



# Exponent

*The Monthly Newsletter of the Chagrin Falls Historical Society*

*John Bourisseau, Editor*

*December 2014*



*The Chagrin Falls Historical Society  
cordially invites you  
to attend*

## *A Victorian Christmas Open House*

*on Saturday, December 13, 2014  
from 2:00 until 4:00 p.m.*

*Please join us for an afternoon of holiday cheer.  
Enjoy delicious homemade refreshments as our harpist  
fills the museum with the music of Christmas.*

*We will have gift items  
for sale, for the history  
lover on your list.*

**Chagrin Falls  
Historical Society**  
21 Walnut St.  
Chagrin Falls, Oh  
440-247-4695



### **Welcome to New Members**

Bob Abley

Paul and Stephanie  
Cervelloni

Emilie Gottsegen

Patti Widmar

**Support Our**

### **Special Event Sponsors**

#### **Curator**

The Chagrin Valley Times  
Hamlet Retirement Village  
Michelle and Ted McQuade  
Dwight Milko, RE/MAX Traditions

#### **Docent**

Diana Weber Gardner  
Mike & Connie Gleason  
The Glenmede Trust Co.  
Drs. Raymond and Katharine  
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Myers Precision Grinding  
Naylor Wellman, LLC

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#### **Historian**

John and Mary Bourisseau  
Gregg Hill & Carol Dolan  
Chagrin Valley Optometrists  
Earth & Waterscapes, Inc/Blazin Bills  
Highway Auto Center  
John & Margi O'Brien  
Palmieri Builders, Inc.  
Steve and Sara Schneider,

## Campaign Kickoff Fundraiser a Huge Success

### Thanks to Volunteers

Fall Back-Spring Forward-It's Time! the historical society's epic first capital campaign fundraiser netted \$48,000! What a fantastic success. Not only was it a financial success, but being recognized as the 'social event of the year' by Barbara Christian in the Chagrin Valley Times was the icing on the cake. Guests that night were heard to say 'This is the best party I've ever been to.' and 'This is the best thing to ever happen in Chagrin Falls.' Music to the Events Committee's ears.

A tremendous thank you goes to the Event Committee who all worked hard to create a sellout event. Thank you for being so dedicated, frugal and resourceful: **Kate Adler** for planning the menu, working with the caterer and donating her extensive catering services, **Mary Bourisseau** for managing the valet service and making sure everything outdoors was safe for our guests, **MaryAnn Carothers** for researching and managing the Newsies, **Gretchen Hamann** for putting together the wonderful silent auction, **Carol Haslett** for helping with the invitations. **Sally Hawkins** for planning, creating and installing all of the decorations, **Ashley Henry** for pulling in a fabulous team of volunteers and for creating a spreadsheet to keep us on track, **Margi O'Brien** for all things written-thank you's, mailing list and beautiful signage, and **Ann Thompson** for working with **Evans Printing** to create a great program, and for washing and decorating the building entry. Thank you all for these things and so much more.

Additionally, **Ken Kvacek** deserves a round of applause for: moving and assembling furniture, gathering decorations, fixing things, loaning things, generally being indispensable, you name it, Ken helped with it. Let's give this man a cigar.

Thank you to **Bill Hamann** for the best wine pull the world has ever seen.

Special thanks to **Carolyn Sihler** and **Jane Babinsky** for working tirelessly on keeping track of the finances and documents for the event, setting us up with credit card capability for checking out and creating the name tags.

THANK YOU to all of the volunteers who worked the night of the event. Your help was integral to it's success and the Chagrin Falls Historical Society appreciates your support.

Anne Burr

## Henry Church Jr. Program

A crowd of close to fifty people gathered at the Shute Building November 20, to hear what Jane Babinsky had to say about her great-great grandfather, Henry Church, Jr. Church, one of the first children born in Chagrin Falls (1836) is known as a blacksmith, painter and sculptor. Babinsky shared photographs of Church's home, blacksmith shop, art studio and several pieces of his artwork. She pointed out that one of the ways to determine if a painting was done by Church is the signature sailboat he always managed to place somewhere in his paintings. She also explained how some of his work appeared to be inspired by the events of the day. His still life with monkeys and a police officer, which hangs in the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center in Williamsburg, Va., appears to be based on an incident he'd read about in the newspaper.

Following Jane's talk, conservator Allyn Rosser spoke about the process of restoring one of Church's paintings, "The Old Oaken Bucket." She explained that she'd always wanted a Henry Church, Jr. painting and when she'd heard of one available she immediately went to check it out. It was in terrible shape. Painted on paper it had several tears and was mounted on a piece of drywall. Ms. Rosser shared photos of the painstaking process of protecting the painting while removing the drywall from it's back. When asked how long all of the restoration had taken her response was 'decades'.

Both speakers were fascinating and gave a wonderful insight into the life of one of Chagrin Falls historical treasures. Thank you, Jane and Allyn.

Thank you also to Patti and Jeff Widmar and the many bakers who provided the refreshments.

Anne Burr

## Honor Book and Memory Book

The Chagrin Falls Historical Society created and maintains these two books. The Honor Book contains a brief biography and picture of the person(s) being honored. This information and the picture are provided by the donor. There is a minimum donation of \$50 to sponsor someone for the Honor Book. All donors honoring the person(s) will be listed in the Honor Book, which is a change.

The Memory Book contains a list of people who have donations made in their memory and there is no minimum donation amount. The donors are not listed in the Memory Book only names of those being memorialized.

Bill Hamann

## Construction Update

What happened to the new home of the Historical Society after the Gala on Nov. 1st ?

The demolition started on Nov. 3 in preparation for the restoration!

Several hundred man hours have been put in meticulously removing walls, electric, plumbing, heating ducts and more as each of the trades have been hard at work to expose the original bones of the building to make way for restoration and new construction.

Each week we meet with the contractor and the trades as we move closer to the completion of the demolition phase of the interior of the building.

The construction team has completed quite a bit since the Gala: Removal of 1<sup>st</sup> floor ceilings, all lighting, electric, HVAC has been removed and we have shored up all ceilings. Walls and partitions have been removed opening up the areas for the future museum galleries. The 1<sup>st</sup> floor bath rooms and kitchen have been removed to make way for new accessible rest rooms and elevator. The exterior Porticoes and lighting has been removed along with the rear patio in preparation for the new community room extension. Three of the four furnaces have been removed to make way for the new duct work and furnaces and air-conditioning. Removal of walls and the two 2<sup>nd</sup> floor baths to make way for the new textile room. Several holes were cut in the basement floor to create new foundation footers that will provide a new structural skeleton. The basement floor was cut and removed for the new elevator that will serve all 3 levels of the building.

Activities in process:

A trench is being dug to alleviate drainage issues and to provide all new underground electric service to building. Vintage doors are being preserved pending restoration. Original random width pine floors were found under the 1<sup>st</sup> floor carpeting that we plan to restore. Energy efficient LED lighting has been ordered. New energy efficient, fire rated, ADA compliant exterior entrance doors are on order since they have long lead times. New traditional styled interior doors and hardware are ready to be ordered. All post

1941 windows are being replaced; two of which are being crafted in the original style of the 1874 Italianate windows as seen on the front of the home. Custom storm windows will be installed for all windows including historic windows. All exterior glass will have UV coating for energy conservation and interior museum protection. Extensive foundation excavation is taking place to correct and improve drainage to promote drier basement conditions for storage.

The Design Committee, chaired by Jane Babinsky, has been meeting to provide recommendations in regards to the phone and the computer needs as well as future furniture needs and building layout.

“We have a couple more weeks of demolition before construction will begin” said architect Phil Koepf.

Phil added “We continue to identify local sourcing for materials and trades such as the new security system and the media needs within the building.”

If you have questions or are aware of suppliers that are willing to support the project with donated or reduced cost materials and services please contact John or Ken at 216-570-9136.

Ken Kvacek



One of the pleasant surprises--framing for a Italianate style fan light window above the front door. We will restore this to its original beauty.

## Curators Corner



Pat Zalba

Volunteer Curator

### Overview Calendar

- |          |    |   |
|----------|----|---|
| December | 1  | Hanging of the Greens. Decorating the Museum for "Christmas Past", Shute Building, 10 am-3 pm |
|          | 2  | Design Committee meets, Shute Building, 4 pm  |
|          | 9  | Chagrin Falls Historical Society Board Meeting, Shute Building, 9:30 am                       |
|          | 13 | "Christmas Past" Open House, Harpist Gina Mulh, Shute Building, (1:00) 2:00--4:00 pm          |
|          | 17 | Century Plaque Committee, Shute Building, 10 am   |

### Christmas Celebrations in Chagrin Falls 1870s style

The information for the following paragraphs was taken from research done by Marion Goldbach in 1970. She attributes her information to Exponent articles written by Editor J. J. Stranahan. (The Exponent was the weekly newspaper published in Chagrin Falls starting in 1874). In the 1870's Christmas celebrations were held primarily in the various churches in the community. It is my impression that Christmas trees were not set up in each home at this time. "December 24, 1878--While on the circle Christmas Eve, we saw the Methodist, Bible Christian and Baptist churches enjoying the pleasures of Christmas trees. Santa had placed a tree in the Methodist Church that touched the ceiling and was spotted with sweetmeats and presents. The Rev. Domer talked to the little ones telling them what Christmas was for". At the Bible Christian church, "after singing by the choir, the presents, candies and popcorn were distributed". And, at the Baptist church, "Two well loaded trees on each side of the rostrum were conspicuously laden with many presents. Exercises, were opened, as usual, with music and prayer, followed by recitations and declamations, songs by the Sunday school were also intermingled. The presents were then distributed and the little ones were made happy. After the presents were distributed, the audience was dismissed and they all went home having enjoyed a Merry Christmas Eve." Editor Stranahan also reported on gift giving in the Chagrin Falls business and industrial community. For example, "Adams and Company made each of their employees a substantial Christmas gift. The men were given knit jackets and the ladies each a half a dozen handkerchiefs. The Chagrin Falls Paper Co. gave their hands substantial presents on Christmas Eve. The factory girls received an order on W.A. Upham for each a dress with all the necessaries for making, while the men laborers were each presented with a knit jacket and a pair of kid gloves. The employees of Adams Co. presented Mr. Adams with a handsome gold watch chain and a charm costing \$45."

*Happy Holidays to all!*

*Pat Zalba*

*Volunteer Curator*



Photos from the Historical Society Gala, Nov 1, 2014