

**A few facts about the Niles Historical Society...**

Please take a moment to look at the address label on the front of the newsletter. If it has a \* on it, it indicates that you are current with your dues, according to our records. Our “year” runs from January to January the following year. Usually about November, we send out reminders for the membership to be renewed for the following year. .

Membership money is used for our “general fund” expenses. That includes publishing a newsletter and sending it to you, plus a wide variety of maintenance expenses at the museum. With postage costs, and printing costs there is not much left, so you can see our penny pinching goes on all year. We also rely on book sales, tours and donations to help pay the bills through the year, but the membership money is the main source of our funding.

As with most small museums we rely on our volunteers to do the work. We do, however have a lawn service which we pay monthly and at times we have to contract out other jobs that we can not do. Because of the average age of the volunteers many of us are no longer able to do the physical work. And as time moves on, we need to pay others to do the work.

Yes, it takes a lot of money to run the museum, just as it does your own home, but for the past 30 some years we have been richly blessed to have a fantastic volunteer group to do the work needed to create the Ward-Thomas Museum and maintain it into the show place it is today.

We know many of you have enjoyed the “Niles Register” and we are always glad to hear from you. If you are a member and have a friend or relation who would like to receive it, just send the name and address to us and we will send them a complimentary newsletter for one year so they can enjoy it too. We’ll be glad to put your friend on our mailing list.

Membership may be sent to:  
**Niles Historical Society**  
**P. O. Box #368**  
**Niles, Ohio 44446.**

Individual \$15.00. Family \$25.00 Patron \$50.00. Life \$500.00  
 “The Niles Register” Newsletter ~ Published 6 times a year.

Last month we started the series “Walk Around Town” by *David Dull*. Many have told us how you have enjoyed reading it. Before David became ill, he handed me the story he had written for the “Class of 1943 Newsletter” and said, “Here you are, use what you want of it, and put it in your newsletter.” David had faithfully served the Niles Historical Society as Treasurer for several years. David passed away on October 12. He will be deeply missed by many of his friends and his family. Now we will continue along the street as David remembered his town in 1940s.

The Niles Historical Society would like to preserve your family’s history by scanning your photographs to add to our digital archives. You can even write a short description to accompany your pictures.

“After crossing West Park Ave. Calvin’s Drug Store stands



as the first store on North Main Street. We may not want drugs, but Calvin’s has an old fashioned soda fountain with marble counter and stools and

they make a terrific chocolate milk shake as well as great sodas. They are more than willing to take our coins.

Having satisfied our thirst, we continue up the street to “Lippy’s” a ladies clothing store for the young and old alike where any number of our classmates have found the dress of their dreams. Then the East Ohio Gas Co., but we don’t have to pay the gas bill, our parents do that for us. But up against the north side of the building on the memorial grounds, there is a large Bill Board and on it are the names of all the young men of Niles who are serving theirs and our country.

There are also the names of young men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice and given “The Last Full Measure” so you and I can stand in awe while we look for the last names. We do not linger too long because soon some of our names will be printed on the board for other’s to view.

We now wander into *Miss Ida Sloan’s* bailiwick, an unimaginable storehouse of information and stories for



pure pleasure. All that is necessary is that you are able to read. Over in the corner there is *Tom Williams* and *Luella Knai*, heads together, pouring over a knowledgeable treatise, for a school report. At least it looks like that is what they are doing!!!!

Others are here also, *Eunice Round*, our valedictorian; *Katherine Bowden*, our salutatorian; and, *Clida, Joan, Doug, Josephine, Edward* and many others, all gathering

information for a book report, studying for an exam, or simply looking for a good read. But you won’t find “Lady Chatterly’s Lover” or any other smutty book on the shelves. Miss. Sloan hid all of those in her office.

I hate to leave the library because the girl I have loved since I was eight years old works there. She and I will marry in about nine years. She will provide me with two beautiful children and fifty-five years of what I think was a perfect marriage. She will also leave me thousands of wonderful memories. They all flood through my mind as we stand here. We must go before I make a complete fool of myself in this very public place. (Editor note: David married *Lois Barber*, who passed away on Jan. 8, 2007.)



Niles Historical Society  
P. O. Box 368  
Niles, Ohio 44446

Non-profit  
Organization  
US Postage Paid  
Niles, OH  
Permit #337

Visit our Website: [www.nileshistoricalsociety.org](http://www.nileshistoricalsociety.org)  
and check out the Photos and Stories links.

**Monthly Calendar**

**Public Open House**  
The first Sunday of each month 2-5 p.m.

Private tours may be scheduled by calling:  
The office 330.544.2143

**Membership meetings** – 10:00am  
The first Saturday each month  
**Executive meeting** – 9:30am  
prior to membership meeting.

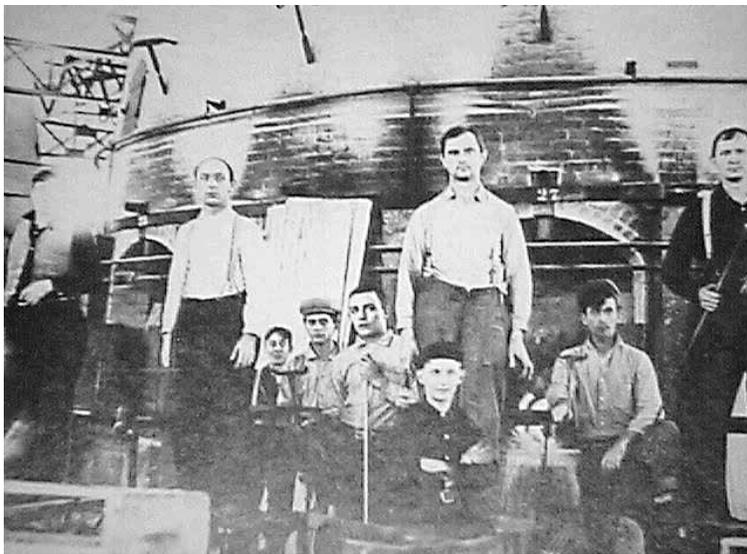
**Trustees:**

Fred Kubli, Jesse Scott, Roselyn Watson

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These two photographs, workers at G.E. glassworks and the smoldering ashes of the First United Methodist Church, show the purpose of The Niles Historical Society—Preservation.

Workers go where the jobs are, and with them come families with traditions and memories. There needs to be a collecting place for preserving this information.

Disasters happen, factories close, new areas expand to change a community. Memories of previous decades fade quickly, unless there is a place to keep the photographs and write the stories.

The Niles Historical Society maintains the Ward–Thomas Museum to preserve for future generations the history of Niles, Ohio.



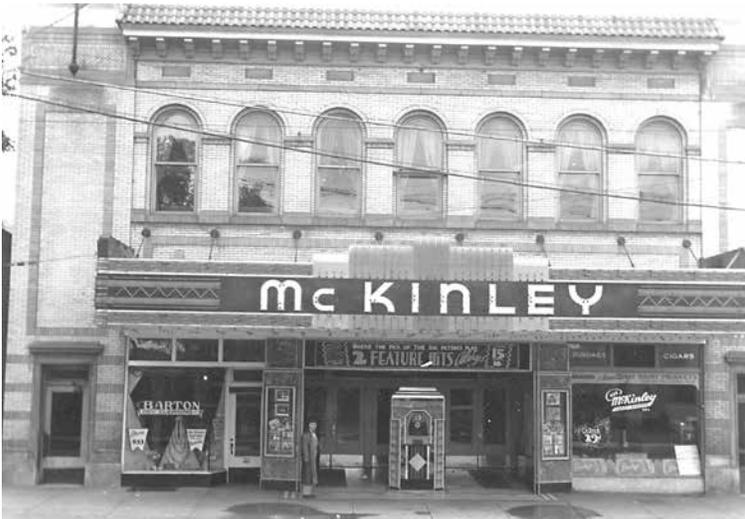
The First United Methodist Church burned down in 1951. The view is from the Post Office looking across to the Yuhasz Funeral Home parking lot. Notice the three-globed street lights and Fire Chief coupe.

**Again, please take a moment to look at the address label on the front of the newsletter. If it has a \* on it, it indicates that you are current with your dues. “Thank you” for your support.**

Our next stop is The First Presbyterian Church. I am not a member, but I belong to a Boy Scout Troop that met in the basement of this building. Unless I'm mistaken, *Fred Fisher* introduced me to scouting. Many, many things were learned, including how to be a better young man.



We now cross West Church Street and after passing several residences, we come to The McKinley Theater. Alas, no balcony and only "B" movies, but next door is the McKinley Sweet Shop where for several thin dimes, we can put a nickel in the music box, satisfy our sweet tooth and pass the time of day with some of our "northern" classmates like *John Coates*, *David Nolder* and *Russell Brauer*. And if we're really lucky, maybe *Rita Donegan* will stop by on her way home, all the while listening to Doris Day take us on a "Sentimental Journey"



As we watch some of our northern friends and classmates disappear over the Erie rail road tracks, waving to the guard sitting in his little house by the tracks, you and I cross to the east side of North Main Street.

If we had any money we might walk north to Stiver Chevrolet and look over the cars for sale. However, that much money is still a dream and there are no new cars to see. All manufacturing plants are making "war material". New cars are several years away. Some of my friends and I are working at the Lordstown Ordinance Depot on the weekends (remember the war effort) but we do not make enough money to purchase an automobile, nor could we get the "gas stamps".

So we turn south and cross Robbins Avenue. The first building we see is the relatively new Ohio Bell Telephone building. It still stands in the same place; full of equipment and has an AT&T sign on the front. We pass several private residents and arrive at the A&P Super Market. I am certain many of our parents bought some of the food we ate at the A&P. I am also certain some of our classmates worked as "stock boys" and "baggers" and we may see *Peggy Walters* who seemed fond of the A&P.

We continue walking past several more private residences and arrive at the corner of Church and Main Streets and the Niles Mobile Service & Gas Station. One of our classmates worked there part time, but my memory fails me, as it often does these days and I can't remember his name.



We cross Church Street, past several more private residences, including Chiaramonte's Shoe Repair and come to the Firestone Store. I don't know what the girls saw, but we boys dreamed of the day we could buy a car and "jazz it up" with all the various chrome accessories on display. In addition, there



were countless lawn and garden tools that would simplify our Saturday chores, if we could just talk our parents into buying some of them. However, why should they, they weren't doing the work." ...Atty. David Dull

## Mark your 2010 calendar

Our April dinner has been scheduled with *Sarah Webster Vodrey*, a 6th generation descendent of East Liverpool Potters as the guest speaker. Mrs. Vodrey is the Director of the Museum of Ceramics in East Liverpool, and will be speaking on "**Hidden Beauties: The Art Pottery of East Liverpool**". The dinner will be held at Ciminero's in Niles on April 27, 2010.

You will hear more about this in future newsletters.

## Niles McKinley Hall of Fame

On November 1, 2009 the **Niles McKinley Alumni Association** held a banquet to honor 6 more inductees into the Hall of Fame. This years inductees are *David Freel, Marcus McEvoy, David Pappada, Guy Simeone, OliveAnn Slotta* and *Louis West*.

For the past twelve years, the Niles Alumni Association has honored 85 people and given \$6,000. in scholarships financed by donations and membership dues. For more information, contact the Niles Board of Education.

## Spring bulbs planted



For most of us, we will be hibernating through the cold winter weather, but we have faith that spring will not be far behind. A donation for flower bulbs was given to the society and we purchased 100 white anemone, 50 hyacinth mixture and 250 "King Alfred" narcissus. It took a little work, but on one beautiful fall day we planted them all. Most of the daffodils were planted up the driveway and in the wooded area just east of the house. They will naturalize in that area and be a real show place for years to come. The hyacinths and anemone are along the walkway from the house to the greenhouse. We look forward to the day they bloom.

## Wishes for a happy holiday season.



Our Christmas Open House will be held on December 6, 2009 and then again on January 3, 2010 for those who can not attend in December. Again this year the home will be decorated with the holiday greens and tiny lights, candles and poinsettias throughout the museum. A treasured private collection of twenty-five Goebel bells are on the piano in the library.

These were manufactured by the **M.I. Hummel Figurine Company**, maker of figurines, bells and plates.

The decorating committee this year is; *Nancy Malone, Roselyn Watson, Marilyn Rankin, Sue Larson, Nonnie Woodford, and Patty Nelson*. Special music is planned.

Hours are 2-5 pm. both days. Donation \$5.00 with children under 12 free with adults.

Hope we see you there.

## Olive Street Bridge Is closed

On October 16th, the Olive Street Bridge that connects Niles and McDonald was closed indefinitely after it was inspected. The bridge is about 1,000 feet long and spans the Mahoning River. It is estimated the cost to replace it will be \$4,000,000.



According to our records, the bridge was built at a total cost of \$500,000 with the **Lake Erie Construction Co. of Cleveland** as the contractor. It was completed in November 1922 and was built mostly of concrete. Note the wooden steps going up to the top of the bridge in the picture.

## Niles Mahoning Glass Plant is closing in Niles.

The General Electric Company has announced the **Niles Mahoning Glass Plant** will be closing the end of July 2010. Some of the operation will be moving to Somerset, Ky. and some to China. Glass plant products are becoming obsolete as the U. S. and other nations are moving toward more energy-efficient bulbs.

The **Fostoria Glass Specialty Company** was built in 1910 on the corner of N. Main Street and East Federal Street. Hand-blown glass bulbs were made there. In 1911 it was acquired by General Electric Company. In 1924 the hand operation was replaced by a mechanized process.

We have several hand blown glass light bulbs, made in Niles, in our collection in the museum. Some of our readers will remember when *Ronald Reagan* visited the plant in



October 1959. Seen here are l-r, *Pat Linaman, Catherine T. Morrison, Ronald Reagan, Beatrice Fateley, Virginia O'Reilly Brothers*. Through the years, many Niles people have worked at the plant on Federal Street in Niles. We hate to see another landmark close. Just another sign of the times we live in.