

Perry News & History

Volume 1 - Issue 2

Saturday, October 27, 2007

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Perry Township Historical Society

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You may also contact Kevin Cox, Tony Hayes, Tom Graham, or Melinda Querry.

Historical Society

The drive for founding members ends on December 1, 2007. Regular members can join at any time. See page 6 for membership details.

The plans for the museum in Perry Township are moving forward. There will be more details in the next issue.

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Gilbert Accountius - The Last Man Standing



Gilbert Accountius, the longest-serving active firefighter, retired this summer to an inactive firefighter status. Gilbert was there at the creation of the fire department in 1953, being one of the original firefighters.

Gilbert said, “they started with an old gasoline delivery truck that was converted onto a water tanker and an old open cab pumper.” He said, “Back then there was not a lot of training and to be a firefighter all you had to know was which end of the hose the water came out. That was pretty easy to figure out once they turned the pump on.”

Gilbert served the community as a firefighter for 54 years and was given an emotional retirement party by the Perry Township Volunteer Fire Department and their Auxiliary. Gilbert is also a retiree from St. Rita's Hospital with 34 years of service.

We wish him well, and thank him for his service.

On The Ballot

Tuesday, November 6, 2007 is election day. Vote! Your voice is important. The people, offices, and issues are listed below.

Perry Township Fiscal Officer
Cathy Semer (incumbent)

Perry Township Trustee
Dick Accountius (incumbent)
Kevin Cox

Perry School Board
Rick Frymyer (incumbent)
Sharon Hayes (incumbent)
Charles West (incumbent)
Rusty Rush
Bill Shively

Issues

The Volunteer Fire Department has two renewals on the ballot this year.

State Issue

Ohio Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner announced on Monday, October 15, 2007 that an effort, being backed by strip club owners, to gather required signatures for a ballot referendum had failed to get enough signatures.

Ohio's County election officials were required to print absentee ballots containing the measure in the event that Issue 1 qualified. Since the issue did not qualify, the votes cast on this issue will not be tallied.

History of The Allen County Fair

By Evelyn Shaw

On January 11, 1851, a meeting was held in Lima to establish an Agricultural Society, with the purpose of organizing and annual county fair. Two people attended the meeting.

The first fair in Allen County was held in Lima on October 21, 1851. It was a one day event, assembled on the Faurot Farm, at the southwest edge of Lima.

The next year, it was a two day fair held at the same site. The two day fairs were held through 1855. In 1860, the Allen County Agricultural Society was reorganizing and the two day fair was held again at the Faurot Farm until 1866.

In 1867, the two day County Fair was held on the Robert's Farm, east of Lima, at what would become the Lima Driving Park. This was at the site of where Lima Memorial Hospital now stands. The 30 acre site was rented from Josiah Roberts for fifteen years, beginning in 1867 and ending in 1881. In September 1881, the 30 acre site was purchased by the Allen County Agricultural Society

During the period, from 1897 to 1902, the fair experienced five straight years of rain with devastating losses.

In 1903, the society sold the property to the Lima Driving Park. The sale had a stipulation that the Allen County Agricultural Society be granted a 20 year lease for \$500.00 for the purpose of holding the Allen County Fair.

When the lease ran out, in 1922, the fair was moved to Delphos. From 1922 to 1948, the Allen County Fair

was held as a street fair. The fair became so large, with the concessions and animals, like cows, pigs, sheep, etc..., that the City of Delphos passed a referendum, stating that, the 1948 Allen County Fair would be the last one held, on the city streets of Delphos.

In 1948, the Agricultural Society's Board of Directors grew from 11 to 18 members. The board remains at 18 members today.

The new Board of Directors voted to move the Society's equipment, which consisted of a dance pavilion, some chicken coops, small tents and a bank account of \$98.95 to a Lima site, east of Lima, known as the "Showgrounds".

In 1949, the Allen County Fair opened with 80, 000 square feet under canvas, 35 acres of grounds filled with exhibits and fair goers. One year later, this was determined to be too small, and 80 additional acres were purchased, by the Allen County Commissioners. This was a part of the Robert's estate. 125 additional acres were obtained through other various transactions.

In 1949, the Junior Fair Board was first organized with the purpose of overseeing expanding Junior Fair youth entries.

During the 1950's, and early 1960's, many construction projects took place, giving the the fairgrounds the appearance we see today. The following projects were completed:

- 1951 Beef Barn,
- 1952 Youth Building, Racetrack,
- 1953 Merchants Building, Swine Barn,
- 1954 Agriculture and Fine Arts ,
- 1955 Pony Barn,
- 1956 Dairy Barn,
- 1957 Rabbit /Poultry Barn,
- 1958 Grandstand,
- 1963 Sheep Barn.

In 1973, Hack Rorchman purchased the Roberts Estate and donated 30 acres to the Allen County Fair.

The Fair Board has many ongoing projects and is always improving. Many thanks to Jay Beggs, the Allen County Fair Manager, and his secretary for their help in my research.

On a personal note, I believe that the Allen County Fair is much better than the Ohio State Fair. The Allen County Fair is much cleaner, the exhibits are nicer and the it feels safer.

Olive Chapel – The Little Church by the Side of the Road

By Beulah Graham



Photo of Olive Chapel from Amherst Road (Late 1950's, early 1960's)

Right over there, was our little church by the side of the road. The sun would come up and people would don their 'Sunday Best' clothes to gather and worship their true Lord and Saviour.

A welcome awaiting all who would enter in to worship God and Reverence His Majesty. The songs we sang would ring out and echo through the fields surrounding our little church.

Prayers lifted toward the Master from the elder gentlemen, like Claude Chapman (I loved the way he prayed), Ortho Graham, Ted Hughes, and others, proclaiming the needs of

the young, the middle aged, and the older folks. Our little church heard prayers for Salvation, prayers for soldiers of many different wars where the strapping young men would be drafted to basic training and fulfill their duty for country with uncommon valor. Prayers were sent heavenward for health, strength, and daily food

Our little church brought us Pastor Ned McKinney. He rode a motorcycle to church. He and Pat, his wife, became lifelong friends of ours.

I wonder; just how many prayers were prayed in our little church? How many wedding vows were shared and how many babies were listed on the Cradle Roll? How many tired farmers came out of the fields and dress in the Sunday Clothes for church and for meetings to keep the church growing? How many souls were saved in our little church? I don't have the answer but of the people that live in Perry Township and live the good life, then it must have been a goodly number over the years.

Our church heard much laughter and joy through the years, as the children gathered for Vacation Bible School each year ,and put on wonderful programs. The ladies of the church like Velma Hardin, Margaret Graham, Mary Helen Kennedy, Nellie Graham, Lillian Hughes, Kate Burgess, June Kerr, Helen Rumbaugh, Dana Croy, Koneta Davis, Lillie Miller, Betty Settlemire and her wonderful mother-in-law, and so many more put on "rummage sales", as they were called back then. Most of these people have passed on, but not without leaving their mark on the township, and their memories to those of us that remain.

Our little church heard the prayers of joy, tears of sorrow, and saw tears

erased . All by loving people in our little church called Olive Chapel Methodist Church.

One of my fondest memories is when we formed a large circle and held hands to sing "Are ye Able." The circle was large enough to surround all the pews. Ron Kennedy, our friend, was in church that day. It was a joy when Ron came to church. His family was happy and it was a good day. It brings tears to my eyes as I remember.

In the 1960's, Olive Chapel joined with two other churches to become Perry United Methodist Church.

More, about the local history of the churches, can be learned by visiting our website.

Uncle Eli Mechling

Article by Tom Graham

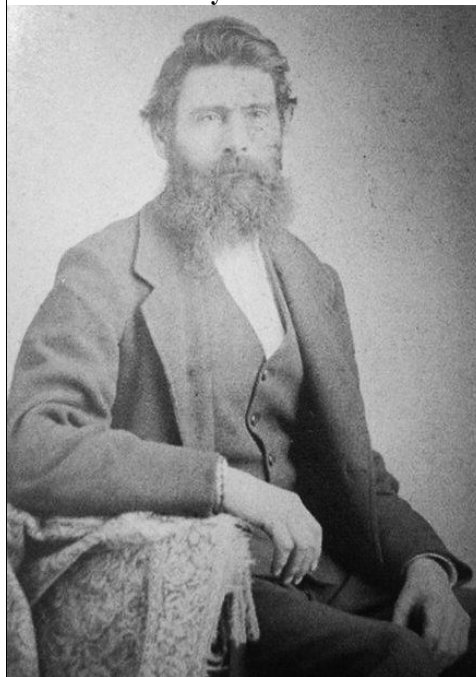


Photo courtesy of Tom Graham

Uncle Eli is all that is written on this old photo preserved by George Graham, but there is more to tell.

Eli was born, raised, lived, died and rests in peace right here in Perry Township. The land he lived and died on was originally purchased by

his great-grandfather William Mechling.

WILLIAM MECHLING'S family was a prominent family, of German origin, in Westmoreland County Pennsylvania. He and his family moved westward as the country grew. Originally settling in Hopewell Township in Perry County, Ohio, he purchased 1,168 acres in Sections 18 & 30 of what is now Perry Township, Allen County, Ohio.

William Mechling moved to Perry County, Ohio in 1812 and purchased a quarter section of his father-in-law's fourteen quarter sections. He married Miss Mechling and they had five children. In his second marriage to Catherine Rice/Ryson (Saum), eight additional children were born. Eli's father, Joshua was the eldest son of William Mechling.

Mr. Mechling gave the land to his children. He was Justice of the Peace and donated 1 acre of the land in the southeast corner of Section 18 of Perry Township, for church and school purposes.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church corner of St Johns Rd and Breese Road



Photo courtesy of Roger and Ruth Boop

This school is no longer there, but it was located at the southwest corner of St John's Rd and Breese Rd. The church was moved and is now located at the northwest corner of St Johns Rd and Fourth Street. The church was originally built just west of the Lutheran Cemetery, located at the northwest corner of St Johns Road and Breese Road.



Photo by Tom Graham for the Public Domain

JOSHUA MECHLING, Eli's Father, was born in 1809 in Westmoreland county, Pa. and came to Perry County, Ohio with William, his father.

He received a common-school education, was raised to be a farmer, married Miss. Sophia Weimer on March 27, 1834, and moved to Perry Township, Allen County, Ohio on April 17, 1836.

With hard labor, Joshua cleared the wooded land and turned it into farm land and farmed that same ground the rest of his life.

Joshua died on December 17, 1879 and was interred in the Lutheran Churchyard, which was land donated by his father to the township.

ELI MECHLING, pictured in the photo at the beginning of the article, was born in Perry Township in 1836 as the second child, but eldest son of Joshua Mechling and Sophia Weimer.

He was educated in the Perry Township School and was also raised to be a farmer.

His father left him 60 acres of land when he died. Eli later purchased an addition 40 acres of the family's original farm.

Eli married Sarah Ridenour, daughter of John Ridenour. They had two children. Louis died in 1884 and was only 17 years old. Milton (1872 – 1946) who married Ollie Hoskins (1874 – 1949) managed the farm for Eli in his older age.

Eli was a successful man and dedicated to the community. He was a successful farmer and businessman and was influential in the Local Democratic Party.

He served as a Perry Township Trustee and Clerk. On March 13, 1895 he was appointed as the Allen County Infirmary Director

He was one of the founders of the Lutheran Society and later contributed to the building of the Lutheran Church in 1856. He also served as a deacon in the church.

His farm was looked upon as a model for farming and within his farm there were nine oil wells which provided the family additional income.

Eli passed away in 1916 and was buried with Sarah, his wife, who had died in 1915. They were buried in the Lutheran Cemetery where both of their children now lay at rest.

DESCENDANTS

Mrs. Sharon Gray (Mechling), the Home Economics Teacher at Perry High School is the granddaughter of Milton Mechling and the great-granddaughter of Eli. Her father's name was also Eli. She still owns the 100 acres that was farmed by her great-grandfather.

Eli, her father, started Mechling Target Manufacturing, right here, in

Perry Township. The targets were used by the army in World War II. There will be more written about Eli and Milton in a future issue..

Register

The register is the place where birth, marriages, special anniversaries or birthday's, and memorials or obituaries can be listed.

To list information please send the information to the contact information listed on the first page.

Announcements of community interest are welcome.

Volunteer Fire Department

October 11, 2007

Rescue: 519 calls (year-to-date)
Fire: 211 calls (year-to-date)

Help Wanted

The society is interested in all old photographs including churches, schools, buildings, farm equipment, and people.. A copy or scan of the photograph or document can be made and returned or it can be copied while you wait.

Community Events

LOGO CONTEST

The society is sponsoring a contest to design a logo. The contest is open to the students, residents, and anyone with close ties to the township.

The Drawing and Design class, at Perry High School, is participating in the contest as one of their projects this year.

Qualifications:

1. The contest is open to all Perry Students, Residents, Former Residents, or those with close ties to the

township.

Rules:

1. The logo cannot infringe on other logos.
2. The society reserves the right to add or edit text associated with the logo.
3. The winner's entry becomes the sole property of The Perry Township Historical Society
4. Must pertain to the history of Perry Township.

Prizes:

1. First Place will receive a \$100.00 savings bond, and a free annual membership to the Perry Township Historical Society
2. Second Place will receive a \$50.00 savings bond, and a free annual membership to the Perry Township Historical Society
3. All Finalists will receive a free annual membership to the Perry Township Historical Society.

Deadline for entries is December 7, 2007. All Finalists entries will be judged on December 16, 2007.

Contact Tom or Michelle Graham at 419-371-8881 if you are interested in participating.

CHICKEN BBQ

The Perry United Methodist Church is holding its Annual Thanks "Giving" Community Benefit Dinner on Thursday, November 15, 2007 from 3 PM to 7 PM. Tickets must be

purchased in advance. To order tickets, please contact Tom or Michelle Graham 419-371-8881 (if busy, please leave a message). Tickets are \$6.50 for adults and \$4.50 for a child/senior. Drive-thru or dine-in.

This year the church has helped people paint, fix siding, fix plumbing, and clean up. The work the church does is for free. If the people cannot afford the materials then the church will also provide these too.

The work they have done has been for those, through no fault of their own, need some help. Many of the elderly, who are no longer able to do the work themselves or simply cannot afford it, may need help.

The proceeds from this dinner will be used to help buy supplies for these projects.

If you need help, or know of a neighbor, friend, or family needing help then please call the church.

Reader's Recipes

Mom's Original Oatmeal Cookies

- 2 Cups Bacon Grease (or Crisco)
- 2 Cups Brown Sugar
- 2 Cups White Sugar
- 4 Eggs
- 1 Small Box Old Fashioned Oats (Quick Oats can be used)
- 6 Cups Flour
- 1 Tablespoon Baking Powder
- 1 Tablespoon Baking Soda
- 1 Tablespoon Cinnamon
- 1 Tablespoon Vanilla
- 1 12 Ounce Box of Raisins

Preheat oven to 350. Place raisins in a pan and cover with water. Cook raisins on low heat until moist (soft enough to mash with a fork). Drain the water and mash raisins with a fork.

In a bowl mix all ingredient, including the mashed raisins. If using Crisco, instead of Bacon Grease, add 1 to 2 teaspoons of salt. Roll into balls, place on a cookie sheet and push down with a fork. Bake 10 to 14 minutes or until done.

Makes 88 cookies.

Bonnie Kirchner's Reduced Version

- 1 Cup Raisins
- 1 Cup Bacon Grease
- 2 Cups Brown Sugar
- 2 Eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 1/2 Cups oats
- 2 cup flour
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon Cinnamon

Thanks to Bonnie Kirchner and Loretta Davis for sharing their mother's, Mary Helen Kennedy, recipe.

Who Is This?

The picture displayed in the last issue was of Francis Mae Graham.

We know who she is. Do you? The answer will be in the next issue.



Hint: She was a Perry teacher in a one room school house.

Tribute to the Veterans



All of the veterans, pictured above, have ties to, or are from Perry Township. Veterans from Peacetime, World War 2, Korea, Vietnam, and Iraq are represented in this photograph. See the full size insert on the next page.

Top Row

Photo 1: WW2 - Paratroopers – Occupation Of Japan; Ed Conrad, Floyd Wetsel, Bob Adams.

Photo 2: WW2 – Calvary – Colorado – Bob Burgess & Speedy his mule.

Photo 3: WW2 – Occupation of Japan – Paratroopers – Photograph taken by Ed Conrad.

Second Row

Photo 1: WW2 – Harold Hardin

Photo 2: Korea – Photograph by Tom H. Graham (1932-1994) on ship to Korea. Person pictured is unknown.

Photo 3: Korea – Tom H Graham.

Third Row

Photo 1: WW2 – Joe Conrad. Photograph taken at the Conrad's home.

Photo 2: Jeep Pickup “Deuce & a half”. Persons pictured are unknown.

Photo 3: (Small Photo) - Korea - Tom H. Graham “Tommy” at basic training.

Fourth Row

Photo 1: WW2 – Charles H. Croy

Photo 2: Colorguard; Front: Floyd Phillips – Vietnam, Albert Jackson (holding U.S. Flag) – Vietnam, Jackie Jackson (holding America Legion Post 96 Flag) – Vietnam, Claude Godsey – Vietnam; Back: Capt. Belton Watkins – Korea, Greg Phillips – Korea, A.C. Fuqua – Vietnam, Robert Moreland – Vietnam, Herbie Johnson – Vietnam

Photo 3: Solders headed for Korea, photograph taken by Tom H. Graham

Last Row

Photo 1: WW2 – Charles H. Croy

Photo 2: Peacetime - Chuck Gantson

Photo 3: Iraq – Alex Jackson & Friend

Charles H Croy served from 1943 to 1946. He received 3 Bronze Stars (3 war zones) for action in Middle Eastern Africa and Poe Valley Italy. Charles says, “I am very proud to have served my country”.

To all veterans, “Thank you for your service.”

Each year we would like to display photos and tell the stories of the veterans in our community. If you are a veteran, please contact us.

Memberships

Founding Members

Charter / founding memberships have a one time donation and all founding/charter members donating \$10.00, or more, will have their name recognized and displayed in the museum (when opened). The Helping Hands will sign a piece of parchment that will be framed and placed on display.

Every individual, family, or business is welcome to be a founding member. Become a founder today!

Founding Members

Category	Donation
Helping Hands	\$1.00 to \$9.99
Bronze	\$10.00 to \$19.99
Silver	\$20.00 to \$99.99
Gold*	\$100.00 to 249.99
Platinum*	\$250.00 or more

* Gold and Platinum memberships include a 1 year regular annual membership.

Memorial contributions will also be listed as "In Memory of", or "In Honor of." We ask for a minimum contribution of \$20.00 (Silver) for memorials.

Annual & Lifetime Members

Members in good standing may vote, receive free admission to the museum (when opened), and receive a quarterly newsletter.

Annual membership is \$12.00 per year for each person or \$25.00 per household.

Lifetime memberships are \$225.00 for each person or \$300.00 per household.

For membership information contact Sue Cox at 419-648-2805 or mail in the attached form.

“We must remember that any oppression, any injustice, any hatred, is a wedge designed to attack our civilization.” President Franklin D. Roosevelt



Perry Township Historical Society

P.O. Box 2402
Cridersville, OH 45806

Please fill in your address

Name
Address1
Address2
City, State, Zip
Telephone
Email

Founding/Charter memberships are a one time donation and you will receive recognition from within our organization for your donation. This is not an annual membership or lifetime membership.

Founding Members

<i>Category</i>	<i>Donation</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>List Name(s)</i>
Helping Hands*	\$1.00 to \$9.99			
Bronze	\$10.00 to \$19.99			
Silver	\$20.00 to \$99.99			
Gold*	\$100.00 to \$249.99			
Platinum*	\$250.00 or more			
Annual Membership	\$12.00 per person each year \$25.00 per household each year			

* Gold and Platinum memberships include 1 year regular annual membership.

If multiple names/donations are going to be listed please include them on the line below.

Examples may be: "The Doe Family", "John & Jane Doe", "John Doe"

For memorials please include "In Memory of John Doe" or "In Honor of John Doe" so that we may properly recognize them.

I have included a check or money order in the amount of _____.

Please make check or money orders payable to Perry Township Historical Society. Payments can be mailed to Perry Township Historical Society, P.O. Box 2402, Cridersville, OH 45806. Donations can also be made at our meetings.