

# The TRACKER

## Terrace Park Historical Society

Vol. I No. 2

*Tracking Our Past and Present for the Future*

May 2002

### Archaeology in Terrace Park and the Surrounding Area

**Bob Genheimer**, speaker

Acting Curator of Geology for Cincinnati Museum Center

**Sunday afternoon, June 2 at 4 p.m.**

Community House

Interesting note: Mr. Genheimer was recently featured in a Cincinnati Enquirer article about his hobby of collecting old fountain pens.

## Tales from the Tracks

*There's something about the railroad era which captures our nostalgic yearnings for the old days. Certainly daily life in Terrace Park was affected by iron horses chugging up and down the corridor which was first the Little Miami Railroad and then part of the mainline of the Pennsylvania. Former resident Lee Stegemeyer, who moved to the village in 1937, and left in the 1970's, has shared some of his memories for our records. They are excerpted here:*

The elephant siding (Robinson circus' small siding south of the Elm bridge) turned a "minor" derailment into a major catastrophe. The story actually starts in 1940 or 1941 when Wooster Pike was being widened to four lanes. World War II was going like a hurricane and the highway people wanted to complete the widening from Mariemont to the Milford bridge. So-called shortcuts were made, but only one created a later problem. About a mile or two west of the Park, near a cluster of river camps, there is [quite a sharp bend] in the Little Miami. On top of the hill where the river bends, Wooster makes a gentle curve passing what had been the old Tarkington home. Take a closer look to the north side of Wooster and you'll see a valley. With the two lane Wooster there was a bridge over this stream. Because of the need to finish the job quickly, the engineers [decided to eliminate the planned lowering of the road and new bridge over the stream and make a drainage system for the creek. But the seepage of the water from the valley into the river caused the tracks to collapse slightly.] Everything was fine as long as trains went by the posted speed limit.

[For two miles from New Street south to this bend there is a six percent grade, the steepest on the Pennsylvania RR.] A hot-rod engineer on the first diesel-powered freight train to run out of Cincinnati to the east wanted to see how much of a head start he could make going up the hill and he went around that curve a bit too fast. The car about 20th back from the engine jumped the tracks and 'rode the ties' all the way to that elephant siding by the green. That caused the first car to jump the track and it proceeded to pull another half dozen cars with it, some almost landing on Terrace Place.....When the automatic braking finally stopped the engine [In a wreck, all brakes are automatically set to stop every car on the train.] was on the bridge at the Terrace Park-Milford line. "must have broke a line back there," was the engineer's comment.. At that time he knew nothing about the wreck!

### MYSTERY QUIZ ANSWERS

Happy McKee is the TPHS member who lived in five houses in the village.

Helen Campbell says, "So have I." Then there are the "Heil girls", Lynn Mileham and Susan Abernethy Frank. Each lived in six different T.P. houses—some of them together with their parents, Edna and Bud Heil.

## Society Welcomes New Members

Thirty four more members jumped on the trolley since our last meeting, bringing the total to 92 member families. They are:

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Marie Stoecklin  
Ted and Marilou Swensson  
David & Maggie Tobergte  
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Vilardo  
Chris & Tamara White  
Richard & Bert Wigton

### TPHS Board in Action

Not only did the board make the creative decision at its May meeting to name this publication *The Tracker*, but it adopted as the society's mission, "*Tracking Our Past and Present for the Future*".

Regular meetings will be held at the Community House at 4 p.m. on the first Sunday afternoon of February, May, and either November or December and the second Sunday afternoon in September.

Treasurer Bill Holloway reported Revenue of \$3722.00, Expenses of \$1280.74, and a Net Balance of \$2441.26.

The Tracker  
327 Rugby Avenue  
Terrace Park, OH 45174



June 2 at 4 p.m.  
COME!

### .....and some trivia

Was one Sunday morning in the summer of 1952 the day the TE telephone exchange changed from operator handled calls to dial?

Stan Miller Redux—(from minutes of the November 1942 Terrace Park Council meeting): "Eppa Rixey, dir. of civil defense activities, will be in charge of awarding of credentials and insignia to members of the defense council tonight at the comm. hs."

Former resident Dick Everhart tells that back in the good old days (pre-WWII) a bunch of the fellows had a pact to swim in the Little Miami every month of the year. They learned to swim with their heads out of water. Why? At that time Loveland and Milford dumped all their sewage into the river. Did any of our members participate in this sometimes chilly activity?