

Local History Round Table Discussion October 24, 2023

(Images at the end of the article.)

The Local History Round Table met at the St. Marys Community Public Library on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, at 1:30 pm. Multiple businesses and several lots were discussed, as well as several questions to which no answers could be found.

Because no answers were found the library is looking for information on the following: a pickle factory that would have been in existence 60 or 70 years ago, the Broadwell Mill that was once located on Mill Road (Road 168) north of St. Marys, businesses located at Lock 14, and names of persons who had services at the chapel in Elm Grove Cemetery. If anyone is familiar with these places or has information please contact Beth Keuneke at the St. Marys Community Public Library, bkeuneke@seolibraries.org or plan to attend the next Round Table on November 28, 2023 at 1:30 pm.

Julie Graves brought in two property abstracts for lots 41 and 42 in original plat. These lots are located on the southeast corner of Spring and Wayne Streets, at 321 and 333 West Spring, now the location of The Cottage Shoppes and Cisco Realty. Graves was told that John Hollingsworth constructed the house at 333 West Spring (Lot 42). This house went to his daughter Isabelle "Belle" Jay, wife of D.W. Jay, after which the house went to their daughter Kathryn "Kit" Quinby. Jennie Huenke, Julie Graves aunt, bought the house and added onto the front from which she ran her millinery store. She had bought the Ed Thomas Millinery Shop and moved it into the house. Graves related that Jennie made a hat for Mamie Eisenhower and that she made a replica which has been given to the Auglaize County Historical Society.

John Hollingsworth built houses for his four children. The other three houses were located at 116 South Wayne Street, 129 South Wayne, and 203 South Main. The Chuck Huwer family lived at 116 South Wayne Street and according to the Ohio Historic Inventory the house was built in 1848 on lot 43. Graves related that it was said that Kathryn Quinby's brother, Charlie Jay, did not believe in banks so he buried his money in the yard. As kids Julie and her siblings asked to dig up the yard to look for the money and their mother let them. Unbeknownst to them at the time she was having her children dig up the ground where she wanted to plant things. Graves also related that her mother would move all of the furniture out of a room and then have the children put on socks and run and slide around the room, as a way to have the kids wax the floors as they played. The house at 203 South Main Street was built for Thomas Elwood Hollingsworth and during the 1940's and 1950's was the Sittlers' Memorial Home.

Keuneke brought a list of advertising businesses that were on the back of the "Vacationists map and guide of beautiful Lake St. Marys published by St. Marys Chamber of Commerce, St. Marys, Ohio." The attendees discussed the following businesses: Martin's R.C.A and G.E. radios, phonographs, appliances, and records, which the group identified as being on Spring Street and became Wilson's Sewing Machine & Music Center at 136-140 East Spring Street. According to the 1946 directory Martin's Inc. was located at 138-140 East Spring Street and by 1957 it had

moved to 120 South Front Street. Dale McCullough Sr. had McCullough Music selling automatic phonographs and vending machines at 112 S. Front Street.

According to a 1951 article Schwaderer Motors (Ford-Mercury Dealers) was located at 415 East Spring. This business was purchased by Robert Potbury and moved it to 425 East Spring Street. In 1961 and 1965 Potbury Ford Sales was located at 216-8 West Spring Street and by 1969 it was located at 1445 Celina Road.

According to the advertisement Favorite Cab was located on North Front Street, and was remembered as being located north of the police department when the police department was located on the corner of Front and Spring Streets. The 1965 Directory lists this business at 517 Linden Street run by Landis R. Taylor. The Blue Kitchen was mentioned as also being located behind the police department when it was on Spring Street. No one could remember who ran it and Keuneke could not find anything about it in the directories.

Another business listed was The Wine Center at 213 W. Spring run by B. E. Schaffer. This brought to mind the steps going up to the front doors of Jake's Pool Room and that the bar and pool tables were located in the back. There was a side room called the card room, where they played cards and you had to be eighteen years old to enter. Someone else said that they had the best hamburgers. Keuneke found Jakes' Party Shoppe managed by Mrs. Shirley L. Kleinhenz located at 213 West Spring Street in the 1969 and 1971 directories. Prior to this it was Bea's Party Shoppe and Liquor run by Mrs. Beatrice B. Graves, later managed by Ernest J. Berron. In the 1940's and 1950's it was the Wine Center. The Ohio State Liquor Store was located next door at 215 West Spring Street.

According to the 1946 directory Wayne Sporting Goods was located at 806 S. Wayne Street and run by Verling V. Nelson and William F. Hardin. Nelson's Barbecue located at 804 S. Wayne Street and Nelson's Body Shop located at 800 S. Wayne Street were operated by Verling V. Nelson. Kreb's Restaurant, East Spring, was listed but no one knew anything about this restaurant and Keuneke could not find anything in any of the directories.

Tabler's IGA Supermarket, a half mile east of the lake on Route 29, now 703, was thought to have become Rhodes, then Marsh, and now part of Kerns Ford. The 1946 and 1957 directories list Tabler's Grocery at 601 Hendricks Street, first run by Margaret Tabler in 1939 and then by James L. Tabler in 1946.

"Insist on Burger (The best beer in town)" states the advertisement. According to Wikipedia, the Burger Brewing Company was an American brewery based in Cincinnati, Ohio and one of the staple breweries of the region through the 1960s. The business began in 1880 and survived prohibition, but sold to Hudepohl Brewing Company in 1973. One of the attendees remembers Burger Beer as being a bitter beer and according to <https://lifetimetopps.wordpress.com/>, "Bürger Beer looks and tastes similar to what you'd expect from an American pale lager. It has a golden color, though it's a darker, fuller gold. You can taste the grain and malt, and it does have some bitterness to it." There was a beer distributor located across the street from the Friendly Tavern run by William "Bill" Zink Sr.

Another business that Keuneke could not find listed in the directories was Thwait's & Son Fruit Market, on the corner of Spring and Chestnut Streets. Attendees remembered a store at that corner that had shelves out front where the fruit was placed. A wire fence surrounded the shelves that was locked when the business was not open. It was located where the barber shop is now. Keuneke did find that Cecil Thwait's was the manager of the Kroger Grocery at 216 E. Spring and was the mayor of St. Marys from 1952 to 1955.

B.J. Balster Hardware at 146 East Spring Street, was run by Bernard "Ben" J. Balster. Several other hardware stores were at this location including Sidener & Sons (1961) and Maze Housewares and Hardware (1965). Attendees remember Charles Folk being there after Balster. The building burned and then Edward Noble and Eldon Montague built their offices at this location.

Kellermeyer Men's Wear had several locations and was first located at 323 E. Spring where GR8 Vines Winery is now located. They then moved to 123 West Spring Street next to the St. Marys Theater, then to 143 West Spring, in the former First National Bank Building. St. Marys Laundry and Dry Cleaners, 325 East Spring was also located in the GR8 Vines Winery building.

Another business that Keuneke had learned about was the Wisener 5 and 10 cent store located at 207-209 East Spring Street where Arts Place is now located and run by Fritz "Fred" L. and Ruth Wisener. They lived above the store. By 1961 they had added the Econ-O-Wash at 205 East Spring Street. In 1969 Fred and Ruth were the owners of Econ-O-Wash and the Blue Ribbon Laundry and Dry Cleaning. Their daughter Marjorie was the attendant at the Blue Ribbon Laundry and Dry Cleaning located at 1560 Celina Road. Later businesses at 1560 Celina Road were Lane's Drugs and Rite Aid Pharmacy and it is now TLC Learning Center. Lane's Drugs was started across the street where the Oak and Iron is now located and where Rick Frances had the Lost in the 50's Diner.

The next Local History Round Table will be held at the St. Marys Community Public Library on Tuesday, November 28, 2023 at 1:30 pm. The December meeting falls on a day the library is closed, so a special local history round table will be held at 7:00 pm on Dec 19, 2023. The public is invited to attend.

BROADWELL MILL

On this site in 1835 a mill was constructed
using a mill race for power

Destruction of the mill race by the 1913
flood ended operation



WILLIAM A. BARNETT, JR.
MILLSTONE
1835 - 1913