



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

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

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.



G.A.R.
MEMORIAL DAY

Surviving members of the McPherson Post # 116 of the *Grand Army of the Republic* on Memorial Day 1922.

The McPherson Post was dedicated October 21, 1892

Notes from 1885 & 1886

January, 30, 1885

Dr. J. F. Strough has purchased a fine medicine wagon.

April 17, 1885

A class of nine will graduate from Niles High School at the end of this term, the largest Class that has ever graduated from the school.

The list of graduates is from the Annual School Report, page 103. (The image was scanned from the documents buried in the time capsule in the corner stone of Niles McKinley High School, which later became Edison Junior High School

Summer of 1886

The first telephone in Niles was installed in the home of *George L. Campbell*. Also during that time, wires of the postal Telegraph and Western Union Telegraph entered the city

Also in 1886

The mayor and solicitor each received \$100 per year and their salaries were given a boost to \$400 and \$200 respectively in 1898

How things have changed, 123 years later.

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

High School Alumni

1875-1912

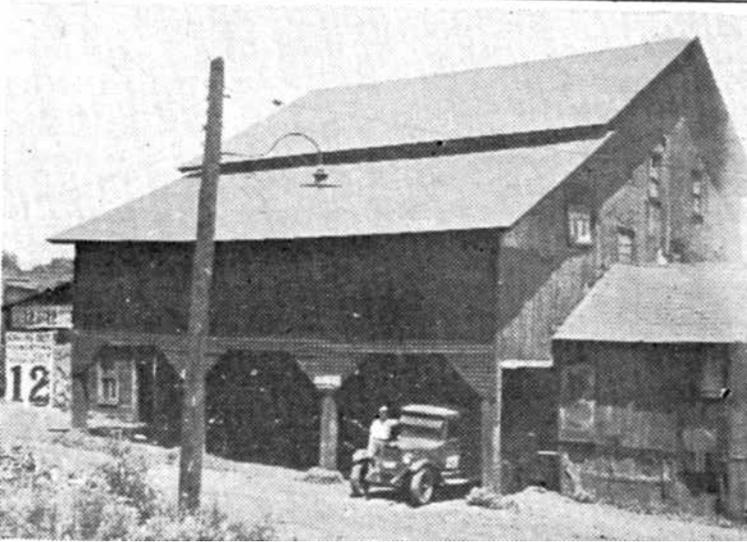
1885

Mame Anderson Wilkins (Mrs. Gilbert),
Warren, O.
Lizzie Bear Pinkerton (Mrs. H. J.),
Warren, O.
Ella Benedict Hitchings, 2166 E. 68th
St., Cleveland, O.
Kittie Lockwood Craig (Mrs. Geo.),
Niles, O.
Sarah Lloyd Cramer (Mrs. George),
Niles, O.
Grace Moore McIntyre, 318 Porter Ave.,
Warren, O.
Alice Orwig Thompson (Mrs. W. H.),
1131 Portland St., Pittsburg, Pa.
Jennie Williams Summers.*
Louis Griffith, Niles, O.

How Niles Got its Name

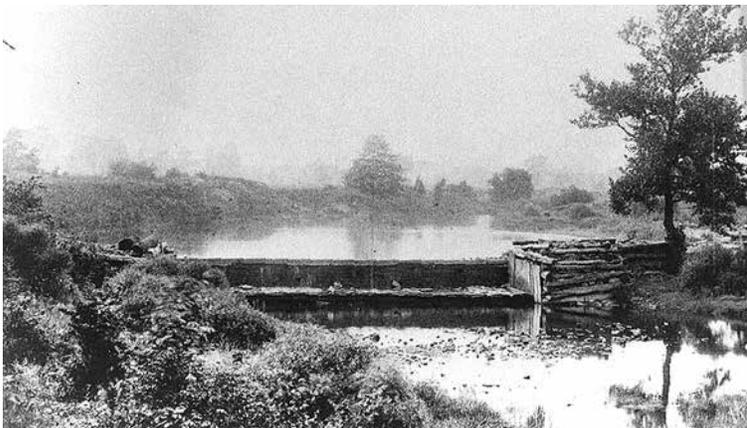
The two brothers, *Daniel* and *James Heaton*, constructed on Yellow Creek the first blast furnace in the Mahoning Valley, and probably the first blast furnace west of the Alleghenies, thus becoming the founders of the industry that eventually made the region one of the leading industrial areas in the United States.

In about 1806, James Heaton selected as his permanent settlement the vicinity near the junction of Mosquito Creek and the Mahoning River. He purchased the land along the creek for at least a mile and a half north of the river. He built his home, a saw mill and a grist mill. This was the first industry in what is now called Niles.

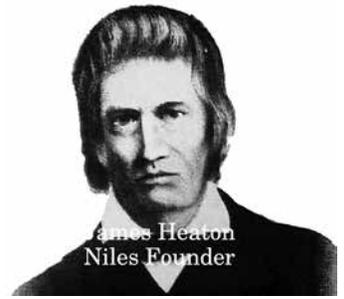


The saw mill was abandoned, but the old grist mill, with its sturdy timbers was still in use in 1934 by *Drake* and *McConnell*. It was built of oak planks two feet wide and two and one half inch thick, and axe-hewn beams and pillars more than one foot square. The parts were fitted and held together with wooden nails, the old grist mill stood as a monument to the hard labor and capable workmanship of pioneer builders.

To power the mill, James Heaton utilized the only available source, water. At the site of the present dam on the Mosquito Creek, he constructed a dam and south of that the gate and entrance to a mill race, leading to a huge wooden water wheel at the mill, a third of a mile distant. After the introduction of the electric power in 1915, the need for the mill race passed and finally the old land mark disappeared when the park commission in 1927 filled in the abandoned bed as a part of the Central Park improvement program. The Grist Mill building stood for sometime as a warehouse for the distribution of flour and other products milled elsewhere.



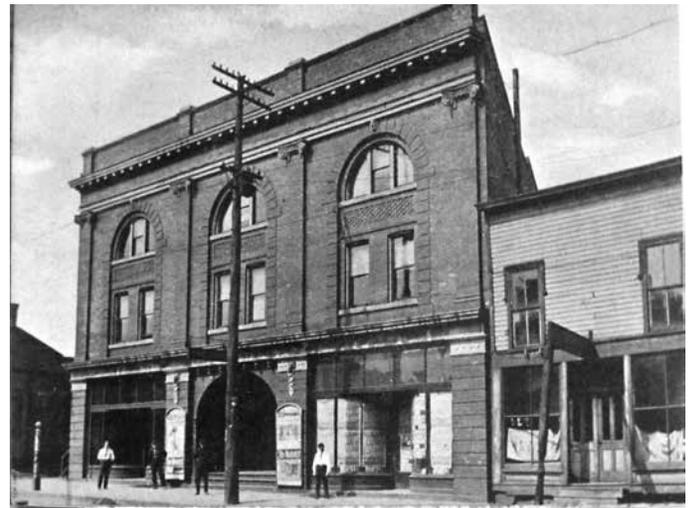
After building his grist mill, James Heaton constructed in 1809 a blooming forge here, which manufactured the first bar iron in Ohio. The pig iron for this product, Heaton had obtained from the Yellow Creek furnace in Poland; but when war was declared in 1812 the furnace men enlisted or were drafted and the furnace closed. James Heaton immediately made plans to supply his own pig iron requirements and in so doing developed an industry that for many years was to attract settlers to the new community in *Weathersfield Township*.



The Heaton forge is believed to have stood on the bank of the Mosquito Creek near the Baltimore and Ohio railroad bridge across the creek. In 1812 James Heaton borrowed \$1,448 from his brother, John, and in 1813 completed the construction of a charcoal blast furnace capable of producing the pig iron need for the manufacture of bar iron and other products at the Heaton forge. He named his blast furnace "Maria Furnace" in honor of his daughter, *Maria*, believed to be the first white child born in Niles.

By 1834 the settlement had reached the proper proportions of a village so James Heaton planned the streets, marked off the lot division and named the village. Until 1834 the settlement was appropriately called "Heaton's Furnace", but James Heaton gave it a new name "Nilestown" in honor of *Hezekiah Niles*, editor of the Niles Register, a Baltimore paper, who's whig principals Heaton greatly admired. Nilestown remained the name until 1843 when the Post Office Department for convenience shortened it to "Niles" and that is how Niles got its name.

Verbeck Theatre, Opera House, then The Warner Theatre



The *Verbeck Theatre* was constructed about 1904 on the west side of Furnace Street, or what is now known as State Street. Traveling repertoire companies gave such plays as "The Coward". In 1907 the Welsh Chorus was brought from Wales, through the efforts of *Arthur E. Davis* to perform at the Verbeck. Later it became an Opera House and then the Warner Theatre, managed by *Ben Warner*.

Additional photo on page 4

The following is a tribute to *Bill Bauman* written by his friend *Dick Bullock*.

William D. Bauman
June 13, 1929 — October 3, 2008

In between those years, Bill was to be found a person who loved life, enjoyed meeting people from all facets of life and basked in encompassing history, especially local in and around Niles.

Bill grew up on the south side of Niles, known to many as "Goat Hill", emblematic of the rich Welsh background. He attended Garfield grade school and then moved on to Niles McKinley Jr. High and High School.



During his high school years, two of Bill's important participations were playing baritone in the school band and being a member of the *Niles First Methodist Youth Fellowship* where he attended church. He was also active in the Warren Junior Military Band under the direction of *Donald Hurlbrink*.

After graduation from high school, Bill began to work with General Electric at Ohio Lamp in Warren, his duties had him traveling extensively throughout the country with an office in Nela Park in Cleveland. He lived in Shaker Heights and kept his home there after retiring and until his passing.

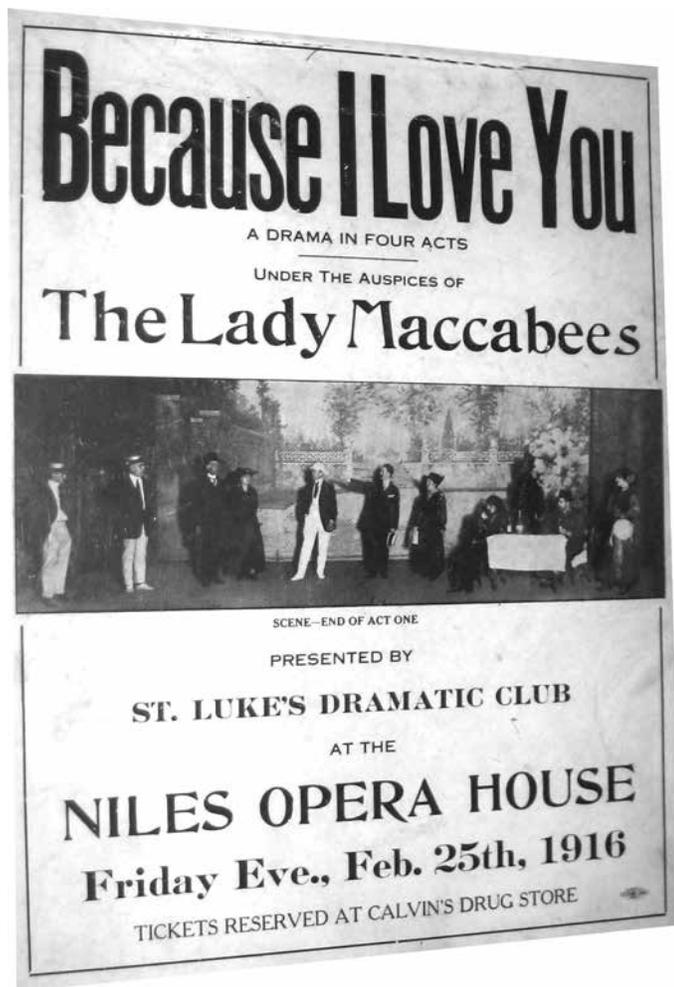
Bill was most proud of his roots in Niles; He kept in touch with the Historical Society, often came back on Sundays to attend church and communicated with many in his Niles High School class of 1947. He often visited with ex-classmates in his travels around the country in connection with his work.

In summary it can be said Bill left his mark in so many ways, he will be missed.

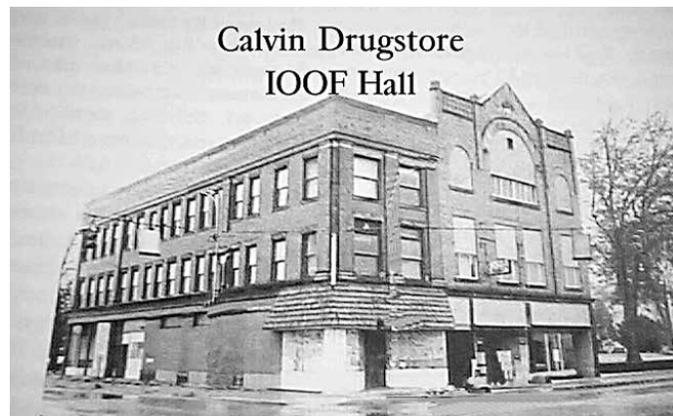
Editor Note: Bill Bauman moved to Cleveland, years ago, but he never forgot his home town of Niles, Ohio. He remembered more about Niles than most of us ever knew, and often provided details most of us have long forgotten. He was also very generous by remembering the Society in his estate. We deeply appreciate his thoughtfulness.



Remember wading in the circular pool and standing under the fountain to cool off on a hot sultry summer day or listening to a band concert playing patriotic songs on the 4th in Central Park?



Niles Opera House Advertisement
(on display at Ward-Thomas Museum)



1976 photo of *Calvin's Drugstore* at the corner of Main and West Park. *Zamarelli's* barbershop is at the back and Western Union and locksmith in the front, upstairs was the *International Order of Odd Fellows*. The Warner family photos including *Ben Warner*, who managed the Warner Theatre, and his wife, *'Ma' Warner*.

