



President's Message:

There is a lot going on these days.

Membership drive: Thank you to those who have responded so quickly to the Niles Historical Society membership drive. The donations to the membership fund provide the dollars necessary for day to day operation of the Society and routine upkeep of the Ward – Thomas property. To those readers receiving a courtesy issue of the “Niles Register” who have not received a membership mailing you can make a donation on line at www.nileshistoricalsociety.org or obtain a membership form on the website and mail it to Niles Historical Society, PO Box 368, Niles, OH 44446.

The Harry Stevens Home: The Society wishes to acknowledge the terrible tragedy of the loss of the Harry Stevens House at 1210 Robbins Ave. Each of our readers has a fond memory of that structure. If you would like to share a memory, please send a message to the email address or PO Box 368. These memories will be shared in a future newsletter.

Barn Roof repair: The Society thanks *Mayor Steven Mientkiewicz* and the City of Niles for the replacement of the barn roof. To those members who contributed to the barn roof repair, your donations were used to hire men to clean out years of accumulated debris in the barn loft to permit the roofers to do their work. The City has also hired a grant writer who will be looking for funds to bring the buildings and property up to code.

Greenhouse: The greenhouse requires maintenance approximately every seven years. The wood frames of the doors and windows were scraped and painted. Windowpanes were caulked. The mechanical equipment was serviced. This project cost the Society a little over \$25,000. The funds came from donations to the Capital Improvement Fund.

The Society will provide a financial report to any member who makes a request.

Newsletter: Anyone who would like to provide a memory to be published in the newsletter as *David Birkovich* has for this edition please contact: *Ralph Tolbert* at ralph.tolbert@me.com.

Family Day: Family Day will be celebrated on May 6, 2023, Saturday, from 10 AM–2 PM on the Ward–Thomas property. Historical societies in Trumbull County will share games, stories and/or crafts of the “good old days” with the children who attend. Food and drinks will be supplied by the Trumbull County Historical Society. Should it rain the event will be moved to the M^cKinley Memorial Museum. This event is free.

Speaker Program Event:

On the third Sunday of every month 2023 at 2 PM a historical society in Trumbull County will present a topic in the Community Room of Boscov Department Store in the Eastwood Mall. Included in this group of presenters are area historical societies and the specialty groups such as the Sutliff Museum, Upton House Museum and the M^cKinley Memorial Birthplace Museum. This event provides the ability to share our stories across the county.

—Anna Marie Beagle

Fairhaven Heights Is Name Chosen For Ochman Plot.



If and when Niles absorbs the 1,100 acre tract north of the city now seeking annexation, it will inherit a carefully planned and attractive allotment which will eventually contain more the 400 homes.

Andrew J. Ochman, better known to many as “Handy Andy”, is the developer of the Niles–Cortland Road–Route 422 plat which will feature homes designed for modern, graceful living in keeping with the times.

Ochman will direct the development of the new allotment while *Hugh Slaughaupt* of Niles will act as sales manager for the tract which will be known as Fairhaven Heights.

Bounded on the east by Niles–Cortland Road, the north by Rt. 422 and the west by Mosquito Creek, is a site endowed with gently rolling sloping ground and has been subdivided into 407 lots.

Fairhaven Heights will be developed by Ochman principally for construction of his own homes but other builders will be allowed to buy lots and build within the allotment, either for themselves or others.

Ochman and Slaughaupt both feel Fairhaven Heights is the answer for many area residents who want a home at a reasonable price but are leery of developments in which every house is alike.

There will be seven basic floor plans offered to prospective buyers in Fairhaven Heights but the variations on those floorplans are virtually limitless. Homes can be built with a basement or on a slab foundation, with or without attached garage and with or without completely modern electric or gas kitchens.

Fairhaven Heights will be designed for homes in the medium price class, ranging from \$13,000 to \$19,000. Homes on the choice lots with basements and completely equipped kitchens will be near the \$19,000 mark while smaller homes on a concrete slab will range near \$13,000.

Veterans will be able to purchase a home on a GI loan for 5% down plus closing costs and can have up to 30 years in which to pay though they can also finance the homes for a shorter period.

Deadline for most World War II veterans on their GI home loans is July 1957 and Fairhaven Heights may offer some of them the home they’ve been waiting for but couldn’t afford until this new development.

Ochman revealed this week that he plans to break ground on the Fairhaven Heights allotment in early spring and expects to have between 50 and 100 homes completed by December 1956.

Fairhaven Heights will include paved streets (asphalt), sewers, city water, gas, and electric power, street lighting, and police and fire protection. Driveways will be built for all homes and Ochman estimates the entire allotment will be completed within about three years though the work could be done sooner if the demand made it necessary.

A Cleveland paint company will paint all the Ochman–built homes in the development and will use a different color scheme on each home, thus eliminating the appearance of a “project” in Fairhaven Heights.

Acting as developer, builder, and seller, Ochman is able to build homes in Fairhaven Heights at a lower cost than many other similar allotments.

One of the model homes to be built in Fairhaven Heights is on display at Handy Andy, a restaurant in M^cKinley Heights on Rt. 422 north of Niles from noon to 9 pm each day and further information on Fairhaven Heights can be obtained there.



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	Officers
Museum 'Open House' The first Sunday of each month, 2-5 Last tour begins at 4 pm	<i>Anna Maria Beagle</i>President <i>Dave Martin</i>Vice-President <i>Lynda Ralston</i>Treasurer <i>Coleen Tominney</i>Secretary
Membership Meetings	
10:00 am First Saturday of each month Call for private tours to be scheduled 330.544.2143	<i>Audrey John</i>Curator <i>Ralph Tolbert</i>Newsletter and Website Trustees: <i>Anne Townley, Nancy Malone, and Sandy Bilovesky</i>

The Greatest Toy Ever Invented.

In the early days of summer, in the 1950's, I would often stalk the McKinley Heights Plaza, now called the Pine Tree Plaza, hoping to be the first, and sometimes the only one, to snag the greatest toy ever invented. Eventually, one would appear behind Terlecky's appliance store. It is the cardboard box that refrigerators come in.

I would require the help of several friends to help drag the box, a mile or so to the field behind my parent's house. Once there, I would cut a hole in one end, for a door and then I had my very own club house. During the dog days of Summer, friends and neighbors from miles around, would come to sit in my steaming hot club house. I did not care how hot it was. It was my very own club house.

As the days of Fall approached, the box would age, become soft and the top would cave in. Then, the second life of the greatest toy ever invented would begin.

After removing both ends of the box, a bunch of us would get inside and crawl up against one side of the box causing it to begin to roll, like a tractor tread. It would roll through tall grass and briar bushes, up and down steep hills, nothing could stop my home-made tank. If someone would slip while inside, they would have to roll around in the back. We stopped for nothing.

Winter brought the third life to the greatest toy ever invented. Immediately behind the McDonald's in McKinley Heights is a deep ravine that we called Hollow Hill. Hollow Hill had the very best sled riding on the entire planet. People from around the world, or at least the neighborhood, came to ride the hill.

Half way up one of the steep sides of the ravine was a flat foot path. We called it a cow path. Don't know why. Weren't no cows around. The path worked as a ramp that sent your sled flying as you raced down

the hill. Sometimes a sled would abruptly stop when it hit the ramp, causing the rider to facepaw the rest of the way down the hill.

At the top of the hill, I would cut open the refrigerator box and lay it flat like a magic carpet. Kids would pile on, with those in the front, turning up the edge of the cardboard like a toboggan. Off we would go! Screaming down the hill! With nothing to hold on to when we hit the cow path, kids went soaring through the air, violently crashing into the hillside and tumbling the rest of the way down. What great fun !

Winter always brought an end to the greatest toy ever invented.

I miss those days.

—David Birskevich.

Calendar of Events:

April Business Meeting:

April 15, 2023, Saturday, 10:00 AM

April Open House:

April 2, 2023, Sunday 2 – 5 PM (last tour at 4:00 PM)

May Business Meeting:

May 13, 2023, Saturday, 10:00 AM

May Open House:

May 6, 2023, Saturday, 10 AM – 2PM as part of Family Day

Handy Andy Drive-In began as Small Grocery-On-Wheels.

Niles Daily Times Jubilee Salute-May 13, 1949.



A photograph, ca 1939, of the Handy Andy restaurant located on the southwest side of Robbins Avenue in McKinley Heights.

Unless you were around these parts in 1936, you'd hardly believe that the present modern Handy Andy's Drive-In is the offspring of a small house trailer that Andy Ochman once used in McDonald as a grocery-on-wheels.

Andy's trailer was the original drive-in stand in this area and he began in the business after he had transferred his traveling grocery store to a permanent location and, as he says, "I had to have something to use the trailer for."



The old trailer was used one summer, then another trailer was purchased and it was used to seat eight customers. The restaurant continued to mushroom as two more additions were built and finally an almost complete tearing-down and building-up program resulted in the present sumptuous structure finished in the fall of 1946.

Before progressing to the 1946 level, however, Andy took three years off from the restaurant business to play around with the 25th Infantry Division in the European Theater of War. Andy joined up April 1, 1943, "but it was no joke," said the genial restaurateur.

Andy was, at different times, attached to the British and French armies and saw his first action at the famous Battle of the Bulge. He finished up in the Rohr Pocket at war's end.

During his wartime sojourn, Handy Andy's was operated by his sister, *Elizabeth Ochman*, now owner of Betty's Dairy on North Main Street. Since returning from service, Andy has been busy getting things rolling again. Just recently in East Liverpool, Ohio, he and his sister, *Mrs. Anna Lancaster*, opened another restaurant, Mr. Handy Andy, which offers the same type of service that the McKinley Heights establishment offers.

March 1 of this year (1949) the 34-year-old restaurant owner took on added responsibilities when he bought the Warren Bus Terminal restaurant which he is now operating, and on April 30th opened up a custard stand adjacent to Handy Andy's.

Andy admits that it keeps him hopping to oversee the three Trumbull County businesses and he personally keeps the books and operates all three. He has a little more help than when he first started in 1936 in the trailer. From that one-man operation, his enterprises now employ 45 persons.

"Although that trailer was small and inadequate," said Andy, "it was my start—and I don't have a picture of it at all," he added, waving at a display of pictures on the wall showing the development of the drive-in. "If you ever run into anyone who has such a snapshot, I'd appreciate if you'd let me know about it."

Andy was born and raised in McDonald and is a graduate of McDonald High School. He now lives with his wife, *Gertrude*, and daughter, *Mary Andrea*, in Girard.

Andy is a Kiwanian and a member of several business men organizations in the area. He enjoys outdoor sports such as baseball and golf, but says his hobby is underprivileged children. "I like to see them have a good time," he says. Each Christmas Andy throws a party for the kids for the Kiwanis Club and boasts, "Last year we had 92 children."

The youthful restaurant proprietor is mainly interested in one outside activity at the present time and it apparently overshadows most other interests. He says, "My ambition is to see McKinley Heights grow up—and it will too, if I can do anything about it."



Advertisement for Handy Andy restaurant, located at US 422 and State Rt. 169 in McKinley Heights.

In 1953, Andy built a modern structure that featured a coffee shop, three dining rooms and Teletray curb-service with a covered walkway from the restaurant to the parked cars. Andy was the first restaurant in Trumbull County to offer Teletray service where the operator took the customer's order and then music played on the speaker while waiting for their order. A waitress carried the customer's order on a tray which was clamped to the window of the car's door.

Another landmark was eliminated when the Handy Andy restaurant was demolished June 21, 1972. At the death of Andy Ochman, the restaurant was closed until it reopened as *Latsko Restaurant*. After another period of being closed, it was sold to Marathon Oil Company and in its place a Marathon Service Station was built. Today a McDonald's restaurant occupies the site.

Like our pictures and stories?

Visit the Niles Historical Society website:

<https://www.nileshistoricalsociety.org/>

M^cKinley Heights Memories Part 2.

1984 Times Special Edition—By Mary Jane Steffey

In the 1920's, businesses were few in M^cKinley Heights. There was the traditional corner general store, run by the *Seitz* family, then *Blatniks*, then *Kimmins*. The building housing this store still stands on the Northeast corner of 422 in front of the Fire Station, and houses Mears Reality Co. Directly across the street on the Northwest Corner was the M^cKinley Homestead, which later became the site of a farmer's market, with trucks bringing in produce for sale. A gas station was built in 1949. It was bought by *Tom Mohn* in 1954 and he has been running it continuously since then.



On the Southeast corner is another one of the few continuous businesses in our area. It has been in operation since 1924. It started when *Leonard Higley* began selling plants raised in two small green



houses on his property. He doubled his capacity in 1924, and added a new building in 1940, specializing in landscaping and garden supplies. During these sixteen years it remained a family business, but in 1946 the business was further expanded and incorporated, changing its name to Flowers by Higleys, Inc. Currently managed by *Gordon Higley*, President, and staffed by employees who have remained competent and loyal through the years, it currently deals with floral arrangements, displays, gifts, gardening equipment, nursery items, and greenhouse plants of all kinds. The nursery covers four times the area it started with, showing continuous progress by dedicated service in the field of beautifying our surroundings. Higleys celebrated its Golden Anniversary in 1974.

In 1952 the first shopping plaza in the area was built on the corners. The first tenants were Terlecky's Appliances, Adeline's Clothing Store, People's Drug Store, Kresge's, Kroger's and Loblaws. Present tenants are Skorman's Miracle Mart Discount Store, M^cKinley Auto Parts, Morris Sport Shop, and a branch of the Niles Bank, including a drive up window.

Behind the plaza where once the Tri-Lan Ballroom provided entertainment for the citizenry, and later Fruehauf Trucking conducted business for a while, Stambaugh Thompson Company has a very busy and convenient hardware business. In this building is also a branch of the United States Post Office.

Also contained in the plaza complex is the Kayo gas station.

Across the road is Walter's Miracle Motors Used Cars Lot, a landmark since the 40's.

Men in M^cKinley Heights have always liked to gather in the neighborhood taverns and discuss world affairs and one of the first was started in 1936 by *Tom Jordan* and continued to be owned by his son until he closed it in 1974. It has recently been reopened under new management and a new name, Chris and Franks.

Jim Coates has run one of the first car washes in the tricounty area — M^cKinley Car Wash, an old landmark.

Our business area boasts two modern clean motels. The Villa Arms Motel has been in business for twenty years, is of brick construction, and has been well maintained by *Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Cordy*. The M^cKinley Motel is owned by *Mr. and Mrs. Richard Lockage*, and has 10 well kept rooms.



Located north of the Hat-O-Mat, "Ma" Perkins Chicken Inn was started in 1938 by *Cy and Ruth Perkins* in a house that stood on the north side of 422. Six months later, they bought the *Stohl* farm on the west side of 422 just north of Bellwood Avenue and moved their restaurant there. Recently it was home to the Army and Navy Garrison.



In the same area as the Army and Navy Garrison is Egner's Tank Truck Terminal which dispatches trucks hauling gasoline, diesel, and fuel oil over a wide area.



Going west of Route 422 within the boundaries of M^cKinley Heights is a convenience store, the Heights Superette. This store has recently reopened after a devastating fire, being completely remodeled and now provides a drive-up window for convenience, a selection of delicatessen foods, a wide variety of baked goods, and the usual staples found in neighborhood stores. It is owned by *Pete Stunich*.

Editor note: The January–February newsletter featured the Snack Shack article, Scenna's Restaurant now occupies that M^cKinley Heights site.