

# Pleasant Hill History Center Newsletter

Volume 8 Issue 4  
March 2022



**Pleasant Hill History Center**

**Pleasant Hill, Ohio**

**8 East Monument Avenue  
P. O. Box 82**

*Mission Statement*

**“To preserve the history of Pleasant Hill and Newton Township through documents, pictures, and artifacts.”**

Historic

**Pleasant Hill and Newton Township**

**“Preserving our local history by telling our stories.”**

# Pleasant Hill History Center Newsletter

Spring 2022

## A Note from the President

Where does the time go? Spring is right around the corner. Soon the snow will melt and flowers will bloom. The Hometown Heroes Banners will return and Memorial Day will be upon us. We are looking forward to another year at the History Center. Our first day of opening will be March 7, 2022. We will be open from 3:00 until 7:00. Come see the history of Newton Township and Pleasant Hill.

This spring we hope to schedule some programs at the History Center. It has been awhile since we have been able to do that. We look forward to getting back to normal. Look for information as we get things scheduled.

Ruthann Beck, President

---

## Membership News

We have 100 partners and 10 business friends. We appreciate your support! Questions about your membership, call Dawn Spitler at 937-417-4985. Thank you for your support.

Dawn Spitler, Membership Chairman

---

## Pleasant Hill History Center Memorials

Donations to the museum have been received in memory and in honor of the following individuals: Don Robbins and Jim Schleinitz, We also received a monetary donation from Richard Sollomann, Judy Amick, Reed Amick, Brent Steiner, Judy Barga, Bill Smith, and Benevity. We are appreciative of these donations.

---

## Kroger

Be sure that you are signed up for Kroger Community Rewards. This program is a great fundraiser for our museum. Our quarterly checks help pay our utility bills! Check your receipt to see if you are still signed up! We appreciate your help with this fundraiser.

---

Museum hours are every Monday from 3:00 - 7:00. Come visit your museum!

**Be sure to check our web site at [Pleasanthillhistorycenter.com](http://Pleasanthillhistorycenter.com)  
and visit us on Facebook**



**Our History Center booth at the Farmer's Market and the Christmas Bazaar - 2021**



## Donald E. Robbins



Don's High School picture

Don was born on October 1, 1931, in Concord Township in the same farm home where his father and grandfather were born. His parents were the late Clyde and Dorothy E. (McMaken) Robbins.

Don graduated from Newton Local School in 1949. He was a veteran of the Korean War, serving in the US Army as a field telephone wireman.

He worked on the family farm and sawmill in Concord Township. He also worked at the Miami County Power Plant from 1960-1973. Most of all he enjoyed his time farming. He could recite the serial number, type of motor, and horsepower of every tractor on his farm.



Don was quite a storyteller with stories of growing up and those he heard from his father. As a young lad, he went to the grain elevator with his dad and listened to the farmers talk about their day. He remembered their stories well.

Don was a member of the Pleasant Hill United Church of Christ where he attended Bible studies and services. He served on the Deacon Committee, operated the sound system, was a bell ringer, and served as trustee. He recorded the services and delivered them to shut-ins.

Don was an asset to the Pleasant Hill History Center. His knowledge of the history of our area was great. He donated items to help others learn our history. Two notable items are the steam whistle from the Pleasant Hill Cannery and the piston ring from the Myers and Patty Elevator. Don's love for history and his many stories will be missed by many. Thanks, Don!



Deeter Saw Mill was purchased and reassembled on the Robbins farm.



Don showing off the millstone of his ancestor



**Amick's Pleasant Hill Canning Co. Steam Whistle**  
This whistle called many Pleasant Hill area residents to work at Amick's Tomato Cannery. The Cannery was in operation in Pleasant Hill from 1947 to 1959.



Steam Engine Piston Ring

### Walnut Plaque

This piece of walnut was made from a tree that was grown from a walnut taken from George Washington's Mount Vernon home. While visiting the estate, Clyde Robbins picked up a walnut, brought it home, and grew it.

## The Photography of Irvin Oakes

Irvin Oakes was the son of Wellington and Edith (Landis) Oakes. He was born in 1897. The family lived in Newton Township with many of those years on Leonard Road. They also lived on Church Street in Pleasant Hill.

In 1911, twin calves were born on the farm. Irvin was given one to raise, while his sister, Pearl was given the other. When the calves were sold in the fall, Irvin made a life-changing purchase. He took his \$12.50 profit and ordered a folding camera from the Montgomery Ward's catalogue.

He would later write: *"It's funny what a little box like that will do. I had decided to stay on the farm and be a farmer, and now look what it did to me."*

Irvin started the *Oakes Studio* in Pleasant Hill. He offered a variety of services including developing film.



Irvin in his dark room



Irvin Oakes with new camera



Mother peeling apples



Wellington Oakes shucking corn.



Mr. Bontrager and Irvin with their camera



Irvin, Iona, Wellington, Leonard, Edith  
Church Street porch



This photo by Irvin Oakes, titled, "Mother" won honorable mention in the *Junior Competition in American Photography* in January 1918.

Around 1930, Irvin moved the *Oakes Studio* to Urbana. In 1942, Irvin enlisted in the Army. He was stationed at Fort Benjamin Harrison.

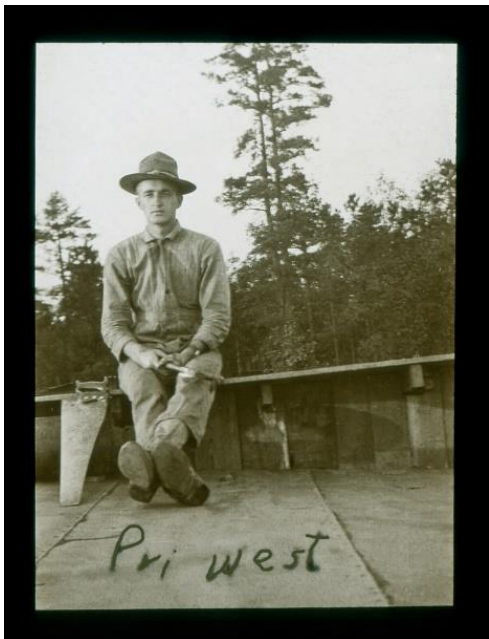
After his honorable discharge from the Army, Irvin continued his work as a photographer. His work was seen in calendars, magazines and newspapers. He also took studio portraits, weddings, and 16 mm film.

Irvin died in 1973 and is buried in Mote Cemetery, near Laura, Ohio.

The Photos of Irvin Oakes on these pages, along with many more, were found in the basement of a descendant. The photos were scanned and can be seen at the History Center.



Jesse Oakes dreaming of fishing.



Dan West at camp during WWI.

FROM  
**IRVIN L. OAKES**  
 PHOTOGRAPHER  
 PLEASANT HILL, O.



Ivah Oakes feeding a calf.



Edith Ellen Oakes on Church Street

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

**Home Portraits**

Pictures of the Baby, Children, or Family, taken right in your own home.

Irvin L. Oakes, Manager, The Oakes Studio, Pleasant Hill, Ohio, will be in Arcanum, February 8, prepared to take pictures of this kind.

Mr. Oakes has made a specialty of Home Portraiture and has had several years experience in taking pictures in the Home.

The pictures will be taken by flashlight, so if it isn't a bright day the pictures may be taken anyway.

Flashlight is the Ideal way to take baby pictures.

**PRICES ARE REASONABLE**

From \$2.00 per dozen up to \$9.00 for the popular styles. Call at the Hoffman Drug Store for particulars.

**THE OAKES STUDIO**

1923 Advertisement for the Oakes Studio

## Newton Athletic Hall of Fame - 2022



**Gavin Spittler** - Gavin is a 2002 graduate of Newton High School, Gavin was a standout on the basketball court where he was a 4 year varsity letter winner, 4 time team MVP, 3 time captain, all league 2<sup>nd</sup> team his Freshman, Sophomore and Junior years and 1<sup>st</sup> team all-conference his senior year along with being 1<sup>st</sup> team all-District 9 and honorable mention All-Area. Gavin amassed an impressive 1022 career points to rank him 7<sup>th</sup> all-time in Newton School History. Gavin has spent his entire career in education and has spent the last 9 years as a teacher, coach and administrator here at Newton where he is currently an assistant principal and head varsity boys' basketball coach. Gavin was instrumental in the creation of the Newton Athletics Hall of Fame and has been instrumental in leading the athletic department the last 8 years.



**Nicole (Diers) Moneysmith** - Nicole is a 2007 graduate of Newton High School where she was a three sport athlete accumulating an impressive 11 varsity letters, 3 in volleyball 4 in basketball and 4 in softball. Nicole earned all-conference honors a remarkable 9 different times in her three different sports and was the conference player of the year in softball in 2006. She was a three time all-state selection in softball from 2005-2007. She is the school record holder for career batting average at .454. Nicole went on to be a four year letter winner for the Defiance College Women's Softball team.

**1994 Newton Fastpitch team** - The lady Indians coached by Charles Hoying and assistant coaches Kirk Kadel and Julie Trucksis were the first team to ever make it to the state level in any sport. They amassed a school record 27 wins to just 3 losses before falling 3-2 in the state semi-final to Sycamore Mohawk. Along the way this team won the CCC championship, the district title, and the regional title. This group paved the way for the 25+ years of success that our softball program has had.



**1994 Ohio State Division III Semi-Finalist**  
**Front Row:** Lyndsay Bissett, Carey Oakes, Erin Brumbaugh, Missy Miller, Jessica Polson **Back Row:** Vanessa Salupo, Kori Shellenberger, Jackie Polson, Kelly Herbst, Meghan Burns, Catherine Graham, Jamie Crilley, Natasha Knapp, Becky Marker, April Wood, Dasa Wells

## NEWTON INDIANS (20-3)



**FRONT ROW:** Adam Shellenberger, Shawn Landis, Brad Ryan, Jay Hall. **BACK ROW:** Coach Jim Allread, Tony Wise, Nathan Prickett, Chris Bucio, Ryan Stern, David Iddings, Asst. Coach Chad Ryan.

**1996-97 Boys Basketball team** was coached by Jim Allread with assistants: Rich Millhouse and Chad Ryan. The 1996-97 Indians won a remarkable 20 games and lost only 4, going a perfect 11-0 in the CCC. They won the sectional championship, district championship, and a regional-semifinal appearance, the first and only in school history. The highlight of the tournament run was the Sectional Final 3OT win over Twin Valley South at UD arena. The Indians had 6 players average over 8 ppg with Chris Bucio and Ryan Stern leading the way with 19.5 and 15.0 ppg each. The 20 wins by this team is the most since 1949.