New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society

July - December 2026 Newsletter

HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

CELEBRATING PIGBEAR: NEW ALBANY'S BELOVED LOCAL LEGEND



We have loved following PigBear's many adventures. Thank you, Marcy Steckman, for bringing this memorable creature to life!

Search "PigBear New Albany OH" on Facebook to follow PigBear's adventures and be sure to watch the *Legend of the Pigbear* and *They Call Me the PigBear!* videos.







* * * UPCOMING EVENTS * * *



HALLOWEEN FAMILY DAY AND OPEN HOUSE

OCTOBER 25 (Sunday) -- 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

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



HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

NOVEMBER 22 (Sunday) -- 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

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

REVOLUTIONARY WAR SOLDIERS OF NEW ALBANY

by NAPTHS President Dennis Keesee

NOVEMBER 4 (Wednesday) -- 7:00 p.m.

New Albany Library, 200 Market Street, New Albany

Smith's Burying Ground: Pioneer Cemetery Ohio Historical Marker states in part: Smith's Burying Ground was established in 1814 when John Smith (born 1742), Revolutionary War Veteran, died and was buried here. John Clouse (1758-1822), Dutch immigrant and Revolutionary War veteran, is also buried here. The D.A.R. biography reads: "When a boy he ran away from home and stole passage on a ship to America where he was sold for his passage. When the Revolution broke out, he was offered his freedom if he would serve in the army." Event is free and open to the public.





HOLIDAY DINNER BUFFET

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

New Albany Library, 200 Market Street, New Albany

Members are invited to this fun event. Salad, baked spaghetti, meatballs, and chicken parmesan from Eagles Pizza will be served, courtesy of Teresa and Dennis Keesee. Dessert will be provided by the Historical Society.

Please let Betty Maynard know if you are planning to attend:

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

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

No program or event is scheduled for January 2027

NEW ALBANY'S FIRST FEMALE MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

by Theresa Kempker

This November, we citizens get to exercise our right to vote. In 1920, the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was passed, giving women the right to vote. Not only did women vote, but a few were elected to local council or the mayor's office by majorities that included these new female voters.

Village councils with a predominance of women were derisively called "petticoat councils" or "petticoat governments." Most of these councils were located in rural areas serving small villages (1,000 residents or fewer), so many of their stories are lost. Approximately twenty white female mayors from 1921 to 1923 are known. African-American female mayors weren't elected until the 1970s, according to historians. The number of female councils is smaller.

How were these female councils elected? In Umatilla, Oregon, and Winslow, Arkansas, women got together and decided who would run and then elected those they had proposed. If they did campaign, the women argued that they would undertake "Municipal Housekeeping," an extension of family budgeting and home maintenance. They did not want to seem to be radical or aggressive, but rather feminine and proper.

In New Albany, a fluke led to our female council. Ballots for the fall 1921 election were either lost or not printed, so voters had to write in the names of the candidates. There were only about 200 residents in the six blocks of our fair village. Everyone elected that November was surprised.

Five women and one man were elected to council: Mrs. Martha Babbitt, Mrs. J.W. McCormick, Mrs. Rebecca Myer, Mrs. F.B. Orem, Mrs. George Triplet, and Mr. W.H. Goodrich. Miss Amnice Coons was elected to be village clerk, and Mr. J.F. Margarum was mayor. Mr. Margarum resigned at the end of May 1922, and Martha Babbitt became the first woman mayor. By the end of 1922, the council had indeed done their Municipal Housekeeping. Gas streetlights were replaced with electric lights, the roads had been tarred and chipped, and the storm sewers were improved. At that point, many of the women said that they had accomplished their goals. Many resigned, including Mayor Babbitt.

Were councils with a preponderance of women successful? As shown, the New Albany council of 1922 improved their village. Other such councils got towns out of debt, enforced speed limits, and clamped down on bootleggers. Most of all, they proved that women could have an active part in the rough and tumble world of politics and government. They persevered through stereotyping, threats, and ridicule. Even the name "petticoat council" is demeaning: has anyone ever called an all-male council a "fly in the front of the underwear" council?

Women, especially minority women, seem to have stepped back—or been pushed back—from elected office after a few years post-suffrage. Finally, in the 1970s, second wave feminism encouraged more women to serve in office. New Albany would not have another female mayor until the 1980s, when Cally Kardules took office, followed by Colleen Briscoe and Nancy Ferguson. Since the 1980s, we have benefitted from the service of many past and current female council members.

425 STUDENTS, 16 CLASSES, AND A FEW RAINDROPS!

by Valerie Bevelhymer

September 2, 3, and 4 brought a whirlwind of activity to the Ealy House Museum as we welcomed eighth-grade students from New Albany Middle School over three busy days!

The visits provided students with a wonderful opportunity to step inside an historic home and experience what life was like for families more than 160 years ago. As they toured the Ealy House, students listened intently to stories about the Ealy family and everyday life in the 1860s. Throughout the house, students explored the different rooms and learned about the daily lives, work, and responsibilities of the families who lived there. Our docents shared stories about the construction of the house, the Ealy family, and the importance of the farm and property to the surrounding community. The tours helped students discover how families prepared food, heated homes, obtained water, completed household chores, and used tools and household items long before the modern conveniences we enjoy today. Historic furnishings, artifacts, and household objects helped bring those stories to life. For many students, the visit was about much more than looking at old objects. It was an opportunity to ask questions, imagine themselves living in another time, and gain a better understanding of the people who helped shape our community.



We were especially delighted to welcome two new docents to our team. Kelle Dildine (at right, on left with Stacie Miller), a longtime resident of New Albany, and Amy Cook (bottom left, on left with Doug Tracy, Beckie Knore, and Dennis Keesee), a recently retired New Albany school district music teacher, jumped right in and did a wonderful job sharing the stories of the Ealy House. We are grateful to have them join our docent team. We also appreciate our returning docents—Dennis Keesee, Doug Tracy, Stacie Miller, Linda Honaker, and Valerie Bevelhymer—along with volunteer Beckie Knore, for sharing their time, enthusiasm, and love of local history.

Of course, no school tour would be complete without a few memorable docent moments! There were plenty of questions, wide eyes, and surprised reactions—and more than one moment when a docent had to pause and remember exactly which century we were discussing! Our docents expertly handled questions ranging from “Is this house haunted?” to the inevitable curiosity about the outhouse. Let's just say that after hearing about life without indoor plumbing, modern bathrooms suddenly seemed like a pretty amazing invention!



And then there was Friday! The weather decided to join the adventure, sending a few raindrops our way but our students and teachers weren't going to let a little rain spoil the day. With some careful timing, quick feet, and perhaps a little luck, the Friday classes successfully evaded the raindrops and completed their visits.

A heartfelt thank you to all 425 students and their teachers, and to everyone who helped make these visits possible. For three days, the Ealy House was filled with curious minds, thoughtful questions, enthusiastic teachers, and plenty of exceptionally polite young

people discovering what life was like more than 160 years ago. Their interest and attentiveness made these visits especially enjoyable for our docents. We hope the students enjoyed their trip to the past and will return to the Ealy House with their families and friends. Perhaps they will even bring along someone who hasn't yet discovered the fascinating history right here in our own community!

We may have been teaching history, but we certainly made a little history of our own—with 425 students from 16 classes, three busy days, wonderful new docents, countless questions, and only a few raindrops standing in the way! Now we can't wait to welcome the next group of first-grade student historians to the Ealy House in November!

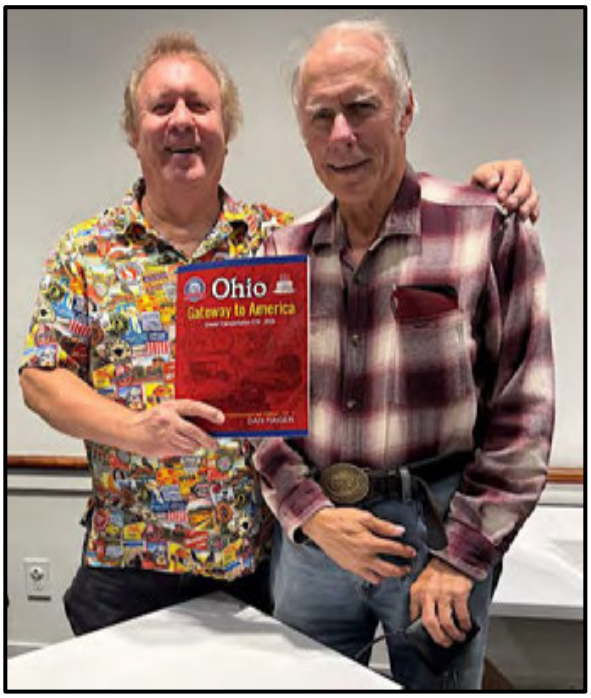
MEMORIAL TO THE FALLEN: 25 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11

September 2, 2026



NAPTHS member David Gerhardt presented a special commemorative program to honor the 25th anniversary of the September 11, 2001, attacks. He shared powerful stories from that day, including those of the last firefighter out of the North Tower and Ashley, the FDNY firehouse dog. He also told about the fire truck crushed by the North Tower, which is now on display at Motts Military Museum. Together, these stories gave us a special opportunity to reflect, remember, and honor the enduring legacy of service and sacrifice.





OHIO: GATEWAY TO AMERICA

October 7, 2026

Author and historian Dan Rager (at left with Jim Thompson) presented his latest book, *Ohio: Gateway to America, Ground Transportation 1776 – 2026*. Tracing transportation from Indian trails to railroads and beyond, he explained how each stage of its development benefited our community throughout its long history. The presentation also complemented the America 250 Project.



SUMMER SUNDAY OPEN HOUSES



From June 7 through August 30, the Sunday Open Houses welcomed many visitors to tour the historic Ealy House and connect with its history. Some had visited previously as first-graders on school tours and returned with their families, while other guests stopped in after passing the house many times. The summer open houses concluded on August 30 with a visit from Karen Taylor, a descendant of New Albany's Taylor family, whose story appears below. We are grateful to the wonderful volunteers who greeted visitors and brought the Ealy House's history to life!

AN AFTERNOON WITH THE TAYLOR FAMILY PAST

by Karen Taylor



My visit to the Ealy House was almost magical! You all were so welcoming, and it was thrilling to see all the Taylor family mementos and the huge portraits! It was so much more than I expected. Anthony Wayne Taylor (his portrait next to me, volunteer Beckie Knore on the right) and wife Melinda were my great-great-great-great grandparents.

After I left the Ealy House, I headed over to Taylor Farm Park and had a sweet walk completely around the house. Then I drove to Maplewood Cemetery to have a few quiet moments there and snap a few more pictures to send to my siblings (Ralph, Nancy, and Susan). That was a sweet ending to a very enjoyable visit to New Albany!

OHIO OPEN DOORS – EALY HOUSE MUSEUM



On September 13, we participated in Ohio Open Doors, a statewide event brought to you by the Ohio History Connection, when local sponsors opened their historic buildings and landmarks to the public for special tours and programs. At the Ealy House, our tours included a special exhibit featuring information about the Taylor House, the brick house at the new Taylor Farm Park, and the Taylor family. Volunteers Dennis Keesee and Doug Tracy led tours through the museum for five highly interested visitors who may not have known about the Ealy House had it not been for the Ohio Open Doors event.

A SPECIAL VISIT TO THE EALY HOUSE

by Betty Maynard



When Robert Goodrich asked whether I would give his sister, Susie (Goodrich) Pater, a tour of the Ealy House during her visit from Frederick, Maryland, I gladly agreed. On October 9, I had the opportunity to reconnect with Susie (at left and bottom right with me), my NAHS classmate and friend, while exploring the many connections between her family and the house.

A quilter herself, Susie was delighted to see the quilt her mother, Millie Goodrich, helped design and make with the Heritage Quilters, along with the quilt scrapbook containing several pictures of her mother. She also reminisced about the bookcase from her family home that now stands in the Ealy House front parlor. Outside, she was pleased to see the brick in the front walk engraved for her parents, Bob and Millie Goodrich, who were the 1998 Founders Day parade grand marshals. Sharing these family memories made it especially meaningful to visit with my friend in a house that is so special to me.



PIGBEAR'S FALL ADVENTURES









WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Colleen & Wayne Green
Marshall & Lauren Spalding

CONGRATULATIONS!

At the October 7 Society meeting, Valerie Bevelhymer and Robert Dean were reelected as Trustees. Their new three-year terms begin on November 1, 2026.

NAPTHS BOARD

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NEWSLETTER EDITORS

Betty Maynard & Marty Saveson

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Potluck Picnic

POTLUCK PICNIC IN SAVESON BARN

Twenty-two of us gathered in the big old Saveson barn for delicious food and great company on September 13. Most stayed after dinner to continue the pleasant evening with friendly conversation and fellowship.



(L to R) SEATED: Catherine Saveson, Helen Pestel, Barbara White (Neil Kirby's mother), Marilyn Regrut, Debbie Dean
STANDING: Rick Otten, Bob Mowery, Chandler Kisiel, Joanne Adams, Doug Tracy, Betty Maynard, Dave Maynard, Emily Eby, Debbie Tracy, Mark Baranoski, Neil Kirby, Theresa Kempker, Frank Knore, Beckie Knore, Robert Dean, Monica Morgan, Marcy Steckman