

Bainbridge Township Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 6, Issue 3

Bainbridge Township, Ohio, 44023

Fall 2011

Our Township Flower and its History

Many of you have probably noticed a flower on the “Welcome to Bainbridge Township” signs as you entered on the major roads that lead into our township and may have wondered what the significance of the flower is? Many states, cities and townships have official flowers, and members of the Bainbridge Historical Society asked the trustees to consider adopting the tuberous begonia as the township flower. The trustees took this into consideration and the following proclamation was adopted:

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Mr. Carlton Lowe was a township resident from 1925 to 1953.

WHEREAS, Mr. Lowe was the first person to bring the tuberous begonia from Europe to the United States of America.

WHEREAS, Mr. Lowe perfected the method of growing the tuberous begonia in the United States.

WHEREAS, Mr. Lowe’s efforts with the tuberous begonia were recognized throughout the United States.

WHEREAS, His efforts in the community involved service as a township trustee from 1938 through 1948, a founder of the Bainbridge Township Volunteer Fire Company and as a Geauga County Commissioner.

WHEREAS, The residents of Bainbridge Township have requested the designation of the tuberous begonia as the official township flower.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, the Board of Trustees of Bainbridge Township hereby proclaims the tuberous begonia as the official township flower in honor of Mr. Carlton Lowe.

This proclamation was signed September 9th, 1990 by Trustees Raymond Mattson, William Repke and Robert Schlatzer.

Carlton Lowe History

Mr. Lowe was born at Chagrin Falls, Ohio, on April 22, 1896. Mr. Lowe was a son of Ellsworth Leverett and Minnie Carlton Lowe. His paternal grandfather, Leverett Lowe, fought in the civil war, and he named his son for his commanding officer, Colonel Ellsworth. The former Minnie Carlton was a painter, being particularly skilled in the medium of water colors; and her mother too had been interested in painting, so there is evidence of hereditary derivation in Mr. Lowe’s esthetic interests. He showed an early interest in flowers. In the first decade of his life he used to accompany his family on their trips to the county fair held at



Chagrin Falls, and would use the occasion to escape from the rest of the family and pick flowers. He received his formal education in the public schools. He graduated from Chagrin Falls High School in June of 1915 and in the fall of that year he was hired as the head football coach for Chagrin High School. While attending Chagrin Falls High School, he invested his savings of eighteen dollars to purchase six hot-bed sashes to enable him to set out plants and begin greenhouse management in earnest.



Carlton Lowe in his WW I uniform

He had made a fair start in the florist's trade when this country entered World War I, and on April 27, 1918 he enlisted in the United States Army. He was assigned as an enlisted man to Camp Sherman at Chillicothe, Ohio, and joined headquarters company of the 331st Infantry Regiment. He served overseas from June 5, 1918 to January 28, 1919; and on one occasion, while his outfit was serving on the Western Front as a component of the 83rd Division, he spotted in the course of a train ride a field of begonias like no flowers he had ever seen before. He absented himself without official leave, and contacted the Belgian nurseryman who had cultivated them. This episode grew his interest in tuberous begonias, which became his specialty. After the war he imported them to this country. As a soldier, he lost a pair of corporal's stripes and got three days in the brig for his A.W.O.L., but as a civilian and a florist, he could trace one of the outstanding interests of his life, and a large measure of his success, to that episode.

Discharged from the service on February 8, 1919, he joined his father who operated "Lowe's Overlook Greenhouse" on South Main Street in Chagrin Falls. His father managed his modest business in his absence. Carlton and his father, Ellsworth, operated the floral shop until they purchased 28.5 acres of land from I.S. Hewlett, (formerly S.A. McFarland property), in Bainbridge for \$2,250 in March of 1925. Thus became the beginning of Lowe's Greenhouse in Bainbridge.



Lowe's
Greenhouse
in the
Early
Days



Carlton in his WW I uniform and his Grandfather, Leverette Lowe in his Civil War uniform

For nearly three and a half decades thereafter, he made his greenhouse his vocation, his hobby and his reason for existence. He also became popular as a lecturer, speaking before garden groups, florists' associations or horticultural conventions a total of several times each month. Most of these appearances were in the states of Ohio and Pennsylvania, but he increased the area of his lecture appearances as time went on. He made motion pictures in his greenhouse to illustrate these talks.

Mr. Lowe was a member of the American Farm Bureau Federation and the Chagrin Valley Men's Garden Club, as well as national and regional florists' groups, including the Ohio Florist Association. The Organization which he headed produced a total of one hundred thousand plants per year. While being active in all these organizations he was also a Bainbridge Township Trustee from 1938 through 1948. He also helped start the Bainbridge Volunteer Fire Department and was a founding member of the Geauga County Fair Board.

In 1948 Mr. Lowe was elected county commissioner and was re-elected in 1952. He had been a member of the legislative committee of the Ohio Township Clerks and Trustees Association for twelve years. Carlton was a member of the Bainbridge Civic Club and served as one of their first presidents. He was a Rotarian, and as a veteran of World War I, held membership in the Americana Legion (played drum) and the Veterans of Foreign Wars and had been a commander of the Legion post. He was also a member of the Independent Order of Odd fellows and the Ohio Grange of the Patrons of

Husbandry. He and his family attended Bainbridge Community Church. Mr. Lowe's major avocational interest, apart from floriculture, was photography.

On June 22, 1921, Carllton E. Lowe married Flora Fathauer, daughter of A. F. and Ann Marie Fathauer. Her father was a native of Germany who came to this country and settled in Cleveland when he was about fifteen years of age, this being during the period of the Franco-Prussian War. His wife had been born in Cleveland. Mr and Mrs. Lowe became the parents of the following children: 1. Betty, husband Donald Buton, both deceased, daughter, Kathy Ann. 2. Ruth, husband Richard Timmons, both deceased, parents of two children, James Richard and William Carlton.. 3. Patricia married Charles Meyer, who is now deceased, and now is married to George Clemens.

Mr. Lowe's suffered a hearth attack on Christmas day and died at St.Lukes Hospital in Cleveland on December 28, 1953. A local newspaper commented that "a familiar and highly respected figure passed from the Geauga County scene," and the writer remarked that he "will be missed for his valuable contributions to the civic welfare of his community and county. Especially gratifying is the fact that in his busy lifetime he saw many of his greatest ambitions brought to fruition."

The greenhouse was sold to the Bernard Griff family several months prior to Carlton's death when his health suffered and he was forced to sell. We shall not forget his wife Flora C. Lowe who was also partner in the business and worked along with him in the office and greenhouse. She was born in Cleveland on February 13, 1898, and was a long resident of Chagrin Falls and Bainbridge. She died February 28, 1998, at Holly Hill Nursing Home in Newbury Township, 15 days after her 100 birthday.

More: info from Robert Blumer, Story below

As he sat in the guardhouse, Carlton Lowe was not too sure that his two days of AOL had been worth while. Yet those two days were the start of one of the most unusual careers in America. When his two months were up, the war ended and he returned to the states he immediately wrote to Moerman, (the man he jumped off the train to visit in Belgium), and he ordered some seeds from him and he attempted growing begonias. It was a complete failure. Then with experimentation and a few accidental discoveries he met with success. In his enormous greenhouse on Chillicothe Road, Mr. Lowe raised some of the most beautiful begonias in this country. He was not the first to grow the tuberous—rooted begonias in the United States, but he was the first to be truly successful. In the early nineteenth century the flower was quarantined because plant disease was imparted with a shipment of bulbs, and before long they were forgotten in the U.S. They were not seen again until Carlton Lowe began his business. Until WW II, Lowe had all of his seed imported from Charles Moerman, the Belgian peasant. The seed is as fine as dust. In the one-sixty-fourth of an ounce packets formerly sent to him from Belgium, there would germinate from 10,000 to 15,000 plants. Since Lowe lost contact with Moerman, he got his seed from a grower in California. Each ounce cost him \$1,200. To complete his success, he had to reintroduce the flower to America. To accomplish this he made movies, talks to garden clubs all over the country and appeared in many national publications all over the United States.

Many thanks to the Griff family for keeping the “Lowe” name of the business and carrying on the family tradition of the business.

A big **Thank You** to the Lowe family archives for providing material for this article.



Lowe's—Dec 2011



Carlton, Elsworth, Minnie, and Marie Lowe

WAS GARFIELD'S CHUM AT SCHOOL

Civil War Veteran Now Makes Home Here.

L. S. Lowe, 4139 E. 114th st., played and went to school with former President James Garfield in the little Orange township log schoolhouse that is still standing. That was in 1845, when Lowe was nine, two years younger than Garfield. The old man is eighty-seven now; his first wife died before he enlisted in the Civil war.

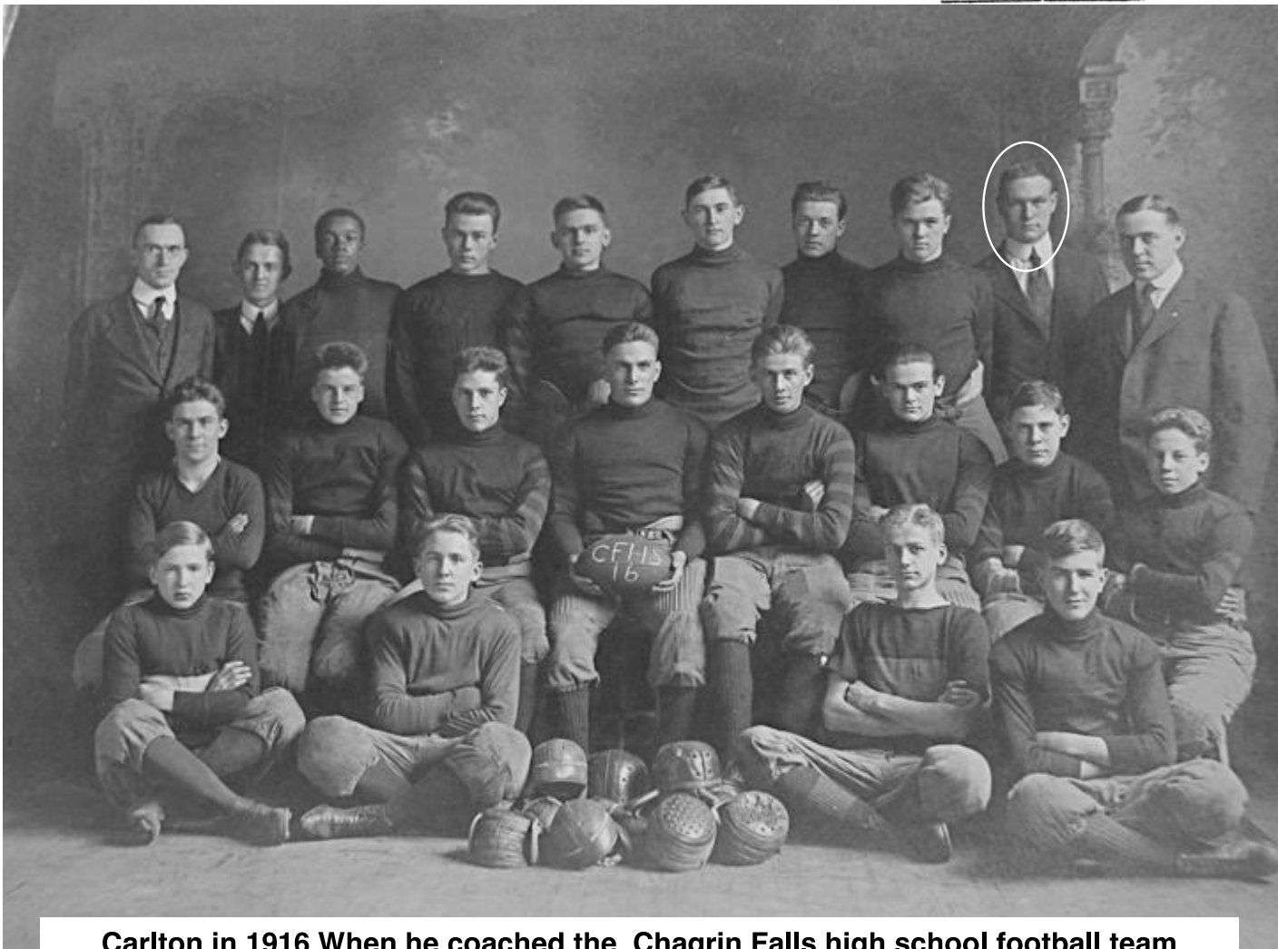


He fought in all the major battles and was wounded once, for which he now receives a monthly pension from the government. He has been married thirty-three years to his third wife, Melissa, who is seventy-nine.

Lowe has been a fruit grower in Clyde, O., most of his life. He built a log cabin near Tacoma, Wash., when he was eighty.

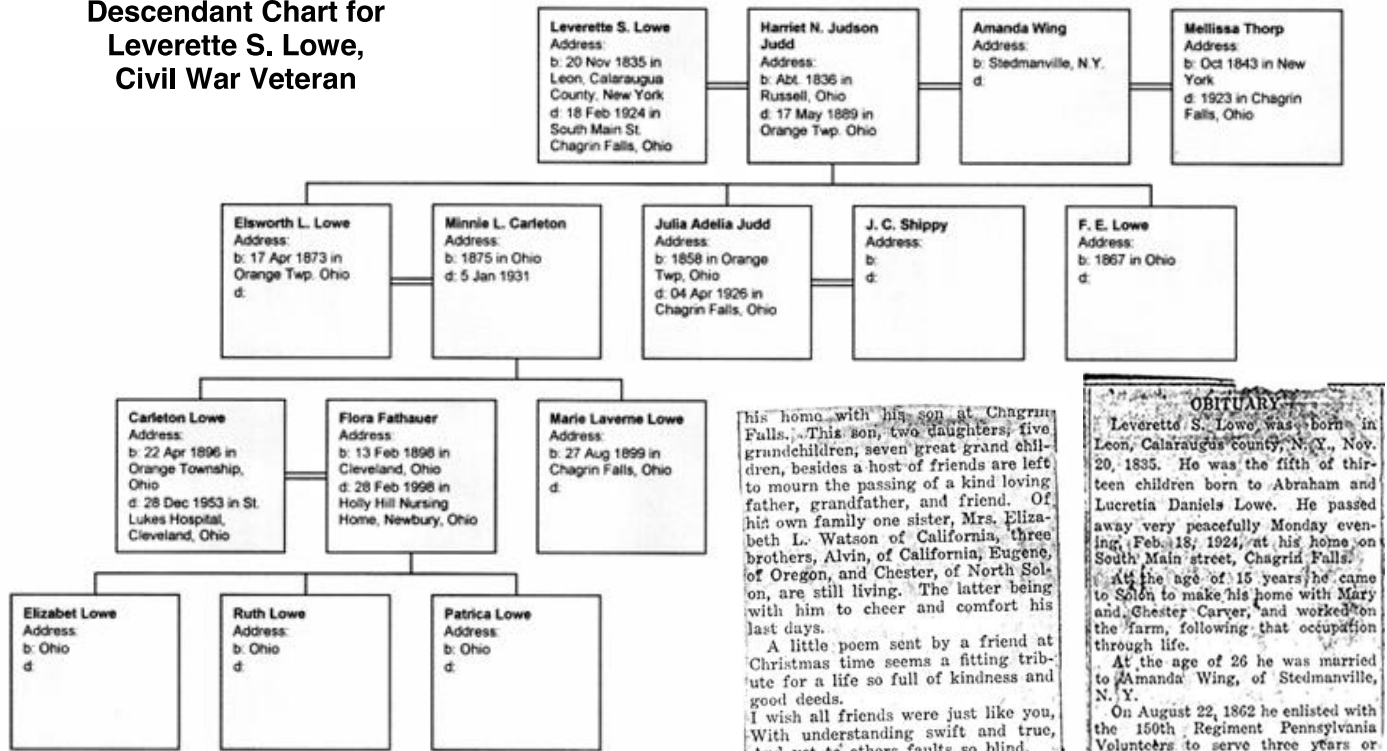
Cleveland has been his home for the last five years.

L. S. LOWE



Carlton in 1916 When he coached the Chagrin Falls high school football team

Descendant Chart for Leverette S. Lowe, Civil War Veteran



Lowe Family History goes back to 1618 in Holland

JAN BASTIENSEN VANKORTRYK (Lowe)
Born 1618 – Leerdan, Zud-Holland
Death 1680 Kingston, Ulster, New York

Jan Bastaenson Lowe was Flemish, and settled in Beest, Holland, a village on the Linge river and somewhat close to his father's home. His children were all born there. The land they owned in Beest was within sight of the Wolfswaert Castle and the ruined abbey of Maranwaert.

He immigrated from Leerdam, Holland and came to Harlem, New York aboard the ship "Brindled Cow (aka Brindle Cow)" in 1663. He and his brother Michiel and their families, the boys approaching manhood, yielded to the flattering offers held out to the colonists and agreed to leave together for that distant land, America. The contagion of immigration had also, among many others, seized their neighbor Jann Louwe Bogert, a young man with a wife and two children. Accordingly they proceeded to Amsterdam and embarked 16 April 1663. Jan Bergen was the master who sailed with several Walloons and other Dutch colonists, in all 90 odd passengers. It cost Jan Bastiaensen for himself and his family 204 florins and 10 stivers. The Dutch florin or guilder valued at 40 cents and the striver at two cents, or in our money \$81.80. Considering the purchasing price of the dollar in those days, Jan Bergen was very well paid. The Bastianensen brothers (their father Sebastian would also have been known as Bastiaen), went to Stuyvestant's Bouwery after landing, but soon left and moved to Harlem.

Jan and his family briefly owned a farm on Staten Island.

his home with his son at Chagrin Falls. This son, two daughters, five grandchildren, seven great grandchildren, besides a host of friends are left to mourn the passing of a kind loving father, grandfather, and friend. Of his own family one sister, Mrs. Elizabeth L. Watson of California, three brothers, Alvin, of California, Eugene, of Oregon, and Chester, of North Solon, are still living. The latter being with him to cheer and comfort his last days.

A little poem sent by a friend at Christmas time seems a fitting tribute for a life so full of kindness and good deeds.

I wish all friends were just like you,
With understanding swift and true,
And yet to others faults so blind,
And just like you, I wish I might
See through the gloom of darkest night,
While bravely faring on and on
The golden promise of the dawn.
Yes, if I could, here's what I'd do—
I'd make the whole world just like you.

OBITUARY

Leverette S. Lowe was born in Leon, Calaraugus county, N. Y., Nov. 20, 1835. He was the fifth of thirteen children born to Abraham and Lucretia Daniels Lowe. He passed away very peacefully Monday evening, Feb. 18, 1924, at his home on South Main street, Chagrin Falls.

At the age of 15 years he came to Solon to make his home with Mary and Chester Carver, and worked on the farm, following that occupation through life.

At the age of 26 he was married to Amanda Wing, of Stedmanville, N. Y.

On August 22, 1862 he enlisted with the 150th Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers to serve three years or during the war. His command joined the Potomac army Feb. 14, 1863. The first experience in army life was anything but pleasant, and through exposure to cold and storm was obliged to be carried to the hospital on a stretcher. Soon after the army moved upon Fredericksburg. The sick were all transferred to Aquia Creek on the banks of the Potomac river. Then in April came the sad news from home that Amanda had given birth to twin boys and all had passed into spirit life, the darkest cloud that had ever overshadowed him, settled on him then, but soon came the exciting news from the great battlefield of Chancellorsville that aroused his anxiety to go. A call came for volunteers from the hospital, so he with many others, went to the field of action, but the battle lasted only one day after he reached the front. Then came the march back to camp. The next great move was the march to Gettysburg. Here he was in the front line of battle until the last gun was fired. Comrads fell all around him, but not once was he struck. From Gettysburg on to the Wilderness, and all the time fighting and marching until they reached Petersburg, and here on the 19th day of June, 1864, he was struck by a piece of shell which disabled him. He was then taken to City Point on the James river. In July he returned to his company in time for the big raid on the Weldon railroad.

On the 14th his brigade was ordered north to do guard duty, so just two years from the day he landed at Bell Plains he took the boat on the James river for the north. The following spring the war closed and on June 30, 1865, he reached home and friends, after having been in thirteen battles.

On October 22 he was married to Mrs. Harriet Judd, the mother of Mrs. Julia Shippy, to this union were born two children, Mrs. Frances Robbins and Elsworth Lowe. After great suffering she died May 17, 1889, and on Jan. 5, 1890 he married Mrs. Melissa Thorp, who preceded him in death by one year. He has since made

Officers 2011

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&
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543-3199**Secretary**

Harriet Novy

Treasurer

Bruce Chittock

Membership ChairmanMarge Cook
440-338-5375**Editor & Publisher**Bill Takacs
440-543-4991**Proof Reading**

Harriet Novy

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

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. Barb Phan and Lois Little are our chairmen and will save them time calling around to find volunteers. Please call **Barb Phan, 543-7972**, if you can help.

Thank you to the following for hosting the refreshments at meetings.

September—Barbara Hess and Harriet Novy

October—Maureen Wolfe and Dottie Batchelor

November—Shirley Takacs and Barbara Phan

Welcome New Members

Robert Paladino

Gloria Triplett

Joe Drake

Kurt Updegraff

Notice

Those who have not paid since 2009 will not receive a newsletter. New members who joined after May 2011 will be carried to September 2012.

Dedication of Heritage Park and Celebration of the old Settlers' Bicentennial has been postponed until the spring of 2012 due to wet weather and the working on the grounds and parking lot.

The Historical Society is now in a position to accept your donated artifacts, both large and small and we'd certainly appreciate any time you can give to work towards this dedication, even an hour or two. If you do not wish to donate an item, please share it with the community by lending it to the museum. Photos can be scanned into the computer and returned.

Please contact our curator David Edmondson at david.edmondson204@gmail.com or 440-544-5002 Your contribution will be appreciated.

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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.

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL – PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY

2011 – 2012 Meeting Schedule

December 14th, 2011 – Christmas Party

January 11th, 2012 – Jacqueline Samuel and Holly Lynn of the Burton Historical District – How they collected and sorted historical information.

February 8th, 2012 – Mr. Hodder – Historical portrayal of Teddy Roosevelt in the Political campaigns against Taft and Wilson.

March 14th, 2012 – Don Mills – Historical portrayer of Ulysses Grant during the civil War.

April 11th, 2012 – Carol Grubb – Quilts used as a secret code of the underground railroad.

May 9th, 2012 – Shirley Weinrick describes re-enactment of wagon trains across the U.S.A. during the Centennial of the Oregon Trail in 1993.

June 13th, 2012 – Annual Potluck Picnic

Check out our web page www.bainbridgemory.org