

# Bainbridge Township Historical Society Newsletter

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Bainbridge Township, Ohio, 44023

Spring 2013

## Pioneer Enos D. Kingsley and the Cleon Taylors

One of our early pioneers was Enos D. Kingsley who came to Bainbridge with his brother-in-law Robert Smith and sister Sarah Kingsley Smith from Becket, Massachusetts around 1814. Enos D helped clear land and build cabins in the area of Taylor-May, Snyder and Crackel Roads before returning nearly 600 miles on foot to get his bride, Sally Harris Kingsley. The couple came by ox-drawn wagon to settle in Bainbridge in 1816, but were here less than a year when Sally died shortly after giving birth to a baby girl.

Life was very harsh for early pioneers. Fortunately, most were tough and purposeful like Enos D's father Enos Kingsley, who had fought in the Revolutionary War, and like Puritan ancestor John Billington, who came on the Mayflower and signed the Mayflower Compact. Enos D remarried, convinced his living siblings and his father to move their families to Bainbridge, continued to travel mainly by walking (some said he could walk 50

miles a day) and was well respected. He served as clerk of the first elections held in the newly-formed township in 1817. Kingsley and his relatives would prosper in the Bainbridge-Aurora area. Their extended family connections are still part of the fabric of this community.



One Bainbridge family that traces back to the Enos Kingsleys is the family of Cleon Taylor, whose mother Laura Kingsley Taylor was the grand-daughter of Enos D. Kingsley. In 1924 Cleon purchased a house and 126 acres on the east side of Chillicothe Road from large land-owner Henry Pettibone. The house stood where Lord of Life Lutheran Church now stands and the farm land extended east through much of today's Pilgrim Village, toward Haskins Road. In that house, over a period of ten years, Cleon and Lucille Stucky Taylor would become the parents of five girls. The girls' grandparents, Charlie and Laura Taylor, moved into the little white house next door. The "Taylor girls" remember the hand pump for water located by a large hickory tree between the two homes.



Enos Kingsley Revolutionary War Plaque  
Restland Cemetery

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The five Taylor girls.  
Back row are: Jean, Dorothy and Lois.  
Front row are: Janet and Elsa.

The Taylor girls were raised on a self-sufficient, working farm like the farms typical of 1920's -1960's America. The family grew potatoes, oats, barley, corn, other vegetables and berries. They had their own dairy products, smoked pork, poultry. Cleon Taylor was especially proud of his apple, peach, cherry and quince trees. In season the family stand offered luscious fruits in baskets filled to overflowing and customers who bought a dozen ears of Cleon's sweet, tender corn, were given three extra. The girls recall how relatives and neighbors helped one another with the thrashing of grains for storage in the silos. Only a couple farmers in the area owned large thrashing machines. The machines and men would move from farm to farm until all harvesting was completed. Women prepared hearty meals and plenty of homemade ginger tea for the perspiring workers. The children ran along enjoying all the excitement till they were old enough to ride hay wagons or help as well.

Lois Taylor Little often comments that farm kids always had enough to eat, but they "never had any money." Especially during the Depression, bartering was common. Most Bainbridge students, even in the 1940's and 50's, were not encouraged to think beyond rural occupations. Yet, federal work programs did attract some men to work on projects like the TVA (Tennessee Valley Authority). A few farmers

worked on the government projects just to earn money to pay taxes. World War II took many sons of farmers away to fight. Some never returned to the farms, with GI educational opportunities opening a path to a wealthier life. Some girls who were really good students did get scholarships and for two of the Taylor girls, the shortage of wartime nurses gave them the opportunity to get nursing training via the U.S. Cadet Nursing Corps. All five of Cleon and Lucille Taylor's girls - and Enos D. Kingsley's great, great grand-daughters - were good students, all married, became devoted mothers (all but Elsa had three children), and all seem to exhibit the admirable character of their hard-working, rural community.

Oldest sister Dorothy May (Clarke) is remembered for the sudden growth spurt that made her a head taller than her siblings for several years. A piano player at church and home, Dorothy reflected her family's musical abilities. The Taylors owned two pianos, two violins, a trombone, and a harmonica. After high school Dorothy worked at various government jobs in the Warren-Youngstown area. She recently passed away in September, 2012.

The second sister is Jean Taylor (Dew) whose fondest memories of farm life include: 4-H Club, county fairs, sheep shearing time, riding horses, her father's whistling, and making ice cream with ice from their frozen pond. After graduation Jean went into the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps at University Hospitals' Florence Bolton School of Nursing. She lives in Tucson, Arizona.

Third sister Lois Taylor (Little) says she was a shy, quiet child, but like Jean, qualified for the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps. Lois trained at Huron Road Hospital. She worked at local hospitals and did some industrial nursing as well. Today Lois again lives in Bainbridge and is active in our historical society.

Elsa Taylor (Lueder), the fourth sister, has been described as very pretty, sensitive and talented in dancing, writing poetry and stories. Elsa worked as a secretary in Cleveland before becoming the mother of a baby boy. Sadly, when the baby was only eight months old, Elsa was diagnosed with a rapid growth sarcoma and barely lived to celebrate her child's first birthday before she died in 1958 at the young age of 26

Janet Taylor (Novak) is the baby of the family and its historic records keeper. She fondly recalls school days in the "new" brick schoolhouse that was razed in 2009. As a graduate of the "Class of 1953," Janet says she was one of the last to get a "Bainbridge" diploma. The seniors graduating in spring, 1954 were the first to receive "Kenston" diplomas, reflecting the recent merger of Auburn and Bainbridge schools. Janet was awarded a teaching scholarship to Kent State, completing the program in a two year period. She now lives in Sagamore Hills, but remains an active member of the BTHS.

It's funny. I've lived in Bainbridge for 36 years, driving by Lord of Life Church almost daily; but lately, I drive by and imagine a family farm with a water pump, a produce stand, and five little girls.

*by Barbara Hesse*

*Kingsley pictures from Richard Childs collection*



Janet Taylor Novak and Lois Taylor Little at BHS Picnic June 2008

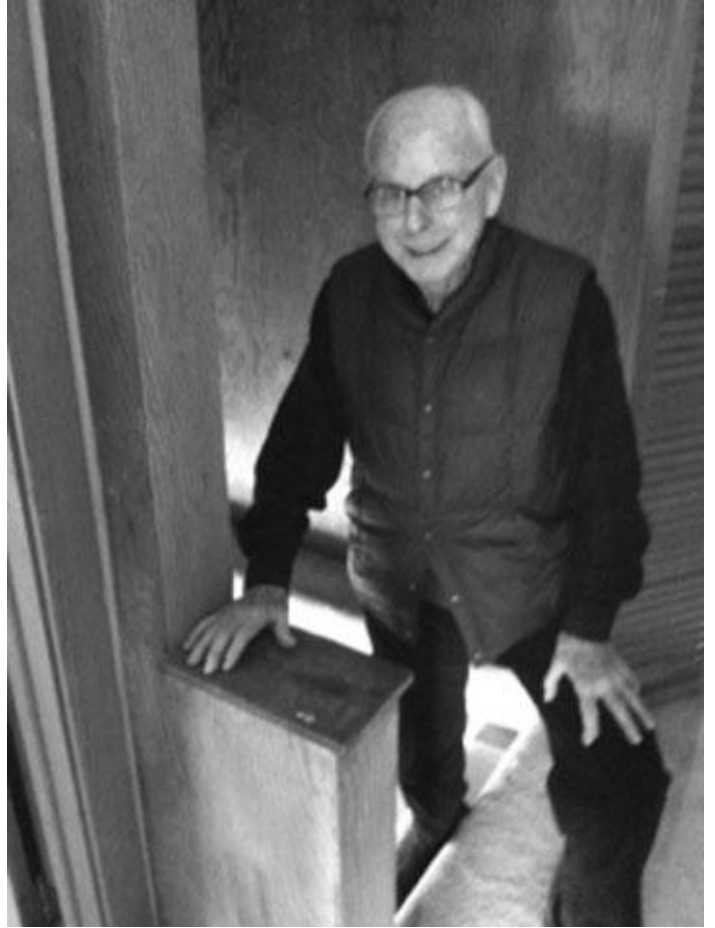


Girls on top of the wagon are Janet and Elsa, while Lois is on the ground "supervising" relatives on land now part of Pilgrim Village.



Left: Working the historical society information table at the Bainbridge Civic Club pancake breakfast on St. Patrick's Day this year was Rolene Murphy.

Rolene served as president of our historical society for eight years.



Right: For about 5 years during the 1950's, Jack and Dottie Batchelor rented the north side of the Bissell-Tucek House from Frank Tucek.

Jack was a teacher also. Our couple was serving as docents at the House recently when this photo was taken.

His right hand rests on a shelf he built at the top of the steps to keep his two sons from falling.



When renovating the north side of the Bissell-Tucek House, built in the 1870s, we have experienced many surprises. First, none of the exterior walls had insulation and sizable cracks exist between strips of siding. We found a large patch of hay, straw and leaves that may have been there for more than 100 years over the header of a north window (see picture). Also, we scared live birds living between two studs over the porch portico who flew away when their wall was removed. north wing of the house.

## Last Bainbridge School graduates to have class reunion

Sixty years ago in the spring of 1953, 35 seniors graduated - 22 from Bainbridge and 13 from Auburn with ceremonies held at the Bainbridge School. According to Janet Novak, herself a '53 Bainbridge grad, there was no valedictorian nor salutatorian, but there were 6 honor students - four from Bainbridge and two from Auburn. The number of honor students was proportionate to the number of students in the class who came from each township.

The graduation ceremony was the culmination of a year of hard work as school leaders from both communities had used the 1952-53 school year to quietly, but effectively, convince Auburn seniors to attend the Bainbridge School on a trial basis for one year. Students joined their peers in classes and participated in sports that culminated with the football team winning the league championship in the fall of 1952. If everything went smoothly, the respective schools boards agreed that a merger of the two would be permanent effective June 30, 1953 and the new system would be named the Kenston Local School District (for the brief period of time in 1816 or so when the total area was called Kent's Town). Thereafter, all students entering the school in the fall of 1953 and graduating in the spring of 1954 would become Kenston graduates.

Under a merger, starting in the fall of 1953, grades one through five would be taught at existing schools in Auburn and Bainbridge, grades six and seven at Auburn only, and grades eight through twelve at Bainbridge only. Among citizens involved with the transition were Paul Gardiner, Frank Tucek, Jerry Hess (teacher and football coach), Dr. Peter Clemens, president of the Auburn school board, and class adviser Rene Mortensen. Mrs. Mortensen also worked closely with the girls, organizing a club with a Greek name so that all girls could join.

***Coordinating the Class of '53's 60th reunion on the May 17-19 weekend is Janet Novak. Former students will have an opportunity to visit the Bissell-Tucek House, view old class pictures and other documents from that era. On May 18, students and alumni will have an opportunity to tour the new Kenston High School.***

### Wild plants serve a purpose

About 25 society members were treated to a fun evening of storytelling, fiddle playing and audience participation in April when they heard from Dr. Wildweed (alias Foster Brown of Cleveland Metroparks). Dr. Wildweed emphasized that "every plant has a purpose and every plant has a story." Dressed in native American clothing and portraying himself as an old-time herbalist, Dr. Wildweed used familiar wild plants like milkweed, goldenrod and Queen Anne's lace to reveal the uniqueness and usefulness of the plant world. The program was a good one!



Constructed in 1942 and serving students and the public for more than 50 years, the Bainbridge School was also known as the Intermediate School and the Early Learning Center. It was demolished in 2009 and is the current site of the Bissell-Tucek House.



## The Pettibone Road-Geauga Lake Road School Bus Route

by Bill Takacs

In past editions of our newsletter, we described various bus routes in Bainbridge that brought students to the old Bainbridge School in the 1950s that housed all twelve grades. It is now the site of the Bissell-Tucek House. Although I was a student in the post-World War II era and lived on the north end of the township, many of my friends lived on the south end, along Pettibone Road and around the former Geauga Lake Park. Here are some remembrances put together from the notes of Margaret Soltes Buron - a 1952 graduate who lived on Pettibone Road, Don Henry, and Dr. Allan "Chris" Manus.



Our bus driver was Howard Benjamin. Most of the roads were dirt, unpaved, with many parts like a washboard, causing the bus to bounce along at no more than 25 miles per hour. Yet, the long ride allowed the kids plenty of time to really get to know each other. Starting from the Bainbridge School, the bus traveled south along Rt. 306 to Pettibone Road. It turned right (west) and within a half mile turned south onto Brewster Road. At the bottom of the hill, it picked up Bob Webster (across the street from Bill Cardieux) and then members of the Plank family (Anna). Turning right at Depot Road, it picked up Jack and Jeannine Herald, whose mother was a French immigrant to this country after World War I. Near Rt. 43 Rudy McSwain was waiting. He lived with his Aunt and Neil Bricker, who later moved to Geauga Lake Road. Then the bus returned north on Geauga Lake Road past the beautiful Henry mansion which still stands atop a hill. (A doll house version of the mansion is now located in the Bissell-Tucek House.) It picked up Don Henry from the Charles Henry farm, where the Bricker family later lived. Along this route were the Kolson girls whose father was a Geauga Lake employee.

After stopping at Pettibone Road, the bus turned left to pick up Margaret (Maggie) and Bob Soltes, then to Monica, Richard and Thomas Ferencie and cousin of Tom Amacher. Next we loaded Agnes Vrabel, the Danforth kids and Chris Mantis. Across the street from the Ferencie family was the Rudney family whose son Jack became a member of the National Football League and played with the Kansas City Chiefs of the NFL. Jack played center for 13 years during the 1970s.

Pettibone Road was particularly interesting for students. We passed a maple syrup site with countless little pails hanging from the trees to catch the sap. The syrup was poured into a vat where it boiled sending out a wonderful aroma. Also along the route was a very low building constructed with only a peak above ground. Most of the underground structure held huge trays of commercially-grown mushrooms. It was referred to as the "mushroom house" and located near the Pettibone Club (near current Parkside Church). Also along Pettibone, as noted, was Chris Manus' home. They raised minks. The family started with 3 minks, but when they closed the farm, they sold 170 minks to pay for Chris' veterinary school. The bus turned around near current Parkside Church and returned to Rt. 306. Turning south again, it picked up Lynn Patterson and Joan Ballard, then did a U-turn near Crackel Road to go north and picked up George Studer, Bill Waller, Donna & Ginny Dietz, Leonard Eames, Zeithaml's, Joy & Janet Christinsan and the Taylor sisters before dropping us off at school.

**Officers 2012-2013****President**

Charles Hesse

**Vice President****&****Program Chairman**Donna Yuse  
543-3199**Secretary**

Harriet Novy

**Treasurer**

Donna Lucas

**Membership Chairman**Marge 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. generally in the Burns-Lindow Building at the corner of Route 306 and Bainbridge-Solon Road.

**Bainbridge Township  
Historical Society  
17870 Chillcothe Road  
Bainbridge Township  
OH 44023-0363**



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 chairwomen and it 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 refreshments.**

**February, 2013—Gerry Chitock, Ethellann Duncan & Barb Phan**

**March, 2013—Elaine Witmer, Carol Malz, Ethellan Duncan, Dottie Batchelor**

**April, 2013—Gloria Triplett, Judy Dolence, Marilyn Vance**

Welcome New Members	
David & Linda Chitock	Harry Haskins
Joan Shelby	

***We will have the B-T House open on Saturdays, 1-4 through mid-June.***

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

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 [talkinghorse204@yahoo.com](mailto:talkinghorse204@yahoo.com) or 440-384-7437 Your contribution will be appreciated. The museum needs volunteers to be present for the open houses. Even one hour or two is helpful.

We're always looking for ideas for this newsletter. If you have a story to share, please let me know. If you don't want to write it, call me @ 543-4991 and we'll try to get it on tape or take notes. We really need to hear from you. *Bill Takacs*

**Just a Reminder—**Our constitution states membership dues are to be paid in September of each year. **Deadline for payment is December 1<sup>st</sup>.** Those current members who have not paid by December 1<sup>st</sup> will not receive a newsletter. **New members** who joined May-Aug. of 2012 will be carried through to September 2013. **-\$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  
17870 Chillicothe Road  
Bainbridge Twp.OH 44023

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

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**DATED MATERIAL – PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY**  
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## **2012—2013 Meeting Schedule**

**May 8, 2013** - Shirley Weinreich returns to explore the trials and tribulations that women endured while on the trail in covered wagons. Many of these women recorded their personal thoughts in journals. It is also annual meeting night.

**June 12, 2013** - Annual picnic will be at the **Bissell-Tucek** house, 6:30 pm. **Pot Luck**. Bring dish to pass and your own place settings.

## **Bainbridge Township Historical Society's GIGANTIC GARAGE SALE**

**SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 2013  
at Bissell-Tucek House/Museum  
17850 Chillicothe Rd. (Rt. 306)  
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

**We want donated items (old and new) that  
can be sold to earn \$\$ for the Museum.  
Call 440-543-3235 or 440-543-9592 before June 4  
for drop-off or pick-up of donated items.**

**PLEASE  
No clothing, electronics, computers or large furniture.**