

THE NITTY GRITTY

CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Events

- Aug 16, 9-noon, recycling trailer
- Aug 24, 2:00 pm, Living History Days, Oak Grove Cemetery
- Aug 30, Soaring Eagle Runs, Wood Co. Fairgrounds
- Sunday Worship, Christ UMC, 9:00 am; Sunday School, 10:00 am
- Council meetings, 1st & 3rd Mondays, Village Hall, 7 pm

The Portage Lions Club meetings will resume on Monday, September 8.

Mosquito dunks are available through the Village Hall. Contact Village Administrator Rex Lee, any council member, or Mayor Mark Wolford to obtain.

The Nitty Gritty is sponsored by the Portage Lions Club. Send comments and suggestions to portagelions@dacor.net.

New Worship Time

Christ United Methodist Church has changed the time of its Sunday worship to 9:00 a.m. Sunday School will begin promptly following the morning worship. Come join us if you do not have a church home. We are a welcoming, inviting and generous congregation who look forward to meeting you.

Food Pantry

The Portage Food Pantry will be re-opening on Saturday, August 30 at 10:00 a.m. If you need food come, and get what you need. If you are interested in seeing our changes, come and visit us. We have a whole new set up.....there will be shelves and a lot more different kinds of food items as well as some non-food items (like shampoo, soap, etc). Visit us at 301 West Main Street, located within Christ UMC

Rev. Bruce McDaniel

Living History Day

The 11th Annual Living History Day will be held on Sunday, August 24, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm at Oak Grove Cemetery. The purpose of Living History Day is to showcase and honor citizens who are interred in Wood County cemeteries. Each citizen is portrayed by a local residents, bringing alive Wood County history.

Featured citizens this year are: **John Marcus Bigelow**, buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, and portrayed by Brian Bushong; **Etta Eliza Bigelow**, buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, portrayed by Sara Bushong; **Virginia, "Frtizie" Bigelow Hartman**, buried in Fountain Grove Cemetery, portrayed by Delaine Adams; **Jack Harvey Bigelow**, buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, portrayed by Ryan Holley; **George D. Chase**, buried in Maplewood Cemetery, portrayed by Jim Myers; **Charlotte Catherine "Katie" Hahn Waggoner**, buried in Troy Township Cemetery, portrayed by Karina Hahn- Clayon; **Sarah Elizabeth "Lizzie" Walters**, buried in Beaver Creek Cemetery, portrayed by Darlene Mauk; and **Bobbie Bradley**, buried in Union Hill Cemetery, portrayed by Garold Bradley.

Bring your lawn chairs and plan to spend a couple of relaxing hours listening to local history come alive! Parking is available in the cemetery and in nearby BGSU parking lots. In case of rain, the program will be held at First United Methodist Church.

IN DAYS GONE BY . . . Article original printed in The Daily Sentinel Tribune, 1891

FORT PORTAGE

A Historical Fort In Wood County That Has long Since Disappeared

Where was Fort Portage? Probably not one person in Wood County today is aware that such a fort ever existed in Wood County. Everybody knows of Fort Meigs, but Fort Portage has been lost to the memory of even the oldest living inhabitant of this county, yet Fort Portage once existed within our borders, and was an important place even before Fort Meigs was thought of, and its remains were plainly visible as late as 1830.

We have in our possession a rare old book—the property of C.W. Evers, that veteran searcher after early history, who will some day leave to the people of this county a rich legacy in the way of pioneer recollections. The book bears the following quaint title page: “The *Ohio Gazetteer and Typographical Dictionary* containing a description of the several counties, towns, villages, settlements, roads, rivers, lakes, springs, mines, etc, in the state of Ohio, alphabetically arranged by John Kilbourn published and sold on High St, a few rods from the State House. Printed in Columbus by P. H. Olmsted in 1821.”

Looking over this rare old book the other day we found this: “*Fort Portage*, a block house, sometimes denominated a fort, on Portage or Carrying river, on the route from Fort Findlay to Fort Meigs; 18 miles southerly from the latter, and 29 miles north from the former.”

Now, where was Fort Portage and by whom was it built? The distances given are evidently wrong, for the distance between Findlay (Fort Findlay) and Fort Meigs, is only about 33 miles, but the mistake was one easily made for in those days there were no railroad, no wagon road and very few land marks.

Fort Portage was located on the west branch of the Portage, a few miles up the river from Portage village, on what is now the Knaggs farm. As late as 1835 a few of the timbers of the stockade were still standing and the outlines of the old fort can still be traced.

By whom was it built? That is hard to say. The probabilities are that it was constructed by the early French traders long before Hull passed through this county in 1812, but it is claimed by some that Hull built it for the use of his sick, whom he was compelled to leave among the hostile Indians, while en route to Detroit.

Seeking the best source of information concerning the fort, the Sentinel wrote to Hon. D. W. Howard, of Wauseon, about it, and received the following letter in reply:

Wauseon, O, April 18, 1891

ED. SENTINEL—Your kind letter and paper, with copy of my letter of the 11th, received, and in reply to your request—will answer—briefly. In your editorial you have corrected that which I intended to do in my letter, but in my hurry, neglected to do so. The word “Portage” is French for ‘carry’, or transport, and the vulgar word ‘carrion’ is the Yankee or white-man for “Portage”. In the early days the “Carrying” (or Carrion) river was the name usually applied, when speaking of the stream as that was the English and “Portage” used by the French traders.

The “Block House” you speak of, I have passed many times when a boy, and camped near its walls, and always thought it an old French trader’s fort; yet it was near one of the trails used by Hull’s army, but I cannot vouch for the truth of this, but this a matter of history. The swamps and streams were always full, and goods and furs were taken by canoes up or down the Portage and the Beaver, and carried across from the head waters of one stream to the other. The ‘old trail’ across was a well beaten track, the two streams furnished early communication (nearly all the way by water) from the villages on the bay at the mouth of the Portage river, to the large and important Ottawa village of the chief Gein-jo-i-no on the left bank of the Maumee, opposite the mouth of Beaver creek. (o-mick-ce-pe) This route, although much farther than via, of the Maumee, on account of the almost continuous rapids for 18 miles, was more convenient.

Hull may have built the block house, as I have often heard the story from the older Indians, that the “White Chief” (Hull) had left some of this sick and foot-sore soldiers in a small stockade in the swamp, who returned south over the trail after they had sufficiently recruited, and this may have been the place. I think there was something of this report, as I asked the Indians why they did not scalp the disabled men and the reply was that “no brave would scalp a sick soldier.”

Speaking of the Portage, you will observe that the west branch of the Portage, and the east or south branch of Beaver creek are not very far apart.

Very truly,
D.W.H. Howard