

TERRACE PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TRACKER

Volume 16 Issue 3

Summer 2017

*Tracking Our Past and
Present for the Future*



The Waldschmidt Homestead



Upcoming Events



**The new Terrace Park
directories will be on
sale at the
Labor Day Festival
For \$10**

In the next issue of *The Tracker*, watch for a report on the genesis of Terrace Park Historical Society.

**Tphistoricalsociety
@gmail.com**

As you pass through Camp Dennison, you will see a beautiful stone house on the west side of the Glendale-Milford Road (route 126). Here is the story of how Christian Waldschmidt, a veteran of the American Revolution, built the house and helped to establish a new community. Waldschmidt came to Southern Ohio in 1796 seeking a suitable place to make his home and raise his family. The land he chose was covered with a thick forest. Clear, running water flowed through the property. There was an abundance of wildlife but, more importantly freedom to live as he chose. Waldschmidt purchased over a thousand acres and began to establish a new community on the banks of the Little Miami River. He helped found a church, a school, and generally encouraged several industries necessary to maintain and grow the community. He built a cooperative distillery, a woolen mill, sawmill, and a blacksmith shop. He also built Ohio's first paper mill.

In 1803, Ohio became a state. In 1804, Waldschmidt built his house in the architectural style of the stone houses which were common in the Pennsylvania Dutch area where he was born and raised.

There are three doors across the front of the house. The one on the left was the entrance to the family's home. The middle door was the entrance to Mr. Waldschmidt's store where he bought or bartered many of the homemade items that were produced by the women in the area. The third door was the entrance to the tavern. There, the men came to trade or buy a variety of goods. It was a men only establishment.

During the Civil War, the house and surrounding area became a training and recruitment center. A hospital was built on the property and the house served as headquarters for General Joshua Bates. The smaller house, which Waldschmidt built for his daughter as a wedding gift, was used as a guard house. The camp was named after William Dennison, the then governor of the state of Ohio.

By 1941, the house was in a ruinous condition. Mr. and Mrs. Chester Kroger bought the property and donated it to the Ohio Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) along with \$5,000 to start the renovation. In 1953, the house was dedicated and opened to the public as a museum. The smaller house was restored and opened as the Camp Dennison Civil War Museum in 1998.

The Christian Waldschmidt House is considered one of the best examples of Pennsylvania Dutch architecture west of the Alleghenies. The DAR continues to research and collect furnishings of that period as well as several original pieces used by the family.

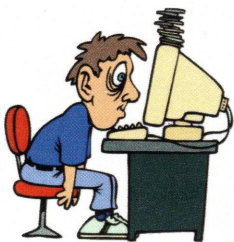
The members of the Terrace Park Historical Society are invited to tour the house and grounds on Saturday, September 16th, from 5 to 8 pm, and enjoy drinks and appetizers. Space is limited and reservations are required. The cost is \$10 per person. Please send payment to The Terrace Park Historical Society (PO Box 3, Terrace Park, Ohio 45174), to secure your reservation. This is an adults only event.

An Evening at The Birch

On Wednesday evening, June 14th, the Terrace Park Historical Society gathered at **The Birch**, the new restaurant in Terrace Park. While sampling good food and drink, the members listened to an informative talk given by owner Brett Tritsch about the history of the property. Did you know that the original building was constructed in 1832 and was used as a school until 1873? In 1876, The Kuntz family bought it and converted it into their home. They lived there until 1962.

Family lore says that when the school was being converted to a home, an unopened quart of Fleischman's Gin was found hidden behind the stone stairs wrapped in a Cincinnati Enquirer newspaper dated 1865. The newspaper announced the surrender of Robert E. Lee to Ulysses S. Grant at the Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865. That bottle has been passed from father to son. Greg Kuntz who is now the current owner, showed the unopened bottle to the group.

After several changes in ownership, the property was transformed from a small motel to The Yankee Dollar clothing store, Bob and Mary Tritsch bought the building and the business in 1967. When they retired, they leased the space to two or three other enterprises. Today, Aaron and Brett Tritsch own the property and have converted the site into a beautiful restaurant and named it **The Birch**.



TP Survey Renovation Project

TPSurvey.org has long been a gold mine of information about Terrace Park, used by everyone from homeowners to real estate agents to the members of the TP Historical Society. When a recent malware issue took the site down, I offered to help as I have a background in computer science.

The Survey represents many years of data collection - there are 56 streets, nearly 700 properties, and dozens of pieces of information for each property. All of it was stored in HTML tables generated by the Microsoft Front Page 2003 website builder.

Unfortunately, this product was no longer supported by Microsoft, and an alternative product had also been discontinued. In order to move the Survey to a different platform, all the information in the tables would have to be retrieved and organized in a consistent format.

This proved to be a challenge. Since the data had been collected over many years, there were discrepancies in the table structure. After a lot of experimenting I managed to extract most of it, but there are probably still some missing items which I am working to detect. (If you notice that the current information for your property doesn't match the original, please let me know - a button on the top right displays the original record.)

With the goal of making the Survey low maintenance, lightweight and user friendly, I custom-coded the front end and user interface in PHP. My hope is that the Survey continues to maintain a record of Terrace Park History for many years to come.

Submitted by Susan Rogers



A Message From Our President

"It's summertime and the living is easy".....what a wonderful thought. Everyone needs time to relax and recharge their batteries. However, at the Terrace Park Historical Society we look forward to an early fall program at the Waldschmidt House. The committee has been working on a fun and interesting program. Please join us for this upcoming event!

On another thought - it's been brought to my attention that some in the community have the perception that to work for the Historical Society one has to be a bit "older"....this perception could not be further from the truth! To sustain an organization, we need input from all ages. If learning about and helping on future programs sounds like something you would be interested in, please contact the Terrace Park Historical Society!

Look forward to seeing you at the Waldschmidt House!

Laurie Baird



Visit our website: tphistoricalsociety.org and find us on **Facebook**

Terrace Park Historical Society

100 Miami Avenue
Terrace Park, Ohio 45174

CONTACT US

Phone: (513) 248-1777

Mail: P.O. Box 3
Terrace Park, OH 45174

Email: tphistoricalsociety@gmail.com

tphistoricalsociety.org

Location: St. Thomas Church,
100 Miami Ave. Terrace Park,
Ohio 45174, lower level from Terrace Place entrance

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Permit #4959



TPHS Headquarters

St. Thomas Church
100 Miami Avenue
Terrace Park, Ohio 45174

Open: 1-4 pm Thursdays
(513) 248-1777
info@tphistoricalsociety.org

Officers:

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FALL EVENTS

Waldschmidt House Tour September 2017

Explore the history of one of the area's first settlements in nearby Camp Dennison. The settlement was founded by Christian Waldschmidt in 1794. This will be a family friendly event.

Membership Drive October 2017

We look forward to your continued support.