

# Why A Historical Society?

## A Preserved Past: An Informed Future

An officer of the Dover Historical Society explains why the museum room in Memorial Hall is a needed asset to a growing community.

Why a historical society?

To preserve a record of former years, to stimulate youth in their quest for an understanding of American and local development and how every section of our vast country has progressed and how our system of government works!

To impress upon all of us the fact that the times always change, that new conditions and new problems confront every new generation and that in an era in which scientific and mechanical progress is ever increasing the need for added emphasis on technical education, there still is need for the preservation of sentiment!

Sentiment still is a part of our nature beyond that of our daily tasks of earning a living. We all cherish sentiments, recall our past experiences and keep mementos of them, of our families and of events that have occurred in the community in which they reside.

This is exactly what a local museum and historical society does.

Out of it comes an understanding of changing times and a realization that civilization and humans never stand still.

Too few of us know enough about our national constitution and the operation of our federal government, or state, county and city government to vote as intelligently as we should on candidates or issues.

If children, even in the lower grades, could be inspired to employ their natural youthful curiosity on our history and how our county is run we would have better citizens.

And how better to promote this desire than by starting with the 1st Grade to interest them in local history and how local government and industry operates and the events that transpired in their own neighborhood and town long before

And how better to promote and satisfy this youthful curiosity and refresh the memories of their elders than by a historical society to preserve relics, records, photographs and books?

Many families, of course, preserved records, of this type but the first person to give publicity to the idea of a public Dover museum was the late W. W. Scott, owner and editor for many years of the weekly Iron Valley Reporter, which is now the Daily Reporter.

By the time Scott died in 1902 he had accumulated an extensive museum collection which his family gave to the Dover public schools, but there was nobody in the school organization to take care of the relics and they became neglected and many items disappeared.

The family gave the remains to the famed Ernest Warther museum in Karl Ave. where many of the items are still on exhibition, although Warther's tourist visitors come mainly to see his marvelous locomotive models and other carvings.

In the 1920s the late Dr. Joseph Weinland, pastor of the Dover First Moravian church, discovered maps and records that led to the restoration of a large part of Schoenbrunn.

This village had been established in 1772 by David Zeisberger, famed Moravian missionary to the Delaware Indians, and where the first recorded school house and first church structure in Ohio were erected.

What is now the Ohio Historical Society took over and Schoenbrunn was established as a state park. A museum building was also erected. It still houses a varied collection but a large collection of items accumulated under the direction of the late O. J. Demuth, one of the first caretakers of the park, never got into the museum and has since disappeared.

Because of these experiences the Federated Women's Club of



CORNER OF HISTORY. Among the items at the Dover Historical Society is the Village of Dover's ballot box, shown on the center shelf. The portrait on the wall is of Mrs. George B. Deardorff, wife of Dover's founder.

Dover Historical Society which was incorporated in 1958 and given a basement room in Dover Public Library.

Attempts did not work out to secure an entry from the library rooms and the outside rear entrance and the inadequate size of the museum area prompted a removal to a room on the second floor of Memorial Hall at a small annual rental fee. An effort is being made to index, tag and display the museum items.

The museum is without adequate funds to hire employees or establish itself in a separate

organization in Dover, in the 1870's.

Among the most treasured exhibits is the original deed and map of Dover when the town was founded in 1807. It was donated by the late Nina Deardorff, last grandchild of Christian Deardorff, who laid out the town in partnership with his brother-in-law, Jesse Slingluff of Baltimore. Jesse, however, did not reside here permanently, but in Baltimore. Miss Deardorff also donated separate painted portraits of her

university worthy of the name was at Alexandria, Egypt. It grew from a museum founded by Alexander the Great.

After his death his world empire broke up but his museum drew the scholars of the Greek, Roman, Hebrew and Arabic world and was the most lasting achievement of his career.

There is a fine museum of the Zoar community in that town and Moravian museums at Schoenbrunn and Gnadenhutten but no general museum of the county's rich history which

Dean Howells wrote "The Three Villages" a story of the Moravian missions in Ohio, Benjamin Franklin in his Autobiography describes the Moravians in Pennsylvania before they came to Ohio.

Manuscripts of the Moravians are in many libraries and museums and in the Congressional Library in Washington. They are still writing about them. A book was published last year, entitled "300,000 Miles with John Heckewelder." Heckewelder was Zeisberger's assistant and later became a U.S. land and Indian agent.

Zeisberger and Heckewelder were well known in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. They were highly thought of by Washington, Franklin, Patrick Henry and the Continental Congress, which in 1778 established Ft. Laurens at Bolivar, the only federal fort in Ohio during the Revolution, in an effort to protect the Moravian missions.

To shrug off this notable early history and all the things that have occurred since in this county without historical society data would leave a notable void.

The Dover Historical society annually answers scores of letters inquiring about local history.

To not have a historical society to help preserve the records of this great American heritage would leave a gap in this otherwise well-organized and well-rounded community that would be embarrassing to explain to our posterity and to newcomers or visitors.

The Dover Historical Society is a non-profit incorporation. Present officers are: D. W. Gerber, president; Sam Ream, vice president; Mrs. George Wills, secretary, and Mrs. Ernest Warther, treasurer. Trustees include Dorothy Feil, Richard Reifert, Mrs. Paul Ziegler, Pauline Seikel, Ernest Geiser, Arthur Beiner, Nelson McMillan, Mrs. Herbert Zollar and Henry C. Hagloch.

Meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the museum room at Memorial Hall. Committees are at present engaged in cataloging and tagging exhibits. It is hoped later to establish regular visiting hours for the public.

Officers and members report a renewed interest in local history by the general public and point to the increasing search for antiques as proof of this.



FASHIONS FROM THE PAST. Maggie Cooley, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Cooley of 919 E. 4th St., is shown with some of the items in the Dover Historical Society room at Memorial Hall. Her dress was the 1893 wedding gown of Anna Canada Geib, mother of Marie Geib, and the purse was used by Maggie's great-great grandmother, Barbara Reed Hagloch. The grand-