



# THE HISTORICAL TIMES

Volume XIX Issue 2

Celebrating Granville's Bicentennial 1805 - 2005

May 2005



*Proposal Tree.  
Spring Valley, Granville, O.*

*Pub by S.P. Tresize*

## Observations on the Natural and Cultural Resources of the Spring Valley

Many days of my youth were spent roaming the valleys and hills of southwestern Granville Township. One locality, known as the "Spring Valley," probably since the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, never ceased to yield new discoveries, especially those of natural history and prehistoric Indian artifacts. This area is dominated by two prominent landscape features. The first is Flowerpot Hill, a large ridge of sandstone rounded during the Wisconsin Glaciation when the Raccoon Valley was covered in ice some 12,000 years ago. The second feature is Salt Run, which has down-cut through the glacial soil and layers of sedimentary rock, revealing the interior structure of Flowerpot Hill. Granville Township falls along the western edge of the Appalachian Plateau which is

### Message from the President



### Lisksa named 2005 Historian

At our Annual Meeting on April 27, we celebrated many things, not the least of which was the award of Historian of the Year to Tony Lisksa. Tony has contributed in so many ways to this Society, to his community, and to Denison; it is hard to know where to start. To list a few: Tony was Editor-in-Chief of our Bicentennial books, and author or co-author of several chapters. He is a long-time member of the Editorial Board of our Historical Times, and has contributed many articles over the years. He has been a member of our Board of Managers, and is now a member of Granville's Bicentennial Commission. He teaches philosophy at Denison and is a nationally noted scholar. Above all, I think of him as a teacher, having just attended his First Year Seminar "Granville Celebrates a Bicentennial: A History of Two Hundred Years," which used our Bicentennial books as course material. This course will be repeated this fall as an honors course, and I highly recommend it to you. Congratulations, Tony, on receiving this well-deserved honor! ---Lance Clarke



Tony Lisksa

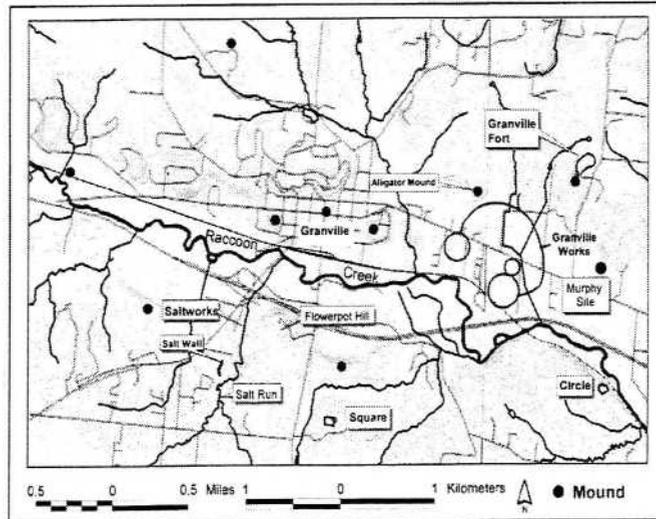
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made up of Mississippian and Pennsylvanian age bedrock. Cliffs comprising these rocks exposed throughout the valley.

The natural beauty of the area is greatly enhanced by Salt Run itself. Salt Run is a small stream consisting of a main trunk and two branches with a total length of about 3.5 miles. It possesses a watershed of approximately 1.2 square miles. These facts are unremarkable in themselves. What is most noteworthy is that this stream has had the power to create such a steep valley, one of the area's most valuable natural and scenic resources. Precipitous slopes along Salt Run have undoubtedly prevented development along much of its course above Spring Valley Pool upstream to Silver Street. Fortunately, much of this area is now preserved as green space.

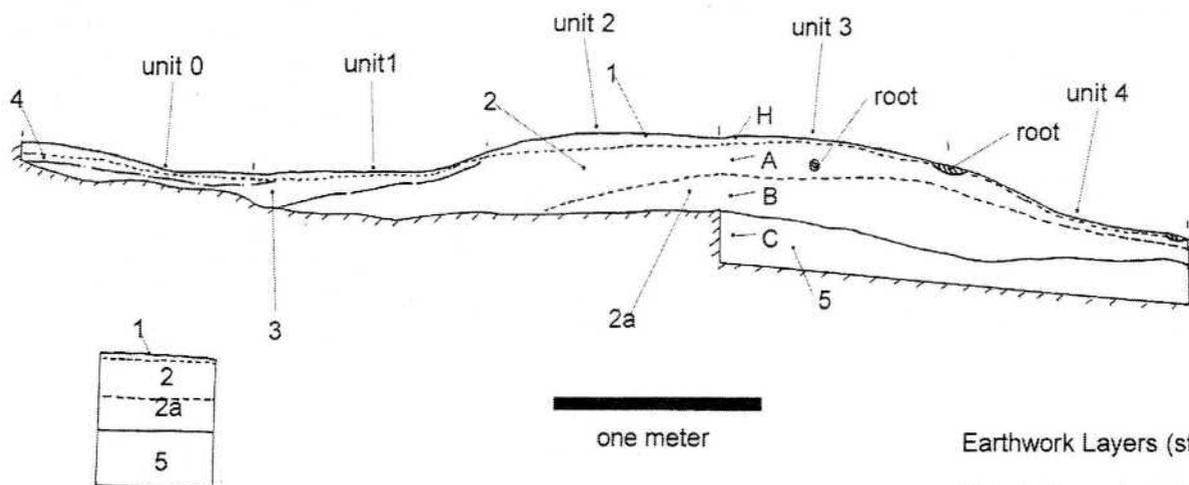
**The History of Spring Valley and the Salt Run Area**

Spring Valley today consists of a beech-maple forest of considerable age, since it probably has not been intensively logged since the 1800s. The valley retains a feeling of an old growth forest. However, this initial



view gives way as you walk through the woods and see signs of past human activity. Old property lines and field edges can be discerned from fence lines and rows of Osage Orange, or hedge-apple trees as there were colloquially called. Some of these imposing Osage trees are at least 150 years old and once were kept as neat field hedgerows. Still older evidence of human occupation was found when farmers plowed their fields

and prehistoric spear points would be revealed. Along with Indian habitation sites or encampments, mounds and earthworks dotted the landscape along the uplands south of the Raccoon Valley before largely being destroyed. A few burial mounds still survive, and a few others might be waiting to be rediscovered. During the 19<sup>th</sup> Century many individuals like E. F. Appy, a professor at the Granville Female College. W. K. Morehead, then a student at Denison University, and the Reverend Henry Bushnell documented or investigated these prehistoric monuments. In the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century modern archaeological research was conducted throughout the township by the Ohio State University and the Lickin<sup>g</sup> County Archaeological and Landmarks



East wall profile, Unit 2.

Earthwork Layers (stratigraphy)

- H - Humic or decaying detritus
- A - Mound Fill episode 2
- B - Mound Fill episode 1
- C - subsoil

Society (LCALS). Fortunately for me, the graduate students from the OSU Anthropology department tolerated, and even encouraged, my participation in their fieldwork throughout the county.

The toponym "Salt Run" was probably applied to the Creek during the 1820s when a spring or deer lick was discovered to possess high salinity. Several historical accounts document that Colonel Chauncey Humphrey bored a well at that location around 1821 in order to produce salt. The exact date is somewhat in doubt: King reports 1817, Bushnell and Utter both state 1821, and Hill notes 1822-23. At the time salt was a scarce commodity which was highly valued. The salt well was located on Humphrey's farm about one-half to three-quarters of a mile upstream from Raccoon Creek, roughly where Spring Valley Pool is today. The salt well was of considerable depth, perhaps over 200 feet deep. N. N. Hill's 1881 account states:

*A salt well was sunk some hundreds of feet, about three-fourths of a mile southwest of town at an old deer-lick. Salt water was reached and a furnace erected to make salt, but on testing the water, two bushels of salt per day was all that could be made, and the enterprise was abandoned. Another well was commenced on Moat's run, in St. Albans township, but did not come to anything.*

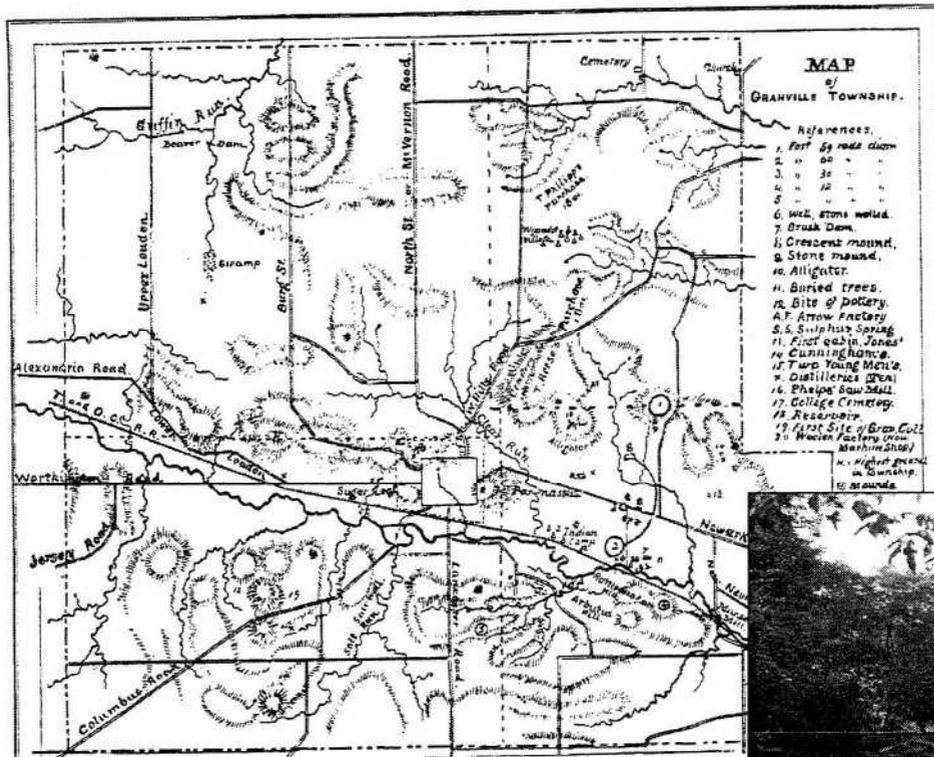
I think these enterprises were undertaken in 1822 or 1823. H. Bushnell's 1889 history provides a few more details of the operation. According to Bushnell, who mapped the well's location, the well was situated about one-half mile from the Columbus bridge crossing Raccoon Creek. At this site Humphrey established "an arch" or evaporation furnace to extract salt from the spring water. Humphrey used troughs thirty feet in length carved from ash wood to act as reservoirs to store the salt water. The solution was then transferred to thirty cauldrons (presumably iron) for boiling the solution down to salt. Each trough held about 30 to 50 barrels of solution. If the current definition of a barrel consisting of 31.5 U.S. gallons may be applied, each trough held roughly 1240 gallons. Once this solution was evaporated, Humphrey only obtained about two bushels (16 gallons) of salt per day of operation. Given the considerable amount of work, not to mention the necessary amount of firewood, the salt operation was soon abandoned. According to a 1912 Granville Times article on the industrial history of Licking County, all that remained 90 years later were "some earth works."

Humphrey, one of the earliest owners of Spring Valley, was a prominent local citizen. Not only did he undertake the salt extraction business, but according to Bushnell he also constructed a mill to produce castor oil. from 1827 to 1830. The mill was likely in close proximity to the saltworks. King states that the Salt Run Mill was sold to a group of three men who installed looms for weaving cloth in 1818. It is not known when the mill ceased operations. Humphrey also started the first systematic dairy farm in the township, most likely within the Spring Valley. After selling the Salt Run mill, Humphrey established a tinning business in Granville. He eventually built the first three-story building in Granville to house his business.

Additionally, Humphrey played a role in local politics and village religious life as well as managing his farm along Spring Valley. When Granville was incorporated, in 1832, Humphrey served as mayor. He was also one of the founders of the Episcopal church and served as a vestryman. Humphrey was also involved in early discussions regarding the construction of the Granville Feeder Canal that linked Granville to the Ohio and Erie Canal in Newark. Hill records that in 1825, at a dinner with a judge in Newark, "A well known citizen, Chauncey Humphrey, in the height of his joy [during a toast] made this remark in relation to the prospects of Granville: 'We shall be a second Utica!'" The feeder canal was completed in 1833, and according to King, the last boat arrived in 1838. Clearly, such isolation from major markets drove people like Humphrey to attempt cottage industries like salt making and to push for infrastructure improvements.

In the late 1900s Spring Valley became a popular recreational area for the Granville citizenry. As early as 1894, the Granville Times was printing announcements of activities taking place at Spring Valley. These notices indicate that Baptist Church picnics, 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations, campfire dinners, and hikes took place there at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. In 1929 the property was purchased by E. C. Roberts. In 1933 a contractor was hired to build a new swimming pool, which has been in operation since.

Photographs and postcards of the area taken in the first decades of the 1900s indicate that the locale was still part of farm. One such image on a postcard postmarked 1908 shows the area southwest of Granville being mostly in pasture. Another photograph dating to 1906 (reprinted in the Historical Times) also indicates that the area was pasture with a few trees and a wooden livestock fence. At this same time there was the locally



Granville Township, left, showing the terrain of the area where Spring Valley is located. Below, the Valley before the pool was built.



famous (or notorious?) Proposal Tree at a now unknown spot along Spring Valley. Apparently by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, this piece of local flora was quite popular, as postcard images of the tree were sold. As late of 1934, the Granville Times ran a news story on the old the Proposal Tree postcards. Although the Proposal Tree may be gone, initials of once former, and perhaps a few current lovers may be seen carved into the bark of a few large beech or maple trees along Salt Run.

### Prehistory of Salt Run Revisited

After being away from the region for several years while attending college and then working as an archaeologist for the state of West Virginia, I returned to Central Ohio to start graduate school in Anthropology at Ohio State. While at the Main Library one day I accidentally found myself staring at a copy of Bushnell's *History of Granville*. Upon opening the book I encountered his map of Granville Township for the first time since working with the Licking County Archaeological and Landmarks Society in the 1980s. The map remains one of the best records of prehistoric and historic cultural resources for the township. The locations of mills, distilleries, farms and other Historic period structures are denoted by Bushnell. Additionally, Bushnell recorded locations of prehistoric earthworks, burial mounds, and encampments. One such notation that I had not paid much attention to, or really noticed

in the past, was a dot along Salt Run with the label "Salt Well" or "Salt Wall" in Bushnell's hand. A drawback with Bushnell's map is that he had drawn it himself, rendering some of it illegible. In addition to the readability factor is the problem that while spatial relationships between objects on the map are generally correct, the distance between them is not.

As it turns out, at the approximate location of the "Salt Well" notation, there exists a small, low earthen embankment or wall, which I had shown members of LCALS in the 1980s, thinking it was a prehistoric earthwork. It was their conclusion at the time, that the embankment was a drainage feature probably relating to farming. As a graduate student in archaeology I returned to that location in 1999 and relocated the one to three feet high and 150-yard long embankment. Upon reviewing the feature once again after several years, I was not convinced of the "drainage feature" hypothesis.

The embankment, or what I have chosen to call the "Salt Wall" after Bushnell's map notation, follows a sinuous path corresponding to the terrain of the hillside. To the West of the embankment is situated a fence line made up of Osage trees. One strike against the "Salt Wall" being a drainage feature is the fact that it does

not follow the fence line. East of the hillside, Salt Run cuts a gorge-like path through Flowerpot Hill exposing bedrock cliff faces. The change in elevation from the hilltop to the creek bed is in excess of 120 feet, one of the most significant variations in relief found anywhere in the township. The northern end terminates where houses were built along Sunset Drive in the 1950s. The south end stops at a precipitous slope which overlooks Salt Run.

Many small-scale prehistoric earthworks are or were located along the Raccoon Valley's southern margins. Therefore, the Salt Wall earthwork might be of prehistoric origin after all. For instance a square enclosure was documented eastward of State Route 37, and a small circular enclosure exists on the bluff overlooking Raccoon Creek where the railroad bridges the creek. Other prehistoric earthworks were situated along the Bryn Du Farm property East of Granville, including the so-called Granville Fort and the Crescent earthworks. One common factor regarding the earthworks and mounds of the Raccoon Valley is that they were often constructed at conspicuous spots on the landscape. Burial mounds dotted the high bluffs along the valley, including the tops of Sugarloaf and Parnassus Hills. Clearly there was at least a level of probability that the embankment might be a prehistoric feature of the Salt Run landscape.

In the 1990s the township managed to purchase the property and the embankment fortuitously was saved when the land became green space. I obtained permission to conduct test excavations on the earthwork, and my wife and I excavated a 0.5 meter (1.75 feet) by 5 meter (16 feet) trench perpendicular and across the earthwork. The excavation revealed two strata or layers of fill in the mound. Apparently soil was excavated from the hillside and placed downslope in two distinct episodes. Soil from the excavation was passed through fine mesh screen to increase chances of finding artifacts. Unfortunately, the only artifact recovered from the excavation was a single flake or piece of Upper Mercer Chert (flint) quarried in Coshocton County. Of particular note is the fact that no Historic period artifacts were found within the mound fill. Other investigation included taking soil samples, and using other modern archaeological methods and techniques. At present, I think that the Salt Wall is a probable prehistoric mound, but no definitive evidence was found during excavation.

However, the Salt Wall is clearly not a part of the Chauncey Humphrey's saltworks located downstream about a third of a mile. The remains of the saltworks

and the Salt Run mill may still be found. There are a few possible locations along Salt Run that require additional investigation. At least one tantalizing clue remains 50 to 100 yards South of Spring Valley Pool. Near a large tree there exists a set of parallel earthen embankments. Are these the same "earth works" ascribed to the old saltworks as in the 1912 Granville Times story cited above? Or, are they prehistoric earthworks mislabeled as such? The answer lies in further field investigation.

## A Call For Preservation

Whether future archaeological fieldwork will be possible along the Spring Valley stretch of Salt Run is currently in question. At the time of writing this article, the property is for sale with the potential for subsequent substantial commercial development. Spring Valley Pool is not slated to reopen in 2005.

Now is the time to secure the land as additional green space and preserve the natural and cultural resources of Spring Valley. Including land previously acquired by the township, the purchase of the Spring Valley property would insure that a contiguous half mile stretch along Salt Run would remain intact.

Not only might future geologists, historians, and archaeologists learn more about this locale; its preservation would do well to enhance the spirits of all that may visit, as it has for millennia.

Andrew M. Mickelson, Ph.D., Anthropologist  
University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Alabama

Mickelson is the son of Denison Professor  
Michael and Diana Mickelson. He grew  
up in Granville.

# Generations treasure Spring Valley

Licking County derives its name from the salt licks frequented by deer and other animals and that were certainly known to the aboriginal people who lived in this area. Salt was a valuable commodity, and as Andrew Mickelson has noted, Chauncey Humphrey, who had emigrated to Granville in 1816, opened a salt well, some 200 ft. deep, in Spring Valley about 1820, near the present swimming pool. He boiled the water in thirty iron caldrons but was able to produce only 2 bushels of salt each day. The amount of fuel and labor required made this uneconomic. He also built a mill on Salt

farm in Granville Township and ran a tinning business. He was one of the founders of St. Luke's Episcopal Church and served as mayor when the Village was incorporated in 1832.

From 1843 until 1880 the Spring Valley property was owned by Richard George, who farmed it and again evaporated salt from the water. The record shows that he hauled salt north to Mt. Gilead and to Lake Erie. One side of the conestoga wagon he used is on display in the Granville Historical Society Museum. Early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century Willis Chamberlin owned Spring Valley. Ed Roberts bought the share of A. P. Nichol to become sole owner in 1929.

Since long before Ed Roberts constructed the pool in 1933, Spring Valley has been a treasured place. In the 19th century, people walked, and Granvillians roamed over the hills and fields and picnicked in the woods. Old photographs document that the Valley of Salt Run was well known as Spring Valley before 1880. The Granville Times, which began publication in 1880, frequently mentions picnics and other gatherings at Spring Valley: Methodist and Baptist Sunday School picnics, family reunions, 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations, wedding showers, dances, memorial services. Circle picnics, birthday parties. Campfire girls and Girl Scouts, Bacon Bats (cookouts), and Denison class, club, and fraternity parties. In addition, many young lovers headed for the Proposal Tree. A page in

Denison student Blonda Watt's scrapbook for 1908 describes a walking date, "Dandy time. Spring Valley. Tore my dress on the proposal tree."

All of this before the pool was constructed! The Granville Times of July 13, 1933, announced the opening of the pool. The initial entrance fee was 25 cents, 15 cents for children. The following week, Red Cross swimming classes began. An article in the Times of July 26, 1934, was entitled, "Local Families Find Solace at Spring Valley during Sweltering Weather. A beautiful scenic spot near the Village this



The diving tower built following the war at Spring Valley Pool in the 1950s, replacing the one built for military use in 1944.

--- GHS Archives

summer reached its pinnacle of popularity with an assemblage of more than 400 local residents and visitors. Spring Valley, a half mile south of the Village, for many years was one of the most ideal spots for picnics in this vicinity. There families could go on hot afternoons and in the shade of the large old trees, sip cold spring water while the children waded in the meandering stream. In the minds of Denison graduates, linger fond memories of Spring Valley and its Proposal Tree, the unusual tree with its large trunk forming a seat just large enough for two."

Spring Valley contributed to the war effort in 1944. A climbing tower was constructed in the pool to give the sailors some water experience in land-locked Ohio.

Generations of Granville residents and visitors have spent summer days at the pool with its sandy entrance slope for very young children.

The Proposal tree was still there in 2003, one trunk broken, but the seat intact. The pool and the Valley were for sale. The next year, a bond issue to modernize the pool with a water slide, new bath houses, and other improvements failed to pass. In 2005, the property is still for sale. A group led by the parents of the Sting-Rays swim team hoped to reopen the pool this summer. By late April they had not been able to conclude an agreement.

--- Flo Hoffman, archivist  
Granville Historical Society

# Upcoming Events

## Granville's Welsh heritage celebrated with weekend of poetry, music, and tours

A Welsh Heritage Weekend, May 20 to 22, celebrates the lasting contributions to the history and culture of Granville and Licking County by the 1803 settlers of the Welsh Hills. The weekend begins at 7 p.m. on Friday, May 20, in the Welsh Hills Room of Denison's Burton Morgan Center with an informal family event to hear the poetry of Granville and Wales, to share the reminiscences of the descendents of those first settlers, and to view photographs, books, and other artifacts of those times. Saturday's activities will shift to Ty Tawel (Fanchion Lewis) Park, the Welsh Hills Cemetery and the streets of Granville for tours. A booklet highlighting the many homes that carry a history of Welsh place names will be re-published and distributed from Ty Tawel Park.

On Sunday, one of the longest lasting cultural traditions of Wales in the New World, will be celebrated. The musical heritage embodied in the hymns that the immigrants had sung in hundreds of small chapels in Wales lives on in the "Gymanfa Ganu," (pronounced Ga-mahn-va Gone-ee) a festival of hymn singing. In the small, isolated villages that dot the hilly landscape of Wales, the congregations of the chapels would practice a group of hymns. Then, in a large gathering - either regional or denominational - the four-part harmony of the chosen hymns would fill the hall. This

### Bicentennial Lecture

#### Series continues

7:30 p.m. at the Granville Inn

May 17

*"Granville During the Progressive Era: Fifty Fascinating Years"*  
Tony Lisska, Professor of Philosophy, Denison University

September 20

*"Granville Encounters the World: 1914-1929"*  
Donald Schilling, Professor of History, Denison University

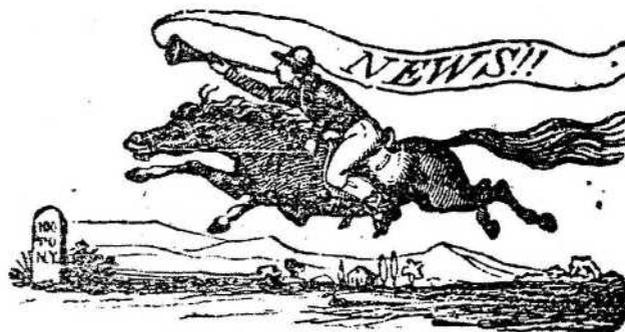
October 18

*"Dealing with Adversity: Granville in Depression and Again at War: 1930-1945"*  
Donald Schilling, Professor of History, Denison University

November 15

*"The Growth of Granville: The Second World War to the End of the Millenniums"*  
Jack Kirby, Professor Emeritus of History, Denison University

Sponsored by the 2005 Bicentennial Commission and Granville Public Library



large gathering is known as the "Gymanfa Ganu."

Granville's Welsh Heritage Weekend Gymanfa Ganu begins at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 22, in the First Presbyterian Church. Conductor for the Gymanfa will be Thomas Lloyd and organist will be Carol Welk.

Lloyd earned his bachelor of music education degree at Otterbein College and a master's degree at Wright State University. He has been teaching in Ohio for 31 years, most recently as conductor of the Concert Band at Columbus State Community College, where he also teaches music history. He is the music director at the First Presbyterian Church in London, where he organized a Gymanfa Ganu in 2004 to celebrate the church's 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary. A tenor soloist, he has recently performed in the Mozart "Requiem," Schubert's "Mass in G," and Orff's "Carmina Burana."

Welk earned her bachelor of music degree at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music where she majored in music education and organ performance. She also earned a master's degree at Ohio State University. She has served as the organist and Children's Choir director at the First Presbyterian Church in London and organist at the Grove City First Methodist Church. She is currently in her 25<sup>th</sup> year of teaching vocal music at West Broad Elementary School, Columbus.

Among the familiar hymns which will be on the program are "Diadem," "All Hail the Power of Jesus Name;" "Joanna (St. Denio)." "How Firm a Foundation;" "Crimond," the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, "The Lord is My Shepherd;" "Bryn Calfaria," "Take me as I am O Savior;" and "Cwm Rhondda," "Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah." Virtually all of the hymns will be sung in English with just a few verses in Welsh to give a taste of the original language, which is so important in the maintenance of Welsh culture.

## Society sponsors Bicentennial photo contest

The Granville Historical Society is sponsoring a Bicentennial Photo Contest. Cash prizes ranging from \$10 to \$500 are being offered. The deadline for submission of photos is August 1, 2005. For complete details, contest rules, and necessary forms for submitting entries, please see the Society's website at [www.granvillehistory.org](http://www.granvillehistory.org)



Joe Sheldrick, publisher of Battelle Press, accepts the set of Bicentennial History books from Society President Lance Clarke and Editor, Tom Martin.

## Battelle Press thanked for support of bicentennial history books

Society President Lance Clarke and Editors of the Bicentennial History books, Tom Martin and Tony Lisska, met with Joe Sheldrick, publisher of the Battelle Press, and Jean Schelhorn, Vice President for Intellectual Property Strategy and Development, on Thursday, March 3, 2005, to present them with the three-volume set in thanks for their efforts to guide and advise the Society in its bicentennial project.

Collaborative work began in January, 2004, when the group met to discuss the necessary steps and strategies to getting the books published. *Granville, Ohio: A Study of Continuity and Change* is the most ambitious project in the recent history of the Society.

"Without Joe's expertise, we would not have had the outstanding product we have and we would not have made the deadline of having the books available for sale by Christmas," Clarke said.

## New board members bring history, talents to Society



Jack Burriss



Tom Martin

Long-time Granville residents Jack Burriss and Tom Martin are new board members of the Historical Society, replacing outgoing board members Marilyn Sundin and Don Havens, who have completed their three-year terms.

Jack brings community service, business experience, and a long family history in Granville to his position. He is currently a member of the Planning Commission and has participated on the Comprehensive Planning Commission and as a board member on the Chamber of Commerce.

Jack is a partner in Cherry Traditions House, which features period furniture and interior design services. His family has lived in his Cedar Street home for over 100 years.

"I hope to help maintain the momentum of the bicentennial," he said of his new position, "to continue the feeling of living history in Granville."

Tom returns to the Board after **serv**ing several terms that included president and vice president. his last year as president, he oversaw the beginning of the new history books and remained active through their production even after leaving the Board. "This is the most important project that I have worked on in my life," Torn reflected.

Tom, who is a senior development officer at Muskingum College, has served as president of Rotary and as a Clerk of Session at the First Presbyterian Church, among other things.

He currently sits on the 2005 Honor Fund Committee.



### THE HISTORICAL TIMES celebrating its 19th year of publication

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Louis Middleman, Anthony Lisska.  
*Designer - Evelyn Frolking*

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Tom Martin

#### 2005 Honor Fund

#### moves Society forward

Forty-seven friends have to date given \$11,675 to the 2005 Honor Fund in the first four months of the year.

As gifts continue to be received, the Honor Fund is more than half-way to its \$20,000 goal. Gifts benefit the Society by providing do-cent leadership, supporting publications, improving technology, and caring for the Old Colony Burying Ground.

The campaign continues through 2005. Your generous contributions are welcome and appreciated.