Up Coming Events:

May 20th Saturday – A Pancake Breakfast with a Tour and Tales of the Bedford Historic District. This joint venture with the Cuyahoga County Metroparks includes a pancake breakfast at the Glens Ball field pavilion and then a tour of the Historic District. Registration is required. Call the Metroparks 216 341-3152.

June 9,10,11 2006- Annual Strawberry Festival  
(See insert for details)

June 10, 2006 6:00pm – 10:00pm Classic Car Show 
they will be lined up along Broadway. Come and enjoy the cars!

August 12, 2006 9:00 – 4:00 Annual Flea Market on the Square. Come and browse for bargains.

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From the President

Greeting Fellow History Buffs,

Well here it is. Today I sit to pen my final comments to you. It has certainly been an eventful year for me and for our Historical Society and throughout it all, it has been both my pleasure and my honor to serve the Bedford Historical Society as its President. I hope all of you have been aware of and had the opportunity to participate in some of the many and varied activities our Historical Society has sponsored for you this year…..from our Annual Strawberry Festival, to our incredible series of Lyceums; from our Annual Reverse Raffle, to our seasonal Open Houses; from our “Teas” and “Tours”, to our development of the “Lincoln Press”; and, of course, our tremendous variety of open museum displays! Yes, all of this and so much more make up our Bedford Historical Society! Our community is both richer and enriched because of the efforts of the Society. The Society enhances our community and the quality of life throughout Old Bedford Township. We all are, indeed, most fortunate to have had such a special organization in our community for over 50 years now and the phenomenal staff and volunteers certainly deserve the continued support of all our membership! So, as I close the 2005-2006 chapter of the Bedford Historical Society, I would simply like to express my most sincere thanks and appreciation to the trustees, the staff, the volunteers, the membership, and, of course, our Director for another incomparable year and a job VERY well done!

David L. Beveridge

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Bedford Historical Society was held May 4th at LaCasa Bella Party Center. Dave Beveridge was thanked for serving as president this year. The Society recognized long time member, John Piazza for his continued commitment to the Bedford Historical Society. Mr. Thomas C. Eakin was recognized for his continued support of the society and the community.

The Society also thanked four Trustees, Dave Beveridge, Rick Backo, Rose Grossenbaugh and Chris Sweet who are rotating off the board. The members elected the following for a three-year term: Louise Ake, Bob Ferrante, Marg Keene and Steve Salvi.

Louise is one of our long time members. She and her husband worked hard to make the society successful in its early years. She works at Ake Labs.

Bob is a Bedford resident and businessperson with an interest in community service and history.

Marg is an active volunteer in the museum. She is retired from a career in bookkeeping.

Steve recently moved back to Bedford to live and work. He is interested in historic preservation.

We welcome all of these community spirited people who step forward to make a difference.

The program was all about Ohio baseball. The speaker was Mr. Thomas C. Eakin, president of the Ohio Baseball Hall of Fame. The historical society print shop gave each attendee a souvenir Indians schedule from 1952. The ‘cut’ is from the Lincoln press collection.

Copies of the annual report and financial statements are available if you were unable to attend the meeting.

Society Receives Grant

The society recently received a grant for $25K from the City of Bedford. The money was reimbursement for capital expenses that were incurred over the past few months. Their assistance came at a time when we were financially strapped with unexpected repairs. Please extend your thanks to the mayor and council next time you see them. Their commitment to preservation benefits us all.
Scrapbooks, Photo and Postcard Albums in our collection may resemble the ones you have at home. They clearly begin with the best of intentions: you can almost hear the person saying as they begin the task ‘I’m finally going to get these bits and pieces in one place and then we can enjoy that great (trip, wedding, reunion) all over again.’

The beginning, and often, the middle of the book will reflect this enthusiasm. All photos will be labeled with names dates and locations, maybe sketches will decorate the edges of the pages. Then we notice a little less care is taken. A photo of a gentleman will have no name written under it. The news clipping has no date as though the person with the pen was called away and didn’t get back to finish. Sometimes this goes on for a page or two and then the last few pages are blank.

This is when we smile as we recognize this person from the past is just like us. We meant well but somehow we were unable to finish. The loose photograph stuck between two blank pages, the postcard used as a bookmark, tell us there was more to come. At the Museum, we leave it as we find it.

Not all of the albums we receive are unfinished, but enough of them are that we realize it is a common shortcoming among those of us who like to record our ‘scraps of history’.

This writer has a scrapbook of our family trip to California in 1972. The family returned home to Ohio, but the reader of the book is forever stranded on a mountaintop in Colorado, 2/3rds of the way home.

The bottom line is that we treasure all these scrapbooks, the finished and the unfinished. They all have a story to tell and what is history if not our stories?

Remembering Alice

The Bedford Historical Society lost a strong supporter when Alice Weisenbach passed away. Alice was an active member whose influence made the Society what it has become today. She served in many capacities over the years including treasurer, vice president and president. Our landmark buildings are here, in part, because of Alice. She was quiet but forceful. She was meticulous in her work and kept us on track. Even when her health was failing, she had a keen interest on preservation issues in the community. Bedford was the love of her life and we all benefit from her influence.

Stone Lithography

The last issue of the Bee illustrated several printing ‘cuts’. Cuts could be illustrations or business logos. They could also be a grouping of words that were used repeatedly. By having a ‘cut’ of these word groups, the printer could reuse it many times without resetting each letter and space. Stone lithography is an earlier form of this. Invented in 1798, stone lithography consisted of words or illustrations that were etched onto stone. The stones could be used repeatedly by the printer. The heyday of stone lithography was 1880 – 1920. A lithograph printed with many colors could cost up to six thousand dollars in 1900. About 1920 photomechanical lithography replaced stone lithography. It was cheaper to produce however, the many colors used on fine pieces were replaced with the use of only four colors.

The museum has two examples of litho stones. The museum print shop exhibits an 8.5” x 10” x 3” stone etched to produce two documents, one for Vestal Chemical Co, and the other for Johnson-Stephens & Shinkle Shoe Co. It weighs about 25-30 lbs. The other litho stone is on display in the old school room. It measures app. 17” x 25” x 2.5”. It probably weighs in excess of 100 lbs. The stone was used by the Bedford School District to produce diplomas for graduating students in 1899. Today’s diplomas are about 5” x 6”, the size of a large post card. We are fortunate to have two examples of rare litho stones.

What is New in the Museum

The Town Hall Museum has some new items for your enjoyment. The first floor highlights the Miniature Model Homes made by Paul Roman. Mr. Roman has made miniatures of many homes in the Cleveland area and is known for his meticulous details. The display is on the first floor through mid June.

There is a small case display about Bedford great Elmer Flick. Flick, as many of you know, is in the Baseball Hall of Fame. Efforts continue to erect a bronze statue.

Baseball Team Photos on Display

The top floor of the Town Hall will have an exhibit about local sports teams in the Bedford area. On display are photos and memorabilia of this area’s rich sports history. The exhibit will be in place from late May through October 1st.

Do you have a sports item that we can borrow for the display? Give a call to the museum 440 232-0796. Terry Salvi is collecting items for the exhibit; he can arrange to pick up your loaned item.
The Print Shop

The shop has new additions to the collection of early print items. A recent article in the Plain Dealer generated new donations of missing type and other items from retired print shop owners. We have met some interesting people and made new friends. The society has been entrusted with pieces of history from this beautiful art form.

A New Garden at the Town Hall Museum

Thanks to the commitment of the Bedford Garden Club, a beautiful garden is being installed at the rear of the Town Hall Museum. Members will remember the Club’s Herb Garden that was removed for construction of the new addition. Landscape architect, Valerie Strong, designed the new garden. It has been planned to be ADA accessible so that visitors with disabilities can enjoy its beauty. The central bed will be raised so that the fragrance and beauty of the flowers can be enjoyed by those with limited mobility. Stop by to see the progress of the garden as it is constructed.

Preservation Work on the Town Hall

Thanks to a grant from the Day Foundation, the tumbling stone steps on the west side of the building have been repaired. The stairs originally went down to Middle Street but the railroad tracks laid in 1882 curtailed their use. They are an integral part of the Town Hall design and are now stabilized.

Trustees have approved major repair of the front tower, all windows (over 40 of ‘em), masonry repair and temporary repair of the front stone steps. The much needed work will protect the landmark building and the treasures with which we are entrusted.

Finance Update

Our first of four annual fundraisers for operating funds was good fun. The Dinner and Reverse Raffle netted $3993.25. We budgeted $3700. The two Teas netted $1513. We budgeted $700. The average will help with the unresolved deficit on the 06 budget. On to the Strawberry Festival with great anticipation!

New Book by Harold George

Harold George, a friend of the society, has published a new book on Civil War Monuments of Ohio. Our Bedford statue is listed. Books are for sale in the museum’s gift shop for $25 if you would like to learn more about this topic.

The Old Ways School

The Old Ways School got off to a successful start. Members and community residents learned something new on the four Mondays of April. We hope to offer courses again. If you have a suggestion on something you would like to learn, let us know.

Our Thanks to the teachers of the Old Ways School- Linda Sleeman, Alma Rhine, Betsy Lee, Lester Pratt, Roger Fuhrmeyer and Andy Jones. Without their willingness to share their time and talent, we could not have offered these courses.

HELP!!!

Calling all members – it is that time of year again- The Strawberry Festival is June 9,10 & 11. We need docents to keep our buildings open both days, servers for the berry tent, set-up and takedown crews. New this year is a Saturday night classic car show along Broadway. About 150 cars are registered. We have a ‘dunk tank’ scheduled for the weekend. Some of our most illustrious citizens have consented to be ‘dunked’. It should be fun. Call Betsy Lee 440 735-0135, Chris Sweet 439-7470 or Janet 440 232-0796 for details. Do you have an item for the raffle? Call Chuck or Lois St. John 232-1155.

Our Thanks

To Ralph Bell for writing an update of The History of the Bedford Historical Society.
To Lynn Jones and the Victorian Maids for creating two magical Teas this spring.
To Holsey Handyside for graciously hosting a tour of his historic home.
To Lester & Helen Pratt, Dr. & Mrs. Hoffman and Dan Kosko for the new computer, peripherals and software including Past Perfect, a software program for museums.
To the ‘School Team’ for hosting over 250 Bedford City School children for tours and activities.
To Roger Fuhrmeyer for sharing his talent again by designing the Endowment logo.

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A Close Call - April 7, 1930

The 1874 Town Hall has some good neighbors on the block. Just east is the old Baptist church that we maintain on our historic campus. Just to the west across the W&LE tracks is our neighbor John Piazza. His home is on some of our oldest maps and photos. On the other side of John, bordering Willis Street is a small industrial and office complex neatly maintained by Joe Cerino. Joe’s property used to be one of Bedford’s premier companies, the Franklin Oil Company. Founded in 1902, the company had a long and prosperous history for a hundred years.

On April 7, 1930, a catastrophic fire at the plant almost changed our peaceful neighborhood forever. A fire broke out in a five-story storage building and rapidly spread consuming 250,000 gallons of exploding oilcans. The flames shot 100 ft in the air. Bedford, Maple Hts and Warrensville Fire Departments fought the spectacular blaze for three hours. They halted three freight trains in order to string hose across the track.

The hero of the day was a Bedford truck driver named Fred Miller. Mr. Miller braved intense heat and smoke to hitch a chain to three railroad tank cars loaded with alcohol and oil. He used his truck to pull the cars out of the fire and heat. Had Mr. Miller not acted so bravely, John’s house and our building would have sustained considerable damage.

Endowment Update

The Endowment Fund is holding at $14,009.55 thanks to several donors. We must raise $50,000 before we can utilize the fund. Please check with your employer to see if they will match your donation. Our thanks to the Endowment Committee - Dave Beveridge, Holsey Handyside, Jamie Hukill, Garth McAdoo, Virgil Ridgway, Ed Romito and Bert Zahn for their guidance.

Obituaries

Glenn O. Maley: Member Glenn Maley passed away on March 7, 2006. He was a member and supporter since 1982. Glenn is survived by his loving wife Olive (nee: Glover); they were married 68 years. He was preceded in death by his son Ronald and daughter-in-law Phyllis. He is the grandfather of Brian (Teresa) Maley and dear great-grandfather of Matthew, Mary Kathryn and Grace.

Alice Weisenbach: Long time member and supporter, Alice Weisenbach passed away on March 22nd after a long illness. Alice served in many capacities over the years including president, vice president and treasurer. She was a 1932 graduate of Bedford High. Alice was preceded in death by her husband, ‘Red’ Weisenbach. She leaves two brothers and their families including many loving nieces and nephews.

Marvin Kowalcyk: Services for Marvin Kowalcyk were held on March 1st. Mr. Kowalcyk was a Bedford High class of 1961 graduate. He was the loving husband of Julia (nee: Flynn) and father of Allen (Anna Marie), Todd (Diane) Kowalcyk, Michael Hoy and Laura (Bryon) Janas. He was a loving grandfather.

Charles Hinzman: Member Chuck Hinzman passed away on April 22nd Chuck served as a docent in the Town Hall when his health permitted. His Wife Ruth (Harn) and son Charles preceded him in death. He is survived by son Dave and (Kathy) Hinzman. He leaves loving grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Word has been received that long time friend and financial supporter of the society, Ron Buckley passed away this past year.

Our sympathy to member Carol Cermak on the death of her mother, Dorothy Cowan.