

Fort Recovery State Museum Newsletter August 2011



Keith Layman – August 7, 3:00

The History and Significance of Fort Wayne in Conquering America's First Frontier is the talk to be given by Keith Layman when he presents at the museum next Sunday. Layman is the historian for *Historic Fort Wayne*, Inc. a not-for-profit organization that manages the replica of Fort Wayne.

He is a native of that city, a graduate of Concordia Lutheran High School and also from Indiana University where he studied history and anthropology. He was recently elected to the Board of Directors for ARCH, a local historical preservation society. Have questions about Fort Wayne history? Keith can answer them for you. Come! Bring a friend!

Update on the National Battlefield Archaeological Study of Fort Recovery

Although the Ball State University Archaeology Field School has concluded, the National Battlefield Protection Program Grant work continues on the "battlefield" around Fort Recovery – particularly on both sides of the present Wabash River. Some interesting "finds" have been documented. On **Sunday, October 2**, the Ball State University Anthropology Department students, faculty, and staff who have been most heavily involved in the research will present their findings for the public. Be sure to mark that date and time (3:00) on your calendar. How interesting it will be to get the final results of this year-long study, investigation and dig! (And find out what's planned next! I'm dying to know too! 😊)

St. Clair 5K Run a Success

Over 300 participants took off at the sound of the cannon for the July 16th 5k! Thanks to Kathy Gonzalez and Kim Niekamp for a well-organized event, and to many, many volunteers for their help. They included not only museum patrons and supporters but also many members (coaches/parents) of the Fort Recovery Cross Country Team. It is estimated that the run profited \$3000+ for the Fort Recovery Historical Society and Museum. At their meeting last week, FRHS trustees voted to give the cross-country team \$300 for their invaluable assistance. It was Win-Win! Thanks to one and all!

Beautifying our Town – a One Man Pursuit!

When Dr. Jim Vaughn became a Fort Recovery Historical Society trustee, he brought with him a passion to beautify the town. He took this on as a one-man project! He secured funding from individuals and businesses, searched for the perfect containers, grew flowers from starts in his home, and solicited the help of nephew, Eric Jutte of Jutte's Landscaping. The result is the many beautiful containers of flowers decorating Wayne Street from the bank on the north end to Tin Cupboard on the south. He and Carolyn have been carefully tending the flowers with his magic brew and watering as late as midnight. Wow, what one man can accomplish when he has passion and a bit of support! Thank YOU Jim!

Needed – One Copy of *The Archaeology of Fort Recovery*

A visitor from Dublin, OH was very disappointed that *The Archaeology of Fort Recovery* by Tony DeReganacourt is out of print. If YOU have this soft back book in your library, and it is in good condition, AND you are willing to part with it, just drop it off at the museum and we will refund your purchase price (12.00) and mail it to the Dublin fellow who so wants it. 😊

Thank YOU – Patron Renewals

Thanks to Toni and Greg LeFevre, Tom and Lisa LeFevre and Dale and Alice Pearson for becoming Presidential Patrons for 2011. We appreciate their generous support.

In Memory of Richard Meiring

Thank you also to Jeanne and Russ Belle of St. Louis for their \$100 donation in memory of her uncle and our past patron, **Rich Meiring**. Through this donation, his memory will live on through the contributions of historical appreciation and knowledge the local museum provides for young and old alike.

Help Solve a Mystery – Who Are *Those* Children?

Check out the new big black and white portrait-type print from the 1800's hanging in the log cabin! The print of two beautiful very young children, in a broken but beautiful gold frame, was brought in by **Christa (Todd) Fullenkamp**. The family found it in the attic of Marty Fullenkamp's home after he passed away in 2008. Christa, the family genealogist, had searched furiously to identify the two subjects of the picture. She is convinced that they are not Fullenkamp children, but may instead be of Ontrop relatives – the family who previously owned that farm at 2959 Reinhard Road, Fort Recovery. Stop by the log cabin and check out the print, and if you have any ideas on solving that “who are they” mystery, do let us know.

Also notice that the once “falling apart” frame is now back together and gorgeous. Thanks to our patron and trustee, **Dr. Jim Vaughn** for fixing that just like new. How nice it is to have not only his handiwork but his expertise in identifying antiques, their history and their values!

Maintenance Issues

As might be expected, on the hottest day of the year, the museum AC went out. After discovering the problem and calling Ernie Rohrer at 8:00 a.m, the Rorer's had it fixed by the noon opening time. Yeah for service in a small town!

Fort Electric LLC replaced parts on our lights/switches in the souvenir room so they are once again working consistently and without blinking! The bad news is that Bruce Scott of FE said that our main panel needs to be replaced as it is oxidizing and the breakers are corroding. Yep, just like home, if it is not one thing, it is another. ☺

Jonathan Alder – Where have we heard that name?

When he was only 8(1782), and living in West Virginia, Alder's older brother was killed by Shawnees, and he, Jonathan, was taken captive and given by the Shawnees to an Ohio Mingo chief whose son had died. Alder grew to love his Indian life and when offered his freedom in 1783, refused. In the fall of 1793, during the peak of the Northwest Indian War, he joined Shawnee chief Blue Jacket to defend against Anthony Wayne's attacks in the Ohio Country, and took part in the attack on Fort Recovery on June 30, 1794.

After peace finally came to the area, Alder searched for and found his original family in Virginia. He soon married Mary Ann Blout, came back to Ohio and built a log cabin along the Big Darby Creek in 1806, and he and Mary had 12 children (1808 and 1830.) During the War of 1812, Alder was elected captain of a company of 70 men formed in Plain City.

After the war ended, Alder returned to the life of a farmer. He continued to visit the other former captives with whom he had become friends. In the fall of 1818, Alder received a visit from Simon Kenton, to share and compare stories. The two discovered that they had much in common, and had been at many of the same battles, even if they had been on opposite sides. They met often.

Living out the rest of his days as a farmer, Jonathan Alder died on January 30, 1849, in Canaan Township, Madison County, Ohio. He had become a well-known figure in the region, and is still remembered today with a school district, high school, and middle school named after him. A historical marker was erected by Ohio in front of Foster Chapel Cemetery near West Jefferson, where he is buried. The cabin Alder built in 1806 is now located at the Madison County Historical Society Museum in London.

(We now carry ***A History of Jonathan Adler, His captivity and Life with the Indians***, edited by Larry Nelson.

This work – taken from the original manuscript of Henry Clay Alder son of Jonathan – is said to be one of the most extensive first person accounts to survive from Ohio's pioneer and early settlement eras. \$14.95 at our gift shop. 10% off for patrons!)

Happy History! nk