

## BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANTIQUE SHOW

The Highland County Historical Society was struggling for funds to pay the normal operating expenses to maintain the Highland House. The Society was organized in 1965 and The Highland House was purchased in 1966. Bob was V. Pres, after having served as the first President. Dorothy Hodson suggested that maybe an antique show would be a successful money making project for the society plus make the society more visible to the community. The idea was presented to the society that quickly approved it.

Dorothy, as General Chairman, went to work first setting the date of August 6, 1967 and began to organize it. She began to contact potential exhibitors by letter, phone and personal visits. This included not only local antique dealers but those in surrounding areas. Many committees began to function: Haul tables and chairs; Clean up crew before and after the Highland County Fairground show; Cashier for food and at the show door; Food committee in the 4-H building; Help to help dealers unload and reload at the end of the show. A strong marketing effort was made with letters sent to local and surrounding news media. It paid off with attendance estimated to be 1,000 with people registered from outlying cities and three states.

Dorothy in the initial planning declared that it would be a juried show meaning there would be no new items for sale by the dealers. It was initially billed as an Antique Show and Flea Market but it was later determined that no longer would there be a flea market. The show as the article states was a marked success convincing both the society and the dealers that it should continue the following year.

The second annual Antique show was held on Saturday and Sunday, August 3 and 4, again at the Highland County Fairgrounds. There were 32 dealers plus food was served in the 4-H building. Again many volunteers were needed and willingly served. Over 1300 people registered and the society received a net profit of \$1,640.

The show, under the continued direction of Dorothy, continued through 1969, 1970 and 1971. By that time it was well know to be a quality show resulting in many tri-state visitors. WLW radio and TV personality Marian Spellman attended and told Dorothy it was one of the best shows she attends as she loaded her car with several "goodies". Noted wild life artist John Ruthven and his wife also attended and stated, "This is the nicest show we've been to and we take them all in, including the so called big Cincinnati shows."

Considering all five shows to date the society had benefited by many thousands of dollars, enabling it to pay off its initial mortgage, install new capital needs and establish a museum that continues to grow to this day. It was during the 1971 show that the new Society President Joe Rockhold began to tell Dorothy how to run the show and what to do and what not to do. He capped it off with the statement, "Anyone can run this show." After proceeding to explain to her that she shouldn't be talking and bothering stars such as Spellman and Ruthven, she concluded that he should be in charge. She stopped serving as the Chairman and within two years the antique show failed.

To this day she still has former show dealers who tell her what a wonderful show it was and wish she had continued with it. Her efforts were directed toward other needs.

Bob Hodson