest of us had the courage to copy his technique. We often thanked Hersch for building up our membership so quickly. Meanwhile, the *New Albany-Plain News* gave us a very good record of printed articles about our activities, with many original photos.

A building of our own was always in the plans for the future. Our first attempt was to reconstruct a log cabin which had been donated through the efforts of Rudy and "Slim" Kennaw. The cabin came from Slim's home place in southern Ohio. This cabin was hauled to a plot at the Plain Township Park (corner of Harlem and Central College Roads). Money soon became a problem, and volunteers were few. The half-finished two-story cabin was an eyesore to the Trustees. They ordered it to be moved or they would burn it down. That really made the front page! Ultimately, the membership did tear it down and at first stored the logs on the Walton farm on Central College Road. Soon afterwards, the members moved them to the schoolgrounds, but despite all efforts, the logs began to rot. (I have no memory of the final story.)

In 1994, the Kern-Harrington House on E. Granville Street came up for sale, and through the leadership of Ralph Lowell Parrill, a Society member and former resident of New Albany, the Society obtained a loan. It was an ambitious move, but many people worked diligently to meet payments and to restore the house to its 1881 appearance.

For the Society to become accredited as a member of the Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museums, Rudy Sever, and Willard & Patty Zarley gathered information such as news clippings, photos, budget records, and more to submit an application to become an official member, as a Society and as a Museum. From then on, we took part in the annual meetings and were kept current with valuable programs that the larger Society offers. By the late 1980's and early 1990's the NAPTHS had become a valuable part of the community.

Meanwhile, Joe Ciminello, a developer, had been purchasing farms in the northern part of the Township and was building the sub-division "The Links." The McElwee farm on Walnut Street was part of that acreage. Mr. Ciminello gave our Society the lovely brick farm house and its barn, garage, and other out-buildings on three acres of land. Mrs. McElwee (Evelyn Dryer) requested that the name of the property be the Rose Taylor Dryer House, because the money used to buy the Walnut Street property had been inherited from Evelyn's mother, Rose Taylor Dryer. The NAPTHS membership has used the property for sales and some other events over the years, but never as a museum.

In the early 1990's Leslie Wexner discovered Plain Township and liked the land that he saw. Many lives were changed as people sold their properties to him. Some of them stayed in this beautiful area, and some moved elsewhere. When large, beautiful homes were built, newcomers moved to Plain Township, and an outstanding new school was built. Through it all, the Historical Society grew and now has become an important and useful organization helping residents (especially school students) to learn about our local history.

One time, Rob Hull, one of the New Albany Company's planners, came to see Cecil and me. He had mental plans of using the site of the old Shell filling station for a library. And even at that time, he thought that what we now know as the Ealy House would make a very nice historical museum. He would have been so pleased to see that that has happened.

The story of our Historical Society will surely continue for years to come. How very proud I am to have been a part of its history. Hats off to the wonderful people who have given so much to New Albany and Plain Township.

My heart is still with all of you. I miss you all, but Georgia can grow on a person.

Sincerely, Arlee

June 20, 2012



MEET THE STREETS

THE STORIES BEHIND NEW ALBANY'S STREET NAMES

by Doug Tracy

Babbitt Road "Cornmeal Avenue"

The Babbitt family has a long and notable history in New Albany and although there is a road east of the city that carries their name, Babbitt Road, the Babbitts never actually lived on that road.

The Babbitts were descendants of Anthony Wayne Taylor (1797-1883) and Melinda Trumbo Taylor (1801-1874), pioneers who traveled from Hardy County, West Virginia, to Ohio on horseback in 1822 carrying their 1-year-old son, John Pike Taylor (1821-1879). The Taylors purchased two tracts of land in Plain Township totaling 1,000 acres, some of which may have been purchased from warrants Anthony Wayne's father received for his service in the Revolutionary War.

The path between today's Hamilton Road and New Albany was first known as Anthony Wayne Taylor Pike and is known today as Dublin-Granville Road. The Taylor farm still exists on the north side of that road bordering on Rocky Fork Creek and is slated to be preserved and repurposed as New Albany's grand gateway park and community center.

Anthony Wayne and Melinda's only son, Pike, married twice, the second time to Mildred Wright, a marriage that produced two children: Martha Elmetta (1862-1950) and Harry Bruce (1865-1953). In 1885 Martha married Edward Calvin Babbitt (1858-1934), whose family farm was located on Dublin-Granville Road just east of the village. The Babbitt farm was first purchased by Lovell and Lydia Babbitt in 1846.

Martha taught school when she was in her mid-teens and was later very active in church and community activities, while Edward continued to work on the family farm. For many years they resided in the tiny New Albany village center while maintaining the family farm a short distance away. Martha's community activism led her to run for a position on New Albany's Village Council in 1921, following passage of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote in 1920. In the 1921 New Albany election, 5 women and 1 man were elected to Village Council by the village's 200 residents, with Martha being subsequently elected Council President. *"When the Councilwomen found out they had won they were shocked, as was the rest of the township. The women only had one thing to say, 'But now that we have the job we're going to show the men how the town should run.'"*

When New Albany's mayor resigned for unspecified reasons in mid-1922, Martha became the village's first and only female mayor. Mayor Babbitt and Council quickly went to work installing electric streetlights, improving storm sewers and tarring and chipping many local roads. Following her service as mayor, Martha and her husband Edward left their home in the village and returned to their farm on East Dublin-Granville Road. Edward led a committee that mapped out new roads, including petitioning for a new north-south road to be built east of the Babbitt's farm – a road they did not live on. However, in those days it was customary for a new road to be named after the person who first petitioned for it – hence Babbitt Road. Locals later referred to Babbitt Road as "Cornmeal Avenue" because of the grain that spilled all over the road from wagons hauling grain to and from the mill that once operated on that road.

Today, the entrance to the long driveway that once led to the old Babbitt's house remains at the official address of 7103 East Dublin-Granville Road, which is now part of the Wexner estate.

Source: The New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society archives



NEW ALBANY HISTORY DAY

The Columbus Metropolitan Library held a remarkable day of history activities and programs at the New Albany Branch on April 26th, in partnership with the New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society. All day activities included: Artifacts Display, New Albany History Videos, New Albany History Scavenger Hunt, Community Connects Us Quilt, Record an Oral History, and Scan or Donate Historic Items.

Heritage Quilters Barb Leeman and Catherine Saveson and historian Doug Tracy presented the awesome, large-scale folk art quilt, depicting New Albany in the 1800s, completed in 2004. City of New Albany Director of Administrative Services Adrienne Joly shared the city's inspiring plans for the stunning Veterans Memorial in Rose Run Park. Historians Tim Butsko and David Gerhardt gave an emotional talk about the Butsko family's and New Albany's connections to the Vietnam War, including the New Albany Vietnam Veterans Memorial statue. NAPTHS President Dennis Keesee led an interesting and informative walking tour of historical sites in New Albany. Despite the rain, the group enjoyed their walk.



BLENDON TOWNSHIP SENIOR CENTER MEMBERS TOUR THE EALY HOUSE MUSEUM

by Valerie Bevelhymmer

On April 24th, six members and their bus driver from the senior center in Westerville enjoyed a morning of touring at the Ealy House. Docents Valerie Bevelhymmer, Dennis Keesee, Betty Maynard, and Doug Tracy were able to spend intimate time sharing the highlights of the museum and also learned from stories told by the visitors. It was an enjoyable and engaging day out for all.

NEW ALBANY FOUNDERS DAY

Robert Dean drove his 1963 Studebaker Champ truck (at right), decorated with "New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society 50th Anniversary" banners, in the parade on May 17th.



Noelle Foreman, Debbie Dean, Nichole Foreman, and Chandler Kiesel rode in the back dressed in period costume and gave candy to the parade watchers. Thanks to Nichole for acquiring and donating the banners that can be used all year! Thank you to the volunteers (at left: Dave Halsey, Doug Brahler, Tim Butsko) who informed festival attendees about the New Albany Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and those at the Ealy House who greeted many visitors during the open house.



SOCIETY MEMBERS ENJOY CLASSIC CARS

by Doug Brahler and Betty Maynard

On June 14th, four Society members displayed their classic cars at the Jim Allen Memorial Orphan Car Show held at Highbanks Metro Park in Lewis Center. They were: Doug Brahler, 1981 Mercedes-Benz 300D 4-door saloon (above left); Chandler Kiesel, 1994 Saab Turbo 900 convertible (above right); Robert and Debbie Dean, 1963 Studebaker Champ truck (top right). The car show was sponsored by the Studebaker Drivers Club's Heart of Ohio Chapter, of which Society members Robert Dean, Debbie Dean, Betty Maynard, Dave Maynard, and Jim Thompson became charter members in 2003. Chandler Kiesel joined last year.

What makes a car an orphan? The term is generally used to refer to any brand of motor vehicle built by a manufacturer that has discontinued business entirely. While Mercedes-Benz is certainly still in business, the Show is open to all comers...as long as it's vintage! More importantly, it's awesome to see three generations of collectors striving to keep these historic automobiles maintained and on the road. What a commitment, and their passion is evident!

Prior to this event, Robert and Debbie Dean also displayed their truck at the Lancaster Spring Festival Car Show on June 8th. They won a special award of a very nice custom-made Lancaster Old Car Club clock (at right) for the Orphan Class Favorite. Congratulations, Robert & Debbie!





HONOR FLIGHT COLUMBUS

by Betty Maynard

On May 7th, Angel First Class Terri Higgins gave a very interesting and informative presentation. We learned that the Honor Flight Columbus mission is "To Honor our nation's senior Veterans with a trip to Washington D.C. to visit their war memorials at no cost to them." An Honor Flight "is simply a very small token of our appreciation for what they have done."

An entire chartered plane is filled with only Veterans, guardians, and support staff. The Veterans' flight day begins with takeoff around 7:30 a.m. from John Glenn Columbus International Airport for a 55-minute flight to Washington D.C. Upon arrival, they load up in three buses to enjoy a busy day visiting their war memorials. The flight arrives around 9:15 p.m. in Columbus for their Welcome Home celebration.

Several attendees told about Veterans who were grateful to have experienced this trip of a lifetime. I mentioned that Logan Scarberry had the honor of being chosen to escort a flight a few years ago while he was an Eagle Scout attending Utica High School. We appreciate Honor Flight Columbus for honoring our Veterans in this special way!



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Jeff & Heather Lane

Linda Myhal

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PRESIDENT

Dennis Keesee 614-563-5228

VICE PRESIDENT

Betty Maynard 614-596-5035

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Chandler Kiesel 614-915-1222

TREASURER

Helen Pestel 614-855-3765

CO-CURATORS

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Betty Maynard & Marty Saveson



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Grant funds provided by the City



FOUNDERS DAY OPEN HOUSE – MAY 17

Next to the Deans' 1963 Studebaker Champ truck at the Ealy House: Richard Whitelock, Nichole Foreman and daughter Noelle, Chandler Kisiel, Debbie and Robert Dean

APRIL - JUNE 2025

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