

Reflections



Celebrating 10 years as a city, former leaders reunited in October 1965 to appreciate all of the work accomplished. Walter Hunter (left), Al Foster, Robert Wessel and his wife Helen Wessel are featured here enjoying cake. Hunter and Wessel were on the original committee that initiated incorporation efforts in 1953. Hunter later served as a councilman for the Village of Fairfield in 1954 and as Councilman-At-Large in 1955. Wessel served as Mayor of the village and the city until 1957. Wessel became City Solicitor in 1966 and spent 10 years in that capacity. Wessel and his wife were also the founding members of the Friends of Elisha Morgan and saved the mansion from being demolished.



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Future meeting topics >>>

September 6 - Jack Snyder- World War II thru my eyes.

October 4 - Pete Groh - "The Early Days of the Fairfield City Schools"

November 1 Ronny Salerno - "Fading Ads of Cincinnati"

December 3 & 4 - Christmas at the Elisha Morgan Mansion

Have an idea for a meeting topic? Send your ideas to ffhistoricalsociety@gmail.com



Fairfield Historical Society



Fall 2016

The official publication of the Fairfield Historical Society

Cornerstones

Building on the Past, Present and Future of the City of Fairfield and Fairfield Township

FHS Snapshots



In 1962, this Shell station on Dixie and Magie was the only one in this immediate area. Within a few months, Dance Oil opened up at Dixie and Winton and a Sinclair station opened at Dixie and Hicks. The Ford pick-up belonged to D.R. Cassetta Exterminating Company located on Hicks Blvd. The building was remodeled in 1975 by Shell. Today, the building is home to Cardinal Motors.



Founded in 1971 in Hamilton by Jim Bonaminio, the business moved to Fairfield in 1974. The store has expanded multiple times and features over 180,000 items and over 6 1/2 acres of floor space. With its latest expansion, Jungle Jim's has added a strip mall near the main entrance and rebuilt the old Lion Country Safari Monorail from the former Wild Animal Habitat at Kings Island. The Oscar Event Center, a 15,000 square foot space, opened in 2007.

FHS Programs for Fall Feature Variety for All

World War, Fairfield Schools & Billboards Ahead

Variety is the theme for the Fairfield Historical Society's fall programs," says FHS President Debbie Pennington. "We will feature some new speakers as well as bringing back our favorites, like Pete Groh."

The fall program launches September 6 with local historian Jack Snyder who will discuss his favorite stories of World War II from his perspective in Butler County.

On October 4, the patriarch of one of the original families of Fairfield, Pete Groh, will feature life as a Fairfield Schools student starting when the district consolidated into a formal school district in 1929.

Local photographer and author Ronny Salerno will be featured on November 1 as he highlights the many photographs found in his book, "Fading Ads of Cincinnati." Ronny has assembled an interesting collection of building wall billboards still left in the Cincinnati area.

Finally, we end the year celebrating the holiday season December 3 and 4 at the Elisha Morgan Mansion featuring Christmas as it was in the 1800's.



Elisha Morgan Mansion at Gilbert Park Christmas Open House

1-4 p.m., December 3 & 4
6181 Ross Road

Fairfield Christmas ornaments available
"Fairfield Through Time" book on sale
complimentary refreshments and holiday snacks

A Fairfield tradition lives with Nativity scene lighting

By ERCELE EATON
Journal-News Writer

FAIRFIELD — Years ago there was a "Christmas in Fairfield" program to feature the lighting of the Nativity scene, Fairfield's public Christmas exhibit.

There were programs including the mayor, clergymen and choral groups of the city.

Although the programs are not continued, the exhibit itself has grown each year and has become a focal point of the city's Christmas observance. It is located on the grounds of the Municipal Building at 5350 Pleasant Ave.

And each year many people have a part in completing the lovely scene, making it available for residents, the children and visitors to enjoy.

The city's street department erects the stable and shelters for the animals and cares for the animals during the exhibit's holiday period. The lighting and music are done by the city's electrician. The original costumes were made in 1967 by several women employees of the city.

They still repair and keep the garments in good

shape. Paul R. Young of Paul R. Young Funeral Home, 3950 Pleasant Ave., provides the figures each year.

All of the figures in the display were originally sculpted in clay. A piece mold was made from the original clay figure and hot wax then poured into the plaster of paris mold. The wax is from a special formula and some tinting is used to give a more natural look.

This year the scene shows the Holy Family: the Infant Christ, the Mother and Joseph, a shepherd is in the barn attending the sheep, a life-sized angel is atop the barn and there is a shepherd boy and three wise men bringing gifts.

The Christmas in Fairfield Committee comprises Young, chairman, Esther Benzing, Paul R. Young Sr., Robert Roesch, Joe Weldon and Naomi Weldon.

"We hope," committee members say, "the Nativity scene will help parents teach their children the true meaning of 'Peace on Earth — Good Will toward Men.'"

Ercel Speaks with Ercel Eaton

Great America

Listening and watching to the cacophony of officialdom (and others) concerned with the 2016 presidential election campaign, has driven me many times to the TV to change the channel.

I've lived through many years with passage of many presidential campaigns, although I couldn't vote in several. Certainly, no matter how much I challenge my memory, I can't recall a campaign period with as much anger and vitriol, accusations, innuendoes, slurs, curses, and just plain bad manners as the campaign shenanigans going on this year.

And, amid all the rough stuff, apologies and words that hurt, were nasty things spoken against our dear country.

For those who go along with the causes to blame the country, I need to say to them. "Our Country is Still Great." Take a few steps back and look at sparkling rivers flowing under bridges and highways that move streams of all kinds of automobiles, trucks and other modes of travel; notice nice buildings for schooling our kids and churches as well as parks, and areas for lots of athletic endeavors.

Speaking of parks, dig into John Muir's books about his discoveries and his work toward establishing future places for following generations.

We could go on and on and on about the greatness of our country. Take trips slowly through great cities, small towns, large green, productive farms and hand built structures meant to speak to everything needed by a growing, green land. Hand-carved beauty lighted corners and framed fireplaces. Through our country grew the wonder of creative people who could see how to make living quarters beautiful as well as useful in making a living.

Speaking of creativity, writing and reading spewed forth as the country's members took on tasks, some of them had never tried before but felt the need to put down instructions.

Pay attention to those folks whose title carries American: watch as they help neighbor, aid the needy and go to the assistance of the weak and anyone who needs funds. Organizations began and grew, folks gathered at meetings to hear what can be done for those who are hungry. This country teems with groups who work in charitable efforts.

And so we became a nation of diversity. Among the thousands beginning this Great Nation were men and women of great spirit, people who felt the needs of others and strove to help. A wonder among them were folks who looked forward toward a glittering future. All this resulted in a country called the "Great America" we enjoy today. I remain filled with gratitude for it.

Fairfield Trivia>>>

A collection of fun facts and stories about the City of Fairfield and Fairfield Township. If you have a story or factoid that you would like to share, please send your information to ffhistoricalsociety@gmail.com.

It's fun to search the Web and find interesting stories about Fairfield and the surrounding area. But there is something about touching a book and smelling the pages or highlighting a quote by bending the corner of the page.

Do you know how many books have been written **exclusively** about Fairfield and Fairfield Township? Let's take a look...

- 1) "Fairfield, Ohio" by Esther Benzing. Published 1978 by Porter Press. Is out of print and may still be available at the library. This book is the most complete history of the Fairfield area.
- 2) "Fairfield at Creation" by Robert Wessel. Published 2002 by Writer's Club Press. Is out of print and may be available at the library. The author is the former mayor of the Village and City of Fairfield and was instrumental in forming the committee that sought annexation of the township to prevent the City of Hamilton from aggressive annexation plans.
- 3) "Fairfield, Ohio: From the Pioneers to Our Golden Years" by Jill Kinder, Dave Crouch, Jeff Kursman and Dena Morsch. Published 2005. Is out of print but available at the Community Arts Center welcome counter. An updated version of the city's history with a variety of maps, lists and facts.
- 4) "Fairfield Through Time" by Scott Fowler. Published 2016 by Arcadia Publishing. Available online and most book sellers. A look at the city using "then & now" photos to tell the story.
- 5) "The Milders Inn of Fairfield, Ohio: Gangsters, Baseball & Fried Chicken" by Terri Horsley. Published 2016 by History Press. Available online and most book sellers. Details Fairfield Township's most infamous diner with some of the most surprising dinner guests.

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Mystery Photo >>>

The ambulance inside the garage should provide a good hint. The location is on Dixie Highway where the Company 2 firehouse was built in 1962. This photo is from 1999 and shows the new firehouse still under construction in the rear of the original building.

