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THE HISTORICAL RECORD

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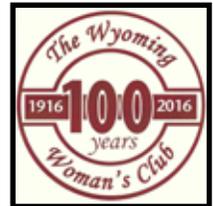
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Open Tuesday 10:30-3:00
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SERENDIPTY...

In mid-February, the Historical Society received an offer from Jim Walton Jr. that could not be turned down. The script for a presentation had been found among the effects of his grandmother, Edith Hall. It was a story about early Wyoming that had been presented as a program to the Wyoming Woman's Club in 1937. Did the Historical Society want a copy? YES!



The script was written by Emily Cowing Healy (1865-1947). The Cowing Family built the house, referred to as the Cowing House, at 230 Reily Road in about 1860. Emily was born and died in that house. When married to Fred Healy, they lived at 357 Beech.

Seventy-two when she made this presentation, Emily was around for much of Wyoming's growing up years and she reminisces about the people and the places she remembers. A wonderful addition to our collection of memories. Oh, the serendipitous part of this....Emily Cowing Healy, Mrs. Fred Healy, was the first president of the Wyoming Woman's Club in 1916 and the Wyoming Woman's Club is, this month, celebrating their 100th Anniversary!! How incredibly timely!

Our congratulations to the Wyoming Woman's Club on their one hundredth anniversary.

CAN YOU RECOGNIZE THIS BUILDING?.....

Can you recognize this building? We have several possibilities but there are questions and doubts about each. So ask everyone who had been around here forever and let's see if we can find this place!



PRESIDENT'S LETTER...Joyce Mueller

Our collections are expanding. In addition to objects like a chair, several books have been donated one of which is the new printing of *Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain illustrated by Wyoming's own C.F. Payne. He used local models dressed in period clothes as a guide for his illustrations. Those who know them will recognize them (they are not from Wyoming).

Keeping on the theme of representational images, we will have as our program in May a mother and son who both work in Portraiture. Carin paints and John sculpts. See the featured article in the next newsletter about their work.



Joyce Mueller

We are also adding to our collection of tangible objects and trivia. You learned of the Wyoming connection to the Star Spangled Banner and now we have a former teacher associated with the world of magic. That story will be in an upcoming issue also.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

The following are new members to the Wyoming Historical Society. We welcome them.

Al & Terry Delgado
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New Business Member:

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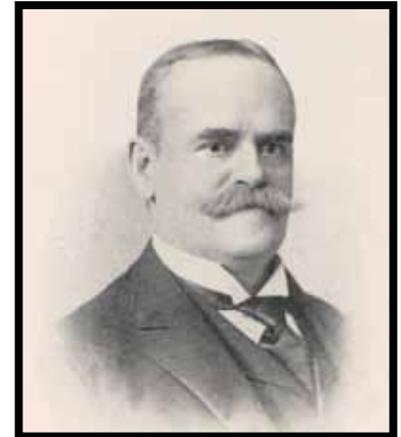
MAYORS FROM WYOMING PAST...By Sherry Sheffield

RODERICK DOUGLAS BARNEY

Mayor April 19, 1886 - April 20, 1896

Mayor Number 7

Roderick Barney was one of Wyoming most active mayors. During his 10 year administration, he started our water works, the tree planting program and concrete sidewalks. Even with all those achievements, Mayor Barney is probably better known as the father of Clara Barney Fisk, the cat lady on Glenway. But we will get to that.



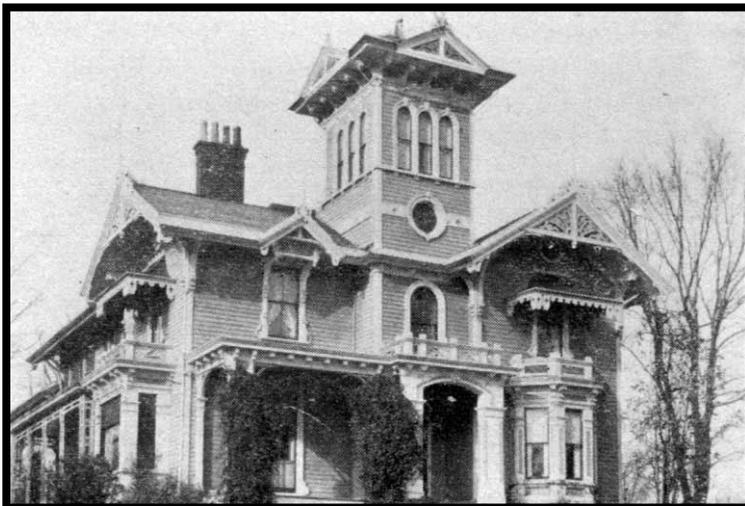
R.D. Barney

Roderick and his brother Harold were born in New York but moved to Cincinnati when their father became a school commissioner. He graduated in the first class at Hughes High School. His business was book publishing and he served as President of the Robt. Clarke Company, Publishers and Booksellers, located on 4th Street in Cincinnati. His brother also worked for that company. So it would be no surprise that they bought land and built houses next to each other on Glenway. Eventually sharing a small 3-hole golf course on the land between and in front of their houses. So it would be no surprise again to learn they married sisters, Clara and Sadie (Sarah Ann) Yates from New Jersey!

Roderick Barney served six years on council before becoming mayor in 1886. He must have had public service in his blood as he became a member of the Society of Colonial Wars in 1897 by right of decedent from Governor George Wyllys of Connecticut.

By 1892, there were 11 ³/₅ miles of cement sidewalk in Wyoming. We were rapidly becoming one of the pioneer communities in providing safety and convenience for our citizens. According to *Chic Magazine*, we were the first village in Ohio to undertake the systematic laying of cement sidewalks. It is interesting that in the current day we enjoy streets that are clear, clean and well maintained. Back between 1874 and 1883, most of council's time and money was spent on streets and sidewalks, GRAVEL streets and sidewalks. But even back then, Wyoming was known for having well taken care of streets and sidewalks, albeit gravel ones.

Gravel streets and sidewalks and dirt ones also led to dust. So Mayor Barney's study of the area and conclusion that it was the bed of an ancient lake led to Wyoming having a waterworks. A well was drilled and the indications were that there was an unlimited supply of water underground. A high tank was erected and the water was pumped up to it. Citizens could come and get water and not have to depend on there much smaller surface wells. Many constructed cisterns. And an off shoot is that in dry times the streets were sprinkled with water to keep the dust down.



661 Glenway, Barney/Fisk House

Included in Barney's achievements was the Amusement Hall, the first of our three civic centers. The cost was \$25,000. Also, during this time the schools build a 'tower' high school facing Wyoming Avenue near the grammar school that faced Worthington.

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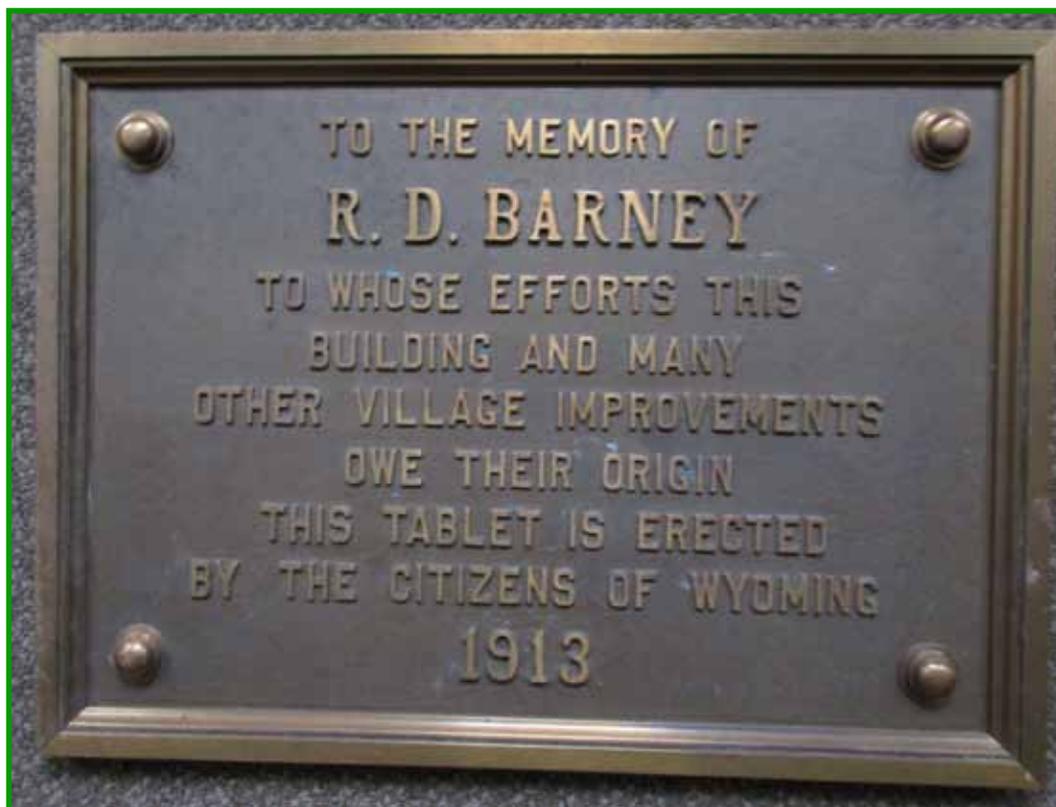
The Amusement Hall burned in 1908 and in the wall of the building that replaced it the citizens installed a bronze plaque as a tribute to their former mayor, a "Thank you for a job well done". That plaque is now in the historical society office.

Sadly, both of the Barneys' once lovely big Victorian homes are gone. Roderick's home, the Barney/Fisk House (661 Glenway), was burned in a fire department training exercise about 1965. Clara Barney, one of the daughters, had a collection of about 80 cats that had made the house unlivable. Howard's house (645 Glenway) was sold and the new owners had the house demolished. That house was known to many as the Applegate House, owned by that family from 1945-1968. Two treasures lost.

The mayor's older daughter Clara married late in life, after all but her sister was gone, to James Garfield Fisk. He a member of the Cincinnati Fisk Monument Company. We have no record of either of them ever working. We have to assume that he had some income from the family business and she had her family estate. We have a letter dated 1955, hand written, from Jim to a real estate company asking about employment. He would have been about 74 years old. He died two years later. About 1960, Clara sold her property to Russell Stearns, her neighbor, but continued to live in the house until her death in 1965. The Barney family did not survive. Brother Howard had no children. Sister Louisa had no children. Mayor Barney had two daughters. The younger daughter, Ethel, died of 'insanity' in 1925 at 39 years of age. Neither daughter had a child. But you can find the whole family in Section 88 at Spring Grove Cemetery. Even his sister Louisa and her husband, who lived in New York, were brought here for burial.

Mayor Barney leaves a rich legacy in Wyoming. Any 9th grade Wyoming student from about 1950 to 2011 knew the Fisk house because of the leaf project they were required to do. Aside from Spring Grove Cemetery, a car ride away, the Barney/Fisk property was loaded with 'unusual' trees. Evidently Roderick Barney didn't just start Wyoming's tree planting, he practiced what he preached and planted a variety of trees, not necessarily indigenous to this part of the county, in his yard. Which is why, several years ago when an arborist was checking out Stearns Woods, he was confused by the many unexpected trees he found growing there, bamboo included! Obviously many are offspring of the ones Mayor Barney planted!

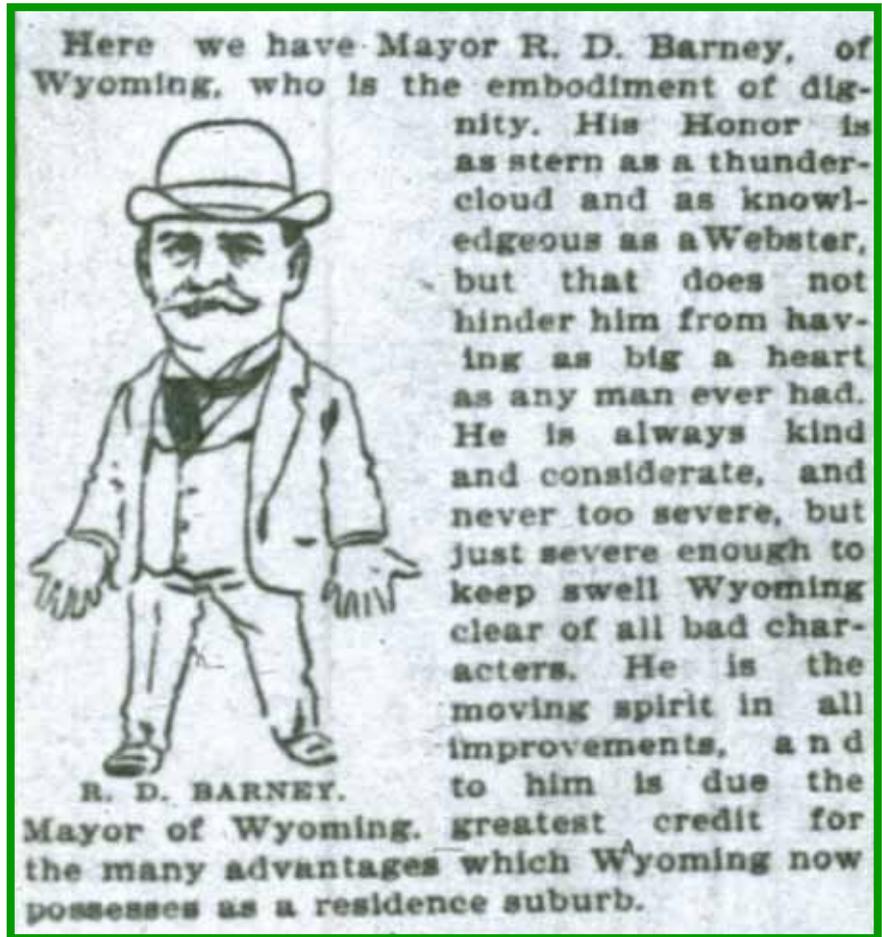
You should walk down that drive way this spring.



The Barney property is an "L" shape surrounding the Stearns house on two sides. The other two sides are bounded Oliver and Glenway. You will find the remains of the foundation of the house as you walk up the driveway. I so well remember the carriage house which stood on the left and just beyond the house. It had an old fashioned car and carriage in it. And not only did Clara Barney Fisk have cats as pets, in the 1930's she & Jim Fisk had a bear chained to a tree in the yard!

I remember that there were bookshelves loaded with bound books. Probably brought home from work by Mayor Barney, a publisher. As I understand it, they were too infested with bugs and silverfish to be saved in 1965. Most of what was in the house was burned along with the house. But a few things survived. We have a fairly large pile of receipts. Items he purchased mostly for his home but once in a while it was for the city. The receipts give us great insight into the businesses that were in the area in the late 1800's and early 1900's. We also have some pictures of the family and the house from that period. And, we have a number of photographs of Clara, at a picnic, on vacation with her parents, and sitting in a car in front of her house. One photo that we don't have in our collection, but is very interesting, is the family in their front yard and behind them you can see construction of the Stearns house.

And, of course, Barney Avenue was named after this very special mayor.



This article is from the July 7, 1895 Cincinnati Enquirer.

Your Historical Society is actively searching for additional information on Wyoming's past mayors. If you have any ideas, know any relatives, have any thoughts on how we can learn more on a particular person, please let us know.

THE WHAT IS IT CORNER....



Sporron, a small pouch worn around the waist so as to hang in front of the kilt as part of men's Scottish Highland dress. You can have Day Sporrans and Dress Sporrans. And, they can be found not just in Scottish ancestry but Irish and Welch also. They can be leather or, as is the one shown, horsehair.

This particular sporrion belonged to C.I. Sears (1878-1930) founder of Sear Plumbing. We don't, however, know why he had it!

RENSSELAER PARK....

**Where are you?
Where did you go?**

There are several newspaper articles from the late 1800's referring to Rensselaer Park in or near Hartwell. Wyoming Police responded to incidents near Rensselaer Park. And, grand parties were held in the Rensselaer Park area. Does anyone know where Rensselaer Park is or was located in or near Hartwell?

WHAT BRAND IS IT???

By Sherry Sheffield
(Everything you never knew or never knew you didn't know about fire hydrants)

Quite often, during a conversation with friends, you will hear someone say, "What brand is it?" It could be something that works well for them and they are excited about the product or exactly the opposite. Recently, I heard those words when talking about a fire hydrant!! The Historical Society had received a donation of a fire hydrant. A bit odd, maybe. But we have a very nice collection of 'fire' items and the hydrant just seemed to make that collection complete. We have two fire hose nozzles, a pick to break through walls, two fire helmets, a beautiful copper and brass extinguisher...why not a hydrant!!

Those aforementioned items came to us as donations from John Sears and Gary Orendorff. Last fall the old hydrant came from John Sear's back yard. At a WHS board meeting I was telling the members of this most recent addition, the hydrant, when one board member asked that question, "What brand is it"? I was flummoxed. Why would a fire hydrant, or fire plug as I call it, have a brand? Why not?! But the follow up comment was equally unexpected, "If it was a Bourbon brand, my company made it." And thus, starts the story of a 1896 fire hydrant!

Bourbon Copper and Brass Works was founded in 1830 and in the late 1960's was located at 202-204 East Front Street, between River Road and Second Street, land the City of Cincinnati wanted so they could build Riverfront Stadium. At the time Bourbon Copper and Brass Works was owned by Thomas Ford, Peter Bardo and his wife, bookkeeper Gertrude Bardo. Located two blocks away was Bossert Machine Co owned by the late Wyoming resident Rod Stewart. In 1967, the continually flooding building and increasing age of the owners brought them to ask Mr. Stewart if he was interested in purchasing the company. A deal was struck and Mr. Stewart moved everything to Stewart Industries on Blue Ash Road in Deer Park.



John Sears with the hydrant that sat in his backyard for years.



The same hydrant pictured above with a lot of TLC and some serious sandblasting. This beauty was made about 1896.

Bourbon Copper and Brass Works was one of the earliest hydrant manufacturers in the United States. Prior to hydrants they made stills and still parts. Their hydrants were first sold in Cincinnati and surrounding municipalities in various configurations. The company eventually expanded to a number of states. Many of these hydrants are still in use and can be seen in Lockland, Glendale, Norwood, Cheviot, Newport and other municipalities where water mains have not been enlarged to the minimum 6" diameter. The City of Wyoming installed Bourbon hydrants in the 1890's and replaced them with 6" diameter Kennedy hydrants in the 1980's and early 1990's as water mains were upgraded.

After the move in 1967, Stewart Industries continued to provide spare parts and rebuild Bourbon hydrants. Business faded as more municipalities replaced 4" diameter Bourbon hydrants with 6" diameter hydrants, the current standard. Stewart decided not to retool and compete in the 6" market. He deleted their parts inventory and donated all of the drawings, patterns, and machinery to the Cincinnati Fire Museum in 1998.

Continued on the next page...



Most of us think of a fire hydrant as this object that stands about 2 ½ feet tall. Actually most of the hydrant, about 2/3's, is buried below ground! Colder climates will have a lower frost line thus deeper hydrants. The valve action of a fire hydrant is typically 4' to 6' below grade where it connects to the water main below the frost line. A long rod connects with the valve to the nut on top of the hydrant where hydrants are opened and closed. There are usually two standard hose connections, 2 ½" diameter, and one larger 4 ½" diameter connection for greater flow to the pumper truck.

Getting back to that board meeting in the fall of 2015, I took board member Jim Weckenbrock, son-in-law of Mr. Stewart and husband of Sherry Stewart Weckenbrock, back to the closet where we were storing the hydrant and he identified it as a Bourbon hydrant. Then he graciously had the hydrant sand blasted of its many coats of chipping paint. When it was bare, Jim and his wife repainted it a bright red with gold lettering.



Our thanks to John Sears and the Weckenbrock's for this interesting and great addition to our Wyoming archives.

The photo on the left is the Weckenbrock's salesman's sample fire hydrant measuring 21 inches long. It shows how much of a hydrant is below ground. In colder climates about 2/3's is buried.

Why some of us call them fire plugs!!!

Early water mains were not pressurized or with low pressure and made of wood. Fire companies would sometimes source their water from these pipes by boring down and through the wall of the pipe then hand pump water for their needs. After the fire, wood plugs called "bungs" were driven into the pipe wall to close the hole. Locations were marked on a map should the need arise for the plug to be pulled again.

Early fire companies were private groups that responded to fires only if the structure was insured because they would get paid to arrive at the scene first to save as much of the structure as possible and clean up afterwards. They sometimes claimed ownership of fire plugs if they had originally installed them. This is why they would race to the fire to beat out another companies. There are stories of brawls between companies for using each other's claimed fire plugs.

Bungs (or, why stop learning now)?

The United States Bung Manufacturing Company had a factory in Brooklyn, NY but its offices were on Evans Street in Cincinnati, Josiah Kirby Sr. was its president. He was also president of the Kirby Bung Manufacturing Company in Cincinnati. Josiah was a major industrialist in the late 19th century and served as president of the Cincinnati Board of Trade. He also served a term in the Ohio Senate. The home he built still stands at 59 Oliver Road. His son, Josiah Jr., served as Wyoming's twelfth and most notorious mayor.

Happy St Patrick's Day

The Wyoming Historical Society
800 Oak Street
Wyoming OH 45215

*Our next Program is May 19th -
mark your calendar...*



WHEN IS A CHAIR.....

When is a chair more than a chair? Chairs can look good. They can 'sit' good. They can 'sit' good but look bad and vise-versa. The chair you see here is more than a chair! This chair was used by many a Wyoming Fire Chief. It was given to us by John Sears and a little scruffy to say the least. We took it up Route 4 to Jerry Ash at Tri-County Furniture Restoration and like magic, we have ourselves a chair that both 'sits' good, looks good, and is filled with Wyoming history. If only this chair can talk!

If you take a close look at the seat of the chair, you will see perfectly round small holes. They are now filled in but at one time were open to the floor below. So the natural question to ask is "Why would someone drill holes in the seat of a wooden chair?" And the answer is quite clever. When the firefighters would come back from a fire, they were often drenched to the skin. The water from their clothing would rest in the chair and ruin the finish. So the holes were drilled to allow the water to flow through to the floor. Thereby, saving the seat of the chair and perhaps the seat of the firefighter



MAY'S PROGRAM...

Save May 19th for the next program featuring John & Carin Hebenstreit at 7:30 in the Great Room at the Presbyterian Church.