

President's Message:

Dear Friends of the Niles Historical Society:

The yard sale on September 23, 2023 was a success. Thank you to all who donated items for the sale. As part of "living history" the Sons of the American Revolution showcased items from the Revolutionary War.



The Society also participated in the Pumpkin Walk at the McKinley Memorial on October 25, 2023.

The Society continues participation in plans for America 250 – Ohio. Needed repairs on the property are ongoing. The City grant writer, *Bianca Rozenbald*, is busy seeking funds to benefit the Ward – Thomas property.

McKinley Christmas will be celebrated on December 2, 2023 from 12 – 4 PM. Participants include the McKinley Memorial Library, National McKinley Birthplace Museum, Niles Historical Society, and the Von Isley Estate. The Students of the Niles Key Club will dress as elves and volunteer at each site.

Transportation will be provided to take participants to each site. Each site will provide snacks, tours and entertainment for all ages.

The Society will also participate in the Festival of Trees at the McKinley Birthplace Museum during the month of December.

The Trumbull County Commissioners are reviewing a request submitted by the Society two years ago for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to be used for preservation of the Ward – Thomas House property. Funds sought are \$63,050. The Society has been contacted by the Trumbull County Auditor, *Martha Yoder* and the Commissioners office to complete necessary documents.

As always you as a member of the Niles Historical Society are encouraged to participate. Would you share your family's history or share a memory in the newsletter? Would you share your gardening expertise and help plan the landscaping on the property? Would you share your love of history with our young people? Your guidance is needed.

Visit the Niles Historical Society website:
<https://www.nileshistoricalsociety.org/>

Two Undefeated Teams in the Same Year–1954.

Niles Daily Times January 18, 1975

Joseph Bassett, 75, who carved a niche in the Niles City Schools as a multi-sports coach and educator died January 17, 1975.

Joining the Niles City Schools in 1947, Bassett gained recognition as one of the best multi-sports coaches Niles McKinley ever had.

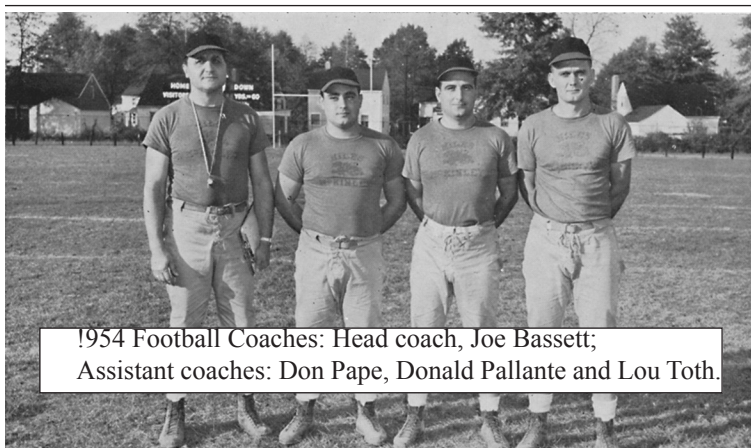
He served as head football coach for five seasons from 1953–1957 and had the first undefeated team in the history of the school in 1954. The team held the title of Steel Valley Champions for three years.

Testimonial

In recognition of his 18 years of successful and dedicated coaching of the McKinley High School Red Dragons Basketball Team during which time he guided the teams to one regional, four sectional and three district championships and one undefeated season for a career total of 225 wins, we, the faculty and staff of McKinley High School do hereby present this testimonial to Joseph Bassett as tangible evidence of our appreciation.

Niles, Ohio, June 10, 1965.

Don Bassett, Dick Trimb, Paul Collins, Bill Quilty, Paul Mandras, Bob DeMont, Dick Grainger, Ronald Filipan, Tom LaPolla, Albert Penska, Tom Gonella, M. Bono, Phil Guiliano, D. Quilty, M. Naples.



1954 Football Coaches: Head coach, Joe Bassett;
Assistant coaches: Don Pape, Donald Pallante and Lou Toth.

As head basketball coach for 18 seasons, he compiled 225 victories and 126 losses. In 1954 he coached the first undefeated team in the school's history recording five wins in NEO Sectional tournaments, one win in the Ohio State High School Regional tournament, three wins in the NEO District Tournament and the Ohio State semi-finals in 1949.

He was one of only three coaches to go undefeated in two sports in one year, 1954. Bassett also served as the school's golf coach.



1954 unbeaten Varsity basketball team. Not only was this a championship team but *Dick Trimb* made the first team All-Ohio. He set a school scoring record of 421 points and his season total was 547 points.

Front: *Bob DeMont, Dick Trimb, Don Mohn, Coach Bassett, Paul Collins, Bill Quilty and Paul Mandras*. Back: *Hewitt, Bruck Boron, Dick Grainger, Ronald Filipan, Tom LaPolla, Albert Penska, Tom Gonella, M. Bono, Phil Guiliano, D. Quilty and M. Naples*.

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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: 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

Westenfield Room
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

Audrey John.....Curator

Ralph Tolbert.....Newsletter and Website

Trustees:

Anne Townley, Nancy Malone, and Sandy Bilovesky

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Of his 31 years with the Niles School System, he spent 21 years in the guidance Department and had previously taught science and physical education.

He retired from the school system in 1978 citing, "I have reached the apex of a career in education and I feel I can't go any higher in the field. I can't stand still. I feel I have eight more years of activity ahead of me."

In 1961, he entered the political arena winning the Democrat council-man-at-large post. He entered the race for reelection but removed himself from the race to devote more time to his career in education. In 1967 he entered the race for Mayor of Niles.

He also served as Recreation Director for Niles, Girard, and the City of Warren under the Federal Works Agency. He was also a field representative and supervisor for Trumbull and Portage Counties.



Joe Bassett with Jefferson School playground team.

Born March 30, 1906 in Niles, Ohio, he was the son of *Nicola* and *Maria Angela Mango Bassett* and spent his life in the city. Surviving are his wife, *Lucille Altiero Bassett*, also a retired teacher from the Niles School Schools to whom he was married October 31, 1942, one brother, *James*, and one sister, *Mrs. Theresa DeMatthews*, both of Niles. One brother and three sisters preceded him in death.

Niles Daily Times March 3, 1962

Niles Cinderella teams of the past-move over, looking over your shoulders are the 1962-62 McKinley High Red Dragons who Friday night bumped off number 1 seeded Poland, 59-53, to win a Class A Sectional title. The team includes Managers *Larry Verhosek* and *Ray Venetti*, team: *John Knight, Bo Rein, Rick Sygar, Carmen Vivolo, Dave 'Pinky' Altiero, Dick Leonard, Tom Grainger, Tom James, Jim Hutchings, Jim Berline, Dave Nestor* with head coach Joe Bassett and assistant coach *Bill Swift*.

The Dragons now make tracks for the District playoffs in the footsteps of two other unheralded McKinley quints, the teams of 1949 and 1960. (The 1954 team was undefeated in regular season competition).

All three teams, under the guidance of Joe Bassett, have followed the identical pattern, suffering through miserable season only to suddenly catch fire and burn up the tournament trail.

Calendar of Events:

November 4, 2023, Saturday, 10 AM: Business meeting Westenfield room
November 5, 2023, Sunday, 2 PM- 5 PM: Open House
December 2, 2023, Saturday, 12 PM – 4 PM M^cKinley Christmas
Month of December: Festival of Trees M^cKinley Museum

Two and one-half times the floor space occupied by the Bolotin-Drabkin Furniture Company at 29 South Main Street will be at the command of the company at its new location, 40 South Main Street which opened Friday.

In the old building, the floor space available was slightly better than 4,000 square feet, while in the new location the space to be used will be nearly 11,000 square feet, besides the warehouse which will afford another 3,000 feet.

The warehouse is to be used for the display of used furniture and to house furnishings to be disposed of in the store, company officials said.

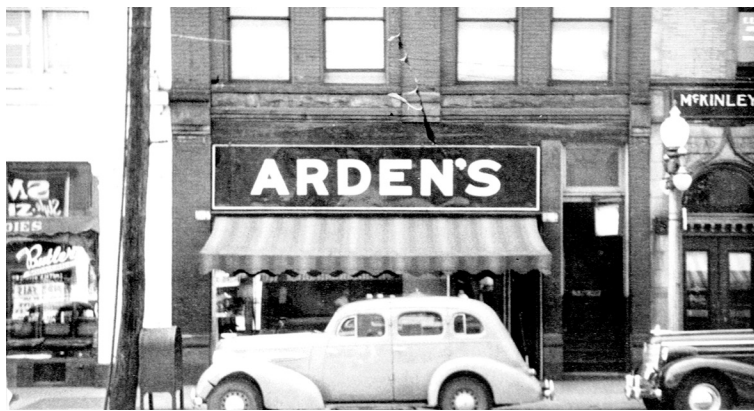
There are three floors and a basement at the 40 South Main Street address, each floor being 27 feet in width and 100 feet in depth with the basement of equal proportions.

The first floor will be occupied by special numbers in living room, dining room and bedroom furniture, ornaments and floor and bidge lamps, arranged in an attractive manner. During the year, seasonal merchandise will also be displayed on the first floor.

On the second floor will be bedroom and dining room furniture, while the third floor will be used to display of living room furnishings, rugs, tables, phonographs, smoking sets and lamps.

In the basement a full line of high grade stoves and kitchen outfits will be on display.

Considerable has been done in order to get into shape for the opening. Steel beams have been placed in the ceiling on this floor and there will be no poles or braces to obstruct the view of prospective buyers. This was done at great cost and aided greatly in bringing the cost of the remodeling figure that the company was obliged to meet.



After the closing of the Bolotin-Drabkin Furniture Store in 1936, a new furniture company, Arden's Furniture Store, took over the building. Above photograph shows the display windows with the Butler Grille and the McKinley Federal Savings and Loan bank on each side of the Benedict Building.

Below is a postcard advertisement displaying metal tube kitchen tables and chairs, rolls of linoleum flooring and stoves.



Photograph of The Olde Main Ale & Chowder House

Rampage at the Olde Main. Daily Times 5.17.90

It's that time of year again-the 13th Annual "Ramp Festival" starts this Saturday at the Olde Main & Chowder House. This event was started by former Olde Main owner Hugh McGarrity 12 years ago

Niles Daily Time 9.18.1986

Hugh McGarrity came to Niles from the East Coast and opened the Olde Main & Chowder House March 27, 1977. He said, "He could find here in Niles the kind of salon he was used to back East." McGarrity recalled, "The kind of men's bar you find in Boston that serves good food. So he decided to put a Boston-style bar in Niles." The site for the Olde Main sits on the birthplace of the President William McKinley.

Hugh operated the bar until his death November 21, 1985. McGarrity's brothers, Mark and George, took over the tavern, but decided earlier this year to put it up for sale.

Niles daily Times 12.8.87 Jim Flick

The Olde Main & Chowder House may be about to change hands. Niles resident, Carol Lepsesty is attempting to acquire the landmark tavern, according to her lawyer, Daniel P. Thomas of Warren.

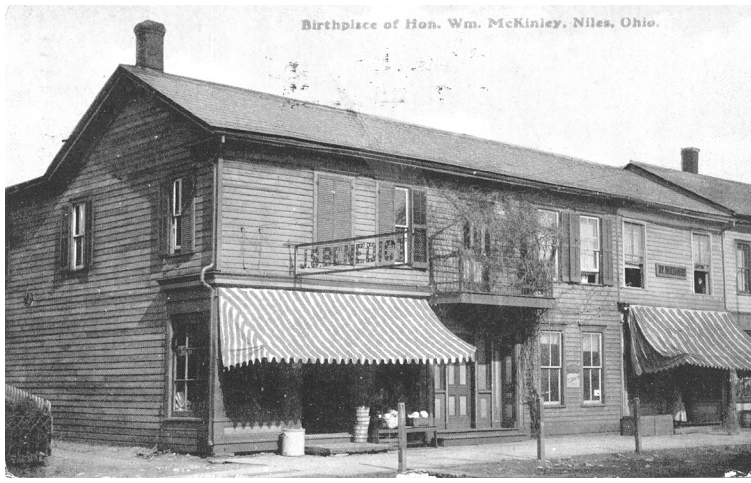
Lepsesty's CRM Entertainment Inc. has filed a transfer application with the Ohio Department of Liquor Control, asking that the Old Main's liquor license be transferred to the company from the estate of Hugh McGarrity.

The price Lepsesty is paying for the business has not been disclosed, but Mark McGarrity said earlier this year that he and his brother were asking \$250,000.

Thomas admitted the sale is contingent upon the transfer of the liquor license and remarked, "There should be no problem with it." Thomas described his client as a Niles native who moved to California but has moved back to the city.

Last Wednesday, City Council received notice of the liquor license transfer application. The notice was accepted and referred to Safety Director Anthony Marsico and Police Chief John Ross. This is standard procedure. If the city officials would find something unsatisfactory in Lepsesty's background, an objection to the transfer request could be filed. However, city officials are not likely to object.

Before It Was The Olde Main Chowder House



The home of William McKinley Sr. on the west side of Main Street. Sometime before 1875 the house was enlarged and converted into a store owned by *J. S. Benedict*. In the 1890's half of it was moved to Riverside Park and half to the back alley. A bank and the Benedict building were constructed on the site.

The City National Bank was built in 1893 on the site of the McKinley home on South Main Street. It opened its doors in 1884 with a capital of \$60,000.00 *H. H. Mason* was president. It closed within a short time and the Dollar Savings Bank Co., which had opened in temporary quarters in 1903, relocated in this building in 1905. They remained here until the new Dollar Bank Building was complete in 1918. The McKinley Savings & Loan, organized in 1918, occupied the site until it was absorbed by Dollar Savings Bank of Youngstown.



In 1905 the Dollar Bank purchased the City National Bank building which had been built around 1893 on part of the site of the McKinley home. The McKinley Federal Savings & Loan purchased the building that same year. Dr. Clingan had his office on the second floor.

The other buildings are the Benedict Building built by J.S. Benedict, the bank building, the Clingan Building, the Deither-Carter Building and the Holeyton Building. Only the Holeyton Building, built in 1897, remains of all the buildings in this photograph.



Close-up of the Benedict Building facade showing the date in which it was built (Ed. it appears to be 1888).

Below is a different view of the buildings on the west side of south Main Street. The Benedict Building is on the far left of the photograph.



Niles Standard 9.18.36

Bolotin-Drabkin will hold big auction sales. The company has been located in Niles for over 23 years and through loss of lease has been forced to dispose of the large stock of quality furniture and vacate the building before October 1st. The first auction sale will be held tonight at 7:30. Sales will continue each day until the entire stock is sold it was announced by *Saul Drabkin*, the general manager.

The movie theatre was still the 'Butler'. ...Continued on Page 3 Page 2