

Historical Society celebrates 50th year of Highland House Museum



Milton A. Caniff (1907-1988)

Milton A. Caniff was considered to be the most brilliant and capable of comic strip artists. His most popular strips – “Steve Canyon” and “Terry and the Pirates” – became classics.

Caniff was born in 1907 in Hillsboro and attended Washington School. He entertained his teachers and classmates with his ability to draw pictures.

Although he wrote right-handed, he always drew left-handed. He created his first cartoon at age 12. His family moved to Dayton, where Milton graduated high school. While at Ohio State University, he worked at *The Columbus Dispatch*, where he also worked after graduation.

In 1932, he went to New York to work for The Associated Press, where he launched his first strip, “Dickie Dare.” Later, he worked for *The New York Daily News* where he introduced “Terry and the Pirates.”

Caniff’s “Male Call,” created during World War II, was published in over 3,000 newspapers and read by troops in

all of the allied nations. After the war, with the help of Magnate Marshall Field, Caniff created his own non-syndicate-owned strip, “Steve Canyon,” for which he held full copyright and ownership. He drew “Steve Canyon” for 41 years.

Milton Caniff appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine and was the subject of the book “Rembrandt of the Comic Strips” by John Paul Adams. His work has hung at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and he is in the Hall of Fame at the Air Force Museum in Dayton for his many honors to his country.