



Kelleys Island Historical Association

Volume 10 Issue 2

April, 2013

The Kelleys Island Historical Association is Celebrating the 200th Anniversary of The Battle of Lake Erie!

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Come in to visit the museum this spring and summer and learn more about The Battle of Lake Erie. The United States Navy sent the island an informational presentation, which is displayed at The Kelleys Island Historical Museum. We also have other information on display relating to this Anniversary, War of 1812, and the accomplishments of Commander Perry.

A Perry Centennial Celebration Flag was loaned to the museum by **Rob and Kim Watkins**. Thanks to them.



An excerpt from James C. Mills book titled Oliver Hazard Perry and The Battle of Lake Erie, first published in 1913:

“Sir:

It has pleased the Almighty to give to the arms of the United States a signal victory over their enemies on this lake.

The British squadron, consisting of two ships, two brigs, one schooner, and one sloop, has this moment surrendered to the forces under my command, after a sharp conflict.

I have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
O.H. Perry

To Honorable Wm. Jones, Secretary of the Navy.”

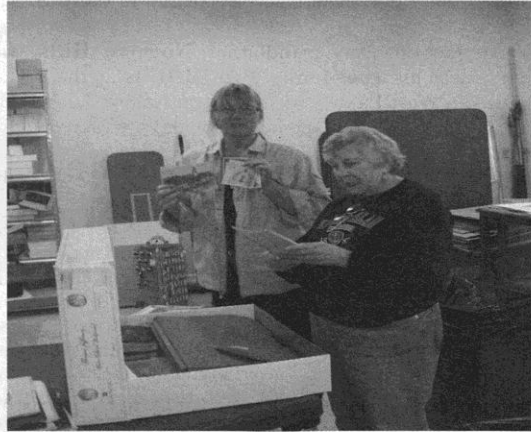
“The day was serene, every breeze was hushed, and not a wave ruffled the surface of the water. The men of both fleets mourned together. As the boats moved slowly in stately procession from the ships, the slow and regular motion of the oars, keeping time with the notes of the solemn dirge, the mournful waving of the flags, showing the sign of sorrow, the sound of the minute guns on the ships reverberated from shore to shore.”

[referring to the burial of the officers of both fleets on Put-in-Bay.]



THE BURIAL OF THE AMERICAN AND BRITISH OFFICERS
From a photograph by Charles H. Wood, loaned to the Western Branch Historical Society, Chautauk

The Kelleys Island Historical Museum's Winter Workers



Acquisitions

by Sally Hiller

Members of the Acquisition Team have been meeting throughout the winter. We have worked on getting the many photos and articles catalogued and listed. We want to thank **Leslie Korenko, Patti Fresch, Cindy and Chuck Herndon** for the hours spent getting some organization to all the various papers and photos.

As we continue to catalogue and list the various items that have been donated, we sometimes end up reading instead of cataloguing. There is a wealth of information here. We invite you to spend some time helping with this very large project. If interested contact Cindy or Chuck Herndon at herndonccb@gmail.com. Or call 419 746-2249.

[We all want to acknowledge **Sally Hiller** for her time spent helping all winter as well.]

We had productive and fun sessions.

Dates to Remember in 2013

Best Practices in policies and Acquisitions
June 15th, 2013

Art Show August 3rd, 2013

Annual Meeting for KIHA August 10th, 2013
(we ask that you try to attend this.....)

Tall Ships/ Appledore 4 on KI
August 30th -September 1st, 2013

Cont. on Pg. 5



We need your help identifying some of our acquisitions.....let us know what you know. Email your response to herndonccb@gmail.com or call 419 46-2249 What are these?



The Flight Suit Story: The flight suit belonged to **William McKillips**. He took flying lesson in Detroit, got his hours verified from his grandfather, and then purchased a bi-plane to bring back to Kelleys Island. In speaking with **Shirley McKillips**, the daughter of William and the loaner of the flight suit, she stated that her father took her mother up in the plane. Upon coming down, she told him that it was "either the plane or me." They were married in 1934 and the plane was sold. This plane was a WACO Bi-Plane and was recently found due to the investigative work of **Ted Blatt** and cohorts. The plane was found in New York by a man from West Virginia, who purchased it, and restored it fully. The rumor has it that this plane may fly to Kelleys Island for 2013 summer. Keep your eyes open for an open cockpit bi-plane.

In Memory

We all will miss "Sis", **Florence Betzenheimer McKillips**.

Sis passed away just a few days ago and all of us are grieving; her close family, friends, Kelley Islanders on the passing of a legend. She was amazing, one who could handle diversity, smile while shedding a tear, taught us how to accept life and live well. She was instrumental as a founder of the Kelleys Island Historical Museum and its operation for years.

We were happy to have interviewed Sis as an oral history project last September. Please stop by the museum and you can hear and watch this interview. We SO Loved Her.

William McKillips Flight suit (below)



Responses to our request for history of families and beginning the Oral History Project

Geraldine Betzenheimer donated an essay her mother **Iva Riedy Erne** had written in 1981, fifty years after her high school graduation.

"In 1931 President Hoover was worried about the depression and stock market crash. Kelleys was still prosperous. Our population was about 1500 and there was plenty of work.

"Ernest Fenwick was superintendent of the stone quarry which employed about 150 people. We also had **Lay Brothers Fisheries**. **The North side Crew** that had three boats at the north dock and **The south side Crew** that worked from **Kosters Dock**, they employed about 20 men. **Booth and Post Fish Companies** also fished off the island. Independent fisheries were **Bickley, Beatty**, and **Elfers**. Plus gillnetters that only fished in the spring and fall.

"Another big industry was farming. **George Becker** had a large dairy farm. His barn is now owned by **William Finger**. [Ed Kuchar in 2013] The island also produced many grapes and other fruits. The grapes were picked in baskets and sent to Sandusky, Detroit, and Toledo to be pressed. It was happy time for school children as they were let out of school for two weeks to help harvest the crop. (See photo Grapes in baskets)"

Iva Riedy goes on to describe places of business. "We had plenty of stores. **Arnold Elfers** was in the grocery business, he had a gasoline pump in front of his store. His store is now **Frank Pohorence's** storage house. **Frieschmanx Meat Market** sold only meats. It is now the **Island Market**. Across the street was **Lange and Brown's General Store**....**Matso's** bar was owned by his father, Joe. It was an ice cream Parlor with the barber shop in the back. **Joe Matso** was the barber.

"Emmet Martin had an ice cream parlor where **Martin's Bar** is now. **The Casino** was **Charley Martin's** pool room. Across the street was a gas station. **Mrs. Burger** sold grain and coal and had an ice delivery service. He managed the store at the Dock where **Ron Beatty** had his fish cleaning business...."



The KIHA will be receiving a hard copy of a recently published book titled **MY MEMOIRS** by **John Ray Lange** written in 2012. His sister **Ann Lange** sent an on line copy to share. In his introduction he wrote:

"On a recent trip to my birth place Kelleys Island, Ohio (actually Good Samaritan Hospital in Sandusky, Ohio) I visited the **Old German Reform** church where my father's family worshipped in the late 1880's. When Dad was an infant, a new Protestant church was built and is still in use today. It was established to provide worship in English. No more German worship services for the new generation of Americans. Today the old German Reform church is a museum. The visit brought back many memories and motivated me to pursue this endeavor."

John talks about fishing in his book, just like **Iva Erne** did. However, we get additional information to print a clearer picture. "Around the 1800's, commercial fishing outfits on Lake Erie, using gill nets, started shipping to the mainland markets. Within a decade, trap nets with much higher yields developed. Lake Erie was awash (pun) with table species of perch and pickerel, particularly around Kelleys. Soon Sandusky, Ohio would become the second largest port in the United States. Today's catch would be off loaded at Sandusky, boxed, iced, and shipped to New York city by Rail Express in time for the 3AM opening of the fish market."

Lange refers to Prohibition in his book. A few words from his book clarify the truth about rum runners.

"Kelleys was very active during Prohibition besides the wine business. The Island, located mid-way from the Canadian water line and The United States mainland, was a drop off for the rum runners, as they were called. I remember seeing them, and at night hearing their black hull speed boats with the huge Kermath engines. They could outrun any of the revenuers' vessels. Smuggling hooch was a big business and apparently very profitable. Our big house was owned by a rum runner who was caught and "doing time" while the house sat vacant. My folks bought it with back taxes. We had a couple of joints (speak-easys) that were open on and off, selling hooch throughout the Prohibition years. If fact, one of them had the first radio I'd ever seen. Dad took me with him to listen to the infamous **Joe Louis/Max Schmeling** fight shortly before the eighteenth Amendment was repealed. Before that, however, telephone service came to the island, I recall that a cache of hooch was found behind the building where workers were sinking a telephone pole."

.....More to come from both Iva Erne and John Lange in future issues. Thank you to them for writing down their memories..so valuable to a community is it's history.

A Flight on the Tin Goose

By Roger Williams

In February, 1944, I had a month to kill after graduating from high school before reporting to the U.S. Navy.

At that time, my grandfather, **Norman Hills**, was living with his wife, **Jenny Bristol Hills**, in the Bristol house on West Lake shore Drive, on Kelleys Island. My mother suggested I spend a few days with Grandpa while I had time available. So, we drove to Port Clinton, and I boarded the Ford Tri-motor "Tin Goose", for the ten minute flight to Kelleys Island.

The airplane and the grass strips at the corner of Monagan and Ward Roads were owned and operated by **Mr. Hershberger**. The trip from Port Clinton and the landing were uneventful, since the ground under the grass was frozen. I even got to sit in one of the old wicker seats for the trip, no seat belts then.

So, Grandpa, Jenny, and I had a nice visit, and Grandpa toured me through his "Olde Curiosity Shoppe," which had a variety of artifacts, stuffed or mummified birds and animals, fossils, ship models, old photos, lake charts, and much more. Lots of fun!

One morning, I hiked down to the boarded up cottage, checked around, then spent a few hours with **Hazel and Howard Hamilton**, catching up on island news.

During my visit we experienced a midwinter thaw, and grassy areas became quite muddy. When I boarded The Tin Goose for the trip back to Port Clinton, all of the seats were filled by ice fishermen, each with a burlap sack full of perch. Hershberger said "no problem, just perch on those empty bread crates, and hang on to that seat back. It may be a little bumpy on the takeoff run." I believe there were two of us standing, and all the seats were filled.

With the wind from the west that morning, we taxied east to the end of the east/west strip, which was about 200 feet east of Monagan road, and turned around. The pilot locked the brakes, got all three engines up to full power, then released the brake, and we started to roll, very slowly through the mud. Then up and over Monagan, rolling a little faster. When we were nearly at the end of the strip, we became airborne, but I could hear the underbrush scraping the bottom of the fuselage. That was rather exciting!

So we gained altitude all the way up to about 300 feet, and flew over the ice to the Port Clinton airport, for a landing on a paved runway. I guess it was just another "milk run" for Hershberger, but I was not used to hearing underbrush rubbing the fuselage of an airplane, so it was a big adventure for a 17 year old. *The Trimotors* serviced Kelleys and Put in Bay for several years, with several scheduled flights each day, all from the grass strip runways. Earlier, Hershberger provided mail service to Kelleys island with a two seat, open cockpit bi-plane. Flying in the passenger seat in that plane was windy, noisy, and exhilarating!

Memorials, Donations and Gifts

In memory of **Roberta Hummel Beckman** by **Kathy and Richard Schleselman**

In memory of **Marv Byers** by **Chuck and Cindy Herndon**

In memory of **Dick Kadlec** by **Chuck and Cindy Herndon**

In memory of **Connie Matso** by **Pat Seeholzer, Peter Thinner, Shirley McKillips, and Cindy and Chuck Herndon**

In memory of **Nadine Mack** by **Barbara Semans, Cindy and Chuck Herndon, Paul and Lois Brown, William C. Michaels, Gretchen and Bob Larson, Mike and Marcy Mielke, Robert Coulon, Phyllis and Anthony Motto, Ila Dick, Mary L. Kirner**

In memory of **Sis(Betzenheimer) McKillips** by **Joan Chamberlain, Peggy and Pat Cooney, Pat Seeholzer, and Cynthia LaMarca**

In memory of **Frank Pohorence** by **Ruth Bandeden**
In memory of **Mary Downs Sherwin** by **Eloise Edson, Lorraine Rehn, and Suzanne Turnquist**

In memory of **Judd Sprandel** by **Laura Jean Pohorence**

Contributions made to KIHA by **Lynne and Roger Renwick, Sonia and Thomas Taylor, Judy Brown, and Delores Cole.**

Thank you!

New Exhibits at The KIHA:

**William McKillips Flight Suit,
Kelleys Island Band Uniform,
Bibles,
Battle of Lake Erie,
and Appledore 4 .**

**Do not Forget August 30th-
September 1st ,The Tall Ship, Ap-
pledore 4 will be docked at
Portside on Kelleys Island.**

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

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

A 501(C)3 organization.
All contributions are tax
deductible.

©



Kelleys Island Historical Association

We're on the web!

kelleysislandhistorical.org

**Welcome New Members for
2013**

Dennis and Jane Diemer, David
and Rose Herndon, John R. Lange,
Dick and Paulette McMonagle, Kev-
in and Kim Pape, Jodie and Scott
Smith, Joan Spandel, Fred and Eliz-
abeth Stueber, Jason and Julie Wil-
liams, Mary and Dennie Wittman.

Kelleys Island Historical Association

P. O. Box 328

Kelleys Island, Ohio 43438

Membership Application—Membership runs from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31

Please give us the address you want your newsletter
sent to:

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

Membership Categories

- All fees are annual except Life membership
 Individual Membership \$15
 also check here for 2 or more Individu-
al memberships but just one newsletter
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business card size ad in one issue of newsletter
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