

Newsletter of the MASON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Mason, Ohio

and Alverta Green Museum

April 2022

KINGS ISLAND

Celebrating 50 Years of Fun!

Gina Burton Arens, Editor

On April 16th Kings Island will open for its 50th season. It's hard to believe that 50 years have passed since Kings Island opened its gates and invited us to "C'mon get happy!" Fifty years is a lot to review but the following will attempt to provide a condensed recap of those years.

It was Gary Wachs who conceived the idea of building an amusement park north of Cincinnati in Warren County. The Wachs family owned Coney Island, an iconic amusement park opened in 1886 along the banks of the Ohio River east of Cincinnati. It was March of 1964 when Coney flooded for the umpteenth time that Gary got the idea of moving to higher ground. Coney had a long history of flooding. A record flood in 1937 submerged the park under 28 feet of water! Wachs, quite frankly, was looking towards his future and was tired of pushing flood mud!



Coney Island underwater during the 1937 flood.

In July 1969 Taft Broadcasting purchased Coney via a stock trade for \$6.5 million with Gary and Ralph (his father) continuing to manage the park. Rumors of Fess Parker's plans to build an amusement park in northern Kentucky, along with the continual flooding of Coney prompted the decision to move the park.

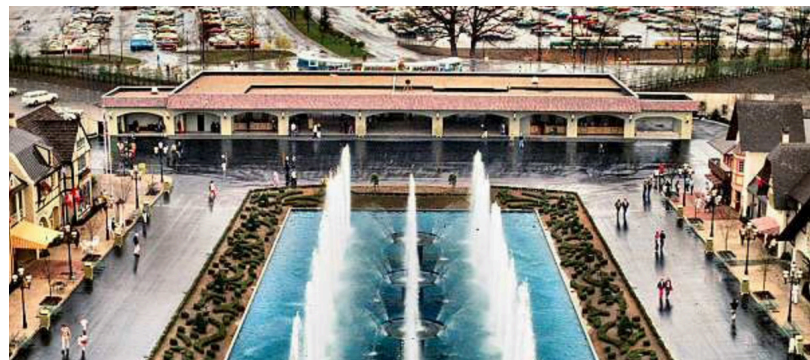
Later it was announced that Taft had secured 1,600 acres of land on either side of Interstate 71 in Warren County,

just outside of Kings Mills, 20-miles north of Cincinnati. The land was purchased for \$3.2 million.

Ground was broken on June 15, 1970, and in November, Kings Island was announced as the name of the new park. Management had held a contest to name the new park and thousands of Cincinnatians took part in the contest. In 1971, Fess Parker abandoned his idea to build a park in Kentucky because of the plans for Kings Island.

On April 29, 1972, 30 months after the initial planning began and with Gary Wachs as General Manager, Kings Island opened for a series of preview weekends. At a cost of \$29.5 million, the park opened for daily operation on May 27, 1972, complete with balloons, parades and Air Force jets. During its first season, more than two-million people visited the park, which covered 150 acres and had 31 rides. Admission tickets cost \$6, and parking was free. Kings Island became the first non-Disney park to attract more than two-million visitors in its inaugural season.

The theme park was divided into five areas: International Street, Oktoberfest, Old Coney, Rivertown, and the Happy Land of Hanna-Barbera. The grand centerpiece was a 1/3-scale replica of the iconic Eiffel Tower. The first year about 1400 high school and college-aged students were hired to fill jobs. Years later that number grew to around 4000.



Kings Island's International Street on opening day, 1972.

Hollywood came to King Island in 1972 and 1973 when two TV families filmed episodes at the park. The Partridge Family episode was titled, "I Left my Heart in Cincinnati," and The Brady Bunch episode was titled "The Cincinnati

story continues on next page

The Mason Historical Society and Alverta Green Museum are located in the heart of downtown Mason, Ohio. Established over 40 years ago, the Society's aim is to create, promote and preserve the history and heritage of Mason.

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Masonhistoricalsociety.org
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NEW HOURS

The Museum is open from
2-5 pm every Thursday,
and by appointment.

Kings Island's 50th, cont.

Kids." In 1974, 69-year-old daredevil Karl Wallenda broke a world skywalk-distance record with an 1800-foot-high tightrope walk between two cranes above Kings Island. Sadly, he died in a fall four years later in Puerto Rico. In 2009, Nik Wallenda, Karl's great-grandson returned to the park and walked a tightrope 262 feet high.

Also in 1974, *Lion Country Safari* (later named *Wild Animal Safari* and today known as *Action Zone*) was added. The 100-acre area included a two-mile monorail and several hundred live and exotic animals. In 1976 it was reported that 50 baboons vaulted a 14-foot fence that was supposed to be unclimbable and were roaming an unprotected section of the compound. Over a three-week period, one by one the "spunky monkeys" were rounded up. Ultimately, they were returned to the Michigan company where they were purchased. Kings Island decided to keep two of the baboons in a cage near Lion Country where a posted sign read, "Here are two of the baboons that made monkeys out of us."



Lion Country Safari entrance, 1974. The monorail can be seen today at Jungle Jim's in Fairfield.

1987, Kings Island introduced a new looping, steel roller coaster called *Vortex*. At the time it was the world's tallest, continuous-circuit roller coaster and boasted a world record of six loops. I'm getting dizzy just thinking about it! Sadly, the popular ride had to be "retired" after the 2019 season due to its age. Most coasters of this type last 25-30 years; the *Vortex* was 33.

One of the most celebrated rides in Kings Island history, unveiled in 1979, was *The Beast*. Mason resident Charles Dinn, Director of Construction, Maintenance and Engineering, headed the team that conceived, designed and built *The Beast*, the world's biggest, longest, fastest and most unusual wooden roller coaster. The 7,400-foot-long coaster, reaching speeds of 65 mph was constructed at a cost of \$3.8 million. Today *The Beast* continues to hold the Guinness World Record for the longest traditional wooden laminate-track roller coaster.

The *Son of Beast*, born 21 years later and costing over \$20 million, was also a ride that garnered a lot of press.



Daredevil Evel Knievel prepares to jump 14 Greyhound buses, 1975.

In an ongoing effort to boost attendance, Kings Island hosted daredevil Evel Knievel, the following year. In October 1975, he jumped 14 Greyhound buses in the parking lot setting a new world record. His son, Robbie Knievel repeated the stunt in 2008 by jumping 24 Coke Zero trucks at the same location.

In 1982 Kings Island opened *Timberwolf Amphitheater*, a 10,000-seat concert venue. Initially hosting big-name entertainment such as Jimmy Buffett, the Beach Boys and Britney Spears, it now hosts much lower-key music and regional events.

Over the park's history, rides come and go on a regular basis. If they aren't taken down and replaced, they're refurbished and renamed. At the 15th anniversary in



"43 years of terror"—The Beast has given more than 55 million rides.



Construction of the, as yet un-named coaster in 1979. After hearing construction workers refer to building the coaster as a "beast of a project," park executives knew they'd found their name.

Unfortunately, much of it negative. Introduced in 2000 as the tallest and fastest (78 mph) wooden roller coaster in the world, it was also the first modern era wooden coaster to feature a vertical loop. Ultimately, portions of the ride were rebuilt, and the loop was removed. A continued series of reported injuries closed the ride in 2009. After sitting dormant for several years, the *Son of Beast* was taken down in 2012 and replaced by *Banshee*, an inverted steel roller coaster costing the park a record \$24 million. At 4,124 feet, it was billed as the world's longest inverted roller coaster.

In 1982 *Winterfest* debuted and made Kings Island the first seasonal amusement park in the nation to host an off-season festival. The first year they projected 20,000

Kings Island's 50th, cont.

visitors but were stunned by the actual attendance of 271,000. The Eiffel Tower was decorated to look like the world's biggest Christmas tree, and the event featured ice skating on the Royal Fountain, entertainment in the Bavarian-style *Festhaus*, carolers and lots of holiday-inspired food. Admission was \$2.50. *Winterfest* was discontinued in 1992 but returned for one year in 2005. Paused for 12 years, *Winterfest* returned to Kings Island in 2017, taking a one-year hiatus in 2020 due to Covid. The park also added a Halloween-inspired *Fearfest* in 2000, known today as *Halloween Haunt*.

In 1989 Kings Island added a 15-acre water park appropriately called *Water Works*. Just in time for King's Island's 25th anniversary in 1996, the water park was doubled in size to 30 acres. By 2003 Kings Island announced they were closing *Water Works* and would be building a new waterpark that opened the following year called *Crocodile Dundee's Boomerang Bay*. In 2011 Kings Island initiated a \$10 million dollar expansion project and changed the name to *Soak City*. Today the 30-acre waterpark includes 36 water slides, two wave pools, rushing rivers and relaxing lagoons.

At their 20th Anniversary in 1992 Kings Island introduced *Phantom Theater*, a \$3.5 million Omnimover-style dark ride, opened in Hanna-Barbera Land. Originally the "Enchanted Voyage" it was converted to a Smurfs theme in 1982. *Scooby Doo and the Haunted Castle* followed the *Phantom Theater* in 2003. Finally, the ride became *Boo Blasters on Boo Hill* in 2010. The park saw an attendance of 3.6 million that year.

In the summer of 1992 Paramount Communications purchased Kings Island and what followed was some serious renaming of rides and attractions. To begin the 1993 season, the 365-acre park was renamed "Paramount's Kings Island." *Tower Gardens* was rebranded as *Paramount Story*, *American Heritage Music Hall* became *Paramount Theatre and Adventure Village* was renamed *Paramount Action Zone*.

In 1993 a new suspended roller coaster, *Top Gun*, opened. The name began Paramount's trend of naming most major new rides after one of their movies or television shows. The *Days of Thunder* was opened as an exciting new NASCAR-racing simulator and *Amazon Falls* was renamed *Congo Falls* ("Congo" was a Paramount movie title).

While Kings Island was thriving, Mason was seeking annexation of the park. Originally part of Deerfield Township, Warren County Commissioners unanimously approved Mason's 1996 request to annex the park and additional acreage. Resistance to the annexation

followed, however in 1999 the annexation was finalized, and the park and surrounding area was incorporated into the city. At that time the move allowed Mason to recover about \$25,500 in property-tax revenues which they planned to use to pay for streetlights along Kings Island Drive.

When Kings Island's 30th anniversary rolled around in 2002 a new indoor thrill ride, *Tomb Raider* was opened as well as *Slingshot*, a ride that catapults you 275 feet into the air at top speeds of 100 mph. Wheeeee! You pay extra for this bit of fun but I'm sure it's worth it! That season, dampened literally by a rainy spring, attendance still reached over 3.1 million. General admission that year was \$41.99.

On June 30, 2006, Paramount's Kings Island and its four sister parks were sold to Cedar Fair, L.P. for approximately \$1.24 billion. The following year the park reverted to its original name, Kings Island and within a short time many rides lost their Paramount-inspired names.

That December Great Wolf Lodge opened adjacent to Kings Island on land formerly occupied by the Kings Island Campground. In 2021, a new luxury campground named Camp Cedar opened north of the park. Amenities include 73 cottages and 164 full-service RV spaces.

In 2011 a new park attraction, *Dinosaurs Alive!* was launched featuring the world's largest collection of

animatronic dinosaurs. For an extra \$5, visitors could view more than 60 dinosaurs along a 4,000-foot path, spread over 12½ wooded acres. The attraction, lasting seven seasons, shut down in 2017.

In more recent park history, *Mystic Timbers* (2017) a wooden roller coaster, opened in Rivertown. In 2020 a large steel giga-roller coaster named *Orion* opened in July. The coaster was Kings Island's biggest investment to date at over \$30 million. Due to Covid the park didn't open until July 2nd.

While Kings Island ranks high in the amusement park world, the park has added great value to the local community. From tourism dollars to local employment opportunities, Kings Island has been a boon to the community at large. In 1985 a *Western Star* opinion article said, "Kings Island is a solid anchor in the Warren County economic sea." We couldn't agree more. Here's to the 50 years of fun and to 50 more to come. Cheers!

The Western Star, 4/2/1969
Mason Pulse Journal 1979, 5/26/11
The Cincinnati Enquirer, 5/18/1986, 5/25/2008
coneyislandcentral.com/history
kcentral.com/parkhistory
ohiohistorycentral.org
visitkingsisland.com
en.wikipedia.org



Amazon Falls launched in 1988 and was renamed Congo Falls in 1999.

2022 gate admission is \$85, \$49.99 when purchased online. Junior (under 48")/ Senior admission is \$45 when purchased online. Single day parking is \$25-\$35. Today, Kings Island and its parent company Cedar Fair owns 712 of the original acres, with the park currently sitting on about 365 of those acres.

"BLACK GOLD" DREAMS

Mason's Oil and Gas Boom of 1906

Sally Sherman Caudill, Editor

The dream of untold riches is a strong pull, and when two oil specialists from northern Ohio came to town in the spring of 1906, this dream looked like a reality. Col. P.M. Moore and J.A. Calhoun had been in the business of digging oil and gas wells for years in northern Ohio. The men were enthusiastic about the prospects of the Mason area for finding the riches far beneath the earth. Their study of area geology told them that they could find the very dense and hard Trenton rock, where gas pockets and oil deposits are found.¹

Several local men were sold on the idea. On April 17, 1906, 116 years ago this month, four Mason businessmen went to Columbus to file papers for the establishment of the Mason Oil Company. W.H. Williamson, W.W. Voorhis, W.H. Jackson and A.C. McClung had capital stock of \$100,000, which was divided into 10,000 shares of \$10 each (\$315. today). For each share, the buyer would also receive a bonus share in the Moore & Calhoun Oil Co. in Harrison County.¹ Full-page ads ran for three straight weeks in *The Western Star*. The ads promised "a rare opportunity." Moore and Calhoun guaranteed an 8% return, and extolled their credentials stating that the investments in their company were currently earning 30% with the good possibility of later pocketing 150% after the property was fully developed with oil wells.²

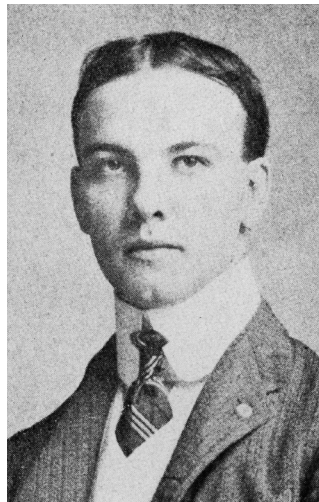


Certificates donated to MHS by Keith Gilbert and Karen Bodenbender

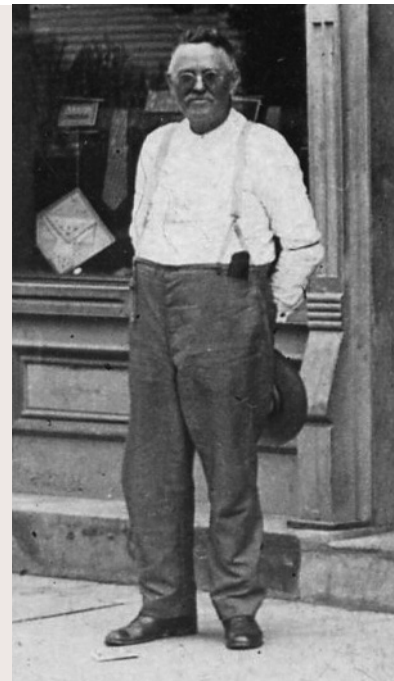
This stock certificate for two shares was purchased by W.H. Gilbert on April 19, 1906. Gilbert bought another four shares on June 25th.

"Excitement grips Mason!" was the headline in the *Hamilton Evening Democrat* on June 28. A natural gas pocket was struck on John Scull's Mason farm the day before, and the flame was shooting 20 feet into the air. Calhoun said "There is no question in my mind that we are on the eve of making one of the best "strikes" in the history of oil and gas fields."³ A well was soon being drilled and everyone in town came to look on in wonder. When

a depth of 515 feet had been reached, the engine's boiler struck a leak and they had to shut it down. That's when they heard a low rumbling far down in the depths of the well. The drillers were practically dancing with delight, as they knew what this meant. McClung, who was VP of the Mason Oil Co. said that if oil is in large enough quantities to warrant a pump, then they will pick a date to "shoot" the well and invite all residents of Warren, Hamilton, Clermont and Butler counties to "witness a spectacle never seen before in this section of Ohio."³



above AC McClung, VP of the Mason Oil Co. He was also the editor of the *Warren County Appeal* newspaper.



right Wealthy farmer John W. Scull. It was on Scull's land just north of downtown where oil and gas discoveries caused much excitement in sleepy Mason.

A few days later, a stranger of "distinguished" appearance arrived in town on the afternoon train. He quickly made his way from the depot to the Scull farm. While there, he chatted up the townspeople about Mason, its history and business interests. The man was wary of answering any questions posed to him and no one even learned his name or where he was from. As the man left to catch the 4pm train, one old resident who had "shadowed" the stranger as he made his way about the grounds, said 'By cracky! That's one of them Standard Oil fellers. Get everything nailed down, boys!'³

"The roar of the gas escaping could be heard for a mile."⁴ To test the force of the 490-foot-deep well, Mayor J.M. Van Dyke placed his hat over the vent hole and it was blown 50' skyward into the top of a nearby tree. Witnesses to the mayor's experiment got the idea of placing an inverted jackscrew over the vent hole to act as a whistle. The result was an ear-splitting screech that could be heard in Bethany over 5 miles away.⁴ At midnight, four days after the initial strike, "a huge mass of gray-tinted sand was thrown 60' into the air by the force of the escaping gas." Upon seeing this, one of the drillers reportedly high-tailed it to his home in Columbiana County to get all the money he had up there, so he could invest it down here.⁵

Mason Oil Company, cont.

The excitement over the gas and oil gripped the town, as well as people from all over the state and beyond. All telephone and telegraph lines in Mason were overloaded. Strangers came to Mason to be witnesses to history. Options and leases on land within a radius of a mile around the Scull farm were taken, encompassing over 1,200 acres.⁶ Hizer Natural Gas Appliance company of Newark, Ohio leased 500 acres of Thomas Scott's land (southeast of Kings Mills and E. Main) for a factory that they believed they would be building soon.⁷

Drilling took place continuously for a week. Calhoun estimated that the gas and oil territory in Mason to be 6 miles long by 4 miles wide, and that it would yield 300-400 barrels per day.⁵ On June 29th, the Mason Oil Company starting preparations to sink a second well in the near vicinity of the Scull farm. Banker G. Milton Thompson already had a well dug on his property after test drilling brought up an oily substance.³

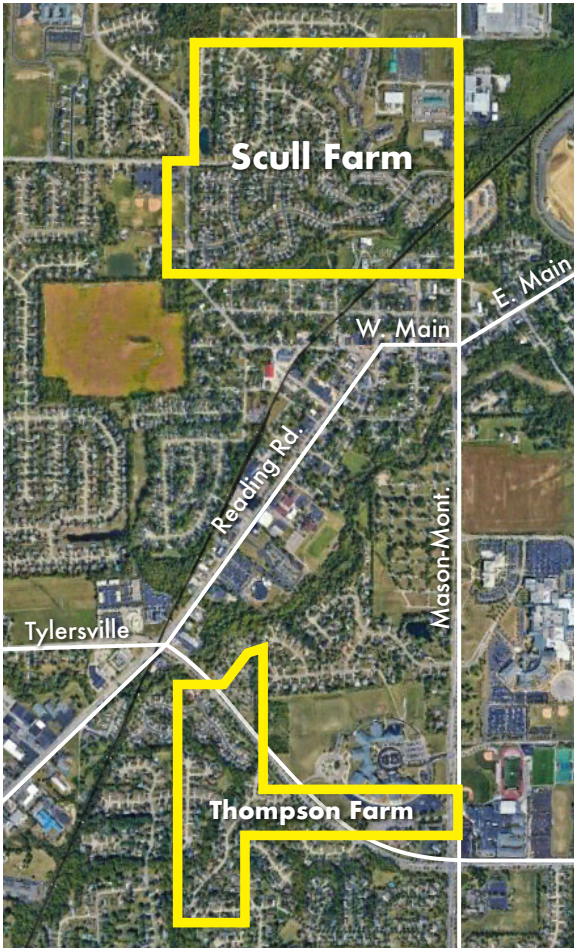
Investors were so optimistic and upbeat about the prospect of "striking it rich," there was little tolerance for their one single naysayer... Oliver Conner, a Cincinnati geologist and metallurgist who had inspected the well. It was Conner's belief that there was a limited supply of gas

here and the pressure would lessen, until it disappeared altogether. He said the only recognized gas belts in Ohio were in the Lima and northeast fields, and outside of that territory only temporary wells have been found. Mason Oil Co. VP McClung, who had no tolerance for any fly who dared to enter his ointment, replied "with all due deference to Mr. Connor's learning, we are certain we have not struck a 'temporary' well on the Scull farm."⁵

True to Conner's prediction, though, Scull's well failed soon after, so the drilling operation moved over to G. Milton Thompson's well. A month later, hope springs eternal! The 200' well exploded with a roar. Col. Moore said he intended to go down 800 feet, due to the good prospects of the porous rock formations he'd encountered.⁸ (Isn't this the same "expert" who praised the very hard, dense rock at Scull's well just a few months before?) His enthusiasm was short-lived... (Do I really need to spell it out...?)

The next year in the spring of 1907, the Mason Oil Co. busted. Shareholders then pinned their hopes on the promised dividends from Moore and Calhoun Oil Co., but to no avail. In July the company was insolvent and the court sold the property.⁹ People hear what they want to hear, but as the saying goes, 'if something sounds too good to be true, it usually is.'

I can't help but wonder how different our town would be today if this "boom" had reached the heights of the townspeople's hopes and expectations. This might have turned into a classic example of "be careful what you wish for..."



Scull's Farm today includes the former canning factory and Concord Crossing subdivision on its lower half. Thompson's Farm today includes part of the Intermediate School property and parts of Manhasset subdivision.

- ¹The Western Star, April 26, 1906.
- ²The Western Star, May 3, 1906.
- ³Hamilton Evening Democrat, June 28, 1906.
- ⁴Franklin Chronicle, July 5, 1906.
- ⁵Butler County Democrat, July 5, 1906.

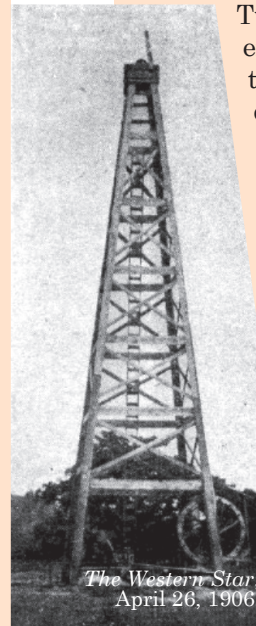
- ⁶Cincinnati Commercial Tribune, June 29, 1906.
- ⁷Hamilton Evening Democrat, June 30, 1906.
- ⁸Butler County Democrat, August 16, 1906.
- ⁹The Western Star, July 25, 1907.
- ¹⁰The Western Star, April 30, 1908.

BABY BOOM

The gas and oil "boom" of 1906 was not Mason's first. In 1866 on the old Felix See farm, just north of where the Scull farm was situated, a 640-foot-deep well was drilled. The Western Star reported that "evident indications of gas were found."¹ The prospectors, however, lost their drill and, disheartened, soon after abandoned the well.⁵

After Scull's discovery in 1906, townspeople inspected the site of the See well and found "an appreciable amount of gas was still escaping" from it.

EXCITEMENT REIGNS AGAIN



Two years after the exhilaration and then the excruciating disappointment of Mason's 1906 gas and oil boom, John Scull was working his farm when he heard the sound of gas bubbling up through the water that now surrounded his abandoned well. He called Mayor Van Dyke, who came over and located the gas spout. He thrust a 1/2" pipe into the ground and lit a match. Gas blazed two feet into the air.¹⁰

Not a word of this "sequel" ever appeared in print again... until today.

MHS Monthly Events

LETTERS FROM PARIS

MON. APRIL 18 @ 7 PM

Suzanne Anderson Taylor

With more than 30 years as a history teacher, Suzanne will present "Letters from Paris" which is based on letters to her grandmother, Betty Cummings McCurley from her pen pal who lived in Paris before, during and after WWII.

FATAL FLIGHT & A NUCLEAR SCARE IN MASON

MON. MAY 16 @ 7 PM

Sally Sherman Caudill

Author and MHS newsletter co-editor Sally Sherman Caudill, will be giving an encore presentation of her in-depth look at the Air Force B-50 Bomber crash, which happened just north of Mason in 1950. **Seats are filling up so reserve today.** Call: 513-398-6750 or email: mason.oh.historical@gmail.com

ICE CREAM SOCIAL

MON. JUNE 13 @ 6 PM

Annual Ice Cream Social and Baked Goods Auction Fundraiser. Gene Steiner will once again join us as our auctioneer and entertainer. If you haven't attended one of these, you're missing out! It's old-fashioned fun, fellowship, ice cream, cookies, refreshments and incredible, legendary baked goods! Social hour starts at 6 pm with auction starting at 7.

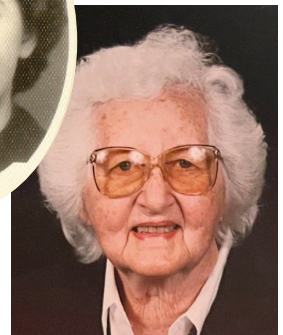
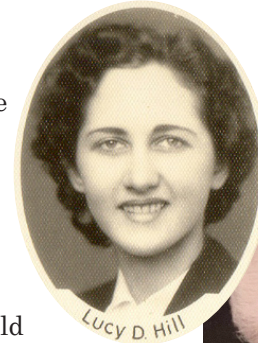
We're very excited to welcome our new curator, Sherry Kuntz Williams. Sherry was born and raised in Mason and is a graduate of MHS Class of '77. She has a rich family history here; her grandfather, Marvin "Streaky" Conover, was Mason's first police chief in 1942.



Sherry has hit the ground running and is fully committed to the continuous improvement and development of our Museum. Stop in sometime soon to say hello. Welcome, Sherry, it's great to have you here!



We were so saddened to hear of the passing of Lucy (Hill) Gorsuch at the age of 100 on February 23rd. She was preceded in death by her husband, Howard Gorsuch, and her two brothers, Arnold and Art Hill. She leaves behind son, Mike Gorsuch, daughter, Susan Harrison and three generations of grandchildren.



Lucy was a lifelong Mason resident and graduated from Mason High in 1939. She was a standout softball player in school and is now a Mason Athletic Hall of Fame inductee. She continued playing ball well into her 50's. Lucy was a long-time member of the Historical Society and served in several capacities over the years, including curator and treasurer. Thank you, Lucy, for all your dedication. You will be very much missed.

A FOLLOW-UP TO OUR SCOUTING ARTICLES

It never fails. As soon as an article goes into print, we find additional information on the subject! Such is the case with the Boy Scout article from February and the Girl Scout article last month. A special edition of the *Mason-Pulse Journal* from May 14, 1980, that was published to recognize the opening of our new library, featured articles on many Mason organizations. The articles about Boy and Girl Scouts were contributed by Mr. Boy Scout himself, Bill Gilbert, and early Girl Scout supporter, Frances Gilbert.

Boy Scout Update

According to Bill Gilbert, Mason has no official record of the first Boy Scout troop, although many citizens remembered joining troops in the mid-twenties. This would correspond with the entry in Rose Marie Springman's book that in 1927 boy scout troops were allowed to meet in the school gym. The article went on further to state that in 1935, Troop 33, under the sponsorship of the Mason Grange, was established and that Troop 33 was the first troop to be registered with the Mound Builders Council, Middletown (later merging with the Dan Beard Council).

Girl Scout Update

According to Frances Gilbert the first girl scout troop was in Mason around 1924 and then again later in 1939 (as we reported). The organization of the Girl Scout troops in Mason began in the fall of 1944. There were four troops: Brownies led by **Mildred Dickinson**; a fifth and sixth grade troop led by Lila Lantzer and Ruth Batsche; a seventh and eighth grade intermediate troop led by Ruth Gray and **Delores Black**; and a senior troop led by Marian Walker, Lucille Bercau, and **Helen White** assisted in camping.

Bolded names were not previously mentioned in article.

The Board Report

Jay Meibers, President



Spring has finally arrived! I can remember growing up this time of the year was when we would take our baseball gloves and start the breaking in process by oiling the glove, put a baseball in it and wrap it tight with a belt. Worked every time. We only had wooden bats back then and I can remember batting practice on cold spring days. Memories still linger of my cold hands stinging like crazy after hitting the ball on the end of the bat. Try-outs for Knothole teams would begin each spring until one year Mason was thrown out of the league. That is when the MAAA was born (now known as MYO). Your team was known as the color of your baseball cap. I remember playing for the Light Blue Caps, being undefeated, and then getting beat in the championship game (bummer).

At that time there were only two baseball fields at Civitan Park (now known as Heritage Oak Park). The entrance was not in the current location but a few hundred yards north on St. Rt 42. It was a dirt entrance and if it rained only one car could go up or down the entrance. Once you got up the hill and into Civitan, you could only drive 5-10 miles per hour due to the car-eating potholes on the dirt paths. The sweat bees would swarm you during the games, plus you had to keep a close eye on the mud dauber's nesting on the infield. Not many true hops on ground balls either, but somehow we survived!

We are happy announce that Sallie Nally has joined the Board as our Social Media Director. Sallie is a past Board member and a direct descendant of William Mason. Welcome back Sallie!

Then & Now

West Main Street at East Street,
view to the east



Ca. 1905 (note streetcar tracks)



2022 – Yost Pharmacy building on near left has been heavily renovated over the past 100+ years. The building on the near right (The Drapery Shoppe/soon to be a Drum Shop) had its corner front door moved to the center of the building in the 1920s.

Our MHS programs begin in April and we hope to see many of you attending various events at the museum this spring and summer. Stay safe, stay well, and thank you for your tremendous support of the Mason Historical Society.

THIS MONTH IN MASON HISTORY

Excerpts from *Around Mason, Ohio: A Story*, Rose Marie Springman

1840: An election would be held on Saturday, April 25, in the home of James Fugate to elect Mason's first mayor, a recorder and five trustees to serve one year. The results were Mason Seward, Mayor; Felix Welton, recorder; and Levin Murphy, Abram Duvall, Felix Welton, Ezra Dawson and Ephraim Meighen, Trustees. (Mason Seward was William Mason's nephew.)

1853: When council met on April 13, they decided that a "watch house" was needed for disorderly people.

1916: The local newspaper had been taken over by LeRoy Lanham and in mid-April he published an editorial that read in part: "America is either hopelessly automobile mad or else exceedingly prosperous... A conservative estimate of the number of machines that will be sold during the season in the vicinity of Mason is 50. There are over 100 cars now in Deerfield Township."

1936: Lon Maddox purchased the property on the southwest corner of Main and East Streets from H.C. Hutchins and H.B. Johnson and on April 1 he began a service station business there. It was to become his life's work.

1963: William Walker purchased the service station on the southwest corner of Main and East Streets from Lon Maddox on April 1. Maddox had operated the business for 27 years and he and his wife Livonia and their three sons lived in the house just to the south of the business.

1972: Kings Island amusement park, owned by the Taft Broadcasting Company, opens on April 29. Fifteen-thousand people attend the opening weekend with admission costing \$6 for an individual (children under 3 free) and \$5 after 6:00pm.

1974: On April 3, Mason is caught in the Super Outbreak, the largest tornado outbreak on record for a single 24-hour period. The tornado leveled the Thriftway Store and severely damaged several buildings downtown, including the fire station and the Dream Theater.

BUSINESS MEMBERS *and* PARTNERS

LIFETIME MEMBERS

Air Authority Heating and Air Conditioning
Al's Heating and Cooling
American Legion, Post 194
American Legion Auxiliary Unit 194
Brunk Excavating, Inc.
Chris Champ – State Farm agent
Jeff Hill Video
Mitsubishi Electric Automotive
People's First Savings Bank
R.E. Middleton Construction LLC
Senour-Flaherty Insurance
Shorten and Ryan Funeral Home
Voorhis, Slone, Welsh and Crossland, Architects
Walldogs – Mason Sign Company
Yost Pharmacy, Inc.

BUSINESS MEMBERS

Artis Senior Living of Mason Heritage Awards
Lt. Robt. N. Mount V.F.W. 9622 Aux.
Mason Bowl, Inc.
Mason Health Care Center
Minuteman Press of Lebanon
Mueller Funeral Home
Terry's Lawn Care, Inc.
Warren County Historical Society
16 Lots Brewing Co.

PARTNERS

City of Mason
Culver's – Mason
LaRosa's – Mason
Mason City Schools
Mason Community Grange No.1680
Mason-Deerfield Chamber
Mason Public Library

A NOTE OF THANKS

We would like to recognize and thank Mike O'Bryant for his efforts in organizing sports programs for William Mason High School from 1962 (the year the football program began) through the 1980s. Available in the Museum library, the programs were donated by Mason Mayor Barbara Berry Spaeth from her mother's estate. The programs are mostly football and some basketball. Mary Berry was an avid fan of the Comets, especially when her children were on the field or court! Thanks to Mike and to the Berrys!



Thank you, Mason!

Thanks to all who have donated items to the Museum over the years. We would not have the amazing collection of Mason memorabilia without the generous support of the many Masonites who have contributed items to the Museum!