

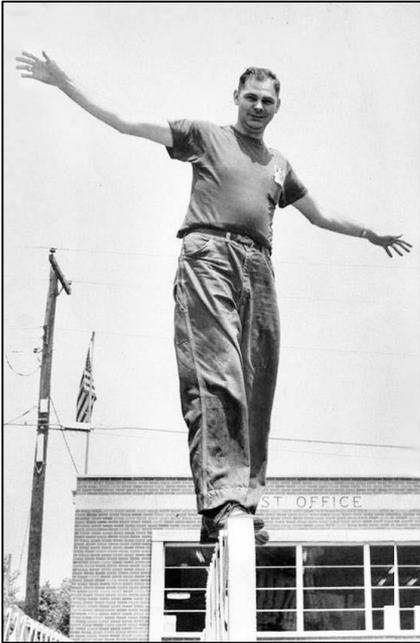


Memories of Ralph 1925-2007

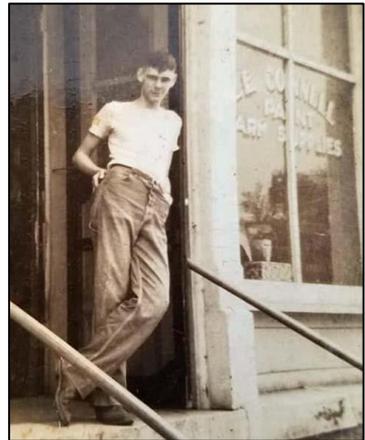
by Connie Parkinson

photographs courtesy of Charity Connell

A whole lot of people knew Ralph Connell -- went to school with him, worked with him on committees or in his store, fished with him, knew him as officer in many organizations, or as a brother Mason or fellow Methodist, knew his wife Jean [Hamilton] and daughters Charity and Sarah. Some even knew his parents Nelle [Osborn] and Elzy Connell; bought a milk bucket, or



seeds from the bin, or had keys made or glass cut to size, or pipe cut and threaded, or screen doors repaired at Ralph's famous store (Connell Hardware, oldest continuous business in The Burg, home of the Hot Stove League, whose newspaper story was syndicated throughout the United States). His Breakfast Buddies kidded him about not wanting to pay for his second cuppa coffee -- but Ralph respected money and knew when to spend and when not to. Ralph *gave*: his time, his attention, his awareness of history, his good sense in touchy situations, his genuine joy of living. He knew all his regular customers and many who were casual drop-ins. He knew his suppliers and his merchandise: exactly where it was, what to substitute if the substitute was better, when and where he'd get more if he was out when you needed it. From age 23 until he died in it, his hardware store was a stable part of his life --- and the town's.



In 1997, when the hardware celebrated its 125th anniversary, Ralph threw a party there in the store, and had souvenir books printed to hand out. He wrote a lot of the book. Somewhat shortened, the words in quotes are Ralph's.

"As soon as I was old enough to work, Dad had me dusting shelves and sweeping the floor in the store. I was always out to make a quick buck. One of the first things I did was pick blackberries. I got 10 cents a quart, and had no trouble selling them. In the mowing season I had four lawns for sure to mow every week. I could get three done in one day. The Methodist Church lawn would bring me 25¢, the other two 70¢. With my 95¢ I'd go to Garry Wiswell's Red & White Store and get me a quart of chocolate milk for a dime.

"I had a bank account from about the age of five. When my parents sold my baby things they put the money for me in the Pataskala Banking Company, where they had their account. After I was old enough to earn money, almost every week I'd give Elzy a dollar or two, and he'd deposit it in my account. When I was in the service, I sent home half my pay ("Twenty-One Dollars a Day Once a Month" - remember that song?) and Dad (continued on page 02)

Memories of Ralph

1925-2007

(continued from page 01)

deposited that for me.

"We didn't always work. We did a lot of fishing. When I was a boy, Blacklick Creek was rated as one of the better bass streams in Ohio. We caught a lot of bass, rock bass, bluegills, and suckers at the mouth of French Run where it flowed into Blacklick Creek. Kenny ["Paddlefoot" or "Paddle"] Van Schoyck and I were Blacklick Creek fishing buddies. From there we went to Canada--Saskatchewan or Ontario-- or northern Minnesota, for many years. I went to one fishing camp for 50 years under the same man who managed it. He was in his nineties the last time I saw him.

"There were three good swimming holes. In two of them you could 'skinny dip.' These were High Banks, in Blacklick Creek just south of Livingston Avenue, and Five Rocks, about two blocks north of Main Street. There were five boulders in that hole. The third swimming hole, pretty close to Rose Hill Road and just south of Broad Street, required a bathing suit.

"I also recall Tom Moky. His name was Looker ["Loker"], but we called it Moky. Tom lived in a shack by Blacklick Creek. He would offer us boys candy mints that he carried in his pockets. Mom told me not to eat anything he gave me because it was dirty. Of course, I ate them anyway.

"Dad had an old flatbed truck. One year he would put rails on it and haul a lot of the Methodist kids to Summerland Beach at Buckeye Lake for a picnic. Later he had a small 1929 Ford pickup truck. I have gone to Brice with him many times to get fencing, barbed wire, chicken feed, and other items from the Motz-Cook Grain Company [another long-lasting business].

"Another memory is of the watch repair business in our hardware. Rolla Graham had one corner set up in the back. Here he did his watch repair work for several years. He lived

behind the Reynoldsburg Bank in a pretty little house that overlooked French Run.

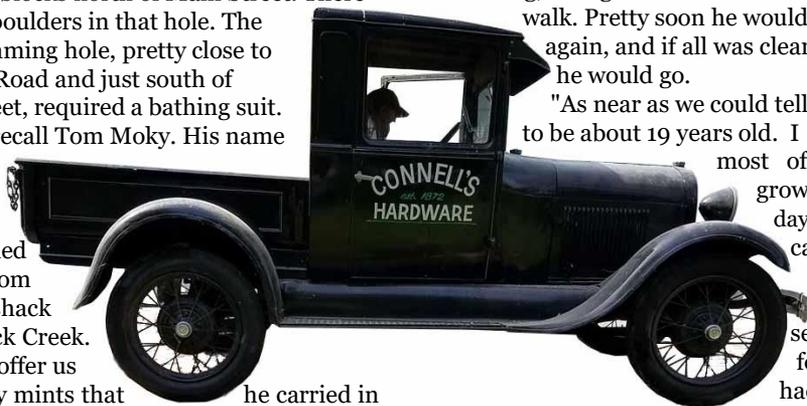
"I had a black and tan hound dog named 'Spot,' who got to be a town legend. Then, there were no restrictions on letting a dog run loose. Spot would stay around the store during school days, sleeping near the potbellied stove. So all of our hardware customers got to know him. [Bryant] Mickey Slack had a filling station at the corner of Main and North Lancaster, diagonally across the street from the hardware. Mickey had a little white terrier. Some of the loafers would hold Spot until I'd get across the street on my bike, headed home. Then when the traffic was clear, they'd turn Spot loose. Of course he would come tearing after me. Spot and the terrier would tangle, but that was short-lived. That was a ritual we went through many times.

"My dog was smarter than some people crossing the street. I've seen him go out to the curb and look both ways, and if there was a car coming, he'd go back and sit on the sidewalk. Pretty soon he would go out again, and if all was clear, across he would go.

"As near as we could tell, he lived to be about 19 years old. I had him most of my growing-up days. When I came home from military service, my folks still had him.

"Spot finally got crippled in the hind-quarters. One day some boys found him, stuck helpless in a hole down by French Run. They picked him up and carried him to the hardware store. Rather than see him get into a position like this again and not be found, I took him to our veterinarian, Dr. E.W. Porter, and had him put to sleep. We made a wood coffin and buried him in our back yard. "That is the story of Spot and his hardware days.

"When I graduated from Reynoldsburg High School in 1943, World War II was being fought, and high school graduates were at the ripe age for military service. I entered the US Coast Guard, took boot camp training at Curtis Bay, Maryland, then went to Hatteras Inlet on the Outer Banks of North Carolina.



Memories of Ralph

1925-2007

(continued from page 02)

There we were on shore patrol on horseback. One time I had ridden five miles from headquarters, and I dismounted. The horse turned right around and galloped back without me.



It was a long walk back to base.

"The old saying is that you should never volunteer for anything while in service. But I had a chance to go to Hawaii, so off I went, cross-country by train to San Francisco. The president of the Union Pacific Railroad

happened to be in his own private car going west, and he invited me and three other men to have dinner with him. That was pretty nice.

"In Oahu, our quarters were in a big civilian building two stories high and as long as an ocean liner. Our dormitory rooms were on the second floor, while on the main floor were a recreation hall, a mail room, a pool table, a writing room, and some offices. In the evening they showed movies.

"My job at first was supervising the loading of ammunition on ships to be sent to the fighting zones. Sometimes we would go to the ammunition depot at Pearl Harbor and "crib" the ammunition, which meant loading it on shelves in exact order following a list.

"Here again, after a few months I volunteered for another position, as maintenance man in our quarters. This position eventually gave me a lot of free time, after I had done my duties. After traveling around the island of Oahu, and swimming many times at the beach on Waikiki, near the famous Diamond Head, I was getting bored.

"I saw an ad in the paper, for a packer in the Theodore Davies Wholesale Grocery House in Honolulu. I worked there until V-J (Victory over Japan) Day. Soon after that I was on my

way home, through the Panama Canal to New York. There I got my Honorable Discharge and a train ticket back to Columbus.

"After I got home, I enrolled in business school. Then in 1948 my dad died. I was 23 and hadn't finished school, and I wondered if I was ready yet, but I thought I'd try managing the hardware store. I suppose I made a few mistakes I don't remember, but one mistake I didn't make was to move to Reynoldsburg Center, when that shopping center was being built. I was approached, and good business was practically guaranteed-- but the rent was \$1000 a month plus a percentage of my gross income. Then a man Dad and I had known for a long time, S. L. Hall, owner of Smith Brothers Hardware [wholesale], talked me into staying where I was. He gave me good sound advice, and I've always been grateful for it.

"One of the major changes in this business has been from bulk to blister packaging. If you want two screws, you don't want to buy a package of nine. And as one customer pointed out, I can give you the *right* screws on the first try. I handle everything in bulk that I can, but for some things, like turpentine and spray products, people have to buy container and all.

"The *Columbus Dispatch* delivery man



would throw the bundles of papers in front of our store. There the paperboys would fold them and get ready to run their routes. All went well in good weather. However, in winter, or on rainy afternoons, I'd let them come into the front of the store to do their work. You know boys are bound to get rowdy, but I could generally settle them down. A few times in the winter I'd have to run the whole bunch out. After an afternoon or two in the cold I'd let them back in. I'm glad I wasn't too hard on them, because most of them grew up to become our loyal customers."

Ralph never lost his sense of fun. A *Little Weekly* reporter (probably the inimitable *Continued on page 04*

Memories of Ralph

1925-2007

(continued from page 03)

Doral Chenoweth), learning that as a boy Ralph had walked the handrail of the footbridge across French Run, persuaded 38-year-old Ralph to do it again.

Connell Hardware was begun in 1872, when Ralph's grandfather Ezra Samuel Osborn at age 23 established E. S. Osborn, a tin shop where he made spouting, funnels, buckets, cups, lunch pails and more, and repaired household utensils that had sprung a leak. He made seamed metal roofing on the job. Ezra was a big man, nice-looking, well liked -- and served as mayor for several years. His sons Howard, Claude, and Walter entered the tinning business and branched out to carry hardware, heating stoves and cookstoves, pumps, horse harness and collars, and farm implements. After Ezra died in 1908, the brothers moved the store's location twice. Howard became founder/ president of the Reynoldsburg Bank. Walter earned a substantial \$300 monthly as production manager for Ralston Steel Car Company. Claude, at age 29, was The Burg's youngest mayor; he later worked in the Columbus Post Office and, like Ezra, wrote poetry. Nelle was their sister.

In 1922, 50 years after establishment of the tin shop, Nelle and her husband, Elzy Connell, took over the business. It went against tradition for a lady to even enter a hardware store, but everybody knew Nelle, so that made it all right.

On Saturdays everybody came to town to do business, visit, get a haircut or play cards at the Masonic Hall -- and wound up at the Connell home, which was connected to the store, enjoying food they had brought, as well as one another's company. When Ralph was still little enough to want his baby bottle, he hid it behind his back so nobody would see it and tease him. He was told that as babies he and Jean played together, but neither one remembered doing so.

In 1934 Nelle and Elzy moved to Mason Hall, and the hardware never was moved again.

"Mason Hall," built in 1883, using brick from the local Dysart & Henderlick "tile mill," is probably the oldest business building in The Burg. Several kinds of merchants have had their quarters on the ground floor: two or three general stores, a bank, a Christian bookstore and Western Union office, an art

school, grocery stores, a post office, a bakery, the local Chamber of Commerce. On the second floor (and up 16 stairs but in constant use anyway), "Mason's Opera

House" sheltered dances, high school graduations, minstrel shows, Chautauqua shows, Lyceum courses, debates, basketball games, a duckpin bowling alley, a teen center, offices, shuffleboard courts, a furniture storage warehouse, and for 18 years at \$1 a year, the Reynoldsburg-Truro Historical Society's first Museum. Nathaniel N. Mason probably did not expect his building to last 136 years constantly in use.

Refurbished, "The Mason Block" is now occupied by Vick's Pizza, another long-term business.

Other stories about Ralph: A local boy, later a businessman himself, stole a can of airplane paint from Connell Hardware. Discovering it, the boy's mother marched the boy back to the

(continued on Page 05)



(continued from page 04) store. The boy admitted his theft to Ralph, who said to the mother, "I know it's up front and a temptation to kids." Then, instead of taking back the paint and bawling out the boy, he said, "Well, you've already got the paint. Why don't you pay me for it on payments?" They worked out a plan. The boy got to keep the paint, he made his payments over several weeks, and got a lesson he remembered.

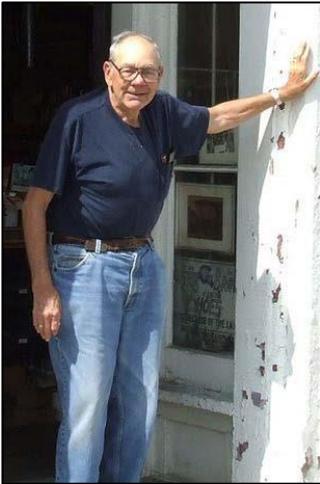
Another little boy was in the store with his father, and he took some nails out of the open bins. In another instance of old-time honesty, the father found out and took the boy back to the store. Ralph told the boy to return the nails to the bin. Then he said, "Some other time when you're in here, if you want a few nails, ask me for them, and I'll give you some."

Ralph and (Owen) Buck Adams had a sort-of barter agreement. Buck bought his hardware at Connell; Ralph's family liked Dairy Queen treats. Both kept track, but nobody paid until settling-up time. Then, whoever owed the most grouched and grumbled and paid the difference. So each one got something "free." The arrangement went on and on.

Ralph went to the store early one morning as usual, and sat down in a chair. When he did not show up for breakfast with the guys, Dick Barth called Jean, who then called the emergency squad. Sitting alone in one of his favorite places, Ralph had gone ahead without us. He was 82 years 3 days old.

For several years afterward, George "Cody" Lemaster operated the store, with the help of Willard Carl. Cody became ill and died in May, 2013. Carl took over temporarily; but the store closed in August 2013. The contents were auctioned in September 2013. Under only two names, Connell Hardware had been in business 141 years. Ralph had worked in it six long days a week (even went down and opened up on Sunday if you told him you had to have something), drove to Columbus and Brice for supplies, dealt with wholesalers, customers, and loafers by the stove, rang up sales on a tall old cash register (actually, two) whose drawer popped out and went *ding!* with every sale, organized, swept out, and for 59 years did everything you have to do to manage a business. And a large elderly building.

"I like the work," Ralph said. "This is the only job I ever had after military service. I would hardly know how to retire."



Editor's Note: I was a Sweet Adeline for 35+ years. Thanks to Ralph Connell, I usually ranked number one in ticket sales for our annual show. He always bought an advertisement for \$25.00, then I would give him two free tickets to the show. In exchange, he would go to the Senior Center and sell enough tickets (at a senior discount) to bring two or three bus-loads of patrons to the Ohio Theatre. Whenever I came in the hardware store, he would tell all the guys, "Mary sang 'Bill Bailey' at the Ohio Theatre all by herself!" The next time I sing Bill Bailey, Ralph it will be for you ...

Sunshine Committee

Do you know someone who needs some Sunshine?

Contact Wendy Raftery if you are aware of an RTHS member who could use a Get Well, Thinking of You, Sympathy, or any other type of card for some added sunshine in their life....

(614) 262-2673 Please call after 2:00pm

Write "SUNSHINE" in the subject line of your email:

cdutchman1@aol.com



THE COURIER

July 2019 Issue

**Reynoldsburg-Truro
Historical Society**

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2019 CALENDAR

JULY 2019

Publish July Courier

16 – TUE – Board Meeting, 7:00pm

20 – SAT – A Trunk of Circus Memories
Open House 10:00am to 2:00pm

23 – TUE – Max & Erma's Fundraiser

AUGUST 2019

03 – SAT – Class of 1964 Indoor Picnic

07 – WED – City BBQ Fundraiser! All Day!
10:30am – 10:00pm

13 – TUE – Board Meeting, 7:00pm

17 – SAT – Open House 10:00am-2:00pm

23 – FRI – Deadline for September Courier

SEPTEMBER 2019

Publish September Courier

17 – TUE – Board Meeting, 7:00pm

21 – SAT – Open House 10:00am-2:00pm

24 – TUE – General Meeting, 7:00pm

OCTOBER 2019

15 – TUE – Board Meeting, 7:00pm

19 – SAT – Open House 10:00am-2:00pm

23 – WED – Max & Erma's Fundraiser

23 – WED – Deadline for November Courier

31 – THU – Beggars Night at the Museum
6:00pm – 8:00pm

Local Members & Friends

Take your family out to dinner and benefit the Reynoldsburg-Truro Historical Society!

Max & Erma's
8050 East Broad Street
(In front of Meijer & Target)

WHEN?
Tuesday, July 23, 2019
All Day Long!
11am to 10pm

TAKE THIS FLYER WITH YOU!
All flyers must be turned in to the server at the time of purchase for the donation amount to count towards the Reynoldsburg-Truro Historical Society. Flyers may be turned in and counted towards dine-in or CARRYOUT purchases.
Gift card and alcohol purchases do not count towards any donation amount.

Join Us For A **FUNdraiser** at **MAX & ERMA'S**
REYNOLDSBURG-TRURO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Tuesday, July 23, 2019
11am to 10pm All Day
Max & Erma's East Broad St.
Reynoldsburg, OH 43068
614-367-0370

Support the Reynoldsburg-Truro Historical Society

Wednesday, August 7, 2019

Take your family out to eat at **City BARBELUE**

All Day!
10:30am to 10:00pm

FUNdraiser!
We get 25% back!

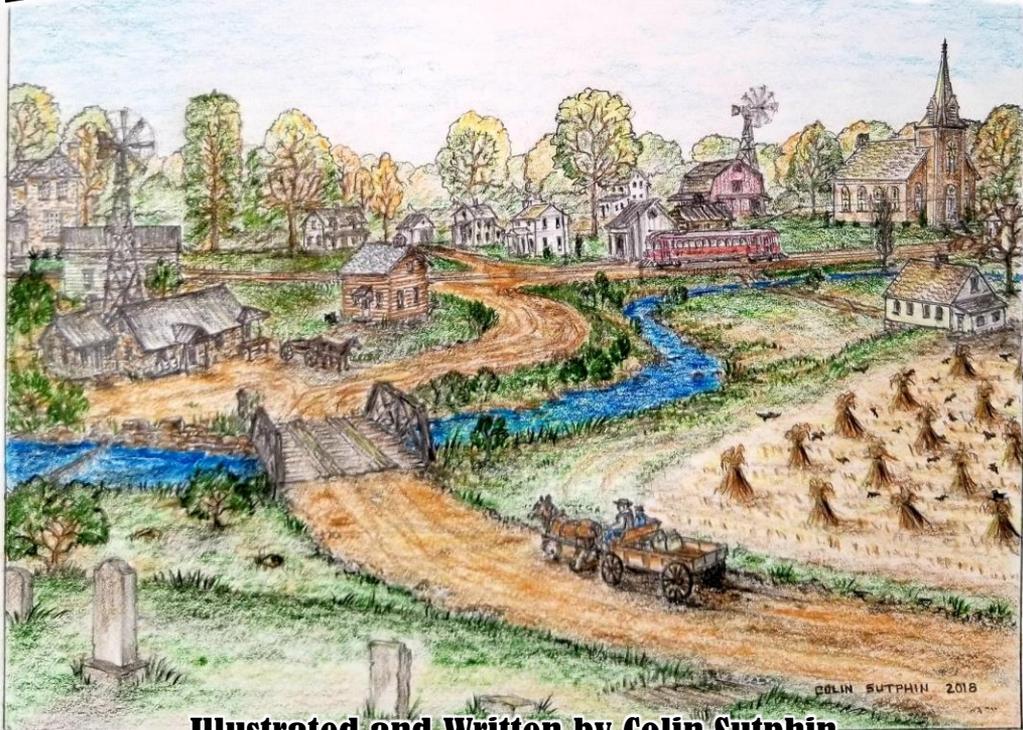
City BARBELUE
5979 E. MAIN ST., REYNOLDSBURG, OH 43123

You will find two inserts in your Courier this month. They include a Max & Erma's fundraiser, and a City BBQ fundraiser.

JULY 23, Tuesday – Max & Erma's All day restaurant fundraiser. Please join us! The meatloaf rocks!

AUG 7, Wednesday – City BBQ All day restaurant fundraiser. 10:30 am to 10:00 pm.

East End of Town 1904 - A Reynoldsburg Vignette



Illustrated and Written by Colin Sutphin

Throughout the nineteenth century and even into the twentieth were businesses that are rarely seen today, or just don't exist anymore. Examples: grist mills, creameries, leather shops, blacksmiths, wainwrights and tinsmiths.

In the late 1950s, being new to The Burg, I would hear older people tell of the village years ago. One story that piqued my interest was about a business on Waggoner Road just north of Main Street. I heard there was a mill or store located in that area, the Spring Water Creamery. Later on, in the mid-1950s, Carl and Rilla Burns (Dave's parents) built a house on that property. It was just behind the Gulf (Valero) station and the Blands' small white (log) house.

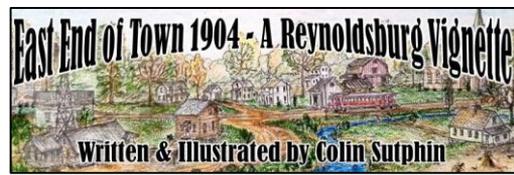
In 1830 the Waggoner brothers, and numerous other residents, petitioned for a road to be built from the intersection of now Livingston Avenue and Graham Road north to now Clark State Road, some six miles. The Waggoners, Martin and Peter, lived north of Reynoldsburg in Jefferson Township. We assume the road was named for that family,

although during the latter half of the nineteenth century locals would refer to it as the "Wagoneers" road. Reason being all the heavy wagon traffic coming from and going to Forrester's Quarry, located about a half-mile north of the village. There he quarried a type of sandstone called light blue freestone.

Forrester had built two homes in Reynoldsburg made from the stone in his quarry. One located on Main Street just east of Graham Road, probably his residence. And, a house at the corner of Lancaster Avenue and Rich Street for blacksmith Wilson Rush, to pay off a debt.

Most likely quarry stones were used in the foundation of the Spring Water Creamery. The foundation stones of the bridge could have come from there also.

The Interurban Transit, a new electric railway, had just begun service through Reynoldsburg from Columbus to points east as far as Zanesville. The steel tracks were laid right down the middle of Main Street. I'll just bet it was a real trick trying to cross them with
(continued on page 08)



(continued from page 07)

a horse and buggy.

Imagine if you will, you're on the Interurban for the first time approaching Reynoldsburg from the east at almost 60 m.p.h. (It was commonly believed back then that if you went over 60 m.p.h. you could die. The wind would suck the air right out of your lungs). Though the ride is exciting, you are hanging on for dear life.

Glancing out the window you see two chickens, peacefully grubbing for bugs along the roadway, take flight in a desperate maneuver to save their lives. Also, a man driving a wagon struggling with his team of horses. The lead animal, the horse on the left, bolts and pulls sharply right, crossing up the subordinate teammate. The driver finally has to dismount and hold the pair by their harnesses. He has some unspoken words for that newfangled contraption as it zips by. After a few years I'm sure this new mode of transportation was pretty well accepted.

In the 8" x 10" color pencil drawing I've depicted a scene of old Reynoldsburg in the autumn of 1904. The view is from Hill Cemetery looking southwest. Starting from the cemetery we see the old wood and iron bridge. It would have been located over 100 feet east of the current Waggoner Road bridge that spans French Run. Just across the bridge is the Spring Water Creamery with its windmill.

Adjacent is the little log house. Above the Creamery on Main Street is the two-story stone house Forrester built. We've always known it as the Donovan house, home of Cliff and Maud Donovan's family. West to the southeast corner of Graham Road is the Zarbaughs' family home. Graham Road and Waggoner Road didn't meet up exactly at Main Street. There was a slight offset. I've added a few houses from Graham Road to the church, not having definite information. I did picture the Interurban on its mid-day run to the east.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, referred to as the M.E. Church in those days, was built on the south side of Main Street in 1835. Then, the church was the mainstay of the community. In 1904 the pastor was Archibald Gilruth. The original steeple had a lantern at the top. How they would light that lantern, I have no idea.

Across the street from the church was a fairly young baldcypress tree planted by Mr. Chamberlain around 1880. The tree is still there to this day, though much taller. Years ago the historical society placed a brass marker at its base.

Directly north on the knoll was the Chamberlains' farmhouse with the walnut tree nearby. Their farm extended up the west side of Waggoner Road more than half a mile. Behind the house is a recently harvested and shocked corn field.

A murder of crows descends on the area to glean kernels bestrewn on the ground.

In the foreground we have six-year-old Rayford with his father riding to town in their Winona wagon. They will stop at the seed store and sell the extra seed corn they took in this harvest. Then, by Osborn's to buy leather strapping and rivets for repairing harness. Finally dropping by the creamery for whey. It has many uses at the farm. Rafe's mother makes wonderful whey bread, and for making cheese. What's left over can be used to supplement animals' feed.

As his father goes into the Creamery, Rafe runs next door to the log house to play with the young dog there.

Finished with his purchase, his father says, "Time to leave, son!" Rafe comes immediately, jumping into the wagon. His father snaps the reins a little, then with a "Giddup," it's back to the farm.

Again, Rayford and his family are fictional characters I have added to the story to make it a little more colorful.

I hope this visit to the early days of the twentieth century has been interesting.

Colin Sutphin

I would like to thank Mary Turner-Stoots and Steve Mcloughlin for their valuable information, without which I couldn't have put together this drawing and story nearly as well.



New Members!

- Doris Berube – Individual
- Alex & Maegan Furst – family
- Edmond Saleski - individual
- Bonita & Vince Cordi - family
- Steven Rich - individual

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Scenic Garden Tour

West Licking Historical Society

Saturday, July 13
1:00pm – 5:00pm

Call for Ticket Information
614-562-2411

SUPPORT LOCAL HISTORY

Join the Reynoldsburg-Truro Historical Society

Individual - \$20 Family - \$25 Sustaining - \$30 Contributing - \$50 Life Membership - \$300

Name _____

Additional Names _____

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

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Make Check Payable to RTHS and mail to: RTHS, Box 144, Reynoldsburg, OH 43068

Invite your friends to join!

Rebecca Way Tobin Yount

June 17, 1944 - May 23, 2019

by Wendy Wheatley Raftery



Editor's Note: *The Courier edition of this article about Rebecca Yount is a condensed version of a lovely tribute written by Wendy Raftery along with an obituary written by Rebecca's husband, David. The entire tribute will be posted on the RTHS Website at <https://rths.info/yount> Please go online to read the rest of Rebecca's story, learn about all the accomplishments in her life, and see a list of her books.*



May 23, 2019 was a "terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day!" That day that we all received the news that our beloved friend, Rebecca (Tobin) Yount, had passed away quietly in her sleep. My first reaction was stunned disbelief. She had become a dear friend over the last several years, and I suspect that she will be in my thoughts frequently.

We reconnected after decades on a Website called "You know you're from Reynoldsburg when ..." The website is full of reminiscences from "old timers" who grew up in Reynoldsburg. That's where I first saw the name Rebecca Yount. Rebecca had many responses that were funny, insightful, thought-provoking.

We knew Rebecca Yount as "Becky Tobin". Her parents were Dallas R. and Nelle McCoy Tobin. Nelle was an elementary school teacher in Reynoldsburg and Dallas was an editor/journalist for UPI as well as a writer for the *Columbus Dispatch*. Becky's brother, Don G. (Toby), graduated from RHS in 1954 and her sister, Jane, graduated in 1957. Becky graduated from RHS in 1962 where she was an honor student and a member of the marching band.

Becky and I chatted back and forth a lot on the website. When I finally placed her, I shared a memory of seeing her with another friend, Judy Pierson. Becky said Judy once tried to teach her to do the hula. I helped Becky re-connect with Judy. I didn't know Becky well in school, but I wish I had. We chatted privately that day for nearly an hour, sharing stories and reconnecting in a big way. We went on to discover SO many similar likes and dislikes and parallel experiences. We both loved to read, and hanging out in libraries was our idea of heaven.

How funny then for Becky to find out that my first job was at the Reynoldsburg Library when it first opened in 1964. And how funny for me to find out that Becky was a published author of mysteries - my very favorite genre! I introduced her to one of my favorites - Rex Stout's books about private detective Nero Wolfe and his assistant Archie Goodwin. And Becky introduced me to her own mysteries about a Scotland Yard detective named Michael "Mick" Chandra. Her first book in her series about Mick Chandra was *A Death in C Minor*.

(Continued on page 11)

Rebecca Way Tobin Yount

June 17, 1944 - May 23, 2019



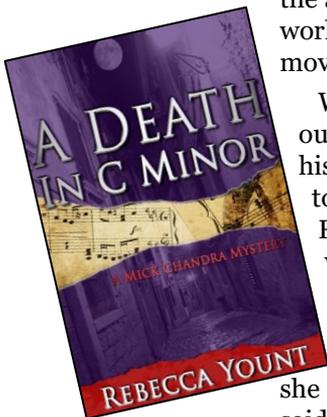
(Continued from page 10)

I saw a lot of Rebecca Yount in her heroine, Jessica Beaumont. Jessica was an American concert pianist, who moved to England to get over a tragedy in her

life. Becky had majored in music at Capital University, desiring to become a concert pianist. She studied at the Capital University Conservatory of Music from the age of eight to 21, but returned to her love of writing following in her parents' footsteps.

I discovered she loved classic movies, and musicals in particular. So for her birthday that year I sent her some Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers musicals. They were quite a hit, and she sent me a thank-you letter on pretty stationery, along with a story about how her mother taught her to write thank-you notes for gifts or for nice things people did for her. Her mom went to Lazarus downtown and ordered Becky her own engraved stationery. Talking about Lazarus led to many conversations about going downtown: trips to Lazarus, favorite floors to shop, and our restaurants of choice. Mine was The Colonial Room; Becky's was The Buckeye Room. Her mom starting taking her there when she was quite young, and Becky remembered they always dressed up and wore white gloves and made an occasion of it.

Last year, facing going into the hospital, she said she was anticipating a long time in rehab, so she'd better go to the library and stock up on books to read. I packed up my duplicate copies of 12 Nero Wolfe mysteries and several other books, plus some more classic movie DVDs. In her thank-you letter this time, she said, "When I opened your box, Wendy, you cannot believe how I sucked in my breath!! I don't think I'll have to go to the library for a while!! I am so blessed to have so many wonderful friends like you!!" She thanked me for two books in particular, *The Last Templar*, because the Templars had always fascinated her. And *The History of the National Road in Ohio*. That one brought so many wonderful memories of her dad, who became an appraiser for the Columbus Office of the FHA. During summer vacations, he often took her with him on his trips throughout the area. And the movies brought memories of her mom, working during summer vacation at Miles East Main Drive-in movie theatre.



We shared the love of genealogy and spent time exploring our roots for many years. As a matter of fact, we both loved history in general. Our shared Reynoldsburg history led me to encourage her to become a member of the Reynoldsburg-Truro Historical Society. She told me she was so proud of her membership that she hung her membership certificate over her desk where she would see it every day. She was very proud of being a "corn-fed, down-home, small town girl," something people she met after leaving Ohio would say to her. She agreed, and said she was proud of it!

(Continued on page 12)

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(Continued from page 11)

We shared another thing in common: our children. Becky and I both married men who had children from their previous marriage, and we both adopted those children and raising them and loving them brought great joy to our lives. Christina, Lisa and Virginia, I'm sure you know how much she loved each of you, and how proud she was of you. David, though I've never met you, I decided that if Becky loved you as she did, you must be a wonderful man. Our hearts go out to all of you.

Rebecca never forgot her roots. I read once that the best thing you could give your children was "roots and wings!!" Rebecca always had roots -- and now she has wings, too! God bless you, Rebecca! I'll miss you always, think of you often with love, and always be proud that we were friends. Not good-bye, Becky. I'll see you again on the other side.

~ **Wendy (Wheatley) Raftery**
RHS Class of 1964

Rebecca Tobin Yount was born on June 17, 1944 in Columbus, Ohio. She was an American author, known for her series of crime novels featuring Scotland Yard inspector Michael ("Mick") Chandra, also a Facebook series on home cooking, entitled *Crime and Cottage Pie*, and historical novels set in England.

Becky attended Capital University, where she received a four-year proficiency award; then the graduate schools of Indiana, Binghamton, and

New York Universities. While pursuing doctoral studies, she received her master's degree and was awarded a teaching assistantship in music at Binghamton.

Becky had already published poetry and co-edited the campus poetry magazine. Later she wrote music and verse for voice: "*Three Songs of Transition*," which was performed at Lincoln Center in New York.

Turning to research, she served as associate editor of the annual

Political Handbook of the World, published by

McGraw-Hill. Moving to

Washington, D.C., she

edited publications for

The Society for Values in

Higher Education, then

became director of development for the Partners

of the Americas, leading to

a series of leadership roles

for the Council of Chief

State School Officers, whose

members are responsible for

the quality of public education

across the U.S. and its territories.

In conjunction with the U.S.

Department of Education and the Bureau

of the Census, she created the very first

comprehensive map of the nation's

school boundaries. She also directed a

nationwide program to invest private

funds to strengthen America's public

schools, soliciting grants from the

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to enrich

public education in a series of states and

territories as disparate as Alaska and the

Northern Mariana Islands. She lectured

(continued on page 13)



Rebecca Way Tobin Yount

June 17, 1944 - May 23, 2019



(continued from page 12)

public policy. She was personally honored by grants from the Exxon Education Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation. Her interest in public policy and governance can be traced to her leadership in the Girls State of Ohio, where she served in the governor's cabinet. In her writing life, she mentored young women in Afghanistan who aspired to be published internationally.

Becky married David Yount, a multiple award-winning author, journalist, and foundation president, in Washington, D.C. in 1978, adopting his three pre-adolescent daughters, who call her "Mom." For decades the Younts resided in a small lake-front home in Northern Virginia with three cats and a series of Scottish Terriers. While still raising the children, she began writing historical fiction set in England, where the family continued to live for part of every year.

Early on, when exchanging homes with an English couple in a small Essex village, she learned of the unsolved violent murder of a wealthy neighbor with his own kitchen cleaver. She resolved to solve the crime by way of her first novel, which introduced Anglo-Indian Mick Chandra, styled after a real Scotland Yard inspector who was a neighbor during yet another home exchange.

By 2018 her Mick Chandra series had expanded to six e-novels with more on tap, each awarded four to five stars by reviewers, including Amazon, Kindle Books, and Goodreads.

Rebecca underwent successful open-heart surgery at New York's Mount Sinai Hospital in January 2010 and continued her writing undiminished until she died unexpectedly and without pain while sleeping at home on May 23, 2019. She had just completed her seventh Mick Chandra mystery, *The Mirror of Naples*, which was delivered to her publisher only a week later. ~ **David Yount**



The following is a summary from the Board Meeting that was held on June 11, 2019.

Our Board Meetings are all open to the membership and you are always welcome to join us:

- 1 Sympathy card was sent to a member's family by the Sunshine Committee
- The furnace will be serviced this week
- The garage roof will be installed when the weather breaks
- The museum roof will be repaired during the same time period as the garage roof installation
- The Yard Sale was advertised in This Week News and signage in the yard, Facebook, and emails. The Whitehall Historical Society is participating
- Due to the location of the venue, the lack of available volunteers, and the cost of the booth, the board has voted that RTHS will not be participating in the Tomato Festival this year
- WOSU-TV will be including a small segment about Alexander Livingston in an October production that will feature two of our members
- The signs on Main Street now direct future patrons to the 'Historical Society Museum'

(continued on page 16)

David Leigh McConagha

Sept. 21, 1941-Mar. 8, 2019

by Suzy Millar Miller, 6/28/2019

I recently read that David (Dave) McConagha passed away in Maryland. He was one of Reynoldsburg's proud U.S. Naval veterans. Dave was born in Columbus to Ralph and Martha McConagha. He graduated from RHS in 1959 where he played on the varsity basketball team. Dave was the class secretary and voted "Must Studious" his senior year. Dave's *Reynolian* caption read: "He's smart as a whip, yet not a square, when you want him to help he's always there, ambition is to be successful, basketball, favorite celebrity is Yogi Bear, 5 or 6 year-old Chryslers, Honor Society."



In the "Letter from the Future, May 30, 1969", a yearbook feature where a classmate wrote a fantasy letter from 10 years in the future, Judy Molnar wrote this about Dave: "At the reunion dinner table we began to talk about the lead Russia has in their space travel research. Dave McConagha was the principal speaker, for he is quite an expert on that subject. He is working at Cape Canaveral as an engineer. At the present time he is working on the intercontinental ballistic missile. We all agreed that with Dave on the job, Russia's going to have a tough fight to stay ahead."

The varsity basketball team pictured are: **Row 1:** Coach Mike Zorich, Hollis Keels, Rowland Jerald, Joe Shamhart, Bill McTeague, Gary Sharp, and David McConagha. **Row 2:** Jack Wilson, Allan Walker, Dave



Kitzmiller, Mike Bowlus, Bill Rice, and Roger Parsons.

Dave married Jeanette Elena Myers (RHS 1960) in August, 1962 while he was working a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics from The Ohio State University. Dave attended Muskingham College before he transferred to OSU. Jeanette was a varsity



cheerleader at RHS. The cheerleader photo shows: **Row 1, Varsity:** Diane Windom, Linda Houck, Jeanette Myers, Chuckie DePietro, Connie Clymer, and Judy LeCoumpte. **Row 2, Reserve:** Elaine Savage, Shelva Shamhart, Monnie Merringer, Judy Hunt, Karen Coy, and Norma Boggs. The caption in the 1960 *Reynolian* for Jeannette read: "Where she gets her energy, no one knows, she's

an expert at dropping pianos on toes, ambition to be an OSU cheerleader, shrimp cocktail, water skiing, 9,999." (continued on page 15)

David Leigh McConagha

Sept. 21, 1941-Mar. 8, 2019

(continued from page 14)

In a fictitious paper called “*The Future Times*” section of the yearbook dated October 30, 1980 which foretold where the RHS class of 1960 would be in 20 years at a 1980 homecoming. Jeannette’s “future” was written as: “*The festivities began when Miss Jeannette Myers of the Metropolitan Opera sang the Star Spangled Banner.*” In Jeannette’s “Last Will and Testament of the Class of 1960” Jeannette wrote: “*I, Jeannette Myers, bequeath my ability to move pianos to anyone who’s foolish enough to try.*”

Jeannette went on to become a nurse and has sung with an International award winning Sweet Adelines chorus for many years.



Dave and Jeannette had four children: Heather (McCongaha) MacNaughton (husband, Deacon), Pat McConagha (wife, Kay), Deidre (McConagha) Austen (husband, Ed), and Marty McConagha (wife, Shannon). They also have eight grandchildren. Dave was the brother of Linda Kelly (husband, Lew), Nancy Tishkoff (husband, Stuart) and Susan Donaldson (husband, Lynn).

According to Dave’s obituary: “*In 1964, David embarked on a 27-year naval career with more than 25 years of flight experience with the A-3B and EA-6B aircraft. His career included teaching*

mathematics at the U.S. Naval Academy Preparatory School at the Naval Training Center in Bainbridge and flight training in Pensacola, FL and NAS Whidbey in Washington State. As a young navigator, David flew photographic reconnaissance and combat missions with VAP 61 in Vietnam from 1967 to 1969. David later served as a Naval ROTC instructor at Dartmouth College while earning a Master’s degree in Operations Research/Systems Analysis. David’s career continued with stations at NAS Norfolk with the electronic warfare squadron VAQ 138 and commanding officer of VAQ 132. His squadron’s deployments included tours on the aircraft carriers Saratoga and Dwight D. Eisenhower. During his tenure at NAS Whidbey, David attended and graduated from the Naval War College in Newport, RI.

“In 1983, David was transferred to the Pentagon where he held successive positions in the offices of the Chief of Naval Operations and the Director for Operations, Joint Staff. David was directly involved with policy, requirements, and operational control of U.S. military forces. Upon retirement from the Navy in 1991, David continued to serve our country as the Director, Office of Weapons Surety, for the U.S. Department of Energy. His responsibilities included nuclear weapons safety, security, and coordination with the Department of Defense. In the international arena, David contributed to both the North Atlantic Treaty Organization nuclear weapons safety and security programs, and cooperative surety efforts with the United Kingdom. He travelled frequently to the republics of the former Soviet Union to assist in the safe, secure dismantlement of their nuclear weapons. David retired from the Department of Energy in 1997.

“David was a member of the VFW Fleet Reserve Association, Military Officers Association, and a lifetime member of the Vietnam Veterans of America. Along with

(continued on page 16)



David Leigh McConagha

Sept. 21, 1941-Mar. 8, 2019

(continued from page 15)

other commendations, he was awarded the Defense Superior Service Medal (with gold star), multiple Navy Air Medals and Strike/Flight Awards, Navy Unit Commendation (with one bronze star), Navy Expeditionary Medal, Vietnam Service Medal (with one silver star), Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (with one bronze star), Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation (with one bronze star), and the Meritorious Service Medal.

“David served several tenures as Senior Warden at Grace Episcopal Church in Brunswick, MD. In retirement, David became an active member of the American Legion, Post 166 in Ocean City, MD. David was a long-time member of the Barbershop Harmony Society, and was recognized as Barbershopper-of-the-Year when singing with the Catoctones in Frederick, MD. He later spent countless happy hours rehearsing and performing with The Chorus of the Chesapeake and singing baritone in several quartets. David’s retirement afforded him time to boat on the Susquehanna River, volunteer at the USNTC Museum in Bainbridge, MD, and visit Ireland to explore first-hand the genealogy he had spent so much time researching. David also was an avid attendee at sports and school events for his grandchildren. Some of David’s favorite days were filled with Ocean City trips in his convertible, listening to Willie Nelson and Patsy Cline, with his dog, Eli, by his side.

“A service was held at Emmanuel Episcopal Church, 303 N. Main Street, Bel Air, MD on March 30, 2019.”

It seems like the class futures in the Reynolians of both Dave and Jeannette were pretty accurate. Jeannette continues to sing and Dave did have something to do with Russia and security. Sometimes our former classmates make predictions we would never expect to come true.

BOARDROOM BRIEFS

(continued from page 13)

- David Yount donated Becky Yount’s RHS 1962 Class Ring which is now displayed in our new Don Foltz Jewelers exhibit

A BIG Thank you to:

Jim Diuguid for all the work he did on the Refugee Tract project, cataloging everything we receive in a timely manner, meeting people at the museum to give tours, accepting donations, and the countless tasks he performs every time he is at the museum

Judy Diuguid for cleaning in the museum, bringing lunch when Jim Diuguid & Mary Stoots were working on the Refugee Tract project, providing transportation, helping Jim elsewhere whenever needed, and for all the planning and hard work you did for my Mom’s Memorial

Suzy Millar Miller for donating \$1,500 towards the garage roof installation; for donating a large portion of the YTD Corresponding Secretary expenses; writing awesome articles for the *Courier*; and helping to make the *Courier* look professional

Ivalee Basinger, Dotti Barth & Judy Holzbacher for working so hard at helping with my Mom’s Memorial

Wendy Wheatley Raftery for her dedication to our membership regardless of her own health issues, and donating all of the YTD postage and other card expenses for the Sunshine Committee

Kim Fisher for her dedication to RTHS, bringing us food, and helping us with our landscaping and seasonal decorating

Mark Myers, for working so hard to organize the VERY SUCCESSFUL Western Electric Open House

Connie Parkinson for being available to edit on the spot, taking the president on outings, and writing such wonderful articles for the *Courier*

Mike Kefauver for the many donations he has made to the museum for the Silent Auction and Gift Shop

- All agenda items were covered.
- Motion to Adjourn at 8:00 pm
- The next meeting is scheduled for July 16, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.