

# ARCANUM WAYNE TRAIL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## SHARING THE SECRET

April 2005  
Volume 1, Issue 2



Arcanum Wayne Trail Historical Society, Inc., 123 W. George St., Arcanum, OH 45304  
www.arcanumhistoricalsociety.org AWTHS@woh.rr.com (937) 548-6556

### President's Report

By Keith Furlong

March 26, will be the first anniversary of the meeting held at Dave and JoAnne Hill's home to discuss the formation of a historical society for the Arcanum area. Although it was our ambition to form a viable organization, none of us could anticipate how far we have come in one year. We now have our building and over one hundred members,

Renovations of the building are slowly proceeding. Replacing the roof is now taking place. A job that should have been done in ten days or so has now extended to weeks because of the lingering cold winter temperature and snow. Spring hopes eternal.

Inside, a group of dedicated individuals have been stripping wallpaper in the upstairs bedrooms while downstairs we have been renovating the woodwork. We have found that the original woodwork was oak and in later modifications yellow pine was used. We have nearly completed stripping the woodwork in the first three downstairs rooms.

In May-June we will be starting the renovation of the front porch, which is in dire shape. Bill Gunder has volunteered his services and skill in seeing this is done. We are trying to duplicate the original as much as possible. If any one has a picture of the original porch or how it looked in the early 1900s, please let me know.

The electrical system in the building must be replaced and state certified. We are working with a state certified architect and a licensed electrician to see that this is done. Until we have

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Report & AWTHS Auction	1
Treasurer's Report & Reception for Dave Hill	2
"Sharing the Secret"	2
History in a Bottle & Design Committee Report	3
Ways and Means Committee Report	4
Acquisition Report	4
Officers, Benefactors and Members	5
Arcanum Fire Department	6
Along the Trail	7

the electrical situation resolved, little more can be done on the interior. Replacing the wiring and adding new services, such as security and communication lines, may be very costly and time consuming, depending on the amount of volunteer help.

Please note elsewhere in this newsletter the number of fundraising events being planned for the next several months. We need your help to make them a success. Thanks to all that have worked so hard to get us this far in such a short time.

### Auction to Benefit the Historical Society

The Arcanum Area Business Assoc. will hold an auction to benefit the historical society Sunday, May 22 during Arcanum's Old Fashion Days. One of our members, Jeff Puterbaugh, a licensed auctioneer, will call for the highest bidder. Members with donations of new items, collectables and used items in good condition may contact Tom Staley, 692-8634 or 692-8050. Tom will pick up and store large items. The auction will be held at Memorial Park, next to the historical society, at 3:00 p.m.

### NEWS FROM THE PAST

(Arcanum Times, July 10, 1919)

*The opening game for the Arcanum Baseball Team at the new diamonds one-half mile east of Arcanum. Proved to be a walk-away for the home boys, Arcanum 13 and Whitewater 1.*

## Treasurer's Report

By Lois Eilerman, Treasurer



January – February 2005	
<b>Income</b>	
Donations	\$50.00
Memberships	\$250.00
Hall Rental	\$50.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$350.00</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>	
Utilities	\$414.74
Real Estate Taxes	\$286.75
Operating Expenses	\$762.34
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,463.83</b>
<b>Bank Balance</b>	<b>\$3,549.41</b>
Checking-\$1,767.91, Savings-\$1,781.50	

## “Sharing the Secret”

The title of our newsletter “Sharing the Secret”, is taken from the meaning of the word “arcanum”. According to the Oxford Universal Dictionary, the definition of the word “arcanum” is 1) a hidden thing; a profound secret; 2) one of the great secrets of nature.

In a personal account written by C.C. Pomeroy, he shares the secret of how Arcanum got it's name.

In the fall of 1848 two civil engineers were assigned to take test levels and cross sections from Dodson to Greenville for the railroad. On a cold, foggy, rainy day the two engineers took shelter overnight with the William Gunder family.

After a nice meal, Mr. Gunder asked the boys to stay the next day, to survey and map his town plat. Pleased with their work, he asked the young engineers to choose a name for the town. Saying no to their first suggestion “Gunderville”, Gunder replied “No, No! Ohio has too many “villes” now; you boys select a name and have one that is not on the map of the globe; have it ready for me when I come from work, as I am going to Greenville tomorrow and will have it recorded.”

After much thought on that murky, damp, sullen hazy afternoon, a remark was made “there must be

a word somewhere that fits the place and its surroundings to a gnat's heel; it is dark, it is dismal, it is gloomy, how would ‘Arcanum’ do?”

When having the map recorded the next day, the clerk in the recorder's office told Gunder that the young engineers were making fun of him in naming the town. “How? Why do you know the name means ‘secret, hidden’?” “I don't care what it means; is there a town in the world of that name?” “No” says the recorder. “Then the people who live there will have no trouble in getting their mail, said Gunder, and it is in harmony with surrounding conditions.”

*Excerpt taken from an article published in the Arcanum Enterprise newspaper written by one of the civil engineers, C.C. Pomeroy, who chose the town name. The article appears in the book “The Secret Town” written by William Gunder, great grandson to founder of Arcanum .*

## Dave Hill Art Show

The Darke County Parks would like to acknowledge Dave Hill for preserving Darke County nature and its beauties through his landscape paintings. He has captured the seasons in his paintings of Darke County's most picturesque creeks, streams and back roads.

Please join Arcanum Wayne Trail Historical Society in a reception for Dave, Sunday, May 15 from 2:00 – 4:00 at the Shawnee Prairie Nature Center. The center is located at 4267 St. Rt. 502 west of Greenville. The art show will be held May 14 through 21.

## NEWS FROM THE PAST

(Arcanum Times, July 19, 1919)

*On July 1<sup>st</sup> Arcanum will have free mail delivery. Each resident is to have their house numbered and have a mail receptacle. Residences to be numbered under the Philadelphia Plan of numbering ordained by Council Ordinance No. 50*

(Arcanum Times, July 3, 1919)

*Clarence Floyd was selected as carrier. Two deliveries have been provided for, the first at 10 a.m. and last at 4 p.m. Two special deliveries for the business section of four main squares at 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Stamped mail will be taken, but carrier is not compelled to stop for it.*

## Sharing the Secret

### History in a Bottle

By Holly Trigg - Program Chairperson

How are milk bottles and the telephone connected? The guest speaker for the May 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Arcanum Wayne Trails Historical Society can tell you. It was a day, thirty years ago on a repair for the telephone company, when Dick Hunt crawled under a house on Hogpath Road and found an old milk bottle there.

He was so intrigued by the bottle and the history surrounding it that he has been collecting and learning about antique bottles ever since.

The bottle became the first in a collection that has grown over the years. So has his knowledge of the history of the dairies of Darke County. To explore this fascinating aspect of local history Dick has bought books, talked to people, attended bottle shows and thoroughly enjoyed what he has learned. In addition to his deep knowledge of milk bottles he can tell you about how milk delivery has changed over the years as well as what kinds of machines were invented to process milk.

Dick was born and reared in Arcanum and four years ago moved to Greenville. He is married and has three children and three grandchildren. In his

over thirty years with the telephone company he has no doubt remembered fondly that day under the house on Hogpath Road and his first sight of the old milk bottle that has led him to learn so much about this part of the Darke County history. Please join us on May 12<sup>th</sup> to enjoy this unique view of our local history.



### Design Committee Report

By Carolyn Furlong

The Plan and Design Committee met, for the first time, at the home of Fred and Carolyn Troutwine March 3, 2005.

The committee's main focus, at this time, was to decide what will be the primary use of each room. A floor plan, prepared by Ken Blackburn, was studied.

A few topics of discussion were, for example, a room for "Pioneers and Businesses". Another room to display school, sports, and celebration memorabilia. "The Founders Room" for land-photos and historical

documents. The committee will soon be making decisions for interior paint colors for the walls, ceiling light fixtures, floors, windows, ect.

Members on the committee are Ken Blackburn, Carolyn and Fred Troutwine, Rose Lambert, Carolyn and Keith Furlong, Dick Hunt, and Joan Rench. Future meetings are in the works. If you would like to become a member of this committee and help us make some important decisions, please call Carolyn Furlong at (927) 548-6556.

### NEWS FROM THE PAST

(Arcanum Times, March 4, 1920)

*Town wants better service on the D&U. Before the war (WWI) Arcanum had four mail trains a day. Railroads were taken over by the government during the war and passenger service was curtailed with mail trains cut to two, one from the south and one from the north. Passenger traffic has dropped to almost nothing.*

## Ways and Means Committee Report

By Carolyn Troutwine - Committee Chairperson

We are reminded daily of our financial needs as we proceed with the renovation of the building. Zars and Dads, putty knives and paint scrapers, have become best friends as we attack the window frames, doors, and baseboard in the first four rooms. The Money Guess, chaired by Jenny Quigney, and Corn Bag Toss, (carpenters and chairman needed), are being organized to help offset the expense of materials needed to refinish the wood and paint rooms. Both activities will be part of Old Fashioned Days and promise to be lots of fun. Remember; bring change to each meeting to help fill the money jar.

Aluminum Can Recycling is off to a great start as society members and community friends bring cans to the container placed on the back porch. Large bags filled with cans encourage us that this will be a good fundraiser.

Lois Eilerman has gathered information about our organization having a booth at Annie Oakley Days. We envision our booth as an opportunity to publicize our organization. Any ideas for a moneymaker would be greatly appreciated. Also, we need someone to schedule workers and oversee the booth.

Initial start-up for bingo is too expensive for us at this time according to Lois. We'll continue to investigate all avenues and come up with a plan for "down the road"

The spirit and fellowship at "the house" during working hours has been heartwarming. It's our intention to have the building open by 9:00 a.m. Monday thru Friday for eager workers. For weekend

hours, call Keith or Fred and they will be happy to open the building. There are jobs for all!

## Acquisition Committee Report

By JoAnne Hill

We were fortunate to have five wonderful glass display cases donated to us by Sue Cummings and Glynn March from Union, Ohio. Their generous gift has now given us a place to display articles locked in cases and to acquire mementos about Arcanum and surrounding communities. In the mid-1800's Arcanum was the central hub for business in Southern Darke County. Customers traveled from the small towns and farms around Arcanum to make their purchases. Thus we welcome the communities of Pitsburg, Castine, Ithaca, Gordon and New Madison to preserve the history of southern Darke County.

The historical society is anxious to have items donated such as books (county histories and play books), census collections, and items purchased from early stores. Also included could be school pictures with identification if possible, family genealogies or mementos from early families. Furniture made in Darke County would be greatly appreciated as well as photos of old historical buildings. We are ready to begin with the collections and we know it will be a wonderful place for family and friends to visit and be proud of their ancestors and their heritage.

If you have items of interest to donate, please call JoAnne or Dave Hill (937-692-8330) or Carolyn Furlong (937-548-6556). Arrangements can be made to pick up heavy or large items.

## NEWS FROM THE PAST

(Arcanum Times, June 19, 1919)

*The Annual Conference of Old Order Dunkards in session early last week at Pitsburg was brought to a close late Wednesday evening after the query received by the standing committee relative to the right of a member to own and operate an auto was decided in the affirmative. The discussion consumed almost two whole days of the conference and was bitterly fought on both sides. This question has been bobbing up at each yearly meeting for about ten years and has been headed off or voted down each year until this, when the more liberal members decided to force a decision if it took a week or more. The query as finally adopted admonishes the members about purchasing autos immediately, asking them not to purchase until they become a necessity. The query also asks that the machines purchased be plain and not expensive in keeping with the church's policy of avoiding all extravagances. Probably the delegates coming the farthest to attend the meetings were Noah Spitler and Chas. Rumble of Modesto, California. This year the Canadian churches were not represented. It is estimated that between 300 and 400 delegates were present. During the five days of meetings 4859 pounds of meat was furnished by John Koehler, 4700 pounds of bread by a Piqua baker, 600 pounds of butter furnished by Covington Creamery Co., 124 gallons of apple butter and three barrels of pickles were used.*

## Arcanum Fire Department

Questions Answered—Mysteries to Solve

After an inquiry from a friend about the Arcanum Fire Department, Bill Gunder and Anita Short started their research into Arcanum's fire steam engine, fire wells, firehouses and the first community rescue service.

Mysteries surround the town's first fire steam engine. We know the Ahren steam engine, which the department has refurbished and now being used in parades, was purchased in 1885, this was verified by purchase data available on the Ahren Steam Engine website. Newspaper articles and town council minutes indicate a steam engine was purchased earlier, in 1881. Of photos shown by Bill during a recent program for the historical society, one photo shows a steam engine that had different size wheels than those shown in the other pictures. The photo shows that steamer being pulled by a pair of oxen. Is this a photo of the 1881 steamer??? And what became of the first steamer???

No mysteries here! First known location to house the steamer was the livery stables at 110 N. High Street. This building was recently used by Weimer's TV Repair. In 1891 the fire department moved to the new and present city building. The department has served the community since 1974 from the present location on South Main Street.

Fire wells were large cisterns dug in the streets, sometimes at an intersection, measuring generally

20 ft. by 20 ft. The cisterns were much like those used by homeowners to collect rainwater. At the time of a fire the steamer would be positioned near the cistern, water would be pumped out of the cistern to douse the fire. Information uncovered tells us there were originally 12 cisterns throughout the town in 1930. In 1956, the town council passed a law making it illegal to drive over the cistern covers, because of damage to the covers. During research by Bill and Anita, they found information about a survey made in 1939 of the town's sewer system, which also showed the location of the remaining cisterns. It was reported that the drawing was placed on the wall of the fire department. Another mystery, has anyone seen the survey map, or do you know of its existents???

1951 was the year Harold Krietzer and Robert Hixon volunteered to take their ambulance to the scene of fires to use in case of injuries. A few years later, in 1954, the fire department purchased an ambulance. Do you remember the ambulance shown here??

Can you help solve these mysteries? There may be answers in your family photos and in family correspondences or journals. Being a member of a historical society is helping to fill in the blanks.

*This information was taken from the program presented by Bill Gunder March 10, 2005*



### NEWS FROM THE PAST

(Arcanum Times, July 10, 1919)  
*Band Concerts in Arcanum every Wednesday evening until September except Chautauqua and Fair Week.*

(Arcanum Times, Sept. 25, 1919)  
*Application for charter American Legion Post to be known as "Col. Edward Sigerfoos Post" in honor of Col. Sigerfoos who was killed in the World War.*

(Arcanum Times, Jan. 29, 1920)  
*Due to the Basketball game with New Madison being called because of weather, the Alumni was called upon and Arcanum High School beat the Alumni 54 to 26.*

## Along the Trail

When brothers John and Samuel Smith came to Arcanum in 1852, they could not have known that John's descendents would continue ownership and operation of John's dry goods business for 144 consecutive years.

Jesse and Christina Smith brought their family to Lewisburg, Preble County, from Adams County, Pennsylvania in 1836. Jesse made a living as a merchant while teaching his sons the trade.

In 1850, at the age of 22, John was a schoolteacher in Lewisburg when he decided to join his older brother Samuel in business, operating a general store in the settlement of Sampson.

Sampson was in the southwestern part of Neave Township, at what is now the intersection of Jaysville–St. Johns Rd. and Hollansburg–Sampson Rd. where the farms of Gene and Joan Rench and Gene and Rita Myers are located. The town was platted in 1846 with homes and businesses on both sides of Jaysville St. Johns Rd.

When the railroad bypassed Sampson, businessmen moved their trade to Arcanum where they saw the future of a more prosperous town. This added to the decline in the growth of Sampson.

Samuel and John were there only one year. Aware of the benefits of the Greenville & Miami Railroad, which by now was operating through the new town of Arcanum, Samuel moved to Arcanum to start a dry goods store. It was founded where the

Simpson and Cline drug store was located, at 111 West George Street, where almost a hundred years later John Toops operated his bakery, making his wonderful "cream bread".

The store in Sampson was closed when John joined his brother in business here. The next year John purchased a lot across the street. In 1857 The Big Store was erected. Like so many others, it was erected up on log stilts, above the swamp waters that covered much of this area. The construction of the beautiful brick building we see today was started sometime between 1866 and 1874. It was built in 3 sections, with the last addition finished in 1886.

After Samuel left the dry goods business he eventually migrated to Kansas.

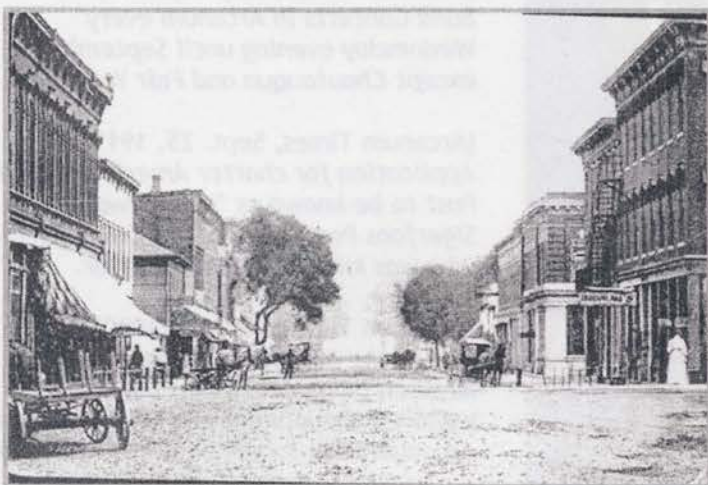
Samuel and John were not the only brothers to come up the trail from Lewisburg through Ithaca to Arcanum.

A. F. Smith was a druggist after trying farming and general mercantile.

William M. Smith was a miller, grain and tobacco dealer, also dealer and shipper of live stock.

All four brothers and their descendents contributed much to the Arcanum business and social life.

*Information for this article was taken from Beers Book of 1880, "History of Darke County, Ohio" and gathered from newspaper articles and conversations with JoAnne Hill.*



**One Man's Loss  
Is Another's Gain!**

We Have  
**LADIES**  
and  
**Gent's**  
**SHOES**

**\$1.00 Per Pair.**  
Just a FEW SIZES OF EACH SEX AT HOME LABOR  
**PLOW SHOES**  
**95¢. AND UP**

Prices Always the  
**LOWEST.**  
**The JOHN SMITH COMPANY.**

Arcanum Wayne Trail Historical Society, Inc. Board		
President	Keith Furlong	937-548-6556
Vice President	Fred Troutwine	937-692-8939
Treasurer	Lois Eilerman	937-692-8223
Recording Secretary	Pat Jones	937-692-5701
Corresponding Secretary	Barb Deis	937-678-7832
Directors	Rod Brown	937-692-5225
	Bill Gunder	937-548-8777
	Wendell Miller	937-692-8425
	John Trigg	937-692-8930

*Sincere thanks to the following businesses and organization for their generous donations to the Historical Society*

Arcanum Area Business Association  
Arcanum Garden Club

Arcanum Criterion Club  
Arcanum Lions Club  
Sunnyside Club

Arcanum VFW 4161  
Greenville National Bank

## Arcanum Wayne Trail Historical Society Members

Jean Aukerman  
Joe & Wanda Bailey \*  
Ken and Phyllis Blackburn  
Ellen Breece  
Ivan & Jerri Brown \*  
Merrie Ann Brown \*  
Rod and Phyllis Brown  
Jerry W. & Patricia Burns \*  
Joan Chapman  
Miriam Clark  
Robert and Joyce Colville  
Ernest and Marion Cooper  
Jack and Marlene Creech  
Carolyn Davison  
Robert & Marian Davison \*  
Jim and Barbara Deis  
Jo Dunlap  
Barbara Eberwein \*  
Mark and Lois Eilerman  
Dave and Beth Flora  
Larry and Judith Foureman  
Alan and Judy Fourman  
Mike and Kathy Fout  
Keith and Carolyn Furlong  
Phil Garbig (H)

Dick and Marilyn Graeff  
Cheryl Gray  
Bill Gunder  
Tom and Jean Hanes  
Glenna Hayes  
Dave and JoAnne Hill  
Jean Munn-Hillis  
Dick and Cheryl Hunt  
Lloyd & Myrna Hunt \*  
Christina Jones  
Pat Jones  
Jerry Kramer (H)  
Rose Lambert  
Imy Livingston \*  
Doug and Nora Mahoney  
Dick and Dee Mathias  
Darryl and Mary Anne Mehaffie  
Wendell and Jean Miller  
Betty Murphy \*  
Mike & Linda Newbauer \*  
Leonard Norris \*  
Helen North \*  
Dean and Marcia Pitzer  
Jewell Puterbaugh  
Jeff and Susan Puterbaugh

Jenny Quigney  
Gene & Joan Rench \*  
Terry & Darla Rench \*  
Duane and Joan Reynolds  
Linda Riley  
Peggy Sanders  
Dale & Betty Sease \*  
Sally Sherritts  
Anita Short  
Marilyn Skillern \*  
Tom Staley  
Allen Stastny  
Tom & Elizabeth Stephens \*  
John and Ella Stevenson  
Marilyn Strickler  
Ed Trick  
John and Holly Trigg  
Dick & Sharon Troutwine \*  
Fred and Carolyn Troutwine  
John and Angie Troutwine  
Lynn & Carolyn Trump \*  
Ben and Deb Williams  
Lew Williams (H)  
Cary and Theresa Wogoman

### Memorial

In Memory of Mary Paff Miltenberger-  
long time member of Wayne Trail Grange

### Welcome to All New Members!

(H) = Honorary Members \* = New Members

# Arcanum Wayne Trail Historical Society Calendar of Events

April 6, 2005	Board Meeting - 7:00PM
April 14, 2005	Business Meeting & Committee Reports - 7:00PM
April 16, 2005	Historical Society Open House - 2:00PM to 5:00PM
April 17, 2005	Welcoming Arcanum High School Alumni
May 4, 2005	Board Meeting - 7:00PM
May 12, 2005	General Meeting - 7:00PM Program: Arcanum Historic Bottles, Presented By Dick Hunt
May 15, 2005	Dave Hill Art Show At Shawnee Prairie Nature Center 2:00-4:00 p.m. Reception by AWTHS
May 20, 21, 22, 2005	Arcanum Old Fashioned Days
May 22, 2005	Auction with Arcanum Area Business Association 3:00 p.m. Memorial Park
June 1, 2005	Board Meeting - 7:00 PM
June 9, 2005	Business Meeting and Committee Reports - 7:00PM

WORKING TOGETHER TO PRESERVE YOUR MEMORIES OF OUR COMMUNITY!

Visit us on the Web at [www.arcanumhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.arcanumhistoricalsociety.org)

Arcanum Wayne Trail Historical Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 4

123 West George St.

Arcanum, Ohio 45304



Welcome to All New Members!  
00 - Honorary Member \* - New Member

Memorial  
in Memory of Mary Nell Miller -  
long time member of Wayne Trail Grange