

Bainbridge Township Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 3

Bainbridge Township, Ohio, 44023

Summer 2009

Chagrin Falls Park



Chagrin Falls Park Community Center 2009

Chagrin Falls Park in Bainbridge Township, Geauga County has a long history. It was farmland until 1920 when Benjamin Kaufman surveyed 81 acres and had streets graded. The land was parceled into 1,386 lots (20-100 feet) and prepared for development.

Mr. Kaufman met with Samuel Rocker of the Jewish World Newspapers to help find buyers. New subscribers to the newspaper had a chance to acquire a lot in the Park for \$58.00. Rocker was promised to have a street named after him.

Meanwhile, during WWI agents from an iron factory in Bainbridge went south and recruited workers who eventually moved to the Park. In the mid-twenties, many immigrant Clevelanders moved to the Park. The Phillips and Bolden families were among the first to come from the south and build in the Park.

Hard times in the thirties saw an increase of black residents attracted to space to have a garden and raise a pig or goat. They endured many hardships—no electricity, no indoor plumbing, coal stoves, poorly insulated houses and dirt roads. Many women worked as domestic help in

Chagrin Falls.

In 1928, Park residents met for worship in a small house on Woodland Ave. After several moves, in 1933, worshippers had built a new church in the



Zion Hill Missionary Baptist Church

Park—Zion Hill Missionary Baptist Church and The Original Church of God. At one time there were four churches in the Park. At present, there are two.

The Park had a little store, a volunteer fire department and some night spots. Geauga County located a part-time sheriff there.

Before 1936, all Chagrin Falls Park children went to the Bainbridge Centralized school on Chillicothe Road where the fire department sits today. The residents petitioned to have a school in the Park. In 1937, 30 students in grades one through eight entered the new one-room school. In 1946, it was enlarged to four rooms, housing eighty-two students. In the late fifties, all children from the park were enrolled at Kenston Schools.

Many improvements came in the fifties. The first Community Center was developed at a former mink farm. It was funded through a grant from the Kroger Foundation and aided as well by the Federated Church and The Chagrin Falls Women's Club. In 1986, there were 150 homes in the Park—population was 400. In 1997, a new Community Center was built. It housed social services, food pantry, a gym for activities, volunteer programs, summer camp, and the Geauga County-Chagrin Falls Senior Center. Redevelopment in the community was started in 2000 by the Chagrin Falls Park Community Development Corporation. Through this program, blighted houses have been removed and new houses have added thousands of dollars in property taxes.

By Marge Cook



Chagrin Falls Senior Center—Part of Community Center



Store In the Park 2009—Cents on the Avenue



Store in the Park 1958

Below pictures taken in the 40's when times were very hard.

Pictures courtesy of Cleveland Press Archives



**Please—We are looking for more pictures and articles on Bainbridge Township History.
Bill Takacs — 440-543-4991**

Officers 2009

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&
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Meetings of the Bainbridge Township Historical Society are held the second Wednesday of the month (September through June) at 7:30 p.m. in the Burns-Lindow Building at the corner of Route 306 and Bainbridge-Solon Road.

**Bainbridge Township Historical Society
P.O.Box 23363
Bainbridge Township
OH 44023-0363**



Town Hall—Circa 1914
Now—Burns Lindow Bldg

Notice anything missing? Flag pole and picnic tables are still there but school is missing.



* **Just a Reminder—Annual dues are Payable in September but no later than December—\$10.00 for singles, \$20.00 for family. Life Membership—\$100.00. Make checks payable to *Bainbridge Township Historical Society*. Pay Marge Cook at the meeting or mail to her at 116 Leaview Ln., Chagrin Falls, OH 44022.** *

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Bainbridge Twp.OH 44023-0363

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL – PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY

Fall 2009 Meeting Schedule

September 9th, 2009: Noted speaker Gilbert Tru will be talking about the war of 1812 and the battle of Lake Erie which is key to this area.

October 14th, 2009:---"Buffalo Bill Cody Personalized": This generation William Cody and his son will entertain with their reflections of their legendary relative. They use a collection of memorabilia and stories passed down to personalize this cowboy, buffalo hunter and wild west show entrepreneur.

November 11th, 2009:---Guest speaker Linda Kanoti will be speaking about old school houses throughout the country. She bought and owns an old school house in New York herself and spends a lot of time there.

December 9th, 2009: We will be having our Christmas potluck dinner, starting at 6:30 PM. The club will provide the meat, and attendees will prepare a dish to pass around. After dinner Sandra Zikrush will share "Christmas Memories" with us. She will talk of traditions and special memories of the past. Don't forget to bring your own place setting.

January 13th, 2010: Terry Worthington will be our speaker on "Who gets Grandmas Yellow Pie Plate" which explains how to transfer non-title items, etc.

Check out our web page www.bainbridgemory.org