

MUSEUM MUSES

Telling Highland County's story for over 50 years!

UPDATED: THE HILLSBORO STORY, available soon!

A TEACHER AT HILLSBOROUGH FEMALE COLLEGE

John Glaze

It doesn't take much to spark my attention to a story just waiting to be told to MM readers. Such was the case a few months ago when Vicki and I were cataloging some newly donated items. Dan Estle had found a book back when what is now the Old Pants Factory Apartments served as an antique mall. He recently donated that to us.



On first look, it appeared just to be a scrapbook collection of favorite poems and short stories. Upon closer examination, however, we learned that it had belonged to Virginia Hedessa Wever from Weverton, Maryland, when she came to Hills-

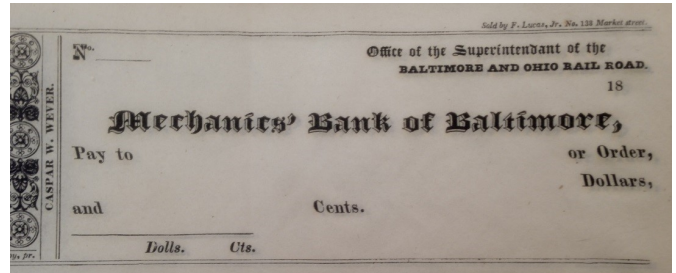
borough Female College apparently to teach. Beneath the name (bottom of this page) is written c. 1858, although in different handwriting.

Well, my first thought was that, while the HFC was undoubtedly a fine college, I would hardly think that an east coast resident would have even heard of it, let alone have her heart's desire be to travel all the way to Hillsborough,

Ohio, to teach, meanwhile passing by many fine colleges and universities. What? Why? How?

The Wever name was the first clue that got my attention. One of St. Mary's Episcopal Church's founders had a wife whose maiden name was Wever. Catherine Wever Collins, wife of Col. William Oliver Collins; you'll remember their son, Caspar Wever Collins.

Paging on through the book, I ran out of the



stories and poems and got to blank checks! The checks were for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and had the company superintendent's name printed on them: Caspar W. Wever. The story continued to get more interesting. It would seem that Virginia came to Hillsborough to teach at the college as well as to be close to her dear sister, Catharine, who had married William Collins.

But what of Caspar Wever? What was his story? The book I discovered from an internet search, **Wever of the B&O Railroad and Weverton - His early industrial village that failed** by Peter Maynard, gives us a controversial look at Caspar Wever:

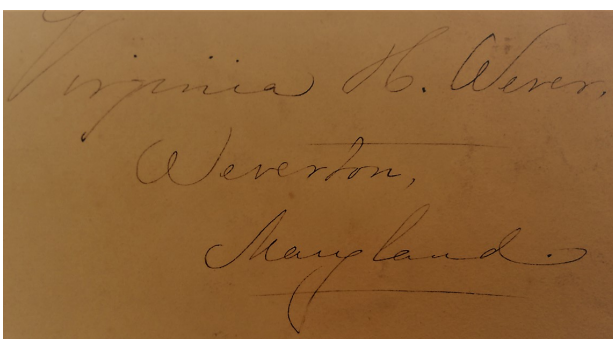
"James Dilts, author of *The Great Road: The Building of the Baltimore and Ohio, 1828-1853*, had this to say after reading the manuscript: 'You and I are probably not destined to see eye-to-eye on the nature and character of Wever . . . [your book] does reinforce my opin-

ion of Wever as a talented builder, but also as an avaricious and unprincipled self-aggrandizer.'"

Most of the difference in opinion, it would seem, had to do with personality.

Wever was born in 1786 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, the son of Catherine Willis and Adam Wever. Adam had been born in Germany, the son of Christina and Caspar von Wever. Caspar married Jane Catharine Dunlop on 13 February 1812. They had nine children in the span of 23 years. Caspar died on 7 February 1861 and was buried in Petersville, Maryland. Jane died on 7 January 1859 in Maryland. They had been married 46 years.

Caspar Wever was a master builder. As the chief construction engineer he showed his mastery in arch bridges. Many of these are still in use today. Some called him unscrupulous and greedy and others said he was involved in "profiteering, collusion and extortion." Was it all just personality clash that caused all of the charges and fault-finding? Could there have been a certain amount of jealousy for his natural tal-
(continued on page 3)



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We are in need of your e-mail address. Please submit your e-mail address so we can include you in emails about upcoming events. If you would like your newsletter e-mailed to you, please let us know. E-mails can be submitted to hchistoricalociety@gmail.com or by calling (937) 393-3392.

Thank You!

2017 EVENTS

- Aug 12—Amazing Race—10 am at Liberty Park
- Aug 24—Ghost Walk
- Sep 16—Log Cabin Cookout
- Oct 3—Annual Meeting
- Nov 3—Spirits of Christmas Pre-Sale
- Nov 12—Children’s Christmas Tea
- Nov 24—Black Friday Shopping
- Dec 23—Museum closes for season
- Dec 31—New Year’s Eve at the Bell

MORE EVENTS TO COME!

DENNY’S BRIEFS—The Importance of Membership



The role of the Board of Trustees of the Highland County Historical Society is to assist in the operation of the Society. Board members are elected by the membership, and serve on a voluntary basis. Board members are not compensated and give of their time and talent. The membership also established a set of By-Laws under which the Society operates. Operating under these By-Laws, the Trustees in turn work with the membership directly and via committees and volunteers to further the operation of the Society. The cornerstone of the Society has been and always will be the membership. Without the membership, the Society would cease to exist. It takes committed members to make the Society a success.

Each year the Board sets an operating budget for the Society. This budget is aimed to keep things running smoothly, and covers only the basic operation of the society itself. The Society owns the Highland House Museum and Scott House. The Society has utility bills, insurance, basic supplies, fees, and costs associated with employment. The average cost to operate the So-

ciety for a year are about \$64,000.00. Outside of employment costs, the largest costs center around utilities, insurance, and regular maintenance. It is important to note capital projects and renovations are not covered in the operating budget and fall under a separate category. The budget also contains some restricted funds that can only be used for very specific purposes, and not for the general operation.

The income that forms the operating budget of the Society is derived mainly from a combination of membership dues, investment returns, museum shop sales, donations, rental income, and special events. The average income from these sources is about \$65,000.00 per year, but can fluctuate. Membership dues in 2015, for example, accounted for just under \$8,500.00 in income for the Society.

Special events have the potential to further increase income, which in turn serves the mission of the Society in the preservation of history and historical education. The recent Lincoln School Exhibit is an example of what a special event can do, and

the hard work required to bring it about. For the first time, the Society worked with a filmmaker, conducted interviews, collected photos and articles and sought the advice of scholars. This culminated in the receipt of approximately \$40,000.00 in grant funds, and resulted in a multi media exhibit. Without these grants, this exhibit never would have reached fruition. The result of the exhibit was over 600 visits to the museum in June 2017, along with regional and possibly national attention brought on by the exhibit. For comparison, the Society had about 60 visits in June 2016. I think this exhibit delivered on the mission and purpose of the Society in major ways, but also served to highlight what a committed group of people can do.

Another example of hard work and commitment was the recent receipt of a \$100,000.00 grant from the State of Ohio to make repairs and upgrades at Scott House. This grant has enabled the Society to work toward preserving this historic structure for future generations. Without the hard work to obtain estimates, work with

A TEACHER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)



Carrollton Viaduct—built by Caspar Wever

ent?

One of Wever's other accomplishments was the building of the town of Weverton in Maryland in 1820. The intention was to create a mill town to make use of the Potomac River nearby and then use the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal to transport goods.

Among the children born to Caspar and Jane was Catharine Willis Wever, born on 30 October 1818 in Maryland. Catharine married William Oliver Collins on 8 November 1843 when she was 25 years old. William was born in 1809 in Somers, Connecticut (Somers Street in Hillsboro is named for this town). William and Catharine had three children: Caspar, born 30 September 1844 and died in 1865 during a battle at the Platte Bridge Station near Fort Laramie, Wyoming – Casper, Wyoming is named for him; Mary, born 21 December 1846 and died

in 28 August 1853 at age 6; and Josephine, born 4 August 1849 and died in 1916. William Collins died 26 October 1880 in Hillsboro. Catharine lived to the age of 93, dying on 16 December 1911 in Hillsboro.

Another daughter of Caspar and Jane Wever was Virginia Hedessa, who was born in March of 1836 in Frederick, Maryland. Her sister, Catharine, was 17 years old when Virginia was born.

We don't know much about Virginia's life other than she never married and spent much of her life in Deer Lodge, Morgan County, Tennessee. Virginia suffered a long period of illness before her death in 1919. Josephine, Catharine's daughter stayed with her during this period.

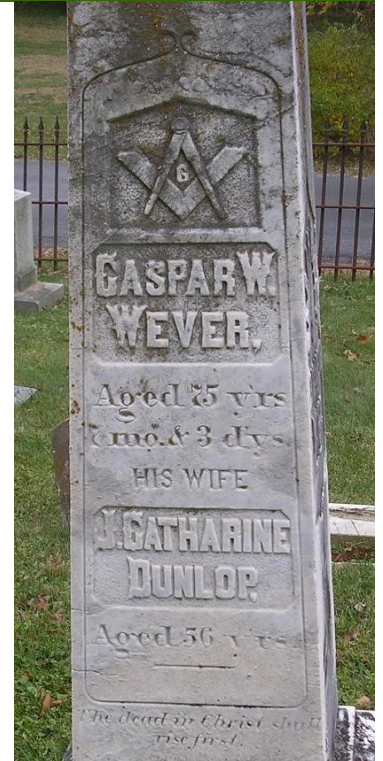
In her obituary, as reported in a Hillsboro newspaper, it is stated:

"Miss Wever was a staunch Episcopalian, devoted

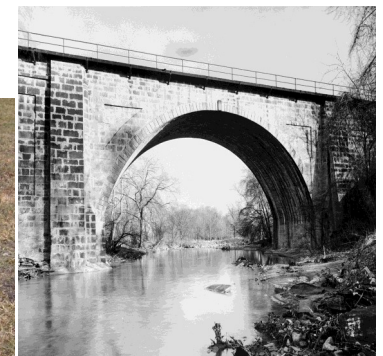
to St. Mary's Parish, and an earnest worker when she resided in Hillsboro. She stood high as a teacher in the Hillsboro College. Miss Wever was a sister of Dr. P. Wever, Mrs. Dr. (Carleton) Sams and Mrs. Col. Collins, names of which Hillsboro is so proud. Miss Josephine Collins, a devoted

niece of Miss Wever, has been with her for months, giving her the happiness of her presence and loving attention."

Virginia's grave marker. Her brother, Patrick Henry, is also on this marker.



Grave marker of Caspar W. Wever and wife, Jane Catharine Dunlop Wever.



Another view of Carrollton Bridge/Viaduct.



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What's Going On at SCOTT HOUSE?

The state funding provided to assist us in preserving and protecting Scott House has begun to take effect! Here are some photos of work thus far. (story on page 6)



(left) New concrete pillar in back of house.
(right) New patio for A/C units.
(below-left and right) Underground tile will carry rainwater away from the house.



LOG CABIN COOKOUT

Come join us and bring your family and friends to the Log Cabin Cookout on Saturday evening, Sept. 16, at 5:00 PM. A delicious ham and bean dinner will be served on the back lawn surrounding our historic log cabin. The menu will include ham and beans, cornbread, applesauce, coleslaw, desserts and drinks.

The evening will include entertainment by Dave and Brenda Hardin, as well as an auction of antique items and collectibles. Tim Koehl will be our auctioneer! We are asking members to search their attics and basements for items to donate to our auction. The committee will select items for the auction and museum shop. You may drop off your treasures at the Highland House the last week of August and first week of September.

Reservations may be made by calling 937-393-3392 by Monday, Sept. 11. Leave your names, phone number and number of reservations requested. Donations will be accepted at the door with the proceeds to pay utility and routine maintenance of the Highland House and the Scott House.

From My Corner of the County

The village of Lynchburg lies within Dodson Township Highland County. Just outside of town lies Clinton County, Clark Township. If you follow Wise Rd. out of town to the west, you go from Clinton County to Highland County then on to Brown County, all within 5 miles. Whether the surveyors dipped south to visit a local inn or were seeking to increase the size of Clinton County (I have heard both stories) Clinton County forms a boot heel in this area. When one enters Brown County, Wise Rd. again becomes Anderson State Rd. Lynchburg was platted in 1830. In 1845 Julia Chatfield led 10 women from two

French convents into the "Wilderness" to educate the local population. Julia was an English woman, therefore could speak the language. Lynchburg's Historical Society will be hosting a Historical Tour of the Ursulines of Brown County grounds at Chatfield with a power point presentation by SR. Patricia on August 19th. A donation will be taken and presented to the Ursulines to use as they desire. In order to provide enough handouts etc. we need to know how many will be coming. Please call 937-364-2579 or 937-364-6101 to confirm.

Carolyn Hastings

**COURTESY OF
DOUG & SUSIE
WAGONER**

BALLANTINE DIARY—1878

Somewhere in the area of Belfast, Berrysville and Fairfax, John Ballentine settled with his mother and siblings where he became not only a farmer, but a merchant, board member of the infirmary, representative in legal matters, and family man. The family had come from Scotland to New York, through Pennsylvania and into southern Ohio.

His diary, written in 1878, is held in the library at the Highland House. That particular year he began gardening March 13th when he set out seed potatoes. Eight days later he planted 15 peach, 12 apple, and 4 cherry trees. He planted early potatoes, Early Rose, and ½ peck of a new kind, nearly black.

The 22nd he made a little garden by planting peas, The Little Gem from Washington. The following day he made garden. The 27th he was in the garden for most of the day. He planted parsnips, onion seed, Dawers (sic) Red Globe, carrots, radishes, 50 cabbage plants, and some more rye and chinees hulley (sic) oats.

In April, the 11th to be exact, he planted 12 plum trees, and 15 other trees in the potato patch. The next day he planted the remainder of the plum trees. The 17th he harrowed the potatoes noting “the peach bloom was going very fast and the apple bloom is pretty full and two weeks ahead of other years.”

The 19th he set out about 400 tomato plants in the cold frame. May 2nd he hoed in the garden the balance of the day. Catherine (his wife) helped to hoe and plant beans. The 3rd he plowed and hoed the early potatoes. The 8th he planted 40 tomato plants in the garden. The 16th he made sweet potato ridges, thinned the parsnips, the carrots and onions. The 17th he plowed the early potatoes, rolled the sweet potato ridges. The 18th he planted over 500 sweet potato plants and planted corn in the afternoon. The 21st he worked in the garden most of the time.

The 22nd of May he “done very little” except to plant sweet potato plants. Went to town and got 800 sweet potato plants. The boys hauled manure to the garden and plowed

and harrowed it and burned brush on the potato patch and marked some of it out and hauled water and planted sweet potatoes. 23rd The boys and I planted potatoes in the afternoon. 25th plowed the truck patch and planted some tomatoes.

The 28th: “didn’t do much” only planted 200 cabbage plants. 29th planted tomatoes. June 1 planted 60 curley cabbage plants and 200 tomato plants.

You get the idea...This was done in between business, farming, repairing machinery, board meetings and resting on Sundays. I could go on and on sharing how much produce he eventually took to town. There were eggs, butter, and bacon in addition to fruits and vegetables.

Don’t you wonder, as I do, if we would be able to keep up even in the strongest days of our past? I love thinking about what it must have been like—sunrise to sunset. Wonder when we started thinking we needed to work only 8 hours a day?

Carolyn Hastings



Jenny M. Hilterbran

Owner/Broker

Volunteer Call

What does it mean to you to volunteer at Highland House? I would hope that you realize that when you are in that position, you ARE Highland County Historical Society... you ARE Highland House.... in many cases you ARE Highland County and Hillsboro. Out of state or even out of county visitors are in our town for just a few short hours. You are the person they will remember. Make that a neat memory! Make that a memory that they want to share with their friends when they get back to their homes!

How do you do that? When visitors arrive, whether locals or out of towners, you are **ON STAGE**. Embrace your part. Arrive early at the museum, so you are ready for your performance. Take your part seriously! Be gracious, be informative, but don’t cross the line and become domineering! Leave your visitors wanting more.

Kirk Law Office, LLC Denny Kirk, Attorney at Law



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kirklawoffice@att.net

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SCOTT HOUSE IMPROVEMENTS

One of the last elements of the Capital Campaign undertaken by the Historical Society were upgrades to Scott House Mansion. Most all of the local donations went toward the needed construction at Highland House Museum. The improvements at Scott House were included in an application to our Ohio Legislature and their Capital Improvements Bill in 2016, bringing in additional funds into the community.

The Society and membership are very appreciative for the support received from Representative and Speaker of the House, Cliff Rosenberger, and Senator Bob Petersen for the request. HCHS received \$110,000 in the Capital Bill for the improvements. As the agreements were finalized between the State and HCHS, the improvements were identified and agreed upon.

Over the past couple months, new high efficiency HVAC units have been installed. Several masonry projects were completed including reinstalling the brick terraces on the east side of the building, along with rebuilding of the stone basement steps. A deteriorating concrete pillar and stone foundation were rebuilt to properly support the NW corner of the building. All of the downspouts for the building were connected to new underground drain tile, avoiding the water from draining toward the building and into the basement. The large basement will be dry and available for storage and potential for future upgrades.

In the next couple of months more visible work will be completed so the community can see the improvements. The trimwork on the building including the shutters will all be rebuilt and repaired and painted. Several of the railings around the second and third floor terraces are in very bad shape. Some flooring will be replaced on an east terrace and along the handicapped access ramp. The wrought iron fence and gates at the front of the property along East Main Street will be repaired. The gates will be rebuilt using the valuable old iron work and replacing newer inappropriate round piping that had been used in the past on those gates. The fence post caps have been missing for years, leaving those large hollow posts open to rain water. New wrought iron caps and round balls will be manufactured and put back on those posts sealing them from damaging water. The back out-building will have a new roof installed. There has been damage to the roof trusses making the building unusable currently. Uses of that building are in the works after repairs are made.

Inside the building there are several improvements also planned. New design appropriate office lighting will be installed throughout the mansion. The lighting had been changed to modern styled florescent fixtures. We will be installing lighting that is appropriate to the building. We are also upgrad-

ing the kitchen for use by the offices and the public renting the open areas of the house for meetings, and events.

Finally, the third floor will be upgraded so it can be made usable for training, artisan classes and/or studios etc. Improvements on the third floor include new lighting, wall and fixture repairs, flooring installation, and wall repairs.

As the improvements are completed this fall, it is the hope of the Society that all the office space can be rented. Renting the building allows the Society to maintain the building and preserve it for the future. There are two tenants there now with two more spaces available to rent in one of the most beautiful buildings in Hillsboro and Southern Ohio. Anyone interested in considering office space for rent should contact the Scott House manager, Justin Harsha, Society Trustee and City Councilman.

John Kellis

Trustee and
Capital Campaign Chair

PARTY!

Are you thinking of having a party at Highland House this holiday season? Many groups have booked already, so, if you haven't reserved your date, call Vicki NOW!

Highland House is always decorated beautifully during November and December and it makes a beautiful setting for any gathering. The price is very reasonable and we take extra care to make sure each and every group has a great time.

Call 393-3392 to check on your dates. We will need to know what type of gathering you will be having as well as the expected number of attendees. CALL TODAY!

HILLSBORO—1861

What was Hillsborough like in 1861? We have a copy of the HILLSBOROUGH BUSINESS DIRECTORY which was printed by the Highland Weekly News. By the way, you could subscribe to that newspaper for One Dollar a Year. J. L. Boardman was the Editor and Proprietor.

Many folks, especially those of the "younger set", think of Hillsboro as the middle of nowhere and certainly (continued page 8)



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Denny's Briefs *(continued from page 2)*

contractors, prepare grant paperwork, and submit invoices, this project would never happened.

The importance of creating exhibits or making upgrades and repairs is to continue to help further generations learn about and appreciate history. The way an exhibit like the Lincoln School, or repairs to the Scott House come about is by becoming involved. It takes dedication and commitment from the membership to make this happen. We always need new ideas and people to carry out those ideas. It is not enough to suggest something. The Society needs the hard work behind that suggestion to make the idea happen. With new ideas also comes to need for funding.

Other events, such as the bean dinner, the Christmas open house, Saint Patrick's Day brunch, and the home tour, all require the commitment and dedication of the membership. We have a great

group of members, but let's not keep this to ourselves. Encourage and invite others to join. The more members, the more ideas, the more innovation, the more help, and the more financial assistance the Society receives. Our current membership stands at about 300. As you read this, think of who you might encourage to not only join, but to get involved.

The Board of Trustees meets the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Members are always welcome to attend. If you have ideas about the next great exhibit, presentation, or event, please contact a board member so we can help.

"But membership is one of the precursors to a lot of social action."

Author: Clay Shirky

Denny Kirk

Chair of the Board of Trustees



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LINCOLN SCHOOL EXHIBIT Kati Burwinkel

The Lincoln School Exhibit opened to the public on June 3, 2017 after nearly two years of planning and work by the Lincoln School Committee. The exhibit showcases the 1954 fight for school integration of the Hillsboro Elementary Schools. A private reception was held June 2 for funders, board members, politicians, supporters, and committee members. The exhibit has been well received, with visits to the Highland House up significantly during the month of June. Special events were held during June by the Chillicothe Men's Community Choir, The New Hope Baptist Church, and Ohio Humanities Speaker's Bureau Ric Sheffield. The museum also hosted the national Brown v. Board of Education exhibit during the month, sponsored by the Highland County Bar Association.

The Lincoln Exhibit has received positive attention since the opening. Kati Burwinkel, Project Director and committee member and child marcher Teresa Williams appeared on Cincinnati WKRC's Newsmakers program and hosted a visit from Columbus television station WCMH, Cincinnati *Citybeat* magazine, President of Friends of Freedom Society Cathy Nelson, and Sherrod Brown's Regional Director Alea Brown. On June 25, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center hosted a screening of the Lincoln School film, followed by a panel discussion. A member of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission was in attendance at the Freedom Center and has contacted the committee about nominating the Marching Mothers and their children for the Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame. Several of the Lincoln Committee members have been invited to provide a session at this year's Ohio Local History Alliance conference in Columbus. The committee could not be prouder of the success of this exhibit! If you have not visited the museum to see the Lincoln Exhibit, come see what at the excitement is about!

Curtis Lane Dedicated to Activist Imogene Curtis Kati Burwinkel

On July 27, 2017, the Highland County Historical joined the city of Hillsboro in honoring activist Imogene Curtis by the renaming of Baker Street to Curtis Lane. The event was held on the new Curtis Lane on the property owned by the Curtis family. Led by daughter Eleanor Cumberland, the evening included thanks, prayer, song, and remembrances of the woman who was honored for organizing the march that led to the integration of Hillsboro Elementary Schools in the mid-1950's and her years of community service. Following the ceremony, the crowd moved to the Highland House Museum for refreshments and fellowship.

HIGHLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

151 E Main St
Hillsboro, OH 45133
Phone: 937.393.3392

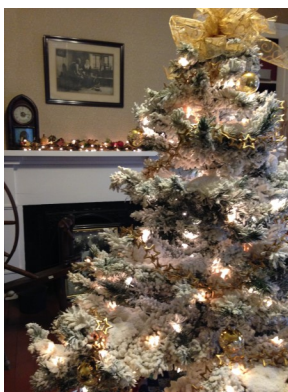
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MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Check the date found on your mailing label. This is your membership renewal date. If it falls within the period of this newsletter, your renewal statement is enclosed. Please make any corrections or additions on the form and return it with your payment. Please consider increasing your membership to the next level.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

While the calendar says August, it is time to be working on the annual Christmas Tree decorating. The theme this year is **"Christmas Through The Ages"**. Many of the groups that have participated in the past have been contacted and already are making their plans. However, Arlene has indicated that she will not be decorating any of the trees or areas she personally did last year. Those areas are: front door and rail, sleigh, conference room, front hall and stairs, back hall and bathroom. All of the rooms which previously had trees will again! The society provides the trees and lights for all of these rooms. They will be set up either Sunday, Oct. 29 after closing, or Monday, Oct. 30., depending on weather.



weather.

Some are more involved than others, but all contribute to the atmosphere of the holidays. The music room is also available. These areas all need to be decorated that last week of October (30 and 31) and November 1-3 so the museum can be ready for viewing by the membership the evening of November 3rd and open to the public Saturday November 4th.

If anyone or a group of individuals would like to participate in decorating the museum for this event, please contact Kathy Levo 937-393-4951 or Vicki Knauff at the museum.

Kathy Levo, Decorating Chair

HILLSBORO—1861 (continued)

nothing of import has ever happened here and anything before they were born must've been out of the "WILD WEST." Just read though this list of businesses found here in 1861.

Churches in town included Presbyterian, Rev. S. Steel; Methodist, Rev. W. G. W. Lewis; St. Mary's Church (Episcopal), no pastor at present; Baptist, Rev. Mr. Pearce; Catholic, Rev. Mr. Donohue; African Methodist, Rev. Harris Goings.

DOCTORS

- J. Kirby, residence on West Main Street, south side
- J. M. Johnston, East Main Street, south side
- J. W. M. Quinn, office on High Street, west side
- E. Holmes, office in J. Mendenhall's store
- C. C. Sams, corner of Beech and High Streets
(continued in future issue)

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