



CRIDERSVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY Newsletter

JANUARY-FEBRUARY-MARCH 2025



CHRISTMAS ON MAIN STREET

On December 14, 2024 the village celebrated its 15th Annual *Christmas on Main Street* event. The celebration included 14 stops throughout the community. Participants were given a *Passport* to be stamped at each location. Everyone then assembled at the Fire Station for the giant Christmas Gift Drawing.

Our Local History Museum was one of the 14 stops for the event. Visitors had the opportunity to tour the museum with all its holiday decorations. The visit concluded in the meeting room where a 4 foot by 24 foot Christmas Village with three model railroads had been assembled.

You could hear the gasps of delight as children entered the room. There is something mesmerizing about a model railroad display for children and adults. Our thanks to Brian and Stacey Cook for making the display possible each year.

Native American Structure EXHIBIT

In November 2024, 60 Fourth Graders at the Cridersville Elementary School made models of Native American Structures—wigwams, tepees, and longhouses. The models were put on display in the cafeteria during the annual *Christmas on Main Street* celebration in December. People who visited the school were invited to join in a *People's Choice* vote to select the best models.

The museum was proud to exhibit the ten winners during a special open house event on February 22 and 23. Each winner received a Certificate of Merit and a \$10 Walmart gift card. We believe this was an excellent opportunity to commend the students on their good work and their interest in history.



Audie Kline (right) and his family with his model at the exhibit.



Kenzie Sawmiller (right) and her family with her model at the exhibit.



Max Paule very kindly donated his wigwam model for exhibit at the museum. He plans to join the Historical Society as a Student Member.

Preserving Our Past For Future Generations



Sheeley Lunch Room & Meat Market—1912

New To The COLLECTION

The Historical Society monitors items for sale on the internet that relate to our local history. We were recently able to buy the postcard shown above. It shows Earl Sheeley (left) standing in front of his Lunch Room and Meat Market at 220 W. Main Street. The names of the men standing with Mr. Sheeley are written on the back. The postcard was never mailed. The seller lives in San Francisco.

In 1912 a fire started in the Reichelderfer Livery Stable located on the eastside of the Sheeley Lunch Room. It destroyed the livery stable, lunch room, and an oil well boiler repair shop.

Remarkably, we recently received a request for information from the Ed and Peg Tobin family about Earl Sheeley. We were able to send them copies of the postcard and the photo below. This is the mission of a local historical society. We are pleased to be able to share items from our collection.



Northside of the 200 block of West Main Street in 1910. On the left (with awning) is the Sheeley Lunch Room and Meat Market. Next to it was the Reichelderfer Livery Stable. On the southside of the street is an interurban car of the Western Ohio Electric Railway.

YOUNG HISTORIANS CLUB



HAVING FUN WITH HISTORY

A collaborative project of the Cridersville Historical Society and Cridersville Elementary School



On September 9, 2024, thirty seven members of the Young Historians Club visited the site of Fort Amanda—one of the US War of 1812 forts on the Auglaize River. Sean Heights, advisor for the club, gave an excellent tour of the site. He explained how the fort was constructed in October of 1812.

The fort housed soldiers and also had space for storing supplies, corrals for animals, and a place to build boats. When completed, the boats were loaded with soldiers and supplies to be transported to other forts along the Auglaize and Maumee Rivers.



The Young Historians toured the Cridersville Fire Station on November 13. It was part of their study of Cridersville's Great Fire on May 2, 1918.

They learned about how the discovery of oil in 1885 caused the village to grow rapidly and how the business district developed in the 100 block of E. Main Street. The presentation included photographs of the stores, restaurants, hotels and offices in this area. One day in May of 1918, a clerk at one of the stores went out back to burn trash. The wind took embers from the fire to the roof of a barn nearby. Within three hours the fire destroyed all the buildings on both sides of Main Street. In total, 32 structures were destroyed and 50 people left homeless.

The Young Historians also toured the fire station



and learned about the department's modern fire fighting equipment and the changes in fire prevention since 1918. Local firefighters explained how fireproof building materials, building setback requirements, and municipal fire hydrants help to prevent major fires like Cridersville's disaster on May 2, 1918.



There is a lot to discover from our local history!

Our Young Historians Club enables our student members to enjoy the fun of history.

OUR WAR OF 1812 FORT

A LOCAL HISTORY PERSPECTIVE

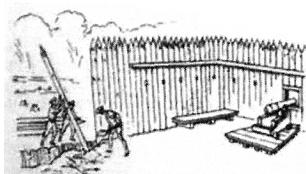


Fort Amanda was the first fort in the US Army's supply chain in Ohio during the War of 1812. It was built at the north end of a trail in western Ohio at the head of navigable waters—where the water was deep enough to float boats—on the Auglaize River. What was needed was a fort that was defensible, large enough to house soldiers plus adequate facilities for storing materials, corrals for animals, and a place to build boats. It was

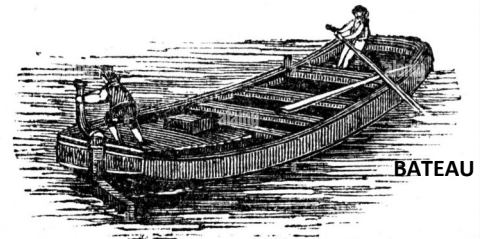


to be more than a typical frontier fort. It needed to be a major production and warehousing facility that also served as a quartermasters depot for the Army. The site for the new fort had to also provide easy access to the river.

Construction of the fort was assigned to a Company of Kentucky volunteers. Men from other Companies who had carpentry skills were also sent to aid in building the fort. With the site chosen and the workforce in place, construction began around the second week of October 1812. The fort was to be built as a square with blockhouses at each corner and stockade walls. The stockade walls were made of logs from six inches to one foot in diameter and 15 feet long. They were placed upright side by side in a two-foot-wide and three-feet-deep trench. Once the logs were in place and secured, dirt was shoveled back around the base and tamped down. To help strengthen the wall, a board spanning several of the upright logs would be nailed or pegged in place.



Building boats was a major goal at Fort Amanda. Soldiers and civilian contractors created a large boat construction area on the opposite side of the river from the fort. The boats built at Fort Amanda had to be able to navigate the winding and shallow Auglaize River. The most likely types of boats built at the fort were flat-bottomed with sides called punts for transporting supplies and equipment and bateaus for transporting troops. When completed, they were pulled to the fort-side of the river and loaded with troops and supplies to be transported to other forts along the Auglaize River and beyond.



William Henry Harrison

GENERAL HARRISON ARRIVES AT FORT AMANDA

William Henry Harrison was a Major General in the War of 1812. He led the American Army to victory at the Battle of the Thames in Canada on October 5, 1813. He defeated Shawnee Chief Tecumseh's Confederacy and their British allies. Tecumseh was killed in the battle.

Fort Amanda was a flurry of activity on April 8, 1813. General Harrison and his senior staff arrived at the fort around 1PM. His objective was to load men and supplies for a journey to Fort Meigs, the US headquarters for the war in the Great Lakes region.

It is estimated the trip would have involved 25 boats for his troops and another ten boats for supplies and ammunition—a total of 35 boats. Without doubt, this was the largest armada of boats to ever navigate the Auglaize River before or since.

When Harrison and his men left Fort Amanda on April 9, it is likely they went 23 miles to Fort Jennings. The next day they continued 30 miles to Fort Brown. On April 11 they traveled 17 miles to Defiance and then continued on the Maumee River. They arrived at Fort Meigs on the morning of April 12. The fort was located near the present city of Perrysburg, Ohio.

After the war ended in 1815, the US Army began plans to close Ft. Amanda. By 1817 early pioneer families were living in the former fort.



The Fort Amanda Memorial Obelisk Monument was erected in 1915 to mark the site of the original fort.

UPCOMING EVENTS

OPENING DAY

APRIL 14, 2025

The museum will officially open for the 2025 season on Sunday, April 14 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. We will be showcasing new items in the collection. The museum received several items from the estate of Clyde and Mary Cook of Lima. They include a very large



Victorian doll house with furnishings and an assortment of dolls. They are all excellent additions to our collection and will be popular with children of all ages.

We invite you to join us on Opening Day!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Annual Beef & Noodle Dinner

Thursday, May 1, 2025

Cridersville Elementary School

4:30PM —6:30 PM

OUR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Greg Myers, President

Lisa Lowry, Treasurer

Melanie Kloucek, Secretary

Board of Trustees:

Lori Bellman Frank Valenti

Jerry Dicus Beverly Wood

Luann Everett

MUSEUM HOURS

Second and Fourth Sunday

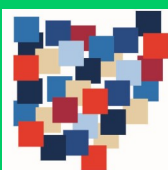
April through October

1:00 PM—4:00 PM

Special tours can be arranged throughout the year by calling 419-645-4782



Learn more on our
Facebook page



MEMBER
**OHIO LOCAL
HISTORY ALLIANCE**
Inspire. Connect. Educate.

New to the Museum Collection



The Ron Delong family recently donated an item that has been in their family for more than a century. It is a snare drum from the Cridersville Coronet Band. During the last quarter of the 19th century, a local brass band was a must for every prosperous community and Cridersville was no exception.

Comprised of local volunteers, the band played at dances, church socials, and community events. It was called upon each year to perform on Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, and the Big Four Reunions held in Delong's Grove. The Grove was a shaded picnic area with a bandstand and horse race track. It is now the location of Onalee, Marcella, and Lavina Drives.

Ron Delong's great grandfather played the snare drum in the band. He is shown standing on the right behind his drum in this photo. We appreciate the Delong family adding it to our local history collection.



LOCAL HISTORY GENEALOGY

David Briggs, from California, came to the museum in February to research family genealogy. He is a descendant of the Benjamine & Elizabeth Bowsher Family who came to the area in 1836. He is shown in this photo with his cousin Beverly Wood, a trustee of our historical society, and his sisters Paula Briggs (seated right) and Rae Adele Hinkle (seated left).

—BECOMING A MEMBER—

Our mission is to save our local heritage for future generations. We do this through exhibits at our museums, our special public education programs, and our activities with local students.

**It is important work and it is fun.
We invite you to join us in the fun.**

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Individual — \$10 Student — \$5

Dual Membership — \$20 per couple

Patron Levels — \$50, \$100, or \$250

Corporate Levels — \$100 or \$250

Please make membership payments to:

Cridersville Historical Society, P.O. Box 2444, Cridersville, Ohio 45806

CRIDERSVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

111 W. Sugar Street

P.O. Box 2444

Cridersville, Ohio 45806

Preserving Our Past For Future Generations