



# Historical Society News

*Knowing where you've been, helps you see where you're going*

A Periodic Publication of the North Baltimore Ohio Area Historical Society

Editor: Margaret E. Bobb

Summer 2015

## Good Ole Summertime Fest Saturday, July 25, 2015

Historical Center **OPEN HOUSE**  
**10:00 a.m. to Noon**

Stop in and check out the displays including the new military room display, Dr. Henry and new acquisitions displays!

## HISTORICAL CENTER HOURS

The North Baltimore Ohio Area Historical Center is open to the public on Tuesday mornings 9:00-noon March through December. Closed January and February.

To schedule a group tour call (419) 257-2266 or e-mail nbahs.org.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

July 15, 7:00 p.m. – Garden Club Meeting  
July 16, 9:30 a.m. – Broken Needle Sewing Circle  
August 6, 7:00 p.m. – NBOAHS Board Meeting  
August 19, 7:00 p.m. – Garden Club Meeting  
August 20, 9:30 a.m. – Broken Needle Sewing Circle  
September 3, 7:00 p.m. – NBOAHS Board Meeting  
September 12, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. – Fall Bazaar  
September 16, 7:00 p.m. – Garden Club Meeting  
September 17, 9:30 a.m. – Broken Needle Sewing Circle  
October 1, 7:00 p.m. – NBOAHS Board Meeting  
October 15, 9:30 a.m. – Broken Needle Sewing Circle  
October 21, 7:00 p.m. – Garden Club Meeting



## FAREWELL TO TOM BOLTZ

On April 21 board members and volunteers gathered at the Center for a farewell lunch in honor of Tom Boltz. Tom and his wife, Jean, have sold their home in Perrysburg and relocated to Reston, Virginia to be closer to family [and more accessible to the upcoming Republican President ☺]. In addition to many historical/research projects over the years, Tom has provided leadership to the Society through membership on the board and as president and vice-president. Some of Tom's more recent projects at the Center include *Main Street Throughout the Decades*, *130 Years of North Baltimore Eateries*, and the recently completed *Military History of the North Baltimore Area*. He plans to continue to be active in the society "from afar" and will be writing historical articles for the newsletter.



**Tom Boltz standing beside the *Main Street Throughout the Decades* display he created.**

## MURDER ON SECOND STREET

By Margaret Bobb

It was a cold winter Saturday night just a few days after the New Year's Day 1947. The daytime high was 24 degrees with the low temperature headed for the single digits. Fred and Ruth Burkhart were settled in for the night at their home at 515 N. Second Street. Fred was a mechanic and worked out of a shed behind their home.

He was partially disabled due to arthritis and arm injuries from a factory accident. Fred's father, Charles, who was also disabled, resided with them. Their son, an ex-marine, and his bride of five months, who also resided with them, had gone to visit her parents in Milton Center around 8 p.m.

Somewhere around 11 p.m. Fred became quite angry after discovering that his wife, Ruth, had received a letter from another man. During the argument that followed, Fred threatened to kill Ruth. The argument continued for some time on the second floor of the residence and Ruth barricaded herself in the front bedroom after her husband beat her on the head and shoulders with a kewpie doll. Ruth then left the bedroom and went to the balcony over the porch on the north side of the residence where she screamed for help. The neighbor across the street, Howard Goldner, heard her screams and notified the local police.

Meanwhile Charles Burkhart, whose bedroom was on the first floor, went upstairs to calm his son who was battering the bedroom door with the barrel of a shotgun. The elder Burkhart was not able to quiet his son and went to the upstairs north side bedroom and fired one shot from a single barrel shotgun into the chimney corner hoping to frighten his son. Fred succeeded in knocking out the panels of the door to the room where Ruth was barricaded and entered the room and confronted his wife who had returned to the bedroom from the balcony.

The struggle between Fred and Ruth continued in the bedroom and Charles went into the room to aid his daughter-in-law and was shot when the gun discharged. Charles Burkhart was shot in the right leg and groin. He had suffered the loss of his left leg several years prior as a result of a car accident. Supposedly the shot was intended for Ruth Burkhart.

The upstairs of the Burkhart residence showed evidence of the struggle that had taken place. The panels of two doors had been splintered out, there were blood stains on the walls and floors, and plaster and clothing were littered about. Police found Charles lying in a pool of blood on the second floor and Ruth escaped to the Goldner residence. Ruth and Charles were transported to Findlay hospital where Charles, 77, died the next morning hours after having his badly torn leg amputated. A search by local police and sheriff's deputies failed to locate Fred. However, North Baltimore police officer Dale Kendall and Chief Fred Moorhead located him about 12 hours after the shooting hiding in a brick summerhome at the rear of the Goldner residence. When Chief Moorhead kicked in the door he found Fred huddled in the corner in his pajamas and slippers. The shotgun was standing against the wall and Fred stated, "Come in and get me". He was taken to Wood County jail and charged with first degree murder. His trial date was set for March 10 which would have been his father's 78<sup>th</sup> birthday.



Left: Officer Dale Kendall points to hole in plaster where Charles Burkhart fired shot into chimney corner. Above: Door panels were battered out by Fred Burkhart to get into room his wife had locked herself.

**These photos appeared in the January 9, 1947 issue of *The News*. The negatives of these pictures and others pertaining to the murder are in the collection of Jim Bucher.**

At his trial in Common Pleas Court in Bowling Green, Fred Burkhart changed his plea from guilty of first degree murder to manslaughter. The three judge jury accepted the guilty plea to the lesser charge.

Prosecutor Floyd Collier stated that due to Fred's rheumatism, the lie detector examination had not been completely successful, but it did indicate there was no intent to murder. Burkhart's lawyer, Moses Lane, stated that the gun exploded during a struggle between the older Burkhart and his son, and that Fred did not know Charles had been shot. He also stated that Fred had no intention of shooting his father, that it was an accidental shooting and asked for parole by the court. The court denied the request for parole.

At the conclusion of statements by counsel for both sides Burkhart was sentenced to the Ohio penitentiary for a period of not less than one year and not more than twenty years without hard labor or solitary confinement. The prisoner was taken to Columbus the next week to begin his sentence. Fred's transfer to the Ohio penitentiary was delayed for a few days due to the fact that depositions were being taken in the divorce action brought by Fred against his wife, Ruth Burkhart. Fred claimed gross neglect, extreme cruelty and other charges against Ruth. He asked that he be granted the title for home and the adjacent lot which he purchased. The divorce was granted. On April 3, 1948 Ruth was married to Clarence Jacob Moorhead who was a widower.



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## **NBOAHS FALL BAZAAR**

**Saturday, September 12**

**9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

**at the Historical Center**



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## **PRIME LAND FOR SALE**

### **Can you guess where these lots are located in North Baltimore?**

There are many fine residence locations in North Baltimore and vicinity, which combine the most desirable features to be sought after in residence property. But this addition, consisting of some two hundred lots, is, in our judgment, among the most desirable of any property in that portion of the city. This valuable property has been sub-divided and platted, appended and placed on the market.

This large tract embraces beautifully undulating ground and level lawn tracts of the most desirable character, while other portions are slightly elevated and covered with delightful groves of native trees of different varieties, presenting to the eye a charming and picturesque location. These entire tracts are now being brought into market, and already selections of some of the most desirable have been made by some of our prominent business men. Several fine residences have been erected, and this spring a large number of new dwellings will be built. The tract is advantageously situated and easy of access from all directions by fine avenues. The drainage of the entire tract is admirable and amply sufficient. Lying as it does, it is reached by passage through the best portion of the town, and it is in every way a most attractive residence spot. The lots are large and are being sold at reasonable prices and on easy terms. The streets are 60 feet wide and alleys 15 feet. The lots are 50 x 150. Terms of Sale: a small payment down, and the balance to suit the purchaser. Contracts are made and bonds given by the owner for a perfect title when paid for.

## **THANK YOU LETTERS FROM 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE CLASSES**

On April 14 over 50 students from the Powell Third Grade classes taught by Mr. Ridge, Mrs. Rodabaugh, and Mrs. Frazee enjoyed a tour of the center. Here is a sampling of the thank you notes from these students.

Thank you for letting us come visit. Thank you for showing us some pieces of North Baltimore history. I really enjoyed seeing the Navy room because it reminded me of my uncle in the army. The type writer was very interesting because I never saw all the letters in different places.

Dina

Thanks for showing us all that cool stuff like the clocks and the chairs and the army uniforms, the trophies, the toys, the silver ware and those paintings and the plates, the cups and the pictures and flags.

Owen C.

Thank you for the tour. I liked the anteaaks.

Kyle G.

Thank you for the tour of the history of North Baltimore!

P.S. My grandpa is the mayor of North Baltimore right now.

Sara C.

I love going up stairs and seeing all the cool stuff but my favorite part was going down stairs throw the last bedroom that was fun. I'm glad that I did not step on the trap and thank you for the tour.

McKenna S.

Thank you for letting us come visit. Thank you for showing us some pieces of North Baltimore history. I really enjoyed seeing the military room. I wish that I had the white wedding dress! It's so pretty!

Kyra

Thank you for the tour. I learned that the place was old.

Jeremiah

Thank you so much for tour. I liked the pretty shanderlears you had and the table cloth.

Mackenzie

I loved the tour. I liked the different rooms. And I thought it was so cool that the house was 100 years old. Learning about the bankers and buildings well I loved it. Thank you so much.

Isaac

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### **The North Baltimore Ohio Area Historical Society**

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Check our website at  
**northbaltimorehistory.org**  
for other history articles and Society news.

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