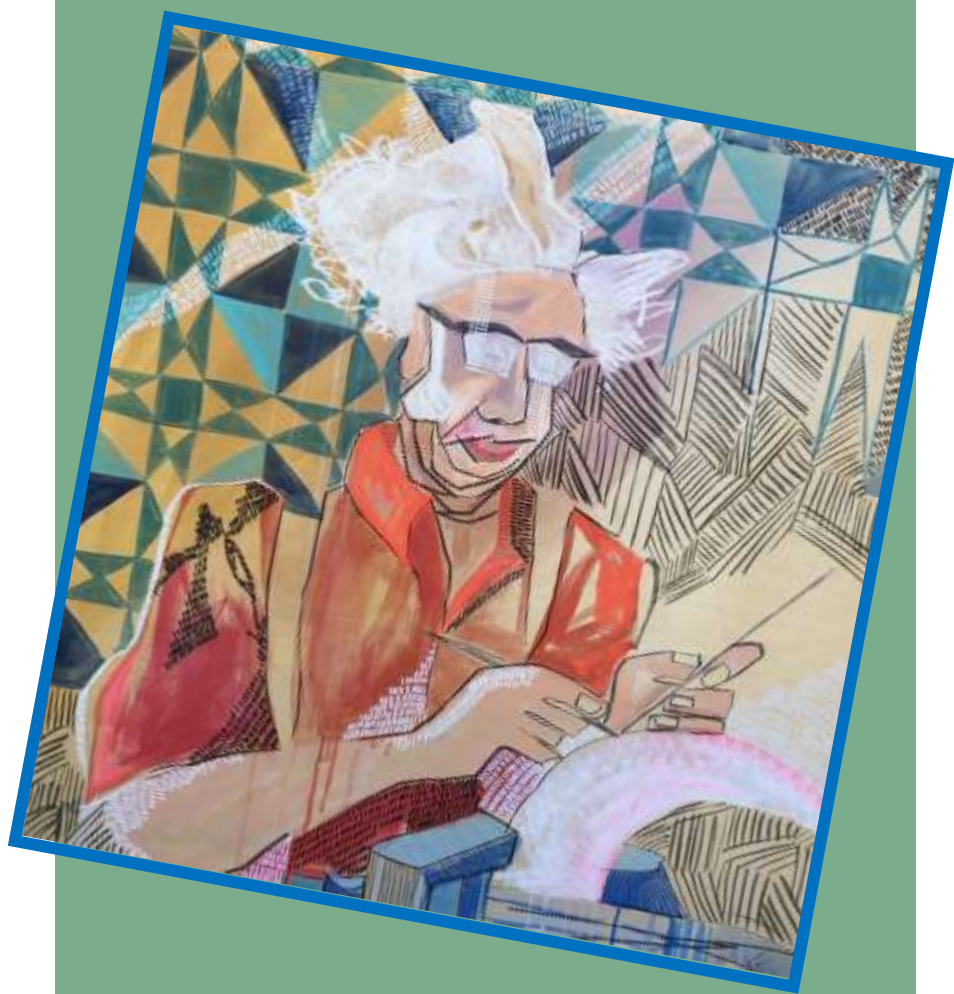


Tapestries



Of Tuscarawas County

Volume 1 2016

Tapestries of Tuscarawas County

Volume 1: Autumn 2016

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“Mooney Warther and Ohio Star Patch”

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Editor's Note

Working at the Dover Public Library, I get to hear a lot of stories. Probably not as many as a neighborhood bartender, but I hear my share. I studied archival practice in library school, and I was enraptured by the idea of preserving oral history, of recording memories of people and providing depth and context to the facts. The words of living people can tell us much more about the fine details of life than reading history books of the regular variety can.

I am pleased and gratified to present this book, a collection of remembered stories in the lives of our friends and neighbors. It has been a wonderful journey, collecting and reading all of the stories that were submitted for this book. Some made me laugh, some made me want to cry, but all of them struck me with their sincerity. I was touched at what some people wanted to share, and I was very glad I did not have to

judge the contest for the “best” entry. For each and every one of these stories came from the heart and reached out with kindness. That to me is the best kind of material to weave into a tapestry of Tuscarawas County, and it is something we can all agree helps make our community so beloved.

So I give to you Tapestries of Tuscarawas County, the first of what I hope are many volumes to come. Many thanks to everyone who contributed a piece to the final work. This is our story, and no one can tell it better!

Caught Up in Summer

By Janet Ladrach

originally published in *Every River on Earth: writing from Appalachian Ohio* edited by Neil Carpathios, 2015 Ohio University Press

I'm sitting in the lap
of mother earth.
My daughter on the far
side of the country
looks for the Beats
of City Lights.
My husband, on the upside
of a hill, bales hay,
trying to outrace the storm.

Killing time, I root around
near the relics
of an old homestead.
I find plate shards:
white, trimmed in pale blue.
I pick up pieces of a crock
and wonder if the past
residents were pestered
by the same flies.

I feel these folks sitting here
shelling peas, peeling apples,
looking across the field of grass,
protected from wind and sun.

Me? I'm hoping to stay out long enough
to get hit by lightning.

86 Years of Precious Memories in Dover, Ohio!!

By Ruth Geiser Schmidt

Herbert Hoover was our 31st President of the United States when March 1, 1930, in the upstairs bedroom of a little rented house on East 13th Street, Dover, Ohio, a little girl was born - that would be me!

Dover was not a new town for my family. My grandfather, Fred Pfeiffer, immigrated from Switzerland as a young man, and, still a bachelor, had a **tavern at 237 East Front Street (now Sammy Sue's BBQ)**. In July 1900, when he heard that a Swiss girl was coming by train to the railroad station at the foot of Front Street, he went to meet her... In 1902 he married that girl, my grandmother: Anna Stegmann, one of four sisters arriving in America between 1898 and 1902. Their union produced three girls: Lydia, Bertha (Bertie), and Florence, my mother being the middle child. Fritz was very proud of his little girls and used to stand them up on a table to sing for their customers. Sadly, in 1915, he died. He was the last one taken to Maple Grove Cemetery in a horse drawn hearse (after that cars were used). Several years later my grandmother married Simon Kappeler, a widower and friend of the family and they had two children: Robert Kappeler and Jeanne Kappeler (Ikes).

My father, Ernest Geiser, arrived in Dover in 1922 from Switzerland after being advised by an uncle that he could learn so much more about cabinet mak-

ing in this country. When he first arrived in Dover, **he and Mooney Warther “roomed” together and became good friends.** My father intended to stay in America two years, but soon met my mother and his **plans changed...**

My mother, Bertha Pfeiffer, born 1905, lived upstairs of the tavern and walked up Cherry Alley to attend Dover School (old 5th street wing). In high **school she helped with creating their yearbook: “The Crimson and Grey” of Roosevelt High School.** She graduated in 1923 (Superintendent was Mr. S.O. Mase and high school Principal Mr. E.W. Blackstone), and **immediately began working in “Payroll” at American Sheet and Tin Plate Company on Tuscarawas Avenue.** She and her friends heard of a **“Swiss boy”** who recently came to the area, and she was anxious to meet him. The rest is history!

My parents married by the bay window in her **parent’s home on Slingluff Avenue, on May 18, 1929.** They honeymooned in Cleveland where his wallet **was “pickpocketed”, and moved into the house on 13th Street** for several years until they found a bigger home to rent at 416 East Second Street (alley between Front and Second Street). I loved my new friends, Charlotte Stutz (Whetstone) and Katie Lieser (Beasley) and we three started 1st grade at the Second Street School, walking together and laughing all the way! How much fun we had playing marbles or softball during recess before the school bell sent us back inside the building. Every year, each class assembled on the

front steps for our class photo - girls in their best dresses and boys wearing their finest corduroy knickers.

Soon, three more Geiser brothers came to Dover and opened a cabinet shop, called **“Geiser Brothers Wood Works,”** in Cherry Alley, between Second and Third Street. When World War II was declared, materials became difficult to obtain, the shop was closed, and the brothers found employment elsewhere. My father worked for Marsh Lumber Company, nailing landing barges together until his arms were black and blue! After the war was over, he was laid off.

After renting for 8 years, my parents could finally afford to build their own home at 524 East 5th Street, on the corner of 5th and Lincoln Avenue. My father designed the home himself, making each room out of a different wood with matching furniture whenever feasible. We moved in November, 1940, when I was 10 years old; I remember photos and an **article in the “Daily Reporter” newspaper** describing some of the features, including the first gas furnace in the area. Soon I had new friends which were easily summoned by simply yelling their name by the back screen door - always open as no one had air conditioning in their homes. I loved living close to Crater Stadium; it was so exciting to see the bright lights and hear the screaming of Dover fans during football games. I still remember when the biggest rivalry game, Dover versus Phila, was actually played in the afternoon of Thanksgiving day.

Who in Dover does not remember Goshen Dairy?!? Many times, in the 1930s, my parents went to the Second Street store, ordered one 5 cent cone for **me, saying they didn't like ice cream that well** (years later I realized that they did not have the extra money to spend). The ice cream was not shaped in a round scoop in the cone like now, but in a high triangular **shape (hard to explain). They also sold "Happy Bars,"** a square of vanilla ice cream, covered with chocolate and placed in a small paper bag. The exciting part of these is if you took the first bite and the ice cream was strawberry, you received another free one, right there on the spot!

In 1942 I began the seventh grade: SO exciting to attend the big school at 520 North Walnut Street! My only mode of transportation was walking (only kids from the country rode busses). Joanne Koledin (Jackson) and I walked together each day, even coming home for lunch and back with only about 20 minutes to eat. I can still remember how cold and red our legs were during the wintertime as NO slacks were allowed for girls! The only time I was permitted to stay at school for lunch was when I presented a note written by my mother stating she would not be home that day. This only happened several times during my 6 years there, but I can still remember how exciting it was to stand in the cafeteria line for my hamburger and french fries plus...sometimes a noon **day movie! We NEVER heard of a "snow day!"**

Starting in 1946, during summer vacations, I worked as a nurse aide at Union Hospital. I can still remember walking up the front steps of the big building on Iron Avenue to apply for the job. I loved working on the maternity floor with Helen Bruun as my supervisor.

Driver Education classes were unheard of. My father took his Oldsmobile and me to Crater Stadium **where I learned to “shift” on the dirt roads. My first “reverse,” almost took us onto the tennis courts there!** To get my license, at age 16, my mother drove me to the New Phila Police Station where a man entered our car and he just rode and watched while I drove around **Phila streets. I didn’t even need to park the vehicle,** and...I passed!

After the War, in 1946, my mother’s half-brother, Robert Kappeler, returned from the service and he and my father opened a larger cabinet shop at 524 East Seventh Street, Dover. Soon they were once more building kitchen and bathroom cabinets along with many other pieces of furniture. The town welcomed **“Geiser & Kappeler - Craftsmen in Wood.”** Many churches in Dover and throughout the area had new Chancel furniture made there.

Finances improved in the 1940s, and many **times our family enjoyed dinner at Cotterman’s Restaurant** after church. No free refills on coffee at that time so my father would ask for his second cup that was included in my meal. We bought a pack of assort-

ed flavor Life Savers when finished, and then took a leisurely drive around the countryside before returning home where my parents immediately took a nap! (At that time, I never could understand why they would do that, but, now, I do the same thing!)

Many activities were offered at Dover High School - **I enjoyed “Morning Chorus” when 3 mornings every week approximately 400 students enjoyed singing together in the auditorium before classes. Mr. L.H. Alexander was in charge of all music and directed the band, orchestra, girls’ chorus and choir!** During my senior year he wrote the words and music for the Dover High School Alma Mater, and teacher Frank Caputo composed the Dover High Victory March, both of which are sung today at school events. **I joined “Y Teens,” French Club, and worked on our 1948 yearbook: “Swirl.”**

1948...twelve years of Dover schooling behind me and time to celebrate! Sunday, May 30, our class assembled in the auditorium for the Baccalaureate Service as Reverend Reinhard Krause gave the sermon: **“Victim or Victor?” Monday, June 1, 1948, 136** seniors gathered with caps and gowns for the 69th commencement program at 8:15 pm in the same location. Our class colors were blue and white, and our **class motto was: “Work together to be friends forever!”** (I still meet with my local high school classmates for a monthly luncheon where we “catch up” on our lives and families).

It's hard to believe that pizza was not a part of our life as it remained unknown in the U.S. even into the 1940s! It wasn't until the end of World War II that its popularity began to increase and in 1953 Mary Zifer of Dover enclosed her porch area and "Mary Zifer's Pizza Shop" on Tuscarawas Avenue was in business out of her house and kitchen oven. Other restaurants I remember: "Ren's Restaurant," 415 South Broad St for delicious spaghetti, Helmkamps's Restaurant, 232 N. Tuscarawas Avenue, Cornett's Diner. The opening of our first "drive-in," Bob Shryock's "KWIK SHAKE INN," 804 Boulevard at Bellevue Avenue, was very exciting for all in 1956.

After graduation I attended nursing school, later married, had four children (all graduated from Dover High School: 1971, 1974, 1975, 1978), seven grandchildren (four graduated from Dover: two in 2000, 2002, 2003), retired, and now am enjoying the activities of nine great-grandchildren (four attend Dover schools).

Dover has been a wonderful place to live and work; my father operated a successful business for 22 years, having about 20 employees, retiring in 1968. I worked part time at Union Hospital for about 20 years, retiring in 1992.

Some of this information may not be 100% accurate as now my biggest problem is: "Too Many Birthdays!" At any rate, I consider it a great privilege to call Dover, Ohio my home!!!

I'm from Mineral City

By Tessa Compton

Two stoplights and a bakery - this is how I describe Mineral City to people who ask me where I am from. Non-locals have never heard of it and believe Ohio is little more than a sea of corn stalks and mid-western sweat. The locals, the ones with Tuscarawas **County grit in their teeth, reply with, "Oh, you're from Miserable City."** Some folks see nothing but overgrown lawns and refrigerators left to rot on porches. They see drooping houses and rusty neons **welcoming you inside one of the town's two bars.** Miserable City, I say with, I admit, a forced chuckle. I understand the joke. But I never have been able to **find truth in it, at least not standing where I'm from.**

I never knew another home besides Old Man **Casey's house atop of Hill Street, up behind the elementary school.** The house was dilapidated, not without possibility or character, when my parents bought it. This was the place my mother instinctively knew would be a paradise for raising her two girls. Our cottage was surrounded by aged, thick and twisting trees shielding us from the summer sun. Among these trees, I ran barefoot.

When my sister left me alone and played with the neighbor boy (no baby siblings allowed), I found solace by my favorite tree at the edge of the yard, the one with the rope hanging from it. This rope hung from the branch originally as a tire swing and had

long gone lost its tire. What was left was a knot big enough to hold the likes of me, a girl who has always been two sizes too short. I would push off the ground, and hang onto the rope so tight my knuckles would turn white. All the while, as I would swing out toward the dried up corn field, I would sing. I mean, I would belt out my own original opera tunes. I sang each note until my lungs must have looked like prunes.

The neighbors thought I lacked talent. At least this felt true when one of the teenage girls stuck her head out the window and hollered for me to shut up. Just as soon as she slammed her window shut did my mother throw the back door open. She commanded me to keep singing as loud and as long as I please. In **Mineral City, where I'm from, I discovered what it** means to have a voice, even if it was a bit off-beat.

When we were brave enough to wander from the boundaries of our own yard, out beyond the weeds, over to the other side of the hill, we almost always found adventure. My yard ran right into the Mineral City Cemetery. We explored its pebbled roads up and around and over the silent stones engraved with the names of those who paved the way for us. We mispronounced their names, ran our fingers through the grooves of the numbers noting the dates. Early 1800s, 1900s, some stones imprinted with German, others washed clean by wind and rain.

The day Beverly and I found a sunken stone, its

very top almost hidden by the grass, nearly forgotten, we knew we had discovered our destinies. We would uncover this mythical stone and become famous! We went to digging with nothing but our fingers and a plastic shovel retrieved from my sandbox. Maybe twelve inches into the dirt we added water, thinking this would soften the hard ground. We had already dug deep enough to make out the names engraved into the stone and the dates, to honor their memory with our own. But, what may have lied beneath is what stopped us. What if we dug too deep and touched the tops of the coffins? What would we do then? Covered in mud, we left the shovel behind and ran back to the **safety of the yard. In Mineral City, where I'm from, I learned what it means to dig deep, and when it's best to keep things shallow.**

On Sundays, old folks, young folks, rich folks, and poor folks all gathered into the yellow brick Methodist church on the corner of Davis Street to sing hymns and go over the prayer list. This is where **I met John “Johnny” Hankison. He was eighty-three** years old, sassy and independent.

He drove a beat up old pickup truck when he **went about visiting the “old timers,” the ones less fortunate** to be one or two years older than himself. He asked me if my family would like to sit with him in church. I, of course, being a bit shy about strangers at the age of 16, declined. Before the end of the service my conscious caught up with me. I sat down next to him with my family following behind for the next six

or seven Sundays, sitting in silence. “I’ve been to Europe,” is what Johnny told me to break the ice. I decided then we could be friends.

When he went to live in a nursing home, I popped in regularly for a visit and an episode of *Walker, Texas Ranger*. He always spoiled the intense scenes, making sure I was warned of their endings. Johnny had lived in Mineral City his whole life, gave away his house for free when he no longer needed it, and made it his purpose to make sure you knew you had **worth. In Mineral City, where I’m from, I learned** how to turn a speck on the map into a home.

Miserable City, they say. I nod with a forced chuckle. Mineral City, I tell them, is two stoplights **and a bakery. Mineral City is where I’m from.**

From Puerto Rico to Tuscarawas County

By Esteisie Gonzalez de Jesús *(aided by Cheri Hutson, tutor)*

I am from Puerto Rico. I am 13 years old. My mom brought me and my sister to the United States for a better life. My aunt lived in New Philadelphia, so we had a place to stay. We stayed with her for a few days, then we moved to an apartment. My sister and I registered for school in New Philadelphia. I went to West Elementary, and my sister went to the Middle School.

School was a little difficult. I had to learn English because I only spoke Spanish. I felt lonely and sad because I had no friends and I was the only one in **my class who didn't speak any English. There were** other Latinos, but they had been there longer than me and the ones in my class all knew some English. My grades were low, and it was hard to keep up. Sometimes it even made me cry.

School hasn't been the only difficulty. Unfortunately, sometimes we have to deal with prejudice. For example, at times when my mom and I go to Walmart or some place and we speak in Spanish, people stare at us like we are monsters. I try to be nice instead of becoming angry. But even if people are sometimes mean, I still like living in New Philadelphia.

When I was in 2nd grade I had a tutor who helped me to learn English. Her name was Mrs. Co-

lón. I will never forget her. After she left the school **and moved away she sent me a note saying, “Never forget your Spanish and try to learn English because knowing two languages is better than knowing one.”** I took her words to heart. Since then, I have read more books in English. I also still read in Spanish because **I don’t want to forget it.**

Things were hard to get used to when we first came here. Things are a little different in Puerto Rico than they are here in the U.S. For instance, school is **n’t exactly the same. In Puerto Rico, schools were a** lot less structured. At the schools here in Tuscarawas County, if the teacher is absent we have a substitute. **In Puerto Rico, if the teacher didn’t come, we just** went home. In grade school there was no art or music, **just gym, and the teacher didn’t watch us as closely as** the teachers do here, so there were plenty of fights **and lots of bad words that were said. We also didn’t** have such strict security. People could enter the **school easily, though I can’t remember having any re-** al problems with strangers or school-shootings or things like that.

At my school in Puerto Rico we had to keep our stuff in our backpacks. Here, we have lockers. We also have more books and we have computers. We also have a school library which I enjoy.

Recess was different, too. We had a playground, but no playground equipment like swing sets or slides or monkey bars. Also if it rained, we still had

to stay outside. I remember there was a woman outside who sold candy that we would buy from her. We **don't have that here.**

Here I live in New Philadelphia, in town, but in Puerto Rico I lived in a small village. My *abuelo* (grandpa) lived close by on a *finca* (which is basically a farm). He grew tomatoes, oranges, plantains, and a fruit we call *La corazón* (heart) because it looks almost exactly like a human heart. We also grew papayas, **which I didn't like.** My *papi* (dad) made me eat *pastelas* (**which resemble Mexican tamales**). I didn't like them, either. Tortillas in Puerto Rico are a little different than Mexican tortillas, which are very flat. Puerto Rican tortillas are made with eggs, and so they are thicker (depending on how many eggs you use). Another type of food that we ate in Puerto Rico was a macaroni-type of dish called *condito*.

Besides the vegetables that my grandpa grew on the finca, he also raised chickens, pigs, and bunnies. We had dogs there, too. My *abuela* (grandma) liked to plant flowers. She had a very nice garden. She planted beautiful orchids, which I never see in gardens in Tuscarawas County.

Another thing I would do in Puerto Rico that I **don't do here is to go with my dad and my sisters to** the *playa* (beach) where we would hunt for *caracoles* (sea shells).

I miss all that, but now I feel that Tuscarawas

County is my home. There are a lot of good things here that I like. Here, we can wear what we want to in school. I can wear the clothes, jewelry and shoes that reflect my personality. At the school we get a lot of help. People are nice and help us if we are in need. There is better help for people who have disabilities, like my sister. I have a tutor who helps me once a week outside of school hours. We study, but we also have fun together. I enjoy it when we go to either the New Philadelphia or Dover Library. Both libraries are nice, and some of the staff even know my name because they are becoming familiar with me.

New Philadelphia Schools have some after school programs available for students. One of the many activities available is dance school. I love to dance and I like going to the classes. There are other activities I like to do outside of school, like bike-riding, and I've gone skating at the Skate Place.

I also enjoy going to the parks here. There are lots of things at the park like swimming and swings and rides. I mentioned some of our Puerto Rican food, but I do like American food. Pizza is one of my favorites, and my favorite pizza is Little Caesar's. I like McDonald's, too.

Another thing that is different here is the snow. In Puerto Rico we didn't have snow. It was usually sunny and warm. I like snow!

I go to a Latino church in New Philadelphia.

There are several Latino churches in the area. It's nice to be able to have the freedom to have our own churches where we can speak our own language.

I enjoy my life here. I've made several friends since I've moved here. There are lots of things to do, and Tuscarawas County rocks!

Untitled

By Dick Ladrach

Tuscarawas County is dotted with hundreds of very old abandoned farmsteads. Most were built in the early 1800s and are now part of larger farms. There are now just a few foundations left, marked usually by the outline of one room cabins, small barns, root cellars and occasionally a stone cistern.

There is one of these a few hundred feet from our present house. When I was young the cabin still stood. Around it there were daffodils, a large bleeding heart, butternut and walnut trees. Of special note was a very large mulberry tree.

One evening in the early 1970s I had walked up to this part of our farm. As I got closer to this spot I noticed something strange about the old mulberry tree. There seemed to be a number of large dark lumps on the branches and on the sides of the trunk. As I got closer I realized that the tree was literally full of raccoons. Some seemed to be sleeping. Some just stared into the distance, some studied me intently, a few fell from the tree and just laid on the ground, but none attempted to escape.

I had never seen anything like this from raccoons. Roughly a hundred clung to the tree and littered the ground around it. Likely every raccoon from some distance had converged on this tree. It finally dawned on me that the mulberries were

overripe. The aroma of the fermented fruit had drawn them to this spot and they were drunk.

I watched for a while and chuckled quietly to myself. It started getting toward dusk, and, as I walked toward home, I had to wonder how these party animals would feel in the morning.

Working at Historic Zoar Village; or The Trials & Tribulations of a Tour Guide

By Steve Shonk

My association with Zoar began in my teens, when I had to put together a family tree for some class in high school. That was when I learned that part of **my mother's side of the family were among the original German Separatists who settled at Zoar in 1817;** my great-great-great-great grandmother, Christina [Holderieth] Petermann, was the first child born at **Zoar. For some time after that it was a “passing/peripheral” interest, but didn't become a primary one** until many years later, when I had an opportunity to **volunteer in the ZCA's Town Hall Museum. When a position for “site interpreter” (tour guide) became** available, I applied for it and was hired.

As a kid I had always been terrified of any kind of public speaking, and was a bit (ok, a lot) unsure at first why I was applying for a job as a tour guide. But **it seemed to be different when it's a subject you love,** are familiar with, and enjoy passing on to others. Even if some of them are likely to remember the information for only two or three days. But others came armed with paper and pens, and took lots of notes and asked lots of questions. Also, for several years, a group of **“top brass” from the Alcoa Co. in Pittsburgh came** over each year and took the tour. They were especially interested in the communal aspect of the village: how everybody managed to work together, how problems were dealt with, and how Bimeler was able to hold

everything in place. I was assigned that tour every year (usually on some cold, sleety/rainy early spring morning). My approach to conducting a tour (which I learned from my mentor Helen [Kappel] Laukhuf): tell it like it is, without going too far one way or the other. Most visitors asked general questions anyway **and didn't need specifics. As tour guides, we all had** the same basic information but each of us told it in different ways. We often had a number of stories at the end of the day and compared notes about **interesting and unusual questions:** “Has anybody died in this house?” (probably); “Is that building haunted?” (maybe); “Where are the Zoarites now?” (their descendants are all over the country); “What kind of cows did they have?” (around 100+ Durham, Devonshire, & Dexter), and so on. Or we talked about things that happened, such as the little 3-4 year old boy who “had to go” and was told “as soon as we leave here” (we were in the tin shop and there were new restrooms nearby). Upon exiting the building he immediately planted himself on the top step, and did what he needed to do - in front of mom, traffic on SR 212, and everybody on the tour (who all thought it was hilarious - mom? Not so much). There were other incidents over the years: minor injuries, bee stings, tours that went out rain or shine (or went out shine and came back soaked) and of course, the occasional visitor who seemed to think he or she was the tour guide, answering all questions before the real tour guide had a chance to respond. We occasionally talked (somewhat jokingly) about compiling a book of the experiences and were even kicking around a title,

“The Trials and Tribulations of a Zoar Tour Guide.”

The book never materialized, but there was one highlight event which was talked about for a long time afterward.

It was a tour I conducted, a group of perhaps 10-15 people, among whom was an older lady who sort of **kept to herself, wasn't very talkative, and didn't ask** any questions. We ended the tour that day on the big Number One House on Main Street, which is mostly furnished with Zoar-made furniture, beautifully designed coverlets, and many other items contemporary to the time period of the original Zoarites. At this point people often marveled at the self-reliance of the Zoarites to be able to make most of their own products, food, clothing, etc. Well, this lady walked all over the house, taking it all in. Right before she walked out she uttered the longest sentence she spoke **that whole day: “Those people certainly liked antiques, didn't they?”** What could one say to that? **All I could muster was “Yeah, I guess so.”** To this day I have no idea who she was or where she came from, but, lady, thanks for making the most memorable quote of the year!

Although Ohio History Connection is not currently involved with staffing at Zoar, the organization and the state still retain ownership of the museum buildings and contents and are involved in periodic maintenance. A number of renovation projects are currently underway as of this writing. Also the usual events are still held at Zoar: Harvest Festival

(formerly called Separatist Days in observance of the Separatists arrival in the US in August 1817), and Christmas in Zoar that alternates years with a September Civil War reenactment event. There is also an annual Descendants Day gathering (currently held as part of the Harvest Festival) which may be especially meaningful in 2017 as Zoar observes the 200th anniversary of its founding. So the next time you visit Zoar, just keep in mind how much those people loved **antiques...**



Inside the Zoar Greenhouse
by Jane Gartrell



The Zoar Wetlands arboretum

Zoar, Ohio

By Jane Gartrell



Cow on the Wall

By Janet Ladrach

This was painted in 2002. I wanted to be able to sit at the kitchen table and imagine a cow coming into the kitchen. I spent lots of time running out to look at the eyes of the calves, so that I didn't get a cartoon looking cow. The background is what a person would see if there were a clear shot to the pasture across the road.



The J.E. Reeves Museum

Dover, Ohio

By Jane Gartrell



The Lake Tuscora Park
New Philadelphia, Ohio
By Jane Gartrell

Tuscora Park Fair

By Ella Munholand

I was nine when me and my family drove to the Tuscora Park. For there was a fair being held. It was extraordinary! There was a magician performing next to the entrance that held a heavy metal barrel on his forehead with fire inside of it. He also did some fascinating tricks. Then, me and my family were walking on the stone pathway that led to the ticket booth, but before we reached the booth I stopped to scrutinize the hand made wooden puppets that were being displayed. There was a skunk, dog, clown, cat, horse, and many other creatures. We kept walking and I spotted some beautiful, sleek, fuzzy toy cats. I stopped to **touch a few but mom suggested we'd better reach the ticket booth before the line becomes too long.**

Finally we approached the white, wooden ticket booth. Mom bought 2 tickets and I started to sprint to the roller coaster when mom said for me to wait for the rest of the family. When we reached the roller **coaster I measured myself even though I know I'm** bigger than the measuring board that was near the roller coaster; I did it for fun. As I sat down in the red roller coaster car, I looked back and saw my family waving to me. All of a sudden, I felt the adrenaline in my body, the wind in my face, and my body moving up and down, up and down. When the ride was over I **was disappointed, but knew the fun wasn't over. Next** we headed to the swings. Me and my brother gave the ticket man our ticket, and strapped ourselves in the

seat buckles, and the swings started to move. Sadly, in a couple of minutes the ride was over. Next, we walked over to the little race cars. That was for my sister since she was too small to ride any of the other rides. After that was over, we headed over to pick up a snow cone. While I was drinking the juice from the bottom of the paper cup, mom said we must be going. So we threw away our paper snow cone holders and started walking back down the stone pathway to our car. I hopped in, took one last look, and then left to go home.

Tuscora Park is a perfect place to go if you're looking for a place to spend time with your family. It's an amazing park to visit, and dreams really can come true. If you really believe!

The Hitchhikers

By Karen Stalcup

It was a beautiful spring day when my husband, Butch, restocked the barnyard with a delivery of chickens. As daylight faded, the new stock looked for a safe place to roost for the night so as not to be eaten by fox or coyotes.

The next day, Butch left in his rig for a blast hole drilling job before daylight. As he reached his job **destination he pulled into the McDonald's to fill his** thermos with coffee. As he exited his cab he heard a **“cluck, cluck, cluck” sound. “Oh no!” he exclaimed.** He knew immediately that he had some hitchhikers on his rig. Six hens had their talons on the bars. They had held on for an hour ride down the interstate. No wonder people were staring up to his cab as they passed him.

Reaching the job site he spotted an old fuel tank **truck. The chickens with only a few “ruffled feathers”** were quickly transferred to the cab of the tank truck. As Butch drilled his blast holes the chickens bounced around from the seatback to the dashboard, keeping their eyes on his drilling operation.

When the day's drilling had ended, the chickens were transferred to the rear operator's cab at back of his rig for a “less air conditioned” ride back home to the barnyard.

Untitled

By James A. Range

My adult children remain skeptical of the veracity of the following stories from my childhood in Dover.

Playing football for Coach Art Teynor at Dover **St. Joseph High School in the 1960's was not for the faint of heart!** Lacking adequate locker room facilities at the school, St. Joe rented the small locker rooms at the rear of Memorial Hall on Wooster Avenue. Our practice field, less-than-affectionately named **"the Ditch,"** was located at the bottom of the hill behind **Warther's Museum off the very end of West Eighth Street.** In an effort to start practices on time, and probably more as a deterrent to keep energetic high school boys out of trouble, Coach Teynor required all players to jog the seven blocks from Memorial Hall to the Ditch. This was done in full pads, including helmets! The route was etched in stone, there were to be no deviations - from Memorial Hall down the alley to Walnut Street, north on Walnut to Seventh Street, west on Seventh across Tuscarawas Avenue and on down the hill to the railroad tracks where the Ditch was located. The prescribed route allowed Coach Teynor and assistant coaches to keep tabs on our jogging. Conversely, at the conclusion of each practice, no matter how long, hot, or difficult, we were to jog back to Memorial Hall. St Joe had several outstanding teams in those years. Perhaps the extra conditioning helped!

Jogging to and from practice was child's play

compared to the “no water” rule. The prevalent thinking at the time among athletic trainers was water caused cramping during strenuous activity. Thus, the recommendation was water should not be consumed during practices, particularly if the weather was hot. **As a result, the players’ last mouthful of water before** each workout was obtained at Memorial Hall. No water was permitted until the refreshing water fountain stop at the same location following practice. To circumvent the rule, some players sliced oranges or apples and hid them inside arm pads to suck out some **liquid during the dreaded summertime “two-a-day”** practices. Others gulped water from a garden hose at the home of a player enroute back to Memorial Hall **after Coach Teynor’s truck passed by. Later in the** fall, players tossed helmets into pear trees on Seventh Street to obtain a piece of that fruit and its wonderful moisture!

Farther back in my childhood, I recall taking swimming lessons taught by Tom Patton at the old YMCA on Tuscarawas Avenue in Dover. The class for six and seven-year-old boys just learning to swim **was designated “Minnows.” In that class, we swam** for the entire class period naked as jay-birds. No swim trunks, no T-shirts - **nothing! I don’t ever recall any-**one objecting. It was just how the class was conducted, and we thought nothing of it! There was always the quick jump into the water when the door to the office area opened. We little boys dove for the cover of the pool on the presumption that the invader might be a female who might cause us some embarrassment!

Coach Milburn: My Personal Hero

By Thomas Bitticker

A hero is an individual who lives their entire life by a personal standard that sets them apart from the status quo. Almost invariably, they will have lofty goals and live a life with high ideals and extreme passion. Heroes possess the rare traits of compassion, determination, courage and leadership along with the ability to inspire the same within others.

My personal hero is Dave Milburn, a man who possessed all of these traits. He was an educator and coached track and field at New Philadelphia High School from 1970 until his death in 1975. I had the honor of being a member of his track and field team from 1970 through 1973.

Coach Milburn's achievements went far beyond being a successful track coach. He also left a legacy that lives within the athletes, students, and every person that was within his midst. His legacy is an inspirational quality that becomes evident upon meeting anyone who was fortunate enough to be touched by his aura. In fact, a common bond develops upon meeting other former athletes of Coach Milburn. There were many because he held coaching positions at Clyde and Newcomerstown previous to his tenure at New Philadelphia, Ohio. The response among these former athletes is almost universal when describing him, always a positive comment such as "fantastic" or "a great coach and motivator," to name just a few. The

recollections of his greatness transcend time, since most people that personally knew Coach Milburn must recall their encounters previous to his passing thirty-four years ago.

His first display of compassion toward me occurred in the autumn of 1969 during a physical education class at the high school gymnasium in New Philadelphia where he was teaching. He approached me after observing a group of students whom I was among that were performing somersaults and hand-stands. **His first comment to me was, “Ace, you do that stuff pretty well, how would you like to come out for the track team and try pole vaulting?”**

I replied, **“I have been on the track team since the seventh grade and I tried pole vaulting.”** I promised him that I would go out for the track team again, which met with his approval, before rejoining the group.

Coach Milburn started his conditioning for track and field on the first day of our return from Christmas vacation. I learned of his patience from the onset of these practices. Early in the conditioning segment of his program, I was having some difficulty keeping up with the senior high school team members. As a freshman who was quite small compared to the other athletes, I thought that I must be in the wrong place, but Coach Milburn encouraged me to keep striving and suggested that I start lifting weights to increase my strength.

During the early years of his coaching at New Philadelphia, funds were rather limited, especially for the junior high track program. The poles used by the junior high school pole vaulters were derived from 3 different sources: you could purchase a fiberglass pole for around 60 dollars, or you waited for a senior high vaulter to break his pole and use the longest piece, or you used a bamboo pole. I opted for the latter out of **necessity. Through Coach Milburn's determination,** the track and field program succeeded. Thus, more funding became available for equipment and by 1973 a portable landing pit had been purchased for the pole vault and high jump to replace the foam rubber car seats that had been in use. New poles became available for each of the pole-vaulters, and the old cinder track was replaced with an all weather surface during **Coach Milburn's tenure.**

Coach Milburn had a motto that was posted on **the locker room wall that read, "Your actions speak so loud I can't hear a word that you are saying."** Without question, Dave was one that exemplified that motto in how he conducted his own personal life and expected it from his protégées. He read into his team members and desired to see improvements and personal standards that he thought each one could achieve. When he thought that you needed some encouragement he gave it to you, and you knew that he was serious when his arms went up on your shoulders and he looked you straight in the eye. You left those fatherly encounters completely focused and ready to

put forth your best effort.

Coach Milburn was innovative in forming a team unity concept that was almost nonexistent in track and field competition. His teams filed off the bus in a single file line while running. Every team member proceeded to run a single file warm up lap around the track donned in classy uniforms and black berets. After the warm up lap was completed, the team captains led the team in calisthenics on the infield of the track. The entire meet strategy was **charted out on paper. He compared the opposing team's** times and distances with those of his team; from that he determined how his team should score and could arrange his lineup accordingly. He viewed every point as important in determining the outcome of a meet. If a team member had a performance that was a personal best, a school record or a stadium record, they received congratulations from Coach Milburn that made them feel like they had just won an Olympic gold medal.

The team returned the adulations following a season ending victory over crosstown rival Dover in 1973. Coach Milburn and his two assistants, Burt Beaver and Jerry Dawson, were carried on the shoulders **of the team for a “victory ride” the entire length of** the stadium. This was an important victory for the New Philadelphia team due to the fact that Dover had **won the previous year, and that didn't rest well with** Coach Milburn and his team.

The spring sports award banquet of 1973 was **held at Bonvechio's Restaurant in Wainwright, Ohio.** The scene at that banquet room is forever etched in my memory. Upon the introduction of Coach Milburn, I came to realize just how much the entire community respected him when he received a standing ovation from the overflow crowd. The dedication and effort that he put forth for his students, school, and community was being acknowledged for those few brief moments. The moment in time that I had witnessed could not have been bestowed upon a more deserving individual. After introducing his lovely wife, Coach Milburn began to introduce his assistant coaches. During the introduction of Jerry Dawson, he shared a bit of humor with the audience. Prior to the track meet at Dover, Coach Dawson had a short stay in the hospital. By his appearance he looked perfectly healthy so the team gave him the victory ride upon their shoulders. What everyone learned at the awards banquet from Coach Milburn was that Jerry Dawson had just had surgery for hemorrhoids. Coach Dawson **claimed that his ride "didn't hurt a bit."**

Coach Milburn did not forget about his team members following graduation. He enjoyed seeing them and was genuinely interested in their well-being. It was common to see former athletes returning to the practices and the track meets to see Coach Milburn, and to offer advice to the up and coming athletes. He was a joy to be associated with and the love of the sport lured me to travel to many track meets following graduation.

During the autumn of 1974, I learned that Coach Milburn was fighting a courageous battle with cancer. He had been diagnosed with having an inoperable brain tumor. I was in complete denial. This does not happen to heroes; they are immortal. The last time I recall seeing my hero was at a football game at the New Philadelphia stadium. The illness had changed him slightly, enough that I could recognize a decline. I wanted to talk with him, but I wanted to do it in private. I feared that my emotions would let go. At nineteen years of age this concerned me; a little more maturity taught me that this would have been all right. I never got another chance to thank him for all that he had done for me because David Milburn died on February 16, 1975. I learned of his death from a telephone conversation with my parents while I was in Tampa, Florida. I was saddened upon hearing of his death; not only did I lose a mentor but I also realized how many young people would not enjoy the same personal relationship with such a great man. His courageous battle had ended and he received his just reward. Coach Milburn will always be remembered by those who had the honor to know him.

When heroes pass on, only their earthly lives are abbreviated. Their inspiration lives on, the memory of their accomplishments, compassion, determination and courage remain. If an individual like David Milburn touches a person once in a lifetime, that person is extremely fortunate, and if it should happen twice during their lifetime, then they are in heaven.

An Af “fair” that Brings Us Together

By Marynette Holmes

I looked out of the window of my father’s car. Parking lots were filled and cars were parked all along the roads. I was bouncing up and down in my seat with excitement as I watched groups of people and families crossing the crosswalks to the main attraction. I could barely contain myself as my father paid at the lot entrance and then pulled into a parking spot. The moment his car stopped my siblings and I were already unbuckling our seat belts and out the door. The moment we were out we were hit by the sounds **of amusement: people’s laughter, tractor pulls, running rides,** and animal noises filled the air. It was fair time in Tuscarawas County.

The music and sounds from the arcade games, and the smells of funnel cakes and Italian sausages are no stranger to almost every inhabitant of this county. This event that happens once a year brings out almost every type of person from this area, all with one goal: to have fun and enjoy a break from our busy day to day. Especially for children, this was the highlight of their year.

As a kid I remember riding as many rides as I **could before the night ended. Sometimes I’d make it** out to the fair more than one night. However, every time was just as great as the last. There was always something to do. I would find time to visit the animals brought in from farms all over the county.

Sometimes I would play a game to try to win a fish, or I would stuff my face with fair fries and the always favorite, fresh-squeezed lemonade. This time of year **for me always brought great memories and I'm sure it** did for many other people from the Tuscarawas County area too.

Back in My Day by Cheri Hutson

Fairly recently, I was sitting in on a meeting with a group whose focus is on giving tutoring assistance to the Latino/Hispanic kids in Tuscarawas County. **Now you have to realize I'm a little over 50 years old.** That plays into this little scenario. One of the leaders of the group, who is in her early 20s and not originally from the area, was giving a talk on what to expect when tutoring these children at their homes. **When I heard her say something like, "... and if you happen to see these kids playing out in the street unaccompanied by their parents, don't feel like you have to call the cops, because that's just the way they live in their culture."** I came this close to laughing and embarrassing myself (and probably her, too, if I'd done it, poor girl).

Why was I tempted to laugh? Well, **"back in my day,"** as the old-timers like to say (I guess I'm one of them now), that was our culture, too, here in good ol' T-County, Ohio. For those of you who might be my age, more or less, do you remember the days? I mean, if what that young group leader said about people being tempted to call cops just because kids are out playing without a parent in sight is indicative of how **people really think today... well!** If that was the mentality **"back in my day,"** every parent in my whole neighborhood – and I dare say in the whole county... maybe even the whole country – would be jailed for

negligence.

“Back in my day” we kids were out from practically dawn til dusk, at least in the summer, and often on weekends for the rest of the year. I lived in a neighborhood on a side road out of town east of Denison. Even though we were surrounded by farmland, still, there were several families with kids who lived on that road, and we were out playing most of the day. People were more trusting back then, I think. Parents trusted their kids more (maybe because they taught us right from wrong and it was up to us what we did with that knowledge). They trusted each other. And they entrusted us to the Good Lord and trusted that He would take care of His little ones.

Anyway, I can remember asking Mom if we could go down to the neighbor girls’ house, and she’d say, **“Do your chores first, then you can stay for an hour.”** Sometimes we weren’t ready to come home and we’d call and ask if we could stay longer, and she’d say, **“Well, ask their Mom first.”** Of course, their mom didn’t mind. And they’d do the same – ask if they could come to our house, and Mom didn’t mind them staying. Sometimes we’d lose track of the time and, since this was before cell phones or even cordless phones, if nobody was in the house and so **didn’t hear the phone, the moms might have to yell** for us if they wanted us to come home. We used to laugh when the mom of one of the neighbor kids, instead of wasting her voice, would use a whistle to call

him home.

We neighbor kids would often get together and do fun stuff. There were enough of us (just in my family alone there were seven kids of varying ages, **though in that time frame the two youngest didn't** count in our activities, since they were just babies) in the neighborhood – and sometimes other kids who were visiting or from not too far away – that we could get up some decent games of kickball or softball or hoops or hide-and-**seek or whatever. Often we'd just go down the road and play at "the Creek,"** which, at one point, ran through a culvert under the road. There was a spot there near the road in a little woods where, just before it reached the culvert, the creek was wide enough, deep enough, and accessible enough, with a big enough shore line to walk or stand on, and a couple of decent places to sit, to make a nice hang-out for **us kids, especially when we didn't want parents** around.

One of our neighbor girls lived further down the road on a farm where there were cows, pigs at one time, even a horse or two. In fact, I once had a horse **that I kept on that farm. We'd go check out the ani-** mals in the barn, play in the yard or walk in the fields, get a drink from the spring-house. It was one of those old cement spring-houses where, even in the summer, **you'd step inside and it was so cool. Literally. Like,** refrigerated. I remember there was a ladle hanging **from a wire, and we'd all take turns dipping it into the**

spring and drinking out of it. Germs? What were those?

We spent plenty of time just wandering the hills or taking walks or riding bikes down the road. **Sometimes we'd go on past the neighbor girl's farm. Right** past her house was the Tuscarawas/Harrison county line, and from there the road turned kind of woodsy and hilly. The hills had been reclaimed, and much of **them were bare, but it was still "back in" and uninhabited at the time. Anyway, we'd sometimes walk** down the road a ways, maybe check out a couple of old abandoned houses alongside the road or go back in behind one of them to the pond which had been a **result of reclamation when they'd stripped the nearby hills.**

I used to ride my horse, Chica, back in there at **times. She was a feisty little thing. An Appaloosa.** I'd gotten her as a yearling and trained her myself – with a little help from a book. Considering that I was not exactly an expert horsewoman and that we learned **from each other, it's probably no wonder she was pretty "green-broke," but I enjoyed those rides anyway.** Just taking in the scenery, listening to the birds singing... **it was all so peaceful. At times I'd nudge her to jump across the little stream back beyond the pond.** **That feeling of being airborne on top of a horse's back** for that one split second was so exhilarating. A couple of times we ran into a herd of deer, which spooked **Chica so that she'd take the bit in her mouth and fly**

back home. It was all I could do to stay in the saddle. I remember my mom always being just a little leery of any of us going back there by ourselves because it was somewhat remote. Nowadays and in hindsight, maybe she had good reason, considering that last spring, not a half mile from our house, the body of a young man was found past the old farmhouse where the neighbor girl lived, just past the county line! Strange to think that in those days that would have been news for months! Two weeks after the fact in this day and age, and the incident was all but forgotten.

But back then, we kids were always playing outside. I had friends in town and it was the same; it **wasn't just us country kids. Oh, our parents cared. Maybe they weren't always within arm's reach.** But you can bet they had their eyes and ears watching out and listening for us. All the parents in our neighborhood were like a network, really. Kinda like the **"Neighborhood Watch" without the formality. They all looked out for us. Things weren't really so... scary** back then. Well, OK, there was the serial killer – **can't** remember his name – who was at large at one time, who, we think, got his target practice from shooting animals, and who, we also think, was the guy who shot Thunder. Poor old Thunder; he was found up on the hill, dead, with a bullet hole between his eyes, right in the middle of the star on his forehead. He was a good old pony (he belonged to the farm girl). But **that wasn't the norm. Mostly, things were pretty** tame. And I think parents back then knew the value of allowing their kids time to grow up and enjoy

God's good earth without having to be constantly in sight. They gave us room to grow. In fact, if we spent **too much time indoors, they'd shoo us out.** "It's too nice out to play inside," they'd say. Of course, in hindsight, maybe, in part, they just wanted a little bit of time to themselves! But they were always watchful of us, no matter where we were. They certainly weren't negligent.

We had fun at night, too. Catching fireflies when we were youngsters, playing hide-and-seek and weenie roasts and camp-outs in the back yard when we **were a little older... what a time we had roasting weenies** and marshmallows over a campfire, with our sleeping bags spread out around it, with the moon and stars overhead, sometimes telling scary stories or just **talking into the night. Didn't get much sleep, really,** but it was fun, despite the fact that once we did wake up after finally getting a little sleep, we were damp from the dew and sniffing. Still, good times! It wasn't like we slept out all the time, but the times we did **were memorable, and I wouldn't trade them for all the tech gadgets that kids have at their disposal today.**

I have to mention Tappan Lake, 5 minutes away by car (yes, as Jeff Foxworthy would say, you **can tell I'm from Ohio because I count distance by minutes instead of miles**). We spent some time out **there... picnics at the rest area, sometimes we'd go boating** (if anyone of our acquaintances had a boat available and asked us to go. Once Dad had a fishing

boat that he took me out on a couple of times, though **mostly he took the boys), sometimes we'd go to the beach and swim. Maybe go to the Marina to eat once in awhile. Once I got my driver's license I was out there a lot more. It was always – and still is – a place of solace for me. When I'd be upset about something I'd go “for a drive to the lake.” Many a time I'd take one or both of my sisters and/or neighbors and we'd have a good talk, or just hang out and walk along the shores of the lake. I had – still have – a couple of favorite spots, though they've changed over the years because of changes that have been made to the lake itself, or for some other reason. But even though it's a man-made lake (my grandparents remembered when it wasn't a lake at all), it's a beautiful place.**

Tuscora Park in New Phila is another place that holds many memories for me. Picnics with family and/or friends, fireworks at 4th of July, playing on the playground or riding the rides, feeding the ducks or just walking along the pond (I remember when there were pine trees lining the perimeter of the pond on the side where the street is). I can remember the days when I and my middle sister, my youngest aunt (who was a year older than me), and sometimes the neighbor girls, would go to Tuscora Park where we **would pretend to play tennis (that's how good we were), but it was fun. Then there was the time when a group of school friends and I went to Tuscora Park of a snowy winter's evening. They had asked me to go ice-skating. As it happened, I had recently acquired some used skates from somewhere. We went, and**

even though I fell on my butt a couple of times, it didn't really hurt, and it didn't really matter. We enjoyed it. It wasn't just the skating, but just being there, out in the cold, with lots of people – and there were lots of people the time or two that I went – skating around on the pond, enjoying ourselves, with our cold, foggy breaths punctuating every laugh and word. I think somebody might have even built a fire for warmth. A **great winter memory. It's a shame that these days there's too much worry about lawsuits or what-not...** sad that people have to give up such good fun just because someone might spoil it for everyone.

Still, the Park has always had much to offer. **Let's not forget the football games! In these parts,** sports rule! When I was attending Central Catholic, it was before they had their own football field. To us, the Quaker and Crater stadiums were home, alternately. Every kid should attend a game at least once or **twice in their lives... experience the chill in the autumn air, the walk along the track to the concession stand and back, feeling self-conscious because you're walking in front of a stadium full of people (if you're shy like I was), the warm cup of hot chocolate in the cold hands, the yelling, the enthusiasm, watching your secret crush run down the field with the rest of the team and cheering him on, even the disappointment when your team loses. All part of the game. I remember once thinking how it was so funny, though. In Catholic School, we're taught to love our neighbor,** right? Well, somehow that can get lost in a football

game. I remember being at a game and some overly **fanatical fan behind me screaming, “Kill him! Kill him!”** when one of the opposing team members was running the ball, and then, when it seemed that her wish might have been fulfilled and the poor kid was down on the field and the refs and coaches were attending to him while he was lying there, this same **woman who had been screaming for the poor player’s death was heard to say, “Oh, I hope he’s OK!”** Ah, the oxymoronic mentality of humanity (by the way, as far as I know, he was OK, in case you’re wondering).

OK, I simply have to mention... the Boulevard. Back in the late 70s and early 80s when I was in my late teens/early 20s, the Boulevard in New Phila/Dover was the place to be on the weekends – at least for those in my age range. I remember my sister, the neighbor girls up the road, my youngest aunt and I **riding down the Boulevard in my aunt’s yellow Camaro** sometimes on weekends. The street between the intersection of Wabash and 4th and Union Hospital was packed with people our age. Cars were parked in many of the parking lots, while young people milled around socializing. Guys would roar down the Boulevard in their muscle cars, whooping and hollering. **You’d see a car full of guys and a car full of girls sitting next to each other in a parking lot flirting with each other.** It was like one big tail-gating party all along the Boulevard every weekend, especially in **summer. We weren’t really one of the “parkers,”** but we did become acquainted with some people just from driving along that strip. I remember we met a guy

who was always driving down the Boulevard in his nice blue truck with the black rollbars and fancy lights underneath. I think his name was Bob. Well, we **called him “Boulevard Bob,” anyway. He always seemed to be there.**

We would usually stop and eat at one of the several restaurants along the Boulevard. Back then the ones that I remember hanging out at the most were Burger Chef (which is long gone now), Pizza Hut **(which is more recently gone), but mostly, Friendly’s** (which has been gone for awhile now). Another one **of my aunts was one of the managers at Friendly’s** for awhile, so we liked hanging out there, picking on and flirting with the guys who worked there (OK, I was **never personally all that good at flirting...**). We enjoyed the ice cream that Friendly’s was famous for **(who among you who remembers Friendly’s could forget their “Fribbles” or their “Jim Dandy” sundaes** or their banana splits? Yum!), and generally just had a good time. But it seems the glory days of the Boulevard **are over (I don’t even know if kids call it that nowadays; maybe they just call it “4th Street” – if they call it anything at all; it seems to have been reduced almost to a nameless street).** So sad on a Friday or Saturday night these days to see it practically devoid of young people, except for maybe a few who decide to grace the inside of one of the fast food restaurants that still line the Boulevard. But otherwise it seems so dead compared to the days when I was young. Today kids sit inside all day and night playing **on their computers and gadgets. They’re missing out.**

But, yeah. I have many a happy memory of growing up in T-County. **Many I haven't mentioned, and I have a few bad ones, too, but I'll not speak of those.**

I think for most of us, those who have dreamed of leaving the area, those who have left and have returned or are returning, and even those who have left and will never return, and even for many of the Latinos that I mentioned earlier and other immigrants in the area, **there is something about "T-County" that will always be "home" to us, never mind how we make fun of it. A lot of things have changed, but some things haven't. Some changes are good, some aren't. Still, it's a good place to grow up, and a good place to live.**

Angel or Tiger?

By Jeannie Manini Michel

In September 1964 I started Uhrichsville Junior High School as an eighth grader. My mother had died suddenly on November 23, 1963, and being fiercely independent (on the outside, at least) I was tired of being known as **“that poor little girl whose mother died,”** so I transferred from Dennison St. Mary’s.

One of many new experiences was my first Friday night football game. Already excited by my first ever **“pep rally” during sixth period,** I joined my new friends in the cheering section of the stadium. My fervor grew as the Tiger marching band took the field and played the national anthem. It continued to grow through the coin toss and the first quarter.

However, in my enthusiasm, I failed to realize that although it was warm when I left home for the stadium, fall evenings in northeast Ohio can grow cold very quickly. By half time my shivering attracted the attention of one of the deities of the cheering section, a senior!

This beautiful blonde, resplendent in a black and gold Tiger jacket, asked me if I’d like to wear her jacket. When I demurred, my benefactor insisted and said she was really too warm anyway because she was

wearing a heavy sweater.

As the warmth and weight of the jacket descended over my shoulders, my shivering stopped. I was warmed not only physically, but emotionally, by **this older girl's kindheartedness. And I thought I was pretty "tuff," too, in the "cool" jacket!**

Who did the Tigers play that night? Who won the game? **I have no recollection, but I've never forgotten** that seemingly-random act of kindness 40-some years ago. That a senior noticed a lowly, unknown eighth grader's discomfort and **took action to alleviate it** will remain forever in my mind as one of **the most caring acts I've ever experienced, and that** typifies the hometown spirit of Tuscarawas County.

A Dance at the Spanish Ballroom

By Rebecca Kutcher

The Spanish Ballroom, located in downtown Dover, was the place to be in the late 1930s and early 1940s. One spring evening in 1942, it was there that Alice Reichman of Dover met Paul Ladrach from the Ragersville area. It soon became the routine for Alice to go to the dances with her girlfriends; Paul would arrive later after finishing up the work on the family farm; and then he would take her home after the dance.

One night while enjoying a dance, Paul asked Alice, **“Do you know that couple over there? They keep dancing all around us and staring at us.”**

Turning her head to look at the couple, a surprised Alice responded, **“Oh, yes I do! They’re my mom and dad!”**

It seems that when Paul took Alice home after the dances, Alice’s parents, Howard and Lillie Reichman, were always asleep. They had decided that it was time they met this young fellow who had been bringing Alice home, so they also went to the dance that night.

Well, Dad must have passed the inspection because he and Mom were married June 18, 1944 and celebrated nearly sixty-two years of marriage.

Me and TC

By Dan Fuller

At the risk of talking a bit too much about myself, I would like to explain how I got from South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Kent to a place I had heard of but once and been lost in once. The hearing part is thanks to Hollywood. In *The Old-Fashioned Way*, W.C. Fields plays a not-very-successful circus **operator who has landed in Bellfontaine, Ohio “on the run from the sheriff in New Philadelphia.”** The lost part came when I was driving from Kent to visit a young woman in Parkersburg. Highway 77 was not quite complete and traffic was routed briefly onto Route 800 before returning to the Interstate. Somehow I missed a sign and ended up on what I would (several years later) discover was known as the Boulevard. There was a group of young women exiting the Burger Chef, so I asked them for directions. Their advice was flawless and I headed for Parkersburg, never assuming that I would spend 44 years of my life in their community.

When the Kent English Department decided **that I probably wouldn’t get tenure there, my first** thought was to buy a local bar. Then I had a chance to teach for the US Army at one of the many bases in **Europe, which would have been a go, but I couldn’t** take my cat. Now, I was attached to my cat (who eventually would notch 47 states and three countries

on her collar), so I turned it down. Meanwhile, several of the more prominent department members decided that I really was a keeper and offered me a position at one of the growing regional campuses (in those days the Kent department did as much of the hiring as the campus did). I had given a guest lecture **at the Salem Campus, but that wasn't where an** opening was. So I had to choose between Trumbull and Tuscarawas. I knew nothing about Warren except that it was close enough to Kent that many of its faculty lived in Kent and commuted. However, I had been living in the houses of department members **who were on sabbatical, and I didn't have a place in** Kent. On that basis and my memory of getting good directions from the girls on the Boulevard, I chose Tusc. Three days later, I drove to the campus for an interview with Dean Francis Hazard; he then pointed me to realtor Frances Eberle, who found me a rental house in the northwestern quadrant of New Phila, and I made the move. (In a side note, Frances then took two or three of my classes; her son Dave the next year brokered the purchase of a house from Dwayne Hicks and that was home for the next fifteen years. In the continuing small town irony of this area, one of our current adjunct faculty members and her husband, who is one of my former students, lived in it for several years and it is now the property of English faculty members, Nicole Willey and her husband Chris Roman. My wife and I live in a house in Oldtown Valley and rent our former house next door to current Sociology Professor Adrian Jones).

In any case, it was the best decision I ever made.

Untitled

By Steven Shroyer

I was a Cart Pusher for 3 years. The technical name for guys like me is Stockman and I never understood why we were called that. We never stocked shelves unless lightning hit the area and we were forced inside. We never made sure something was in stock for a customer to purchase at a later time. We just brought the carts inside and helped out with **the occasional heavy item or project that couldn't be** delineated to an employee in another department. In other words, we, that is myself and my fellow Stockmen, were the go-to boys for the grunt work at Walmart Store 2115 in sunny New Philadelphia Ohio.

You may wonder if in those three years I would have some stories. Well I do, quite a lot really. Like the time a man placed two ribeye steaks down his shorts at the self-checkouts just as the cops were walking in, or the time a drunk member of the local Latino community was stumbling around the parking **lot and had to be chased out of the women's room by** an elderly people greeter. Then there are the **customers who just don't know how to dress in public.** In short, I have quite a few funny stories, yet to write **about them would place this into "People of Walmart" territory and despite all the oddness, the** vast majority of customers are nice people who just want to pick up their items and get on their way. No,

this is going to be about the shopping carts and the things left in them, in particular one item that I still remember to this day.

First let me say this: Shopping carts are not garbage cans. The parking lot has plenty of cans and we try to clean them out daily. Part of my day was spent cleaning out the carts before pushing them inside because someone had decided to use them as waste units. Diapers, beer bottles, windshield wipers, fast food wrappers, chew and dip spit bottles, unopened or unfinished bottles of pop, and papers of all shapes and types, glossy or matte, went into the garbage. Of course you would find something of value: a purse or a cane here and there, a WIC packet, but mostly it was trash. It was a crisp day in early November when I made the discovery. The sun had gone down and the clouds blended with the sodium lights over the parking lot to give the world around me a bruised plum color. I had ventured over to Row 3 over by Lawn and Garden to grab a few carts to bring inside. It was the night shift 4-11 and we had yet to enter the holiday season, so business was light but steady, a relaxing evening all in all. It was then I noticed it. Sitting in the basket reserved for children, the kid seat if you will, was an iPad. Someone left an iPad, an over 300 dollar piece of technology in a shopping cart, alone, and ready for someone to steal. Now to be honest, the thought had crossed my mind as to what kind of idiot would do such a thing but it was replaced by the duty and respect I had for my job

and my customers. So I did the natural thing. I picked it up and took it to the customer service desk. It belonged to someone, and I knew that if someone stole it I would never forgive myself and besides I would want someone to do the same for me. I took it over, alerted the clerk and went back to work. The night continued as normal, gather, push, repeat. However it **wasn't until my final break that the story of the iPad** reached a conclusion that was unexpected.

Final break had arrived; the night was almost over. I was sitting thumbing through the latest Times Reporter when the CSM on duty had walked in on her break. **"Steven," she said, "We found the owner of the iPad."** I looked up. **"Really?"** I replied, **"Good."** I continued to read. **"She was really worried when she called, but she was so happy that someone had brought it in."** she continued. I smiled to myself, knowing full well that I had done a good deed. Then she revealed something that left me slack jawed and sent a chorus of butterflies dancing happily in my stomach. **"That iPad," she said, "belongs to her son. He has Autism."**

I left Walmart shortly after my vacation. My own struggle with Autism, namely Asperger's, played a part in my dismissal. Yet with all the negativity I can remember the good times. I can remember being All Star 2 times in a row. I can remember getting hugs from little old ladies whom I've helped or whose items I've found. **But most of all, I remember that iPad.** I remember the feeling I had learning I had found

something that meant something to someone else that helped them live their lives comfortably, and that, to me at least, will make all the difference.

The Chicken House Snakes

By Cynthia Renner

When I was a little girl of about 10 or 11, Karen and I went to Bible school. This was back when Bible school lasted two weeks. Karen and I came home from Bible school and we were to gather the eggs. We changed to everyday clothes, went to get the egg basket, and headed to the chicken house.

Now the chicken house had two parts to the building. Karen and I started on the first part gathering the eggs, then just as I went to step over the stone to the other side, something moved in the nest. It was a big black snake eating the eggs. I turned away **and told Karen, “There’s a snake!” We went out of** the chicken house,. I told her to go call our minister, who was from Niagara, who had been around snakes. Reverend Wenger came and told me to get an axe, so I went to the barn to get the axe. It was just inside the barn where dad always kept it. I took it up to the chicken house to Reverend Wenger.

We went in and he took the axe and pulled the snake out of the nest onto the floor. He then took the axe and chopped his head off and then dragged it outside.

We stood talking and he told us the mate is

probably around. So we went back in the chicken house and found the mate on the floor. We then killed it and dragged it outside. Reverend Wenger then left, and we thanked him for killing them.

When Mom and Dad came home, they found two dead snakes in the upper driveway curled up. Karen and I told them what happened. Dad then got the hoe and axe and carried them off somewhere to let them die.

Karen and I never forgot that experience and we always was afraid to go gather the eggs from then on. We would gather the eggs in the evening after that when Mom and Dad was around.

Our Christmas Tradition

By Cynthia Renner

On Christmas Eve we would do our barn work at 4:00 in the evening. That included milking the 12 cows, feeding the calves, bedding, and putting hay down from the hay mow. You had to move fast to keep warm, especially if the temperature was 0 to 20 degrees.

My mom, Gretta, would stay in the house to get supper ready. When we came in from the barn, we would get warmed up by eating supper and going to get ready for church.

My sister Karen and I was in the kids program, so we would get ready first. We had special blue jumpers that mom made for us one year. The program would start at 7:00 so we had to know our memory verses. There was anywhere from 20 to 30 kids. The program would last about an hour. Then we would break for the regular church service and Lovefeast, then we would have candlelight service to follow. When the service was over we would go for home, change our clothes, and grab presents to go to our **grandmother and grandfather's for Christmas** exchange.

We would visit with Grandma (Ola Durbin)

and Grandpa (Lloyd Durbin), then Santa Claus would arrive, and then we would exchange presents with everyone else, including my aunt and uncle. We would have a meal afterwards.

By 1:00 a.m. we would start gathering everything to gather, and head for home. We would then fall asleep in the back seat. When we got to the house, mom would tell dad to keep the car running and she would go to the house to put presents out from Santa. Mom would blink the porch light to let dad know to wake us up. We would go to the house and go to the living room to open our presents from Santa. One year we got a little pool table with marbles, and we played that until 4:00 a.m. Karen and I would go to bed and Mom and Dad would go to the barn to do the work.

We would sleep late, then we had to go to the other grandparents (Walter and Zello Frey) and have Christmas there, along with a big meal. Then our other aunt and uncle would come and they would have presents for us. Then back home to do barn work.

We have carried this tradition on with my kids, **also. Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without it. As** you can see I never had a Christmas morning like **others. When you're a farmer you have to milk your** cows first, then have your holiday later.

We still carry this tradition on, for we go to my **oldest sister's house for Christmas dinner and just** visit. All together there is 18 to 20 of us at her house. We all bring a covered dish. Our one favorite dish is **my mom's chicken noodle casserole. It has all the** good stuff in it: cream cheese, cream chicken soup, cream of mushroom soup, and sour cream along with chicken and noodles. We make a great big pan or in **crock pots. It doesn't last long. We make this at** Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas time.

Winter in Tuscarawas County

By Marynette Holmes

One of my most favorite stories to tell happened one winter during my early teenage years. Adults may look at winter as a cold and dreary season, but to kids and teenagers it means many things. Fun in the snow, winter break from school, and most importantly to me during my teenage years: snow-shoveling season. For several years every winter, my brother and I and some of our neighborhood friends would get together to make some extra cash.

One winter, I remember school was canceled **due to the snow. Even though we didn't have school,** my brother and I got up early and got ready for a day of shoveling. We met two of our friends and split up into two groups: my brother and one friend were in a group, and the other friend and I were in the other group. We went all around our neighborhood in New Philadelphia, house to house, asking to shovel their snow. We hit up several houses around Tuscora Park and even houses near Central Catholic School. We only charged about ten dollars to shovel their driveways, sidewalks, steps, porches, and even the snow that may have blocked their cars in on the side of the road. I specifically remember one older lady who was so glad to have someone shovel for her because she had no one else to do it. Not only did she pay us, but like some other houses we also got candy

bars.

On our way to another house, my partner and I **passed my brother's group. They were shoveling a** very long and steep driveway on a hill off of **Broadway. I laughed at them and yelled, "Good luck!"**

A few hours later at the end of our day we all met up again. My brother and his partner told us what happened to them. After taking almost two hours on that driveway that went around the house, they were exhausted and went back to the door to get paid. The family inside invited them in for pizza and hot chocolate, on top of paying them! Instantly I was jealous.

"That's what you get for laughing at me," my brother jokingly said. We all laughed then, heading home with pockets full of money, candy bars, and some of us with warm full bellies. All in all, it was a great snow-shoveling season for us. I also found out some people in Tuscarawas County are very grateful for help, that they will be generous in return.

A Journal from York Township

By Dalton Renner

My first memories came when I was about three years old. Naturally they occurred out at the barn. My parents, Glen and Thelma Renner had a dairy and swine farm. I was told that I was wanted to help herd livestock and when a half blind workhorse ended up in the milk house where the canned fresh milk was cooled, I took a stick and tried to chase it out. Very dangerous because this building was only **about 15 feet by 15 feet diameter. Luckily I didn't get** trampled. Our family had workhorses and John Deere tractors until I was about 12 years old. After that, only tractors and tractor drawn implements.

One main rule of my father: my brother and I had to take turns getting up every morning to help do **the farm chores at 4:15 a.m. Father didn't need an** alarm clock either.

Our family was fairly happy, lots of close neighbors and extended family. We lived on a 115 acre hilly farm south of New Phila. Going to visit relatives in Cleveland was a big adventure. This only happened three or four times in my growing up years. One time we spent half a day near Dover getting the car repaired.

Our family has always attended Jerusalem Church near New Phila.

I always liked to talk. This didn't work out one time in second grade—the lady teacher slapped me in **the mouth! This wouldn't happen today. I liked** school, livestock, and the farm life. Several times relatives visited us, most were very nice, a few let us know how much better the city was.

The principal at York Elementary, Paul Kuhn, was very strict. I only got the board once from him but I remembered it well.

Our class was the change-over class who started into 8th grade at New Phila. I was partly afraid of the new system. In the assembly the first morning, some girl sent me a note that she wanted to talk to me. She stated that she was wearing a polka-dot black and **white dress but I didn't even look around. I never did** know who she was.

About this time my parents were expanding the farm. They ordered a new concrete tower silo to store corn and hay silage in. It was 40 feet high and 14 feet around. It would hold 150 tons of corn silage, the whole corn plant harvested about the time of the Tuscarawas County Fair. But first the two old upright silos had to be torn down and hauled away. One was

made of wooden staves with metal bands around them and the other one was made from six inch concrete-like material which interlocked on the inside. They were held in place by metal bands. The new silo needed a four foot footer dug out and filled with concrete to support the weight of the silo. This was dug by hand. It was a very dirty, smelly, job. The new silo only cost \$2100.00, including the tin roof, but this was a lot of money back in 1961.

In high school I was teased a lot because I was a **farm kid and didn't socialize hardly any. I was on the honor roll until the 10th grade and then my grades dropped. I tried to bring them back up but they never got above average. I didn't take hard enough subjects the last three years. I wanted to go to college at Heidelberg College at Tiffin, Ohio. This didn't pan out as I didn't have any scholarships.**

I planned for and attended a Dairy short course at Ohio State University for two months the winter of 1966. I learned a lot. I was also called to go to Cleveland in February 1966 to see if I was qualified to serve in the draft, as events were heating up in the Vietnam Conflict. Only 12 guys failed the physical out of 300 men. I was one of them. I remained on I-4 status for about five years but was never called to serve my country. I formed a partnership with my parents on the farm during 1970. We sold Grade B milk to Yaggi Cheese Factory until the spring of 1968 when we switched to Grade A production with the

Lawson Dairy at Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio from 1968 until 1982. We sold milk to Superior Dairy at Canton, Ohio from 1982 until 1986, when we sold our dairy herd in a federal dairy buyout program. We contracted to stay out of Dairy production for a five year period until 1991, which we did.

I met my future wife on a blind date April 29, 1972. I called her house and asked to speak to the wrong sister. We got it straightened out and went to **the show “The Godfather.” The time changed to Daylight Savings time that night. We didn’t get to** her house close to Gnadenhutten until about 2:00 a.m. My father met me at her farm driveway and thought Cindy had kidnapped me. He made me go straight to **the barn to do the morning milking. It wasn’t too** pleasant that morning during chores.

I didn’t call Cindy for two weeks, as I didn’t want to be too pushy. The first week of May her one friend was married and she had hoped that I would **call to go with her to the wedding, but I didn’t call** until the next week. First mistake.

After that we dated off and on until we was engaged over Labor Day 1973. I asked the big question in a pasture field outside of Dover where we had dairy heifers (yearlings) on pasture for the summer. She said yes and we were married April 20, 1974. It was a big wedding, about 350 people were there. I

made a few blunders that day, none major. My brother Lee Renner who was best man got to the church 15 minutes before the ceremony was to start. He was working back in the underground clay mine at Stone Creek Brick Company. He had three flat tires on the way to the wedding. But being a former U.S. Marine, he managed to make it on time.

His friends and him decorated the car like you **wouldn't believe. It was a white 1968 Pontiac LeMans** with a black vinyl top. It had all likes of farm quotes on it which the truckers loved as we drove to the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania. We spent an hour at the carwash but the writing still showed up.

We bought the farm September 1982 from my parents for \$115,000. We raised three children, two girls and one boy: Darlene, who passed away tragically this past March 17, 2016, Carol Lippincott, and Darin who still is single. We have no grandchildren to date.

It has been basically a good life. I have been blessed in many ways. I believe I was born and raised in a more innocent time.

Sincerely,

Dalton Renner

Fernwood Cottage

By Mildred J. Houy, before her 90th birthday

The first library I ever entered was opened by Emma Huber in downtown Strasburg, Ohio. Mother **drove sister Ruth and me. Elmer was along, Ruth's pet** raccoon, wearing a collar. She held the fine linked chain to keep him from straying. The ring-tailed bandit liked Emma, who said kind things while he examined the checkout desk. We girls were grade school age.

I was much younger the day I read the comics, which were in color on Sundays. Paging through the news, I saw a photo of railroad dining cars. The story told of a girl who gave parties on three railroad dining cars put on a railroad. Her dad owned and maintained them. I was captured with the idea of owning one. An impossible dream.

When I was hired at age 21 to do office work, WWII had already spanned my high school years. They included mother using food stamps to buy canned goods, rationing tires, and begging for a board when her leg went through a rotted back porch step.

Now, several years later, housing was still scarce. People were buying railroad cabooses to live in. I got on the list, then bought a half-acre of land from a

couple several miles from home for my dream cabin.

It was delivered to a partly wooded slope. From there I could look out and see the people who lived in part of four side by side railroad cabooses. A couple with two small girls lived in part of them.

There was a door on each end of my caboose, and rooms with a hallway connecting them. The sun shone down onto the hall from those up high windows. Iron rungs, like a ladder, were fixed to the built ins flanking that hallway. Up I climbed, sat on one of the built in seats, then slid open a window. I used the wooden walk on the roof but later had it removed.

It took many years and paydays to have a 12 x 20 foot living room with fireplace added to the uphill side. It extended past the caboose end. That allowed two steps up into a dining area put at the end of the caboose. Another step up and I added a small room that became the kitchen.

I was so proud. A cousin and wife with their child had a travel trailer maybe 8 foot wide outside. My caboose was 9 foot wide inside. I was joyful and bragging. There was no lilac bush outside to hide the outside toilet I bought.

Then five years of slow construction passed. Often I went with jugs of water and borrowed tools to fix my dream caboose cabin. I renamed it **Fernwood Cottage. Mother's friends wanted to see it and we had a picnic inside.**

My brother-in-law snapped a blue chalk line for the start of covering the red caboose. A pile of attractive grey shingles was nearby. He helped for a little while. So too did my soon-to-be husband, Robert.

I had turned down two suitors, so happy being **single and loving my very own caboose.** “Set a date or you will never see me again,” Robert said.

“Next weekend,” I replied.

Temporarily we lived with relatives. Hubby said, **“We need to rent an apartment.”** I convinced him we could carry water jugs. Relatives let us use their showers and bathtubs when we needed. We both had jobs. A water well was drilled. Electricity had been in a long time. A partial basement was dug and soon contained a coal furnace and a shower. Four of the high windows now looked down onto a toilet and washbowl on one side of the hallway. Eventually, I raised pheasants, and we had a red fox. Next, a pet raccoon, and then a dog. Home sweet caboose.

Tapestries of Tuscarawas County

Featuring essays, poetry, and artwork created
by area residents.

Experience life in Tuscarawas County
through the words and images of those who live
here and love it!

*This project was sponsored and funded by Dover
Public Library's Local History department and the
Friends of the Library*

