Up Coming Events…

**Annual Strawberry Festival**- June 8th, 9th & 10th. Friday 6 pm -11pm, Saturday Noon-11pm, Sunday Noon – 8pm. See insert for details.

**Strawberry Festival Classic Car Show**- June 9th Saturday 5pm-10pm

**Festival Special- Meet some of the Greats from Sportsman’s Park & Cloverleaf Speedway**. June 9th Saturday 4pm – 6pm., Look for the display and tables at the car show.

**Annual Flea Market** -August 11th 9am – 4pm. Call Chris (440 439-7470) to rent a space & sell your own items or Lynn (330 467-4338) to donate to the Society’s table. It is always a fun day at the Flea Market!

Don’t forget the **Parties-in-the-Park** each Wednesday evening all summer long. Bring your lawn chair and enjoy a summer evening in historic Bedford.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

**From the President…**

The Annual Strawberry Festival is only a few weeks away. As the society’s largest fundraiser, let’s hope for good weather and large crowds. Each year, the Festival Committee works to improve the event. We hope you will support the Festival in any way that you can. Enclosed with this newsletter is a preliminary schedule listing the entertainment and car show hours. The museums will be open both days in the afternoon.

Can you help? It takes many people to run the festival. Perhaps you can serve berries, help keep the museums open, and help set up or take down. Maybe you have an item that can be used for the raffle or would like to make a donation to underwrite the entertainment. Brain Melling

**Annual Dinner**

The Annual Dinner and Meeting of the Bedford Historical Society was held on May 3rd. Members and community residents attended an enjoyable evening. George Dauler, presented a first person dialogue as U.S. Grant. President Grant reminisced about his career as a public servant, his years in the military and his childhood in Ohio.

The Society received a grant from the Ohio Humanities Council, an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities so that the program could be offered to the public without charge.

Members voted the following to serve a three-year term as trustees: Kathie Rice and Jack Ulman to serve a second three-year term, as allowed in the by-laws. The following were voted to first terms: Garnet Barker, Kay Gary, Ronald Rue and Ed Kaneen. Mr. Barker, owner of Star Glass, is active in promoting arts and culture in Bedford. Mrs. Kay Gary is an active community volunteer in Bedford Hts. Mr. Ronald Rue, a retired banker, is a long time Bedford supporter. Mr. Ed Kaneen a long time Bedford resident has been active on the administrative board of his church. We welcome these community minded citizens as they serve on the board.

**A Special Volunteer**

Ralph Deavers was honored at the Annual Dinner on May 3rd for his continued commitment to the Bedford Historical Society. Ralph joined the Society in 1960. He served as a trustee three times over the past 30 years for a total of twelve years of service on the board. He served as president of the board of trustees from 1980-82. He has helped with fundraising and society projects. Currently he is a museum volunteer during public events. Ralph has instilled a sense of appreciation for history and a commitment to community to his children and grandchildren many who have helped in society projects. We extend our gratitude to Ralph Deavers for his service to community through the Bedford Historical Society.
From the Archives

The back of the photo is marked: First Military funeral in Bedford after World War I. The American Legion was in charge. Fred W. Oldham was the photographer. Bryan Avery was the pallbearer on the left. Wilber H. Jones was the pallbearer on the right (facing picture). According to Ethel (nee: Alexander) Oldham in 1976, ‘None of the Legionnaires knew who the deceased was, but as he had been sent to Bedford O., they gave him a military funeral.’

Another War and Other Memorials

As Memorial Day approaches, the following inscriptions are from monuments at Civil War sites in Georgia and Tennessee. Chickamauga and Chattanooga Military Parks were the first of four sites preserved by the Congress in the 1890s. Resaca Cemetery contains the remains of Confederate soldiers killed in battle.

“It is a duty we owe
To posterity, to see
That our children
Shall know the virtues,
And become worthy
Of their sire.”
(1909 United Daughters of the Confederacy statue at Chickamauga)

“How sleep the brave
Who sink to rest
By all their country’s
Wishes blest.”
(Georgia Confederate soldiers monument)

“We sleep here in obedience
To law.
When duty called, we came.
When country called we died.”
(Georgia Confederate soldiers monument)

“Centuries
On centuries
Shall go
Circling by,
But they
Are not dead,
Their memories
Can never die.”

Memorial to the First Ohio Cavalry

Our thanks to member Steven Angyal for sharing his photos of trips to Civil War sites in Georgia. The photos are on display at the Town Hall Museum through summer.
Walker China Travels a Long Way

A recent inquiry to our website was from someone at McMurdo Base, Antarctica. The inquirer found some Walker China at the base. The sender asked if we would like some pieces of it for the hometown museum. Did we ever! The last shipment out from Antarctica before winter settled in was February 2nd. The china was carefully packed and sent to Bedford Ohio. It arrived safely. A note from our sender says they do not eat off such fancy plates anymore. The beautiful set consists of one dinner plate and one cup and saucer. It is marked with the U.S.Navy logo and was made for them in 1958. The McMurdo base was opened in 1956. Today it is operated by scientists and support staff.

Two other recent donations of Walker China arrived on the same day. Member Doris Pankratz donated some pieces that were given to her father, O. E. Hutchison, Bedford City Manager. They represent ribbon cuttings and special events that her father attended.

A Bedford resident stopped in with some Toltec ware (a beige colored Walker line) for our collection. He made the pieces himself when he worked for the company. He worked there for 18 months then WWII interrupted his plans. He was a Pearl Harbor survivor. After the war, he returned to Bedford but did not go back to the china company.

The society received a substantial donation for the purchase of new cases for our Walker collection. A recent additional donation has also been given so that our collection can be properly displayed.

Geocache Comments

Our Geocache has received many favorable comments. The cache is placed in the vicinity of Viaduct Park. The history markers with photos, the roaring Great Falls of Tinkers Creek and the Stone Viaduct, a National Register site, all attract attention to this beautiful area. Many Geocache visitors comment that they would not have discovered the area if it were not for the cache site.

New Room Opened

A new room has been opened adjacent to the Community Room in the Old Church. The room was sealed for many years. It would have served as a Sunday School classroom when Jacob Snyder designed the building. It has now been painted and carpeted and will be available as an additional meeting area. It is a beautiful example of adaptive reuse of a historic building.

Society Hosts Museum Event

The society recently hosted the regional meeting of the Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museums. The all day event focused on collecting and preserving the recent past. What is important to save and how to save it. After the all day sessions lead by various experts in the field, our 72 museum colleagues toured the society’s buildings.

Hezekiah Dunham, the Landlord

Helen Batko was researching information about a Civil War soldier. A relative, who lives out of state, sent in the request. In the 1860 census, the young man lived in the Dunham House with Hezekiah Dunham, age 81. Elizabeth Dunham, age 72 was also one of the residents. She was married to John Dunham, another Hezekiah relative. They raised a family of ten children in Independence but in later life, she moved in with Hezekiah.

Six other residents are listed in the census living at the Dunham House. Our young man, who became a Civil War soldier, was also a distant relative of Dunham. The census does not indicate if the Dunham House was being used as an inn, a hotel or apartments. Because we know that this future Civil War soldier stayed and worked in Bedford at the time, we can presume that the rooms were long-term rental and not for an overnight stay such as the Fountain House up the street.

The last owners of the Dunham House, Richard and Ann Sedlon were also landlords of the facility. One of the first projects in the restoration was removal of kitchenettes and bathrooms in each section.

What about the young man? Safford Grant joined Co. One, 23rd Regiment OVI on May 22, 1861. He was mortally wounded in the Battle of South Mountain, Maryland in September 1862. His body was transported to Bedford Cemetery where he was laid to rest a week later. Many Civil War casualties were not as fortunate to be buried at home. The route of the railroad made a difference in this case. The C&P Railroad connected Bedford to points east; it would have allowed his body to be quickly transported home for burial. A Bedford horse and wagon would have waited at the old C & P Depot for the train that brought our young soldier’s body home to stay.

His relative was grateful that we remember his sacrifice each Memorial Day.

Congratulations to Evelyn Sawastuk who was elected into the Bedford High School Hall of Fame.
Bedford Cemetery-a Historic Treasure

As Bedford and the surrounding communities continue to identify and recognize our historic treasures, one place is very special. Bedford Cemetery is the final resting place for those who have helped shape Bedford Township.

The early layout of the cemetery reflects our New England settlers, who preferred graves laid out in quadrants with an east-west position. Many of our monuments and gravestones are beautiful examples of the stone workers’ skills. These markers tell us much about life in this area.

The Bedford Historical Society recognizes the importance of this reverent place. We are continuing to assemble information about the markers, the early history and the significant botanical plantings that grace the cemetery.

Several people have volunteered to photograph and record the early graves. If you would like to help with this project, please call the museum 440 232-0796. This will be a Saturday afternoon project tentatively scheduled for mid-late June.

Forbes Preserve

When the Forbes family arrived from Scotland, they settled in the eastern portion of Bedford Township along what is now Forbes Road. The Forbes farm was a good example of farming practices of the 1800s. For example, the house was positioned west of the barn and outbuildings. The position allowed the house the benefit of fresh air from prevailing west winds. The home was also positioned at the top of a rise. Better drainage made for a healthier environment. We do not think too much about this today, but they were important lessons from agricultural science.

The city of Bedford Heights and the Cleveland Metroparks are working to develop the site of the Forbes Farm. The historical society has been asked to help with the project. When completed, the site will have a walking trail, nature sanctuary and an interpretive area about the farm. Visitors will be able to view the foundations of the homestead and some of the outbuildings. They will learn about 19th century farming practices and about the early contributions made by this family.

Obituaries

John Kovach; Sportsman’s Park racer and enthusiast, John Kovach passed away on February 6, 2007. Johnny was one of the curators of the Sportsman Park exhibit when it was formed. He would share stories and reminisce with visitors. In later years, John helped with the Meals-on-Wheels program and would make dolls and pins for the people on his route. He made one for the Museum. The charming little doll sits amidst automotive and racing memorabilia; it is a reminder of a nice man.

He was married for a time to Marie Kastner and had two stepchildren Juanita Scibana and Frank Kastner.

Julia Antol; Member Julia A. Antol (nee Emery) passed away on March 2, 2007. Julia was a member since 1985 and enjoyed many of the Society’s events. She was born in Pittsburgh. Julia worked for Western Electric for 32 years. She is survived by many loving nieces and nephews. She was the widow of Paul J.

James R. Cameron; Member James R. Cameron passed away on April 24, 2007. Jim was a member of the Society since 1986. He served his country and retired from the U.S. Navy Reserve. Jim was active in the community particularly through his church, First Baptist of Bedford. He is survived by his wife, Elaine (nee Hays) and children William (Diana) and John (Linda). Many loving grandchildren and great grandchildren will miss him.

Parade Season!

Like parades? How about helping march with our historic flags? Maybe a child or grandchild would like to be part of the fun. Call Chris, 440 439-7470