



Olmsted 200

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

Issue 76

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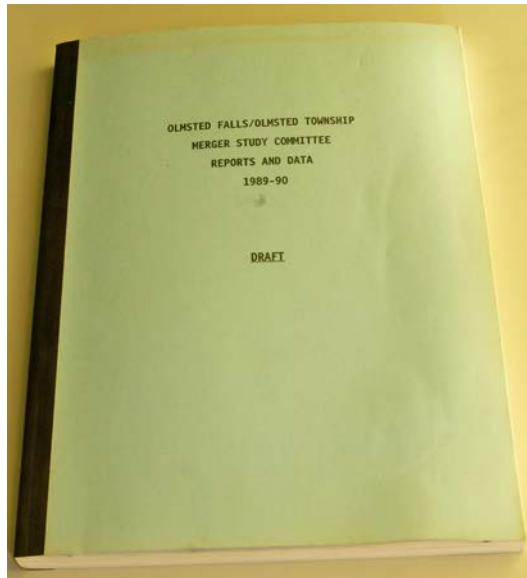
Contents

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----|
| Merger Study Was Extensive | 1 |
| Gathering Fuels Memories of Schady's Shell | 5 |
| Longtime Olmsted Hot Spot Started Seven Decades Ago | 12 |
| Still to Come | 13 |

Merger Study Was Extensive

The effort to merge Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township that began 30 years ago in May 1989 came closer to success than many similar efforts. That could be because of the extensive work done in 1989 and 1990 by the unofficial Olmsted Falls/Olmsted

Township Merger Study Committee, which included 12 township residents and 12 city residents. Thanks to a recent donation from George and Donna Behrend, *Olmsted 200* now has a copy of the committee's 135-page draft report from May 1990. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the pros and cons of merger, which the group decided to support unanimously.



This 1990 report, courtesy of George and Donna Behrend, documents much work by the Merger Study Committee in 1989 and 1990.

As recounted in last month's issue of *Olmsted 200*, voters rejected the proposal to form an official merger commission in the November 5, 1991, election, but the margin of defeat was only 140 votes from township residents – about 4.6 percent of all the votes cast in the township. Previous efforts to combine the two communities had usually failed by much larger margins. Overall almost 48 percent of township voters favored the formation of the commission. The proposal

had majority support in six of the township's eight precincts. In the two precincts where the vote went against establishing the merger commission, 56 percent voted against it in one, while 86 percent of those in the precinct for the Columbia Mobile Home Park opposed it, as did Gary Brookins, the trailer park's nonresident owner at the time. In Olmsted Falls, 89 percent of voters approved the establishment of the merger commission.

Despite the proposal's defeat, it is interesting to review the information compiled by the merger committee and the conclusions the members reached. In what looks like a news release issued on May 15, 1989, to announce the merger study committee, spokesman Carl Stewart said, "We want to explode the myths and misconceptions that usually surface when discussing a merger, but not ignore the fact that there are real concessions and compromises involved." He said the committee intended to evaluate the advantages of a merger that would combine the strengths of Olmsted Township and Olmsted Falls without sacrificing the character of each of them.

"In many ways we have always been one community; our churches, businesses, clubs and organizations, and our schools have always brought us together," Stewart said.

"In many ways we have always been one community; our churches, businesses, clubs and organizations, and our schools have always brought us together." – Carl Stewart

"The city government and township government has *[sic]* served us reasonably well in the past. But we are growing, and it may be time for us to join forces and exert more direction and control over our combined growth rather than react independently."

In a July 17, 1989, summary of what the committee was doing and why, it was noted that a previous attempt to establish a merger commission in 1987 was muddled by the unsuccessful effort to prevent Berea from annexing the township's Bagley Road corridor east of Olmsted Falls and west of Berea's previous border.

"When people went to vote on the issue there were very few facts available about the issues involved let alone about the role of such a commission," the report said, adding that the committee intended to establish the facts of what a merger – and a merger commission – would do. It said the common philosophy of the committee members was that it would be "better to direct, plan and control our future" rather than pretend everything would be all right.

The committee rejected the attitude that there was nothing the City of Olmsted Falls could do that Olmsted Township could not do for itself. It noted that state statutes purposely limited the power of township government. "Further, townships rely heavily on the decisions and authority of people who are not even residents of the community, i.e. county prosecutors, county commissioners and state legislators," the report said. "Hence,

while they may generally act in our best interest, they do not have the same vested interest as we do."

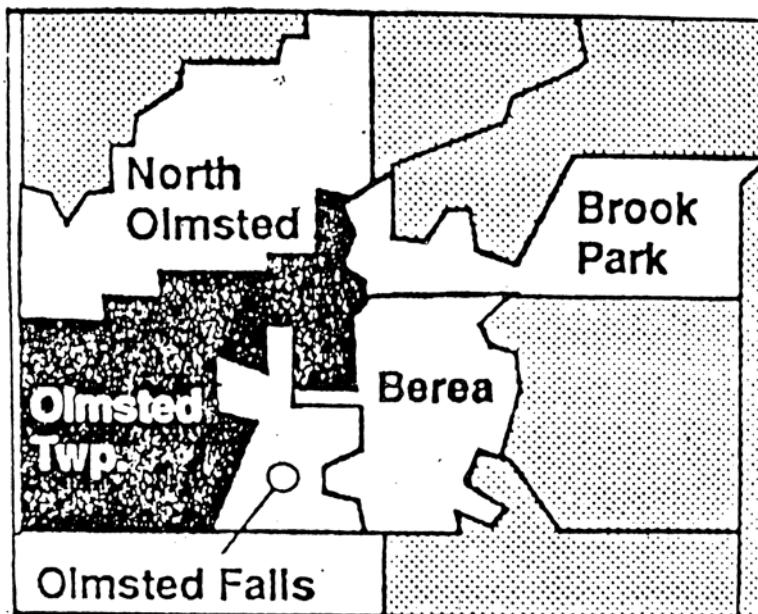
The report suggested that a combined Olmsted Falls-Olmsted Township could work as effectively as the Olmsted Falls City School District – perhaps with a city manager who would serve in a role equivalent to the school district's superintendent.

The merger committee was working at a time when Brook Park, Berea and North Olmsted all were considering acquiring the township in whole or part, and many residents were concerned the township might be dismantled in pieces. It also was a time when both Olmsted Township and Olmsted Falls were experiencing a spurt in the growth of new housing, and the commercial and industrial development of the two communities was unclear. For perspective, it is useful to remember that the future of downtown Olmsted Falls was still in question in 1989. It was only late that year that Clint Williams acquired two acres with several old buildings that he redeveloped as Grand Pacific Junction.

"It is our belief that our community has many natural attributes that we want to retain and protect," the committee report said in July 1989. "At the same time it is our belief that our community is going to continue its population and commercial growth. We believe we can accommodate *[sic]* the retention and protection of our 'rural' flavor while directing our growth in a manner which makes our community one of the most attractive in Northeast Ohio. It is our belief that to do this we must move ahead now to study benefits of merging with one another."

The committee appointed subcommittees to study the subjects of land use, parks and recreation, finance, future problems, services, and government organization. The finance subcommittee found that a merger of Olmsted Township and Olmsted Falls would reduce total

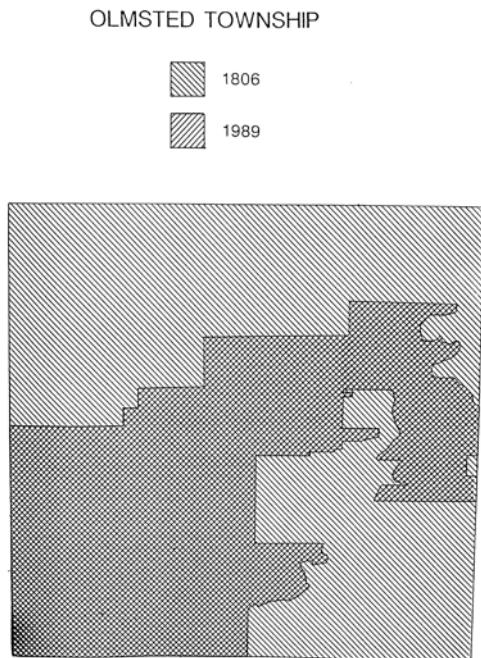
administrative costs by up to \$200,000 per year with no decrease in services, send to the community about \$180,000 a year in license and gas tax revenue for road maintenance that was retained by the county instead of turned over to the township, and result in an overall reduction in property tax rates for residents of both communities. Compensating



This rough map in the Merger Study Committee's report showed all the cities interested in adding township land to their communities.

for the reduction in property tax rates would be revenue from spreading the Olmsted Falls income tax to the former area of the township. Income tax would be paid not only by residents of the community but also by residents of other communities who would come to the expanded Olmsted Falls to work.

“The change would reduce the tax burden on fixed income homeowners and shift [it] to wage earners,” the report said. “The revenues from an income tax would rise as wages rise; whereas, any increase in property tax revenues must be voted by the residents. An income tax would provide additional revenue from present and future nonresidents who work in the Olmsted Township area.”



Amid concern about losing more township land to neighboring cities, the Merger Study Committee's report showed how Olmsted Township had shrunk from 1806 to 1989. Most of the township's lost land had gone to Olmsted Falls and North Olmsted, but Berea and Brook Park had taken smaller parts of it.

The committee warned that, if parts of the township were annexed to neighboring cities in the future, the residents of the remaining part of the township would have to approve large tax increases to retain the township's basic level of services.

Members of the committee stated they had no interest in evaluating any annexation of township land by Brook Park, North Olmsted or Berea. At the time, the township had a population of 7,800 in 10.3 square miles, while North Olmsted had 35,800 people in 12.0 square miles, Brook Park had 27,000 people in 8.5 square miles, Berea had 19,700 people in 5.2 square miles, and Olmsted Falls had 6,600 people in 3.2 square miles.

The committee specified it was interested in the merger of Olmsted Township and Olmsted Falls – not an annexation of the township to the city. Merger was seen as the friendlier of the two options. It would require two votes by residents of the township and the city: one to form an official merger commission with five members from each community and one on whether to accept proposals made by that merger commission.

“Merger allows the best features of both communities to emerge,” the committee said. “The conditions of merger, developed by two equal communities, are legally binding.”

By contrast, the report noted, annexation could include either part of the township or all of it. It also could involve a referendum of all voters in the area being annexed or

just the votes of property owners, which would have meant the owner of a trailer park, such as Gary Brookins of Columbia Park, could vote instead of the residents of the trailer park. In addition, those in the annexed area would have to accept the laws and tax rates of the annexing community rather than being able to negotiate for legally binding agreements on what those laws and tax rates should be.

The land use subcommittee found that the township's boundaries would be protected from loss to other cities by a merger with Olmsted Falls, and the township's semi-rural nature could be protected while planning for expected future growth. It said Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township already had similar zoning codes.

After studying the issue for almost a year, members of the committee voted unanimously by secret ballot in favor of merger on April 8, 1990. They recommended putting on the ballot in November 1991 the issue of whether to create an official merger commission, and if that were approved, to follow up in the election of November 1992 with a vote on whether to proceed with the proposed merger.

As already noted, the process never reached that second election because of township residents' defeat of the proposal to form the official merger commission. But that did nothing to quell the desire of Olmsted Township's neighbors for township land in the 1990s. *Olmsted 200* will have more on that in next month's issue.

Gathering Fuels Memories of Schady's Shell

People who grew up in Olmsted Falls or Olmsted Township have fond memories of various spots where they spent many days of their formative years, including schools, churches and parks. One location that still warms the hearts of many current and former Olmsted residents is the building that was known for decades in the 20th century as Schady's Shell. That's when it was a gas station run by Gordon Schady with or without a partner.

For some guys, it was either a place they worked or where they hung out with their friends. For some girls, it was where they stopped at or passed by to be noticed by the boys.



Clint Williams added an old Shell Oil pump in front of his Olmsted Falls office in time for a gathering of people who remembered it as the longtime home of Schady's Shell service station.

Those are the types of memories that came out one day this summer when a few dozen people gathered at the building at the corner of Columbia Road and Water Street – now the Olmsted Falls office for Clint Williams Realty – for a Schady's Shell reunion. In

preparation for the June 22 gathering, Williams acquired and installed a vintage Shell gas pump similar to those once used there.



Ron Molosky enjoyed cars and visiting Schady's Shell.

"All my friends were into cars, so we were always over here working on a car," Ron Molosky recalled. "We enjoyed coming here because we had cars. It was one of the things we liked to do – work on cars. Then my father-in-law bought half the gas station from Schady, and so he ran it until he went to work for the school system eventually. He was Frannie Nickels."

Molosky, attended Berea schools until he was 12 years old. Then his parents built a house along Sprague Road in what then was the Village of West View and now is the southern end of Olmsted Falls. After high school, he joined the Air Force. He got out of the service in 1966 and

married Frannie Nickels's daughter in October of that year, about the time he started working for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, where he remained for 38 years.

Schady's Shell also was a hangout for Dick Hall, who was in the Class of 1964 at Olmsted Falls High School. "I remember my brother [Jerry] and older classmen would always come here on a Friday," he said. "This was a place where they would gather to figure out what they were going to do. And I never knew how Mr. Schady could take that. I said, 'How does he put up with all this?' He was an amazing man."

Hall is from the family known for Hall Brothers' Meats at 27040 Cook Road. He grew up along on Cook Road across from McKenzie Road. His grandfather's house was a block house that was turned into Dugan's Garden Center at 27005 Cook Road.

"We'd all come in to buy a pop and chips and sit down and talk," Hall said about Schady's Shell. "Then we'd go down the river and go fishing or something. It was a hangout place."

Hanging around Schady's back then was like the way life for teenagers was depicted in the 1970s television show, "Happy Days," he said.



Schady's was a meeting spot for Dick Hall and his friends.

“I just had Chris Correll tell me he’d come over if he could find a Camel cig, because this was the first place he bought his cigarettes to smoke – those Camel cigarettes back then,” Hall said. “It’s just been a fun place, and it’s so nice to see that they kept this up, and it’s so beautiful.”



Sonny Hall remembered Gordon Schady as kind and generous.

know, a guy moved away from here about six months ago, and I have a tire bill for him sitting in the drawer under the register.’ He said, ‘You know, that guy came back visiting someone and he said he had to come and see me and pay off that bill. It’s amazing.’”

Letting customers pay off their bills on their own time wasn’t the only example of Schady’s kindheartedness. Hall said, “I was here one time when a woman pulled in and she said, ‘My heater isn’t working,’ Schady was a big man. So he gets her out of the car and he crawls under the dash, finds the fuse, and he puts a new fuse in. She says, ‘Well, how much do I owe you, Gordon?’ He says, ‘A nickel.’ He was kidding her though. He said, ‘Oh, go on.’ He was a good guy.”

Sonny’s wife, Lucy (Schartman) Hall of the OFHS Class of 1961, also remembered Schady’s Shell fondly. “It was such a nice, fair place, and you could trust them,” she said. “I know one time I came home from work, and I was having problems with my car. I

Another member of that same family with memories of Schady’s is Sonny Hall of the OFHS Class of 1958.

“[I remember] all the characters who used to hang out here – just a good place to meet your friends,” he said. “It always had good mechanics.”

Gordon Schady was “a great guy,” he said. Hall recalled being astounded by the drawer full of IOUs that Schady kept.

“People would come in and say, ‘Fill it up,’ and he’d write it up on a ticket and put it in the drawer under their name,” Hall said. “He had a big drawer under his cash register. I’d come in with my expense check on a Saturday, and he’d cash my expense check. I’d pay my bill and get a carton of cigarettes. I remember one time, he said, ‘You



This ashtray, courtesy of Sonny Hall, and this keychain are two items preserved from the heyday of Schady’s Shell.



*Lucy (Schartman) Hall
got gas and sometimes
free services at Schady's.*

Kenny Kramer would take it out and burn the exhaust until it was all clean when I got back in it."

One of the boys who frequented Schady's was Mark Ciacchi of the OFHS Class of 1967.

"I used to come up here, and back then, you could put 30 cents – a quarter and a nickel – in the cigarette machine and get a pack of Luckys, and there'd be two pennies change inside the cellophane," he said. "And if you jiggled the handle just right, a second pack would fall down. Everybody knew how to jiggle it. And it would also dispense a pack of matches. The matches would come out with the cigarettes. The cigarettes were 28 cents a pack."

Although it was cheaper to buy cigarettes in stores, Ciacchi said, the machine at Schady's provided him with easy access as early as age 12.

"A lot of my high school friends worked up here," he said. "Doug and Tommy Fenderbosch – they were all part-time mechanics up here."

Although Ciacchi lived along Sprague Road near Jaquay Road, he spent as much time as he could in the center of Olmsted Falls. He recalled his mother taking him as a small child to the wading pool at the Village Green and getting inducted into the Boy Scouts at the Scouts' cabin down in the park (before it burned down).

went in and I told one of the guys. They came out and checked it and fixed whatever, and away I went."

The charge for that service was nothing, she said, but it helped keep her as a loyal customer. Hall, whose father owned Olmsted Auto Wrecking on Bagley Road, said she drove a 1956 Mercury convertible. In those days, she said, she could buy about half a tank of gas for 50 cents, so she didn't worry about gas mileage.

Another woman with a similar experience is Sharon Laut, also of the OFHS Class of 1961. "I knew a lot of the kids that hung out here," she said. "It was only boys. I did get my gas here."

An employee of Schady's who sticks on in her mind is Kenny Kramer. "I had just started working," Laut said. "I bought a '61 Corvette, and I used to bring it up here. And



*Sharon Laut relied on
Schady's for care of her car.*



Mark Ciacchi values a Bob Sayers print of Schady's Shell.

“One of the things I remember about Schady’s is we used to come in and say, ‘Hey, my tire’s out of balance,’ and the guy would throw me a couple of tools and say, ‘The machine’s over there.,’” he said. Someone else who needed a tune-up would be told where the lift was, he said. “We just did our own stuff here,” he said.

That was different from the more attentive service young women would get. “That’s because most of the guys here were trying to pick up those women.” Fenrich said.

His wife, Joan (Moore) Fenrich, who lived on Olmway Avenue and was the OFHS Class of 1965’s Homecoming queen, confirmed that.



Joan (Moore) Fenrich enjoyed walking by Schady's Shell.

“So I got a lot of memories around here,” Ciacchi said. “I left and came back, but I’m still living back around here now. I love living in a small town. It was great.”

One of his treasured possessions is a print of the picture artist Bob Sayers, who lived a few doors down from Schady’s, painted of the gas station. “I bought it from a guy on Craig’s List,” he said. It’s a signed print. It’s an original, and it’s framed, and I see my friend, Don Warner, has a copy here, too.”

Lee Fenrich, who graduated from Padua High School in 1965 after attending elementary school in Olmsted Falls, recalled that the service at Schady’s Shell sometimes was self-service.



Lee Fenrich worked on his own car at Schady's.

“I walked by here because the guys were hanging out here,” she said. “There wasn’t anything to do back then, so we’d go to the Village Green, we’d walk around town, and there usually were some guys hanging out here.”

One of her friends was Susanna Stewart, whose father was a judge who bought her a Corvette, so the two of them would count out their nickels and dimes to gather enough money to buy a couple of gallons of gas at Schady’s.

Lee Fenrich said, “I could get my car filled up for six dollars. At that point, it was: How fast can you go? Now, it’s: How far can you go on a gallon? What the hell happened to us?”

Schady's Shell played an important role in the young life of Dave Fenderbosch, who spent quite a bit of time there and learned a few things from Gordon Schady.

"He taught me when I was about 12 years old how to drink a Coke," Fenderbosch said. "You got to sip it down about a quarter-way down on the bottle. Then you take Planter's Peanuts and you dump [them] in the top of it. And that's how you eat your peanuts and drink your Coke, and it's delicious. If you ever get a chance, try it."

As others did, Fenderbosch got his first line of credit at Schady's when he was 18 years old shortly after he got out of high school.

"I was going to barber's college and working here and eating stuff, and I needed money to get back and forth," Fenderbosch said. "Well, he says, 'Sign this card and you keep it in the bottom of the cash register, and every two weeks, you pay me.' [That was] before credit cards came out."

That was just a "rite of passage" while coming of age, he said.

"You could work on your cars here," Fenderbosch said. "The older fellas would teach you how. It was just how everybody came through. Everybody met here whenever they decided they were going to go to Cedar Point or wherever they went. They always met here or at the Fenderbosch center – my dad's place. It was the grocery store up at Olmsted Falls there. They met there or here, and then they just disappeared."

Fenderbosch also has old ashtrays and other mementos from Schady's, as well as a Coca Cola machine that he calls "the sister" to the one that was at Schady's Shell. Both machines were bought at the same time – one for Schady's and one for Barnum's grocery (which burned down in the mid-1960s) on Columbia Road, he said.

"I got that machine from Mike Carroll," Fenderbosch said. "He bought it when they sold the stuff off from Barnum's. He had it in his barn down in Valley City at the time, and I ended up buying it from him."



Dave Fenderbosch stood next to the print of the Bob Sayers painting of Schady's Shell that hangs in the Clint Williams Realty office as he reminisced about Schady's.



This Coke machine owned by Dave Fenderbosch is the same as one once located in Schady's Shell.

more tires. We bought all our tires over in Berea from a wholesaler over there. Schady's gas station was his biggest customer. We sold a tremendous amount of stuff here. We worked on trucks. We worked on cars. We never did brakes. We did none of that stuff. It was just the liability. Gordon and [co-owner] Art Christensen did not want to have that not done right. So it was a busy, busy gas station – very friendly. Just seven-or-eight-hundred people lived in town, and we knew every one of them."

Asked what Gordon Schady and his partner at the time, Art Christensen, were like, Martin said, "They were good people – good people. Bill Stanton and I were the fulltime employees. Then on and off, we'd hire different people. I worked from the time I was 16 years old until I was about 18 years fulltime, then I worked part-time here at 19 or 20, and then that was the end of it. I had a chance to buy this station when they decided to close it up. They called me and wanted me to have this station. I didn't want it. That was in '65. They were done. Anyway, it was a good time."

Martin explained that Schady and his partners never owned the building. A woman who lived in California owned it and let Schady run it as long as he desired, he said.

Al Martin of the OFHS Class of 1957 recalled that he was 16 years old when he started working at Schady's and worked there on and off until he was 20. During the years Martin worked at Schady's, he first drove a 1953 Ford and then a 1958 Chevrolet.

Asked what a typical day around the gas station was like, Martin said, "Come to work here at seven o'clock in the morning. You'd have three gas pumps here. We had an air pump over here. We had two lifts in here in the bay. We repaired tires here. There was always 10 or 12 of them every day that we fixed. We fixed tires, changed oil, grease. We worked seven to one and then went home. We had the afternoon, and then we'd come back at one the following day. So we had 24 on and 20 off. We used to have to fill the pop machine there every day. We had a safe in there at that corner. That's where we'd put all the money in."

Martin said he and the other employees stayed stayed very busy. "This little three-pump station at one Time in 1956 or '57 was the best pumping gas over anyone else for Shell Oil Company," he said. "We sold



Al Martin worked at Schady's Shell for about four years.



Among the decorations at the Clint Williams Realty office are these paintings on slate of the building as it looked as Schady's Shell (left) and as it looks now.

down at Cook and Columbia. I can't remember his name – a great big man. He had homemade ice cream and stuff in there. Then they put the Gulf station in up at the corner across from [the] Sohio."

But Martin was glad he worked at Schady's Shell. "This was a good place to work," he said.

Longtime Olmsted Hot Spot Started Seven Decades Ago

Seventy years ago this month in September 1949, Olmsted Township Trustee Hugh Quinn announced he was constructing building that would be a combined residence and clubhouse on a three-acre plot of land next to Township Hall. It was designed to be a community center and a gathering place for private clubs and groups because Quinn thought the township needed such a place.

"This is not to be a public dance hall," he told the *Berea News*. "It is first for the use of such Township organizations as wish to make arrangements for it, and next for private clubs and groups from elsewhere."

Quinn used Douglas fir logs from Oregon for the building, which was to be 145 feet long with 45 feet for a six-room residence for his family. The rest was for club rooms and a dance floor that would be 80 feet by 45 feet. That gave the band led by Quinn, a drummer, a place to play on weekends, although he said it wasn't to be a public dance hall.

Quinn's plan included planting 200 trees, mostly evergreens and maples around the building. He planned to welcome children to use the grounds as a park with swings, teeter-totters, a sandbox, a softball diamond and a small pool for swimming and wading. The land also was to have picnic tables in the rear, and Quinn hoped it would become a favored location for family reunions.

"Shell Oil wanted to buy this station all the time, and she wouldn't sell it as long as Gordon was there," Martin said. "Art Christensen was one partner, and he sold it to Nickels. Frannie Nickels bought in. And they ran it for five, six, seven years. And both of them were getting up in age. The superstations were starting to come in. But it made a lot of money here. We knew everybody. We only had three stations here in town at one time. We had the Sohio station at Columbia and Bagley. That was Hecker's... And then we had one

It's not clear how much of those plans were fulfilled because Quinn did not own the building, called Olmsted Lodge, very long. In 1950, he sold it to Howard Adler and Raymond Tober. Adler eventually bought out Tober's interest. In 1958, he built the first of two swimming pools on the site for what was called Adler's Swim Club. In 1961, he renamed Olmsted Lodge the Corral, which became a popular spot where rock-and-roll bands played throughout the 1960s, 1970s and into the 1980s until it burned down in 1982 as the result of arson. That fire came after Adler had sold it and long after he closed the pools to make more room for parking.

Greenbrooke Plaza shopping center now occupies part of the land where Olmsted Lodge and then the Corral and Adler's Swim Club were located. The full story of the Olmsted Lodge, the Corral and Adler's can be found in Issue 61 of *Olmsted 200* from June 2018.

Still to Come

The next issue of *Olmsted 200* will include a story about how Olmsted Township fared in annexation attempts in the 1990s.

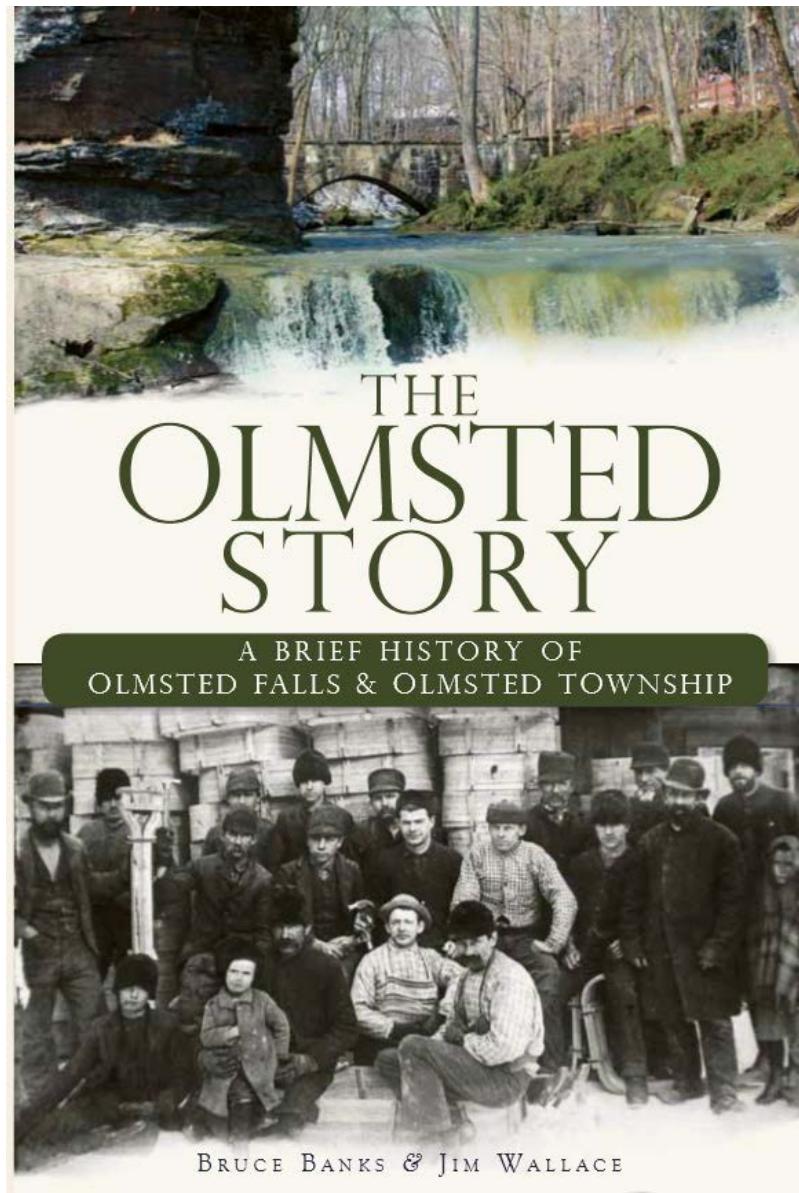
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Your questions and comments about *Olmsted 200* are welcome. Perhaps there is something about Olmsted's history that you would like to have pulled out of *Olmsted 200*'s extensive archives. Or perhaps you have information or photos about the community's 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. 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 the Village Bean in Olmsted Falls and the Berea Historical Society's Mahler Museum & History Center and through online booksellers.



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