
Skipping Village Gazette

Anna School Bell... 193 Years of History

Written by Dennis Raberding



It was in the fall when they hung her. The year was 1828. Allen Trimble was Governor of Ohio. John Quincy Adams was President of the United States. And on Saturday, October 25th to be exact, they rang her for the first time. One hundred

ninety-three years ago. Hauled by wagon over dirt roads from Philadelphia, her destination was the Clark County Courthouse



Springfield Historical Society
inspecting bell on Anna Roof 1937

in Springfield. She was cast by John Wilbank. He made bells and was a big deal in his field. He once owned the cracked Liberty Bell which was given to him in exchange for casting a new bell for Independence Hall. He made the bell I'm talking about. The bell that hangs at the southwest corner of Anna High School.

It was Springfield's first bell, and her 200 pounds hung proudly from the specially made cupola extending above the second story of their courthouse from 1828 until 1878 where it was the duty of the jailer to ring her at 6:00 in the morning and at 9:00 in the evening.

In 1878, the Clark County Courthouse, including the bell, was sold for \$55.99 and then torn down. The purchaser, Judge Littler, entrusted the bell to the Commissioners to preserve as a relic. And then it disappeared -stolen after two or three years of resting in the county storage lot.

Welcome to our newest ADHS members...

Dr. Milliette Level—Neil & Genny Schroer,
Dennis & Deb Raberding, Randy & Carol Wentz

New Memberships—

Jim & Mary Billing, Eric & Sarah Klein, Maria Wiseman, Donald & Doris Schmitmeyer, Paul, Vivian, and Jeff Goins, Judi Billing, Richard & Joan Steinke, and Lee & Marcy Braun

Welcome and thanks for your generous support of the Anna District Historical Society! (Please let us know if we have inadvertently missed your name, and we will add it to our next newsletter list.)

Somehow the bell made its way to Toledo and on November 3rd, 1883, the Treasurer of the Anna School District paid junk dealer P Smith and Company \$60.00 for the bell. Anna Schools had only existed for 16 years at the time.

In 1929, Anna School Superintendent F. K. Stafford, on a visit to the Clark County Museum, mentioned that the bell on the roof of the Anna school house was the bell that had been cast for Clark County back in 1828. It didn't take long – less than a year in fact – for the Clark County Historical Society to make the first of many offers to purchase the bell.

In 1938, the school board wrote "Why should we

sell it? Has not the bell won for itself sentimental regards of hundreds of pupils who, in the last 50 years, have graduated from the Anna school?" Later the School Board wrote, "We just think we will keep the bell for a while at least." then "Maybe – well possibly some day we will sell it, and then Clark County will have the first chance." And after the earthquakes "it was decided to keep the old bell. Time might make changes." And after approaches from Clark County in 2003 and 2015, "We prefer to keep it at this time."

From 1938 until the latest renovations, the bell sat on the roof of the high school, completely unprotected from the elements. For many years, she rang on the first school day. In recent times and to protect her, the tradition stopped. Many either forgot or never



HELP US PRESERVE OUR HISTORY

Please consider becoming a member of the Anna District Historical Society.

Name of member _____

Name of spouse _____

Children under 18 _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Single Membership - \$20 yearly _____

Family Membership - \$25 yearly _____

Lifetime Membership - \$500 _____

Mail to: ANNA DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY, P.O. Box 133, Anna, OH 45302

knew the bell even existed.

As a testament to the history and tradition of the Anna Local School District, she now hangs protected and secured in a tower welcoming future generations to our school building and honoring those who leave. She is tough. Hit by lightning while hanging in Springfield and having survived the earthquakes in Anna, she remains cherished by both communities – 50 years in Springfield and 138 years – in Anna. One hundred thirty-eight years and counting.



Thank You!

Five years ago the building housing the ADHS was purchased by Linda Glessner and gifted to us for use as our new home. In these 5 years we have made many improvements to the facility totaling well over \$250,000. these improvements would not have been possible without the generous support of our many donors and members. THANK YOU to all who have donated your time, talents, and funds in making the Packer Historical Center a beautiful addition to downtown Anna.

Following is a list of just some of the improvements made possible by your generosity:

- Total HVAC and electrical system replacement
- All hardwood floors refinished
- Total porch reconstruction, including foundation and beam

- Kitchen refurbishment
- Wheelchair lift installation
- Fireplace restoration
- New shelving in library
- Landscaping
- New windows on all 4 floors
- Foundation replacement at rear of facility with new basement entrance
- Fire and security systems installed
- New storm doors on east side of facility
- Purchase and installation of Audio Visual equipment and Wifi system

“Christmas on Main” November 13th & 14th

Beautifully handcrafted items will be available at the first ever “Christmas on Main” event taking place at the Packer Center on the weekend of November 13-14. On Saturday, November 13th, the Packer Center will be open from 10am—4pm and on Sunday, November 14th from 1pm—4pm. What a great way to purchase holiday gifts with your donations! All proceeds will go to support the Anna District Historical Society.



Anna District Historical Society

112 West Main Street

P.O. Box 133

Anna, OH 45302

POSTAL CUSTOMER

ANNA, OH 45302

Additional Giving Opportunity to Support the ADHS

The Anna District Historical Society is initiating a new way to participate in the funding of the society and its projects. Three levels of monthly contributions are available:

- ⇒ DR. MILLIETTE LEVEL - \$50 monthly or \$600 yearly (includes ADHS membership)
- ⇒ ANNA CAREY THIRKIELD LEVEL - \$25 monthly or \$300 yearly (includes ADHS membership)
- ⇒ LOIS LENSKE LEVEL - \$10 monthly or \$120 yearly

This donation can be deducted monthly from your bank account automatically if preferred.

Anna District Historical Society

112 W. Main Street, P.O. Box 133

Anna, OH 45302

Website: www.adhs-oh.org

Phone: 937-646-0011

Packer Historical Center Hours

Sundays 1-4pm and Thursdays 6-8pm

Kettlersville History...



Classes of 1924

(Picture of students above and right)

First Row: Miss Christina Elsass (Teacher), Arthur Maurer, Kathrine Maurer Phipps, Naomi Poppe Trump, Howard Stein, Ted Maurer, Frederick Maurer, Lucille Hirschfeld Meyer, Ruth Becker Prueter, Lula Becker Shield, Ralph Harlamert, Mildred Schwaberow Gruebmeier

Second Row: Ruth Eversman Cory, Llewellyn Holtkamp, Carl Bartenstein, Willis Harlamert, Edward Maurer, Esther Headapole Dicke, Paul Poppe, Anna Mae Maurer Katterheinrich, Evelyn Stein Billing, Oneta Harlamert

Third Row: Lloyd Harlamert, Robert Schwaberow, Irvin Blakely, Melvin Blumhorst, Wilson Hirschfeld, Arvil Schwaberow, Merlin Tangeman, LaRose Sollmann Maurer

Fourth Row: Richard Maurer, Marvin Roettger, Paul Headapole, Edith Sollmann, Glenna Harlamert Fogt, Myra Poppe Kindred, La Rue Fark McCormick, Alice Hulsmeyer