

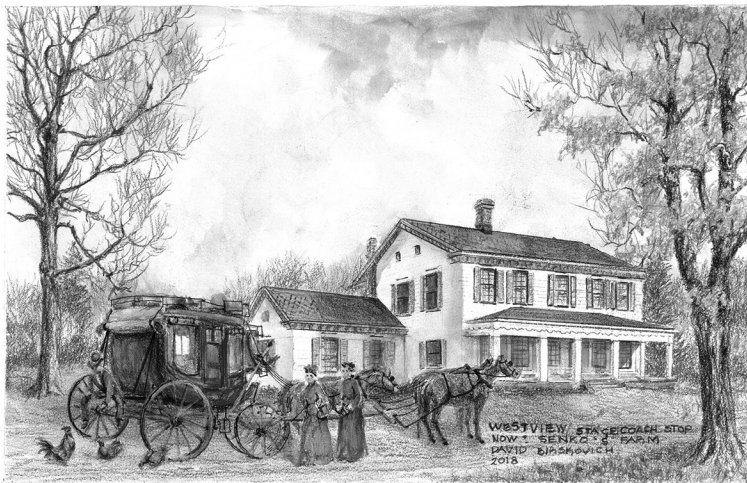
President's Message

March roars in like a lion and goes out like a lamb. I hope so! The crocuses, tulips and daffodils are ahead of schedule and are poking their way to spring early. My sincere "thank you" to all of you who have renewed your membership to the Niles Historical Society. "Welcome and thank you" to our new members.

At this time I would like to encourage all of our members to consider becoming active members. Your talents are needed to keep this organization viable. There are about twenty active members out of almost four hundred. Even those who live miles away can help by adding their memories to our newsletter.

Ralph Tolbert has been busy adding more stories of Niles history to the Society website. There is also a link to membership recruitment.

David Birskevich who creates colorized drawings of old Niles has presented the Society with more of his work. David, a resident of McKinley Heights, added drawings of the Hat-o-Mat, Ma Perkins, Handy Andy, Fire and Police City Hall 1890 and Butler-Robbins Theater 1935 and more to the collection. These will be on display in the Westenfield Room.



The Senko farm, on the east side of Route 422 near Arby's, was once the Westview stagecoach stop between Pittsburgh and Cleveland.

Drawing by David Birskevich.

The Society welcomes *Lloyd Dean* of Morehead, KY. A man of many firsts in his ninety plus years is descended from those who emigrated from Virginia to Olive Hill, KY to Niles. He has documented the ancestry of families who came from Olive Hill. Mr. Dean is a prolific writer and has donated many of his writings on Appalachia to the Society.

Sandy Bilovesky has written an article on the Ohio-Pennsylvania Canal that connected Akron to Pittsburgh through Niles. The story will be published in the *Tribune Chronicle* April 25 as part of the history series.

The Society will be participating in the Community Connections Fair on Saturday, April 23 from 1–4 PM. The goal of the event is to connect the Niles community with local organizations and resources. This free event is an excellent opportunity for networking with the public and other vital institutions in the community.

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Another Niles Landmark is Demolished.



Built in 1922 to house the Knights of Pythias, this building was known to most of us as The Daily Times Building.

The Knights of Pythias was founded in Washington D.C. in 1864. The cardinal principles of the organization are friendship, charity, and benevolence. It strives to gather into one fraternity men who appreciate the true meaning of friendship as Damon showed Pythias in Greek literature. The Niles lodge was instituted in 1882 and first met in the old Odd Fellows Hall then located on South Main Street.

Demolition of the blighted and vacant Niles Times Building began August 2, 2021. The building would have become 100 years old in January 2022.

From 1922 to 1993, The *Niles Daily Times* (later *Niles Times*) was a newspaper in the city. In 1993, the building closed, and the city purchased it three years later. For several years, the water department called the building home, and some of the building was used for storage of various documents ranging from court dockets to tax records. In 2018 the building was deemed unsafe and the water department moved out. Since then the building has been vacant. The new space will be used to provide new parking for the future revitalization of the downtown businesses. *Nathaniel Hawthorne, Tribune staff writer.*

A sampling of three editions of the *Niles Daily Times*, 1934, 1959, and 1990, reveal why the daily newspaper was so essential. The community newspaper provided information about National, State and most especially local news— who was getting married, who died, local sports, advice, and local business ads, and all featured information about the families that lived in Niles.

A list of topics from the October 22, 1934 edition: Town Talk with *James Wick*, 5–10–15 Years Ago, a full page of Society & Club news featuring dances, birthdays, church notes, sick list, births, deaths, wedding showers, engagements, a page of world news in photos, a full page of local and national sports, a full page with the school newspaper *The HiCrier*, radio station program lists, cross-word puzzle, and a comics section with a Magazine Column showing fashions for women.

The October 27, 1959 *Niles Daily Times* edition cost 5 cents compared to the 1934 paper which cost 2 cents. Added to the list are Temperatures, Dear Abby, a larger editorial page and national editorials, Town Talk is now by *Agnes Lopatta*, sports now appears on two pages, TV listings and show reviews, and a page of classified ads.

The newspaper edition for November 15, 1990 is now published by *Phoenix Publications*. New features are: Sound Off, Letters to the Editor, a Dining and Entertainment page, and Health and Fitness topics.

The demise of the local newspaper written by people who lived in the Niles community is sad, especially when you consider today's social media as its replacement.



Ward-Thomas Museum
Home of
The Niles Historical Society
503 Brown Street
Niles, OH 44446

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

Preserving and promoting Niles' History for future generations

Visit our Website: <https://www.nileshistoricalsociety.org>
Check out the Photographs and Stories links.

Monthly Calendar

Museum 'Open House'
The first Sunday of each month, 2-5
Last tour begins at 4 pm

Membership Meetings

10:00 am First Saturday of each month
Call for private tours to be scheduled
330.544.2143

Officers

Anna Maria Beagle.....President
Dave Martin.....Vice-President
Lynda Ralston.....Treasurer
Coleen Tominey.....Secretary
Ruth Van Huffel.....Corr. Secretary

Audrey John.....Curator
Ralph Tolbert.....Newsletter and Website

Trustees:

Anne Townley, Nancy Malone, and Sandy Bilovesky



Marooned by flood on Park Avenue Niles Ohio, March 26th, 1913.
Note the man standing on a board with a paddle.



Calendar of Events

April and May 2022

Meetings:

First Saturday of the Month at 10:00 AM –Westenfield Room

Open House:

First Sunday of the Month, 2–5 PM
Last tour begins at 4:00 PM

Community Connections Fair:

Saturday, April 23, 1–4 PM

Yard Sale:

Date: To Be Determined

The Society will sponsor a yard sale this summer and will take donations of household items. No clothing items accepted.

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If you are interested in gardening, the Society needs help restoring and maintaining the Victorian garden behind the greenhouse. *David Martin* will need volunteers to help with winter clean up of the grounds.

If you would like to contact the Society please call Sandy Bilovesky at 330–652–8329 or Anna Marie Beagle at 330–856–5274.

Please leave a message if no answer.

Niles Historical Society Website:
<https://www.nileshistoricalsociety.org>

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“From a volume standpoint, it was a record flood,” Loehlein said. The 1913 flood consisted of “a bunch of intense rainstorms with short periods of little or no rain in between,” he added. Over the four days, the Mahoning Valley got between 7 and 9 inches of rain, Loehlein said, adding that rainfall averages were 8.8 inches in the west branch basin of the Mahoning River, 7.15 inches on the river’s main stem and 8.35 inches along Mosquito Creek, which flows into the river in Niles.

— By Peter H. Milliken



The Gilmore Restaurant and Manhattan Hotel on South Main Street and Water Street during the 1913 flood.

Visible are people watching from second floor windows and standing on the roof. The building is dated 1892.



Main Street looking south from Mill Street (State Street) during flood.



Looking North, the Gilmore Restaurant and Manhattan Hotel on South Main Street and Water Street during the 1913 flood.



The South Main Street iron bridge was extensively damaged during the flood of 1913. The Viaduct, built in 1933, would arch over the Mahoning River.



Third Street School, now Garfield School, with a rowboat floating in the street.



Mosquito Creek bridge over West Federal Street. At the height of the 1913 flood, the water was over the floor of the bridge.

For additional photographs of the 1913 Flood:
<https://www.nileshistoricalsociety.org/Flood.htm>

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Downtown History and Memories



Photo taken of The United Cigar located at 28 East Park Avenue on the corner of Park and Pine Alley in downtown Niles before urban renewal.

Martha Pallante—My grandfather built the building that housed the parkway in 1921. Family businesses there until 1940s. Uncle Ralph ran Kings news stand. I went every Saturday morning with my dad (Don). *Shirley Muoio Sullivan*—Next to the Parkway was my *Aunt Mary* and *Uncle Nick Sorianos'* Music and Appliance Store...my brother *Anthony Muoio* (a great musician), my sister *Cassie Muoio Scala* and I worked there...enjoyed listening to music with friends in the record booths and selling appliances too (not as much). Cassie married *Tom Scala* who was circulation manager for the Pallante Newsstand and I married *Jack Sullivan* class of 1950.



Jean Corliss—My dad and *Hugh McGarrity* used to stop in. Hugh and my father looked at opening a bar restaurant in the old train station. Unfortunately my father died and then Hughie opened the Old Main. *Paul Lawrence*—Parkway next to Niles Book and News, when they closed they moved the liquor license to the Old Main.

1913 Flood Niles, Ohio

The recent heavy snowmelt caused rivers to rise but nothing like the March 26th 1913 Flood that affected Niles and surrounding areas.



Map of 1913 Flood Plain

Trudy E. Bell, M.A., now considered the foremost national authority on the Flood of 1913, in describing the effects of the flood is quoted as saying—"This mammoth storm system with its ferocious tornadoes and floods set records for fatalities and flood heights that still stand today and which dwarfed both Sandy and Katrina in geographical extent created institutions that evolved into today's United Way, Red Cross, Rotary, IBM, and Cox Communications."

Newspaper account of 1913 Flood.

Flooding from the four-day rain that began on Easter, March 23, 1913, however, was unprecedented and never to be equalled in the century that followed. "It was attributable solely to an almost unceasing rain of four days and four nights, something akin to the biblical deluge."

Joseph Butler, the industrialist from Niles, who founded the Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown, wrote in his first-hand account of the event, "Although Mahoning River dwellers were forced to flee their homes, it was the industries that suffered worst. All of these located in the river valley were put hopelessly out of operation, the water standing many feet deep in the mill buildings and covering the machinery."

Immediately after the 1913 flood, the Ohio Legislature allowed the formation of conservancy districts and authorized counties to form three-member boards to construct and maintain flood-control structures.

In the Mahoning Valley, the Lake Milton dam was completed in 1916, forming the lake that would increase Youngstown's industrial water supply and begin the creation of water-storage capacity to alleviate flooding here.

In the decades that followed, dams were built to create and regulate the water levels of Berlin, West Branch, Mosquito and Shenango River Lake reservoirs. Those lakes became part of a vast U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-managed network of water-storage lakes that would reduce downstream flooding, help maintain consistent river water depths and provide recreational boating opportunities. Each fall, the Corps reduces water levels in these lakes to increase their capacity to store snow melt and spring rains, and thereby reduce downstream flooding.

"It was officially called the 'reservoir design flood,' for Berlin, Mosquito and West Branch", said *Werner Loehlein*, a hydraulic engineer with the Corps in Pittsburgh. "Those lakes and dams were designed to withstand a recurrence of the 1913 flood, but with some water going over the dams' emergency spillways", he explained.