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 Chester, OH 45720
 Phone # 740-985-9822
 Email: chestercourthouse@windstream.net
 Website: www.chestercourthouse.com

**Chester Shade Historical Association
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From the Bench

CSHA Members and Supporters,

2016 is here, and as I write this, our new president Dixie Sayre is basking in the Florida sunshine. So until she returns, it becomes my job, as the new VP, to lead the Chester Shade Historical Association group! I'm still learning a lot about the organization, who does what, offices, committees, must-do items, what's been suggested but dropped, planning for the future, and beneficial participation in this and that. So I'll comment on some of the items in the works for the year with other bits of information along with soliciting your support.

In January, some of the CSHA members attended the Meigs County Historical Society and Museum's open house in Pomeroy, as they celebrated their recent reorganization. We hope to re-establish a new working relationship with our sister historical organization, collaborating on projects and public exhibits at various area venues, as well as exchanging ideas on promoting ourselves to area tourism and history buffs. We are hosting the officers and trustees of MCHS at an informal dinner at the Academy, tentatively set for March 12, 2016 at 6:30 pm; we look forward to acquainting ourselves with their leaders and them with ours to start the ball rolling on working together.

On March 5th, you may want to stop by our booth as we will be represented, along with the Meigs Tourism group, at the 8th Annual Southeast Ohio Tourism Expo at the University of Rio Grande – Lyne Center, hours 10:00 am – 4:00 pm.

In April we will be having our annual fundraising dinner in the Meigs High School cafetorium. Rather than trying to have an auction of donated items this year, we will have a featured speaker, Meigs County's own Mike Gerlach talking about the Under Ground Rail Road and the part Meigs County played. The date is April 15, 2016. Please encourage your friends and neighbors to come support us and hear some interesting facts about our county.

July brings us to the time of the year in which we traditionally have had Chester Shade Days. Last year it was Meigs Heritage Festival. This year will feature a car show, at Eastern Elementary School, along with concessions, ice cream, and some activities for kids. The date will be July 16, 2016. More info later.

In September we will have a big part to play in the Morgan's Raid III, to be reenacted across the county September 15-18, 2016. Plans are well under way by those who volunteer to be reenactors, with many details yet to be decided. Our part will be to feed the participants, who camp in the Chester area Friday night and on Saturday morning. Also, we will be hosting, of sorts, a Civil War Dance—Friday night on the Commons. (continued on page 2)

Academy and Courthouse Hours

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
 And Saturday
 10:00 - 4:00
 Or
 By Appointment
 Call Kaye Fick at 740-985-4115
 Or
 Mary Powell at 740-992-2622
 E-mail
chestercourthouse@windstream.net
 Website
www.chestercourthouse.com
 Courthouse
 740-985-9822

From the Bench (continued from pg. 1)

Also in September or maybe in October, we will be hosting our annual Genealogy Fair; Kaye Fick is in charge of this, and is working on establishing a firm date.

There are many other venues we hope to be a part of this year and in the future to showcase the history CSHA has been able to preserve. We soon want to update our website and keep it current with our activities, as well as provide the ability to apply for membership on-line, and pay membership dues and make donations via a PayPal link. We intend to resurrect this periodic newsletter, hopefully quarterly, and send it out either by USPS or email, the latter being most cost-effective for us. We need your ideas for fundraisers, and then the help required to plan and implement. The CSHA cannot continue to exist without having a source of revenue and volunteers. We appreciate and certainly thank all of you who have made generous donations over the past 19 years to get our buildings and contents to the point you see now. However, to maintain them and keep them open for public viewing and as a resource for education and research takes, as you know with your own homes, FUNDING!!!

Lastly, I encourage all of you who are current CSHA supporters and members to re-new your membership by paying your dues (individual) of \$10 for 2016. Or better yet, why not become a Lifetime Member for a donation of \$100? And for those of you who belonged and paid dues some time ago, but have not been supportive or active lately, why not get reignited with our history and determine to be a supporter in 2016 by renewing your membership?

Looking forward to your interest in the Chester Shade Historical Association and your support at our events!

Dan Will,
Vice President
Chester Shade Historical Association

Ohio History Tax Check-Off

Donate to Ohio History on your Ohio tax return and help support history projects in local communities that invest in Ohio's economy.

The funds generated through the Ohio History "tax check-off" are made available through a competitive matching grants program, the History Fund. The History-Fund supports the preservation and sharing of Ohio's heritage by supporting local projects, programs, and events related to Ohio's history.

Small donations make a BIG difference

For just \$8, you can help repair a roof, preserve rare color film footage, or stage a historical reenactment.

Help promote the History Fund tax check-off

To be a part of the Ohio History Tax Check-Off campaign and to access free promotional materials, go to:

ohiohistory.org/makehistorycampaign.

Chester Shade Historical Benefit Dinner

The benefit dinner for the Chester Courthouse and Academy will be held at the Meigs High School Cafetorium at 6:30 on Friday, April 15, 2016. There will be a good homemade dinner and desserts along with drinks.

There will be a program on The Underground Railroad presented by Michael Gerlach.

Tickets will be sold at the door as well as at RacHannon Summerfield's Restaurant, Baum's Lumber and the Chester Courthouse. Price of Tickets will be \$15 per person.

NO AUCTION!!

Send News Letter stories and information to:

You may contact the Courthouse with your stories or other items of interest to be included in the newsletters. Send to one of the mailing addresses or email addresses below.

Judy Buckley

Chester Academy

P.O. Box 5 SR 248

Chester, OH 45720 Or

740-985-9822 Or

chestercourthouse@windstream.net

Dave Schatz

dschatz1939@yahoo.com

740-667-9712

Calendar of Events 2016

CSHA meets the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM at the Chester Academy. Public is Welcome.

(Winter hours 6:30 PM)

- Jan. 7 – Monthly meeting 6:30 PM** Weather permitting
- Feb. 4 – Monthly meeting 6:30 PM** Weather permitting
- Mar. 3 – Monthly meeting 6:30 PM** Weather permitting
- Mar. 5 – Southeast Ohio Tourism Expo at Rio Grande 9am to 4 pm**
- Apr. 7 – Monthly meeting 7 PM**
- Apr. 15 – Annual Benefit Dinner and Silent Auction. Meigs High School Cafeteria at 6:30 PM. Tickets will be available by at RacHannonSummerfields, Baum’s Lumber, and the Chester Courthouse. Please call 740-985-9822 for more info.**
- May 5 – Monthly meeting 7 PM**
- Jun. 2 – Monthly meeting 7 PM**
- Jul. 7 – Monthly meeting 7 PM**
- July 16 – Car show and Harmonica Championship More information to follow**
- Aug. 4 – Monthly meeting 7 PM**
- Sep. 1 – Monthly meeting 7 PM**
- Sep. 10 – Genealogy Fair More info to come.**
- Sep. 16 & 17 – Morgan’s Raid**
- Sep. 16 - Civil War Ball Friday Night**
- Oct. 6 – Monthly meeting 7 PM**
- Oct. 12 – Starting at 6:30 PM (Second Wednesday) Chester Firemen and Chester Township Trustees Appreciation Dinner**
- Nov. 3 – Monthly meeting 7 PM**
- Nov. 28 – Monday following Thanksgiving, Decorating Courthouse and Christmas tree**
- Dec. 1 – Monthly meeting 6:30 PM** Weather permitting
- Dec. 3 – Christmas Open House Time to be announced. Featuring Eastern Bell Choir and Mrs. Chris Kuhn, with refreshments to follow**

This calendar is subject to change, so call the Courthouse at 740-985-9822 for further information.

The Allens **By Mike Gerlach**

Prior to the Civil War, the Free Black population of Meigs County was small. It was just too dangerous to live that close to the Ohio River. Slave owners would just grab Free Blacks off the streets and claim they were run away slaves. Once the war started, that all changed rapidly. As Northern armies advanced into the South, slaves were being freed. They were encouraged to head to the North. These refugees of the war were considered cheap labor in many areas above the Ohio River. Jobs were available. A better life beckoned.

Samuel B. Allen was freed by a Northern army near Lewisburgh, Virginia, now West Virginia. Samuel made his way north and found himself in Rutland here in Meigs County. Samuel was a man of intelligence and, as it turned out, he had a great deal of business ability. He worked on a farm near Rutland until an opportunity appeared working at an Army hospital in Gallipolis then he moved onto steamboats working as a porter. Samuel married and raised two children. They settled in Middleport where Samuel was a barber and began to purchase property.

In 1881, Samuel and his family moved to Rendville, an African American community in Ohio. He continued to be a barber, acquired considerable property and operated a hotel. He even became mayor of the community. He eventually sold his property there and moved to Corning where he operated a successful restaurant in a predominantly white community. Several years later Samuel sold his property in Corning and returned to Middleport where he opened another successful restaurant and built the Allen House which became Middleport's premier hotel. There were at least four hotels operating in Middleport at the time.

It was 1902. These were not easy times for African Americans. Meigs Countians in large numbers had fought and died to free the slaves during the Civil War but there was still prejudice and racism in Meigs County. There was segregation and the Klan was soon to take hold all along the Ohio Valley. Meigs County was no exception yet Samuel B. Allen overcame all that and became a successful member of the community. He eventually turned operation of the hotel over to his son, Edward. Samuel died in 1915 at the age of 72. He is buried in the Middleport Hill Cemetery.

The story of the Allen family does not end there. Samuel B. Allen had a grandson named Samuel C. Allen born in Middleport.. Samuel C. Allen took piano lessons and turned out to be very talented. By age 10, this Samuel

Allen joined the Navy during the Second World War where he played for USO shows and events for the diplomatic corps. Following the war, Allen settled in the San Francisco area. He married and was the father of 6 children. He continued to play in California and Washington, DC. Samuel C. Allen died in 1963. The Samuel Allen Memorial Scholarship Foundation was established in his honor to support live jazz and provide scholarships

Chester Courthouse Museum News

By Linda Blosser

Director

Chester Court House—Museum Memorabilia

Pomeroy native, Anna Heilmann Genheimer, secured her future by graduating from the Training School of Nurses, St. Clair Hospital, Columbus, Ohio. Anna received her diploma at a ceremony held at the Columbus Public Library in October 1919.

Items from that event are on display at the Chester Court House Museum including her diploma, nursing certificate, an invitation to the ceremony, cuff links and a photo.

Anna was married to Eddie Genheimer who was diagnosed with cancer at the age of twenty four. He was in the hospital in Columbus, so Anna decided to go to nurse's school while she was there with Eddie. She first worked to get her high school diploma, and then her nursing diploma even after her husband's death at the age of twenty six.

Her first job was at the Gallipolis State Hospital. Her parents took her to Hobson by horse and buggy to catch the train to Gallipolis. Later on she moved to Akron and worked in the Contagious Disease Center. She finished her career by working at The Ohio State University Hospital.

Anna was born in 1881 and passed away in 1954 at the age of seventy three.

Visit the Court House Museum and see Anna's memorabilia.

Athens County Historical Society and Museum

By Dave Schatz

It was recently announced that the ACHSM would be moving from their long standing location on North Court Street in Athens, to the First Christian Church building they have purchased at the corner of Congress Street and West State Street in Athens. The move will provide the Historical Society with more space for the museum displays, library and education opportunities.

It is the intent to name the new location the Southeast Ohio History Center, with the idea of building relationships with other historical societies and historical associations in the region. The hope would be to bring exhibits from other counties, and assist smaller regional museums with preservation of their artifacts and resources. The purpose is to bring people together and partner with neighbors. Hopefully this will create a destination that draws people to our part of Ohio seeking history information.

This could be a good opportunity to further history education in the region, in partnership with like minded historical organizations.

Morgan's Raid Announcement

Morgan Returns To Chester

General John Hunt Morgan and his horse mounted raider's first rode through Chester during the Civil War in July 1863. Chester and the Chester Shade Historical Association helped host reenactments of the raid in 2003 and 2006 when Morgan and his cavalry, along with two cannon, again rode through Chester.

During the week of September 15-18, 2016 Wilksville, in Vinton County, along with Pomeroy, Chester and Portland in Meigs County, will again host the reenactment of Morgan's Raid. There will be cavalry, infantry, cannon, skirmishes, and the battle near Buffington Island in Portland. This is a reenactment of Civil War history recognizing the only Civil War battle fought in Ohio. There will also be period dress ball's, [dances] one in Chester and one in Pomeroy as part of the annual Stern Wheel Festival.

Mark your calendars for Morgan's Raid III, "The Pursuit", for September 15-18, 2016. Contact the CSHA at 740-985-9822 if you would like to help or participate in some way with this event as history is reenacted.

Chester's Unique Rainbow Bridge

By Pat Holter



Travelers driving into Chester from State Route 7 on to SR 248 cross the Shade River on a bridge that is an almost one of a kind in Ohio. It is the Rainbow Bridge, so named for its rainbow like supporting arches constructed of concrete. Supposedly there are only four such bridges in Ohio. The earliest bridge, spanning the Shade River, at Chester, was a covered bridge. There is a picture of that bridge in the Court House museum. This early wooden bridge was burned by Confederate General John Hunt Morgan and his raiders when they rode into Chester in July 1863 during the Civil War.

Several bridges followed until in 1928 the Rainbow Bridge was constructed and still serves us today. It is supposedly the longest of the four surviving such spans in Ohio. The Ohio Department Of Transportation determined in the early 2000's that the bridge was not structurally up to what it should be. The question was whether to tear it down and replace it or to somehow refurbish the Rainbow Bridge. On this occasion, which does not happen often these days, ODOT decided to go with tradition by keeping the arches thus maintaining the appearance of the bridge. Bringing the bridge up to current standards required replacing the roadway structure, as self supporting, leaving the arches in place but not really supporting the deck as the arches were originally designed to do.

The next time you cross Chester's Rainbow Bridge think how unique it is and that you are passing between two historic arches.

Genealogy Corner

Spring 2016

Spring is coming! Time for cemetery visits and Genealogy field trips. Our Genealogy Library is open M-W-Th-S from 10-4 year. We have a huge selection of genealogy materials for Meigs County, the surrounding counties, and some of the surrounding states. We also have a large library of Civil War books and references, old tax books, thousands of obituaries, marriage records, death records and death certificates, school and church records, and much more. All of this is free to research.

Each fall we have a **Genealogy Fair**. Due to the Morgan's Raid Reenactment coming the 3rd week of September, the date for this year's fair has tentatively been set for the September 10th, second Saturday. You are welcome to come, bring a friend, and maybe meet some relatives.

Last fall, near closing time, I got a call that there was someone at the Genealogy Library that had some questions about her family so I said I would be right there. There were actually two groups there by the time I arrived and soon another person came. As we talked, we learned that all three groups had common families. That has happened at the GenFair but this was a first for three random groups.

I have heard many horror stories of families whose family historian has died and the family was not interested in all of the materials that were left behind so they pitched them. If you are the family researcher who has accumulated materials, please plan for the care of your research after you no longer can. If you are the person with the responsibility for these materials after the death of your family member and no one in the family is willing to care for them, then consider donating them to an appropriate historical society.

Here is a list of materials that we collect: We can make copies of many materials and can bind them into books. You can keep the original.

Family Histories

Old family pictures (identified)

Old obits and death notices

Old birth, marriage, and divorce information

Old yearbooks and school pictures (identified if possible)

Lists of class graduates

Old church records, pictures, and histories

Old school house pictures, histories, and locations

War records for veterans of all wars

Research materials for Meigs County and surrounding areas (Original only please)

Wanted: Volunteers

One of our greatest needs at the library is volunteers. We need many people to volunteer in order to sustain the *Chester Shade Historical Association* and to keep the Courthouse and Academy maintained and open for future generations. If you have a few hours or a couple of days a month that you can spare, please consider becoming a volunteer. **We will train you.**

The following is a list of some of the jobs that volunteers can do

- ◆ Cut birth, death, divorce, marriage, anniversary, reunion, biography, etc. items from old newspapers.
- ◆ Paste the cutout items on sheets, by category
- ◆ Index articles onto a form
- ◆ Help with children's programs (tea parties, genealogy, school class tours)
- ◆ Help prepare and serve meals a few times during the year
- ◆ Donate baked goods or other foods for meals occasionally
- ◆ Help decorate the Courthouse and Academy for various functions.
- ◆ Help with the newsletter.
- ◆ Clean and maintain the buildings and grounds
- ◆ Make copies
- ◆ Make labels
- ◆ Punch and bind books
- ◆ Laminate materials
- ◆ Stamp and put security stickers on new acquisitions.
- ◆ Retype obits and other items that are hard to read
- ◆ Help set up displays in the museum
- ◆ Do genealogy look-ups
- ◆ Research histories of Meigs County Schools and Churches
- ◆ Type indexes into a software program (if you can type, we can teach you the program)
- ◆ Greet visitors
- ◆ Conduct interviews and record oral histories.
- ◆ (We are losing our older people and their vast amount of information very quickly.)
- ◆ Transcribe oral histories
- ◆ Catalog reference materials
- ◆ Catalog donations

If you are interested in history, education, research, or meeting visitors who come from across the country, we can use you! Please call CSHA at 740-985-9822 or Kaye Fick at 740-985-4115.

New Chester Cookbooks
For Sale
\$20.00
Call 1-740-985-9822

Chester Academy 2016



Chester Courthouse 2016



Photos courtesy of Gary Coleman

3rd Graders' Field Trip

On Nov.23, 60 Southern third graders and their teachers and on December 22, seventy students and their teachers from Eastern Elementary visited the Chester Courthouse and Academy. Dixie Sayre portrayed Aunt Rodie Knight, a resident of Chester in 1863. After the covered bridge across Shade River was burned by General John Hunt Morgan's troops during the Morgan's Raid, Aunt Rodie helped the Union Army find a crossing point.

The students were divided into groups. Each group of students toured the Courthouse museum to learn about the artifacts there and Mary Powell told the history of the Meigs County's first Courthouse.

Students also learned other early history of the Chester Academy. Dixie Sayre taught them to play marbles when they visited the old grade school classroom. Linda Blosser taught the students to make a Christmas ornament to take home.

When students toured the Genealogy Library, Kaye Fick taught the students some genealogy terms and explained to the students how important it is to talk to their parents and grandparents about their family history and ask to see old family photos. Each teacher was given blank family trees, a word search puzzle and a crossword puzzle containing genealogy terms.

Christmas Open House

On December 7 the Eastern High School Bell Choir presented a Christmas program. For fourteen years the Christmas season has begun with the bell choir concert. The choir always plays to a full house of appreciative attendees at the Chester Courthouse. Mrs. Chris Kuhn and the students always look forward to the Chester Courthouse presentation because the sound of the bells are so clear in the old building.

After the program the choir and visitors toured the museum and then were treated to refreshments.

In 1995-96 Members of the DAR and a small group of local people came together to save the county's earliest history, Meigs County's first Courthouse.

The Chester Shade Historical Association trustees and volunteers have worked very hard to preserve the Chester Courthouse and the Academy. Both buildings are in use and open to the public.

We have worked 20 years to save what was preserved and make these beautiful buildings useable. Continued help is needed to maintain the buildings and keep them open to the public.

You can help by becoming members of CSHA and through donations.

Chester Shade Historical Association

Adult Membership \$10/year

Student Membership \$1/year

Donations

Thank you for your continued support!!

Please send your check to:

Chester Shade Historical Association

P.O. Box 5

Chester, Ohio 45720

2016 CSHA Membership

\$10.00 Individual Adult, \$20.00 Parents & Immediate Student Children, \$1.00 Students,
\$100 Lifetime Membership

PLEASE PRINT

Name: _____

Spouse Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-Mail: _____

(if email has changed, we are asking you to verify your email address)

Student Name(s): _____

Number of Persons: Family _____, Individual _____, Student _____, Amt. Pd. _____

Years Paid _____ Date Paid _____ Donation _____ Amt. Pd. _____

(Please mark one of the following and a member of the CSHA will contact you)

I would like to volunteer at the Courthouse/Academy

I have a family history or other items to donate to CSHA

I have stories to tell

Thank you, we appreciate your support!!!!!!!!!!

Yes, I would like to volunteer!

Name _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

I can volunteer: One day a week _____

One day a month _____

Occasionally _____

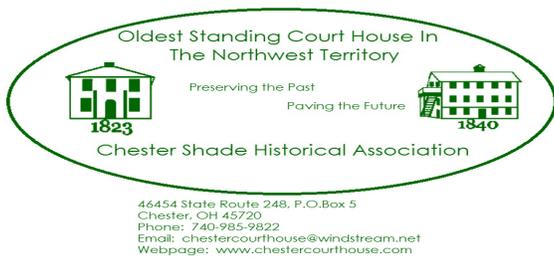
As needed _____

Preferred day: Monday _____ Wednesday _____ Thursday _____ Saturday _____

We are open 6 hours a day from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Special Skills*: Filing _____ Typing _____ Word Processing _____ MS Excel _____

*For most jobs you don't need any special skills, just a willingness to learn. We will train you.
Mail to: Kaye Fick, 38092 Green Up Lane, Long Bottom, OH 45743 or email: kayefick@windstream.net.



Jim Stewart, President
Chester Shade Historical Association
P. O. Box 5
Chester, OH 45720

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Your Dues Count

The money that you pay for dues goes to promote our organization. It helps us pay our utility bills and upkeep expenses, making it possible to keep the buildings open to the public. Please check out our membership page and sign up today.