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Fall 2015

The official publication of the Fairfield Historical Society



Cornerstones

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



*You are cordially
invited to the
15th Annual*

*Elisha Morgan
Holiday Open
House*

**Saturday & Sunday
December 5 & 6
1:00-4:00 p.m.**

**Sponsored by
Four Seasons Garden Club
Fairfield Historical Society
Fairfield Parks & Recreation
Friends of Elisha Morgan**

our feature story >>>

Fairfield Celebrates 60!

Historical Society and City Forge Partnership

The Fairfield Historical Society and the City of Fairfield have teamed up to engage the entire community to help celebrate Fairfield's 60th anniversary of becoming a city. A variety of activities are planned and are open to the public.

The Fairfield Historical Society, under the direction of archivist Bob Pendergrass, will feature a variety of historic displays of Fairfield people and places and events in the Community Arts Center (CAC) Art Gallery October 14-21. The gallery will be open Monday thru Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Admission is free.

On Friday, October 16, Community Arts Center Theatre will host a free concert featuring Mr. Chris and the Cruisers from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. playing the hits from the 1950's and 60's. The CAC Community Room will also be themed to 1955 and offer food at 1950's prices and offer other activities.

On Tuesday, October 20 (the actual date Fairfield achieved city status), the CAC will be the site of three special events that will culminate the 60th anniversary activities.

**The City of Fairfield and
the Fairfield Historical
Society roll out the red
carpet for the
community to help
celebrate 60 years!**

The Fairfield branch of the U.S. Post Office will be participating in a first-day cover stamp cancellation ceremony. Cancellations will be made available for sale to the public after the ceremony.

Fairfield resident Scott Fowler will be hosting a book signing on his new book from Fonhill Media called "Fairfield Through Time." The book features

"then and now" photos of a variety of city landmarks.

Finally, the CAC Art Gallery will be the site of a reception featuring a special cake that will be available to the public at no charge as the city and the historical society say "thank you!"

**Invite your friends and family out the Community Arts Center located in
Village Green. Nilles and Pleasant Avenue October 14-21**

retro November 8, 1922 >>>

Emery Farmer; Fairfield Township Police Officer Killed

Fairfield Township Police Officer Emery Farmer, 26, 916 Cleveland Ave., Fairfield Township, was killed November 7, 1922 in a motorcycle accident while on patrol on the Dixie Highway just south of the Thomas Slade farm. His body was found by two unidentified men who carried Officer Farmer to the Earl Bittinger home. Officer Farmer's motorcycle was found about 25 feet away from where he was found. He was taken to Mercy Hospital where he died without regaining consciousness. It is theorized that Officer Farmer was run off the road by bootleggers since the speedometer was stuck at 58 miles per hour and his pistol was missing.

Officer Farmer had served with the agency for eight months and was survived by his wife (who was pregnant at the time) and two children. He is buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Hamilton.

Officer Farmer is the only law enforcement officer in Fairfield Township (and the City of Fairfield) to die in the line of duty.



Officer Emery Farmer

Fairfield Township Police Dept.
1922-22 (8 months)

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Mystery Photos >>>

The Mystery photo in this issue of Cornerstones should be easier to discover - it's in color! We can't provide any more hints but we can say that this building is still standing today and is a very popular spot. It has just changed a little on the outside.



Last issue's answer:
This Sinclair gas station was located on St. Rt. 4 and Symmes where the Car Connection is today. It formerly housed the Dixie Auto Top, the Hitchin' Post among other shops.

Ercel Speaks with Ercel Eaton

A Look Back at Symmes Tavern

Late August (the 28th to be certain) bathed us for several days with sparkling sunshine and midday glory.

I had listened to an almost continual lot of complaints about the rain. "What happened to summer?" they all asked, old and young, family members and strangers; But I couldn't answer, I was too busy thinking back over a rainy spring and before that, I recall a winter that left me sad.

But today is gorgeous. Someone picked me up and took me to the bank not far from my Fairfield home. What I see this bright day is a heart-lifting array of trees fully leaved, still broadcasting their beauty for all to enjoy.

Turning the corner around what used to be Symmes Tavern, my memory slipped still backward. Back to lovely memory of what that tavern used to be a real tavern with food and drink, that's what. And during my newspaper work, I met many news sources there to work and eat at the same time.

It was a favorite meeting place for residents of Butler County as well as surrounding areas.

Once I wrote about a relative of what used to be the owners of the building. That was long ago. She still lives here (on the west side of Hamilton as I recall).

"Time was when the Cincinnati Reds didn't have a place to sleep," she remembered. "They would bring sleeping bags and sleep out doors, behind our dwelling house just across Pleasant Avenue. "They said it was hot in Cincinnati."

Our family loved eating at Symmes. One daughter remembered those days in a conversation about a wonderful tree that stood for years on that corner. I loved driving by that corner every time I went in that direction. Then!!! I was driving out toward Route 4 one morning. . . . and the tree was gone!!

I wonder if anyone else nearly threw their brakes when they neared that spot with only earth showing. Well couldn't help it; the tree, simply disappeared. Still Harbin Park came into being, offering climbing places for the kids to play and one time hosted me and a granddaughter on a wonderful walk during which we climbed the roots of another huge tree.

Apparently, the rush of a small stream had dug a quietly deep distance beneath the tree's roots, which were plenty big for the two of us to tiptoe across.

I don't drive much anymore, but that doesn't keep my memories from coming to the conscious mind when I need that.

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 fowler528@gmail.com.

Jungle Jim's International Market celebrates 40 years in the City of Fairfield. Owner Jim Bonaminio purchased land at 5440 Dixie Highway from developers Jim Ivers and Bruce Cunagin and sought to rezone the land from industrial to commercial. The city was reluctant to approve the change until Esther Benzing reminded officials that they had approved an Arthur Treacher's Fish & Chips on Dixie Highway at Michael Lane. After unanimous approval, Jungle Jim's went on to become one of the "must" stops for visitors and residents alike.

The Fairfield City School District was originally formed 1929 with the opening of "Fairfield School," later known as Central Elementary. The State of Ohio decided in 1927 to force Fairfield Township to consolidate all of its 13 one-room schoolhouses into one district, with the exception of the Stockton District. The consolidated building was constructed near the "geographical" center of the township.

The Tri-County Assembly of God church on Dixie Highway is one of the largest Assembly of God churches in the U.S. The name was conceived in 1961 when the church renovated a former box factory and chose the name because of the opening of the Tri-County Mall, located in nearby Springdale. Former Fairfield Mayor Robert Wessel was a early member of the church and was instrumental in establishing the church in the city.

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Business Spotlight

Do you own a business or service and want to reach a captive audience? Maybe you just want to show your support for the Fairfield Historical Society!

Buy this space in the next issue of Cornerstones and get noticed by our local community.

Call Scott Fowler today at (937) 367-2792 for more information how you can showcase your business!



Fairfield Celebrates 60!



One of the first elected council members Walter Hunter and future city clerk and council member Algin Foster join the city's first mayor Robert Wessel and his wife Helen in celebrating the city's 10th anniversary on October 20, 1965..



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Future meeting topics >>>

September 10 - Roger Miller- Writer & Local Historian

October 8 - Scott Fowler - will debut his new book on the City of Fairfield featuring "then and now" photos.

November 12 - Pete Groh - Local Historian will speak on "The Blizzard of November 1950."

December 5 & 6 - It's Christmas at the Elisha Morgan Mansion!