

Mount Healthy Historical Society



January 2015

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Mt. Healthy Historical Society

1546 McMakin Avenue

Cincinnati, OH 45231

Phone: 513-522-3939

Hours: 9-11 a.m. Tuesdays
and Saturdays, 1-3 p.m. the
first Sunday of the month or
by appointment.

Have questions? Email:

mt.healthyhistory@yahoo.com

Visit us online at:

www.mthealthyhistory.org.

*Newsletter created by
Monica Lubiani*

Around the Society...

After a relatively mild December, I think winter has arrived. At least the mild winter favored our Christmas Open House and our Christmas Dinner. Both were successful events.

I want to tell you about a new project.

We have started an educational program with the third grade classes at South Elementary School. We gave a powerpoint presentation on some early businesses in Mt. Healthy comparing them to present day businesses. Providing some items from the museum for the children to see and hold proved to be a big attraction. We will do a second presentation in early spring and then the children will visit the museum in late spring. Our programs are tailored to enhance the goals and objectives of the third grade curriculum.

Remember to support our Perkins Fundraiser. The third Wednesday of each month we Dine to Donate at Perkins Restaurant on Hamilton Avenue. When you bring a coupon and enjoy a meal, Perkins will donate 20% of your bill to the Mt. Healthy Historical Society. This also includes carry-out and bakery items. Coupons are available at many businesses in Mt. Healthy and on our website, mthealthyhistory.org.

Have a good winter!

Sincerely,
Penny Huber

Historical Society Happenings

Holiday Open House A Huge Success!

By: Karen Arnett

Our Old Fashioned Christmas Open House at the museum was a hit! The crowd ebbed and flowed, but the place was pretty well packed for the two-hour event on December 8. The youngsters got to talk with Santa Claus, and participate in crafts and a holiday book reading. The adults got to observe three expert woodcarvers at work. Several excellent baskets were raffled off by the service organization What Do I Stand For, whose founder Nicole Chenault collaborated with our historical society to make the event lots of fun. The pump organs bellows got a workout, pumping out Christmas carols. There were lots of tasty and beautiful Christmas cookies to be munched, and folks enjoyed fellowship with neighbors and toured the museum exhibits. (Photos: Karen Arnett, Julie Turner)





Snowy Scrapbook

The blizzard of 1917 left Mt. Healthy looking like the North Pole. In addition to feet of snow, power lines were downed and transportation couldn't maneuver the snowy streets. Traction cars in Mt. Healthy didn't run for a week. Some people were snowed-in at their homes but a few brave souls ventured out into the cold to play and pose for these wonderful photos. (Photos courtesy of Mt. Healthy Historical Society. Info from Mt. Healthy history book.)



Notable History

DeBaptiste a Significant Figure in Mt. Healthy History

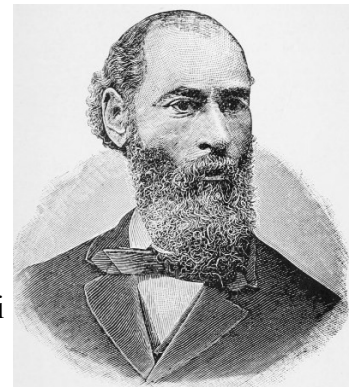
By: Karen Arnett

Mt. Healthy was home to a thriving community of African Americans prior to the Civil War. The 1860 census records 230 people of color in the Mt. Healthy post office portion of Springfield Twp, comprising of more than 50 families. These were people born in all of the slave states of the South. Some families had children born in the south, and then younger children born in Ohio. This indicates that they weren't just passing through on their way to Canada, but rather were settled residents. The census numbers hint at poignant stories: elderly parents born in Virginia, and extended family born in the cotton states of the deep south. How they made their way here would fill volumes with powerful stories. We can only guess at how, and why Mt. Healthy, since this part of our history has not been preserved.

There were skilled men in this community: no less than 9 men whose occupation was work on steamboats, a blacksmith, a plasterer, an engineer, and a number families whose property values were substantial - a sprinkling of affluent farmers. The landscape painter Robert Duncanson lived for a time with a wealthy Black farmer, Reuben Graham, and marrying into that family before moving to Cincinnati to pursue his artistic career.

One notable member of this community in 1860 was the Rev. Richard DeBaptiste (1831-1901), the Baptist minister and teacher who later in life was considered one of the most important Black church leaders of his time. He taught school here in Mt. Healthy, supported his family by his trade as a plasterer (recorded in the census) and by request of Baptist members of the community, he was ordained as a Baptist minister to serve Mt. Healthy.

DeBaptiste's presence in Mt. Healthy is a reason for pride. He was from a prosperous free Black family in Fredericksburg, Virginia. One of his grandfathers fought in the Revolutionary War. An uncle served in the War of 1812. Richard's father courageously resisted Virginia laws that made it illegal for people of color to receive an education, by secretly providing schooling for black youth in his own home. Richard's uncle George DeBaptiste (ca.1815-1875), famous for his Underground Railroad work, may have been responsible for bringing Richard to Cincinnati - we don't know. George and his wife Lucinda appear in the church rolls of Union Baptist Church in Cincinnati in the early 1830s. George conducted Underground Railroad work in the river town of Madison, Indiana from around 1838-1846, and from there moved to Detroit where he not only was renowned for moving freedom seekers north to Canada, but famously met with the abolitionist John Brown.



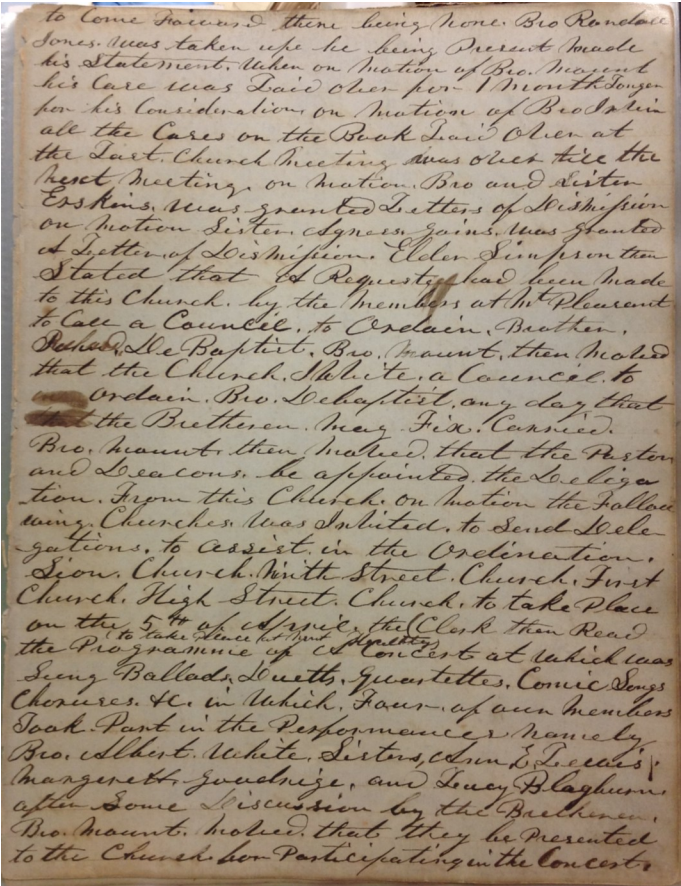
Rev. DeBaptiste. Provided.

The anti-Black atmosphere in Virginia became so repressive that the DeBaptistes, along with a group of other free Black families, migrated to Detroit around 1840. (from Carter Woodson, *A Century of Negro Migration*, 1918) Richard took his secondary education with the Quaker abolitionist Richard Dillingham (1823-1850), who died in prison for aiding fugitives from slavery. He also studied with Samuel H. Davis (1810-1907), a minister of the Second Baptist Church in Detroit. The Rev. Davis was also a leader in Underground Railroad work, and with the resettlement of fugitives in the Dawn settlement in Ontario, Canada.

Cincinnati's Union Baptist Church, located in downtown Cincinnati, the earliest Cincinnati Black church of that denomination (organized 1831), was active in anti-slavery work and the Underground Railroad. The church records indicate that Mt. Healthy members of that church requested in 1860 that Richard be ordained as a minister for a new Mt. Healthy congregation. A committee of two Black and two White Baptist churches jointly ordained DeBaptiste in a ceremony held in Mt. Healthy in April 1860. From here, DeBaptiste moved in 1863 to Chicago to lead the Olivet Baptist Church and to be a pioneer in the development of the Baptist denomination. He is included in numerous books and articles that list African Americans of note.

At right, Mt. Pleasant members of the Union Baptist Church in Cincinnati request the DeBaptiste be ordained for a new congregation in Mt. Pleasant.

Photo Provided.



Did You Know?

The document requesting that Richard DeBaptiste be ordained a minister for a Mt. Pleasant congregation can be found at the

Historians assert that African American churches in the era of slavery were hubs for local Underground Railroad activity. "...Almost every Negro minister was otherwise engaged in spiriting away fugitives from the slaveholding States through the North into Canada. They were in touch with men in other centers, found out what was going on, learned what was the trend of things, and planned to act accordingly. (Carter Woodson, The History of the Negro Church, 1921, p. 170) The Black Underground Railroad history has yet to be told.

This is just one tidbit in the as-yet hidden Black history in Mt. Healthy in the pre-Civil War era. How do we reconstruct and restore this rich history to its rightful place in our history? Arlette Merritt, descendant of freed slave Anthony Nelson, preserves the oral history of her ancestors. Are there families around the country, descendants of other early residents, who have also preserved some oral history of this time? Will more pieces of this interesting puzzle be discovered?

Helping History



Donate to Ohio History on your Ohio tax return and help support history projects in local communities that invest in Ohio's economy.

Look for "Ohio Historical Society" on your Ohio tax return and designate a dollar amount. That's it!
Your tax-deductible donation goes to support history projects in local Ohio communities.

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The funds generated through the Ohio History "Tax Check-Off" are made available through a competitive matching grants program, the History Fund. The History Fund supports the preservation and sharing of Ohio's heritage by supporting local projects, programs, and events related to Ohio's history.

Small donations make a BIG difference

For just \$8, you can help repair a roof, preserve rare color film footage, or stage a historical reenactment.




The Ohio History Tax Check-Off needs your support now

Why? The upcoming tax season is especially important. The Ohio General Assembly recently established a new threshold for tax check-off programs. The Ohio History Connection (formerly the Ohio Historical Society) needs to generate at least \$150,000 each year or the Ohio History Tax Check-Off, and the History Fund grants program it supports, could be jeopardized.

It's easy to donate to Ohio History on your tax return

Look for "Ohio Historical Society" on your Ohio tax return and designate a dollar amount. That's it!
Your tax-deductible donation goes to support history projects in local Ohio communities.

On the 2014 Ohio IT 1040: Individual Income Tax Return, look for line 27c and designate a dollar amount to the "Ohio Historical Society."

<p><i>Dine to Donate</i></p> <p>Please present this on January 21st 20% of the bill (pre-tax) supports The Mt. Healthy Historical Society</p>  <p>Coupon Expires: Jan. 21st only at the Hamilton Ave Perkins</p> <p><small>One coupon per person per visit at participating Perkins Restaurant & Bakery locations. Not valid with any other discount or offer. Coupon void if purchased, sold or bartered for cash. Only original coupons accepted. Multilisted, tampered, forged or photocopied coupons are not accepted. Sales tax, if applicable, must be paid by customer. Prices may vary in Canada. Printed in the U.S.A. © 2010 Perkins & Marie Callender's Inc.</small></p>	<p><i>Dine to Donate</i></p> <p>Please present this on January 21st 20% of the bill (pre-tax) supports The Mt. Healthy Historical Society</p>  <p>Coupon Expires: Jan. 21st only at the Hamilton Ave Perkins</p> <p><small>One coupon per person per visit at participating Perkins Restaurant & Bakery locations. Not valid with any other discount or offer. Coupon void if purchased, sold or bartered for cash. Only original coupons accepted. Multilisted, tampered, forged or photocopied coupons are not accepted. Sales tax, if applicable, must be paid by customer. Prices may vary in Canada. Printed in the U.S.A. © 2010 Perkins & Marie Callender's Inc.</small></p>	<p><i>Dine to Donate</i></p> <p>Please present this on January 21st 20% of the bill (pre-tax) supports The Mt. Healthy Historical Society</p>  <p>Coupon Expires: Jan. 21st only at the Hamilton Ave Perkins</p> <p><small>One coupon per person per visit at participating Perkins Restaurant & Bakery locations. Not valid with any other discount or offer. Coupon void if purchased, sold or bartered for cash. Only original coupons accepted. Multilisted, tampered, forged or photocopied coupons are not accepted. Sales tax, if applicable, must be paid by customer. Prices may vary in Canada. Printed in the U.S.A. © 2010 Perkins & Marie Callender's Inc.</small></p>
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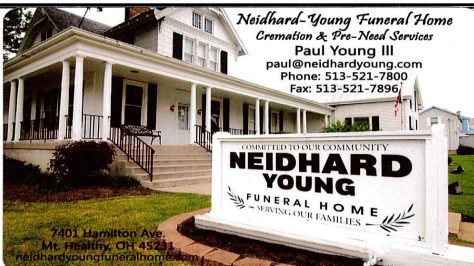


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Want to submit an article or have an idea of what you want to read about?

Email Monica at monica.boylson@gmail.com.

In The Next Issue:

Learn more about the history of the Main Theater and what the Port Authority is doing to stabilize it. If you have any stories about the Main Theater or pictures, please contact Monica to add them to the newsletter.

Mount Healthy
Historical Society



1546 McMakin Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45231

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Be A Part of History: Join Us!

The Mt. Healthy Historical Society cordially invites you to become a member as a Business/Professional Member. Being such a member has its advantages...

- It gets your business name before the public as it will be printed in each newsletter.
- It will show that you support the organizations of your city.
- It will help the Society to teach about and preserve the past for current and future generations.
- It will enable you to partially or entirely sponsor a Society activity.
- It will enable you to participate socially in worthwhile community activities.

Business Member Form

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