

Reflections



Flag Presentation Reunion 1969-2017

Bob Glass (above left) presented a city flag last year to FHS President Debbie Pennington. In 1969, Bob (far left), along with his Dorothy, Bob Lunsford and Sterling Uhler presented the same flag to Mayor Noah Creech. Photo by Edna Antes



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Cornerstones

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

Spring 2018

Fairfield Historical Society

Vol. 5 Issue 1

FHS Snapshots



This is not the new McDonald's building on Nilles Road. This was the original building nearing completion in 1975. Friendly's restaurant is located just to the left adjacent to the original United Dairy Farmer and Fairfield Hardware building. (Photo courtesy of the Butler County Historical Society)



The old Company 1 fire station on Pleasant Avenue was the home to one of the County's Civil Defense response trucks. This photo was taken prior to 1962 - Brashear's Sohio station would be built just to the right. The Fair Plaza shopping center would be constructed in the foreground. The siren on top of the building was used to summon volunteer firefighters when a call for assistance came in.

our feature story >>>

Show n' Tell Meeting Moved To Tuesday, July 10

The most celebrated meeting of the year has been moved to Tuesday, July 10 due to the Red, White & Kaboom celebration during our regular meeting time.

The Show n' Tell meeting was initiated several years ago by former President Debbie Pennington and has become a favorite among members.

"You just don't know what you are going to find when you attend the Show n' Tell, said current President Craig Keller. "I hope many of our members share item(s) that provide a side of history that we may have otherwise not been aware of."



Nancy Hutton shared her father's memorabilia when he was Fairfield's fire chief.

thank you for your support >>>



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Meeting Topics for 2018!!!

August 7 – History of the Elisha Morgan Mansion

September 4 – Roy Miller returns with his many helicopter experiences during the Vietnam War and with many VIP's here in the states.

October 2 – City of Fairfield Engineer Ben Mann shares his discoveries and changes in the city during his tenure

November 6 – Pete Groh continues to share his 80 years experience working and living in Fairfield Township and the city

special edition >>> Area's First Mill Built in Fairfield Township

Excerpt by Jim Blount (former Journal-News Editor)

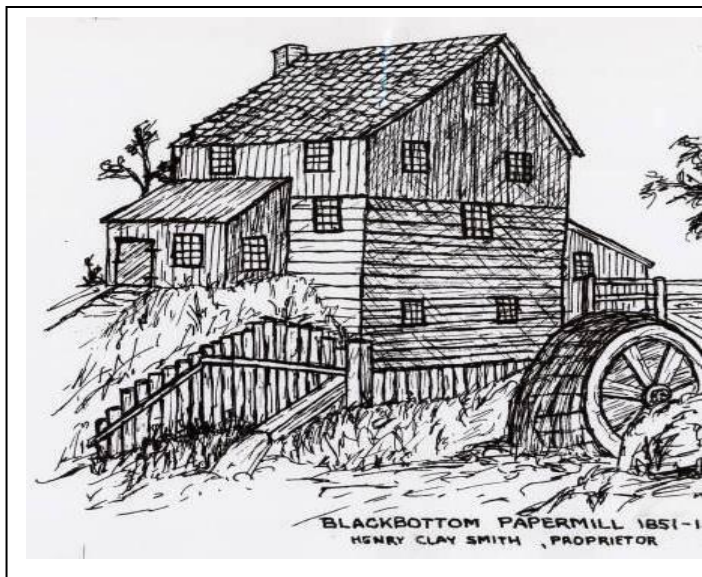
Joel Williams has a solid claim as Butler County's first real estate agent. He also may have been the area's first pioneer businessman and banker. The Pennsylvania millwright was an enterprising frontiersman whose determined quest for profit put him at odds with early leaders in Cincinnati. He was one of the original settlers in Losantiville -- Cincinnati's original name -- in December 1788.

Williams worked as an agent for John Cleves Symmes, who had purchased the land north of the Ohio River between the Little Miami and Great Miami rivers from the government in 1787. Williams also operated a tavern in Cincinnati and a ferry on the Ohio River between the foot of Main Street and Kentucky. Williams came to the area in the 1790s when it was unsettled. He explored the Great Miami River and its tributaries, searching for the most promising sites for water-powered mills.

Williams is believed to have completed the first mill in the county by 1798. It was in the southern end of Fairfield Township at the mouth of Bank Lick, where it empties into the east side of the Great Miami River. Today, it would be near River Road in the vicinity of Burns and Georgetown roads, close to the county line. The Bank Lick mill served the earliest settlers in two important ways.

First, of course, it enabled them to have their corn and grains ground without the expense and time-consuming task of building their own mills, or hauling it elsewhere,

Fair Play or Fairplay was a settlement around the intersection of sections 15 and 16 in Fairfield Twp. at a



western extension of present Nilles and River roads. It was laid out about 1850. It had been the site of mills, a ford and a ferry across the Great Miami River. At various times, it was known as Black Bottom, Hart's Block, Alston's Mill, Graham's Mill and Miami Chapel, the latter after a Methodist church was built there about 1843.

The origin of the name Fair Play, according to Thomas Stander, who is quoted by Mrs. Esther Benzing in Fairfield, Ohio, is because Stander's great-great grandfather, Stephen Harrison Elkins, a resident, "was a canal boat master and his canal boat was named Fair Play. Further, when Fair Play was laid out . . . his son was Justice of the Peace Reuben Squire Elkins." The Fairfield riverside area was called Graham's mill for a paper mill operated there sometime between 1815 and 1830 by James Graham. It is believed to have been the first paper mill in Butler County. The area was called Black Bottom for the rich farm land found there. It was called Alston's Mill when Thomas Alston operated a mill there.

Ercel Speaks

with former Journal-News Columnist Ercel Eaton

Slow Down, Take Note, Be Careful

It's not cool to say critical sentences about July. After all, it is perhaps the only month in the year that hangs its fame on a number -- "Four". But it steps on the year's stage following probably one of the most beautiful months of the year -- June.

Who can hear the words "It's the Fourth of July," without a whirling of red, white and blue filling the head with visions of celebrations off all sorts?

The Julys I recall from my childhood are always framed under white, puffy clouds drifting over clear blue skies. On the ground, green pastures with scrims of tall trees and softly curving mountains set the stage for riots of scenes, for golden rod yellows lending energy to drifts of white Queen Anne's Lace looking like a hem of a bride's gown.

This month moves with its own urgent pace, setting fruit to plumpness, bringing beans to swelling time to pick and break and eat; roses, not to be outdone by foods, flings it reds, pinks and yellows on stage.

Sometimes in July at this time of my life, I think of a van Gogh painting, its blending hues circling and falling over green grasses. One of July's big chores is fulfilling the promises of spring, bringing all the seeds and bulbs and sprouts planted reach out the glory of this month's great deeds.



Photo by George Crout

This is a month when the earth is generous, handing out midsummer nights that ease the soul, adding moonlight sweetened by cool breezes. Time this month to note the tremendous oak and maple and elm and all the other trees; to know this marvel of a world, this complex miracle of growth and beauty beyond anything we humans can create.

And how about the wildness of a July thunderstorm, sweeping across landscapes with lightning flash and thunder crack!

July doesn't ask for pay for its wondrous shows; but reminds us to slow down, take note and be grateful.



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- ★ First in school music program reporting
- ★ First in school activity photos
- ★ First in local news and commentary
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(Left) Fairfield Municipal Judge Jim Walsh stopped by the Fairfield Lions Club Geranium sale behind Brashear's Sohio at Patterson Blvd. near Pleasant Avenue in 1978. (Right) Neighborhood kids gather at Good Neighbors Park located behind the Hicks Manor Shopping Center under a shelter built by Pease Industries in 1962.



