

# THE VILLAGE PIONEER

Newsletter of the Sheffield Village Historical Society & Cultural Center



## Holiday Greetings from Sheffield Village Historical Society

This Newsletter marks the formal beginning of our Society earlier this year. However, the concept of a Historical Society for our Village goes back to 2003 with our participation in The Ohio Bicentennial Celebration at the French Creek Nature Center—OHIO 200: A Celebration of Lorain County's History. Lorain County Metro Parks and Lorain County Historical Groups presented an exhibit from April 11 through June 8 designed as a leisurely walk through the history and development of Lorain County from the earliest settlers to the present. Of particular interest was a reconstructed scene where an oxen-drawn covered wagon had been overturned to form a shelter of the type used by the first pioneer families to settle Sheffield. One week after the exhibit closed, on June 15 2003, members of the Society were honored to unveil the Ohio Bicentennial Historic Marker at the Burrell Homestead on East River. Tom Hoerrle was instrumental in organizing both of these events on behalf of the Society.

The purpose of our Society is to discover, collect, archive, preserve, and interpret documents and other materials, which further establish and illustrate the history of Sheffield and its environs. The mission of the Society is to advance the appreciation of the Village's rich heritage by (1) making historic information available for research and general interest, (2) providing educational opportunities, and (3) encouraging the preservation of historical structures, artifacts, and monuments. We recognize that developing cooperative programs and projects with other civic, educational, recreational, and historic organizations can best achieve these goals.

On July 13, 2006 the first meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Sheffield Village

Historical Society was held at Garfield Farms. The Inaugural Trustees and Officers of the Board were inducted and the Constitution and Bylaws of the Society were adopted. The board members are:

- Jan F. Ackerman — *Trustee*
- Ron P. Forster — *Vice President*
- Donald J. Hammer — *Trustee*
- Charles E. Herdendorf — *President*
- Ricki C. Herdendorf — *Treasurer*
- John E. Hoag — *Trustee*
- Thomas Hoerrle — *Trustee, Lorain Co. Historical Society Representative*
- Kathy Keefer — *Secretary*
- Matt Kocsis — *Trustee, Lorain County Metro Parks Representative*
- Douglas Ondercin — *Trustee, Village of Sheffield Representative*
- Catherine A. Price-Gentile — *Trustee*
- Barbara Sheets — *Trustee*
- Leo Sheets — *Trustee*

Membership in the Sheffield Village Historical Society is open all individuals and organizations interested in the purpose and mission of the Society. Any person, family, organization, or corporation may become a member of the Society by agreeing to support the mission, and by paying annual membership dues established by the Board of Trustees. Charter membership dues for 2007 are \$10 for individual members, \$15 for family membership, and \$25 for Business or Organization membership. A family membership is defined as all those persons living in a single family dwelling; each individual will be listed on the membership roster and issued a membership card.

You are invited to join our new Society. Members who join for the calendar year 2007 will be considered *CHARTER MEMBERS*. Your membership dues and participation will help support Society activities. Please fill out

the membership form at the end of this Newsletter and return it along with your payment to the Sheffield Village Historical Society at the address on the application form. For more information you can contact Kathy Keefer, Secretary (934-6015, evenings) or Eddie Herdendorf, President at (934-1514) or email herdendorf@aol.com.

### Village Council Awards Funds

At the suggestion of Mayor Darlene Ondercin, during the September 11, 2006 meeting of the Village of Sheffield Council, the Council unanimously passed a motion to award the Sheffield Village Historical Society \$1,000 in appreciation of the Society's efforts to preserve the Village's heritage (Ordinance No. 2078, 3rd Reading on October 23, 2006). The funds will be used to help establish the Society and further promote our mission. The Society expressed its appreciation to Mayor Ondercin and the Village Council in a letter dated November 3rd, stating, "Your grant of these welcome funds will greatly assist us to reach our goals of preserving and articulating the rich history of our Village."

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## Scenic Byway Proposed for North Ridge

The Historical Societies of Sheffield Village and Avon, in conjunction with the Sheffield Township Trustees, submitted a proposal for the establishment of a North Ridge Scenic Byway along State Route 254 in Lorain County, Ohio to the Ohio Scenic Byway Program of the Ohio Department of Transportation in December 2005. Various known as North Ridge and Detroit Roads, this historic highway passes through a diverse assemblage of agricultural, residential, commercial, and natural settings as it traverses the northernmost ancient beach ridge of a glacial-lake predecessor to Lake Erie. Travelers along this stretch of highway are treated to pleasing views of many cultural and natural features.

The communities of Sheffield and Avon are rich with human history that began several thousand years ago with Native American Indian settlements on North Ridge and later the Burrell Fort on French Creek. Soon after the War of 1812, hearty pioneers from New England and New York recognized the natural attributes here and began to settle the new land, naming it after their towns in the East. In the middle of the nineteenth century German immigrants purchased land and enriched the communities with their heritage. Churches and schools were built and our rural Village flourished as it produced men and women of outstanding strength and character.

Today our community is in transition as it becomes a modern residential and commercial center. As we move forward, it is fitting that we recognize the efforts of those who have built our towns before us, and that we work to preserve and share the heritage of their contributions. We can learn much about ourselves and how to cope with our current struggles by understanding the hardships and joys of our Village ancestors. To this end the North Ridge Scenic Byway will be dedicated.

The proposed Scenic Byway seeks to engender public awareness of the cultural and

natural attributes associated with the Ohio Route 254 corridor through our communities. Preservation of historic buildings and sites along North Ridge has begun, but too late to save several noteworthy structures. Scenic Byway designation will do much to generate interest not only in the preservation of endangered historic buildings, equally it

### PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A NORTH RIDGE SCENIC BYWAY FOR LORAIN COUNTY, OHIO



SUBMITTED BY  
**Sheffield Village Historical Society and Cultural Center  
and  
Avon Historical Society**

SUBMITTED TO  
**Ohio Scenic Byway Program  
Ohio Department of Transportation**

**December 2005**

will encourage further documentations of the cultural history of our communities, thereby enhancing an appreciation of our heritage by residents and visitors alike.

Travelers along the North Ridge Scenic Byway will be treated to an array of working farms (many with early 19th century farmhouses), parkways, small-town neighborhoods, and attractive commercial centers, with colorful antique shops, gift stores, and restaurants. Our Society plans to produce brochure-type guidebooks to the features, which can be viewed from North Ridge to assist travelers with the enjoyment of the Scenic Byway. These guides will be available in many of the commercial establishments along the Byway. The Societies are also working to establish signs, plaques, and historical markers for prominent landmarks, which will facilitate the recognition of important features.

The Ohio Scenic Byway Program Coordinator, Mr. Paul Staley, has received the 173-page, full-color proposal and has favorably commented on the completeness and attractiveness of the presentation. The six chapters of the proposal address our compliance with the criteria necessary for successful designation. Chapter 1 discusses the purpose and significance of the proposed scenic byway, specifies the sponsoring organizations, and gives contact information. Chapters 2 and 3 outline the fascinating natural setting and cultural history of the corridor, respectively, while Chapter 4 describes in some detail scenic, recreational, cultural, natural, archaeological, historic, agricultural, residential, and commercial features along the proposed Scenic Byway.

Chapter 5 is an illustrated tour of the proposed Scenic Byway in the form of photographs and drawings that demonstrate the scenic character of the corridor. A Management Plan for the corridor is included as Chapter 6 of the application. As a State Highway (Route 254), the proposed Scenic Byway has legal public access, which offers safe and convenient accommodation for two-wheeled drive automobiles and possesses standard overhead and edge clearances. At nine miles in length, the proposed Scenic Byway exceeds the 5-mile minimum length.

End materials of the proposal contain acknowledgments for individuals who contributed to the preparation of the proposal, a glossary of architectural styles and elements found in the corridor, list of reference materials used in its preparation, and letters supporting scenic byway designation from a wide sector of organizations and individuals. A copy of the proposal is available for public inspection at the Village of Sheffield Municipal Complex on Colorado Avenue.

The next step in the process is a site visit by representative of the Ohio Scenic Byway Program, which will include an evaluation tour of the proposed corridor. Once this done a final decision will be reached on our proposal. This review process can take up to 18 months, so we are hopeful of a favorable decision by mid-2007.

## Historical Societies Host Scenic Byways Tour

On September 9, 2006 the Lorain County Historical Society, in conjunction with the Sheffield Village Historical Society and several other local history groups, hosted a tour of northeastern Lorain County's Scenic Byways—Detroit Road in Avon and Sheffield Village and Lake Road in Avon Lake and Sheffield Lake. Some 150 participants were welcomed to the 15-mile historic tour. All one needed to take the tour was a Scenic Byways Passport (map/guidebook included) and a vehicle. Tour Guides greeted participants at each of the seven stops to lead them on a fascinating and enlightening tour of the features found there. The theme of the tour was *HISTORY SPEAKS!*

Four Ohio Bicentennial Historic Markers were located along the Scenic Byways Tour route, one in Avon, one in Sheffield Village, and two in Sheffield Lake. These markers commemorate early pioneers, outstanding individuals, heroic soldiers, and natural features associated with the tour route. The inscriptions on these plaques are reproduced in this article with the corresponding stop description. Starting the Scenic Byways Tour at the Sheffield Village Hall, the tour route progressed in the following fashion:

	Mile Point
Stop No. 1—Sheffield Village Hall & Garfield Cemetery	0.0
Stop No. 2—Burrell Homestead	2.6
Stop No. 3—Shell Cove Park	6.6
Stop No. 4—103rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry	7.6
Stop No. 5—Thomas Folger House	10.4
Stop No. 6—Old Avon Town Hall	14.9
Stop No. 7—Avon Isle Park	15.0

### STOP NO. 1—SHEFFIELD VILLAGE HALL & GARFIELD CEMETERY (Sheffield Village)



Built in 1883 as a schoolhouse, this structure is distinguished from typical late-19th century one-room schools in that it has



elaborate Queen Anne style wood trim, especially at the peak of the front façade and in the ornate cupola. The brickwork is attractive, as seen in the hood moldings and patterns at the eaves. Designed by architect E. Terrell, it was one of eight red brick schools that served Sheffield Township before school centralization was initiated in 1920. Since 1935, soon after Sheffield Village was organized, the building has served as the Village Hall and office for the adjacent Garfield Cemetery. This structure, including Garfield Cemetery, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Garfield Cemetery was formally established in 1851 when, for \$16, Milton and Tempe Garfield sold one acre of land to the citizens of Sheffield for a graveyard. Joshua Smith, War of 1812 Veteran—the first settler of Sheffield and the first to die there (1817)—has a monument erected to his memory. Many members of our early pioneer families are

buried here—Austins, Burrells, Days, Garfields, Moons, Roots, and Smiths. George F. Smith's monument commemorates his Civil War service in both the Union Army and Navy, 1861-1865. Captain Aaron Root, credited with transporting many runaway slaves across Lake Erie in his schooners to freedom in Canada, is buried here.



**STOP NO. 2—BURRELL HOMESTEAD**  
(Sheffield Village)



Members of the Burrell family lived in this elegant Federal Style farmhouse from 1820 until 2001. The history of this fine example of early Connecticut Western Reserve architecture is depicted on an Ohio Bicentennial Historic Marker placed in front yard of the homestead which is now operated as a museum by the Lorain County Metro Parks:

**BURRELL HOMESTEAD**

In June 1815, Captain Jabez Burrell settled this land after coming from Sheffield, Massachusetts. Five years later the brick homestead was constructed. Five generations of the Burrell family occupied the homestead continuously from 1820 to January 2001 when Eleanor B. Burrell passed away. In 1836, the racially integrated Sheffield Manual Labor Institute, a branch of Oberlin College, was established at the Burrell Homestead, but the Institute closed the next year because the Ohio Legislature refused to grant its charter unless it excluded black students. From 1837 until the start of the Civil War, the homestead was a major stop on the Underground Railroad. Runaway slaves were hidden in the grain barn until Robbins Burrell could arrange for captives in Lorain, such as Aaron Root, to hide them on vessels for the trip across Lake Erie to freedom in Canada. [dedicated June 15, 2003]



**STOP NO. 3—SHELL COVE PARK**  
(Sheffield Lake)

This relatively new Sheffield Lake city park offers visitors a marvelous vista of Lake Erie from a raised observation deck. The park also features a playground and picnic areas. The shale cliffs, which flank the observation deck, are famous for yielding rare fossils of placoderm fishes, that once inhabited the Devonian Sea, which covered northern Ohio 360 million years ago. An Ohio Bicentennial Historic Marker tells the following story of the region's geologic past:



**TERRELL & HIS "TERRIBLE FISH"**

Around 1867, along the shale cliffs of the lakeshore of Sheffield Lake, Jay Terrell found fossils of a "terrible fish" later named in his honor as *Dinichthys Terrelli*. This animal, now known as *Dunkleosteus terrelli*, was a massive arthrodire (an extinct, joint-necked, armor-plated fish) that lived in the Devonian sea, which covered much of eastern North America some 354–364 million years ago. *Dunkleosteus* was armed with an incredible set of shearing jaws and was clearly the top marine predator in the Devonian Period (the "Age of Fishes").



**STOP NO. 4—THE 103rd O.V.I.**  
(Sheffield Lake)



On the bluffs of Lake Erie, at the northeast corner of the City of Sheffield Lake, exists one of the oldest yet least publicized historical sites in Lorain County, an active organization that was founded by veterans of the Civil War and is still carried on by their descendents. At the end of the Civil War, a group of men who had served in 103rd Regiment of the Ohio Volunteer Infantry decided to build a place to hold reunions during the summer to renew old friendships and enjoy the comradeship of the men who had endured the war years together. Eventually a site in Sheffield Lake was selected and in 1907 four acres of land was acquired. The veterans decided that membership shares in the 103rd O.V.I. Memorial Foundation would only be available to the veterans, their wives and children, and descendants of the children. Soon the veterans began building cottages so that their families could spend longer times on the grounds under more comfortable conditions, and eventually a kitchen, mess hall, dance hall/community building was added, including space for a Regiment Museum. An Ohio Bicentennial Historic Marker details the following history of the organization:

**103rd OHIO VOLUNTEER INFANTRY**

The 103rd O.V.I. was recruited for the Civil War from Cuyahoga, Lorain, and Medina Counties. The Regiment was organized at Cleveland in August 1862, and served until 1865 in campaigns at Cincinnati, Knoxville, Atlanta, Franklin, Nashville, and the Carolinas. 103rd veterans and their descendants have held continuous, annual reunions since 1866. The organization is believed to be unique in the nation. Descendants live on these grounds today.

**STOP NO. 5—THOMAS FOLGER HOUSE  
(Avon Lake)**



Overlooking Lake Erie in Veterans' Memorial Park, the Folger summer home was built in 1902 by Thomas Folger—avid grape grower, founder of the Lorain County Grape Growers Shipping Association, and mayor of Elyria (1903-1909). The Village of Avon Lake acquired the house in 1926 and through the years the house has been used as a village office, teen center, municipal court building, and mayor's office. In October 2001 the Avon Lake Landmark Preservation Society saved the Thomas Folger House from demolition and in March 2002 the Society secured a lease from the City of Avon Lake and began the process of restoration.

**STOP NO. 6—OLD AVON TOWN HALL  
(Avon)**



This building is a small, simple town hall that resembles a typical one-room schoolhouse of the late 19th century. Little ornamentation exists on the exterior. A small stone circle, set into the front façade proclaims the building's original purpose and date of construction. The Township Trustees purchased the land for Avon's town hall from Clemons Alten for \$400 in 1871. Bates and Dunning built the town hall in the Italianate style the same year for \$800. The building was next owned by the Village of Avon (incorporated in 1917), and now by the City

of Avon (1961). It housed the Avon Public Library starting in 1958 until it became the home of the Avon Historical Society in 1977. A cozy downtown park, known as Heritage Square at French Creek, lies across the street from the Old Avon Town Hall. The park features an elaborate Victorian-style gazebo (1999) and an Ohio Bicentennial Historic Marker dedicated to the accomplishments of Dr. Norton S. Townshend, a leader in progressive agriculture:

**NORTON S. TOWNSHEND, M.D.  
(1815 – 1895)**

A progressive farmer, physician, and legislator, Norton S. Townshend lived in Avon from 1830 until his death. His introduction of field drainage tile significantly increased the productivity of Avon farmland. A well-educated country doctor, he served this district as a U.S. congressman (1851-1853) and later as an Ohio state senator. As a legislator, Townshend, a member of the antislavery "Free Soil" Party, espoused civil rights for women and free blacks. Later he was instrumental in the founding of the Ohio Agricultural and Mechanical College in Columbus, serving on the first board and as first professor of agriculture. In 1878, this land-grant college became The Ohio State University, where Townshend Hall stands in honor of his founding role. He is interred in Avon's mound cemetery. [dedicated May 6, 2001]

**STOP NO. 7—AVON ISLE PARK  
(Avon)**



A historic dance pavilion built in 1925 highlights this city park. The pavilion is a charming blend of Neoclassical and Italian Revival Styles. A cupola is centrally located on the Italian style roof and possesses operable windows for ventilation and natural lighting. A porch extends across the entire length of the façade, about 5 feet above ground level, and features a hip roof supported by Doric columns. French Creek meanders through, and nearly encircles, the park as it flows over gentle ripples created by

the Berea Sandstone bedrock. These rocks were deposited as sand beds in an ancient Paleozoic sea some 330 million years ago.

The Scenic Byways Tour raised nearly \$2,000 for the Lorain County Historical Society's Preservation Network and the local history groups that put on the exhibits at their facilities and provided tour guides. Sponsors of the tour were the Lorain County Historical Society, Sheffield Village Historical Society, Avon Historical Society, Avon Lake Landmark Preservation Society, Lorain County Metro Parks and the Friends of Metro Parks, 103rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry Memorial Foundation, Sheffield Lake Park Board, City of Avon, and Village of Sheffield. Tour coordinators were Eddie Herdendorf of the Sheffield Village Historical Society and Jack Smith of the Avon Historical Society. Volunteers at the Sheffield Village Hall included Dave Vortticher and Lola Smith,



who organized a marvelous display of American Indian artifacts from Sheffield Village, while Ron Forster, Eddie & Ricki Herdendorf, Jack Hoag, Kathy Keefer, Cathi Price-Gentile, and Bobbie & Leo Sheets served as guides and docents. At the Burrell homestead, Jean Ackerman, Marilyn Fedelchak Harley, Donnie Hammer, Tom Hoerrle, and Matt Kocsis handled the guide duties. At the other stops, Len Smith organized visits at Shell Cove Park; Todd Bemis and Deb Wagner lead tours at the 103rd O.V.I., John Earley handled the Thomas Folger House, Jack Smith orated and showed a videotape on the history of Avon at the Old Avon Town Hall, and Ralph White conducted tours at Avon Isle Park. The Society gives a special thanks to Terry Wacker for arranging media publicity and to John Edwards of *The Press* for writing a series of feature articles on the stops along the Scenic Byways Tour.

## Inter-Society Presentation

The 2006 Inter-Society Meeting was held on November 2nd at the Lorain County Metro Parks' Carlisle Visitor's Center. This society is open to all history- or genealogy-related organizations within Lorain County. The Lorain County Historical Society under the chairmanship of Trustee Jeff Sigsworth coordinates the Inter-Society. Jeff has compiled a listing of organizations active in Lorain County—an amazing 61 groups are believed to be located here. Kathy Keefer is hoping to obtain addresses, mission statements, and a list of planned activities from each group. At the Meeting, Eddie Herdendorf gave a PowerPoint presentation recap of the Scenic Byways Tour held on September 9th in northeastern Lorain County. In addition to reviewing the historical character of the stops on the tour, the presentation focused on some lessons while preparing for and conducting the tour, with the hope of encouraging other groups in the county to arrange a tour in 2007. Top 10 lessons learned:

1. Appoint a Tour Coordinator
2. Select Tour Rout/Coordinators for Stops
3. Plan an Exhibit & Guided Tour for Stops
4. Develop Standards for Stops
5. Plan Breaks for Staff/Tour Participants
6. Plan Early & Preview Stops
7. Create Illustrated Passport & Stamps
8. Develop Marketing Strategy
9. Encourage Group Tours
10. Make Sure History Speaks!



## New Bell for Sheffield Village Hall

As noted in the *Scenic Byways Tour* article, the Sheffield Village Hall was originally constructed in 1883 as the District 2 Schoolhouse for Sheffield Township. To call students to class, a large cast-iron school bell hung in the ornate Queen Anne-style cupola tower. In the early 1880s the Township had a population of nearly 1,000. Eight red-brick schoolhouses, attended by 286 students, were scattered throughout the Township. The District 2 school served grades 1 through 8 until the early 1920s when school centralization was initiated.



In 1924, when Brookside School was constructed east of the Black River and Clearview and Vincent Schools were built west of the river, the one-room schools were closed. Then, in 1935 the Board of Education, Sheffield Lake School District, transferred the schoolhouse on North Ridge to the newly formed Village of Sheffield for \$500 to be used as a Village Hall. Soon after, the Village constructed an attached garage at the south end of Hall to house a fire truck. At about this time the bell that had hung in the tower for over 50 years was removed and a fire siren was installed.

In the intervening 70 years the bell has disappeared. Eventually the siren too was removed as new fire stations were constructed and volunteer firefighters were replaced by a full-time Fire Department. Thus for nearly two decades now, the bell tower has been vacant. In an effort to retain the original character of the building, the Sheffield Village Historical Society began a search for a suitable replacement bell.

Ricki Herdendorf located a late 19th century bell in Hohenwald, Tennessee. This bell was cast in Hillsboro, Ohio in 1886 by C. S. Bell & Co. It weighs 102 lbs., measures 20 inches at the base of the bell, stands 19 inches high and has the original clapper. The Society purchased the bell for \$40 and paid \$100 for shipping to Sheffield. Ron Forster sandblasted the bell, straightened the yoke, brazed a crack, and applied a protective coat of paint. Eddie Herdendorf presented the bell to the Village at the Council meeting on November 13, 2006. Mayor Darlene Ondercin enthusiastically accepted the bell and asked Village Administrator Ken Kaczay if he could stabilize the cupola so that the bell could be re-hung by Christmas. Ken said that the Service Department would do their best to get the job done.



## Garfield Farms Receives Historic Landmark Plaque

The Lorain County Preservation Network and the Lorain County Commissioners developed a Historic Landmark Program this year designed to recognize historic sites and structures in the County. At the Commissioners meeting on November 16, 2006, seven historic sites were awarded with handsome bronze plaques to inaugurate the program. Lori Kokoski, President of the Commissioners, and Bill Bird, Executive Director of the Lorain County Historical Society, presented the Milton Garfield Farm plaque to Eddie & Ricki Herdendorf. In receiving the award, Eddie stated, "I am pleased to accept this plaque in honor of my Great Great Grandfather, Milton Garfield, who had the foresight to walk from the Berkshire Mountains of Massachusetts to found Sheffield, Ohio in 1815." Other historic sites receiving plaques were Jacob Shupe Homestead Site 1816 (Amherst), Avon Isle (Avon), Thomas Folger House & Lake Erie Cemetery (Avon Lake), Charleston Cemetery (Lorain), and Vermilion-on-the-Lake Clubhouse (Vermilion).



The Milton Garfield Farm is located on North Ridge (4921 Detroit Road) in Sheffield Village. The original farm encompassed 200 acres on the north and south sides of North Ridge. It once included the land on which the Sheffield Village Hall, Garfield Cemetery, Bass Ford, Arch Abraham Nissan, Tri-County Kia, 5&Dinner, Quaker Steak & Lube, Willoway Nursery Sheffield Range, Galehouse Green Goods, Weeds to Beads Studio, Norfolk & Southern RR, and 10 residences are now located.

Milton started clearing the land in 1815 and built a log house. He married Tempe Williams of Avon in 1820 and they had six children, all of which were born in the log house, except their youngest, Julia, who was born in their new home. By the late 1830s Milton had become a prosperous farmer and was commonly known as Colonel Garfield because of his participation in the Ohio Militia. He was then able to build the fine Greek Revival-style home, which still stands near the center of the original homestead. Milton served as County Commissioner when Lorain County was first organized in 1824 and was also the first Treasurer of Sheffield Township.

## Daniel Garfield Barn Saved



Daniel Garfield (1833-1911) was the third son of Milton and Tempe Garfield. After his father's death in 1862, Daniel farmed the land on the northeastern side of the Garfield Homestead. During or soon after the Civil War, Daniel built a fine country-style barn on North Ridge. The barn's attractive roof was constructed from over 6,000 individual pieces of slate. About 70 years ago the barn was moved several hundred feet to the north, near on the slope of the ridge, to accommodate a lower level, which was added in the form of a bank barn. The barn continued to be used for agricultural pursuits for nearly a century and half, until 2004 when the 10-acre property on which it was located was sold by Johnny Laskin to Arch Abraham for the construction of Nissan and Kia automobile dealerships.

The Sheffield Village Historical Society contacted Mr. Abraham to advise him of the historical importance of the building and ask if there was a way that the building could be incorporated into the design for the dealerships. Although saving the barn on the property could not be accommodated, Mr. Abraham offered to donate the building for preservation elsewhere. A search was begun for a local site for relocation and perspective person or organization interested in preserving the barn.

In October 2004, the Village of Sheffield Council supported this effort by passing Resolution No. 459, supporting the preservation of the Daniel Garfield Barn. The Lorain County Historical Society offered to serve as broker and Ron Krystowski of Avon stepped forward and agreed to disassemble the barn and rebuild it on his property at 39036 French Creek Road. All of the timbers were numbered, each roof slate was individually taken down, and the entire barn was removed in early 2005. Earlier this year, 2006, Mr. Krystowski indicated that approvals for reconstruction of the barn on his property had obtained and site preparation has begun. As part of the agreement to receive the barn, Mr. Krystowski "will periodically make the building available for showing to the public as a historical artifact." Ron also plans to store and exhibit historic vehicles in the barn. The Sheffield Village Historical Society is indebted to Ron for his outstanding efforts to restore and preserve this historic structure.

## Garfield Cemetery Mapping and Database Project

Garfield Cemetery lies on a peaceful sandy ridge near the southern boundary of Sheffield Village. The ridge was formed some 12,000 years ago as a beach along ancient Lake Warren, a predecessor of Lake Erie which now lies about five miles to the north. Known as North Ridge, the early settlers found this elevated terrain to be ideal for farms, home sites, a major east-west transportation corridor, and a place to bury their dead. After nearly 200 years the land surrounding Garfield Cemetery retains much of this character—still dominated by agricultural pursuits and individual homes.

Nearly one thousand burials have taken place in Garfield Cemetery since 1817. It is the final resting place of early pioneers, War of 1812 and Civil War heroes, plague victims, stillborn infants, farmers, businessmen, paupers, doctors and nurses, carpenters, shipbuilders, steel mill workers, and men and women from many other walks of life. Decedents range from those born in the 1760s through the 1990s. Garfield Cemetery holds the history of those who struggled and found joy in creation of Sheffield.

This summer the Sheffield Village Historical Society conducted a project to remap the gravesites in historic Garfield Cemetery and to compile a computerized database of the decedents buried therein. A folio of 10 maps and a 196-page report was presented to the Village of Sheffield at the Council Meeting on September 11, 2006.

The purpose of the project was to assemble a comprehensive information database from records held in the Cemetery Office at the Sheffield Village Hall and from other reliable sources. The ultimate objective was to stimulate interest in the history of Sheffield Village and to make important records readily available to those wishing to pursue Sheffield's heritage.

The report is divided in three segments: (1) a historical analysis of the cemetery and the decedents, (2) a description of the cemetery's organizational plan, including up-to-date maps, and (3) a decedent's database presented in tabular fashion. Special features of the report include an index map of the cemetery blocks, demographic and military service analysis, gravestone inscriptions, table of gravesite availability, a guide to using the database, indexes to cemetery deed books, and a glossary of medical terms for causes of death. Copies of the maps and report are available for public review at the Sheffield Village Hall, the Village of Sheffield Municipal Complex, and Domonkas Library in Sheffield Lake.



In summary, Garfield Cemetery was formally established in 1851 by Sheffield Township, but prior to that time 56 burials had already taken place on the ridge, with the earliest gravestone date being 1817 (Capt. Joshua Smith). The original 1.2-acre cemetery plot was increased by a 0.8-acre "new addition" in 1929. The cemetery is currently organized into 15 Blocks, each containing a series of Lots, which are further subdivided into a total of 1,770 individual gravesites. Of these, 939 have been utilized for 961 burials. Of the remaining 831 gravesites still available for burials, 228 are reserved by virtue of Family Plots, 78 by deeds issued by the Village, and seven by informal reservation. This leaves a total of 398 gravesites available for purchase in Blocks A through M, as well 120 for indigent persons in block designated as Potter's Field.

The cemetery report, titled *Historic Garfield Cemetery 1817-2006: Historical Analysis, Description, Maps, and Information Database*, was prepared by Eddie & Ricki Herdendorf with the assistance of John Ackerman, Bud Brown, Ed Dugan, Ruth Hammer, Tom Hoerrle, Cathi Price-Gentile, Ken Kaczay, Kathy Keefer, Karis Lyon, Darlene Ondercin, Leo & Larry Sheets, Len Smith, and Tammy Smith. Copies of the maps and report are available for public inspection at the Sheffield Village Hall, the Village of Sheffield Municipal Complex, Domonkas Library in Sheffield Lake, and the Hickories Museum Library of the Lorain County Historical Society in Elyria.

### *HISTORIC GARFIELD CEMETERY*

*1817-2006*

*HISTORICAL ANALYSIS, DESCRIPTION, MAPS,  
AND INFORMATION DATABASE*



*Prepared by*

*Sheffield Village Historical Society & Cultural Center*

*Presented to*

*The Village of Sheffield, Ohio*

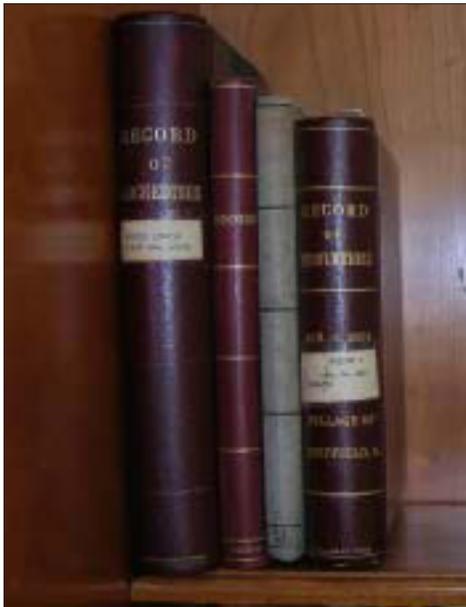
*September 2006*

## Historical Society Inventories Historic Village Records

At the request of Village of Sheffield officials, in December the Society completed an inventory of historic records stored in the basement of the Village Hall. The records primarily cover the period from 1934 through the 1990s, except Clerk/Treasurer records, which extend to 2004. Over the years, records from the various Village departments and offices were stored in the basement without a complete log and definite plan of organization.

In addition to conducting an inventory of the records, the Society arranged the records in approximate chronological order by department, including: Clerk/Treasurer's Office, Police Department, Fire Department, Utilities/Water Department, Building Department, Mayor's Office, Village Council, Planning Commission, Mayor's Court, and Garfield Cemetery Office.

Some water damage and deterioration of storage boxes was encountered, which required re-boxing records in new containers. In all, 352 file storage containers and 30 file drawers were inventoried and placed on 26 elevated shelves and 8 file cabinets to protect them from further water damage. Eddie and Ricki Herdendorf conducted the inventory with help from Kathy Keefer, Leo Sheets, Cathi Price-Gentile, Mike Gurich, Jeff Young, Greg Davis, and members of the Service Department. The completion of this project will assist the Village in formulating an efficient records retention plan.



## Acquisitions and Donations

The Society has been fortunate in that a number of individual have given us documents, photographs, and historic artifacts. In addition to the donation of the Daniel Garfield Barn, Arch Abraham also gave the Society a set of *Encyclopedia Britannica* from the Laskin House.

Mr. John A. Whitney of Fort Wayne, Indiana, hearing about our new Society from Trustee Andy Allan of the Lorain County Historical Society, donated 69 historic farm artifacts from his barns on the Conrad Trier Homestead on Hessen Cassel Road south of Fort Wayne. Eddie & Ricki Herdendorf drove to Indiana in September and happily filled up their GMC SUV with artifacts ranging from a blacksmith table to pig hair scrapers. Ron Forster has already sandblasted a kitchen water pump and a cast iron pot from the collection. The Society plans to restore several others over the winter. Ron also donated a large anvil that he has restored and he is now in search of a tree stump on which to mount it.

Carolyn Sipkovsky, on behalf of the Black River Historical Society, transferred a collection of historic Sheffield documents to our Society, including: 37 photographs, 26, negatives (16 with proofs), 8 prints (including 2 of the Lake Breeze House), 10 booklets & brochures, 4 letters, and 22 issues of the *Sheffield Lake Pioneer* from the 1930s. The documents constitute a valuable addition to our growing document collection. Bonnie Canterbury donated a Limited Edition Bi-Centennial Calendar (1977) depicting Sheffield's historic buildings and a 1921 survey map of Sheffield Township Lot 71. Jim Conrad delivered several documents describing early Sheffield Township and the Lake Breeze Community. Sandy Belu Dalzell and Sue Post gave us several Brookside *The Leader* yearbooks from the 1940s to 1960s. Roy Kudrin sent in an article on the historic Traxler House on Colorado Avenue. Tom Hoerrle donated a number of historic documents to the Society, including an account of his recent wedding at the historic Burrell Homestead. A special thanks goes to the Sheffield Village Firefighters Local 4275

for their cash donation of \$50 to help our Society get organized. To all of those who have helped the Society in very many ways we express our sincere appreciation.

Now for our wish list—most of all we would like new members to join and participate in Society activities.

Next, we would appreciate any Village memorabilia, documents, and photographs. In a practical way, we are need of file cabinets,



folding tables & chairs, bookshelves, and general office furniture & equipment. Please contact the Society at (440) 934-1514 or 934-6015 or email [herdendorf@aol.com](mailto:herdendorf@aol.com) if you have items to donate.

## Future Society Projects

The Society has started to compile data for a booklet to be titled *Sheffield Milestones*. The booklet will be in the form of a timeline starting with the arrival of pioneers in Sheffield and continuing through nearly the 200 years of important events (and some not so important, but interesting events) that shaped our community. We plan to glean information from accounts written by the early settlers, the works of Village historians such as Doris Burrell, C. L. Cuddebeck, and Angela Forster Halusek, newspaper articles, and from official county, township and village records.

Other proposed projects include repairing broken headstones a Garfield and Pioneer Cemeteries, researching the history of schools in the original Sheffield Township, working with Lorain County Metro Parks to develop a classroom for students in the Burrell Homestead cheese house, and conducting an open house and exhibits at the Village Hall this summer. We are also hoping to issue a calendar or booklet composed of historic images of Sheffield Village.

## Organization and Contact Information

The Sheffield Village Historical Society and Cultural Center is a nonprofit organization, which aims to promote an appreciation of Sheffield's rich heritage by discovering, collecting, preserving, interpreting, and presenting the history of our community. Membership is open to anyone who is interested in the history and cultural attributes of Sheffield and who wishes to support the Society. Offices for the Society:

Sheffield Village Historical Society  
c/o Garfield Farms  
4921 Detroit Road  
Sheffield Village, Ohio 44054  
(440) 934-1514 or herdendorf@aol.com

Historical Society news can be found on the Village of Sheffield, Ohio official website: [www.sheffieldvillage.com](http://www.sheffieldvillage.com) (click on Departments, then Historical Society). We encourage articles from any member of the Society.

Charles E. Herdendorf, Ph.D.  
Newsletter Editor

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Ricki C. Herdendorf, MBA  
President

Photo Credit: Kathy Keefer



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## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP SHEFFIELD VILLAGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Garfield Farms—4921 Detroit Road Sheffield Village, Ohio 44054

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

- Individual (\$10.00/year)
- Family (\$15.00/year)—2 Adults & children under 18 years old
- Business/Corporate or Organization (\$25.00 year)

Family Members \_\_\_\_\_

Special Interests in Sheffield History? \_\_\_\_\_