

# Bainbridge Township Historical Society Newsletter

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Bainbridge Township, Ohio, 44023

Spring 2010

## Man With a Firm Hand and Warm Heart

### Paul S. Gardiner

as told by his Son, *Ralph Gardiner*

Paul Sampson Gardiner was born on August 17, 1896 in Lisbon, New York. This is up-state New York. He was the second born of seven children. He had three brothers and three sisters. Two of his brothers were teachers and two of his sisters were teachers. One sister died in infancy. His father was a Methodist minister, therefore they moved around a lot. He went to eleven different schools, back then they had three year high schools. He lived in Michigan, Canada, and New York. His later years were in New York. His father was from Kingston, Ontario. After graduating



from high school and the age of 17 he took a two year teacher training course in up-state new York. He had his first teaching job at the age of 19. It was a one room school, I'm not sure how many grades there were, eight or eleven. The winters up there were very cold, he would have to get up early to get the fire going in the pot bellied stove.

At this time World War I was raging in Europe, in 1917 at the age of 21 in 1917 he joined the Marines, he went through boot camp at Parris Island. America got into the war in April 1917 and the first American troops arrived in Paris, France in January 1918. He was there among the first troops, it was a terrible war, about nine million people on both sides died in that was from combat and disease, and the food wasn't good.

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## Whence the Name, **CATS DEN ROAD**

By *Bruce Chittock*

For many years, when I'm on the phone to order a Christmas present for Gerry, or make a motel reservation, and I give my address as 16925 **Cats Den Road**, at least 50% of the time I hear: "Gee, what a cute name", or "Hey, you got lots of cats there?" or "How on earth did your road get that name?"



When our family moved here in 1942, the official name shown on all of the county maps was **Harvey Road**. It had been named, as many roads in Bainbridge and Auburn were in those days, after the area's major land owner and farmer, one Mr. J. Harvey. But even back in 1942, it was known, unofficially, as **Cats Den Road**. Mail wise it didn't make any difference, as all of the residents mail was delivered to R. D. #1, Chagrin Falls, Ohio.

The origin of the name, **Cats Den Road** becomes obvious once you see and explore the beautiful rock and cave formation located only a short distance off of Chagrin Road.

### Inside this issue:

Cats Den Road actually goes over what is called a "Natural Bridge", formed by a massive stone arch that is the entrance to the den. The story was that The Cats Den was so named because at one time there were several Bobcats living in the

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**Bainbridge Celebrates 100 Years.  
1911 Highlights on Page 3**

He said he had to eat raw bacon. He was in virtually every fight, he saw a lot of action. He was never shot, but he was gassed. In World War I they used poison gas, chlorine gas, mustard gas. Poison gas was so horrible that it was outlawed by international law in World War II. He had his gas mask on and somehow gas leaked in. He was hospitalized for a while then sent back to the front. He had scars on his lungs for the rest of his life. One time he got a large gash on his forehead. He told how the doctor stitched it up-no novocain-nothing! When the war was over on November 11<sup>th</sup>, he was part of the occupation forces in Germany. He spoke some German, but not fluent enough to get by.

After his tour of duty he came home. He went one year at St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York, then three years at Syracuse University in New York. After graduating he moved to Burton, Ohio. Why would a guy who lived most of his life in northern New York move to Burton, Ohio? You guessed it! A girl! I don't know much about it but he liked her. I believe her name was Doris Cook, she was from Burton and she went to Syracuse, they were in the same class and they graduated together. When she came home after graduation he followed her.

He got a teaching job with the Burton school system in the building that is now the Burton library. Across the hall from where he taught was a young lady from Gustavus, Ohio, She was a four year graduate from Western Reserve University in Cleveland. Her name was Clara Hull. Well Doris Cook was no longer in the picture. On April 11, 1925 Paul Gardiner and Clara Hull were married in Burton. I suppose I should thank Doris Cook, or my brother and I wouldn't be here.

My brother, Alfred P. Gardiner was born on Feb. 22, 1926 in Burton. It was soon after the school year that Bainbridge needed a school superintendent, Paul Gardiner was asked and he accepted. In 1926 they and baby packed up. They cranked up the old Model T Ford and headed for Bainbridge. Back in those days there were no paved roads, it took a long time to get to Bainbridge. Dad told me when they got to Bainbridge Center it was a cold, wet, dreary day. They stopped at the general store. This old farmer was trudging up to the store with his wagon and team of horses with a

wagon load of milk. He said they almost turned around and went back to Burton. There was no electricity in Bainbridge Center. None at the school. There were some homes on Bainbridge Chagrin Road that had electricity. They found a home for rent on that road that had electricity.

When school started in the fall of 1926 his salary was \$1200 a year. I don't know what my mother got. This was a three year high school, there were four elementary teachers. My parents taught the high school. Since there was no electricity, they had outside privies. The building where the town hall is was up on Chillicothe Road. They played basketball, dad coached basketball. I don't know about the other sports. In 1928 the Illuminating Company installed power lines to Bainbridge Center, the school got electricity. 1928 was the last year for three year high schools. 1929 became the first year for four year high schools, there were kids that graduated twice. This was also the year of the great stock market crash, and the great depression started. Dad had to take a cut in salary from \$1200 a year to \$1000 a year. I didn't mention that the school was located where the fire station is now. In 1932 I and the class of 1950 were born. In 1936 dad got his masters degree from Western Reserve University. In 1938 they moved the town hall and gym from Chillicothe Road down to its present location. The first and second grades moved into the back room there. In 1941 the new school was built. My parents bought the house right across the street. One thing about it dad was very economical. People knew this. Dad and mother taught while he was superintendent. He taught up until 1953 when Bainbridge became Kenston, then he was a full time superintendent. He retired in 1958, he taught for two years, and retired completely in 1960.



My parents bought a home in Winter Haven, Florida. Dad passed away in Winter Haven March 6, 1969. My mother passed away in Gadsden, Alabama in January 1991 and my brother, Paul (Bud), passed away in January, 2010.

**Information About 1911 Bainbridge Centennial  
Taken from Geauga Republican Newspaper, Chardon, Ohio August—October 1911**

**Article from: The Geauga Republican,— Chardon, OH (Bainbridge News section) Wednesday, August, 1911**

Bainbridge will be 100 years old this fall. Our citizens seem anxious to fittingly celebrate the event. A meeting has been called for the evening of August 3, to arrange for it.

**Article from: The Geauga Republican— Chardon, OH (Bainbridge News section) Wednesday, August 23, 1911, Page 1**

The township Centennial will be held Saturday, Oct. 7. Various committees have been appointed, and they will need a great amount of help, the time being so short to arrange for it.

**Article from Geauga Republican Newspaper—Chardon, Ohio Wednesday. Oct.25. 1911. page 1**

**BAINBRIDGE**

**The following letter was received at this office October. 23, 1911:**

Oct. 7, the day set for Bainbridge Centennial celebration, was disagreeable. Over 400 people were present, and a well-arranged program was carried out, as follows: Flag drill, by about 30 of the school children, under the management of Supt. Fred Goodrich. Bainbridge martial band escorted them from the school building to in front of the church, where the crowd had assembled. It was a pleasing sight. The parade was the most complete affair of the kind ever seen in town. It consisted in part of floats, decorated autos, pioneer and historical representations, humorous outfits, oxen and old cart, Indians and papooses, etc., headed by the martial band, and accompanied by Solon Cornet Band. A relay race of one mile was participated in by pupils from Troy, Auburn and Bainbridge schools. Auburn won. Dinner was served under large tents by a caterer 250 being thus fed. After dinner the church bell rang, the bands played

lively airs, and the people crowded into the church, filling it to its utmost capacity. M. I. Miner, president of the day, in his pleasing manner, took charge of the afternoon program, which consisted in part as follows: Music by Bainbridge orchestra, and address of welcome by Hon. A. R. Phillips in his usual happy style. He said in part: "It is a solemn thing to be 100 years old, and celebrate the centennial anniversary of your birth. But few people do. Only one Bainbridge citizen ever reached the century mark—J. M. Fuller, who lived to be 101 years old. We extend an earnest, cordial welcome to all who are with us, to join in commemorating so important an event. One hundred years from today Bainbridge citizens will again assemble to celebrate the second centennial, the very things that are now transpiring will be listened to with much interest by those who are to come after us." The speaker ran over a list of over a hundred names of families and individuals who had lived here since the early times, and who did their part in making the town what it now is. The response was made by Judge J. O. Cunningham, of Urbana, Ill., whose wife was a daughter of Porter McConnoughey, one of the earliest settlers here. They have always taken a deep interest in Bainbridge affairs. Judge Cunningham spoke feelingly, and his address dwelt largely with pioneer scenes, events and adventures. He was listened to with much interest. "A History of Bainbridge," was a paper read by Albert R. Haskins. It was full of historical data, containing more of Bainbridge history than had ever been given to a local audience. He told how the town came to be named Bainbridge at a public gathering, when it was decided to leave it to three men, who each wrote a name and placed it in a hat held high above their heads. George Smith, one of the men, and a great admirer of Commodore Bainbridge, and his gallant defense of our rights on the African coast, wrote the name of Bainbridge, which was drawn first, and that became the name of our township. This paper was very entertaining. The writer is a young man of sterling worth, a graduate of Bainbridge school, and now at Hiram, fitting himself for a useful life. "Early Pioneer Experiences," was the subject of Wm. Howard's remarks, and he was well qualified to talk upon the subject. He was

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From Page 1

**CATS DEN ROAD**

caves and dens. My Dad always insisted that he often heard those Bobcats when he was working on our new property in 1939 and early 1940's.

The Cats Den was a great place to play for the children who grew up in the area. That it has been a popular destination for many years is attested to by the hundreds of initials carved into the stone walls, some dating as far back as the mid-1800's. One, *HJC—1865*, was done by Henry Church, the carver of Squaw Rock in the Chagrin Metropolitan Park.

In 1951 my Dad, Dave Chittock, drafted and circulated a petition to officially change the name from **Harvey Road**, to **Cats Den Road**. This petition required the signature of every property owner and resident of the road, and was completed in early 1952. It was forwarded to the Chairman of the Geauga County Commissioners, Mr. Carlton Lowe (Of Lowe's Greenhouse fame). Even back then the wheels of the government turned slowly, but finally in early 1953, poor Mr. Harvey lost his road, and the records were officially changed to the new name, **Cats Den Road**.

Sadly, The Cats Den is no longer visitor-friendly, if you recall, the Great Blackout of August, 2003 that shut down the power throughout the northeastern

United States was blamed on a tower line in Ohio. A few months later, line crews came through like locusts and cut down every tree and bush in the tower lines right-of-way. And so, as shrubbery and poison ivy grow denser each year, it is becoming more and more difficult to enjoy exploring the area. But, for those of us who had the great good fortune to play in, explore and carve our initials there, The Cats Den will never be forgotten.

*Bruce Chittock, Cats Den Road, 1/6/2010*



Cats Den after heavy rain 2009

From page 4 - **1911 Bainbridge Centennial**

born in Bainbridge, and lived here until elected County Auditor. Since then he has resided in Chardon. His description of pioneer hardships and compensations was feelingly and interestingly told, and listened to with deep interest. Judge F. A. Henry, of Cleveland, A Bainbridge boy now on the circuit bench, delivered the closing address. He referred to what President Garfield gave as the chief requisites of a thoroughly good community in which to dwell. It must be founded on three things—the church, the home, and the school. Judge Henry took up his theme under this head. His address was listened to with interest. Mrs. Emma Seward, who was born here over 70 years ago, and has resided here most of her life, delivered a fine violin solo, with her daughter accompanist. She played old-time music, the "Opera Rec!" and "Rory O'Moore." The music set all feet a-going, and was received with hearty cheers. Miss Giles, who has studied music abroad, then rendered a fine piano solo. She is great-granddaughter of the late Dr. Shippard, one of our noble pioneers. The Town Hall was tastefully decorated with the National colors, and was well filled with relics, about which space forbids a description. The hall was a veritable "old curiosity shop," and it was crowded during the day. Thus closed the eventful occasion for Bainbridge.

## Officers 2009-2010

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**Editor & Publisher**  
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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**



Town Hall—Circa 1914  
Now—Burns Lindow Bldg

A big “Thank You” to **Rolene Murphy** and **Julia Newton** for providing refreshments at our February meeting, **Carol Maltz** and **Shirley Takacs** for the March meeting and **Mildred MacRitchie** and **Marjorie Cook** for co-hosting the April meeting.

Everyone enjoys the refreshments at our meetings so remember when the refreshment sheet gets passed around to be sure to pick a convenient date and add your name to the list. It will make the job of our Refreshment Committee much easier. Janet Novak and Lois Little are our chairmen and will save them time calling around to find volunteers. Please call **Lois Little** at **543-4062** if you can help.

### Welcome New Members

Daniel Duresky

Henry Dunasky

Sandra Mooney



2 Teams Gathering

**Sugar House in Bainbridge— Can you identify who owns it?**

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

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

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**DATED MATERIAL – PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY**  
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## Spring 2010 Meeting Schedule

**May 12th, 2010:** Nancy Hammel & Linda Barnard will present to us “The History of Twilea Park”.

**June 9th, 2010:** Picnic—Beartown Lakes Reservation: Shelter: North Point—Time—6:30 p.m..  
Potluck—Bring Main Dish, Salad or Desert to pass and your own beverage and  
Place Setting.

Next Meeting in September 8th, 2010. Program to be  
announced.

**Can Someone identify this farm in Bainbridge?**



**Check out our web page [www.bainbridgemory.org](http://www.bainbridgemory.org)**