



Pickerington-Violet Township HISTORICAL SOCIETY

News for Members and Friends

FALL 2020

Find us: 15 E. Columbus Street, Olde Pickerington Village ~ www.PickHistory.org

Call us: 614-382-5989 ~ Email us: pickhistsociety@hotmail.com ~ We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

Museum closure continues for the remainder of 2020

The primary concern of our Historical Society Board of Directors continues to be the safety of our volunteers and Museum visitors during the on-going coronavirus pandemic. Therefore, our Historical Society Museum will remain closed for the foreseeable future.

The good news, however, is that a few outdoor events still can be enjoyed by strolling or driving through Olde Pickerington Village this Fall and Winter:

- **October:** "Trail of Scarecrows" decorations can be seen at our Museum and other downtown Pickerington locations throughout October.
- **December:** Festive holiday lights and decorations will be displayed in Pickerington's Town Square, our Historical Museum, and other downtown Pickerington locations. Details coming in our November Holiday Newsletter

We will continue to keep you — our members and friends — informed about Historical Society and local happenings through this quarterly newsletter, email notices, Facebook, and our website, PickHistory.org. In the meantime, please stay safe.

— Peggy Portier, President
Pickerington-Violet Township Historical Society

Historical Society Acquires Player Piano

Our thanks to Barb and Dan Rankin, residents of Violet Township's Mingo Estates, who donated an early 1900's Norris & Hyde player piano to our Historical Society Museum during the summer. With the piano came a box of music rolls featuring vintage songs such as *Tie a Yellow Ribbon*, *Somewhere My Love*, *Till We Meet Again*, and *William Tell Overture*.

We hope you will share with us the joy of this music once it's safe to re-open our Museum.

For many years, this player piano belonged to Howard Milnor (*photo at right*), who was a friend of the Rankins.

Howard Milnor was an accomplished pianist and organist. He regularly played at weddings, local restaurants, and church services in the Pickerington area. Howard also provided the music for weekly Friday night sing-a-longs at Pickerington Nursing and Rehab Center where he lived for over 20 years prior to his death at age 85 in 2017.

Howard played his music entirely from memory as he was blind.

Read more on page 2 about Howard Milnor and the roles the Milnor Family played in Pickerington-Violet Township's history during the 20th century.



Getting a Player Piano into our Historical Museum was quite a challenge! Photos by Peggy Portier.

AROUND OUR MUSEUM

Pickerington's Milnor Family

By Gary Taylor and Maggie Arendt

Howard Milnor was the grandson of prominent Pickerington-Violet Township landowner, businessman and civic leader, William W. Milnor. The elder Milnor served on the school board during the construction and opening of Pickerington's first high school on East Street in 1907. This building now serves as Heritage Elementary School and the Pickerington Local School District Office.

The Milnor family lived in the farmhouse that is still standing at 319 North Center Street, near the intersection of Milnor Road. The former family farm has since been developed into Pickerington Meadows, Milnor Crossing Subdivision, The Meadows Apartments, and Epiphany Lutheran Church.

Howard's father was Charles R. Milnor who, with his father (William W. Milnor) in 1920, established Longview Poultry Farm, a chicken hatchery that provided chicks throughout the eastern United States.

Howard had three siblings: Helen, Kenneth, and Charles — all of whom are now deceased. The four attended Pickerington schools and had been active in the local School Alumni Association. Howard, a member of the class of 1951, entertained fellow alumni by playing the piano or organ during annual get-togethers.



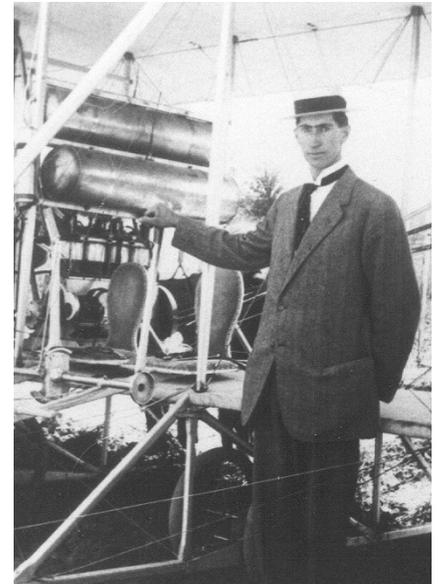
↑ *Photo Above: Howard Milnor's grandfather, William W. Milnor (back row, far right), with other members of the 1907 Violet Township Board of Education (clockwise from left in back row): John Peters, Gus Alexander, Allen Courtright, Milnor, William Ackers, and John Talbot.*

↓ *Photo Below: Howard Milnor's father, Charles R. Milnor, stands by airplane forced to make an emergency landing in Pickerington during 1911. Charles R. Milnor passed away at age 61 in 1946.*



Historical Society Board members wear masks and social distance during their monthly meetings in the Museum's Lower Level.

During its last meeting, the Board postponed our planned Museum Yard Sale Fundraiser until 2021. However, we still are accepting donations. Items already received include artwork, frames, metal signs, books, games, and household items. Do you have any donations? If so, they can be dropped off at our Museum or we can pick them up from your home or business! Call or text Peggy Portier at 614-595-5867 with questions or to make arrangements.



LOCAL HISTORY 100 YEARS AGO

1920 Homecoming Parade



← Frank Dovel leads 1920 Homecoming Parade as Grand Marshal.

An enthusiastic booster of Pickerington in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Frank Dovel leads the 1920 Parade as Grand Marshal wearing his stove-pipe hat and riding his horse named "Billy". The crown of flowers Billy is wearing was made by Dovel's daughters, Miss May Dovel and Mrs. Rose Dovel Kallies.

Frank Dovel owned a farm and racetrack where the present Ridgeview Jr. High School currently is located. His family's brick home, still standing at 50 Hill Road South, is now owned by Dovel descendent, Rick Ricketts. This 1920 fall photo was taken by Mary Judy who, with her husband Ray Judy, owned the Pickerington Greenhouse.



1920 Huntwork-Shimp Sinclair Filling Station

Do you know where this Sinclair gas station was located? It stood on the northeast corner of Columbus and Center Streets — where the Fairfield County Sheriff's Substation stands today.

Roy Huntwork is standing by the station door, with his enlarged image underneath the station photo. In later years, Huntwork was a director of the Pickerington Bank and involved in the development of Mingo Estates.

In 1977, this downtown corner was occupied by a new brick gas station selling Sohio products and owned by Dude Harrell.



← The Pisgah Church and burial ground, located on the southeast corner of Routes 256 and 204, was built in 1852 as part of the United Brethren in Christ denomination.

The congregation was served by circuit riding ministers. Regular meetings were discontinued in the late 1800s, and the church was torn down circa 1920. However, the Pisgah Cemetery lives on and contains the resting places of early pioneers with names such as Harmon, Motz, Houser, Allen, Price, Ashton, Millar, and Fishbaugh.



Society Members We Will Miss

Condolences to Jack Whitaker on the passing of his beloved wife, Bev (*photo at left*), on June 19. Jack and Bev have been active Lifetime Members of our Society for more than 17 years. Jack currently is Vice President-Programs for our organization. The Whitakers were married for 63 years and have 3 daughters, 8 grandchildren, and 9 great-grandchildren. All of us miss Bev’s bubbly personality and smile.

Lois Williamson (*photo at right*), longtime member and volunteer of our Historical Society, passed away on June 25 at the age of 95. Lois and husband, Raymond (“Kayo”) who passed away in 2010, owned and operated Williamson’s Sunoco at Hill Road/West Columbus Street in Pickerington for 58 years. Our sincere sympathy to her living children, Scott and Laurel, 7 grandchildren, and 6 great-grandchildren.



2020 Columbus Foundation Big Give

Thanks to Pickerington members and friends who donated money to the Pickerington-Violet Township Historical Society during the recent “Big Give” sponsored by the Columbus Foundation. Donors included Erin Feiler, Jean Mauger, Ira Weiss, and Byron Seymour. The Fairfield County Foundation’s annual “Give” takes place around Thanksgiving.

2020-2021 PICKERINGTON-VIOLET TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY EXECUTIVES

Elected Officers:

President: Peggy Portier
Advisor (Past President): Gary Taylor
Vice President-Administration: Keith Ebright
Vice President-Programs: Jack Whitaker
Secretary: Mary Herron
Treasurer: Fiona Spears
Members-at-Large: Barbara Freeman, Stephanie Johnson, and Greg Karoly

President’s Appointees:

Historian: David Williard
Librarian: Suellen Goldsberry
Membership/Volunteer Chair: Stephanie Johnson
Publicity Chair/Newsletter Editor: Maggie Arendt

Open Appointed Position: Curator

2020-2021 Historical Society Projects:

- Digitizing Pickerington High School class photos and purchasing a display rack for them.
- Creating children’s “Try It On” vintage clothing exhibit.
- Purchasing Video Equipment for Oral History Program with the Pickerington Public Library.



↑ First responder units representing 20 different organizations from central Ohio joined forces on June 30 outside the Portier home in Pickerington for a tribute parade in honor of Pickerington-Violet Twp Historical Society member Ralph Portier (*wearing red shirt and standing in his driveway*). Ralph currently is Chief of Police in Groveport and has taught thousands of central Ohio first responders. He is fighting cancer and his colleagues wanted to show their support.

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