



NEWSLETTER

August 2026 Issue

You're Invited to Help Us Tell Our Community's Story!



PHHS President Jeri Pickett presents the board with the beautifully handcrafted 2026 time capsule that he built by hand. It will be filled and sealed on August 8th and preserved until its reopening during Hilton's Tricentennial celebration in 2076.



Join us at the Time Capsule Dedication & Community Picnic on August 8th!

Celebrate our nation's 250th birthday and help create a lasting legacy for future generations! **This year, our annual Member Picnic joins our 2026 Community Time Capsule Dedication** for a memorable day of patriotism, community, and family fun. Enjoy the ceremonial dedication of the time capsule, G&D Hots food truck, yard games, and activities for everyone! We'll also have the 1976 time capsule available for the community to view. Members will receive a \$5 food coupon toward lunch from our food truck, and kids will receive a free glider plane. This event will take place on **August 8th from 2-5pm at the PHHS Museum**; 1300 Hilton Parma Corners Road in Hilton.

Time Capsule Trivia

Did you know America's oldest known time capsule was created by Samuel Adams and Paul Revere? Buried in the cornerstone of the Massachusetts State House in 1795, it was rediscovered during repairs in 2014 and opened the following year. Inside were remarkably well-preserved treasures, including colonial-era coins, newspapers, a page from the Massachusetts Colony Records, a George Washington medal, and a silver plaque, believed to have been crafted by Paul Revere, commemorating the building's cornerstone ceremony led by Governor Samuel Adams. Source: <https://www.history.com/articles/8-famous-time-capsules>



Reminder

Since this years Member Picnic is being combined with this historical community event, please do not bring a dish to pass. Also, feel free to bring a chair!



Among the Headstones

Pine Hill Cemetery Restoration Project Begins

As part of the PHHS's ongoing commitment to preserving local history, members recently began planning the restoration of the long-forgotten Pine Hill Cemetery. The cemetery's location was rediscovered after extensive historical research revealed that Pine Hill Cemetery was once situated on the Avery Gretton Farm. Property records showed that Avery Gretton owned land at 1198 Ogden Parma Townline Road in the early 1900s. Seeking to confirm the location, local geneologist Dick Halsey visited the current property owners, who confirmed that the cemetery still exists behind their home, hidden within the surrounding farmland. Because the cemetery was inaccessible while the corn was growing, Halsey returned after the harvest to photograph the site, allowing Historical Society members to visit and assess its condition.



PHHS members John Toal, and Amanda and Brian Dudley, conducted a survey of the cemetery to evaluate its restoration needs. Although much of the site has become overgrown with brush and weeds, the cemetery still retains portions of its original fence. Two sides of the historic fence remain standing, while the other sections have collapsed beneath decades of vegetation. The first phase of the restoration will focus on clearing the overgrowth so the fallen sections of the fence can be raised and stabilized. Future plans may include straightening and further restoring the fence as the project progresses.

Following the cleanup, volunteers plan to repair and preserve the cemetery's remaining headstones. Three markers remain: Mangle Rall (d. 1851), Jane (Knapp) Rall (d. 1853), and Caroline Rall. Research indicates that Mangle Rall was a veteran of the War of 1812. He enlisted at Rockland, New York, in Captain George W. Sneden's Company of Colonel Benjamin J. Gurnee's 83rd Regiment of the New York Militia. Military records also identify John Rall and James Rall as members of the same regiment, although their exact relationship to Mangle remains unknown. They may have been brothers, cousins, or other close relatives.

The Pine Hill Cemetery restoration represents another important effort by the Parma Hilton Historical Society to preserve the stories of the individuals and families who helped shape the community. As work continues, volunteers look forward to restoring this historic burial ground with the respect and care it deserves, ensuring that these early residents are remembered for generations to come.

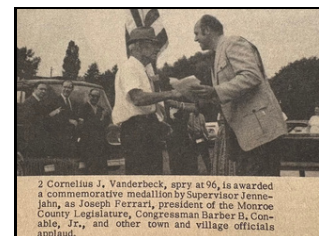
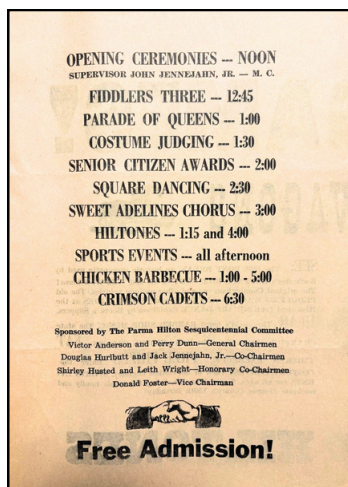


Left: View of the entire area of the overgrown Pine Hill Cemetery that currently sits in the middle of a farming field. Right: John Toal brushes away the dirt to help identify one of the down-turned stones. Top right: The top portion of Jane Rall's headstone seen with part of the original cemetery fence.

The Bigger the Birthday, the Longer the Word

From the Sesquicentennial to the Semiquincentennial: Celebrating in Parma Hilton Then and Now

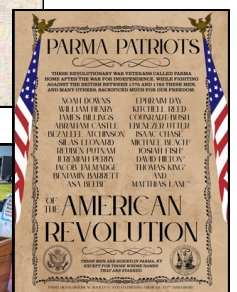
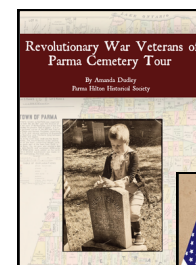
Monroe County celebrated its Sesquicentennial (150th anniversary) in 1971, and the Town of Parma marked the occasion with a community-wide "Pioneer Day" celebration on July 31st. The festivities featured a full day of entertainment, including performances by the renowned Sweet Adelines women's chorus, the popular Hiltones barbershop quartet, state champion fiddlers, and the Hilton High School Band. Visitors also enjoyed a parade, antique car show, square dancing, a costume contest, chicken barbecue, and a variety of sporting events. Special medals were presented to local residents age 85 and older, as well as babies born on February 23, 1971, the official 150th anniversary of Monroe County's founding. One of the day's most unique attractions was an 1890 pony break wagonette once used by Buffalo Bill Cody in his final Wild West stage show!



Fast forward to 2026, and together we celebrate America's 250th birthday; the Semiquincentennial. While today's celebration may look different from the festivities of 50 years ago, the spirit remains the same. The Semiquincentennial brings us together in new ways while honoring the enduring values of patriotism, pride, and community.

Here in Parma Hilton, organizations such as the PHHS, Hilton-Parma Recreation, the Parma Public Library, and many others have embraced this historic milestone with enthusiasm and creativity. Throughout the year, they have hosted themed events like the wildly successful Summer Smash, created special publications including the America 250 Activity Book and the Revolutionary War Veteran & Pioneer Cemetery Tour Guide, organized community contests, and launched a community time capsule that will be reopened during Hilton's Tricentennial in 2076.

Perhaps most importantly, we are sharing the stories of our Revolutionary War veterans and early pioneers through presentations, exhibits, podcasts, publications, and cemetery restorations, ensuring their courage, sacrifice, and contributions continue to inspire future generations while reminding us how they helped shape the community we proudly call home.

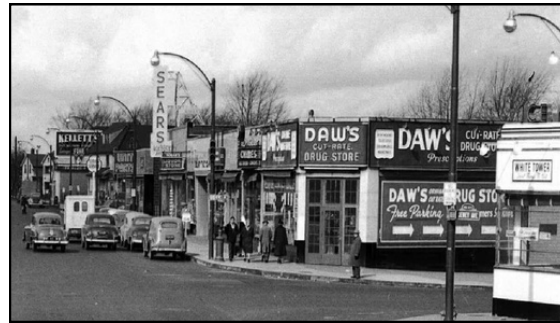


Curator's Corner

What's New in the Collection

A couple of issues back, I talked about how tools had changed since the 1800's. Recently we received a donation of some power tools from PHHS President Jeri Pickett. These were tools his grandfather had used. When I saw what we had gotten, my first reaction was "Sears had a sale!" If you are about my age, you will remember the Sears store at Ridge and Dewey, and another store on Monroe Ave. While no longer Sears stores (there's only a small handful left in the entire country, but that's another story) in those locations, the buildings are still there and have been repurposed, many times over.

So, what's in this collection? And how old are they? I'll answer the second part first. Among the tools were owners manuals and sales brochures, with copyright dates of 1959 and 1960, so we know when these were made and sold. Not crazy old, but from the late Baby Boom era. My dad had a drill much like these, and probably is from the same date. One thing I can say is that all of these power tools are HEAVY! Made back when power tool bodies were made of steel, with motors that lasted, and could be used and abused. Oh, and back then, even Craftsman power tools came with a lifetime warranty. I know that back in the day, as the saying goes, their power tools were made for Sears by the Electrolux Company, who made vacuum cleaners and many other electrical appliances.



*Original Sears store at Ridge Road and Dewey Ave.
Thanks to Bill Sauers for providing this image!*

So, what is in the batch? How about a 6 ½ inch circular saw? Odd size for a blade, and I doubt if a home builder/framer would have bought one that size. Did I mention it was heavy? I just put it on the scale in the General Store, and it came out at 12 pounds. I wonder what one of the new cordless Milwaukee saws weight in at with a battery? Same with all the other tools as well.

So, what else did we get? Two Craftsman Sabre Saws, different models. Looks like he opted for an upgrade, as one has more features than the other. A Craftsman orbital sander. A Craftsman soldering gun kit. Looking at the style, I'd guess this was a rebadged Weller. I bet it still works like they always did. A Black and Decker jig saw. And a Fury ¼ inch drill, made by the Ram Tool Co of Chicago, Ill.

So, I've had to jump down the proverbial rabbit hole on these tools and find out when the first of their types were made. I joked to a friend of mine last week, that I could almost see a couple of redneck carpenters sitting at the kitchen table wondering how they could connect an electric motor to a saw blade? So, I summoned up Google to see what Mr. AI has to say, and here's a quick blurb from Pro Tool Reviews.



A Brief History of Who Invented the Circular Saw

- *Invented by Edmond Michel in 1923*
- *Joseph W. Sullivan joins Michel to make improvements on the electric handsaw and start "The Michel Electric Handsaw Company" in 1924*
- *Originally called the "Skilsaw"*
- *1926 – Michel leaves the company, which is renamed "SKILSAW Incorporated"*
- *1928 – Art Emmons invents the first sidewinder circular saw for Porter-Cable*
- *1937 – Model 77 circular saw is born*
- *1985 – Patent granted to Panasonic Electric Works for a battery-powered circular saw*
- *2009 – The US Patent Office grants Milwaukee Electric Tool Company a patent for lithium-based battery packs*

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April 1st – November 30th / Closed on major holidays

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Now this is just for a circular saw, how about the sabre saw or jig saw? Here's a paragraph from our friends at Wikipedia:

Jigsaws first emerged in the 19th century and employed a treadle to operate the blade, which was thin and under tension, being secured at both ends to an oscillating frame. This kind of saw is now usually called a scroll saw. The modern portable jigsaw, with a rigid blade secured at one end and cutting on the up-stroke, was introduced in 1947 by Scintilla AG (later acquired by Bosch).

A quick bit of research tells me that the orbital electric sander could be considered the new kid on the block, the first design being around 1951.

And, how about the drill? I find this a bit amusing. The first electric drill was invented in 1889 by Arthur James Arnot and William Blanch Brain in Melbourne, Australia. Key milestones in its evolution include:

- 1889: Arthur James Arnot and William Blanch Brain patented the first electric drill to be used for coal mining.
- 1895: Wilhelm and Carl Fein created the first portable, handheld electric drill in Stuttgart, Germany (though it weighed over 16 pounds and required two hands).
- 1917: S. Duncan Black and Alonzo Decker patented the modern pistol-grip handle and trigger-switch portable drill modeled after a Colt handgun, creating the design used today.

I'm not sure I would call a 16 pound electric drill to be very portable. Many thanks to Mr's Black and Decker for their 1917 design. Looking back, the circular saw replaced the hand saw, I'm sure a lot of home builders were happy to have something to cut down on the time to build a new house. The same for a woodworker with the saber (or jig) saw, the sander and the power drill. For display purposes, the other really nice thing is that we have the boxes the tools came in. The box for the saw is quite beat up, but we have it. Plus manuals and other paperwork.

I'm looking forward to doing a window display of these tools, and others, in the town hall window next year. Along with what Jeri gave us, as I said, I still have my dad's Craftsman ½ inch drill, and an 8 inch angle grinder/buffer. I used that just once, to buff out the paint on my car, long ago, and discovered how easy it was to burn through the paint with it. I think we cut a cutoff wheel on it once, and, someone has referred to that as an ancient death wheel. I don't think OSHA would approve of this thing now. Anyway, stay tuned, this will be a display for next year.

Ken Freeman, PHHS Museum Curator



1963 Black & Decker Drill Ad



This labour-saving invention was the world's first power tool. In 1895, the resourceful employees at FEIN combined a hand drill with small electric motors. The concept of a tool with an individual electric power source was born. The first prototypes to use the now familiar 'pistol' shape were built in 1918 in accordance with an American model. Source: <https://fein.com/>

Information & forms for PHHS events can be found at
www.parmahiltonhistoricalsociety.com/events/

Upcoming Events

ON
GOING

America 250 Photography Contest & Kids Historical Marker Coloring Contest

Kids up to age 12 can pick up a coloring page at the Parma Public Library, PHHS Museum, or on our website and design their own historical marker. Prizes will be awarded by age group, and entries will be displayed for the public in the library window. Entries due by September 15th.

Calling photographers of all ages! Submit your best community and patriotic-themed photos for a chance to be featured in next year's community calendar. Entries are due by October 15th. Email your photos to Parmahiltonhistory@gmail.com.

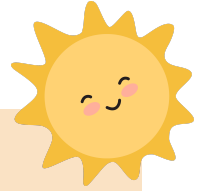
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Open Coloring at the Parma Library for the PHHS Coloring Contest

Come to this special open coloring session in the Parma Public Library Meeting Room from 10:30am - 1:30pm and use the library's art materials to design your historical marker along with friends! When you're done, leave it at the library or drop it off at the PHHS museum to be entered into our contest.



Happy August!



Did you know? August is the only month that does not contain any federal or nationally recognized public holidays, however it does host a variety of informal observances and smaller celebrations like...

August 7th: International Beer Day

August 8th: International Cat Day

August 13th: International Left Handers Day

August 26th: Women's Equality Day

The Perseid meteor shower returns every August and is widely considered one of the year's most spectacular celestial events. Although the shower is active from July 17th through August 24, it reaches its peak in the heart of August, when dozens of meteors can light up the night sky each hour under ideal conditions. "Global Sleep Under the Stars Night" on August 8th is the perfect opportunity to enjoy this amazing display!

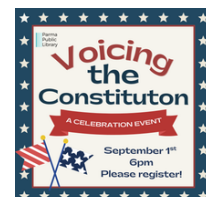


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Parma Public Library Programs (just a few, of many!)

Visit <https://www.parmapubliclibrary.org> for details. *=registration required

Aug 3rd at 6pm: Hold On to This for Me: A Joe Flaherty Legacy Writing Workshop*
Aug 4th at 6pm: Metal Detecting Adventures with Roc Diggers*
Aug 12th at 6pm: ZOOM: 10 Ways to Combat Climate Change in Your Yard*
Aug 17th at 6pm: Building Sustainable Communities with Color Westside Green*
Aug 21st at 10:30am: Open Coloring for Historical Society Summer Contest
Aug 24th at 6pm: Crafterdark: Neurographic Art*
Every Wednesday at 10:30: Gazebo Storytime
Sep 1st at 6pm: Voicing the Constitution: An America 250 Celebration Event!*

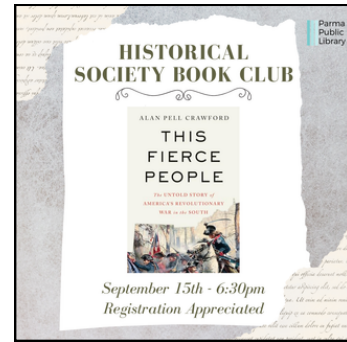


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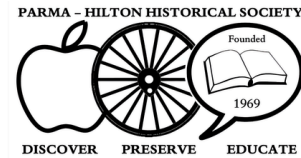
Historical Society Book Club Meeting: *This Fierce People* by Alan Pell Crawford

Join the Parma-Hilton Historical Society for their next community book club! This month we'll discuss *This Fierce People: The Untold Story of America's Revolutionary War in the South* by Alan Pell Crawford. Help us celebrate the 250th anniversary of America's founding this year by learning something new (and old)! The meeting will take place at 6:30 at the library Meeting Room. Please visit the library website events calendar to register your seat.



*Copies are available to
borrow at the library!*

Society Happenings & Highlights



Summer Smash Fun!

July 24th's Summer Smash was a great celebration filled with fun for the whole family and plenty of America 250 spirit! PHHS board members enjoyed meeting community members, coloring our America 250 banner, showing off our newly handcrafted time capsule, handed out treats, and shared stories about our local history with visitors of all ages. Thank you to everyone who stopped by and celebrated this historic milestone with us. Right, Nancy Leport hands out historical activity books to the kids.



Local Historians Gather at the Sylvester Lanthrop House

Several Monroe County historians were invited to tour of the 200 year old Sylvester Lanthrop house in Pittsford Village. Built by Mr. Lanthrop who was an engineer integral in building the Erie Canal, it was later owned by a family named Richardson who assisted enslaved people on their way to Canada. Tunnels ran from the house to underground limestone caverns nearby. The Strassenburgh family (of the Strassenburgh Planetarium) later owned the house. Today it is owned by Doug and Joyce Drake who hosted a tour of about 50 people. Pictured L-R are Hilton Historian Dave Crumb, Pittsford Historian Vicki Profit, and Greece Historical Society President Bill Sauers.



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From our Camera Roll

Four members of Hilton's Wright family recently gathered at the Museum to celebrate their shared heritage. Betty Smith Benoit, Florence "Tiny" Wright, Nancy Wright Bender (granddaughter of Leith Wright) and PHHS docent Carolyn Hurlbutt, whose husband was a Wright descendant, enjoyed the reunion on Sunday, July 12. Bender traveled from Springfield, Missouri, to join the gathering and reconnect with her family's local roots.



PHHS board members joined the Sons of the American Revolution at HP Rec's Summer Smash, where they hosted educational & patriotic displays and activities, to help continue the America 250 celebration!

Assistant Town Historian and Village of Hilton 2026 Citizen of the Year Nancy Leport poses beside the beautiful vintage red convertible in which she rode during this year's Firemen's Parade!



Get in Touch!

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Published August 1st, 2026 by Margaret Whelehan

Thank you to our friends at the Parma Public Library and Hilton Parma Parks & Recreation for their continued support!

