Up Coming Events:

December 8, 2007, Saturday – Noon – 4:00pm Annual Christmas Open House: Refreshments, Caroling, shopping for Bedford souvenirs, sleigh rides, ice carving—what’s not to like about this annual event in conjunction with Christmas In Bedford Falls.

January 3, 2008 7:30 pm A History of Auto Racing in Northern Ohio; Denny Hudock, a racing fan since childhood, presents an overview of auto racing in this area. Our transportation legacy includes Sportsman’s Park and Cloverleaf Raceway. Come and reminisce about this by-gone time.

February 7, 2008 7:30 pm Stories about Life in Little Egypt, a thriving Bedford Township community from the early 1800s into the 1900s; Jean and Bill Kainsinger relate the story and other historical tales from Walton Hills. They will bring their new book for purchase and signing. An interesting evening from our Township neighbors.

March 1, 2008 Saturday 6:30 cocktails- 7:30 dinner. Annual Reverse Raffle and Dinner. Our first fundraiser of the year, this fun event hosted by the Society’s Trustees will be an epicurean delight. Phil, at Catered Elegance, is planning a memorable menu with a French theme- an Evening at Moulin Rouge. Forget the weather and enjoy an evening out.

March 6, 2008 7:30 pm; Cartoon Images of Kids at Play 1900 – 1925; Fred Schuld presents an interesting discussion about the games of childhood. His slide collection of newspapers and magazine cartoons shows play patterns from this era. Join us for an interesting discussion on childhood 100 years ago.

Please note that the Lyceum programs have a new starting time. We begin at 7:30 pm.

From the President-

Here we are at the end of another year. Our Antique & Appraisal Fair was a success. Our next big fundraiser is the Reverse Raffle & Dinner on March 1, 2008. A ticket to the event would be a great Christmas or Birthday gift. What fun to give a wonderful meal and a chance to win $2,500. We will seat you with interesting tablemates or purchase a whole table for your friends. The Dinner and Raffle is always a great time.

The end of the year is the time to consider making a contribution to the Bedford Historical Society Endowment Fund. This tax- deductible contribution will help keep our museums and educational programs going into the future. Happy Holidays, from Betsy Lee

October Lyceum an Evening of Remembering

The October Lyceum was a special evening of remembering life in Bedford and the township communities. Ev & Mike Sawastuk, Cleaster & Flora Fowler, Holsey Handside, Garth McAdoo, Dave & Shirley Boam, Mary Houghton, Luverne Skillicorn, John Straka and Lad Vitu answered questions asked by Bedford High School’s National Honor Society. The students accompanied by their advisor, Mrs. Michelle Bellini, impressed the audience with their insightful queries. Roger Fuhrmeyer hosted the evening, which was recorded by Bedford Schools cable broadcast channel. It will air on cable television for those of you who missed the program.

Thank you, Popcorn Crew

Our thanks to the following for helping pop popcorn at the Parties-in-the-Park- Jules & Alma Rhine, Irene Rhine, Laura Flaisig, Lee & Barb Aldridge, Marge Keene, Helen Hurtuk, Jane Backo, Roy & Sharen Naylor, Evelyn Sawastuk, Betsy Lee, Therese Chapman, Patti Sirna, Chris Sweet, Frank Caldwell, Pat Bosway and Rita Heintel. Thanks to Chris Sweet for ordering the popcorn and to Lynn Jones for lining up volunteers. These enthusiastic ambassadors served up $ 390.50 of popcorn.

Newly Painted Sign

Our thanks to Roger Fuhrmeyer for painting the large Town Hall Museum sign mounted on the outside wall. He painted it with beautiful lettering and trim. Thanks also to Gary Watts and Frank Caldwell for removing the 6’ x 8’ sign and remounting it.

Don’t forget the Museum Store has many items to complete your Christmas Gift List. Last day for Christmas shopping at the Museum Store- December 20th. We will reopen on January 2nd.
So Long Students

Our summer students were off to college this fall. Siobhan enters her third year at Defiance, Tim enters his senior year at Mount Vernon Nazarene and Ashleigh starts her college career at Howard University. We wish them well and will miss them.

Front Landscaping Newly Installed

The portion of landscaping facing the Square between the Town Hall Museum and the Old Church has been newly landscaped. The original landscaping was dedicated to Mike Bucur, long time city landscaper and Sam Niver, community activist and editor of the local paper.

The area was redone in loving memory of Don Grossenbaugh, mayor of Bedford and John Piazza, honorary mayor of the Square. The families of Don and John provided the funding to redo this area.

These four people from all walks of life are examples of citizens who made our town a better place. The beautification of this area gives us pause to remember their dedication to community.

Old Church receives a Face Lift

The Old Church received a facelift this summer as part of the ongoing preservation of our historic buildings. Board replacement due to an over zealous squirrel and fresh paint on the upper portions now protects the building.

What is New at the Museum

The Taylor Exhibit continues on the third floor. The first floor has a new display of jewelry and adornments from other times. Included are the museum’s extensive hatpin collection, extensive shoe buckle collection, men’s jewelry and assorted pins and brooches. There is also a collection of brooches for horses. These beautiful matching items adorned the bridles.

Construction of a new display for our Walker China collection is to begin shortly. If you would like to help, please call the museum.

Sign at the Holmes County Genealogical Society

“We are who you were.”

Thanks to the Old Ways School Teachers

The fall semester of the Old Ways School concluded in early October. Our sincere gratitude to the instructors for sharing their knowledge- Carol Pittis, Lester Pratt, Andy Jones, Linda & Mary Sleeman, Roger Fuhrmeyer, Betsy Lee and Alma Rhine. These folks donate their time so that we can offer this to the community.

Forbes Woods

The society conducted a survey for Cleveland Metroparks recently. A committee of seven members drafted a survey to inquire about Forbes Woods use as an archaeological field site for colleges and universities in the area. The ruins of the old farmstead are on the property.

The ground breaking for Forbes Woods was on October 10th. The event included students from Columbus Road School who practiced their ‘digging skills’ under the supervision of Kathie and Jim Rice and Lynn Beveage.

Whoops- Correction

Last issue’s listing of the Strawberry Festival Raffle had the first two prize winners correct but the rest needs corrected to: T. Tench, M. Caldwell, Dom D., L. Hamilton, E. Lautanen, L. Yarish, S. Martin, E. Gould, D. Dick, M. Wise, L. Patrick, M. Romito, L. Skillicorn, J. Molinar, M. Lee, L. Hendrickson.. Sorry for the mix-up; We have not been able to reach ‘Dick at a Garfield address.’ The ticket stub is incomplete, the phone number is not correct. If this is one of your ticket holders, please give us a call. Thanks.

Cemetery Project

Trustees of the society approved the establishment of a fund for preservation of the older stones in Bedford Cemetery. Proceeds from a book about the cemetery currently being published by the society will be used toward the project.

Please keep us advised of your new address. The Post Office does not forward non-profit mail. If you know someone who is not receiving the Bee, let us know the new address.
The Town Hall Museum will feature:

- Phil Saunders’s Christmas Village
- Caroling by The Golden Tones
- Coffee, hot chocolate and bakery

Geocache Update

Our Geocache at Viaduct Park continues to attract visitors, many of whom would not normally have visited the park. Many Geocachers comment about the beauty of the site and the interesting history of the area.

A New Membership Secretary

We welcome Marge Keene as the new membership secretary for the Bedford Historical Society. Marge has been an active volunteer for many years and is currently serving her first term as a Trustee. We thank Frank Caldwell for serving as interim membership secretary.

Conservation Project Completed

Thanks to a grant from Bedford Eagles Lodge # 2122 and the volunteer efforts of Andy Jones and Frank Caldwell, the last of our Civil War and Lincoln books are protected with Lexan doors. This large and valuable collection contains hundreds of books.

This project plus the summer project involving a solar protective film on the first floor windows and metal shades has helped us conserve the first floor holdings of the museum, archives and library.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all our members, near and far. Stop and visit when you are in town!

Newspapers See the Light

The Bedford Historical Society is a resource for past issues of the local papers. Some of our earliest papers are over 100 years old. Newspapers are fragile, particularly the pulp papers from the first half of the 20th century. These issues deteriorate at a faster rate than earlier papers.

Jules Rhine, assisted by his wife Alma, has spent two years photographing the most fragile papers and recording them onto CDs. We can now obtain information without handling the originals. They can be enlarged for easy reading. Unlike microfiche or microfilm, the digital images are in color and more easily read. Our thanks to Jules and Alma.

Obituaries

Wayne Lamont Reichle; Wayne Reichle passed away on March 16, 2007. Wayne was a Bedford resident for many years and a society member. He served as a Trustee and was vice-president in the mid 1970s. Wayne worked on obtaining the Old Church as part of the Society’s inventory of historic buildings. He was preceded in death by his parents, his son, Hal and former wife, Barbara Handyside. Donations in his memory may be made to the Bedford Historical Society Endowment Fund.

James L. Stanton; Jim Stanton passed away on November 10, 2007. Jim joined the society in 2005 and became an active member. An accomplished professional organist, Jim performed at many events throughout Ohio, including a recent society Lyceum concert. He was a Bedford High graduate and helped with many reunions. Jim served his country in the U.S. Coast Guard. Jim was preceded in death by his wife, Ethel and a son, James Jr. Surviving are his children, Margaret Kuchnicki, Kathleen Tedrick, Michael and Edward, brothers William & Daniel, 8 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

Julia Zemon; Member Julia Zemon passed away in October 2007. She was a member and supporter since 1996. Julia was a dear friend of the Meighton family and will be missed by all.
From the archives…  

A “Swell Christmas Gift” from Home

While packing 19th century newspapers and magazines safely away in acid-free boxes, Paul Pojman and I came across a 20th century treasure. A scrapbook, with a dark brown cover embossed in fading gilt symbols of war, held a few hundred letters, notes, greeting cards, Christmas cards and postcards. All were dated between December 1942 and March 1943. All had the familiar return address that began with Name, Rank and Serial number that we see from men and women in the military. And all were being sent to the same address: Lions Club Bedford Ohio U.S.A.

This mail came from all over the U.S.: Camp Tyson, Tennessee; Chanute Field, Illinois The U.S. Naval Reserve Aviation Base in Olathe, Oklahoma; Fort Ethan Allen, Vermont, Camp San Luis Obispo, California. Some came from “Somewhere in England”, some from North Africa and some writers say the censor won’t let them name where they are, “but it is warm and sunny and some of the women are wearing sarongs”. All mail has been stamped “Passed by Naval Censor” or :Examined by Army”.

As we carefully turned the 60 year old pages, 38 in all, we read their contents and found the writers were expressing thanks for a gift they had received from the Bedford Lions Club. Describing it, they wrote “It was more than welcome”, “it felt like a warm handelasp”, “an unexpected and welcome gift”, “a most generous gift” and “thrilled not as much from the pecuniary standpoint....but from the .friendship shown”. So, we knew the gift was money, but we wondered, how much and in what form.

The mother of one of the writers had that answer for us. Mom worried that her boys thank you note might not make it to the Lions Club, it being war time and all, and she wanted to confirm how very happy he had been to receive a $3.00 money order along with a friendly, informative letter. Paul, Janet and I tried to convert $3.00 to today’s value and so used the price of a pack of cigarettes. Not really the way to convert currency values, but we thought that was one way to spend the money. I remembered buying smokes for my girl-friends’ grandmother in the 1940’s and the cost was 14 cents! Generous gift, indeed!

As welcome as the money was - ex: “how did you know I had only $.40 left in my pocket to last until payday?”, a new 2nd Lieutenant “will purchase gold bars and insignia”, Chaplain John Price “will send my money to Bedford Hospital to buy cheer for patients” another officer wrote he would use the gift for a gift for someone who has none and sign the card from the Bedford Lions Club”.

Even more welcome to all of them was the letter that came with the gift. “...money is not much to a soldier, but a greeting from one at home is cherished as a luxury”; “...the arrival of news from home meant as much or more”; “the Christmas greeting alone was a swell gift, even without the money”. Being remembered by sending news of home made a huge impression on these boys of Bedford.

Another theme is that of optimism that “this mess” will soon be over and there was no doubt at all about who would be Victorious. The only question was When. One young man, writing on Dec. 7, 1942, notes that “the 1st year of War is completed. Then he added his wish, “And May it be the Last”.

Sadly, it was not. Another two and a half years went by before those who returned would be able to do what one soldier wrote - “...all that most of us long for is to just sit around with family and friends and talk about not much of anything”.

I’ll close this with a quote from one homesick young corporal _ “I’ve seen a lot of this country, but for me I wouldn’t trade the worst part of Ohio for the whole of it. For me, there is only one state and only one city - Bedford Ohio.

Joyce Maruna, Bedford Historical Society

Cover of the scrapbook containing thank you letters from GIs to Bedford Lions during WWII.