



Making Kelleys Island History Everybody's Business

Kelleys Island Historical Association

Volume 1, Issue 4

Fall, 2004

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Groundbreaking news...

It may not look like much but it means a lot to us ... this is a photo of the KIHA Museum's holding tank, in the ground, covered with dirt. This first step in our construction plans for the museum happened in September. Newsletter photos, unless otherwise noted, are by Claudia Brown.

KIHA plans for 2005

First and foremost, the plan is to build the museum (see photo-left).

Tour of Homes Resurrected

The KIHA Board also plans to resurrect the tour of homes. It is scheduled for a July date next summer. Annalee will be the overall coordinator of the event and other hands-on coordinators will be active closer to it. The exact date should be chosen before our next newsletter is printed.

A lot of people are needed during the day of the event to be in the homes being shown and to help direct attendees around the island. Consider signing up for a shift at a home. The Board has been working on an update to the guide to homes, previously published as the Tour Guide. The book is almost...**Cont. on page 2**

President's message

The leaves are changing and fall is here. It's hard to believe that summer is over and the season is winding down. It seems as though it was only yesterday that I wrote welcoming everyone back for the summer.

I would like to thank everyone for supporting our events this summer. It was a busy summer with the art show, open house, organ concert, Butterfly Festival and bake sale, butterfly tagging, and the painting and quilt raffles.

A huge thank you to all of our volunteers, without your time we would not be

able to keep the museum open for visitors to share in our Island history.

In the last newsletter I assured everyone that the orange stakes in the lot next to the museum were not for an alien landing site, but were actually the foot print of our proposed building. Now I would like to assure everyone that the mound of dirt is not a re-launching site, but is the sewage holding tank. After years of testing, applications, and extensions, the holding tank is in the ground. Finally! We are one step closer to a building.

We will keep you informed of progress on the building as it develops. At the present time we are waiting. Bid sheets were sent out to many local contractors and now we are waiting for returns. If any of you know of a contractor that may be interested in this project, please contact me and I will send them a bid package.

Hope you had a good summer. Enjoy this beautiful fall weather.

**Historically Speaking,
Michael Feyedelem
President**

A full season of activities and events

Events since the last newsletter have been many. The Art Show was held on August 7th and the drawing for Anne Sennish's painting of downtown KI circa 1865 was held. Lillian Phinney was the lucky winner.



Anne Sennish at Art Show with some of her lovely watercolors. Photo by Lori Hayes.

Many thanks go to Annalee, Bonnie & Ray Meyers, Ed & Carol Frindt, Byron & Shirley Crabill, Anne Sennish, Carole Geschke, and Russ Matso all of whom helped get the grounds ready for the event—and many stayed to work in their own booths. Many thanks to all the other volunteers that made it a successful event!

Fran Minshall and Laura Jean Porhorence made sure that quilt tickets were sold at Islandfest and at Homecoming. An organ concert was held at the Old Stone Church in conjunction with Kelleys Island Homecoming. Carol Schnittker played the church's ancient organ with Stuart Crotser pumping it



Organist Carol Schnittker just before her organ concert.

Schnittker played traditional church hymns and the audience was very appreciative of her expert skill. KIHA thanks both Carol and Stu for their help in bringing the organ to life once again.

On August 14th the Annual meeting was held outside behind the KIHA build-

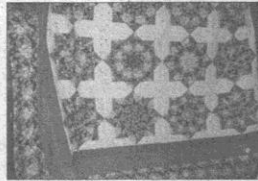
ings. Claudia Brown and Russell Matso were re-elected to the Board. Donna Algase and Mark Priebe expressed an interest in learning about preservation of paper objects in the museum collection.

The Butterfly Festival was once again a success. Russell Matso was the head chef for the food concession. Pat Hayes demonstrated butterfly tagging. Craft exhibitors Joe Corso, Anne Sennish, Bonnie Meyers, and Annalee had booths at the festival. Ed Frindt, Ray Meyers, and Russ Matso set up the tents and tables. During the Festival the tape of Betty Pape's Winery Talk—part 2—was shown.

The table of donated baked goods was sold out before midday and we had some real treasures at the Trash and Treasures sale. All the volunteers worked really hard to make money for the Building Fund. We thank them one and all: Russell & Bea Matso, Sis McKillips, Lisa Matso Luna, Jack & Mary Ellen Thinner, Marcy Mielke, Pat Hayes, Jacquie Kranyak, Marge Clapper, Cindy Merkel, Betsy Walcott, Nadine "Dee" Mack.

During the Butterfly Festival, Teri Betzenheimer Behrens, the quilt maker, was present when Nate Wessel of No. Canton drew the winning ticket for the Snowball Bush Quilt. Anne Davis of Ashland was the lucky winner.

The season wound up with the last KIHA potluck on September 23rd. Tapes of previous potluck talks and



This magnificent Teri Betzenheimer quilt was won by an Ashland, OH, woman during the Butterfly Festival. Photo Phyllis Pahler.

gatherings were shown. The food, as always, was wonderful.

Thank you to V.P. Russ Matso for organizing it.

KIHA plans—from pg. 1

finished and is scheduled to be published in time for next year's tourist season.

The Norman E. Hills' book, *A History of Kelley's Island, Ohio* has just been published for a third time and is available from the KIHA Gift Shop, the cover is dark green as was the original.

Teri Betzenheimer Behrens will once again do a quilt for a raffle and Joe Corso has donated a painting for a raffle in 2005. Those tickets will come to members by mail in the spring of 2005.

Membership—dues change reminder

Remember that one change to the Constitution and By-laws this year was that memberships will run from January 1st to December 31st. Renewal letters will be mailed to members by mid-January 2005 for their subscription. Members that renewed at the original time in the summer of 2004 have had that applied to their 2005 year. Upon renewal you will get a membership card in the mail. If you don't receive one, please contact us.

Recording our history

The Board purchased a digital camera this summer. It will be used to photograph KIHA events, take photos for the newsletter, and to photograph objects in the KIHA collection. Several years ago we purchased museum software to catalogue the collection and the software also accepts digital photos. All the photos for this newsletter were taken with the new camera.

Mark Priebe donated a computer to KIHA that is being used to transfer the pictures from the camera to a CD. KIHA purchased a CD writer so that photos can be archived for future use and it was also essential in the publication process.

Roger Williams donated a monitor to be used with the computer. KIHA also has also received a pledge for a scanner/printer for photographs which we may receive before the year is out.

Membership increases

The membership has increased this year and we are hoping to offer more programs next year for members.

It appears that 2005 will be one of our best year's ever!

Grape harvesting formerly an annual island event

Grape picking – Lydia Dwelle Bechtel, interviewed by Claudia Brown

Fall is a time of harvest, a harvest generated from hard work during the rest of the year. Kelleys Island was at one time full of farms and vineyards, very different from the on-going brush of today, that hides the lake from view. Farms and vineyards made the island feel open. You could see the lake from quite a ways inland and the farmland, pasture, and vineyards went on and on. **Lydia (Dwelle) Bechtel** was born and raised on Kelleys Island, the daughter of **Nelson Dwelle** and **Rose (Feddersen)**.

Lydia remembers one fall, in 1933, when she was allowed to go grape picking. Many adults and older children went grape picking—it was an annual event. The vines that had been planted, nourished, and tended finally gave up their fruit in late September or early October. The time of year for the harvest varied with the weather conditions for that year. Children were given time off school for grape picking—all hands that wanted to work could.

There were lots of grapes on the vines and they all became ripe at the same time. There was a flurry of activity as the harvesters worked hard to get all the grapes picked for shipment to wineries. By 1933 the island had lost its wealth of wineries, so the grapes

...He didn't want his little girl
picking grapes...

were shipped off the island by boat for market elsewhere. Lydia's family did not own a vineyard and she had never picked grapes. Lydia knew that women and students had fun picking grapes, even though it was hard and long work.

The other nice thing about picking grapes was that you got paid, and on Kelleys Island in 1933 there weren't

many things that a young woman could do to make money. Lydia's father Nelson Dwelle was not keen on his daughter picking grapes. "He didn't want his little girl to pick grapes." Maybe he was too proud to think he had raised his daughter for a laborer. Maybe he didn't



Lydia Bechtel

think it was ladylike to pick grapes, or maybe he thought it would be too hard a type of work for Lydia. Whatever the reason may have been, Nelson did not want Lydia to pick grapes, but you know how persistent a girl can be, and he finally gave in.

At that time, the **Marchkys, Beckers,** and **Schlesselmans** still grew grapes. Lydia picked Catawba grapes that autumn for **Henry Schlesselman**. She was the only student out of her class of 12 (class of 1934) to pick grapes that year. Mr. Schlesselman's barn was at the corner of today's **Harbor Lane and East Lakeshore Drive**. The Schlesselman house was white and to the west of the barn. (Harbor Lane did not exist until years later when **Hunter and Cruse** subdivided property and re-named the farm lane to Harbor Lane.) When Lydia was picking grapes it was just a farm lane.

My grandparents had the farm on the opposite end of the same farm lane on **Woodford Road**. My father, **Charles Brown**, told me that at that time it was known as **Schlesselman's Lane**, and that earlier it had been called **Beatty Lane**—in each instance named for the family that had the farm at that end of the island.

The Schlesselman family was well known to the Dwelle family. Mrs. Schlesselman was Lydia's Sunday school teacher. Every Sunday that Lydia didn't go home to help with Sunday dinner, she went with **Mrs. Schlesselman** for a visit to their house. So it was natural that if Lydia was going to pick grapes for anyone, it might as well be for a family that she knew very well.

It was a small crew picking for Schlesselman's, and mostly from the family. Lydia's **Aunt Marguerite** also picked, but not Mrs. Schlesselman. She never picked grapes. There was plenty else to do on a farm.

They picked grapes for about a week and a half. Actually using the verb "pick" is slightly misleading. You don't "pick" grapes, you actually "cut" them off the stem of the vine with a type of scissors. Lydia also remembers that each bunch of grapes was turned over in your hand and any dead berries were cut off.

Lydia, who is of small stature today, was also a small girl, weighing less than a hundred pounds. When you pick grapes, you collect them in a basket of about a half bushel. And after you pick grapes for awhile, the basket begins to fill up and get heavy. **Marvin Schlesselman**, one of the Schlesselman boys and a little older than Lydia was also picking grapes. Every time that Lydia was ready to move along the vine, Marvin would quickly run over from where he was and pick up Lydia's basket for her and place it at the next spot. Lydia remembers that Marvin's action did not go unnoticed by others. One by one, she began to be teased about Marvin's attentions towards her.

It turns out that Lydia never dated an island boy. At intervals during the day, fellows would come with a stone boat and the baskets of grapes would be emptied into it. The stone boat was like a horse drawn sledge. The grapes were then taken to be shipped out on **Neuman's boat**.

And why did Lydia want to pick grapes so badly? Remember that you **Continued on page 4...**

Grape harvesting an annual event

From pg. 3...

got paid for picking grapes? It turns out that Lydia had her eye on a rifle at Bogart—a 22 long. She bought her gun and practiced and became a good shot.

On Kelleys, Lydia hunted rabbits, pheasants, and marsh squirrel (Muskrat for non-Kelley Islanders). She also hunted on the mainland and mentioned hunting squirrel. When I asked her how squirrel tasted, she said it was delicious and that she had about six different recipes for preparing it. Lydia also liked marsh squirrel (which I think may be an acquired taste). One time Lydia's photo was on the front page of the *Cleveland Press*, with her game. Lydia had a hunting license and became quite a markswoman.

She remembers once being out in the backyard at her parents' house. Out in the pasture lot was a cock bird (Pheasant). All you could see was the head. Her father wagered with her that she couldn't shoot that bird. So Lydia took aim and shot the cock pheasant right through the head.

During WWII, Lydia remembers hunting a lot, with her first husband, **John Ohlemacher**. They both hunted for game to eat. She hunted some after she married **Ron Bechtel**, but since he no longer hunted himself, she eventually gave it up.

One never knows how one turn in life leads on to another. So that's what happened in the autumn of 1933 when Lydia Dwelle went grape picking!



In Memoriam....

Dr. Ramie Dick
Rose Kadlec
John D. Maiani
Mary (Navorska) Leczynski

Treasurer's Report

Checking account:	\$ 26,746.89
Building Fund (Savings):	\$ 197,156.50
Total	\$ 223,903.39

The fiscal year-end is October 31st. The final reports will be available sometime after that date. If you would like a copy of the final reports, please send us a request with your name and address included and we'll send the information to you after it is ready.

Butterfly Festival:

Bake sale:	\$ 98.25
Booths:	\$ 60.00
Flea Market:	\$ 92.45
Food Booth:	\$319.26
Games:	\$50.00

Total: \$619.96

Gift Shop:

Total sales (YTD 11-16-04)	\$ 22,481.33
Expenses	\$ 31,287.85
Loss	(\$ 8,806.52)*

There are quite a few items left which means that we can start next year off early in the season with well stocked shelves. We are also planning to participate in the Chamber of Commerce Town Hall sale at Thanksgiving. Look for us there.

The Gift Shop had quite a few visitors through it this year. As always, it is our volunteers who make it a success.

Many thanks go to Madeleine Williams, Anne Eddowes, Murali Pel-laki, Fran Johnson, Mary Beth Quillen, Mary Anne Pileski, Cindy Merkel, Jan Ranson, Pat Seeholzer, Ed Frindt, Betsy Walcott, Fred Walcott, Nadine Mack, Pat Hayes, Don Gilles, Shirley Crabill, Fran Minshall, Sharon McIntire, Joan Quillen, Barbara Behlen, Marv Byer, Pam Stoup, and Bonnie Meyers. Special Thanks! go to **Bob Luckay** for once again taking care of the plantings along the nature trail.

Memorials to the Building Fund:

From **Annalee** in memory of: **Dr. Heinz & Catherine Boker, Judy Weintraub, Warren Elfers, Bill Clapper, Scott Bassett, Kenneth Geschke, Bill Erne, Claude Smith and Tracy Katz.**

In memory of **Bob Behlen**, memorials were received from **Annalee and Gary & Jackie Finger.**

In memory of **Ronald Beatty**, memorials were received from **Geraldine & Lyle Bickley, Dr. Ramie & Ila Dick, Gary & Jackie Finger, Joe Guerra, Tony & Peggy Guerra, Don & Mary Ellen Huntley, Bea & Russell Matso.**

In memory of **Dr. James Printy** from **Dr. Ramie & Ila Dick.**

In memory of **Victoria Beatty**, memorials were received from **Geraldine & Lyle Bickley, Dr. Ramie & Ila Dick.**

From **Sandra & Graham Dickens** in memory of: **Ray Feyedelem & Frank P. Dickens.**

From **Dr. John Towle** in memory of his mother **Ruth Towle.**

From **Lydia Bechtel** in memory of **Marilyn Balconi.**

From **Gary & Jackie Finger** in memory of **Mary Navorska & Rose Kadlec.**

In memory of **Dorothy (Himmelein) Sun**, from **Lydia Bechtel, Gary & Jackie Finger.**

In memory of **Dr. Ramie Dick**, memorials were received from:

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Baum, Karl Beatty, Geraldine & Lyle Bickley, Philip Bickley, Steve Bickley, Todd Bickley, Paul & Lois Brown, Robert Coulon, Elizabeth Anne Eddowes, Gary & Jackie Finger, Jacqueline Kranyak, Nadine Mack, Florence McKillips, Mary McKillips, Edward & Yvette Noon, James E. & E. Jeanne Printy, Dr. Dean & Linda Reichenbach, and Anne Sennish.

Other donations:

Bill & Terri Stevenson made a contribution to the building fund to honor the birthday of **Lydia Bechtel.**

Jude Brown made a contribution to the accessions fund.

Lydia Bechtel contributed to purchase the raffle tickets for 2004.

Joi Luckadoo-Villa contributed to the building fund to honor & thank **Tim & Becky Morrison.**

2004 photo memories



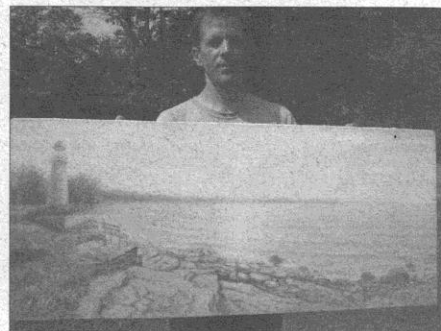
KIHA's Annual Meeting in August.



Frances Minshall and Laura Jean Pohorence selling raffle tickets for this year's donated quilt.



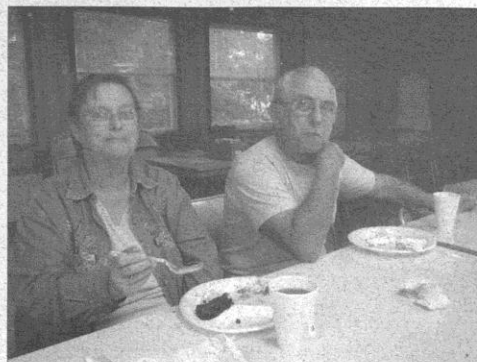
Pat Hayes tagging butterflies at Butterfly Festival.



Joe Corso with his donated oil painting of the north shoreline.



Lucky winners of the 2004 Teri Betzenheimer quilt.



Bea and Russ Matso at the September potluck.

**MAKING KELLEYS ISLAND HISTORY
EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS**

Kelleys Island Historical Association
P.O. Box 328
Kelleys Island, OH 43438

A 501(C)3 organiza-
tion. All contributions
are tax deductible.



Kelleys Island Historical Association

We're on the web!
kelleysislandhistorical.org

**Kelleys Island Historical Association
P. O. Box 328
Kelleys Island, Ohio 43438**

Membership Application

Name: _____

Summer address: (from / / to / /) **P.O. Box** _____

Street: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____ - _____

Winter address: P.O.Box _____

Street: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: _____ - _____

- Individual Membership (annual) \$10.00
 - also check here for 2 or more Individual memberships but just one newsletter sent to one address
 - Family Membership (annual) \$25.00
 - Patron Membership (annual) \$100.00
 - Life Membership \$500.00
- (office use only below this line -----)
Paid: \$ _____
Received by: _____