

New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society January-March 2026 Newsletter



HISTORY OF SOCCER IN NEW ALBANY

by Dennis James

During my March 4, 2026, presentation I answered: "How did the sport of Soccer get started and develop in and around the New Albany area? How did the James family affect this development?"

I also talked about our involvement with EIS Excellence in Sportsmanship, a group of high school soccer officials that recognize Varsity players in Central Ohio who have demonstrated great character during their games. We choose students each year to receive scholarship offers toward their future education and have been doing so for 36 years. Last year, we honored six students with scholarship offers totaling \$19,500. Some 25 years ago my wife Janet James, with her best friend Judy Hodge, got the idea to make knotted soccer fleece blankets to give to each of the scholarship winners. I have continued making these blankets for the past six years after my wife's passing to keep the idea going.

Not mentioned during my presentation is an accomplishment of which I am proud. In one week, my son Jonathan James, in his junior year of high school, scored six goals each at two different games. For that, he was recognized as The Columbus Dispatch Athlete of the Week. The award was presented to him by Jimmy Crum.



HAPPY NEW YEAR PARTY



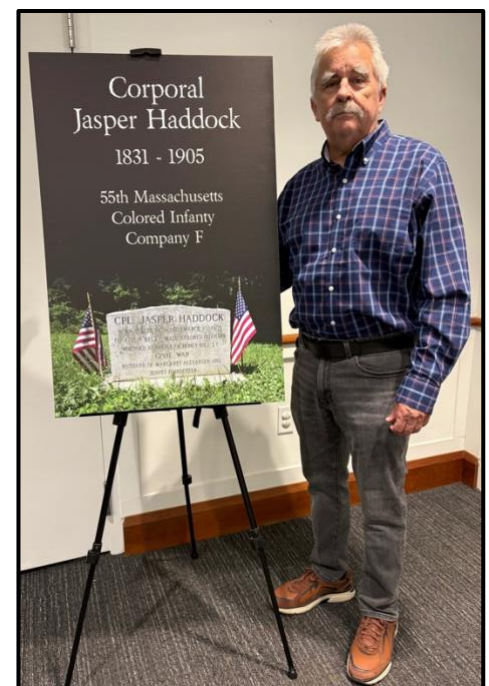
January 7, 2026

Twenty of us enjoyed a fun party at the New Albany Library with snacks, trivia, penny toss (Doug Tracy at left), pitching pennies, and many prizes. We all look forward to the many exciting programs and events in the year ahead.

JASPER HADDOCK, BLACK CIVIL WAR VETERAN

April 1, 2026

Doug Tracy (at right) presented the story of Corporal Jasper Haddock, one of many Ohio African Americans who stepped forward to serve in the 55th Massachusetts Colored Infantry during the Civil War. It's also the inspiring story of Captina, a once-thriving Ohio community of free Blacks and formerly enslaved persons who courageously found their way across the Ohio River in the early 1800s in search of freedom and an opportunity for a new life.



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

SONGS OF STEPHEN FOSTER

MAY 6 (Wednesday) -- 7:00 p.m.

New Albany Library, 200 Market Street

Musicians Steve and Lisa Ball will give a presentation of Stephen Foster's life and career as America's premier songwriter. Learn about Foster's inspiration, the popularity, or lack thereof, of some of Foster's most popular tunes in American culture today. The program consists of a dozen of Foster's popular and not so popular tunes, and the stories behind them, as well as the myths generated over the past 160 years. All music is performed on a 19th century Martin guitar, and a reproduction minstrel banjo.

Event is free and open to the public.



NEW ALBANY FOUNDERS DAY

MAY 16 (Saturday)

Parade -- 11:00 a.m.

In honor of our 50th anniversary, we're celebrating the people and organizations that made it all possible.

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

6359 Dublin-Granville Road, New Albany

CLIMBING THE CHARTS

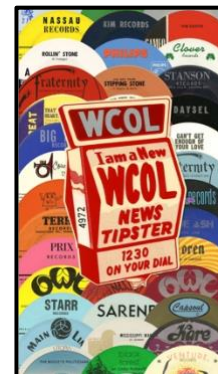
CENTRAL OHIO ARTISTS ON THE WCOL-AM TOP-40 SURVEYS

JUNE 3 (Wednesday) -- 7:00 p.m.

New Albany Library, 200 Market Street

If you were a teenager in Columbus with a transistor radio in the late 50s or early 60s, you were surely dialed in to WCOL-AM. It was the golden era of AM radio as rock 'n roll was taking over the airwaves. WCOL-AM's weekly Top-40 charts from 1958 to 1978 could be found in record stores throughout the area, with local artists appearing on many of these charts. Doug Tracy will talk about the WCOL charts and play the songs, from doo-wop to rock 'n roll to soul to country, by the local artists that appeared on many of them.

Event is free and open to the public.



OPEN HOUSES AT THE EALY HOUSE

SUNDAYS -- JUNE, JULY, AND AUGUST

1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

6359 Dublin-Granville Road, New Albany



AMERICA 250

INDEPENDENCE DAY

JULY 4 (Saturday)

Parade -- 11:00 a.m.

PARTYING LIKE IT'S 1776

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

50 YEARS OF COMMUNITY

Reprinted from newalbanyfoundersday.com



New Albany Founders Day goes back to 1976, when the New Albany Historical Society pulled together a celebration for the nation's bicentennial. A small town, a handful of volunteers, and a patriotic reason for the community to come together. Fifty years later, as the country celebrates its semiquincentennial, the volunteers are still at it, and the party has only gotten bigger.

The festival has been held all over New Albany over the years, from school grounds to parking lots to its new home at Rose Run Park. The parade has wound its way down just about every major street in what was once a village and is now a city. Today, about 7,000 people come out every year for the parade, food, rides, vendors, and the kind of afternoon that reminds you why you live here.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of that first celebration, and we're spending it the way it should be spent: looking around at what this community has built together. Every grand marshal who's led the parade, every organization and school group we've honored, every local business and volunteer who have supported and helped make this special occasion possible. Fifty years of community isn't one story, it's hundreds of them, and they all started here.

FIRST ANNUAL N.A. FOUNDER'S DAY CELEBRATION

Reprinted from a 1976 local newspaper

The first annual New Albany Founder's Day Celebration was held Saturday, May 8. Featured in this day of activities were a parade, an address to spectators by Grand Marshal and Congressman Sam Devine, a maypole dance, a performance by the "Singing Moms" and a square dance.

The first activity of the day was the parade. During the parade, there was a judging of the best float, best antique Ford, best antique GMC car, and best mounted troop.

Winning the best float award was the New Albany Businessman's Association. Kenny Massey won the award for the best antique Ford and Chip Daniels had the best antique GMC. The winner of the best mounted troop award was the Trojans 4-H Club.

Following the parade, Congressman Devine gave his address. Following Devine's speech was a performance from the "Singing Moms" and then a maypole dance by the elementary students. The final event of the evening was a square dance.

The general feelings of the organizers of the event were that it will become an annual event.

IN MEMORY OF KRISTIE KIDNER

by Theresa Kempker

A friend of the Historical Society, Kristie Kidner, passed away in October 2025. Kristie had deep roots in New Albany. Her parents, Wilma and George, had families, including the Diehls, Favills, Baughmans, and Kidners, who settled in the area in the 1800s.

Kristie was quite the businesswoman. She had a cleaning company, and she added pet-sitting services in answer to the need she saw. She enjoyed her work, especially meeting so many interesting people and playing with the pets. It was no surprise, then, when she was glad to be hired to clean the Ealy House. She had a lot of fun with the Society members and helped us solve the mouse problem.

Kristie had many memories of growing up in the center of old New Albany during the 1970s. In high school, she worked at the Dairy Cream and Eagles Pizza. Both jobs gave her needed self-confidence and discipline that served her well in her business.

Kristie wanted people to know that there was a nice town here, with people who had fun, sorrows, disputes, and friendships. She will be missed by many members.



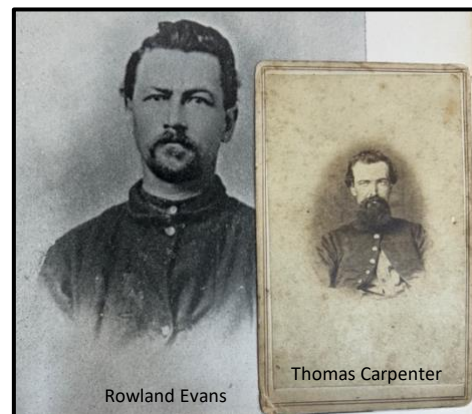
THE DRUM

by Dennis Keesee

I have been obsessed with collecting pieces of history since I was a young boy. Coins from the cash register at Eagles Pizza were my first collecting area, as I explained at a recent Historical Society meeting. As a teenager, with a few friends in tow, I walked the many plowed farm fields around the New Albany area looking for Native American artifacts which were plentiful after a good rain washed the gleaming flint so arrowheads would shine in the sun. By high school I started to read every Civil War magazine and book I could find. My love of the history of the American Civil War and New Albany's soldiers who fought during that time has shaped my life for the past half century - from years of reenacting the various battles during the 125th anniversary of the war to publishing *Too Young To Die - Boy Soldiers of the Union Army* in 2001. With this book I traveled the country giving speeches and I set a sales record for any author who had sold books at the Gettysburg National Park visitors center which was quite a feat for an unknown author.

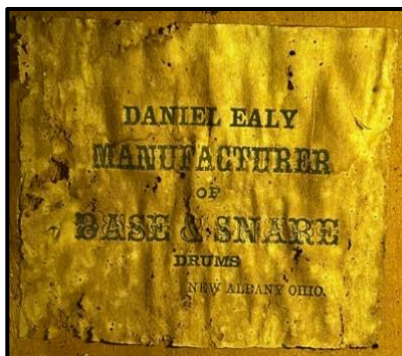
Throughout the years I set out to find the name of every Plain Township soldier who had fought for the Union Army during 1861-1865. Before Ancestry.com and other websites were created, the only ways to find local soldiers were by scouring area cemeteries, and reading lots of books, local diaries, and letters of area residents. I also studied the draft records and census records of Plain Township which were available only by going to the National Archives in Washington, D.C. and searching the originals. I believe there were 224 soldiers including four officers from the township, according to an article written by Fent Wilson for a turn-of-the-century school newspaper. After many years I have found the names and regiments of all 224 soldiers, who will be remembered in the upcoming New Albany Veterans Park.

Because I knew the names and regiments affiliated with the area, I have been able to acquire images of several of our local soldiers and artifacts they saved after the war, including canteens, guns, etc. Years ago, at a Historical Society meeting, Naomi Fodor graciously gifted to me her great-grandfather Thomas Carpenter's pistol which he carried during the war with the 18th United States Infantry. My grandfather Chester Doran passed to me a captured Confederate sword that Captain Job Wilson of Company B of the 133rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry had given to his grandfather Alexander Doran as the two were neighbors and both had served in Company B. I have quite a few artifacts from our family and am most proud of my great-great-uncle Rowland Evans whose sister Cynthia married Alexander Doran. Thomas Carpenter and Rowland Evans enlisted at New Albany in 1861, and both served in the 18th U.S. Infantry. Rowland carried the battle flag and had 12 color guards killed or wounded at his side and was also wounded at Jonesborough, Georgia.



Out of respect for Rowland Evans, my favorite regiment to collect and research is the 18th U.S. Infantry. During the fall of 1861 a recruitment stand for the 18th was manned by Lt. Fetterman and Lt. Andrew Burt in downtown New Albany, where several area men formed the first group of volunteers to leave for the war. Two of them who joined were Daniel Ealy and Henry Ealy. I knew all about the Ealys who fought during the war, or so I thought, years before the Historical Society made the Ealy House our area museum. But sometimes what you think is correct is very, very wrong when you have access to the new computerized age of research and look with a new understanding. I am a researcher of soldiers but not a genealogist who is someone that studies family connections.

When I first started studying local soldiers, computers were a thing of the future. I used index cards on which I wrote the names of all men listed between the ages of 14 and 45 in the 1860 Federal Census. As I would find new sources to prove another person was a soldier I would write the known regiment, etc. on the index card. Over the years my cards slowly added proven soldiers. After acquiring a computer in 1998, I transferred my data from the cards to a list that was easier to search or update. Later, after knowing that many underage boys also served, I expanded my database to include younger boys into the list. I never added older men, as the upper draft age during the war was 45 and very few men older than that served.



I knew from my list of soldiers that there were four Plain Township Ealys, Daniel, Henry, Martin, and Peter, who fought for the Union. Over the years as I research more and more subjects and names, it is easy to mix up today what I had once already learned. As far as the Ealys, I admit now that I was a little confused.

Last fall I was made aware of a Civil War era snare drum for sale on Facebook marketplace by a few friends who monitor the many sights where Civil War material is listed for sale. They had called me to report that a drum made by Daniel Ealy of New Albany, Ohio, was listed. I was

shocked to say the least. That day I called the person listing the drum and later drove to Greenville, Ohio, near the Indiana border, to purchase it. Soon after, I carried my treasure to a Historical Society Board meeting to declare that the drum was probably made in the basement of our museum.

With Betty's deadline for an article on Sunday, I sat down to write a simple story about my prized drum. And that is when I went down the rabbit hole researching and realizing I was wrong about a lot when it came to the Ealy Family. One of my mistakes many years ago when making my Index cards for soldiers was not noting who were brothers on the cards. I did write the house numbers on most of the cards but by mistake I did not put house numbers on Peter, Martin, or Henry Ealy's. On Daniel, Isreal, and John H. Ealy's cards, I did put house number 216. But until now I never had a reason to look at the house number.

On my Daniel Ealy card I noted that he was 19 in 1860 and joined Company F of the 18th United States Infantry on October 14, 1861, and served until March 31, 1862, or only for about five months. I also wrote that he died at New Albany, New York, in 1874 as I saw that information in the Franklin County edition of Ohio's Military History even though I knew it was probably wrong.

I then went to Ancestry to search Daniel Ealy of Plain Township. I was looking for my 19-year-old Daniel Ealy but all I could find was Daniel Ealy of Pennsylvania who was born in 1811 and had moved to Plain Township. After clicking here and there, I went to the Ealy House website and read the history of the Ealys, *"The Ealys themselves contributed (to the Civil War). George's brother Daniel and his three sons, Peter, Henry, and Martin, all enlisted. Peter, who died at the age of thirty-two, seems to have experienced shell shock. His wife in a petition claimed that Peter suffered from "acute mania."*

Flabbergasted I read and re-read the sentence over and over. So, there it was in print undoubtedly penned by historian John Saveson years ago. Henry, Peter, and Martin were the sons of Daniel Ealy and never lived in our museum. Instead, Daniel who was George Ealy's brother owned 100 acres on Babbitt Road where he and his sons farmed. OK I thought, but could have Daniel Ealy who was 50 years old really have been accepted into the Regular Army which had a much higher standard than state volunteers? I also had the age of my Daniel Ealy at 19. It seems I was not the only skeptical person, for on a Graves Registration card for Ohio Veterans listing Daniel Ealy an unknown registrar in 2017 marked the line for service record, "Service suspected. Civil War emblem on grave." It was now 1:30 in the morning on Monday and my article had gotten nowhere. I had two Daniel Ealys perhaps, but which was the soldier and who made my drum?

My first focus was the Daniel Ealy on my card that was age 19 who I had noted was the soldier in the 18th. Back to Ancestry I went and tried another approach. I searched for house 216 in the census and there I found that house 216 is the Ealy House Museum today. Listed were George Ealy age 52, wife Christina age 44, Lucinda age 22, Isreal age 21, Daniel age 19, John H. age 17, Malinda age 15, and Christena age 12. And there written in the 1860 census were the true family members that lived in the Ealy House. But wait, when looking at today's computerized and printed list of names that show up on Ancestry next to the image of the census, they have Daniel typed as David. Had I read the scribble from 1860 wrong 30 years ago? I next looked at the 1850 census, and the written name there clearly says David and my problem was solved.



There was only one Daniel Ealy in Plain Township during the war, and he truly was a 50-year-old soldier who joined the blue with his son Henry. His son Peter had already joined the 113th Ohio Infantry the prior August and Martin served during 1864 with Captain Job Wilson and the many other Plain Township men in the 133rd Ohio Infantry. As most other older recruits Daniel did not withstand the rigors of camp and field and his service was short. That does not diminish his patriotic duty to serve, which he did. His age explains the drum as only a very good craftsman could make such a beautiful drum of the period. Perhaps while in camp he noted the need for drums for the regimental drum corps and decided to make some when he returned home during the spring of 1862 when hundreds of regiments were being formed.

Phillip "Jimmy" Doyle (at right) of Mt. Vernon, Ohio poses with a Civil War Drum similar to those made by Daniel Ealy. Both Jimmy and Daniel served during the war with the 18th U.S. Infantry. Jimmy at age 14 was one of the youngest members while Daniel at age 50 was one of the oldest.

The old patriot died at the age of 62 on July 7, 1873, and is buried at Maplewood Cemetery. His wife Barbara filed for a widow's pension, which was granted in 1888. For the record, none of the sons of George Ealy of the Ealy House served during the war. On another note, our Ealy House brochure also tells of Daniel Ealy and his three sons who were in the war. Sometimes the answers we are looking for are so obvious we overlook them.



TALES FROM THE PHILIPPINES – A FEW OBSERVATIONS ABOUT LIFE ON THE ISLANDS

by Society Member Doug Brahler



While traveling recently through the remote and mountainous region of Bukidnon province on central Mindanao island, not only were the views of the hills and mountains stunning, but the people that I encountered were always kind and friendly.

Indeed, for some of the local inhabitants, I must have been one of the few Caucasians (or perhaps Americans)



that they had ever encountered, as I experienced a "first" for me...They wanted to get a picture with me, for no other reason than my height and white skin (by the way, as my friends know, I'm far from being Larry Bird on the height spectrum).

I was happy to oblige, but it was I who ended up with the better part of the deal, having gotten to meet them, in their remote area of the world. And the sun and sky that day, were as close to heaven on earth that I think you could find.

While traveling in Bataan Peninsula (near Bagac City, Bataan, Luzon island, Philippines), as an American, I find it never-endingly interesting to see how local Filipinos use the roadways as convenient places to sun dry various crops. I've seen rice, corn, cashews, and coconut pieces.

I've seen this done all over the PI, on countless islands that I've visited. I'm always amazed — keep in mind, this is an active road, and an active lane of travel. But I deeply respect the practicality, resilience, and sort of old-world mentality that the Filipinos exhibit (rice is a staple crop; people need locally sourced healthy food; costs need to be economical; there is flat surface; the roadway absorbs sunlight; it all works out). No one drives through the drying rice (pictured below). Everyone understands the necessity. As a society, there seems to be much mutual respect.



In so many places, that old-world sensibility and common-sense, has flatly disappeared, but the Philippines are still a place of unique traditions and fascinating history!



TALES FROM THE PHILIPPINES, continued

One of the truly fascinating aspects that I deeply admire and respect about the Philippines, are the countless ways in which what I call "old-world traditions and craftsmanship" are still alive and a part of daily life and culture. In many ways, you can see the same traditions and same ways of daily life, that date back 50, 100, even 150 years ago. These ways have simply disappeared into oblivion, in many countries and societies around the world today.

Whenever I visit the PI, it's hard to explain, but in so many ways, the culture, the people, the traditions, the strong family connections, the nature of their society and demeanor...is like stepping back in time into 1950s America.



With that, in countless small villages and towns, on all the many islands, there are people who still ply the old trades and crafts, and in fact count on these old methods as a source of income. They are resilient, efficient, creative, hard-working, and incredibly resourceful. The downside of Third World countries...every peso is hard-earned, and every peso so meaningful to them and their families' existence. Upward mobility is a struggle; opportunities, can be limited.

I was honored to purchase a broom (4, in fact), and would that I could, I would have bought out the whole stand, if only I could have carried all of them back to the U.S.

EALY HOUSE

Sharper Impressions Painting company is performing much needed work on the Ealy House during April.



Keri Gierhart & Julie Virgalitte



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Debra Cline
- Keri Gierhart
- Reba Teiga
- Julie Virgalitte & Garry Qualter

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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HISTORY OF THE U.S. CENT – 1793-2025 Presented by Dennis Keesee on February 4, 2026

JANUARY - MARCH 2026

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