

# HISTORICALLY SPEAKING

September 2016

The Newsletter of Muskingum County History

## MUSEUMS OF MUSKINGUM COUNTY HISTORY

The Stone Academy Historic Site & Museum  
115 Jefferson Street  
Zanesville, Ohio  
Hours: Wednesday-Saturday 1:00-4:00  
May through September

Dr. Increase Mathews House Museum  
304 Woodlawn Avenue  
Zanesville, Ohio  
Hours: Sunday 1:00-4:00 May-September

Both museums are open by appointment from October through April. Call the museum office at the Stone Academy at 740 454-9500 or contact us through our website

[Muskingumcountyhistory.org](http://Muskingumcountyhistory.org)

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2016

The manner in which local history museums interact with their communities has changed over the years. At one time, museum visitors would come to see the physical artifacts that connected them to their families. This may still be true in small towns where few new families move in and many residents are descendants of the founding settlers. In larger towns, including those the size of Zanesville, there is more change as young people leave to find careers while new people move in to run chain retail shops and industries or to fill positions in the learned professions such as edu-

cation and health care and retired persons leave the big cities for the slower pace of small town life. These people might have an interest in the history of their adopted towns but without the long-term connections to past generations, one visit for an overview is sufficient. Larger, well-funded institutions such as the Zanesville Museum of Art or the Decorative Arts Center of Ohio, are able to organize changing exhibits that give visitors reasons to return on a regular basis but smaller museums with limited space, money and staff have fewer opportunities to make changes and must rely on static exhibits that may not change for years.

In a world that thrives on change, how are the smaller museums to stay relevant and justify their place in the community? I can offer three ways:

1. There will always be a place for traditional museum displays, we just can't expect them to generate the interest they once did. John McIntire's desk, John Mathews' transit, Gen. Herrick's portrait, Zanesville art pottery and glass, and archival photos and documents are tangible ties to Muskingum County's past, both distant and recent.
2. If museum visitors don't come to us we can go to them in the form of our publications. *Muskingum Journal*, now in its twenty-third year of publication, has allowed us to preserve written accounts of our history by printing new research articles and articles that were written in the past which had fallen into obscurity. Two recent examples of the latter group are Zachariah Chandler's history of Putnam and a series of papers written by Andrew Peirce.
3. The general term *programming* covers a wide variety of activities ranging from entertaining musical concerts to straightforward lectures, all designed to increase our understanding of our history.

It is in this third approach that we may have found our calling. Public programming is

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nothing new for us, the lecture series "Southeastern Ohio: Its People, Places and Past" ran for close to 20 seasons in the 1970s through 1990s, but we really started to come into our own with our observance of the bicentennial of the Stone Academy in 2009. This was followed by our programs celebrating the bicentennial of Zanesville as the state capital and the centennial of the 1913 Flood. Last year we developed a new relationship with On the Same Page Muskingum built around the life and works of Zanesville native Zane Grey which resulted in living history presentations, a roots music concert and lectures.

This year our collaboration with OTSPM under the general title of *Exploring our Underground Railroad Heritage* has made possible our most ambitious schedule of programs yet with book discussions, many lectures, children's programs, and history walks. Side benefits of the five month program include the encouragement of ongoing research and the opportunity to work with the Putnam Presbyterian Church, Ohio University-Zanesville, the Nelson Gant Foundation and the Zanesville Museum of Art. Our work in the area of the Underground Railroad has gained the attention of the Ohio History Connection, the National Park Service and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

We will continue to operate our two museums and we hope you will visit them and support them with your donations of Muskingum County artifacts but keep in mind that we are about much more than static museum exhibits. With our publications and our programming we go out into the community to fulfill our mission to "celebrate and preserve the history of Muskingum County and its people."

*Mitch Taylor*, PRESIDENT MUSKINGUM COUNTY HISTORY

## DID GRANDPA WORK ON THE CHAIN GANG?

We receive many requests for information and we respond when we are able. One recent request is more interesting than most and will require the assistance of community members. Jeffrey Alan John, PhD, a retired associate professor of communication at Wright State, is researching the laying of paving brick on a section of the National Road (US Route 40) between Zanesville and Cambridge in 1918. A twenty-

seven mile stretch of the road needed improvement and the demands of World War I elevated the work to the level of a national emergency. The Burton-Townsend Company was to supply the Townsend pavers needed for the job and Rufus Burton, president of the company, was in charge. A holdup in the project was the lack of brick layers. Governor Cox talked to the warden of the Ohio State Penitentiary who arranged for 250 Black inmates to do the work. Dr. John would like to hear from family members of the inmates to develop the "human dimensions" of the road project. Any family information, whether it be from the family of an inmate, family stories of interactions with the inmates or stories of non-convict workers involved in the project would be appreciated. Dr. John wrote, "I would be especially interested in people living in your area whose fathers, grandfathers or other relatives worked on the rebuilding project, or knew someone who did."

This is a part of our history that has not received much attention. A Zanesville *Signal* article in March 1918 hailed the cooperation between the various branches of government who could put aside differences to get the work done. We would like to more about how the local public reacted to 250 convicts working in the community, especially Black convicts at a time when segregation still existed in Zanesville.

If you have any information about the bricking of the National Road in Muskingum and Guernsey counties between March and October 1918 please contact Dr. John at [Jeffrey.john@wright.edu](mailto:Jeffrey.john@wright.edu) or by mail at 122 Brown St., Apt E, Dayton OH 45402. We would also appreciate your information for our files so we can add to our Muskingum County archives.





The grandchildren were born over an 11 year period from 1854 to 1865 so we have assigned the piece a date range from 1854-1860. In terms of workmanship and technique the high-chair is far removed from the factory-made dresser, having been made by hand. Despite having many nominally round members, there is no lathe work in the chair, with an approximation of roundness having been made with a hand-held blade, possibly a draw knife. The chair was assembled with wedged through tenons. An extra set of holes on two of the legs show where Mr. Linn made a mistake, something which must have caused him grief at the time but which only adds to the character of the chair now.

This is the third time we have shared artifacts with DACO and on both of the previous occasions we have been very pleased with the high level of professionalism shown in preparing the exhibits. While we have not yet seen this exhibit we can recommend it to you based on past experience. The Decorative Arts Center is open Tues-Sat from 10:00-4:00 and Sundays from 1:00-4:00; admission is free. For more information visit their website at [www.decartsOhio.org](http://www.decartsOhio.org).

## MCH CONTRIBUTES TO NEW EXHIBIT AT DACO

The **Decorative Arts Center of Ohio**, 145 East Main Street, Lancaster, has a new exhibit running from September to December 31. **An Ohio Childhood, 200 Years of Growing Up** "illustrates the evolution of Ohio childhood from the frontier period to today." The exhibit uses photographs, paintings, textiles, books and toys to illustrate what it was like to have been a child in Ohio through our history.

Muskingum County History has loaned two items from our collection to the exhibit. A child's two drawer play dresser with mirror is one of two pieces of children's furniture purchased for the Christmas of 1897 from either the Wells or Ball furniture store in Zanesville for Ruth Morrison Decker (b. 1893) and Helen Morrison Jones (b. 1891) Both pieces were donated to MCH by William Decker, Jr. and have been on display in the Children's Room at the Dr. Increase Mathews House.

The other loaned piece, also normally displayed at the Mathews House, is a highchair made by Joseph Clark Linn (b. 1790) for his grandchildren, the children of Daniel Bliss Linn.



Linn highchair

# *Git on Board, Little Chillen*

Jim Geyer, Museum Director



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Our programming series, ***Exploring Our Underground Railroad Heritage***, continues through October. It's not too late to get on board!

- **Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup>**, 2:00 pm at the Putnam Presbyterian Church. **Anti-Slavery Tensions in Muskingum County: The 1835 Ohio Anti-Slavery Convention in Putnam.** Speaker: G.L. Corum, author of *Ulysses Underground: the Unexplored Roots of U.S. Grant and the Underground Railroad*.
- **Monday, September 26<sup>th</sup>**, 1:00 pm, at the Stone Academy. **Researching the UGRR: Ulysses Underground.** G.L. Corum returns to discuss researching and writing *Ulysses Underground*. (Corum will also speak about General Grant at the Zanesville Civil War Roundtable at 7:30 that evening at the Stone Academy.)
- **Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, History, Mystery, and Magic: The Story of Henry "Box" Brown** at Ohio University Zanesville (Elson Hall), 9:30 am for grades K-5, 11:00 am for middle school and high school. Living history presenter: magician Roy Rennick.
- **Sunday, October 16<sup>th</sup>**, 2:00 pm, at the Stone Academy. **The UGRR Comes Alive: John P. Parker.** Living history presenter: Anthony Gibbs of the Ohio History Connection.
- **Monday, October 31<sup>st</sup>**, 8:00 pm at the Stone Academy. **History, Mystery, and Unsettled Spirits.** Speaker: Gary Felumlee.
- Our guided walking tour, **Underground Putnam: A Walk Through History**, is available for groups **by appointment**, and for individuals on **Saturday, September 24<sup>th</sup>**, at 10:00 am. Walking tours begin at the Dr. Increase Mathews House.

Attendance so far has been capacity or overflowing. Several of the remaining programs are scheduled off site so that more can attend. More information about upcoming events can be found on our website, [www.muskingumcountyhistory.org](http://www.muskingumcountyhistory.org). You can also call the director at 740-454-9500.

In addition to attending programs we hope you are exploring the UGRR by reading. In August, our partners at **On The Same Page Muskingum** distributed free books about the UGRR to individuals and book clubs throughout the community. OTSPM is also sponsoring a **Local Authors Book Fair** at the library on Saturday, **September 24<sup>th</sup>**, from 10 am until 2 pm. At least ten authors who are from, or have written about, Zanesville and Muskingum County will be on hand to sign their books. **G.L. Corum**, whose book discusses the 1835 Putnam anti-slavery convention and profiles many of the delegates, will be there and would love to meet and talk with those who have read *Ulysses Underground*.

Looking ahead, Muskingum County History plans to include a UGRR Forum as part of the 2017 schedule of programs. A panel will discuss UGRR topics in a "Town Hall" format. Look for details in the Spring newsletter.

## NEW YORK'S VIEW OF MUSKINGUM COUNTY IN 1854

In *Muskingum Journal* 21:2 and 22:2 we printed promotional articles about Zanesville and Muskingum County that were originally printed in 1923 and c. 1910. A future issue will have an article describing Zanesville from the *New York Daily Graphic* of July 1878. The first two articles were written by local writers and were clearly meant to emphasize the better aspects of the county. The *Daily Graphic* article appears to be more objective but betrays its local connections in a few parts of the text. With the article printed below we go further back in time and the errors in reporting would seem to indicate that the writer was not a resident of Muskingum County and thus lacking in some of the biases shown by the other writers. The article at hand appeared in the *New York Tribune* in 1854. The text was accessed at funtonhistory.com and unfortunately, the top of the page with the date was cut off in the scan. We can only narrow the date down to July or August 1854.

### ZANESVILLE AND PUTNAM

Correspondence of the N.Y. Tribune.

COLUMBUS, O., Monday July 3, 1854.

The towns of Zanesville and Putnam lie on opposite banks of the Muskingum River, and were it not for the smutty, dingy look of the houses on account of the general use of bituminous coal, would be among the pleasantest towns in the State. The first takes its name from Ebenezer Zane. In 1796 Congress granted Mr. Zane "three military warrants not to exceed one mile square each" as a compensation for cutting a road from Wheeling to Maysville; the first of these was to be where the road should cross the Muskingum, the second where it should cross the Hockhocking, and the third where it should cross Scioto. With far-seeing sagacity, he located his first land warrant where Zanesville now is, attracted to this place by the large facilities for water mills. His third warrant was located not quite so fortunately, yet the land became valuable. It was on the opposite

bank of the Scioto across from Chillicothe. The law making him the grant compelled him to keep boats at all the ferries on the road. It is a fact worth noting, as a point from which to reckon progress, that "the first mail ever carried in Ohio was brought from Marietta to McCulloch's cabin—he was the ferryman at Zanesville—by Daniel Convers in 1798, where, by the arrangement of the Postmaster-General, it met a mail from Wheeling and one from Limestone—now Maysville. McCulloch, who could barely read, was authorized to assort the mails and send each package to its proper direction, for which he received \$30 per annum."

The town was laid out in 1799, and called Westbourn, because I suppose the proprietor thought he had reached the West, but it was afterward changed to its present name. Mr. M'Intire, Zane's brother-in-law [McIntire was Zane's son-in-law, ed.], kept the first tavern in Za-



nesville. It was built of logs and roofed with split clapboards, and enjoyed a great reputation in its day, on account of the nice table and lodgings provided for travelers. Those who have read Gen. Cass' "Camp and Court of Louis Philippe" will recall the fact that this man of such singular and varied fortunes, then a fugitive from France, was a guest in this wilderness-inn, and if I mistake not, the royal Philippe showed Mr. Cass the very entry, which he made at the time, of the

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cash expended at the place.

No place at the West has been more noted for the enterprise of its business men, and so early was this characteristic developed that the town was of sufficient importance to aspire to be the capital of the State, and succeeded so far as to have the Legislature hold its sessions there during the two winter of 1810-11 and 1811-12. These facts are derived from *The Zanesville Gazette* of 1835.

The hills surrounding the town are filled with coal and the river furnishes extensive water power. The slackwater navigation of the Muskingum gives trade a thoroughfare to the Ohio, and a side cut to the Ohio Canal has opened the way to the lake and the East for the vast quantities of flour here manufactured. The national road also passes through the town, and a railroad from Columbus to Wheeling also is completed from the former place to Zanesville.

Among the noted men of Zanesville was John M'Intire, who assisted to cut the road from Wheeling to Maysville, and who kept the first tavern in the town. He amassed a valuable estate and left it by will to provide schools for the poor of Zanesville, and this property, now worth some three thousand dollars, is accomplishing its beneficent purposes. On the hill, in a beautiful spot overlooking the river and the city, the M'Intire Academy is built, and the school, said to be one of the best in the State, is in full operation. The common schools of the city are of a high order, and those who are unable to pay receive all the advantages of instruction free.

The most remarkable business man the city has had, was Mr. Buckingham, who is said to have begun his fortune at the wood pile of Gen. Rufus Putnam at Marietta. Tradition says that one evening just before sundown, a rugged young man with his ax and budget on his shoulder, called at the general's door, and inquired for work, and was told by Gen. P. that he wished that wood pile chopped up, and

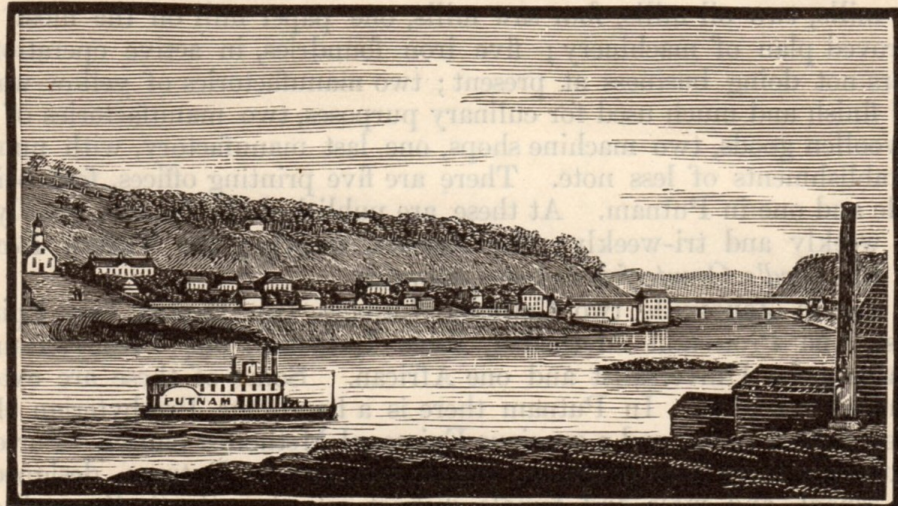
that he might go at it in the *morning*. The young man had been walking all day, but he instantly threw off his coat, and mounted a log with the energetic expression, "why can't I begin now?" And suiting the action to the word, he sunk his ax with a hearty good will into the wood, and worked till night. This was the prophecy of his own fortune. He afterward married Gen. Putnam's daughter. His activity and business foresight were prodigious, anticipating by years the duller perceptions of others and accumulating money with a rapidity truly astonishing. I am told he even anticipated that shrewd old gentleman "Uncle Sam" as to the location of a bridge for the national road, as well as the vast local travel of the city. In raising the bridge which now spans the Muskingum and Licking Rivers, a part of the frame fell, precipitating him and several others into the river. He was drowned, leaving an estate worth perhaps more than half a million. His widow, who has been dead but a few years, was a munificent patron of the Putnam Female Seminary, giving thousands of dollars to it, as well as to other public charities.

Perhaps the most noted young man Zanesville has numbered among her business characters is a nephew of Mr. Buckingham, the son of Mr. B's sister. He has displayed a capacity for business and a breadth and boldness of plan which seem to overshadow the activity of his uncle and his father—both of whom are reckoned among the ablest financiers Ohio ever produced. To engage in gigantic schemes of business seems as natural to William Sturges as to breathe; and he seems to accomplish them with as little trouble or vexation. With a capital in cash of \$20,000, and his father's name for another considerable sum, he seems to have acted on Shakespeare's oft-quoted philosophy:

There is a tide in the affairs of men  
Which, taken at the flood,  
Leads on to fortune.

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Venturing boldly into immense flour speculations, he closed them up with heavy profits. With the steadiness of a Wall st. broker, he opened banking ventures with brilliant success. For all sorts of ventures as yet "his stars have been lucky;" and yet with vast enterprises to be executed resting on his shoulders, he is as blithe as a bird, and frets not as much as ordinary country shopmen under the ventures of their sixpenny speculations. Withal, he is not a mere money-maker, but feels himself a man yet, and owns the obligation by giving sums which seem extravagant to aid forward the great charities of the day. Of course the end has not been reached yet, but present



Drawn by Henry Howe in 1846.

PUTNAM.

signs seem to indicate large accumulations, which past events show cannot fall into more worthy hands.

On the opposite side of the Muskingum is the beautiful town of Putnam, so called, I suppose, in honor of the commander of the first colony at Marietta, whose son [nephew, ed.] was one of the original proprietors of the place. There is as marked a difference between the business of Zanesville and Putnam as between that of New York and Brooklyn. The Buckingham and Sturges families, the great financiers of Zanesville, reside in Putnam. There is another difference yet perceptive, but not so much as formerly,

owing to the workings of the Compromise measures of 1850, and the abolition of the Missouri Compromise in 1854; I refer to Anti-Slavery feelings of the Putnamites, and quite a different class of feelings in their neighbors. In the days when Birney, Wild [Weld], Thom, and Blanchard, were mobbed in so many places in Ohio, Putnam was the place of more than one State Anti-Slavery Convention. It was once honored by a mob from Zanesville, and would have had another but for an old man named Nye, resolute as a bull-dog, and deaf as a post. The Putnam Mayor headed a party to resist the mob from Zanesville, and met those patriots at the bridge, reading the Mob Act and warning them against proceeding at their

peril. Our friend of the Indian wars, Mr. Nye, had his trusty musket honestly loaded for an emergency, but he could not hear what the Mayor said. So he touched his next neighbor on the shoulder—his gun was cocked and all ready—and asked him the significant question, "Does he say shoot?" The mobocrats heard the question, and it had more potency than the Mob Act, for knowing the iron resolution of Mr. Nye's character, and fearing he would fancy he heard the command "fire," they took to their heels much

to the merriment of all present.

(Illustrations from *Historical Collections of Ohio* by Henry Howe.)

SAVE THE DATE: SEPTEMBER 24<sup>TH</sup>, 10 AM UNTIL  
2 PM

ON THE SAME PAGE MUSKINGUM  
CELEBRATES LOCAL AUTHORS!



Meet authors who write

- ◆ *About* Muskingum County
- ◆ *In* Muskingum County
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Talk with these talented writers, and share their inspirations...and consider autographed books of local interest for special holiday giving! We'll be at John McIntire Library in Zanesville.

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(For more information, please contact [pamkirst@yahoo.com](mailto:pamkirst@yahoo.com).)