



Chaffee Opera House Welcomed 250 Visitors for Ohio Open Doors

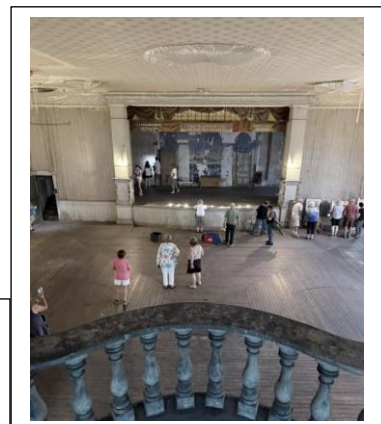
Tipp City's historic Opera House welcomed 250 guests on September 16 during an Ohio Open Doors event sponsored by the Tippecanoe Historical Society in celebration of America 250. Ohio Open Doors, an initiative of the Ohio History Connection, brought more than 300 events to communities across all 88 Ohio counties between September 10th and 20th.

Joanna Pittenger greeted visitors at the door of the landmark at 28–34 East Main Street. Upstairs, Historical Society members Marilyn and John Richards, Barb Smith, Karen Jackson, Lonnie Bowen and Paula Lantz hosted guests during self-guided tours.

The original two-story building dated to around 1840. Businessman Sidney Chaffee purchased it in 1852 and later expanded it upward and westward. Chaffee's Hall opened in 1867 and eventually became known as Chaffee's Opera House. The hall reportedly seated between 600 and 800 people and hosted plays, concerts, recitals and traveling shows. It also served as a roller-skating rink, graduation hall, basketball court and meeting place for local organizations. Its final theatrical performance took place in 1913, but the building continued to serve the community through a variety of businesses and activities.

After touring the Opera House, visitors stopped downstairs at Chaffee's Brewhouse, where they enjoyed complimentary pastries and coffee. Mike Jackson and Jackie Wahl hosted the social, offering guests an opportunity to visit and share memories of Tipp City's past.

By Paula Lantz



Paula Lantz with the Richards, Opera House owners

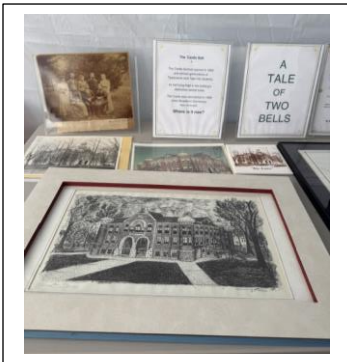
THS Celebrates Tipp City's Heritage at Mum Festival

From historic bells and treasured photographs to Bicentennial memories and hometown traditions, the Tippecanoe Historical Society offered visitors a fascinating journey through Tipp City's past during the annual Mum Festival.

The Tippecanoe Historical Society brought local history to life at its booth in Tipp City Park during the annual Mum Festival. Featuring exhibits, photographs, memorabilia and locally produced items, the display celebrated the people, places and events that have shaped the community over generations.

One of the featured exhibits, "A Tale of Two Bells," highlighted two familiar objects with very different histories. The display featured the Fireman's Bell, which originally stood at the City Building. In the mid-1970s, the bell was moved to the park, where it remained for many years. It is now located at the fire station on Main Street.

The second bell was the Castle Bell, which once topped The Castle School. After the school was demolished in the 1960s, the bell was preserved and eventually placed at the Board Office, where it remains today. Together, the two bells offered a tangible reminder of Tipp City's changing civic landscape and the community's efforts to preserve important pieces of its past.



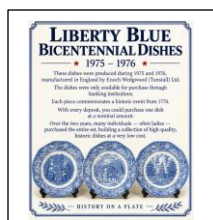
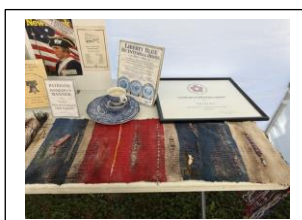
Literature also had a special place in the booth. Visitors could explore novels by author Susan Furlong, along with two books devoted to Tipp City history. These publications offered readers opportunities to discover both fictional stories and the real people and events that helped shape the community.

A nostalgic exhibit featured recipes from Hettie and Lettie Barnhart, sisters who operated a pastry shop in Tipp City. Their recipes provided a glimpse into the kitchens, businesses and food traditions of an earlier generation.

Another popular display, "Who Do You Know?", invited visitors to identify Tipp City children pictured in old school photographs. The collection encouraged conversations, shared memories and the recognition of familiar faces from years gone by.



America's 1976 Bicentennial was especially well represented. One exhibit featured selected contents from the 1976 Bicentennial Time Capsule, which was opened in September 2026, 50 years after it was created. The artifacts offered a fascinating look at what residents chose to preserve for future generations. A companion Bicentennial exhibit featured memorabilia collected by the late Dave Cook during the nation's 200th birthday celebration. His collection, generously shared by his son, Chad Cook, helped visitors recall the patriotic spirit and community pride that marked that historic year.



Mum Festival Cont.

The Society also highlighted Tipp City's historic Opera House, once a center of entertainment and community gatherings. The exhibit included a miniature cupboard handcrafted in 1942 by Frank Ingerman, an unusual piece connecting local craftsmanship with the building's history.

Another featured exhibit introduced the Society's Century Homes program, which recognizes Tipp City homes that have stood for 100 years or more. The program honors not only the historic buildings but also the families and generations who have contributed to the community's story.

Visitors could also browse a sales table offering distinctive Tipp City keepsakes, including Christmas ornaments, playing cards, woven coverlets, postcards and school yearbooks. These items provided opportunities to take home a piece of local history while supporting the Historical Society's preservation efforts.



Throughout the festival, the Society's booth offered more than a collection of historical objects. It provided a gathering place where longtime residents could reminisce, younger generations could discover their hometown's heritage and visitors could appreciate the rich history of Tipp City.

The Tippecanoe Historical Society continues its mission of collecting, preserving and sharing the stories of the community, ensuring that the people and events of yesterday remain part of tomorrow's history.

By Paula Lantz

Letter from the President

Society members were busy in September!

The Society participated in Ohio Open Doors celebration of 250 sites not typically seen by the public. September 16th, we were delighted to open the doors of the Chaffee Opera House to over 200 folks anxious to sneak a peek at this historic building. Hats off to members Paula Lantz, Joanna Pittenger, John and Marilyn Richards for making this happen. After visiting, guests were offered coffee and pastries at Chaffee's Brew House, where members Mike Jackson and Jackie Wahl greeted them. Thanks to Sean Richards for graciously offering the refreshments.

September 22nd, a time capsule buried 50 years ago (1976) was unearthed in the City Park. City officials, members of the graduating class of 1976, the Historical Society and curious folks were present for the event. Items that survived the 50-year interment are on display at the Museum through November. These artifacts will be reburied with items from 2026 probably early next year. What would you put in a time capsule from this year??

September 26 and 27, we hosted the Society booth at the Mum Festival, highlighting the stories of a bell that used to rally fire fighters, as well as one that gathered school children into the "Castle." As always, visitors were drawn in by the display of artifacts from the Museum and conversations with Society members. Old yearbooks were a particularly "hot" item as folks "remember when..."

The following Society members made our presence possible: Paula Lantz and her granddaughter Rose, Ed Merta, Karen & Mike Jackson, Dawn Kramer, Joanna Pittenger, Tiffany Mohr, Lonnie Bowen, Joe Hammann, Marilyn Fennell, Chuck Kessler, Wayne and Susie Spitler. A thousand thanks to each of them!

Society members participate in *Tippecanoe and Christmas, Too*, by gathering history and images of homes and buildings that are on the tour. This year's tour is December 5th with homes located on First and Second Street, including the building Trophy Nut occupies.

Barbara Smith

Favorite Son: Revelations of a Tombstone in Maple Hill Cemetery

By Ed Merta

In Anno Domini 1812, dramatic news came from traders and newly arriving settlers to the forests and farm fields and villages of Miami County, Ohio. Far across the Appalachians to the east, the Congress of the United States in Washington City had granted a request by President James Madison for authority to wage war against the British Empire once again.

America's war did not go well. The nation's primary army, operating out of Detroit, crossed into British-held Canada. There the American forces met the British and their Indian allies in battle. The Americans lost. They fled back to Detroit. Then their commanding general surrendered the whole army without further resistance. The jubilant British and Indians invaded Michigan, defeating another American contingent near the western shore of Lake Erie in January 1813. In the frigid winter air, the British allowed the Indians to murder American prisoners taken during the clash. Such butchery had been the way of war on the frontier for centuries, by Indians, Europeans, and Americans.

Now the conquering army of the British and Tecumseh's Indians advanced across Ohio's border in the frozen winter. Panic spread across American settlements in the great Ohio forest. The terror came to Miami County, in frantic conversations around fireplaces in log-cabins, in taverns, in the pews of churches. No one knew where the marauding force might march. Everyone feared the blood and slaughter it might bring. Americans vowed to respond in kind.

When the invasion came, Abraham Favorite was 26 years old. The enemy forces might come to his Miami County home, for all he knew. As required by state law for all able-bodied men ages 18 to 45, Abraham joined in the Ohio militia when the summons to do so arrived. He enlisted February 22, 1813. Militia from Ohio and Kentucky were gathering at the settlement of Urbana, along with regulars from the U.S. Army. These soldiers would, the authorities hoped, drive the enemy from Ohio land. As a fresh recruit, Private Abraham Favorite almost certainly joined the Urbana preparations, although surviving records don't expressly tell us so. His term of service, by state law, would last until August. Six months. Those months proved to be among the most decisive in Ohio history. They were the last time a foreign military power set foot on the soil of the state (the Battle of Lake Erie, fought in the same war, occurred on water rather than soil).

In the late spring of 1813, American forces under General William Henry Harrison met the British and Tecumseh at Fort Meigs, near present day Perrysburg, Ohio. There the siege of the Ohio fort went on for weeks into mid-summer, to the merciless crack of rifle and musket fire and screams of the mutilated, amid forests along the rivers in steam bath summer heat. Men died in a haze of blood and sweat in detritus of leaves and dirt.

Ultimately, Harrison and his officers led their force to victory, driving the British and the Indians away. The enemy moved east to Fort Stephenson, near today's Fremont, Ohio, and suffered another defeat at American hands. Afterward they retreated from Ohio soil, never to return. Tecumseh would never go home.

We don't know where Abraham Favorite spent that bloody summer, when the Indians fought to go home, Ohio struggled to be free, and the British served their king. The records we have from that time tell us Abraham's company of the Second Ohio regiment was not at the two land battles waged in Ohio. We don't know where he was stationed, only that he drove a freight wagon pulled by draft horses for the forces defending the Republic. We can guess, without knowing for certain, that Abraham may have spent many a terrifying hour at the reins, hauling supplies through steamy woods, horses snorting and wheels grinding, as he wondered when the sound might come of enemy legions charging out of the deepness of the trees.

We know that Abraham came home. His militia term ended August 21, 1813. He lived out his life as a farmer in Miami County. He raised eleven children through first one marriage and then another, to Eve Long Leininger, after the death of his first wife.



Favorite Son Continued

Abraham lived to see the Miami and Erie Canal come through the county, connecting the new city of Tippecanoe to the Great Lakes, the Ohio River, and the oceans of the world. He died in 1848 as the canal boom began to give way to an age of locomotives. Their reign in turn would one day birth technologies only imagined in Abraham's life. Through the children of Abraham and his two wives, generations of Favorites born in Western Ohio would live to see that future of dreams, down to the day when the country born in revolution reached a quarter of a millennium old.



We wouldn't know any of Abraham Favorite's story, if all we had were carvings on a stone at a grave. He lived through desperate times. His descendants faced trials of their own, building through them to ages beyond. Their memory lives still, thanks to keepers of history in the place where they lived. We can hope the same will be true for the experiences we have in our lifetime. Maybe a part of them will live on among those who come after, when some of them gather at the next quarter millennium. On a certain day in July of 2276, when we rest where Abraham waits.

From the Building Manager

We have had two very expensive maintenance issues this year. First was the roof replacement on the white house and garage. The old roofing was removed and replaced on both buildings. Because the fascia boards were rotted on both buildings, they were replaced and covered with aluminum fascia and new gutters were installed.

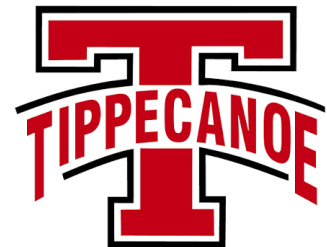
The second issue was a failing compressor in one of the twenty-year-old air conditioners. The decision was made to replace rather than making expensive repairs on old equipment. Note: When the Society bought the property, the museum building housed two apartments. That is why there are two furnaces and two air conditioners.

Susie Spittler



School District Branding

Recent considerations by the Board of Education, per Superintendent Aaron Moran are focused on "creating a more cohesive districtwide visual identity, strengthening unity across our schools and determining a name for the new PK-8 school." An example of this is that all proposed logos have eliminated Tippecanoe in favor of Tipp City. Because the Historical Society has concerns about loss of the historical relevance of the name Tippecanoe, a position statement was developed and sent to Superintendent Moran and each member of the Board of Education and was published in the Tippecanoe Gazette as a letter to the editor (included for your reference).



In response to the letter, Superintendent Moran indicated that "the district was not looking to change the name of Tippecanoe High School and that it would remain as it is."

The Tippecanoe Historical Society supports continued use of the name Tippecanoe across our schools.

Tippecanoe Logo Position Statement

September 11, 2026

To Superintendent Moran and Tipp City Board of Education

Regarding: School District Name Branding

The name "Tippecanoe" was given to our town by its founder in 1840. It has been embraced by businesses, organizations, and, yes, our schools for nearly two centuries. It is a distinctive name that reflects the historical legacy of our community.

The Tippecanoe Historical Society encourages the Tipp City School Board to retain this name in every school, logo, sports team, and other entity where it is currently in use. Renaming Tippecanoe High School and removing the name elsewhere we believe would discount generations of alumni identity, athletic tradition, and community history. We believe the currently perceived benefits of name change would not outweigh this lessening of historical identity.

The name "Tipp City" can continue to be used in both current and future venues, but the identity associated with the word "Tippecanoe" has emotional resonance. We respectfully request that the Board meet with representatives of the Tippecanoe Historical Society before any vote is taken. We wish the voting members to pause and reflect on the "heart" of this matter.

Tipp City Schools' slogan is "Where Excellence is a Tradition." The "Tippecanoe" name is an integral part of our tradition. We, as a society, wish this venerable name to be honored and valued in the future.

On behalf of the Tippecanoe Historical Society

Barbara J Smith, President

Direct line: 734-845-6520

50 Years Later....

1976 was a momentous year in my life. Our nation celebrated 200 years and my class graduated 200 students. A Tipp City Bicentennial committee put together a grand celebration and buried a time capsule that they placed in the hands of the class of '76 to dig up in 50 years. There was a proclamation made by the mayor and our class President got a copy of it, but we were not involved in the process at any time.

Time went screaming by and here we are...planning our 50-year class reunion. The subject of the time capsule became a regular topic of conversation at our planning meetings...where was it buried, is it still there, can we get to it, who do we have to call to get it dug up, when can we do it? After investigation and lots of communication, the city broke open the cement cap upon which the old fire bell monument sat in the park. On September 22nd, a group of us from my class along with curious onlookers, the editor of the Tippecanoe Gazette and Chad Cook, who had all of his father's records from the Bicentennial event, were present for the great unveiling.

None of us had a clue what was in it, except perhaps Kathy & Vince Hinde whose father was in charge of putting it together. We all laughed when we discovered the capsule was a pony keg painted red, white & blue. The smell was horrendous because the contents had gotten wet. The initial thought was water seeped in, but when a fragment of a Stroh's beer box came out we wondered if Vince Sr. had put beer in it and the cans didn't survive. Most things were loosely wrapped in plastic bags but Ziploc bags didn't exist so many things had gotten ruined, especially paperwork. We had to throw out a leisure suit jacket, a pair of bellbottom pants, a striped shirt, a can of Tip Top tomato juice and some papers that were unidentifiable. Interestingly, a stack of newspapers from the year was slightly damp but undamaged. Thankfully, a jar of slides of Tipp City photos was in perfect condition. My husband converted them to digital images which are on a flash drive and will be put back in the jar when it returns to its home. Chad Cook is going to take another set of photos of the same location now, which will be put in the new time capsule. I'm hoping to do a "then & now" piece in a future newsletter.



Yes, there will be a new capsule with items from 2026. It will probably be buried next year so we have a full year of information. Stay tuned. Have ideas of what to include? Send them to info@tippecanoehistoricalsociety.org.

Meanwhile, go see the display at the museum through the end of November.

By Annette Smith Calicoat



Mark Your Calendar

**December
19th**

**Museum Closes for the Winter
Reopens March 2027**



Upcoming Board Meetings

Tuesday, November 10th 3:00 pm – Board Meeting – Tipp Senior Center

Tuesday, December 8th 3:00 pm – Board Meeting – Tipp Senior Center

Tuesday, January 12th 3:00 pm – Board Meeting – Tipp Senior Center