

ROCKY RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P O Box 16445, Rocky River, Ohio 44116, Ph: 440-895-0983
<http://rockyriverhistoricalsociety.org/>

A Centennial City

1903-2003

Fall 2014 News Edition



CLOCKS OF THE WESTERN RESERVE PRESENTED BY TOM BARRETT

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**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2014
At 7:00 PM
ROCKY RIVER SENIOR CENTER**

Humankind has always recognized the passing of time and has tried to measure and record that passing. The simple alarm clock at your bedside table owes its existence to more than 6,000 years of thinking about time and tinkering with devices to accurately mark its passage.

A general knowledge of time division was relevant to the earliest of farmers, who sectioned quadrants of time into broad periods of seasons for planting, growing and harvesting. In those days however, the actual hour of any particular day was not important.

As early civilizations grew and became more complex in their needs for order and governance a more precise measure of time was required.

Come and spend an evening listening to Tom Barrett share his knowledge of the history of Clocks of the Western Reserve. This exciting program is not one to be missed. Tom will also talk about the care and maintenance of your own antique timepiece.



BRADSTREET'S LANDING

ROCKY RIVER'S MOST HISTORIC EVENT

By Dr. Daniel Marsalek

October 18th will mark the 250th anniversary of an historic, calamitous event that occurred on our Rocky River shore. It commenced a saga requiring the extraordinary effort and perseverance of hundreds of men. That event has ever since been historically referred to as "Bradstreet's Disaster".

Although the French and Indian War had ended in 1763, Indian attacks on British forts continued. Sir William Johnson, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and General Thomas Gage ordered Lt. Col. John Bradstreet, hero of Ft. Frontenac, to take an expedition to Ft. Detroit to either make peace with or attack and subdue the opposing Indians. Leaving Ft. Niagara, they traveled in their 46 ft. long oared boats called bateaux. On August 19th,, 1764, as they made their way westward, the 2289 British and Provincial soldiers and Indians encamped on the west channel of the Riviere aux Roches (the Rocky River).



On Oct. 18th, having reinforced outposts and having completed his assignment of creating treaties with the offending tribes and with the prospect of unsettled fall weather ahead, Col. Bradstreet ordered his expedition homeward. Leaving Ft. Sandusky early in the morning, the returning 1650 soldiers rowed until about 8 pm and put into the strand of beach offered by the pre-glacial swale, now known as "Bradstreet's Landing" park. They had determined by their earlier visit that, although just to the east, the shallow, rock strewn river with sand spits at its entrance would be too treacherous for the many craft to enter safely in darkness. Thus, on that quiet, moonless night the 1650 tired boaters struggled to cram their 62 craft onto that beach. Instead of following the standard procedure of emptying the boats, the exhausted men took only their tents, bedding and some food. Shortly after they had eaten and retired their boats were inundated by a rare, huge seiche wave which rendered 27 of their boats completely unsalvageable. Unfortunately, most of the supplies which they carried were also lost.

The next day brought efforts by the soldiers to scour the shoreline for lost supplies and belongings. Their 6 brass cannons and ammunition were buried. In the afternoon of the 20th, they entered the Rocky River to spend the next day making repairs. The decision was made that each boat would need to carry 36 men rather than the normal 27 and that the approximately 500 remaining boat-less men would have to march, meet at encampments and exchange with the boaters. During that ordeal they would face storms, endure cold, tent fires, and having tents crushed and soldiers injured by a falling tree. The only verifiable human casualty

occurred when one hungry, foraging soldier died after having mistaken hemlock for wild parsnip. The last of the stragglers arrived at Ft. Erie on the Niagara River on Nov. 4th.

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But Bradstreet's troubles did not end there. Sir William had given imprecise orders that allowed Bradstreet an unintended freedom of interpretation. The angry Superintendent railed to Gen. Gage that Bradstreet had usurped his own reserved right to make Indian treaties instead of just "making peace" with the Indians, as directed. Incompletely informed and lacking situational understanding, he wrongly excoriated Bradstreet for numerous other conjectured offenses, particularly his Oct. 18th choice of not utilizing the supposedly safer Rocky River. Thereby, in his distorted mindset he found Bradstreet completely responsible for his own problems, the jeopardizing of his troops and the material losses.

Bradstreet's military career survived the unwarranted attack and he concluded it as General John Bradstreet.

WAR OF 1812

BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE

Annual Commemoration of the Battle of Lake Erie by The Early Settlers Association of the Western Reserve

**Wednesday, September 10, 2014, 11:00 a.m.
Fort Huntington Park
at West Third Street and Lakeside
in downtown Cleveland**

The program includes:

- **Posting of the Colors**
- **Welcoming remarks**
- **Speech by John Cimperman, president of The Early Settlers Association, entitled "Historical Consequences of the Battle of Lake Erie"**
- **Placing of the wreath**



The program will be followed by the annual meeting of The Early Settlers Assoc. and a luncheon at noon. For more information on the meeting and luncheon, call 216-319-0997. Luncheon reservations must be made by September 5, 2014.

FORT MEIGS

A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

29100 West River Road • Perrysburg, Ohio 43551

By Gay A. Christensen-Dean

In the winter of 1813, and by order of General William Henry Harrison, Fort Meigs, named after then Governor Return J. Meigs, was built on a bluff overlooking the Maumee River, near Toledo, to repel the British during the War of 1812. It was a massive structure built of 15-foot logs with earthen mounds piled on both sides to strengthen the walls against bombardment. It enclosed almost ten acres and housed seven defensive blockhouses, five artillery batteries, two powder magazines, storehouses, and a well. On the outside there were bake houses, smoke houses, a hide-processing facility, and a boat launch. It was the largest wooden-walled fortification in North America.

On May 1, 1813, the first British siege took place on the fort under the leadership of General Henry Proctor and Chief Tecumseh. It lasted five days until they got tired and left. In July, 1813, the British tried to set up an ambush but the Americans in the fort did not fall for it, and then a thunderstorm forced the British to leave. Soon after, the British retreated from the area of northwest Ohio and General Harrison ordered the fort rebuilt on a smaller scale, to be used as a supply depot until the end of the war. After the war, it burned to the ground.

The full-size, 10-acre fort has now been re-constructed; tours are given; and several re-enactments take place each year. There is also a museum on the grounds. For more information, go to www.fortmeigs.org.

Source: www.ohiohistory.org



MARLYS CHRISTENSEN

1917 – 2014

Marlys Christensen (pronounced mar' liss) died July 28, 2014, at the age of 97, at her home in Rocky River. She was born in Manson, Iowa. The small family moved to Hiawatha, Kansas; St. Joseph, Missouri; and St. Louis, Missouri; until they came to Cleveland in 1937, where she met and married Sunny Christensen. Sunny was a founder and the first president of the Rocky River Historical Society, back in 1968.

At one time, Rocky River was the greenhouse capital of the United States. Marlys was the last of the Rocky River Christensen tomato greenhouse owners.

Marlys Drive in Rocky River is named after her, and Chrisfield Drive in Rocky River is also named after her Christensen family. It is a shortened version of "Christensen's field".

Submitted by Gay A. Christensen-Dean, daughter.



Once again the Rocky River Historical Society Annual Picnic held on August 14 at Elmwood Park was a success. With over 40 in attendance, the evening was spent with good friends, delicious food and wonderful prizes.

MANY THANKS TO THESE BUSINESSES THAT PROMOTE US

LAKE ROAD:

Rego Brothers Lake Road Market (near the Clock Tower) • Cravings Café (at east end of Lake Road)

DETROIT ROAD:

**Sunrise Assisted Living of Rocky River • Rocky River Library (off Detroit on Riverview and Hampton)
Mitchells' Ice Cream (across from River Square Shopping Center) • Michael's Restaurant (River Square Shopping Center) • Pet People (River Square Shopping Center) • Dugan's Barber Shop (across from Heinen's)
Heinen's • Denise Alexander Skin Care The Desk Set • Pure Enchantment • Jan Dell Flowers
Fords Men's Clothier • Pearl of the Orient • Urban Home and Garden • Ace Hardware • Burntwood Tavern
Tomorrow's Hair Salon**

OLD DETROIT ROAD:

Innuendo • Olive Scene • Salmon Dave's

LINDA STREET: Tommy's Place

WOOSTER ROAD:

**Great Scott's Bakery and Deli (between Detroit and Hilliard)
Pelicano's Pizza (next to Great Scott's Bakery and Deli)**

HILLIARD ROAD:

**Rocky River Recreation (behind City Hall) • Rocky River Senior Center (behind City Hall)
Schwarzer River Automotive (across from Rocky River Post Office) • Hilliard Road Cleaners (next to Rocky River Post Office)**

CENTER RIDGE ROAD:

**Brueggens Bagel Bakery (Westwood Town Center) • Fit Works (Rockport Shopping Center) • Starbucks (Westgate Shopping Center) • Earth Fare (Westgate Shopping Center) • First Federal of Lakewood (at Linden)
Panera Bread (at east end of Center Ridge) • The Irish Barber (at east end of Center Ridge)
The Woods Restaurant • Rocky River Brewery • Rustic Restaurant • Estetica**

ALSO: Mimi Vanderhaven • Rockport Observer • West Life • West Shore Sun

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MEETING DATES FOR 2014

Meetings are at the Rocky River Senior Center Auditorium at 7:00 P.M.

UPCOMING DATES:

September 13th, 2014

Rocky River Arts Fest

October 18th, 2014

Bradstreet's Landing 250th Anniversary

PROGRAM DATES:

November 13th, 2

A History of Clifton Park – presented by Arthur Dueck 014