

New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society July - September 2025 Newsletter

POTLUCK PICNIC IN SAVESON BARN

On August 16th, scrumptious food and great company were enjoyed by 21 of us in the big old Saveson barn. We were pleased to meet and visit with guests Barbara White (Neil Kirby's mom) and also Sandy Vescio (Barb Dean's mom) and friend Barbara Kelly from Las Vegas, Nevada. Helen Pestel was honored for her many years of service to the Society, especially as Treasurer from which position she will retire at the end of October. Unfortunately, the evening was too hot for Marty Saveson to attend in the barn, so a beautifully decorated cake in celebration of her August 6th birthday was presented in her home where many attendees visited with her.

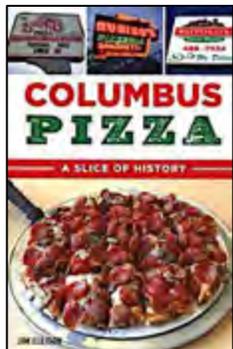


Left: Helen Pestel
Above: Marty Saveson with daughter Catherine Saveson
Right: Dave Dean, Sandy Vescio, Barbara Kelly, Barb Dean

(L to R) SEATED: Barbara White, Helen Pestel, Betty Maynard STANDING: Catherine Saveson, Joanne Adams, Tango and Rick Otten, Bob Mowery, Neil Kirby, Theresa Kempker, Dave Maynard, Dennis Keesee, Chandler Kisiel, Dennis James, Debbie Tracy, Doug Tracy, Robert Dean, Debbie Dean



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



COLUMBUS PIZZA HISTORY

OCTOBER 1 (Wednesday) -- 7:00 p.m.

New Albany Library, 200 Market Street, New Albany

Kicking off National Pizza Month is pizza mania with the Professor of Pizzaology, Jim Ellison, author of *Columbus Pizza*, delivering up piping-hot slices of Columbus pizza history. Jim will have the sauce on all your local pizza favorites and may surprise you with deep-dish stories about the birth and evolution of pizza in Columbus and how the city was named Pizza Capital of the USA in the 1990s. Jim's presentation will be followed by a pizza-talk session featuring New Albany's own pizza legend, Dennis Keesee, owner of Eagles Pizza. Don't miss this delicious evening!

HALLOWEEN FAMILY DAY AND OPEN HOUSE

OCTOBER 26 (Sunday) -- 1:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Ealy House Museum, 6359 Dublin-Granville Road, New Albany

Free Hot Dogs, Snacks, Drinks, Candy - PIG BEAR Stories



WINIFRED BREEGLE & THE NAVAJO CODE TALKERS OF WWII

NOVEMBER 5 (Wednesday) -- 7:00 p.m.

New Albany Library, 200 Market Street, New Albany

NAPTHS member David Gerhardt will present the incredible story of Winifred Breegle who served as a cryptographer in the Navy's WAVES from 1944 until 1949. Her exceptional coding and decoding skills, coupled with her groundbreaking work with the Navajo Code talkers, were essential to the war effort. Thanks to her work, critical information was provided to wartime commanders, military leaders, and the White House to impact the war and bring it to end. Her service helped blaze a trail for future generations of military women.

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

NOVEMBER 23 (Sunday) -- 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Ealy House Museum, 6359 Dublin-Granville Road, New Albany

Tour the festively decorated Ealy House



HOLIDAY DINNER BUFFET

DECEMBER 3 (Wednesday) -- 6:30 p.m.

New Albany Library, 200 Market Street, New Albany

Members are invited to this fun event. Salad, baked spaghetti, and meatballs will be catered by Eagles Pizza, followed by dessert. Dinner is free but a donation to the New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society would be appreciated. Bring cash or check made payable to NAPTHS.

Reserve early. Space is limited. Reservations due by November 26.

Text or call Betty Maynard at 614-596-5035 or email bettymayn@yahoo.com

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

BOARD MEETING

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

Franklin Church, 7171 Central College Road, New Albany

A LETTER FROM PRESIDENT DENNIS KEESEE

I would love to fill this space with clever and entertaining historical facts concerning past residents like Doctor Sylvester Ranney whose brick house still stands on High Street as a reminder of our town's Civil War era Doctor. Or how on September 5, 1956, two children born in the village that day upset New Albany's statistics as the population had stayed at 360 for quite a while in Franklin County's second oldest community.

Instead, I am going to give an update on the finances of our Vietnam Veterans Memorial and an update on the statue's progress. Currently, we have on hand \$71,506 in our statue account. Our total fundraising has collected \$112,850 and we have pledges for another \$2,000 or so. Over the two plus year timeframe of collecting donations, we have had 151 supporters. Our committee members have also donated items to be used in fundraising and have paid out of pocket some expenses for printing, signage, float building, etc. So far, we have had seven Gold Star Sponsors of \$10,000 each including Eagles Pizza; Marjorie Keesee; Monica Morgan; Ralph Fallon; the Frank Resch Family; the Mike Butsko Family; and Rick and Krista Eldridge. The New Albany Alumni Association gave \$3,000 and the New Albany Lions Club \$1,000. I have a commitment for one more \$10,000 donation coming soon and another family has indicated they will be donating considerably as well. I recently have been in talks with the Plain Township Trustees, and they have indicated they will also be contributing to our project. With that said, we are getting close to our commitment of \$180,000 to artist Mike Kraus. We would like to raise extra to have a bronze plaque made to be displayed near the statue with the story of Eleanor, son Mike Butsko, and the door.



To date we have paid \$37,500 to the foundry artist on behalf of Mike Kraus. The first check was paid long ago to buy supplies for the clay statue. Recently, two more checks have been issued now that we are in the metal-casting stage of the process. We have also spent \$3,844 out of our accounts for mailings, banners for parades, and handouts. During the 2025 July 4th parade, we distributed nearly 1,000 card handouts. Unfortunately, after the parade we only received around five donations that we can attribute to card handbills. We have also mailed out over 300 letters to area businesses and received very few donations that way. Yet we know we will reach our goal and hope to have all money by year's end.

Now for the statue news. Tim Butsko and I went to Cleveland and picked up Travis, the metal artist, and then drove to Mike's studio in Pittsburgh on June 11th. The statue artwork in clay was finished, but Tim needed to doublecheck Mike's work on

Eleanor's face as the statue had to look like his mother. After Mike's unveiling, we saw a stunning statue with Mrs. Butsko in the act of placing the Gold Star Flag on her door. Tim then noticed that his mom's nose was too bumped out, so he and Mike (at right) started collaborating to adjust the face to match Tim's images he had on his phone and in his recollections. Mike was a great sport and before we knew it, he smashed the nose away and started over. Before our eyes, the face reemerged better and on point, a perfect match to Eleanor. This took a good hour, so afterwards we all went to lunch before our next phase. The next task was to cut the incredible statue apart so it could be transported back to Travis's studio in Cleveland. We carefully cut it apart and carried it to our van for the trip. Boy, was it heavy!



Since that time, Travis has been working nonstop creating the wax molds for the different pieces of the statue. It was a little more complex than expected and super heavy molds were needed to create this life-size statue of woman and door. A few weeks back, Travis asked me to call him. I soon after complied and his first question was "How set are we on having the statue by Veterans Day?" I replied that this is the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War, so it is pretty important. He next slowly stated it would not be done by then. After talking for some time, I reassured him that quality was far more important than being on time as the statue should be here long after we are both gone. I also explained that the Veterans Park has not been started yet, so it will only be going into storage for some time anyhow. Yes, I was

disappointed but also know this gives us more time to raise the money. We will see how progress goes, but we are thinking it should be dedicated on Memorial Day of 2026 as that is probably a more fitting day in the first place. I am hoping the City will be able to add the groundbreaking for the park in conjunction with the statue unveiling at that time. I am still not worried about raising the money and after seeing the statue in person I am more excited than ever about our organization and our accomplishments in general.



ELIZABETH "LIZ" FEICHTER

January 4, 1937 – February 8, 2025



Elizabeth "Liz" Feichter, nee Shockey, 88, of Villa Park, Illinois, formerly of New Albany, passed away on February 8th after a lengthy illness. A memorial service was held at Schoedinger Northeast Funeral Home on August 15th, followed by a graveside committal ceremony at Maplewood Cemetery in New Albany. In lieu of flowers, donations could be made to the New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society in her honor.

Born and raised in New Albany, Liz graduated from New Albany Plain Township High School in 1955. She worked in insurance until she got married in 1975, then moved to Massillon to be with her husband Norman. Together they built a life and welcomed their daughter. After Norman's passing, Liz returned to New Albany, where she was deeply involved with the New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society, cherishing the town's history and many friendships there. She served as President during the time the Society negotiated an agreement with the New Albany Company to exchange the Kern-Harrington House for the Ealy House.

Liz had been a collector of Depression glass for several decades and her collection included several colors. Prior to moving in 2018 to her daughter's home on the east coast, she made a very generous donation of her Depression glass collection (at right) to the NAPTHS.

Liz was preceded in death by her husband Norman R. Feichter; father John R. "Bob" Shockey; mother M. Elizabeth Shockey; brother John D. Shockey; and sister-in-law Marie (Feichter) Vasco. She is survived by her daughter Steffanie Feichter, who was by her side through it all, and brother Dan (Dot) Shockey.



NORMA JEAN MASSIE

December 18, 1931 – May 28, 2025

Norma Jean Massie, 93, formerly of New Albany, passed away on May 28th while living in North Carolina with her son. A Celebration of Life was held at The Five Event Center in Gahanna on June 27th.

Norma was a lifetime member of the New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society and a member of the Ladies Oriental Shrine of North America Thea Court No. 5. She loved dancing, singing, flower gardening, and spending time with family.



Norma was preceded in death by her husband Kenneth Massie, daughter Karen Johnson, and grandson Mark Massie Jr. She is survived by her son Mark Massie, four grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren.

INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

In the July 4th parade, Eagles Pizza and the Historical Society jointly honored the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War. Veterans Dave Halsey and Dave Gerhardt waved to the crowd from the float displaying the New Albany Vietnam Veterans Memorial mockup. Among the Open House docents were Doug Tracy and Richard Whitelock (at left). Thank you to all of the volunteers.



EIGHTH GRADERS STEP BACK IN TIME AT THE EALY HOUSE MUSEUM

by Valerie Bevelhymer

On the 3rd, 4th, and 5th of September, 438 eighth-grade students from New Albany Middle School got a glimpse of life more than 150 years ago during a walking trip to the Ealy House Museum, a beautifully restored farmhouse dating back to 1860.

The historic home, originally built on a 73-acre working farm, gave the students a chance to observe the simplicity of daily life long before smartphones, cars, or even electricity. From the hand-crafted woodwork to the cast-iron stove, every detail of the Ealy House tells the story of farm families who lived and worked in Plain Township generations ago.

During the tour, students explored rooms filled with period furnishings and artifacts, learning how families in the mid-19th century lived, worked, and cared for their homes. Docents from the Historical Society shared stories about farming, cooking, and schooling in the era before modern conveniences.

The visit connected classroom lessons in history to real-world examples, helping students imagine what life was like for families who helped shape our community generations ago. The eighth graders heard of the difficult and perpetual work that early farm families faced. The tours also illustrated how technology, culture, and daily routines have changed over time. Students left with a deeper appreciation for local history and a greater understanding of the hard work and resilience of the families who lived in the 1860s.

Docent volunteers for the tours included: Helen Pestel, Doug Tracy, Beckie Knore, Stacie Miller, Nichole Foreman, Marcy Steckman, and Valerie Bevelhymer. We welcomed new docents Dave Gerhardt, Emily Eby, and Linda Honaker. Pictured (L to R) are Nichole Foreman, Linda Honaker, Emily Eby, Valerie Bevelhymer, and Stacie Miller.



Fabric for five new aprons was donated by Barb Leeman and Beckie Knore. Susie Horvath and Fiona Hoefer designed and constructed the aprons, complete with simple embroidery to reflect the time period.

DOUG BRAHLER VISITS PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

Earlier this year, Society member Doug Brahler returned for another visit to the far-flung Philippine Islands in the South Pacific. Over the course of his month-long stay, he was able to visit many historic sites, as well as trek to many beautiful beaches. In honor of the upcoming Veterans Day on November 11th, one such destination took him to the American Military Cemetery, in central Manila, Luzon Island. In his own words, he shares his story and a few photos:

I was deeply honored to have recently visited the American Military Cemetery in Manila. The capital city of Manila is a city of stark contrasts, from ultra-modern high-rises and luxurious shopping districts to lowly slums, and from beautiful greenery and exotic plants to grit, grime, and all the woes that poverty brings with it. Nonetheless, in all this hustle lies a Cemetery that is quietly nestled on just over 150 acres near the city center, on the most profoundly solemn, serene, and well-manicured oasis of green, that serves as the final resting place of so many young American men, from over 80 years ago.

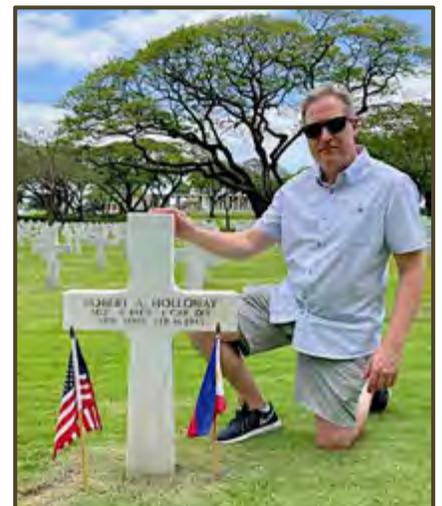


It's hard to convey the powerful emotion that one feels at such a hallowed place, where both Filipino and American defenders of the Philippines lie side by side, as well as being the final resting place of many prisoners of war who subsequently died during internment at the hands of the Japanese. Additionally, there are also US soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines who died on far-flung islands throughout the South Pacific, trying to either halt the wave of Japanese aggression that rolled across nearly the entire Pacific in 1941, or during the slow "island hopping" campaign that occupied the years 1942 through 1945.

Nestled on lush, green, well-manicured grass, with beautiful, full, shade trees, the cemetery is a respite in bustling metro Manila and is surrounded by modern skyscrapers and never-ending development. Here, there are over 17,000 war dead resting peacefully, cared for by dedicated staff, guards, and caretakers.

While visiting, it was an immense honor to visit in particular the memorial crosses of Robert Holloway (at right) and George Winnie, whose Purple Hearts I am the caretaker of, in lieu of any remaining direct family. Robert was killed inside Rizal Baseball Stadium, in central Manila, in February of '45, during the Battle of Manila. George was onboard the Navy destroyer USS Fletcher, killed by a single salvo fired from the tiny island of Corregidor, on February 14, 1945. (The Fletcher was part of pre-invasion preparations for the retaking of Corregidor, which began two days later on February 16th.)

At the cemetery, in addition to row-upon-row of white marble crosses, there is a seemingly endless marble wall, engraved with the names of those Filipino and American "Comrades in Arms, whose earthly resting place is known only to God." Here, I was able to pay tribute to two particular Army Air Corps airmen, who were initially held as prisoners of war in the Philippines for over two and half years. As the war dragged on, the Japanese began transporting many remaining POWs out of the Philippines, to the home island of Japan, to be used as slave labor. In a cruel twist of fate, the dilapidated transport ships used by the Japanese were unmarked as to carrying prisoners of war, and many such ships were unknowingly torpedoed by American submarines. Both Airmen ended as fatalities onboard these so-called "Hell Ships." While no bodies were ever recovered, their names are honored on the Wall of the Missing. I am equally honored to care for the Purple Hearts of Buster Baze and Willis Joplin.



A visit to this Cemetery was as much a chance for me to remember and learn about the history of WWII, as it was to show a small measure of care and respect for the Families that sent their Sons and Daughters to liberate so much of the world from flagrant tyranny.

SUMMER SUNDAY OPEN HOUSES

Open Houses at the Ealy House were held every Sunday from June 1st through August 31st (except July 6) from 1:00 until 4:00 p.m. They were a success with a total of 144 visitors who all enjoyed touring the historic house. People arrived by car, by bicycle, and on foot. A few had visited previously as first-graders with their school tours and wanted to show the house to their families. Many said that they had been meaning to stop by and were glad they finally did. Pictured in the back parlor (at right) are NAPTHS President Dennis Keesee and visitors Reba Teiga and Judy Howard. Thank you to our many volunteers who greeted visitors and shared the Ealy House with them this summer!



NEW ALBANY HISTORY

To watch New Albany History videos:

Go to: [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

Search: New Albany History

Select: View full playlist

ENJOY!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Marty & Brad Day

Elizabeth Ransopher



WALKING TOUR OF HISTORIC NEW ALBANY

NAPTHS President Dennis Keesee led a group of 23 persons on a walking tour of Historic New Albany on the very pleasant evening of September 3rd. After stopping at the New Albany Mill Whse. building (above), a former creamery, we visited the New Albany Cemetery where New Albany's founders Noble Landon and William Yantis are buried. We made several more stops as Dennis continued telling stories of former residents and businesses, such as Doctor Sylvester Ranney and The Ranney House. Thank you, Dennis, for the very interesting and informative tour!

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Betty Maynard & Marty Saveson



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Grant funds provided by the City



EALY HOUSE DOCENTS FOR EIGHTH-GRADE TOURS

Helen Pestel, Nichole Foreman, Valerie Bevelhymmer, Beckie Knore

JULY - SEPT 2025

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