



Olmsted 200

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

Issue 58

March 1, 2018

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Township Fire Department Endured Hard Times

Looking at the Olmsted Township Fire Department today with its modern facilities holding firetrucks costing hundreds of thousands of dollars each for use by 19 firefighters who double as paramedics, it takes quite a bit of historical perspective to realize how little the department began with seven decades ago. In fact, the struggles through lack of money and barely adequate equipment faced by the original members of the department, who were all volunteers, would have deterred many others with less grit and determination.



Former Chief Virgil Valek wrote this history of the department.

Until shortly after World War II, the township depended on the Olmsted Falls Fire Department for fire protection. That ended at the close of 1946. There are two versions of why that arrangement ended. According to a story in the *Berea Enterprise* on October 11, 1946, the village notified township trustees that the contract for fire protection would not be renewed for 1947.

“The reason given for this refusal of fire protection to the township was that the new fire fighter purchased for the village was to be kept exclusively for village use, and would not be allowed to leave the village limits for fire fighting duties,” the newspaper reported.

However, a history of the township’s fire department, “1946-1976: Our Thirty Progressive Years,” written in 1976 by Virgil Valek, who then was the department’s chief, said otherwise. He wrote that Olmsted Falls had

been charging the township \$100 for each fire until village officials decided to double the fee. "The Township Trustees decided to get out from under the Falls thumb," he wrote.

Tensions between Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township already were high in 1946 because of an ill-fated proposal to annex the township to the village. Perhaps those tensions played a role in leading the township to form its own fire department.

The trustees called a meeting at Township Hall the evening of October 14, 1946, for anyone interested in helping to form a volunteer fire department.

"It is proposed that fire practice begin as soon as a chief can be appointed and that hand equipment be stationed at appropriate points so that quick action can be had in case of fire," the *Enterprise* reported. "The trustees desire that volunteers may be found in all sections of the township."



In February 1949, nine members of the Olmsted Township Fire Department posed with their two trucks in front of the fire station built in 1947. From left to right, they included: Chief Vernon Wentz, Captain Frank Reese, George Pesko, Melvin Axford, Captain H.H. Quinn, Samuel Whately, Lieutenant Vernon Valek, Assistant Chief William Sprague and Captain George Haberlein.

department at the Cleveland Bomber Plant, which later became known as the Cleveland Tank Plant and now is the International Exposition – or I-X – Center. Wentz called a department meeting for October 26. About 25 men showed up. Valek concluded that about 40 of the men who attended the October 14 meeting didn't come back because each of them wanted to be chief.

"Olmsted Township had a tank truck on an old school bus chassis and it was decided that this would stay in Olmsted Falls until January 1, 1947, when we would take over," Valek wrote. "In the mean time we would drill every week. On November 21, 1946, we started our Ohio State Fire & Industrial schooling under the direction of Tom McManoman of the Cleveland Fire Department. This was a 40 hour course of which we had 4 hours a week of training."

The paper said the trustees already had engaged the services of Berea architects C.E. Kern and G.C. Bush to draw plans for a township fire station.

The organizational meeting attracted 65 men. They selected Vernon Wentz to be chief. He was a lieutenant for the fire

Even while still in the process of getting organized, the department answered its first call in mid-November 1946 when members assisted the Olmsted Falls department at the Sprague Road railroad crossing, where a train had hit a Ford Model A car. Valek wrote that the car's passenger had been thrown out of the car and the unhurt driver was found some distance down the tracks. Writing apparently about the passenger, Valek said, "His condition made some of the men wonder if they wanted to continue on the department."

As the department approached 1947, it had no place to store its tank truck. In December 1946, one of the volunteers, William Sprague, offered the use of his barn if members of the department would help him insulate it by putting Celotex on the ceiling and walls. They did that, but early in 1947, they decided the township also would need a pumper truck, and Sprague's barn would be too small to hold both trucks. In addition, they had found it hard to heat the barn with an oil stove.



This is another early photo of members of the Olmsted Township Fire Department with their firetrucks outside their original two-bay fire station.

Although the trustees wanted the township to have a fire department, they kept telling the department they lacked money to pay for it. The trustees readily agreed when members offered to fight all field fires in the first year without pay. But department members pushed for building a fire station behind Township Hall, and the trustees eventually agreed to put up one with cement block walls. It's not clear what happened to the trustee's original plans to have Kern and Bush design a fire station for the township. Valek bid to do the carpentry work for \$25 and the other department members assisted him. Members held paper drives and filled cisterns to raise money to complete the building. They also chipped in the money the township paid them for drills. On November 6, 1947, they paid \$237 for cement and put in the station's floor. A few weeks later, on December 1, they paid \$25 for a sign "and were proud to show that we were now a fire department," Valek wrote. On December 21, they went into debt for \$375 to buy an overhead heater to prevent water in the trucks from freezing and keep the men warm.

The department continued raising money by holding dances at Springvale Ballroom, paper drives and steel drives, filling cisterns and setting up stands at homecomings and their own carnivals.

On January 15, 1947, members began taking a Red Cross first aid course. However, the instructor then took off a few weeks for a trip to Florida.

A few weeks later, on February 8, the department received its first fire call while waiting for a demonstration of a firetruck from Sutphen Fire Equipment. “This was a garage fire at the Yesenko residence on the corner of Stearns and Cook Roads,” Valek wrote. “The demonstrator truck ran out of gas on the way to the fire and when he did arrive he had no water in the truck to do anything.”

To comply with state law, the department needed to mount a loud siren in a high spot, so members acquired one from the Cleveland Heights Fire Department. On Sunday, February 16, 1947, they removed the top of the cupola from Township Hall and installed the siren in a newly made top.



On the left is the artist's drawing of Township Hall from the souvenir program for the Olmsted Homecoming in 1939, the year the facility was built. It shows the original design for the cupola. In 1947, the fire department installed a siren in the cupola and remade its top. On the right is a recent photo of Township Hall showing the current cupola.

“That night the people of the neighborhood had the pleasure of listening to the wailing of a 5 horsepower siren for the first time,” Valek wrote. “Along with a siren for calling those nearby, we started a calling system of four phones in four firemen’s houses. Those firemen in turn called the rest of the firemen. This same system is still being used satisfactorily today by some of our wives who have honored us with their services without pay and very little thanks considering some of the lip service that they have received.”

In January 1947, the trustees agreed to pay \$1,763.60 for a GMC chassis for a new firetruck. In March, they accepted a bid from FMC for \$4,985.25 for a Bean Hi-Pressure firetruck, which was delivered on October 24 and then put on the chassis.



= FIRE APPARATUS =



Valek's history includes a photo page of vehicles and facilities. At upper left is the original truck with a tank mounted on a school bus chassis. Lower right photos show fire station additions, as well as vehicles.

One of the biggest fires the department faced in its early years occurred late on the night of March 23, 1952, at the Halls' slaughterhouse on Cook Road. Departments from the township, North Olmsted and Olmsted Falls spent several hours fighting that fire. The estimated loss from it was \$200,000.

Something the firefighters had wanted since the formation of the department was a small truck for use in fighting fires in fields. They thought their wish was granted when the trustees bought a 1952 International pickup truck. But the township put salt in the truck and let it sit outside all winter, causing the body to rust out. The fire department never got to use it.

In August 1953, the trustees decided to spend \$8,500 to get a new pumper truck. It was a Ford F-800 truck with a body from Central Fire Equipment of St. Louis. That

In August 1948, the old tanker truck reached the end of its usability. Fortunately, the department had just made \$318.19 by operating a stand at the Olmsted Homecoming on August 16. That went most of the way toward the \$485 needed to buy a used 1941 GMC cab-over-and-chassis on which they mounted the tank and pump.

On October 24, 1949, they bought their first set of uniforms, which included gray shirts with the department's name embroidered on them, as well as blue pants and fireman's caps. But the men still had difficulty affording their fire coats and boots, so in 1950, one of the firefighting associations they belonged to bought those items for them and let the men reimburse the association from their fire pay. In 1956, the department changed the uniform to a navy blue jacket and pants with a white shirt and black tie. That uniform wasn't for fighting fires but for use when attending meetings.

included an 800-gallon tank and a 650 gallons-per-minute pump. The township received it December 14, 1953, and then traded in its old tanker for \$1,500.

From 1952 through 1954, William Sprague served as fire chief, but he ran into trouble in 1954. “Too many men were dreaming of becoming the fire chief and started belittling Chief Sprague until he had about enough of it,” Valek wrote. At Sprague’s recommendation, the trustees appointed Valek to serve as chief beginning on January 1, 1955. He appointed Sprague as assistant chief and reorganized the department. Valek went on to be the department’s longest-serving chief by staying in the position until 1982.



In 1963, the township bought this Seagraves Triple Pumper, the first firetruck approaching the size of those in use today.

The cement block fire station built in 1947 served the department for many years, but the firefighters long wanted something bigger. In 1958, they came up with plans for a two-story extension on the back of the station with room for another truck, as well as an office and a meeting room. They received a \$5,000 bid for building the addition, but they couldn’t persuade the trustees to accept it.

In early 1961, the trustees’ attitude changed. They had plans drawn up for a three-bay building to the north of the existing station. Using money from three different funds, they allocated \$17,500 to construct the building. But they didn’t let the fire department move in right after it was completed because of a dispute between the maintenance department and the fire department over which one should get it. The firefighters won that battle by pointing out that their money provided one of the funds that paid for the building. They moved in on January 2, 1963. Then they converted one bay of the old fire station for use as an office, restroom and combination kitchen and meeting room.

As they worked on those rooms, the firefighters developed specifications for a new firetruck. On February 6, 1963, the trustees agreed to buy a Seagrave Triple Pumper with a five-man cab, 750 gallons-per-minute pump, 1,000-gallon water tank and a high-pressure pump. It cost \$28,276. The township received it September 26, 1963. The department put it into service on October 12.

“This was a great feather in our hat to have a truck so large with which we could fight fires,” Valek wrote.

They didn't actually wear hats with feathers, but the firefighters decided to get new dress uniforms in 1964. They included Eisenhower jackets, blue dress pants, white shirts and black ties at a total cost of \$501.20.

In 1967, they finally got the small truck they long had wanted for use in putting out field fires, as well as on first aid calls. The trustees bought them a Jeep Gladiator Townside six-cylinder pickup from Parma Motors. The firefighters installed a 150-gallon water tank, a 35 gallon-a-minute pump and a 50-foot hose, as well as other equipment, on it.

By late 1967, when Olmsted Township was experiencing population growth that was straining the school system, the trustees began considering the need for a transition from a fully volunteer fire department to one with fulltime employees. In January 1968, they decided to have Chief Valek and one other man as fulltime employees. By late that year, the department began employing two fulltime firefighters in addition to the chief. In 1973, another fulltime firefighter was added, which allowed the chief to work five days a week. By the mid-1970s, when Valek wrote his history of the department, it still operated with a combination of fulltime employees and volunteers. But it was not many years after that when it made the transition to a fully professional department.



The fire department's current station opened in 2011.

Also in 1968, the trustees decided to spend another \$35,000 for another addition to the fire station that provided another bay for the fire department and space on the north end for the police department.

Part of the deal for Valek to go fulltime was that the township would provide the chief with a car and gasoline. What he received for six years was a series of used police cars, but Valek found them to be in such bad shape that he couldn't trust them on the road. In February 1975, the trustees got him his first new car, a 1975 red Torino station wagon with a light bar, a siren, a public address system and a radio that tuned to both fire and police frequencies.

In 1974, the township paid \$48,995 for an American LaFrance Pioneer Triple Pumper firetruck to replace the 21-year-old Central truck. Note that it cost almost six times as much for a firetruck in the mid-1970s as it did in the mid-1950s. Today, a new firetruck can cost several hundred thousand dollars.

When he concluded his 30-year history of the department in 1976, Valek wrote: "Looking into the future we hope to see another fire station on the South side of the railroad tracks. This has been needed for a long time and the officials have been working toward this. We also hope to see the paid department enlarged as it soon will not be able to be handled by a part-time department."



This is the department's logo.

Valek's wish for a department filled with fulltime, paid firefighters came true. By 2016, 40 years after he wrote his history, the department employed 14 firefighters, all of whom also were paramedics, with at least three on duty for each shift. According to the department's annual report, it handled 1,700 emergency calls in 2016, including 1,394 for medical emergencies, 278 for fire or rescue incidents and 28 for such other service-related calls as water leaks and animal problems. Average response time was five minutes. In 2017, the department responded to almost 1,900 calls.

Department had more growing pains.

That's not to say that the township department did not experience any more struggles with money and facilities. By April 2004, the Olmsted Township Fire Department, the police department and the service department had outgrown their facilities. Fire Chief John Cecelich complained that his department's building was crumbling. Chemicals and lubricants were stored in the same bay where firefighters worked out and where an ambulance was parked. The department had six firefighters per shift and just three bunk beds right next to each other for sleeping. The police lacked a holding cell for prisoners, and they had to share bathrooms with the prisoners. The service department had to store a backhoe, a dump truck, an air compressor and a crack sealer outside. In other words, everyone was cramped.

To solve those problems, the township acquired \$2.86 million in bond financing for construction of new buildings to house the fire, police and service departments. Township Trustee Martin Strelau went on record saying the township could repay the bonds out of its operating funds, so the project would not affect residents' taxes.

The plan was to begin building the police station in July 2004 and complete it by March 2005. That would make way for a new fire station. Its construction was to begin in November 2004 and be finished in the fall of 2005. A building for the service department was scheduled to begin in the spring of 2005 and be finished nine months later. The service garage was planned for land farther south on Fitch Road, next to a county maintenance facility.

The township engaged an architectural firm to design the buildings, and seven firms were contracted for the construction. The contracts for the fire station were signed

on April 18, 2005. It was estimated to cost \$1.13 million. The contracts for the service garage were signed on August 9, 2005. It was estimated to cost \$797,000.

However, the plans didn't work out as smoothly expected. The police station was completed, and the department moved into it by the fall of 2005. But by November 2006, construction had halted with the fire station and the service garage only partially built. The fire station was estimated to be only 35 percent complete – essentially just a shell of a 5,000-square-foot, two-story building. The service garage was about at the same stage of completion.



The department now uses trucks like these, seen in a recent Olmsted Heritage Days parade.

Two trustees disputed who was to blame. Trustee Martin Strelau, who was an architect, reportedly cited unexpected change orders, increases in the costs of materials and delay charges for cost overruns. Trustee Karen Straka charged that the contracts gave the builders too much flexibility. She also reportedly claimed that the contracts did not go before the full board of

trustees for review before Strelau signed them. The cost of the projects increased to about \$3.5 million, which the trustees approved, but then the cost of finishing the buildings was estimated to require another \$1.7 million. So work came to a halt. Some of the money the township could have spent on the buildings reportedly was used for resurfacing roads.

By early 2007, contractors filed suits against the township. On May 16, 2007, the trustees voted two to one to pay \$371,000 to the contractors by taking money from other accounts. Strelau and Trustee Charles Fink voted to pay the contractors, while Straka voted against it. The trustees passed a resolution saying they had “determined that sufficient funds are no longer available to complete” the fire station and service garage.

On July 23, 2007, Strelau resigned his position as a trustee. In a certified letter about his resignation, he wrote: “While in office I have made many sacrifices in my personal life and although serving my community has been very important, it is now time for me to concentrate on personal matters and pursue other interests.”

In late August, Straka and Fink chose Ralph Bertonaschi to replace Strelau. But Fink resigned effective September 1, so he had to be replaced. Fink's replacement was Jim Carr, a former mayor of Middleburg Heights. Both positions were on the ballot that November. Carr won election over four challengers. Bertonaschi lost in a three-way race to Jim Carroll, a retired Cleveland assistant fire chief, who said finishing the fire station and the service garage was one of his top priorities. Thus, in a matter of a few months, six

different people served as township trustees, turnover related to problems in completing the fire station and service garage. More would come and go before it was all over.

Late in 2008, the trustees called in Amanda Gordon, an Akron bond lawyer and debt specialist. One of her recommendations was that the township should finish the service garage before completing the fire station because the township was paying to house the service department equipment in Berea at that time.

By mid-2009, after the township had gone through several years of expenses exceeding revenues, members of the fire department looked for federal help to finish their fire station. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), part of the Department of Homeland Security, had \$210 million in grant money for fire station construction projects available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, one of the Obama administration's efforts to pull the nation out of recession. The fire department wanted \$2.6 million of it with the hope of ending up with a building with 13,000 square feet of space. The federal government awarded the township \$1.95 million for a building with about 12,000 square feet of space.

“The process to get there was painstaking.” – Chris Kovach

“The process to get there was painstaking,” Assistant Chief Chris Kovach, who was in charge of getting the grant, said this week. “Aside from the main grant application, we wound up

having to go through a pretty grueling technical review process with FEMA specialists. That dragged out for all of fall and early winter of '09. Then finally, we got the award in February of '10. We had to go through a few more reviews, a couple of environmental reviews, a historic review to make sure we weren't losing a historic building. Then finally, they broke ground in fall of '10.”

The new building incorporated the 5,000-square-foot shell that had been unfinished for several years. It ended up being more than twice as big as originally planned.

“When the initial blueprints were drawn up for that building started in the early 2000s, we knew it was already too small,” Kovach said. “By the time we got around to getting this grant, we had the ability to then add extra square footage onto it, which has been very beneficial to the department as we've grown.”

Currently, the station houses two ambulances, a ladder truck and a fire engine, plus three utility vehicles, and has room for another fire engine. The station also includes a 500-square-foot training room, a state-of-the-art weight room, a kitchen, a dayroom, workspace for the two in-house mechanics, places to securely store medical equipment and medication, a room for washing and cleaning gear, separate offices for the chief, assistant chief and lieutenants, and dormitory rooms for each firefighter.

“At the old station, we had anywhere from four to six guys a shift working, and we were in bunkbeds and one bathroom,” Kovach said. “It was tightknit to say the least. It was pretty cramped. In the new building, health code required everybody to have their own individual dorm room.”

At times, when the department brings in extra staffing for situations like bad weather, nine to 10 guys can live at the station comfortably, he said. The department now has 14 fulltime and five part-time members.

The first shift operated out of the new building on Thanksgiving Day 2011, and it was dedicated on May 26, 2012. The formerly uncompleted shell was valued at \$300,000, so the total cost of the fire station was \$2.25 million.

“It was great for the community,” Kovach said. “It was great for the fire department. In our opinion, I think, it helped remove a black eye



From left are Township Hall, the fire station and the police station.

from the early 2000s. When the lot sat here vacant with just that shell on it, we’d hear all the time from people, ‘When is it going to be done? When is it going to be done?’ Then the guys who worked here at the time, they’d drive into work every day and see this what-if. Like, what if that got finished? It was a huge relief when the building was finally done.”

However, the service garage remains unfinished. “They’re looking now hopefully to finish that in the next couple of years,” Kovach said.

Although members of the fire department “every day count their blessings for how fortunate they are to have this building,” he said, they already are hoping for more. Finding it interesting that Valek in the mid-1970s already envisioned a second fire station in the southern section of the township, Kovach said, “It’s something we’re looking at now. That’s where all of our growth has been. All the new housing developments and apartments are going [there]. It’s funny that he brought that issue up back in the 70s when we’re looking at it today still.”

With the new overpasses on Fitch Road and Stearns Road, as well as the underpass on Columbia Road in Olmsted Falls, firefighters in the two communities are less worried about having trains block their access to fires and other emergencies, but Kovach said they still have concerns about responding promptly.

“Even with the overpasses, our farthest response time into that south end can still be over 10 minutes,” he said. “Looking at stats, we’ve seen a little bit of an increase in

run volume into the south end, but not much yet. In another 10 years, when that population starts hitting their late 40s-early 50s, that's when we're going to start seeing a real increase in call volume down into the south end. So we need to start preparing now to start serving that portion of the population."

Fundraising Became a Circus for Firefighters

One of the most striking aspects of Virgil Valek's history of the first 30 years of the Olmsted Falls Fire Department is how much effort the volunteer firefighters put into raising money for the department's operations in the early years, when township trustees had little to offer them. They conducted paper drives and steel drives. They filled cisterns for residents. They donated their meager compensation back to the department, while also saving it money by handling construction and maintenance work for free. They held dances at Springvale Ballroom. They manned concessions stands at the annual Olmsted Homecoming and even staged their own carnivals. But one fundraising effort they got involved with turned out to be so much work that they vowed never to do it again.

On April 7, 1958, Valek took a call from an agent for the Mills Brothers Circus, a mid-sized circus that toured the East and Midwest from 1940 until 1966. The circus pioneered use of local sponsors, such as civic and fraternal organizations, to sell tickets

and promote shows. Valek thought the proposal for the fire department to help put on a local appearance by the circus "sounded like a very good proposition." By that afternoon, the firefighters' association called a meeting at which members decided to do it.

"We had much to learn about backing a circus but the advance man gave us a great story and the men decided to accept their offer," Valek wrote. "The President [of the association] signed the agreement and the ball was rolling."

The circus was scheduled for June 18, 1958. The department assigned every member to a committee and got busy making preparations right away.

This photo is from a Mills Bros. poster from 1963.

"The first problem was finding a piece of land to have the circus," Valek wrote. "Here we were lucky as one of our trustees had purchased an old airfield and a contract was signed with him for the land. We then had to get a zoning permit. This meant visiting all the landowners in the area. They all consented so we were ready to go."

The advance men came in about two months before the circus was scheduled. The fire department had to provide them with five phones for use in selling ads. The phones cost \$700.



“They did not seem to care whose name they used or how they did it,” Valek wrote in reference to the way the circus sold the ads. “We had to do all the collecting and they had promised all these people the names would all be on sail cloth and they could pick it up after the circus. The advance men just used plain paper which was a mess by the end of the day of their circus when everyone wanted their large advertisement. No one could find their advertisement in the mess so they just forgot it and [threw] them on the ground.”

On the day of the circus, members of the fire department gathered at the site about five o’clock in the morning. Soon after the circus arrived, rain began to fall.

“That’s when the fun began,” Valek wrote. “As the trucks tried to get in the field they all got stuck. The circus people unloaded the elephant and she pushed them all in place. The food tent was put up and the cook [fried] a hundred dozen eggs and a large amount of potatoes and everyone dug into breakfast.”

The turnout for the afternoon show was large, but that was partly because the fire department had given many tickets to orphanages and provided them with transportation.

“The rain stopped for the evening so we did not have to tow too many cars,” Valek wrote. “We were amazed at the way they pulled the stakes with the elephant and other uses of her. We finally got the show off the lot at 5:00 a.m. the next morning and called it a day.”

In conclusion, he wrote, “We were a tired but smarter bunch. Although we did make \$3,170.00, we felt we earned it all. We gave the police department 10% of our earning to police the circus grounds for us. It was then agreed that we would never put on another circus. We decided to put \$1,000.00 in a savings account for later use.”

Although the firefighters never used another circus for fundraising, they continued to engage in – and enjoy – many fundraising activities for years after that. “We felt all of our ventures rather than being just a money making proposition were also for the good fellowship of the department,” Valek wrote. “This has always helped make a better understanding in the fire department. This feeling has never changed.”

Olmsted’s Barns Should Be Saved

In a recent “Olmsted Dates and Data” column in the *Sun Post-Herald*, Joanne Berger DuMound wrote about her fondness for photographing old barns, noting some are still left in Olmsted Township and Olmsted Falls. Calling them a rich part of the communities’ history, she expressed hope that they will remain standing. That is a hope anyone who cares about Olmsted’s history should share because agriculture was an important part of the communities’ past.

Unfortunately, a barn that was one of the most photographed buildings in the township was torn down in 2014 – the big red barn that John Hall built in 1880 along

John Road near the current entrance to The Renaissance. Only a few foundation stones, including one with Hall's initials and the year he built the barn, remain. Perhaps this would be a good time for someone to do an inventory with photographs of Olmsted's remaining barns. That might help preserve them – or at least memories of them.

Still to Come

The next issue of *Olmsted 200* will include more stories about the history of Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township.

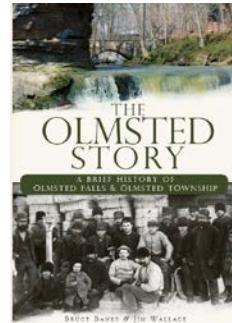
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Your questions and comments about *Olmsted 200* are welcome. Perhaps there is something about Olmsted's history that you would like to have pulled out of *Olmsted 200*'s extensive archives. Or perhaps you have information or photos about the community's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