The Governor Comes Home

The Ross County Historical Society is the new home of the statue of former Ohio Governor William Allen of Chillicothe—one of two statues that have represented the State of Ohio in National Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC for the past 129 years.

Allen, who lived most of his life in Chillicothe, served in the U.S. House and Senate during the 1830s and 40s. He was the 31st Governor of Ohio from 1874 to 1876 and the first Democrat to hold the office since before the Civil War.

Legislation creating National Statuary Hall in 1864 authorized each state to be represented by two statues of distinguished citizens worthy of "...national commemoration...". Ohio selected recently assassinated President James A. Garfield and recently deceased Governor William Allen for the honor. Their statues have stood in the Hall since 1886 and 1887, respectively. Renowned sculptor Charles H. Niehaus (1855-1935) of Cincinnati was commissioned to sculpt both statues.

A highly regarded statesman and gifted orator in his day, Allen has fallen out of favor in recent years for being an outspoken voice for his party's positions on Abraham Lincoln, the Civil War, slavery, and states rights. Another major strike against him is that he has been more or less lost to history with very few of the millions of current visitors to the U.S. Capitol even knowing who he was or recognizing his name.

The solid marble statue—which is nearly twelve feet tall and weighing over three tons, including its pedestal, was delivered to the Ross County Heritage Center on September 20 where it is now on permanent exhibit. It is a magnificent work of art, and the Society plans to provide a historically accurate and honest interpretation of Allen in context with the time in which he lived.

Allen's statue was replaced by a new bronze statue of inventor Thomas Edison of Milan, Ohio, during a special dedication ceremony in National Statutory Hall on Wednesday, September 21.

*****
President’s Report, by Ron Bowen

The Ross County Historical Society will be conducting a membership drive for the next few months. While we currently have over 400 members, we do want to grow our membership by introducing the history and culture of our city and county to new arrivals into our community and also to long-time residents who have never joined us. Income from our memberships provides part of our programming and operating budget, and with ever increasing costs of maintenance and operations, it is important to increase our revenues likewise.

You, our current members, can help in this effort by suggesting to people you know that they visit the museum during operating hours and sign up for membership. You can also invite them to come to one of our Fall Speaker Series presentations in October and November and sign up then. Benefits of membership include receiving our quarterly newsletter, free admission for museum visits and many Society programs, reduced fees for workshops and special programs, and 10% discount in our museum store.

Let’s make this a year of growth for the Ross County Historical Society!

Welcome New Members

The Society welcomes the following new members since the last issue of the Recorder (names are in alphabetical order):

Mr. & Mrs. Louis Adams
Gregory & Mary Creech
Dr. Daniel Green
Nanette Hlavaz
Mr. & Mrs. Leonard Roop
Suzanne Caroline Schilder-Hugher (Life)
Marilyn Vadakin

Gift Ideas from the Museum Store

New! Chillicothe, Ohio and The Great War 1914-1918, the never before told story of the massive changes World War I brought to Chillicothe and its people, and how it left a permanent mark on the community that lasts to this day. Illustrated, 264 pages, heavily indexed and footnoted, by Patricia Medert, $39.95. Absalom’s War: The Life and Death of a Young Ohio Farmer in the Civil War, $19.95 — The real life story of an enlisted man in the 73rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry, by Christopher Grabb. Back In Print! The Marietta & Cincinnati Railroad, and Its Successor—The Baltimore & Ohio: A Study of this Once Great Route Across Ohio, 1851-1988, $25.00 — an outstanding compilation of photos, short stories and newspaper clippings on Chillicothe’s railroad history, by John R. Grabb. The Civil War Journals of Samuel H. Hurst, 73rd Regiment, OVI, $19.95 — a perfect companion to Hurst’s Journal History of the 73rd OVI, compiled by Patricia Medert. Church & High Streets, Chillicothe, Ohio: The Buildings & the People & Other Miscellaneous Structures, $39.95 — the sixth in a series of publications on the structural history of Chillicothe’s historic district, by Patricia Medert, Chillicothe, Ohio: Frontier Settlement to State Capital, $14.95 — An illustrated history of Chillicothe’s founding and role as Ohio’s first capital, by Patricia Medert & Andrew Verhoff. Society members receive a 10% discount on all purchases.

Director’s Report, by Tom Kuhn

For over 120 years, the Ross County Historical Society has operated largely through the generosity of its members, supporters, and the good will of the community. During that time, we have managed to generate a steady stream of income needed to support our operations through revenue from memberships, admission fees, gift shop sales, donations, and the careful stewardship of our assets. As we look ahead, however, it is apparent that we must continue to seek additional sources of support since interest rates and dividends are near all-time lows, and relying on capital gains to make up the difference only works when there are capital gains. Realizing that we can’t afford to stand still because standing still really means falling behind, the Society is initiating an Annual Giving Campaign where our members and supporters may make tax deductible donations to help us continue moving forward. Inside this issue of the Recorder you will find our new Annual Giving Campaign contribution form. We ask you to please take a minute to look it over and consider making a contribution of your own. Any amount will be helpful and greatly appreciated. Thank you.

In Memory of Tonya Dye

We have lost a beloved member of our Ross County Historical Society family. Tonya Dye passed away unexpectedly on August 4, 2016. Tonya was our registrar and head docent for almost two decades. She co-directed our Junior Member program, planning crafts, activities, and themed refreshments that added a touch of whimsy. She also assisted with the creation of our seasonal exhibits, and it was her talents that made our Christmas decorations so magical. We will miss her organizational skills, her dedication to the Society, and her fun-loving spirit. Most of all, we miss the warm and caring friend she was to all of us and to everyone else who knew her.

Memberships Make Nice Gifts

Memberships to the Ross County Historical Society make thoughtful and inexpensive gifts. Buy them for the history buffs you know by returning the form on page 7. Benefits include free admission to each of our museums and the McKell Library plus discounts at the museum store.

The Society’s Wish List

Donations of everyday items such as tools and other types of equipment help our staff and volunteers complete a multitude of projects. Since the last issue of the Recorder, we received a donation of white cotton sheets from Joe Zupi—THANK YOU very much! If you, or anyone you know, have any of the following items to donate, please call 740-772-1936. (We would be happy to arrange to pick up your donation.)

1. A 32 foot aluminum or fiberglass extension ladder
A Day in the Life of Ohio’s Prehistoric Peoples: Insights from Artifacts and Archaeology
Featuring Gary Argabright, retired educator, collector, and authority on prehistoric cultures of the Scioto River Valley, Chillicothe.
Wednesday, October 19, 7:30 p.m.
Gary Argabright has been collecting, cataloging, and researching Native American artifacts from the Scioto River Valley for more than 35 years, including assisting us with the storage and cataloging of our extensive collection of prehistoric artifacts. Thanks to a recent resurgence of archaeological interest and investigation into Ross County’s prehistoric people and hopes of World Heritage recognition for our local mounds and earthworks, much has been learned about the sophistication and importance of activities which occurred here between 100 B.C and 500 A.D. However, very little has been said about the everyday lives of the mound builders and the peoples who preceded and succeeded them. Thanks to some amazing archaeological discoveries and analysis of the artifacts during the past 150 years we have many tantalizing clues into the everyday lives of Ohio’s prehistoric peoples. Join Gary for a glimpse into their world.

George Rogers Clark: Revolutionary War Hero, 1752-1818
Featuring Mel Hankla, living historian, collector, and founder of American Historic Services of Hitchins, Kentucky
Wednesday, November 2, 7:30 p.m.
Join us as Mel Hankla, one of Kentucky’s premier living historians, recreates the life of George Rogers Clark, a tall, talented Virginian who ventured west to Kentucky as a surveyor, but made his mark in history as a great military leader during the Revolutionary War. In 1777 Clark lead a secret mission to attack British posts north of the Ohio River. Clark’s party—175 soldiers and a small band of settlers—set up camp on Corn Island near the falls of the Ohio River in May 1778. The next month Clark launched a brilliant campaign into present-day Illinois and Indiana, defeating the British and their Indian allies and securing the Northwest Territory for the young United States. We welcome Mel back for the first time since he gave an outstanding portrayal of Simon Kenton back in 2008.

Songs of and by the Women of the Civil War
Featuring Steve & Lisa Ball, living historians, musicians, and entertainers, Columbus.
Wednesday, November 16, 7:30 p.m.
Steve Ball last performed here four years ago as a solo act singing many of the popular tunes of the American Civil War and providing interesting tales about the people who composed and performed them. He’s been a musician and singer for over 40 years. For the past sixteen, he has combined his love of music with his interest in Civil War history performing at numerous events, festivals and reenactments across Ohio and nearby states. This time, he will be joined by his wife Lisa for another enjoyable evening focusing on songs written about or by women during the period. Some of the songs remain well-known today while others are seldom, if ever, heard. A few, however, have woven their way into our collective conscience and have become icons of American culture. Steve performs using a Civil War era Martin guitar with Lisa on upright bass and harmony vocals. Please plan to join us for another enjoyable evening of history through music.
From the Archives, by Pat Medert

In the Spring 2010 issue of The Recorder, I wrote about William Allen, one of Ohio’s two honorees in National Statuary Hall in the Capitol at Washington since a movement was underway to replace the Chillicothean because of his political position prior to and during the Civil War. Since that time, Thomas Edison was chosen to represent the state, and the William Allen statue now resides in the Ross County Heritage Center. It seems appropriate to retell Allen’s story for those who may have forgotten and for our new members.

William Allen was born December 27, 1803, at Edenton, North Carolina. He was orphaned while still a baby and was reared by his half-sister, Mary, wife of Pleasant Thurman. They were living in Lynchburg, Virginia, when in 1817, the Thurmans moved to Chillicothe. William, who was apprenticed to a saddle and harness maker, was left behind. He had no ambition to become a saddler, and in 1819, he followed his sister and brother-in-law west. Having no money to buy a horse or to pay for passage for the journey, he traveled the distance from Lynchburg to Chillicothe on foot.

William attended the Chillicothe Academy for two years and then studied law under local attorney, Edward King. After his admission to the Ohio Bar in 1827, he began practicing in the law office of his mentor, and a few years later, he entered the field of politics.

In 1815, Allen was among the crowd who cheered Andrew Jackson as he traveled through Lynchburg with former President Thomas Jefferson on his way to Washington. The hero of the Battle of New Orleans left a lasting impression on the young boy, and when it came time for him to choose his party affiliation, Allen chose the Democratic Party of President Jackson. In 1832, he was the party’s candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives and defeated his opponent, Duncan McArthur, by one vote. At that time, he was the youngest person to be elected to the congress.

His victory in 1832 delayed his marriage to the love of his life, Effie McArthur, daughter of the man he had so narrowly defeated. Duncan McArthur never forgave him, and Effie married Dr. Elijah Coons, of Alabama. Coons died of consumption before the birth of their first child, and she returned to Chillicothe to reside with her parents. McArthur died in 1839, and six years later, William and Effie were married.

William lost his bid for re-election to Congress, but in 1837, was sent back to Washington as one of Ohio’s senators. He was at that time the youngest person to fill a senate seat. During most of his time in the Senate, he was chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations. He was a strong advocate for the country’s western expansion and for his work in this area, he was recognized in 1855 with the naming of Allen County in Kansas in his honor.

Allen was known for his honesty, integrity, and loyalty. He fought against corruption and extravagance in government. During his tenure in the Senate, he was present for nearly every session and participated in over ninety percent of the floor votes. He did not abuse his franking privileges, but was paid for the shortest mail routes as certified by the Postmaster General. He opposed paying elected officials for travel expenses based on mileage they accrued in performing their duties. When he left office, he refused to accept the $6,000 that was credited to him.

After serving two terms in the Senate, Allen retired to his home near Chillicothe without Effie. She died in 1847 of pneumonia, and he went home to Fruit Hill, the plantation Effie had inherited from her father, to raise their one-year-old daughter and his stepson. William devoted his time to farming, primarily horticulture and the raising of livestock, and was actively involved in community life. He spent his leisure time in reading and studying history and the works of ancient philosophers.

Although Allen was out of public office, he was not out of the public eye. Because of his skills as an orator, he was much in demand by the Democratic Party to speak at rallies and campaign events. He was a major influence in the party until his death. Party leaders approached Allen three times (1848, 1860, and 1876) to be allowed to place his name in nomination as its candidate for the presidency. He refused each time. He also declined all presidential appointments for public office, refusing to accept any office to which he was not elected. It was not until 1873 that he came out of political retirement and agreed to run for gover-

(continued on the following page...
The Ohio Democratic Party had not been able to fill the governor’s seat since 1853. Party leaders were desperately searching for a candidate who could break the pattern and decided that William Allen was their only possible choice. He was chosen unanimously by the convention, and in the fall, he drew enough Republican votes to win the election. He was the only Democrat that year to be elected to state office.

Allen lost re-election because of his position on monetary issues. The legislature wanted to return to the Senate in 1876, but he would not allow his name to be considered. When asked by a reporter from The New York Times why he refused to enter public life again, Allen said, “It is time for me to give up the power which I am no longer strong enough to use for the good of the people.”

William Allen died unexpectedly July 11, 1879. Chillicotheans, along with state and national political leaders, grieved his passing. The Chillicothe Advertiser reported, “The announcement...of the sudden death of ex-Governor William Allen fell upon the community in which he has lived so long, and in which he was so honored and respected and beloved, with a shock of painful surprise.” The Bar Association met to pay tribute to one of their own. Judge William H. Safford wept as he spoke of the “public and private virtues of the man who in either public or private life was irreproachably honest, pure and just.” The paper went on to say that “the poor people of William Allen’s neighborhood, colored and white, who had often been assisted by his generous bounty, paid him a touching and tender tribute as he lay dead at Fruit Hill.”

On the day of the funeral, all businesses were closed, and their doorways and windows were draped and shrouded in black. Many homes were similarly adorned. The columns in front of the courthouse were wrapped with black cloth. The funeral procession of local and out-of-town mourners was nearly three-fourths of a mile long. It made its way from Fruit Hill (Brewer Heights) to Water Street, where it was met by the Sill Guards, who, marching with arms reversed, led them to Grandview Cemetery. Church bells tolled, and people lined the streets to bid a final farewell to “their most distinguished citizen and one of the noblest of her sons.”

Six years after his death, the State of Ohio recognized William Allen with a statue in Statuary Hall in the nation’s Capitol. In July 1864, Congress passed legislation authorizing each of the states to provide two statues “of deceased persons who have been citizens thereof and illustrious for their historic renown or for distinguished civic or military services such as each state may deem to be worthy of this national commemoration.” The statues were to be placed in the old hall of the House of Representatives, which was renamed National Statuary Hall.

The Ohio legislature decided to make its selections by choosing one Republican and one Democrat to represent the state, but no action was taken until 1882. In September 1881, President James A. Garfield, Republican from Ohio, was assassinated, and in his annual address to the General Assembly, Governor Charles Foster recommended that the slain president be remembered by the State of Ohio with a statue in Statuary Hall. The legislature acted on this recommendation, but it was not until January 1885, that the Democrats put forth the name of William Allen.

Representative Andrew Stevenson, of Richland County, did the honors for the party and said of Allen, “In native downright ability as an orator and statesman, he was equal to the best and inferior to none. And from yonder political heavens there beams no brighter star.” The selection was approved by the legislature and $12,500 was appropriated for the statue. The sculptor of the Garfield statue, Charles H. Niehaus, was chosen to make that of Allen.

In 1893, Andrew Stevenson wrote a newspaper article about Allen and concluded with the following words:

His marble statue stands in its appropriate place in the Capitol and will be looked upon by myriads of people in the ages yet to come. And there it will remain until remorseless time itself shall crumble it to dust.

That was not to be the case after it was recently brought to light that he stood on the wrong side during the Civil War. At the outset of the conflict, Allen supported Lincoln because he did not believe the southern states had the right to leave the Union. Once the president spoke of emancipation, he joined with the peace Democrats in his party in actively opposing the war and freedom of the slaves because he viewed this as usurpation of states’ rights. He stated his views on slavery in a speech he gave in Philadelphia in 1856, saying, “Slavery is unquestionably a calamity wherever it exists....If slavery were proposed in my State tomorrow, I would oppose it to the bitter end, on the soundest political and philosophic reasons.” However, like most in his party, he did not believe the federal government had the right to interfere with the laws of the individual states and to force abolition in the South. That said, we have not yet found any documentation showing Allen ever introduced or voted for any legislation—for or against slavery—during his entire tenure in both the House of Representatives or the Senate.

Allen was not a pariah among his contemporaries during and after the war, nor did the millions of other Americans who held the same beliefs suffer social ostracism. The Scioto Gazette wrote at the time of his death: “He was personally known here to everybody, but it seems to us that the secret of his great strength before the people was in the first place, his uncompromising attachment to the Democratic party. To him Democracy and country were synonymous terms.” Republican William McClintick said, “However much those of us who differed with him in opinion may think he was guilty of political mistakes, no one will charge him with any dishonesty in public or private life.”

*****
From the Photo Archives, by Lisa Uhrig

Sadly, we recently lost our beloved staff member and friend Tonya Dye. Since most of us have experienced the loss of a close friend or relative, I have selected the following images from our photo archives to celebrate friendship.

Harry J. Bliss, Ernest Raper, Lorin Sears, Gregg D. Wolfe, Fred Raper, Warren Lemon, 1888 or 1889. (Names appear in this order, but not certain if names are listed from left to right, or by front row and back row.)

Chillicothe High School, Class of 1949 Friends, left to right: Patricia Stanton, Pat Skinner, Dodie Sauers, Katie Gaston, Nancy Korst, Jerry Street, Marilyn Miller & Evelyn Walker, late librarian at the McKell Library.

RCHS staff and volunteers gather together—with hula hoops—in front of the Franklin House Museum during the grand opening of our 1950s Exhibit in May 2005. Left to right: Roland “Topper” Phillips, Emily Marks, Lisa Uhrig, Jamie Bliven, Tonya Dye, and Tom Kuhn.

Bess Gray & Marianne Franklin, April 1897

Fritz Hagemann, Dan Brundige, Tom Krug, c. 1945
Recent Acquisitions of the Museum and Library
(Listed in order received since the last issue of the Recorder)

42. Registration Book — Chillicothe Hospital, March 5, 1896-August 30, 1952, donated by Glen E. Bane.
43. Collection of books, booklets, printed materials — related to state & local history & events, donated by Nancy Baum.
44. Printed & Written Materials — related to Northwest Ordinance Bicentennial Celebration, c. 1987 and other items, donated by Terry Davis.
45. Film Reel — of Lucy Webb Hayes home restoration, July 1968-May 1970; Photograph — Mooresville Covered Bridge, c. 1950, donated by Al Heierman.
46. Photographs, DVDs, Cassette Tapes, Printed & Written Materials, Medal of Honor Coin and other items — related to Steven E. Good’s Vietnam War Service, donated by Dean Good.
47. Art Activity Books — (4 children’s) 1912-40; Construction Set — “American Bricks”, c. 1940, donated by Sue Rockhold.
49. Booklet — How to Use Your General Electric Refrigerator, c. 1940; Shopping bags — (2) and wrapping paper — from Schachne’s Dept. Store, c. 1975; Baby books — c. 1900, donated by Vivian Allen.
50. Program — Commencement for Ross County Public Schools class of 1946, donated by David & Linda Brownfield.
53. Tools — Shoe last stand with (4) lasts; sheep shears; cooper’s adz; stove lid lifter; tin box, late 19th century, donated by Ken Breidenbaugh.
55. Documents — related to history of Crouse Chapel, Kingston Ohio, donated by Janet Good.
56. Ice tongs — hand-forged, mid to late 19th century, donated by Alan Davis.
57. Painting — Landscape in oil by L.C. Erich, 1939, donated by Gary Argabright.
58. Statue — Governor William Allen by Charles H. Niehaus, 1886, donated by the Ohio Statuary Hall Commission (photo at right).
60. Commemorative plate — “Republican Victory Team” 1966, donated by Linda S. Park.
61. Street bricks — from West Water Street and iron railroad spikes from old trolley system, found during repair work on W. Water Street, donated by City of Chillicothe via Thomas E. Day.

*****

The Ross County Historical Society Welcomes
___ New Member ___ Renewal

Name________________________ Address________________________
City, State, Zip________________ Phone_______________________
Date________________________

Are you interested in volunteer work?
Yes___ No__

I have enclosed a check made out to the Ross County Historical Society for $_______________.
( ) My employer will match this gift. Employer’s name:

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Junior (12 & under) $10.( )
Teacher………………………….. 15.( )
Individual………………………… 20.( )
Family…………………………….. 30.( )
Contributing…………………… 75.( )
Group/Club or Business ………… 100.( )

CONTINUING MEMBERSHIP

Life (per person)………………. 500.( )
Patron……………………………. 750.( )
Benefactor……………………….. 1,000.( )

Your benefits as a member of the Ross County Historical Society include:

♦ Quarterly newsletter
♦ 10% discount in museum store
♦ Free admission for museum visits by member and out-of-town guests
♦ Free admission to many Society programs
♦ Reduced fees for workshops and special programs

The Ross County Historical Society is a non-profit 501(c)(3) institution. Your gift may be tax deductible

Please make checks payable to:
THE ROSS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
45 West Fifth Street
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601-3227
(740) 772-1936
The RCHS Welcomes Junior Member...

Name ___________________________ Telephone # ____________
Address ____________________________________________________
City ___________________________ State ______ Zip Code __________
Birthdate ______________________ Grade in School __________________
Parent/Guardian’s Name _________________________________________
Parent/Guardian’s Signature _______________________________________
What are your hobbies? ___________________________________________
Are your parents members of the Historical Society? - Yes - No
Is this a gift membership? - Yes - No
From Whom? ___________________________________________________
Address ___________________________________________________________________

Please send $10 with this form to
The Ross County Historical Society
45 W Fifth Street
Chillicothe, OH 45601-3227