



Olmsted 200

Bicentennial Notes about Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township –
First Farmed in 1814 and Settled in 1815

Issue 90

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Olmsted Lived with and Loathed Railroads in 20th Century

As the 20th century dawned, Olmsted's two railroads still were primary means for residents to reach Cleveland and other nearby communities, as well as the rest of the country, but the automobile was beginning to give residents another option for travel. Projects to pave roads, usually with bricks at first, in Olmsted and other communities steadily made automobile travel more feasible and enjoyable, but many residents still relied on the railroads for daily commutes to jobs and other excursions throughout the first half of the 20th century.

The newspapers published the trains' schedules, and when a train didn't meet the schedule or a schedule was changed, it was news. For example, in the April 4, 1913, edition of the *Berea Enterprise*, the Olmsted Falls column included this item: "The Norwalk 'plug,' 'bob' or 'peewee', whichever you want to call it, was over an hour late today on account of the burning of coal chutes at Elyria blocking the main line...."

That column also explained the term, "the call of the red cushions," meant a desire to sit on the red plush cushions in the coaches on "the plug."

PEOPLE ! HERE !	
Simmerer celebrated STEEL RING, of Hosiery, Gas Ranges, and Oil Cloth; Boards, Coal Scuttles. alls, Ohio.	
The Big Four Route On Dec 25, 26, 27, and 28, after Jan 1, 1906, tickets will be on sale between Cleveland and the Big Four Route, (Cleveland, Akron, Canton, Massillon, Kent, and Norwalk) for the purpose of visiting the State Fair. Tickets good for return to January 3.	
One fare, plus 25c to Dayton and return, account Annual State Convention Fraternal Order of Eagles. Tickets sold Jan 9 and 10; return limit Jan 14.	
One fare, plus 25c to Columbus and return, account inauguration of Governor-elect Patterson. Tickets sold Jan 7 and 8; limit Jan 9.	
R. R. Time-Tables. Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway. TRAINS WEST: 9 47 141 137 87 AS PM PM PM PM Cleveland Dep. 6:00 2:55 8:10 5:10 7:40 Berea 6:05 3:17 8:20 5:20 7:50 Olmsted Falls 6:10 8:27 5:25 TRAINS EAST: 108 38 45 48 2 Olmsted Falls 7:25 8:30 1:00 Berea 7:30 1:01 8:35 1:15 8:40 Cleveland arr. 7:30 7:40 10:00 1:40 9:30 Trains 47 stops or passengers on Norwalk Division only. Big Four Railway. C C C & ST L R Y Trains Pass Berea as follows: Westward bound: 8 47 am Eastward bound: 6 07 pm daily 6 07 pm daily For full information and particulars as to rates, tickets, time, etc., call on agent, Big Four Route, address the undersigned, Warren J. Lynch, W. H. Duggan, G. P. V. L. A. Agent G. P. V. L. A. Cleveland & Berea St. Ry. (Cleveland, Ohio) Berea and Depot. Cars leave for C. C. C. & St. L. 1 train East am: for No. 2 Due 8:45 pm: for No. 4 Due 8:45 6:00 for No. 4 Due 8:45 West am: 6:05 for No. 5 Due 8:30 pm: 6:10 for No. 23 Due 8:12 for No. Due Cars leave for L. S. & M. S. Train: East am: 6:45 for No. 35 Due 7:08 7:30 for No. 108 Due 7:48 9:10 for No. 40 Due 9:35 pm: 12:35 for No. 44 Due 1:15 8:30 for No. 2 Due 8:45 West am: 6:05 for No. 7 Due 6:25 pm: 6:00 for No. 47 Due 6:30 8:00 for No. 141 Due 8:30 8:10 for No. 147 Due 8:35	

These listings of railroad schedules ran in the December 29, 1905, Berea Advertiser.

Anna Jean Hall, who was born in 1921 and married into the Hall family that ran greenhouses near Cook Road and McKenzie Road, was the daughter of Ed Breisch, who served as the station agent at the Olmsted Falls Depot. In a 2012 interview, she recalled what the depot was like when she was a child and later when she was an adult.

“It was very busy because...of what we called the plug, which was the train that the men that worked downtown took,” Hall said. “There were a lot of people [who] took that train. That left Olmsted at seven o’clock. And then there was a train, which they called the Shoppers’ Special that went in – and I don’t remember whether it was nine or 9:30, but it was in that vicinity. And then there was one coming out from Cleveland that stopped at the depot at three o’clock in the afternoon, which was the Shoppers’ Special, because there were no shopping centers. I mean, Cleveland was where you went to shop.”

Hall recalled taking the plug to work in Cleveland in the 1940s and then arriving back in Olmsted Falls on the train about six o’clock in the evening. “And then there was



This undated photo shows a train approaching the Olmsted Falls Depot sometime in the early half of the 20th century. Perhaps it was the commuter train known as the “plug.”

another one [that] came in late at night, nine-ish at night, that came back for people that stayed downtown for a meal or a movie or something.”

It's not clear why the commuter train was called the “plug,” but that seems to have been the most common term for it, judging by newspaper references. “I have no idea where they got the plug,” Hall said. “These were passenger trains.

And here again, I don’t know how they got this name – they traveled what they called the Pea Vine, which was a branch of the New York Central that went through

Kipton and Wakeman.”

It not only went through Kipton and Wakeman but also apparently went to and from Norwalk. Thus, the newspapers sometimes referred to it as the “Norwalk plug.”

Another item from the May 2, 1913, *Enterprise* is an example of the use of that nickname and local residents’ concern about train schedules: “There is some talk of having the ‘Norwalk Plug’ leave Cleveland at 5:25 or 5:30 p.m. instead of 5:05 at present, and quite a little feeling has been engendered by the proposal. Petitions pro and con – mostly ‘con’ – are in daily circulation on the train. Have you registered?”

In his 1966 book on Olmsted history, Walter Holzworth wrote that the peak in freight handling at Olmsted Falls came in October 1924, when the depot handled 100 cars with revenue of \$8,000. The freight handled at the depot included cattle, so the depot had cattle ramps and stock pens.

“The midnight serenade of bawling cattle that were shipped in by the carload from the Chicago stockyards and then herded out Cook Road to Arthur Hall’s slaughter house and feeding lots by his sons, Irving and Florin, on horseback by lantern light, no longer disturbs the quietness of rural nights,” Holzworth wrote. “The Halls chose the darkness to drive the cattle. It caused the animals to herd closer and reduced the temptation to take off into corn fields.”

Holzworth also wrote that, in the early half of the 20th century, the railroad station master was “a man of prestige.” Hall recalled her father was very busy as the station agent “because he had so many trains he had to work.” He was busy in the morning and had some time off midday before he got busy again with trains in the afternoon and evening, she said, so they lived just a block and a half from the depot on Mill Street just west of Plum Creek.

“That’s why I always said I grew up in that depot,” Hall said. “I was my dad’s shadow. I was with him all the time, and I was practically all my life in that depot.”

Her earliest recollection was of her father using the telegraph. “He had a telegrapher’s key that he communicated with the other depots and things. Later, there was direct telephone, but that was my first recollection with Daddy with his telegrapher’s key here.”

Holzworth also wrote that the railroad maintenance foreman, or section boss, who hired and fired workers, was another important person in the community, and many people curried favor with him.

“If he felt inclined he could have the old railroad ties stacked conveniently close to cross overs for the farmers along the track to haul away for firewood,” Holzworth wrote.

Further, he wrote, when Frank Aish supervised major repair or new construction for several sections of tracks around 1904, his “prestige was heightened by the fact he had charge of ordering supplies for the laborers’ camp stationed in cars on sidings along the railroad. His home town grocers were naturally favored whenever possible. Walter Locke supplied much of the groceries and meats.” (Locke ran a store in downtown Olmsted Falls for many years.)



The Olmsted Falls Depot was quiet and peaceful after snowfall in this March 31, 2014, photo, but it was a busy place with passengers and freight in the early 1900s.

After World War II, the railroad quit stopping at Olmsted Falls for passengers in 1948 and for freight in 1954.

Yet even as residents depended on services from the railroads in the early 20th century, the safety of living with the trains remained a big concern, as it had been in the latter part of the 19th century. The increased use of cars and trucks only intensified issues of safety at the railroad crossings. As Holzworth wrote, dissatisfaction with response of the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway and later the New York Central to those problems frequently occupied the attention of village leaders in Olmsted Falls.



This photo seems to be from the 1930s or 1940s. It shows the back of the watchman's shanty at the Columbia Road crossing in Olmsted Falls. The woman is identified as Louise Milton.

“The many casualties at crossings, especially at the village, caused the council to insist that a flagman be on duty there at all times to warn of approaching trains,” he wrote. “In 1904 the village demanded that gates be placed at the Columbia Road crossing. The railroad claimed the cost would be prohibitive and that an electric bell or gong would suffice. In that year hand operated gates were installed. A gate tenders shanty at the northwest corner of the tracks at Columbia was built. A Mr. Nichols and David Folk were among the gate tenders stationed there until the present automatic flasher gates were installed.”

But although the railroad was reluctant to spend money to improve safety measures at crossings, its crews seemed to be too eager to use another safety feature on their trains.

“The law [that] required the railroad to sound a warning whistle at all crossings caused a lot of sleepy-eyed and irritated citizens,” Holzworth wrote. “Some over zealous or perhaps rogueish [*sic*] trainman never let up on the whistle as they sped through a sleeping little village with four crossings. Blocks of crossings were also a vexing problem that in one instance resulted in police action against the train crew.”

Holzworth added, “Sometimes council meetings were a bit dull and these railroad gripes were handy subjects for parliamentary debates.”

However, an item in the Olmsted Falls column in the April 4, 1913, edition of the *Berea Enterprise* indicated that council members, or “town dads” as the columnist put it, sometimes might not have paid enough attention to problems with trains: “Won’t our town dads please make themselves familiar with the state law governing the blocking of public highways by trains on railroads and get busy. An example can be furnished several times a week at street railroad crossings.”

Later that year, Olmsted Falls officials apparently tried unsuccessfully to persuade the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway to hire someone to guard the crossing in the middle of town late at night, judging by this item in the October 10, 1913, edition of the *Berea Enterprise*: “L.S. & M.S. Ry. Co. have advised our council they do not consider the traffic on Columbia-av., after 10 p.m., sufficiently heavy to warrant an additional watchman at their crossing.” In 1914, the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway merged into the New York Central. Newspaper records don’t indicate that made much difference in the railroad’s approach to safety, at least initially.

Anna Hall said she remembered seeing the watchman operate the gates at the Columbia Road crossing when she was a child. “In fact, I sat there in that shanty with him a number of times,” she said. At some time, the railroad replaced the manually operated gates with automatic gates, but Hall couldn’t remember when that happened, although she believed it was before World War II. “It just seems like one disappeared and the other was there,” she said.



This photo dated 1931 shows the watchman’s shack at the Columbia Road crossing in downtown Olmsted Falls looking south toward the Depositors Building. Anna Hall, in 2012, identified the boy as Bill Nichols and the man as his grandfather.

Loud whistles or horns from locomotives and the blocking of crossings remained problems throughout the 20th century. Also, even though the railroad had installed gates and a watchman’s shanty at its Columbia Road crossing early in the century, it took decades before that railroad and the Big Four Railroad that ran through West View installed such safety provisions at other crossings around Olmsted Falls, Olmsted Township and West View, which became a village in 1927.

An item in the *Berea Enterprise* for February 14, 1930, provides a peek into the status of some crossings at that time. The item was about changes in routes for school buses. “The upper Big Four crossing at West View was eliminated from Driver Jackson’s route last week, and this route south added to the route of Driver Wise,” the newspaper reported. “This crossing has no danger signals.” Later in that item, the columnist wrote that the Big Four Railroad’s Columbia Road crossing in West View was scheduled to soon “be equipped with flash signals.”

That item also said that buses on more northern routes in the school district had to go to the Columbia Road crossing in Olmsted Falls to get across the New York Central Railroad’s tracks. It specifically said the crossing at Division Street (now Mapleway Drive) had no danger signals. It went unsaid, but is reasonable to infer, that other crossings at Lewis Road, Railroad Avenue (now Brookside Drive), Fitch Road, Stearns

Road and Bronson Road also had no signals. That was about eight decades after the railroads were built through Olmsted and almost one-third of the way through the 20th century.



Mike Gibson recently found this photo dated in the 1940s in a collection from his grandparents, Wilbur and Helen Staten, who lived at 7435 River Road. It seems to show two men manually operating gates at the Columbia Road crossing in Olmsted Falls by the watchman's shanty on a winter day.

But despite that 1930 promise by the railroad for “flash signals” at its West View crossings, those crossings remained dangerous for years. Early 1937 was especially deadly. The *Berea Enterprise* reported on January 8, 1937, that Mike Surman of Sprague Road was hurt badly when a train hit his car at the Sprague Road crossing. His car was damaged beyond recognition. One month later, the February 12, 1937, edition reported that a 79-year-old woman, Mrs. Albertine Studnarz, was killed on a Thursday evening when a westbound train hit her at the

West View crossing, presumably on Columbia Road, as she was going from her house to the house of her son.

A newspaper story from August 18, 1950, reported that the New York Central's Mercury train struck and instantly killed 62-year-old Joseph Zulbert of Bronson Road as the train sped through the crossing near his home. He had lived for 19 years next to the crossing, which had no lights or gates. He was returning from a shopping trip when the train hit his car at 9:15 a.m. His car was demolished.

After Mrs. Otto Haier of Berea was killed at the Fitch Road crossing when a train hit her car in May 1952, many Olmsted Township residents began circulating a petition to get a signal at the crossing.

Seven months later in December 1952, a 65-year-old retired plumber, Otto Muhlhauser, died the morning after a 70-car freight train struck him at the Fitch Road crossing on a Sunday night. At that time, the approach to the crossing was a steep rise, and Muhlhauser's car stalled on the tracks. According to newspaper reports, he got out of his car but apparently fell into the side of the moving train.

It then was revealed that Mulhauser had been one of about 200 township residents who had signed the petition for a crossing signal after the death of Mrs. Haier. In the five months after Haier's accident, local officials, the railroad and the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio had discussed the installation of a signal at the crossing, but they had not yet reached agreement.

Those discussions went on for many months with the railroad, the New York Central, unwilling to yield much. In late September 1953, the Olmsted Township trustees rejected a proposal from the railroad to install a gate at either the Stearns Road crossing or the Fitch Road crossing if the trustees would agree to have Bronson Road dead-end at the tracks. The township wanted either gates or blinking lights at crossings along all three of those roads. The PUCO had ordered the installation of gates at all those crossings that summer, but the railroad had not yet installed them. The three gates were estimated to cost about \$90,000.

Four months later in February 1954, a Lorain County man and his wife were crossing the still-unmarked Bronson Road crossing when a New York Central passenger train hit their car, knocked it 75 feet down the tracks and killed them.

About that same time, the New York Central agreed to install automatic signal warning devices at the Stearns Road crossing by July 1. In return, the township agreed to hold off until April 1, 1955, in its effort to get safety measures at the Bronson Road and Fitch Road crossings. Trustee Ben Warner said the township would not give up on efforts for safety devices at Bronson Road and Fitch Road, but the deal for the signals at Stearns Road was made in a hearing before the PUCO as a means of avoiding a court fight.



Crossing signals, such as this one along Fitch Road in 2011, became common in Olmsted in the latter half of the 20th century, but railroads were reluctant to install them earlier.

By March 1958, township leaders had been successful in getting the railroad to install flasher lights at the Fitch Road crossing, but they still were trying to persuade the PUCO to order flasher signals at the Bronson Road crossing. They enlisted support from the Ridgeville Board of Education, which had school buses that used the unguarded crossing.

It's not clear when, but eventually all the crossings along tracks in Olmsted Township, Olmsted Falls and West View were equipped with signals and gates. That improved safety but didn't solve the long-running problem of blocked crossings. It flared up strongly in the mid-to-late-1980s, especially along the east-west tracks running through Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township that then were operated by Conrail.

Beginning in November 1983, Olmsted Falls attacked the problem by fining the railroad \$1,000 or more each time crossings in the city were blocked for long periods. At that time, about 50 trains were passing through the city on those tracks each day. The city went to Berea Municipal Court in May 1984 with documentation of 19 violations for blocked crossings. In August 1984, Conrail paid \$26,500 in fines. Judge William Todia suspended \$4,200 in fines pending fulfillment of Conrail's pledge to install electronic "predictors" at the Olmsted Falls crossings by November 7, 1984. However, it took until January 1985 for the predictors to be installed at crossings at Lewis Road, Columbia Road, Brookside Drive and Mapleway Drive.

By March 1985, according to the *News Sun*, that step had “virtually eliminated malfunctioning crossing gates” at those crossings. In addition, when emergencies arose that resulted in trains blocking crossings, Conrail got into the practice of calling the city.

The predictors used microprocessors to sense the speed of approaching trains and then lower crossing gates 30 seconds before a train would reach the crossing. If a train would slow down and stop before reaching a crossing, the microcomputer would wait 30 seconds and then raise the gates. Previously, out-of-date equipment, inclement weather and possible tampering were blamed for gates remaining down too long.

But the installation of the new devices at the four crossings didn’t eliminate problems with gates in the city. Those along the other Conrail tracks at crossings along Columbia Road and Sprague Road at the southern end of Olmsted Falls, the part that formerly was West View, still tended to malfunction during wet weather. At times, the gates would go down and stay down during foul weather even when no train was passing through.

Despite that problem, the city’s citations to the railroad for blocked crossings had declined from a reported high at one time of about 25 per month to just two per month. Robert Kennedy, who at that time was an Olmsted Falls councilman, was quoted in the *News Sun* as saying, “In short, for the first time in years, Conrail has been cooperating with the City of Olmsted Falls and we appreciate it.” Nevertheless, he said, he didn’t think the problem of blocked crossings ever would be solved. He lamented that Conrail’s rush hour seemed to coincide with the time people were coming home from work and parents were rushing kids to after-school activities, but he was happy the city had made some progress with Conrail.



Long trains have been inconvenient for motorists in Olmsted for many decades, but the community found it intolerable when they stopped and blocked the crossings or the gates became stuck in the down position.

In September 1985, Kennedy agreed to withdraw a complaint he had filed against Conrail on behalf of the city with the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio. The case, No. A-1183-83-64, was titled “Alleged Excessive Operation of the Protective Devices in Olmsted Falls, Ohio.” Kennedy agreed to drop the case after the PUCO’s chief inspector toured the city’s railroad crossings, but he was disappointed that no state or city law could eliminate trains that moved “at a walking pace” on their way to nearby freight yards. However, he hoped enough goodwill had been created between Olmsted Falls and Conrail that the railroad would react more sympathetically when the city called about problems.

Two years later in 1987, Conrail officials in Columbus proposed a solution to the problem, but Olmsted Falls officials rejected it right away. The proposal was to build a bridge for Columbia Road over the tracks in the center of town. Mayor David Dunn told the *News Sun* it looked like “an excellent idea” on the surface, at least to Conrail, but it

wasn't practical considering the layout of downtown buildings. Kennedy said it would "destroy downtown Olmsted Falls."

Dunn said blockages occurred when the Berea control center to the east of Olmsted Falls would halt westbound freight trains. "The average train is 113 cars long, and when they stop a train west of that tower, it is going to block us on every east and west crossing we've got, just about out to the county line," he told the newspaper.

A separate, specific incident Dunn mentioned occurred on February 20, 1987, when the crossing gates at Columbia Road in downtown Olmsted Falls malfunctioned for about an hour beginning about 3:30 p.m. He said traffic backed up on the road to the city's border. The gates kept going down, and it took the railroad until late that night to fix the problem, he said.

In the last few years of the 20th century, Olmsted's train troubles got worse, but solutions arrived in the 21st century. *Olmsted 200* will have more on that next month.

Robbery and Murder Occurred along the Railroad in Olmsted

Late in the 19th century, the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway's depot



The Olmsted Falls Depot and its vicinity seem to be an unlikely setting for crime today.

at Olmsted Falls was the starting point for an episode of crime that could have made for an entertaining movie. Early in the 20th century, another bloody crime occurred nearby.

"Burglars entered the depot, last night at midnight, bound and gagged the operator and attempted to blow the safe," the *Berea Advertiser* reported in its Olmsted Falls column on March 30, 1894. That item continued:

They got nothing from the safe, but got the operator's gold watch and \$3 in money. George Bowman, living opposite the depot, heard them and fired at them. The firing made the visitors seek seclusion and in a short space of time nearly the whole male population of the village was on the trail with Town Marshal Romp at their head as commander-in-chief. The tracks of six men in the snow were found along the railroad near the depot and the pursuers kept on this. They were overtaken in Rockport and the whole six were arrested and taken to Cleveland on a freight car. The Cleveland papers say the captors of the gang of six attracted much attention on the streets with the dangerous looking shot guns over their shoulders and the military precision with which they marched. Several of them wore army overcoats with brass buttons and capes which aided to their warlike appearance. In the party were Township Treasurer T.C.

Stokes, Marshal Romp, W.J. Spafford and James Short. They were heroes at the Lake Shore office.

Two weeks later, that column provided this update in the April 13 edition of the *Advertiser*: “The six men who were captured by Olmsted farmers after a chase of fifteen miles, and were later bound over to the Court of Common Pleas on the charge of robbing the night operator for the Lake Shore Railway Company at Olmsted, are suspected of being members of the gang of desperadoes who committed the daring burglary of the Silver Creek depot...on the morning of March 24...” (Unfortunately, the ink on the copy of that edition of the newspaper that was preserved on microfilm was faded and parts of the story are unreadable.) The reference to the other burglary seems to have been at a depot in Silver Creek in upstate New York.

The court moved swiftly back then, as this item in the April 20 *Advertiser* indicated: “The six burglars who raided the telegraph office and station here a few weeks ago have all been convicted of burglary and will do time in the Pen. Messrs. Bowman, Spafford and others who captured the rascals have the thanks of the community in securing their punishment. Burglars will hereafter be shy of Olmsted Falls. The Cleveland papers state that they are old offenders and are wanted in New York for similar crimes.”



This depot in Silver Creek, New York, as seen in this postcard photo, bears some resemblance to the Olmsted Falls Depot. It might have been hit by the same gang of criminals who showed up in Olmsted Falls in March 1894.

One week later, on April 27, the Olmsted Falls column in the *Advertiser* included this follow-up: “The robbers who entered the Lake Shore railway station at Olmsted Falls, bound the night telegraph operator, and secured a small sum of plunder, were on Saturday severely punished by Judge Hamilton. John Kane, who it was learned had served one term in the Penitentiary and had been implicated of a robbery in New York State, was sentenced to five years in the penitentiary. His five companions...were sentenced three years each.”

That might have been the end of the story of the depot robbers, but the Olmsted Falls column in the June 22, 1894, *Advertiser* included this item that indicated the incident could have been much more explosive: “A dynamite bomb was found Wednesday by Ben Spear on the banks of Plum creek. The bomb was large in size and had attached to it a long fuse. It is thought that the bomb was left by the robbers who looted the station here several months ago, and who are now serving penitentiary sentences.”

About 16 years later, a railroad labor camp about 2,000 feet west of Columbia Road, not too far from the depot, was the scene of another crime. As Walter Holzworth

described it in his 1966 book of Olmsted history, it occurred on the night of July 14, 1910.

“The heat settled in like a smothering blanket and the workmen tossed uneasy in their bunks,” he wrote. “Dice and card games were over. The smell of beer, whiskey, bologna sausage, garlic, and the sweat of laborers cooped up in close quarters was overbearing. There wasn’t much relief outside but the air was clean and the ground was cool.”

About 9:30, Charles Brunner took his pillow and blanket and headed outside. “Can no sleep in here tonight,” he was quoted as saying. “Anyone go with me to sleep outside?” Two others, Jim Counterwane and Tom Zurach, followed him. Just after they got to sleep, someone kicked Brunner in the side, waking him. Thinking one of his coworkers did it, he said, “You do that again and I bust you in the nose.” But when he sat up, he could barely see several men around him.

“This is a holdup,” one man said. “Where is your money?”



These tracks through Olmsted Falls now belong to Norfolk Southern, but in 1910, they were part of the New York Central when a murder occurred near them one summer night.

“I have no money,” Brunner said. Then a gun was fired seriously wounding Brunner. His two colleagues jumped up but were cut down by a hail of shots. Their fellow workers poured out of the train cars they were in, while the shooters escaped into the darkness.

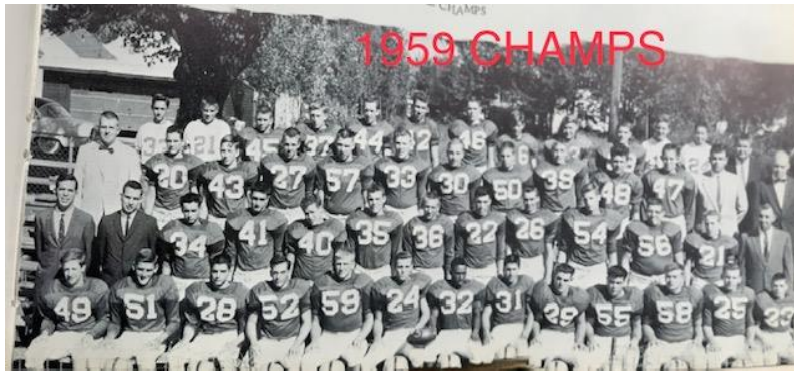
The camp’s foreman called the sheriff, who arrived about 12:30 a.m. and searched the area. The men who were shot were put on a train that left Olmsted Falls about 12:45. They were taken to St. Luke’s Hospital. Brunner died on the way. Counterwane had serious wounds. Zurach had only a scalp wound. Both of them recovered.

Later, it was reported that authorities suspected a gang of seven African-American men who had been escorted by police out of Elyria. They left on a freight train, but a railroad detective discovered them at Shawville. When he ordered them off the train, they responded with gunfire. The detective returned fire and the men jumped off the train somewhere between Shawville and Olmsted Falls. Whether they were responsible for the murder in Olmsted Falls was never determined because they were not apprehended.

Reader Recalls Big Season for the Bulldogs

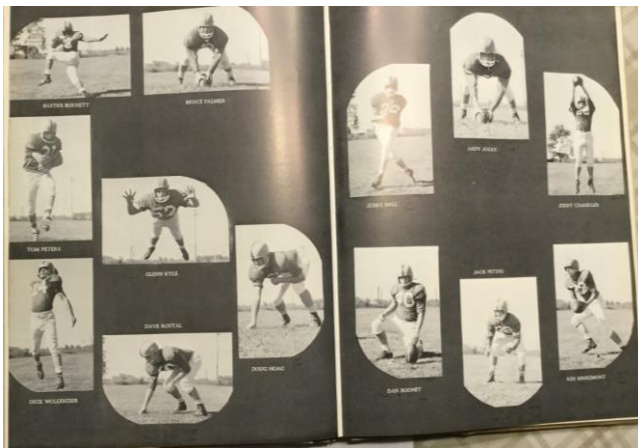
The recent stories about Olmsted Falls Bulldogs’ football five decades ago caught the interest of reader Mary (McManamon) Mularo, who called attention to the success the Bulldogs had during her senior year in high school six decades ago when they went

undefeated and won the Southwestern Conference championship. She was a member of the Class of 1960, so that was the fall 1959 football season.



This photo from the 1960 Senorio shows the Olmsted Falls High School football team that won the 1959 Southwestern Conference championship.

On their way to the championship, the Bulldogs defeated Strongsville, Bay Village, Westlake, North Olmsted, Rocky River, Fairview, Medina and Oberlin.

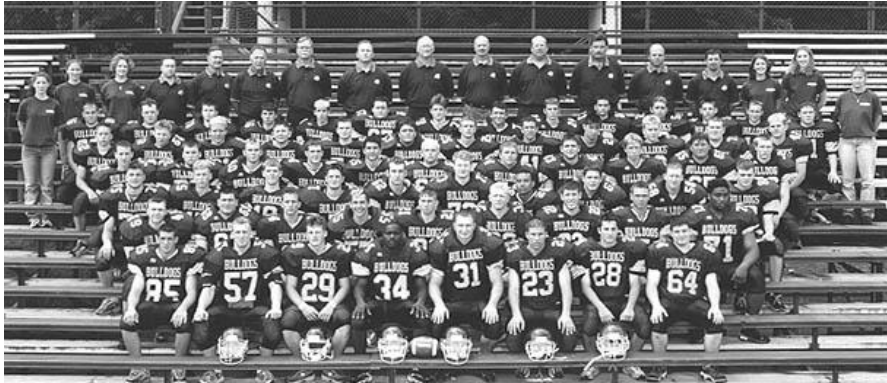


The photo on the left shows how the 1960 Senorio displayed the individual photos of 13 stars of the Bulldogs' championship 1959 football team in the "60" shape. On the right is the cover of that year's yearbook. All the 1960 Senorio photos are courtesy of Mary (McManamon) Mularo.

Olmsted 200 is not attempting to recount the history of every championship team produced by Olmsted Falls High School. However, this is a good time to recognize that this year is the 20th anniversary of the Ohio High School Athletic Association Division II state football championship the Bulldogs won in 2000 after finishing the regular season with a record of nine wins and one loss. Their championship victory came on the evening of December 1, 2000, at Massillon's Paul Brown Tiger Stadium. Olmsted Falls shut out Piqua 21 to zero to take the title.

The head coach for that state championship team was Jim Ryan, who graduated from Olmsted Falls High School in 1976. He went on to attend Findlay College, where he was the starting linebacker for that school's football team that won a national

championship in 1979. After teaching and coaching at North Olmsted High School for two years, Ryan returned in 1982 to Olmsted Falls High School, where he taught and



This was the Olmsted Falls Bulldogs team that won the state Division II football championship on December 1, 2000.

coached several sports. In addition to the state football championship in 2000, he led the Bulldogs to the state semi-final game in 2002 and the regional finals in 2010.

Still to Come

The next issue of *Olmsted 200* will include the next story about how Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township have coped with the railroads over the years.

If you know of other people who would like to receive *Olmsted 200* by email, please feel free to forward it to them. They can get on the distribution list by sending a request to: wallacestar@hotmail.com. *Olmsted 200* has readers in several states beyond Ohio, including California, Oregon, Washington, Montana, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia, Michigan, Wisconsin, New York, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Maine, as well as overseas in the Netherlands, Germany and Japan.

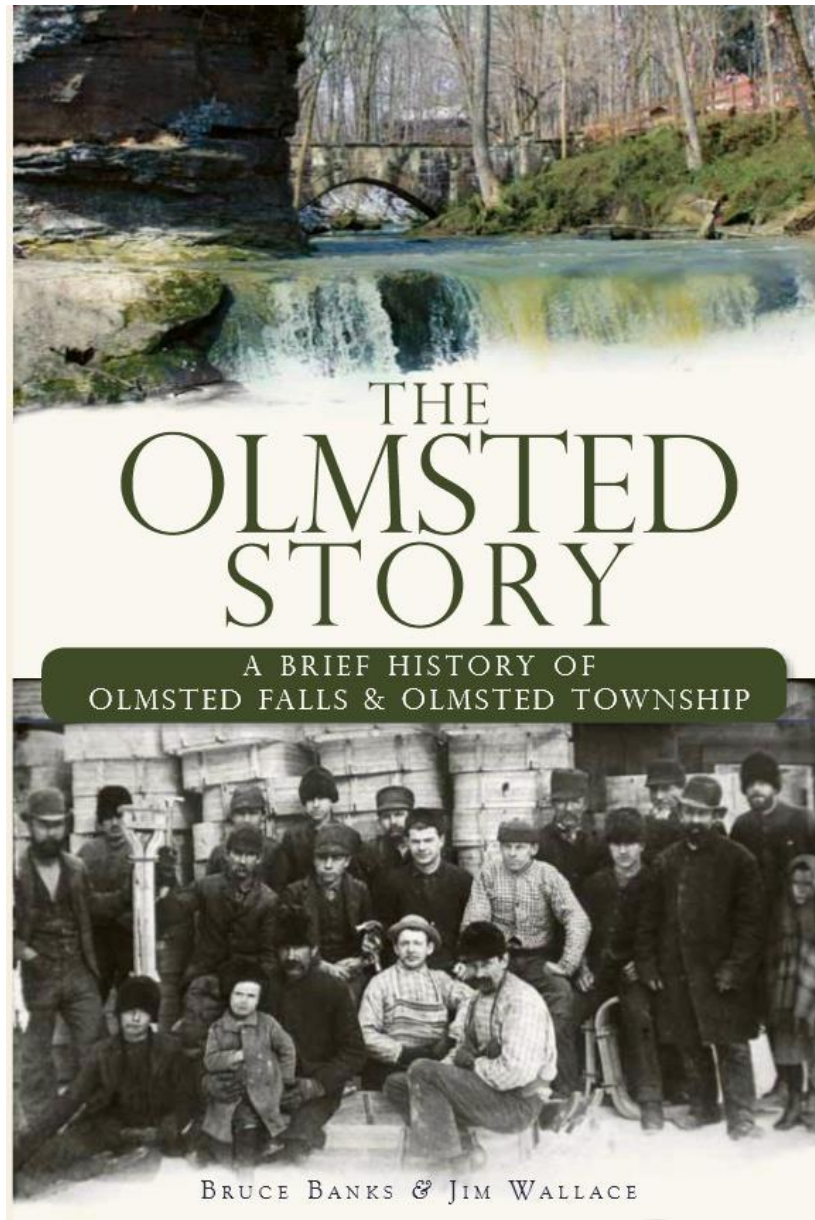
Your questions and comments about *Olmsted 200* are welcome. Perhaps there is something about Olmsted's history that you would like to have pulled out of *Olmsted 200*'s extensive archives. Or perhaps you have information or photos about the community's history that you would like to share.

If you have missed any of the past issues of *Olmsted 200* or want to share them with someone else, all of them can be found on Olmsted Township's website. Go to <http://olmstedtownship.org/newsletters/>. A list of *Olmsted 200* issues is on the right side. Click on the number of the issue you want to read. All of the issues of *Olmsted 200* also are available on the website of the City of Olmsted Falls. Find them at: http://www.olmstedfalls.org/olmsted_falls_history/index.php. A link to *Olmsted 200* can be found on the left side of the page.

Except where otherwise noted, all articles in *Olmsted 200* are written by Jim Wallace. Thanks go to Mary Louise King for help in proofreading and editing many issues. Thanks also go to David Kennedy for frequently contributing research and insight

for some stories. Written contributions and photos, as well as comments and questions about items in this newsletter, will be considered for publication. Send any correspondence by email to: wallacestar@hotmail.com.

Olmsted 200 is written, researched and edited by Jim Wallace, who is solely responsible for its content. He is co-author (with Bruce Banks) of ***The Olmsted Story: A Brief History of Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township***, published in 2010 by The History Press of Charleston, S.C. ***The Olmsted Story*** is available at Angelina's Pizza in Olmsted Falls and the Berea Historical Society's Mahler Museum & History Center and through online booksellers.



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