



## The Barber Shop on the Corner

Someone should write a novel entitled "The Barbershop on the Corner". To help that project along, here are some stories about barber Jim Francis and our iconic Francis Barbershop at the corner of 2nd and Main in Tipp City.

Sometime in the early years of the 1970s **Forest Troup**, a regular customer and visitor (more about that later) stared out the front window and announced that two men were standing in front of Stiles shoe store and Rohrers Family Restaurant handing out flyers. He stated that he would go over to see what it was all about. He approached the men and asked to see a copy of the handout. He discovered that the information was promoting the Klu Klux Klan. About this time **Dick Perk**, who was summoned by Don Francis to back up **Ron Re** (who is telling this story) came in the back door of the barber shop just in case this turned into an altercation. But Forest handled the situation by asking for the men's names. They answered that they were not allowed to give their names, whereupon Forest said "think I recognize you. You work at Hobart"...the two men quickly fled the area ... solving the problem. Ron also shared that he often sat in the shop as he began his new week of work and listened to the tales of the weekend where he often picked up information that helped him with various police matters. Ron also shared that one time when he was walking in front of the shop handing out parking tickets, he turned and saw a man taking down the tickets. When Ron confronted him, he replied "who do you think you are, .J. Edgar Hoover? Ron answered "no, but you may soon meet him".

Many customers came into the shop even though a haircut was not the point of the visit (this still holds true today). **Miles Ruby**, a resident of Tipp City, was one of those. He stopped in the shop twice a day every day. He would stay for an hour in the morning, return home for lunch and to view "The Price Is Right" and then come back for an hour in the afternoon. Miles was retired from Aeroproducts in Vandalia where he was a security officer. There is a plaque with his name on it that you can see today above his favorite chair.

Several years ago, **Don Wayne**, a very well-respected newsman from WHIO TV, was in the barber chair and told of his experience during one of his broadcasts. Seems the big deal was to make the news reporter laugh as he reported the news. One of Don's coworkers decided to strip and then run by the glass booth Don was broadcasting from, but his timing was unfortunate as he came face to face with Jim Cox (the owner of the TV station) and his wife who happened to be visiting the station that evening. Needless to say, there was a new job opening at the station the next day. **Jim Francis** said Don Wayne was a frequent customer when he was in the area.

A customer told Jim he had decided to let his hair grow as Jim made the first pass with the burr clippers. He then remarked that he guessed that would start after the next haircut appointment.

Jim shared that he has done haircuts and taken pocket watches, guns, fishing equipment, etc. in exchange for his hair services. He kept a notebook and knew who owed who for what, when they settled up with him after a time!! Jim has no phone in the shop. He says he would be too busy to answer it anyway so come on in and see "how many are ahead"

## The Barber Shop Cont.

There was an incident where Jim and a waiting customer thought the customer in the barber chair had died while Jim was cutting his hair--frantically they summoned the ambulance, but it proved to be a false alarm. Thank goodness he "came to as we were about to join him!!!"

While I was sitting in the shop, a customer named **Ralph** came in and said he had been coming here for 10 years at least - "best price in our town!" Another customer in the chair quipped "best price in the whole country!"

**Forest Troop** sold fruit cakes for the Senior Citizens of Tipp at the barber shop. Jim says he kept several on hand. Ron Re came in and said he would need to taste one first. He did and was promptly surprised when told he had just bought it!!

We all admire the sign on Harrison's 2nd street wall. Years back, when Paddy owned the now Harrisons, he hired a company to "clean up the distressed wall. During the process (which was not going well), suddenly everyone in town and visitors as well began to notice the sign, maybe for the first time, and said they admired the history of it, and it was a shame it couldn't be saved. Jim shared the feedback with Paddy and Paddy promptly switched plans and had the sign repainted to the delight of all.

**Nancy Cartwright** tells of a time several years ago a few of her classmates from Lima Shawnee were eating lunch across the street from Francis Barber Shop when another classmate and her husband came in the door. They had driven down all the way from Cridersville for him to get a haircut.

Jim also confirmed **Dave Cook's** tale of throwing coke glasses to see if they would reach the roof of some of the downtown buildings, planned for late in the evenings, of course.

There was a problem with pigeons that dwelled in the upper reaches of some of the buildings, depositing slippery substances on the sidewalks. The solution - shoot them. However, there was a fine for doing this. How the powers that be ended up paying a reward for this practice was never fully explained.

A quip by one of Jim's newer clients, **Joe**, was " while getting a haircut I don't want to look at myself the whole time (one chair, facing Main St manned by one barber and featuring a whole row of story-telling guys is just the ticket). Joe says he has overheard a lot of discussions and gained some valuable Tipp knowledge and insight. He also admits the barbershop reminds him of haircuts as a kid.

During one of my visits, I learned a whole lot of information about hunting deer in Ohio, especially the scoop on the shape and size of deer antlers. Two deer hunting partners are the very best story tellers!! Antlers are rated in many ways - one is their shape. They can be basket or bucket shaped, among others, and size, of course is very important. Larry and Jim said to check The Buckeye Big Buck club categories for more details. Two of these prize heads hang on the East wall as well. They are for sale as many items are now for sale and many more have a history of sales at "the shop on the corner".

Over the years lots of items have been sold at the shop...bags of popped corn and homemade candy for the Tippecanoe Historical Society; Charley Green, a local folk artist displayed his work in the window and sold many paintings; a collection box for funds to buy the first ambulance was offered (up to this point, a hearse from the funeral home had been used for that purpose). They collected enough from the town boxes to buy one and a half ambulances). **Steve**, a customer, had a sign telling all patrons and passersby that there were bullets and shotgun shells for sale within. Steve told me he had a lively business going in the shop!!

MILES RUBY SURVEYS MAIN ST



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## Barber Shop Cont.

The décor of the shop grabs your attention immediately...from the hornet's nest that hangs from of the mirror covering the back wall (Jim says it reminds him of one of his favorite fishing spots in Indiana he visited as a child that had a nest hanging near it.) One entire wall shelf displays trophies won by Jim while competing in dart games (there is a dart board resting on the floor just waiting to be displayed for action) . The back mirrored wall sports an entire set of duck decoys. There is a mail pouch sign donated by **Jim Kessler**. When asked why Teddy Roosevelt's picture is displayed, Jim has a ready answer. He admires the Roosevelt family as it produced a President of the United States for both parties. He said both Presidents did a good job for America. An Indian chief on the wall was put up by a customer who had taken a special trip out west and had followed a famous Indian trail and wanted to keep the memory alive as he told his story.

A large real life 7up dispenser greets you as you enter the shop. Jim is thinking of turning it into a gun safe. Guns are sometimes the topic of a tale told well.

**Vinnie and Bob Jackson** were prominent customers with stories of their inside and outside house painting business.

There is a "services offered" sign that states simply HAIRCUTS. The customers say the price can't be beat. Jim says he changes it about every 25 years.

When I asked how **Judge Carl Kessler's** picture ended up on the wall, Jim replied that **Jim Kessler** missed his brother, who had been an important judge in Montgomery County, and wanted his picture hanging where all would remember him in his hometown, as Carl was raised over on Dow St.

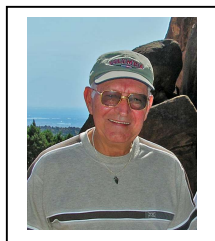
One of the important objects that touched my heart was the giant American flag that hangs in one of the front windows, but Jim says "the best collection of all is the collection of neat guys who come in here!! "

**Believe me, when you exit the "barbershop on the corner" you feel refreshed in more ways than one!!**

by Ruth White

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### In Memory



Jerry Huntsberger  
11-27-1939 to 2-12-2023

THS lost a member since the last newsletter. We appreciate his years of membership and send condolences to his family.

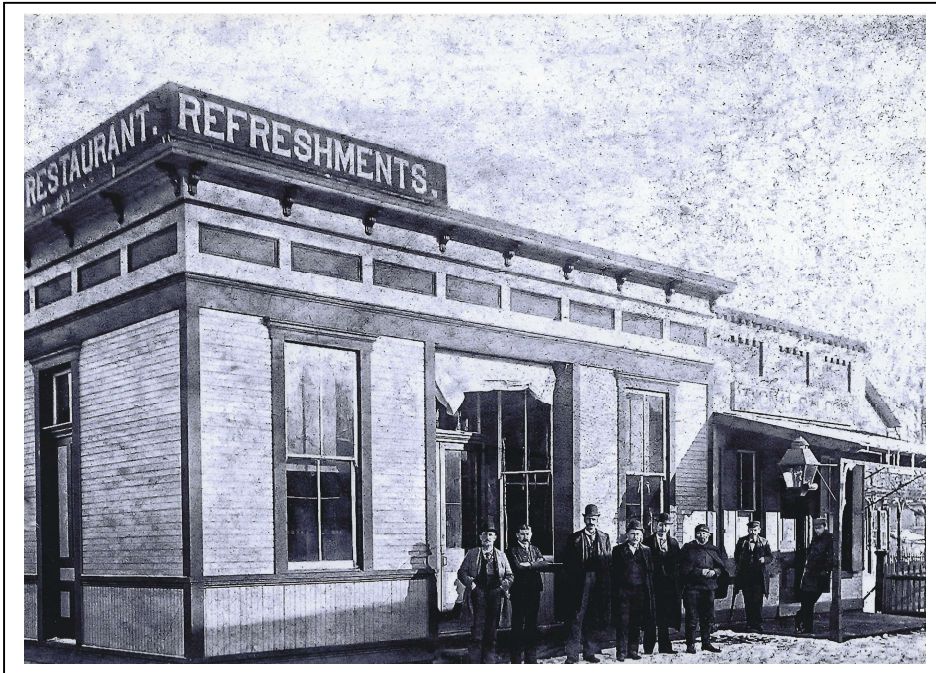
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## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

Most of you should have received the renewal form via email. Simply print out the form and mail it with your check, made out to Tippecanoe Historical Society, to P.O. Box 42, Tipp City, OH 45371.

Those attending the annual gathering can pay at the door.

## Mystery Picture



Part of this building is still standing. It is on the east side of the railroad tracks right across from the old depot. Betty Eickhoff remembered riding on a wagon with her dad to deliver supplies. She always had to wait on the wagon as it was not a place for young girls. Gordon Pittenger remembered eating lunch there as a kid. David Cook has written the following article about his memories. He would also like to hear from anyone who has stories about it.

From Dave Cook - November 2022

Owner: Hergenrether Schroeder Saloon & Restaurant

Also: Signal Saloon

I recall the building was located on the east side of the railroad tracks and south of the depot that was located at Main Street. The Railway Express office was attached to the south side of this structure and operated by the Miller's who lived behind the office in a mobile home with their four grown boys. The oldest boy, Paul Miller was in the Class of 1957 until our sophomore year in 1955 but did not graduate with us because the family moved to another location after the office was closed. Francis Miller was one year younger, Kenny was 1 or 2 years younger, and Bob was a few years younger.

Entering the tavern from the railroad side, there was a long bar with bar stools along the south wall and tables and chairs scattered about the remainder of the room.

I recall tagging along with my father and uncle a couple times, when I was quite small. I do not recall what the reward was, but the thing they tried to get patrons to do was to drink (chug) a full mug of draft beer with a raw egg dropped into the beer. The egg's clear liquid and yoke would settle to the bottom and just slither around there.

You were allowed to sip off the foam that surrounded the top and roll the brew around the mug, but that raw egg just rolled around and appeared to shine right through the beverage. My uncle was raised in southeastern Ohio on a farm and had possibly eaten about anything, including groundhog, etc., but could not complete the task of chugging down the beer with the egg to follow. The egg was the last to go down your throat with the clear part of the egg first followed by the big yellow yoke that you could see looking at you from the bottom.

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## Letter from the Outgoing President

Annette asked if I wanted an opportunity to say “farewell” and while I am leaving the position as president, I am not leaving the Historical Society! I’ve reached the point in my life where I’d rather be a worker bee than the queen. I have so many other things I want and need to do, including but not exclusive to visiting old friends, reading, needlework and messing around with my dogs.

I do want to urge you to get involved with the Society. Figure out what you want to do and give it a try. You might surprise yourself; you might have a hidden talent! Talk to your friends, encourage them to check us out. This organization has seen such growth in the 30+ years I’ve been a member; growth comes in spurts but there is no reason to think it will end. I KNOW young people aren’t joining clubs but that was somewhat true when I joined. None of us knows what the future has in store for us so let’s work at staying positive and enjoy the blessings we have.

Hope to see you sometime at the Museum!

Jackie Wahl

*Editor’s Note: I asked if she wanted to say farewell as President, not farewell to the organization. 😊*

*Leading an organization is a lot of work and often a thankless job. Please join me in thanking Jackie for her years of service in this role.*

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## Letter from the Incoming President

Hello members.

Thank you for letting me serve as President for 2023. I am honored to do this. This is my first news article, and we just held our meeting Tuesday, so this will be brief.

We are going to begin recordings of various groups and organizations as we have done in the past. The Vietnam Veterans will be the first group. The recordings are usually one to one 1/2 hours long. The starting time is 12:00 pm and everyone is encouraged to bring a brown bag lunch and a drink. The recordings will be held at the Tipp Senior Center on N. Hyatt St. Please watch for further updates.

I am hoping to schedule a Quarter Auction at the American Legion in early 2024 as a fund raiser. I am looking forward to seeing everyone at the banquet on April 25, 2023. Thanks for all you do and stay safe and healthy.

Joanna Pittenger



## From the Museum Director

- For those of you who subscribe to the *Tippecanoe Gazette*, I hope you have been enjoying the Mystery Pictures. It is a fun way to let people know that we exist and that we have so many interesting things to share. We appreciate the *Gazette* giving us so much space. One of the photos is included in this newsletter, with more to come in future editions.
- We have received several donated items. Among other things, the Eickhoff family gave us some family pictures and some very old Dolly Toy wall hangings. Saunders Seed gave us some paperwork and some pictures. Vickie Kuhls Blakey brought us a trophy along with other drill team memorabilia and several Campfire Girl items. David Lorms sent business correspondence and an envelope from the Fairview Nurseries (Bob Bartley says that was on the west side of South Hyatt Street).
- The donated roll top desk turned out beautifully. The pieces were all put back together. It was scrubbed down with Murphy's Oil Soap and gone over with a wood grain enhancer. We are trying to find a picture of the inside of our building where the desk would have been used when it was the post office. Stop by and check it out!
- We are definitely at capacity and need to be watching for the opportunity to find a bigger building. Which brings us to the question, where will our organization be in ten years? We need to bring in new and younger members in order to continue. Encourage your friends and family members to join the Society and support the Museum. It is what is needed to be confident that both will still exist in ten years. In the meantime, we can be appreciative of all that has been done in the past to allow us to arrive at where we are today!
- Jill Eickhoff asked that we inform our membership that the family will be holding an auction on Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup>. The details are below.

Susie Spittler 937-698-6798



**Date: Saturday, May 20, 2023**

**Time: 9:30 a.m.**

**Location: Bill & Betty Eickhoff's home, 218 N. 7<sup>th</sup> St., Tipp City**

Lots of antiques including furniture and toys. Oriental rugs, linens, kitchen implements, china, depression glass, early lighting devices, chandeliers with prisms, a complete set of pewter flatware, tools, a riding lawnmower, household items and more.

In May, there will be pictures of the items on Jerry Stichter's website: [www.stichterauctions.com](http://www.stichterauctions.com)

## Upcoming Events

Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> 6:00 - ANNUAL MEMBER GATHERING/DINNER

Charis Church at the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> & Broadway (the old St. John's Catholic Church)

Tuesday May 9<sup>th</sup> – Board Meeting

Tuesday June 13<sup>th</sup> – Board Meeting

Tuesday July 11<sup>th</sup> – Board Meeting