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The Granville Post Office Mural Before Renovation

Photo courtesy of Kimberley Broyles

"The First Pulpit in Granville" The Story of the Village age Post Office Mural

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PLAN TO JOIN US FOR THE
RE-DEDICATION

OF THE POST OFFICE MURAL
SUNDAY, JULY 20TH AT 4 PM.

THEN ENJOY ONE OF THE FAVORITES
AT THE CONCERT ON THE GREEN
THE DUTTON FAMILY SINGERS



At the far end of the lobby in the Granville village post office stands a mural often overlooked by the many residents doing their postal business. David Terry is shown here undertaking the restoration of this mural. The mural will be rededicated by the Bicentennial Commission on July 20th at 4 o'clock pm.

"THE FIRST PULPIT IN GRANVILLE "
THE STORY OF THE
VILLAGE POST OFFICE MURAL

At the far end of the lobby in the Granville village post office stands a mural often overlooked by the many residents doing their postal business.

High above the floor over the mailboxes a mural depicts the arrival of the first villagers to Granville on a chilly November day. The story of the settlers coming to central Ohio from Granville, Massachusetts and Granby, Connecticut has been told often. A people with deep religious roots from their New England heritage, the freshly arrived settlers cut down a tree near the center of the village to serve as an altar and pulpit. There they offered a Sabbath service in thanksgiving for their safe arrival from the arduous trip of some seven hundred miles up and over the Appalachians. Today the concrete tree stump on the lawn east of the Presbyterian Church inscribed with the names of several first settlers reminds us of that original religious service of nearly two hundred years ago. Two sermons were read that momentous day in the history of Granville. One was the text of the sermon preached at their former home in Massachusetts several months earlier. The weary travelers raised their voices in songs of praise, with the sounds echoing through the valley that was to become their village home. Observing from a distance was the titular head of the Welsh settlement, Theophilus Rees, who lived in the nearby hilly terrain later to be known as the Welsh Hills. Rees, so the legend goes, was near what today is the corner of Prospect and College Streets looking for some of his wandering cattle when he heard the sonorous tones emanating from the southwest. Rees would become a frequent visitor to the Congregationalist community in Granville,



This 1805 first village function is captured on the post office mural, which was painted by Woodstock, New York, artist Wendell Jones. The cornerstone and the inside plaque for the new post office indicate 1936, but the construction was completed in 1937. The dedication took place August 5, and the Postmaster General of the United States, James A. Farley, journeyed to Granville to participate in the ceremony. The Jones mural was installed in the next year. Granville historian Minnie Hite Moody tells the story of how the artist published a sketch of his proposal for the mural and how her mother wrote to Jones indicating that the presence of Theophilus Rees in the mural was necessary in order to flesh out the full story of that important event in Granville's early history. Jones noted this absence, and the upper left corner of his finished mural depicts a startled Rees coming through the woods that Sabbath day.

Depression Era Public Painting

The story of the origin and development of the post office mural program is a fascinating tale of American support for what a later generation

would call "the starving artists." The post office mural project was created during the Great Depression as an offshoot of a pilot program designed to provide relief and assistance to the vast wellspring of American artists then struggling to survive. Two other goals helped inspire this original program, called the Public Works of Art Project [PWAP], the first of which was to bring more local art to the people of the country. Secondly, this massive project was to prevent the wholesale neglect of American art work at the depths of the Depression and thus help prevent the obliteration of art in the country through the loss of creative art work by practicing artists. Hence, more immediate relief and assistance for members of the American art communities, the continuation and conservation of art skills, and bringing art to the people all functioned as principles determining the massive program of government assistance to American artists during the bleakest economic period in American history. In her *The Public as Patron*, Virginia Mecklenburg wrote about the significance of the New Deal art programs:

The mural studies were created under a program unique in American art. For the only time in its history, the U.S. government founded an art program based on the idea that art should be born and bred of the people, that it should express their ideals about art and life. These paintings chronicle the struggle of a nation trying to reestablish human values after an economic upheaval that shook the foundations of American society.¹

The post office mural project evolved from part of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs. In late 1933, the first full year of his presidency, Roosevelt initiated what was called The Public Works of Art Project, which was a pilot program for artists. This program hired thirty-seven hundred artists across the country whose task was, through the means of the visual arts, to decorate public buildings nationwide. Funding for this program expired the following spring, hence requiring a new way to continue assistance to the American art world. The succeeding program, called the Section of Painting and Sculpture, later modified to the Section of Fine Arts and more commonly was known as "The Section," was the unit responsible for the establishment of the post office mural project. This important program for the local rendition of art functioned for nine years, from 1934 until the war year of 1943. In her "Off the Wall: New Deal Post Office Murals," Patricia Raynor recently wrote about the extensive impact of this art initiative:

Throughout the United States—on post office walls large and small—are scenes reflecting America's history and way of life. Post offices built in the 1930's during Roosevelt's New Deal were decorated with enduring images of the "American Scene."²

Raynor notes that often post office mural artwork is mistaken for what is in the vernacular called "WPA art." The post office mural project, however, officially was under the arm of the Procurement Division of the Treasury Department of the United States and not under the rubric of WPA.

The Concern for the Demise of Art and Culture

To understand the background from which the Granville post office mural sprung is an interesting story in itself. The early decades of the twentieth

Selecting the Artists

century had witnessed a renaissance with the development of a unique style of American art. Art critics suggested that American artists finally were becoming free from their earlier dependence on primarily European sources. The number of museums and commercial galleries in the country grew rapidly—in fact, Mecklenburg notes, "from 1920 to 1930, the number of art museums in the country had increased by over 50 percent." Following the terrible stock market collapse in 1929, commercial galleries in particular began closing rapidly. Fear in the art world grew that, with few if any avenues open for artists to survive practicing their crafts, whatever gains had been made in American art would be lost and forever forgotten.' The original 1933 Public Works of Art Project, although short lived, was the impetus to turn the tide against the disappearance of American art during perilous economic times.

The Section of Fine Arts program grew from the seeds of this 1933 pilot program. This new program, of which the Post Office Mural Project was an essential component, had a direct goal of fostering art and making it accessible to the general American public. An explicit goal of this program in its printed form reads as follows:

The aim of the Section of Fine Arts is to secure murals and sculpture of distinguished quality appropriate to the embellishment of Federal buildings. Approximately 1% of the total of limit of cost of the buildings is reserved for this decoration.

Philip Parisi writes about the artistic direction of the Post Office Mural Project.

Unlike other public-supported art efforts of the period, whose primary objective was to provide relief, the primary goal of the Section of Fine Arts was to secure high-quality artwork and to support American culture. Post office murals were part of an art renaissance called the American Scene, which rejected European-influenced art in favor of an art based on American themes. It was characterized by its close examination of everyday life in America. The acquisition of murals was an important event for many communities; the artworks also represented many people's first direct encounter with original art and artists.'

The goal of each mural was, in some way, to depict a portion of what came to be known as the "American Scene." The Granville post office mural fits in appropriately with this general theme. Since post office visits were a regular part of the daily lives of many Americans, especially in smaller communities, its walls provided a perfect place for the newly commissioned art works to be seen by larger groups of citizens. Several commentators remark that this opened a "democratic view" of art for the people. In his 1956 narrative of Granville's history, William Utter wrote that "'Going to the Post Office' is the oldest and most firmly fixed of all village habits." He went on to write that "villagers exchange their news, views, and stories in the lobby and it is there that funeral notices are posted." In their *Timeline* essay on post office murals in Ohio, Gerald E. Markowitz and Marlene Park refer to these passages in Utter's history of Granville and agree with Utter's suggestions regarding "the post office's importance in the life of the community." That the Granville post office met the aspirations of the Section of Fine Arts for general visibility of the post office murals goes without saying.

Most of the artists undertaking projects for the Section of Fine Arts were selected on the basis of their artistic credentials. While need alone was not sufficient for selection, for many artists this was a principal means of livelihood. Often anonymous competitions took place, with the jury composed of a national body of artists. It was in this way that Wendell Jones from Woodstock, New York, was chosen to portray images for an American Scene mural to be placed in the newly constructed Granville post office building. The one percent of construction costs set aside for "embellishment" in New Deal building projects contained the funding from which the artist's commission and other costs came.

Guidelines developed for the murals stressed the importance of scenes of local interest and historical significance. The Granville mural portraying the arrival of the settlers fits in with these general guidelines. Other nearby post office murals also reflect these norms. The Gambier post office possesses a magnificent mural of Episcopal Bishop Philander Chase atop his horse viewing the hilly terrain on which he would build Kenyon College. The post office in New Lexington illustrates a dozen prominent Perry County citizens grouped together on a ridge overlooking the town. The artist for this mural, New York painter Isabel Bishop, took her cue from Clement Martzolff's early history of Perry County that had as a theme "Great Men Come from the Hills."⁸ Both Jones and Bishop give evidence that they took up these local mural projects with a seriousness of purpose. The fabric patterns of the bandanas and the shawls worn by the women depicted in Jones's mural illustrated authentic designs that Jones had copied from a patchwork quilt that had been handed down through the family from one of the original Granville settlers. Hence Jones's finding the patchwork quilt—and most likely reading Bushnell's early *History of Granville*—and Bishop's reading through Martzolff's rather drab history of Perry County both indicate a degree of interest in the local scene more than the merely perfunctory.

From the distance of some seventy years, one gets the impression, not surprising given the state of the 1930s economy, that the artists desired and vigorously sought these commissions. Furthermore, they attempted assiduously to base their mural work on the aspirations of the local community. In determining the scope of his Granville mural, Wendell Jones submitted sketches to the village for approval, which were published in *The Granville Times*. For a post office mural, the community itself was seen as "the patron," and its thoughts on the matter were not to be neglected.

Raynor writes the following about the general scope of the post office mural project:

Genre themes were the most popular subject matter for post office murals. Americans shown at work or at leisure, grace the walls of the new deal post offices. Although the mural program was inspired by a Mexican mural tradition strongly affected by social change, the hard realities of American life are not illustrated on post office walls. Scenes of industrial America, for instance, avoid tragic portrayals of industrial accidents. Social realism painting, though popular at the time, was discouraged. Therefore, the very real scenes of jobless Americans standing in bread lines are not to be found on post office walls.'

Looking at post office murals in this light helps us understand Parisi's remarks that while "critics's opinions vary regarding the esthetic merit of post office mural art, the value of the murals as vehicles for study of a unique period of America history and culture is generally accepted."¹⁰ This rather sanitized view of the "American Scene" was part of the general pattern of government events geared to uplift the spirits of beleaguered Americans during the terrible times of the Great Depression.

The Artist of the Granville Post Office Mural

The artist receiving the commission from the Section of Fine Arts for the Granville post office mural, Wendell Jones (1899-1956), was a native of Galena, Kansas. His family moved to the Boston area when Wendell was quite young; hence, he brought both mid-western and New England roots to his work. Following his Army service in the First World War, in 1919 Jones matriculated at Dartmouth College, emerging four years later still somewhat undecided about a career path. In the middle 1920's, Jones became affiliated with the Art Students League in New York, and when artist, Kenneth Hayes Miller, started his mural classes, Jones enthusiastically joined in this endeavor. Mecklenburg describes the artistic psyche of Wendell Jones in the following way:

He became fascinated with the possibilities offered by murals, which he said gave the artist the opportunity to "paint symphonically." Jones was philosophically well suited to paint murals for the Section of Painting and Sculpture, believing that "mural paintings must explain themselves on such common ground with the onlooker that only a title is necessary'

Describing his "The First Pulpit in Granville," an oil painting on canvas, Jones remarked that he wished to stress the sense of community binding together the settlers coming to begin their new lives in Granville. He is reported to have said about his Granville painting: "I think Americans like these in the picture—thoughtful, home-loving, industrious, independent—shall never be destroyed." "

The 1938 Granville mural represented Jones's first commission. The Section of Fine Arts press release at the time of the installation of Jones's mural noted that the artist had received this commission through an earlier competition—presumably a national competition—in which he received an Honorable Mention. In addition to the Granville mural, Jones completed murals for post offices in Johnson City, Tennessee (1939) and later Rome, New York (1942). He also submitted a proposal for the San Francisco post office. His mural for Cairo, Illinois (1942), while accepted and finished, was never installed. Jones appears to have been much interested in local history and in "getting it right."

The Rome, New York mural, entitled "The Barn Raising," depicts a group of upstate New York farmers lifting hand-hewn wooden beams into place. This event was the familiar community barn raising, and the farmwomen illustrated in the mural contributed by arranging for the meal. The background of the mural suggests an earlier rural setting of the beautiful Mohawk Valley. When asked about this mural and its theme, Jones said a

period earlier than 1942 was fitting because his mural was to be placed in a colonial design post office building. Jones apparently had used this same method in deciding upon the historical theme for the Granville post office building five years earlier.¹³

For a post office mural project in Cairo, Illinois, Jones read the history of the river and visited Cairo in order to talk with local citizens. There he was much impressed with the heroism of the citizens of Cairo fending off continuously the threat of flooding at the confluence of the mighty Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. He titled his mural "Sandbagging the Bulkheads," which depicted sandbagging along the Ohio River that saved Cairo from the that devastated so much of the river shore line. The Cairo postmaster, along with several influential members of the community, was leery of Jones's theme and worried that the citizens would react negatively to this scene depicting the inauspicious location of their city. One commentator suggested another complicating factor:

"Most of the citizens in Cairo were of Southern descent. The mural was not genteel enough for their Southern sentiments and did not show any influential members of the community." "

Nonetheless, the sketches submitted by Jones were accepted and the mural completed. Prior to installation, however, the postmaster and two local judges digging in their heels protested to the Postmaster General. Given this political

interference, the Section of Fine Art buckled under the pressure. Jones, however, appears to have been paid for his work. Later his "Sandbagging the Bulkheads" was selected for an art exhibition tour of South America, but sadly, during this tour, the mural appears to have been lost.

From 1948 until his early death in 1956, Jones taught painting as a member of the Art Department at Vassar College. In 1957, Vassar sponsored an exhibition of his paintings. It is unclear whether he ever visited Granville following the completion of his post office mural.

Utter on the Post Office Construction in Granville

In his history of Granville, William Utter describes briefly the construction of the new post office building in 1936-1937. Utter notes that the government architects made serious efforts to fit the design of the building into the heritage and traditions of Granville. What today is generally regarded as a gem of a small federal building, at the time caused some consternation among the village populace. Utter writes that "the political feelings of the community were so strong, that townspeople commonly referred to the new structure as 'Jim Farley's Sheep Barn.' Utter also remarks about the "clumsily designed" doors at the entrance to the lobby—from the perspective of a half century later, it's unclear what he had in mind for doors! But he does claim that the doors "serve their purpose as devices for continuous training in etiquette."¹⁶ One wonders what was going on here, as Utter is normally not sarcastic in his remarks about Granville institutions and traditions,

Utter also has a comment on the mural. One wonders if Utter had about the mural itself or if he was just chiding his mildly narrow-minded Welsh Hills neighbors. Utter himself served the village with distinction as its mayor.

Billy Thomas, a genial Welshman, remarked that the folks had their mouths open because they had just learned that the government had paid more for the one building than they had paid for the whole town-

This may be but an illustration of the general tendency of many Granville citizens towards matters pertaining to government assistance. Utter notes this excessively self-reliant attitude during perilous economic times in his account of Granville's history:

During the depression, Granville made little effort to benefit from government subsidies. The sewage disposal plant was enlarged, the opera house was remodeled and painted, sidewalks were replaced in many sections, and the interurban tracks were removed from Broadway, all with government aid. However, this is not an imposing list for a time when school buildings, gymnasiums, and similar projects were being

heavily subsidized.¹⁸

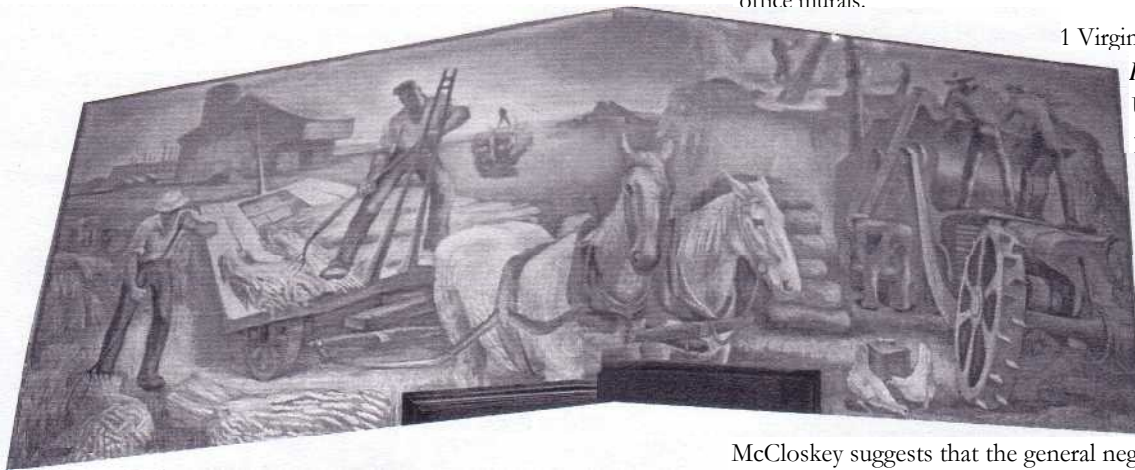
One suspects a tendency towards belittling what was perceived as government interference is the source of Utter's account. Whatever may explain Utter's views, nonetheless what some referred to then as "Jim Farley's Sheep Barn" is today regarded as a striking building whose continued existence on Broadway is a firm resolve in the minds of many citizens of the village and township. This account of the post office mural enhances the general awareness of an important contribution to this New Deal building, both products of the important federal programs instituted by Franklin Delano Roosevelt during the worst economic time in the history of the United States.

the first steamboat races, most probably in the Norfolk harbor. The **won this race, with a cannon** shot as it crossed the finish line, and the crowd is celebrating enthusiastically. Two of his murals, in addition to the Bridgeport one on the threshing of grain, were completed and installed in post offices in Bluefield, West Virginia and Williamston, North Carolina.

Anthony J. Lisska
Denison University
Granville Historical Society

Author's Note: The Granville 2005 Bicentennial Commission sponsored the restoration of the post office mural in Granville. Historical society member, Don DeSapri, shepherded this project to completion, which was accomplished recently. The re-dedication ceremony for this significant piece of Granville history is planned for July 20.

The author gratefully acknowledges the keen proofreading assistance of Lou Middleman and Marianne Lisska and the editorial sophistication of Laurie MacKenzie-Crane. Former Granville resident Kimberly Broyles kindly granted permission to use her photograph of the mural in the village post office. The author appreciates the wonderful information provided by Chris Kenah on Richard Kenah's work as a Section of Fine Art artist for post office murals.



A Granville Connection with
Post Office Mural Artists

The father of Granville resident Chris Kenah was an artist who completed three murals for the Section on Fine Art, including the post office mural in the Bridgeport, Ohio, facility, shown above. Richard Kenah, in on his theme for the Bridgeport post office mural, which was the threshing of grain, wrote that "people living near Pittsburgh or Wheeling might find his colorful mural 'a punctuation in their drab atmosphere."

Richard Kenah submitted an interesting proposal for the Pittsburgh post office mural, which depicted an early shipping endeavor at the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers that forms the beginning of the Ohio River.

Mr. Kenah also proposed a harbor scene mural for the post office in Norfolk, Virginia. This mural proposed for Norfolk is a depiction of one of

¹ Virginia Mecklenburg, *The Public As Patron* (College Park, MD: the University of Maryland, 1979), p. 10.

Patricia Raynor, "Off the Wall: New Deal Post Office Murals," *EnRoute* (Publication of the Smithsonian National Postal Museum), Vol. 6, Issue # 4 (October-December 1997).

³ Mecklenburg, *op. cit.*

⁴ Economist Deirdre

McCloskey suggests that the general neglect of the building trades and architecture skills from the beginning of the Great Depression until following the Second World War entailed much shoddy construction in the late 1940s. These various skills had been allowed to die on the vine because of the dearth of construction during the economically strenuous Depression times.

⁵ Philip Parisi, "Post Office Murals," *The Handbook of Texas Online*, a useful web page account.

⁶ William T. Utter, *Granville: the Story of an Ohio Village* (Granville, OH: Granville Historical Society and Denison University, 1956), p. 318.

⁷ Gerald E. Markowitz and Marlene Park, "Not By Bread Alone: Post Office Art of the New Deal," *Timeline: A Publication of the Ohio Historical Society*, Vol. 6, Number 3 (June July 1989), p. 7. This article is a delightful and informative account of post office murals in Ohio.

Clement Martzloff, *History of Perry Count, Ohio* (Columbus, OH: Press of Fred. J. Heer, 1902), p. 144. The author's friend, the late Edward Hennessey, a native of Perry County, kindly loaned this book to the author.

9 Raynor, *op. cit.*

¹⁰ Parisi, *op. cit.*

11 Mecklenburg, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

12 Markowitz and Park, *Democratic Vistas: Post Offices and Public Art in the New Deal* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), p. 140.

¹³ For a fuller discussion of this Rome, New York post office mural, the interested reader might consult "The Federal Arts Program of the Works Progress Administration" web page. This page notes how preservation efforts kept Jones's mural in Rome:

The mural was first placed in the post office in Rome, New York. When the Rome Historical Society purchased the building (which was first built as a WPA project in 1939), the Postal Service retained ownership. However, when plans were made to move the mural to the Saratoga, NY post office building, residents of Rome asked if the mural could remain in their community, as the setting is actually an historic barn raising in the Mohawk Valley. In 1992, the mural was painstakingly moved to Rome's City Hall where it can be viewed today.

14 "The Depression Era Art Project in Illinois," which is a web page without an author listing. A sad commentary on Wendell Jones's work is noted on this web page: "The National Archives at College Park, Maryland, has records for most of the murals, but Wendell Jones' work is not among them."

¹⁵ Utter, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*
¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Markowitz and Park, "Not By Bread Alone: Post Office Art of the New Deal," p. 12.

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The Story Behind the Mural

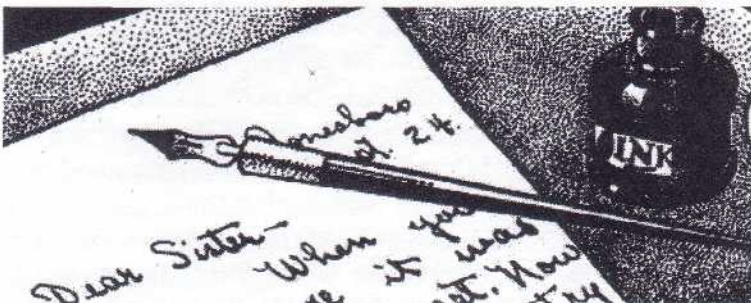
The following piece was written

by *Laura Evans* for her weekly column.

The Granville 2005 Committee has decided to have the mural in the post office cleaned. What's the story behind that mural?

In late 1935 when federal funds were appropriated for a new post office, the Business Men's Association appointed a committee to envision content for a possible mural. WPA [Works Progress Administration] funds could be used for local artwork.

Francis W. Shepardson chaired the committee. The other members were: H. L. Pierce [banker], Horace King [Denison art instructor], John Bjelke [Denison Alumni Secretary], Gwendolyn Graves [artist], Minnie Jones [artist] and Mrs. George Reese [artist].

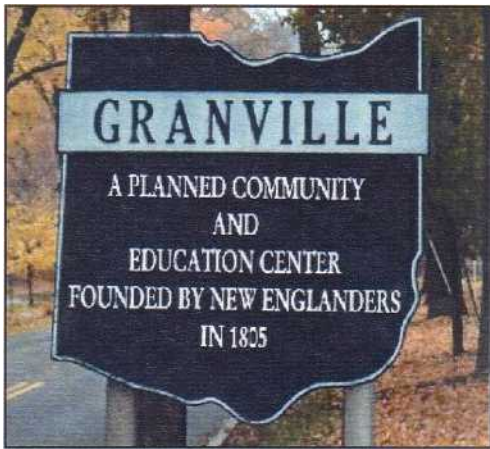


The committee offered these suggestions for possible mural topics for public consideration:

- Wyandotte village by the big spring on Welsh Hills Road
- Coming of pioneers — oxen, covered wagons
- First Sabbath — tree stump, Theophilus Reese and his cow
- Congregational Church building
- First girls' school west of the mountains
- Granville College
- Out on the farm
- Transportation — stagecoach, canal boat, "bus", chariot, union hack, electric line, railroad
- Sheep and cattle drive thru town
- Tall tree on Taylor's farm
- Granville Female College/ Young Ladies' Institute
- Mower house
- Buxton Tavern
- Granville Water Cure
- Fugitive slave
- Granville from Rose Hill
- Granville 1870
- Broadway during Centennial
- Swasey Chapel
- Joseph Little, Jonathan Going, Pratt, other men
- First brick schoolhouse
- Old Academy Building

The committee asked for public reaction. It was an important decision. The mural would capture a moment in time. How to choose the right moment?

Next time you visit the post office, check out the mural on the south wall above the bank of boxes. Did the committee choose wisely?



Annual Report

President Maggie Brooks delivered the following remarks at the annual meeting of the Society on April 22, 2003.

Good Evening.

I have the pleasure of reporting the accomplishments of the Society's Board of Managers during the past year.

First on my list is the maintenance of the two structures that comprise the "real estate" of the Society — the museum and the Academy buildings. I hope you haven't noticed that there was a major roof leak in this building the past year, I hope you will notice that there are additional display cabinets arrayed around the room tonight. They will soon be organized with displays compatible with the history of this building — displays that have been displaced by a project undertaken at the museum building. In meetings that were dedicated to planning for the short and long range future of the Society, it was concluded that while our collections of furniture and clocks, telephones and toys, cameras and arrowheads, and gadgets and garments were valuable, interesting and sometimes even unique — what was truly the heart and soul of the Granville Historical Society was its archive collection of documents, records, photos, and letters.

These were the items that no other museum in Granville, in Ohio, in the USA or in the world had in their possession. They were fragile pieces of paper that could document the economic growth of this community. They were faded photos that could bring an ancestor to life, They were hand written wills tracing the history of a plot of ground.

And - They were crammed in a tiny room! On shelves reaching for the ceiling! They were an incredible resource for individuals and for historians working on a new book the Society is planning to mark the bicentennial of Granville as a village. The archives were making life for an archivist frustrating!

So, a short-term strategic plan developed, and some new walls developed, and the archives grew from 233 square feet to 737 square feet. But the walls were just the beginning. There was pounding and painting and wiring and phone lines and lighting and shelves and cabinets. There were "things" to be moved and boxed and organized.

And there was serendipity! The Cunard Jewelry Store was going out of business and it had six lovely display cabinets with storage space below, So please do visit the museum (we open on May 3) and see what has been wrought. Displays have been updated and now reside in cabinets that represent another piece of Granville history; a reading room for the seekers of information from the newly expanded archive space has been furnished with a classically styled table and chairs — found in the classified ads for just \$100 — and the process of bringing some of the collections to this building has begun. The archives have breathing room; the collections are a little cramped.

So we are back to the strategic planning process — now for the long term. We plan to check out the possibilities at Bryn Du; to keep a basic blueprint for expansion of the museum building that came out of our deliberations on the Sinnett House; to look for other spaces in the village that might serve as either display space or archive space — two future space requirements of the Society but with very different sets of physical requirements.

In other accomplishments and in the very near future, you will have a chance to see "From Here: A Century of Voices from Ohio," a production which the Society is proud to bring to you on June 6th & 7th. Auditions for "reader/actors" for this presentation, an Ohio bicentennial project with parts which are an outgrowth of our oral history project, are set for 7 p.m. on both Sunday, May 4, and Monday, May 5th here in the Old Academy, Please take our invitation seriously to audition; you will not have to memorize long speeches and a good variety of people are needed to portray the 150 Ohioans whose voices and memories will live again in this production.

The Granville Oral History Project was to record, preserve and publicly share unwritten aspects of Granville history from the latter part of the 20th century. It was our intent to feature what, how and why Granville landmarks, lifestyles and values have been altered or preserved during the last half of the century. Special attention was focused on the impact of development resulting from the interface with nearby urban regions.

With major funding from both the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Ohio Humanities Council, and additional funding from the Granville Foundation, the Granville Rotary Club and individual donors, and with volunteers donating time valued at more than \$19,000, 66 Granville residents were interviewed, their taped interviews were transcribed and will be preserved in the archives of the Society. Last May, the project organizers presented "Hey, Granville, Tell Us Your Story" and more than 100 people joined four panelists and Howard Sachs from Kenyon College to talk about Granville memories and stories.

We hope to put together a full report on this oral history project for The Historical Times, another proud accomplishment of the Society, by the way, and one that I hope you enjoy reading.

I'll leave you with these thoughts from the Oral History Project report to the NEH:

Like many edge-cities, Granville could be characterized, as one interviewee said, as a place in which 'the past and future are having a tug-of-war.' Resignation or regret over the costs of growth are countered by optimism about the resilience of the community and recognition of the advantages of 'new blood.' Tradition and personal memories claim allegiance even as economic realities demand accommodation to change.

Historian of the Year Presentation

APRIL 22, 2003

*Flo Hoffman's remarks on behalf of the
Granville Historical Society at the presentation.*

More than three decades ago, this year's historian moved to Granville with training as a scientist, an interest in how and why things work both in nature and with the machines of human invention, and with a family tradition of caring for others and making things better. A strong frugal and practical streak led to participation in conservation efforts from collecting bottles for recycling to encouraging a healthy diet. Raising a family in Granville fostered a lifelong interest and involvement with the schools and the library.

Human beings are too complex to characterize easily, but in this year's historian I see a strong and lively imagination, outstanding organizational skills, a curiosity about how things come to be the way they are now, and the attitude, "There are so many worthwhile and interesting things to do and that need to be done—how can I help?"

And help she has! A stalwart supporter and worker in the restoration of the Old Colony Burying Ground from the beginning of the project 12 years ago, she has dug, weeded, researched the lives of former citizens, organized and conducted tours-whatever was needed. She provided labor and leadership in the League of Women Voters. Presbyterians in Granville have some inkling of her contributions to the life of that church, which include spiritual support and healthy and interesting meals. 'You need an index to the Granville Times? I can do that.'

No one, anywhere, has a deeper and more detailed knowledge of Granville's history from 1880 to 1940. At 100,000 entries and counting, she KNOWS the people who lived then. It is a usual occurrence to meet her for lunch and have her remark; "I lost Kussmaul (or some other important Granville figure) today" (That morning she had indexed the obituary.) With her usual initiative, there have been spin-offs to this project. She has written more than 45 "Time Traveler" articles for the Granville Booster, based on people and events covered in the Times.

(Ed. note: one of those articles is reprinted in this very newsletter.)

Wearing some remarkable hats, with humor as well as historical accuracy, she has portrayed Clara Sinnott White and Dora Case for elementary school classes and the annual Old Colony Tours. She has talked with groups of local historians about preserving their records. She reminds us of both people and events that will be useful in observing Granville's bicentennial celebration. And always, she has maintained both her perspective and her enthusiasm for Granville's history.

It is my great pleasure to present the Granville Historical Society's 2003 Howe Family Award for Historian of the Year to Laura Evans.

Take a Look at This!

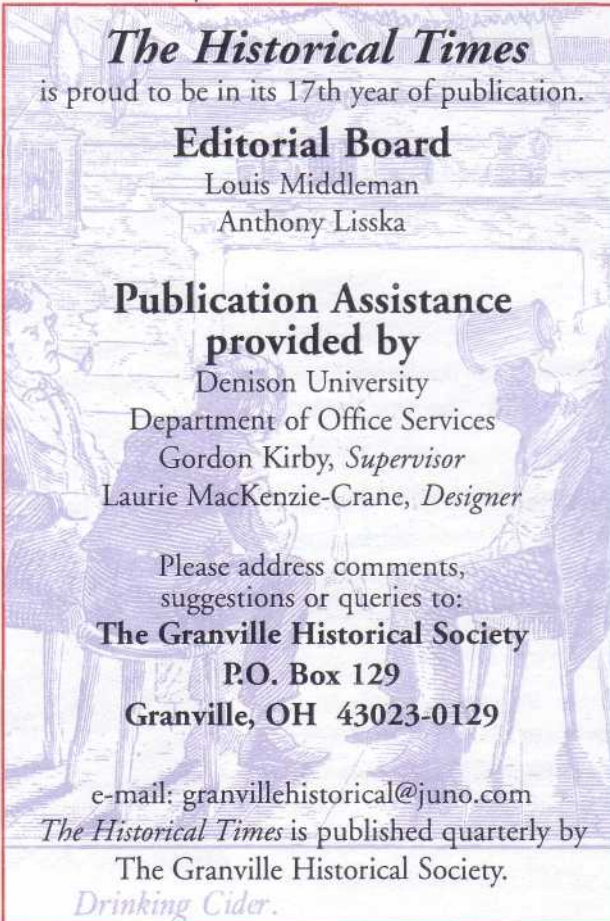
If you're reading this little note inside the museum, and it's daylight, and the weather is fine, step out the back. If you're already outside on a glorious Granville summer day, come on over to our garden. There, in the southwest corner, you will find the Granville Rose. It's an old-fashioned, small, pink rose, with a good rose smell—not like those hothouse blossoms that may please the eye but cause nary an olfactory nerve to fire.

It's been in our garden for fifty years, since the garden itself was given, in memory of David William Lattimer, President of the Granville Historical Society from 1952-53, by his widow and Mr. and Mrs. Harry L. Doud.

But it's been in Granville since 1806, brought by one of the original emigration parry, Samuel Everett, Jr. Everett had first come in the fall of 1805, then returned to bring his family. Utter reports that he also brought a long sawblade for James Thrall's mill, boxes of books to start the village library, and, "well protected in some corner of the wagon, a hardy rosebush from his old home." Everett planted the bush at his new home, on Raccoon Creek Road. Although it can't be found there any longer, the rose has taken up residence at number of Granville locations, including the Robinson Lifestyle Museum on Main Street, and at the Buxton Inn on West Broadway.

From its original stalk in our garden, clearly distinguishable as by far the thickest, a total of 14 more have grown. Enjoy every stem, leaf, bud, and full-blown blossom of this special annual resurrection.

Louis I. Middleman, with help from Flo Hoffman



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