



780 South Hyatt Street

If you ever drive on South Hyatt Street, you have passed this stately old home. It happens to be one of the oldest homes in Tipp City. The original structure was built sometime between 1820 and 1826. Unlike most of the other homes of the area, it was brick. So, while the builder is unknown, it is safe to assume he had masonry skills. It was a 2 room, 2 story structure. Those rooms are now the family room and an upstairs bedroom. The original staircase has been replaced by a storage closet.



During the 1860s a barn was added to the property, as well as the foyer, 2 downstairs rooms and upstairs bedrooms. This completed the current facade. For context, it was during this period that the railroads were coming in, imperiling the business of the canals. This was also the time that Sidney Chaffee built the building that houses the Opera house, one of the oldest in Ohio. This was during the Civil War to which Ohio's contribution of personnel and resources ranked 3rd in the nation.

In the early 1900s, the land and home were acquired by Springhill Nursery. It was used frequently as home for the managers of the nursery. On the upside, they added the second barn. In the 1950s it also was a cattle farm with 200 head. Over time, it became a rental property to the workers at the Nursery and fell into disrepair.

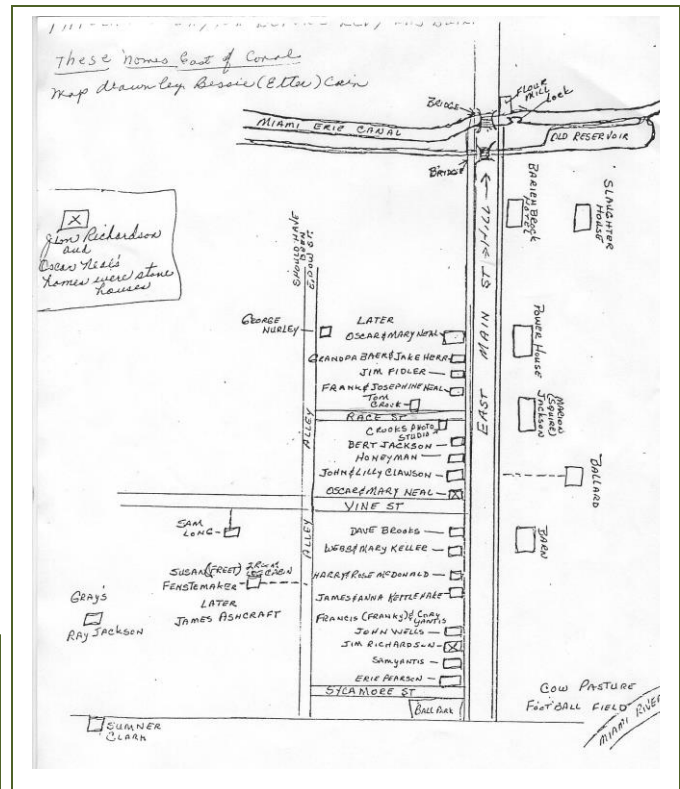
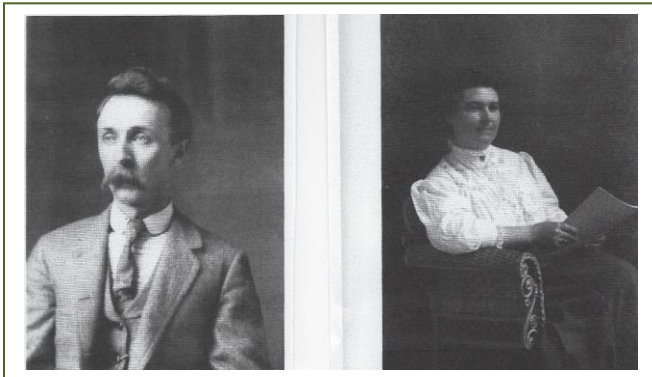
In the 1980s, Scott and Sylvia Brownlee began major restorations on the property. In addition to much needed painting, they removed over a foot of guano from the upper rooms. They added the sunroom, wrap around porch, and expanded the kitchen. They also added an office and dressing room upstairs. Externally they added the Carriage house and pool.



When Erin and Steve Staub purchased the property in 2016, they devoted a year to renovation before moving in. Their goal was to remain true to the historical integrity of the home while making it comfortable for a modern family.

Thomas & Savilla Crook

Thomas Crook was born in 1869. He and his wife, Savilla, moved to Tippecanoe in 1906 and set up the Crook Photography Studio. Their home was next door. They were located in the area below the hill on Main St. and were flooded out during the 1913 flood. Due to the flood, 14 houses in this location were able to be moved to other locations in town. The Crook's home became someone's garage. They are both buried in Maple Hill. This information is from Susan Furlong's book "Legendary Locals of Tippecanoe to Tipp City". Many of his photos are still around, we have many at the Tippecanoe Historical Museum. Bob Bartley has done extensive research into the location of these houses.



Map of Main Street below the hill, east of First Street before the flood of 1913

Message from the President

Hello Members,

I hope everyone is doing well. The Historical Society did not attend the Mum Festival this year. The inclement weather forced us to cancel. We did not want our items to be ruined.

The Museum is open Saturdays 10 AM to 2 PM. Please stop in and browse awhile, we have many new items. Staffing is needed on Saturdays; openings are for two-hour increments. Please stop in and check the schedule. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

On December 5th, we will be holding a Christmas Brunch at Bob Evans. Please RSVP to Joanna, by December 1st; 937-216-8951. As I write this it is hard to believe that 2024 will be coming to a close in approximately two months. If you are traveling for Thanksgiving and Christmas, I wish you safe travels. To you and your family I wish you Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas and a wonderful 2025. Thanks for all you do, stay safe and healthy.

Joanna Pittenger



Changes, Signs & Memories

As I watch some of our long-standing buildings get repurposed and old signage get changed, it evokes childhood memories. When the toy store sign came down, it revealed the faded and worn Cramer Drugs sign underneath. Seeing it again brought back memories from when I was a small child. Mom took me with her to purchase items and I remember the distinctive apothecary smell. My family knew the owner, Hugh Cramer, well because he employed my brother and because of an adventurous trip. My father and brother, Dale Smith Sr. & Jr., along with Mr. Cramer and his son, Bill took a trip up the Alcan Highway to Alaska. It was not a highway in the way that we now know highways that are paved, with plenty of areas to find gas and food. It was a rough road with very few places to get fuel or much of anything else. They took along extra gas, a spare tire and plenty of food and water. Upon return, my father played a home movie of some of the trip, and this is the part I remember...in the middle of the movie a black bear tried to crawl into the car with them. I think most people don't have a lot of memories from when they were little. All of mine revolve around things that were either traumatic or joyful. This movie fell under the traumatic category because I thought the bear was going to kill my dad. Clearly, he was home and safe, but my young brain couldn't discern that fact as I watched the incident unfold before my eyes. I'm not sure he thought that through when he allowed me to watch but it is indelibly etched in my memory.



I drive past the Saunders Seed building every weekday on my way to work. If you have gone by, you can't miss the huge transition that is taking place. The painted signs on the building remain but the side facing Broadway is mostly covered by a balcony and steps.



My dad and I frequented Saunders every spring to buy seed for our garden. One step inside the door and the aroma of all the organic materials like fertilizer and seeds was nearly overwhelming, but in a pleasant sort of way. I knew all the work that was ahead of me with planting, weeding and picking but it was worth it for the sumptuous summer meals we would harvest. It wasn't unusual to have a dinner of tomatoes, green beans and corn on the cob fresh out of the garden.

When my husband and I became the family property owners, we wanted to carry on the garden tradition and once again we went back to Saunders to buy the necessary items. That came to an end in about five years. Suffice it to say that between insects, critters and animals, we lost most of our hard work. When Saunders closed, it was certainly a sad end to an era in my world.

Do any of you have memories from these places? Please share them with me at acalicoat@woh.rr.com. I think it would be interesting to put together a composite of them in an upcoming newsletter.

By Annette Smith Calicoat
Photos by Barb Smith



Report from the Museum Director

- We have not had a lot of foot traffic at the museum, but we are still very active.
- We had a nice thank you note from the Boy Scouts for having them paint a new mum on the sidewalk out front, which was a fundraising project for the Scouts.
- A retired pharmacist from Macon, GA, had an advertising magazine from Smith's Drugs in Tipp City, OH. He wondered if we might have some information on Ross Smith. Of course, we have a lot of information and pictures of Ross and his store, and Evalyn and Chuck. I was able to put together a large manila envelope of information to send to him.
- "Mutt" Hoover's granddaughter, Jene Steele, was here the weekend of Sept. 24. She came last year and brought us several family items. She and her friend, Barb, brought quite a few more items this visit. She had donated several items about her aunt, Staff Sergeant Velma Barto. We kept a file on her and other things we passed on to the Miami Valley Veterans Museum. They were kind enough to open the museum for us for a couple hours on Saturday. She made a nice donation to them and to us. She has fond memories of spending part of her childhood summers in Tipp at her grandparent's home on S. Hyatt Street.
- Judy Jenkins George and a friend stopped in and donated several family and personal items. Many of us remember Dick and Dorothy Jenkins. They were very active in the community.
- A gentleman from Troy is going to be stopping in to go through our files about the Detrick Family and their distillery.
- We had to cancel our booth at the Mum Festival this year. Our canopies are not waterproof, and we could not chance our things getting wet.
- We have been asked to take part on the Saturday of Yuletide Gathering, November 8-10 and the Tippecanoe and Christmas Too tour of homes on December 7th. We will be one of the stops on the tour.

Susie Spitler

Upcoming Events

Saturday, November 9th, 10:00 am – 6:00 pm – A Yuletide's Christmas Gathering

Tuesday, November 12th, 3:00 pm – Board Meeting at the American Legion

Thursday, December 5th, 1:00 pm – THS Christmas Brunch at Bob Evans in Tipp

Saturday, December 7th, 12:00 – 4:00 pm – Tippecanoe and Christmas Too Tour

Tuesday, December 10th, 3:00 pm – Board Meeting at the American Legion

Tuesday, January 14th, 3:00 pm – Board Meeting at the American Legion

December 14th is the last day the museum will be open before closing for winter. It will reopen the first Saturday in March, weather permitting.