



*January*  
*February*  
*March, 2019*

## *A look back at Blue Ash History...*

The following is an article written by Blue Ash resident Alma Weber on August 28, 1989. It's unknown where or if it was ever published. The school referred to is the Blue Ash School, erected in 1892, which was located on the corner of Cooper and Kenwood Roads.

### *Frank Malsbary*

It has been said, and is likely true, that had it not been for Frank Malsbary there would have been no Blue Ash today. Everyone who tried to live here would have frozen to death. Coal and wood were the only available sources of heat in the area and Frank Malsbary owned and operated a coal yard. It was located on Perry and Cooper Roads. Most everyone had a furnace in his home and fireplaces served a more useful purpose than just adding to the beauty of a room. Coal also heated the school and Louis Weber's grocery store. A pot-bellied stove furnished the warmth and the old-timers gathered around it day after day swapping tales, enjoying each other's company and keeping warm.

Frank Malsbary could be seen delivering coal with his horse and cart every day all day long, except the day after Halloween when he had to spend hours getting the cart down from the school house roof. That was the favorite trick to play on Halloween. The boys never got caught - there were no police and no one wanted to stay up late enough to try to catch them. Besides, there were plenty of oldsters who enjoyed seeing the sight.

The two-room plus second floor school was heated by a coal furnace and Mr. Zugg, the teacher/principal, took his recess time early. He built the

fire and then having given his four grades (5, 6, 7, 8) an assignment, he sat by the fire waiting for it to get going while he read a newspaper. The teacher of grades one through four took care of all the other chores.



Then the Sycamore High School came into being and was housed on the second floor of that building. The first year was for freshmen only, with one teacher, Cora Hawley, who maintained discipline by ripping off her spectacles, repeating your name and giving the offender a look that cut into one's heart and soul.

The third year was memorable. A little building, just big enough to hold twelve desks and chairs, was built on the west side of the old building. It had to be heated and had its own little heating stove. It sat there for a long time, and went through lots of usage until it finally ended its days as a tool shed on the southern boundary of the school yard.

But that third year was a memorable one for another reason. That was the year Dorothy Ferris enrolled, and since her plan was to attend U.C. Medical School, she studied third year Latin and translated the entire book of Cicero all by herself! Alma Weber was one of those third year students,

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but was only seeking proper credits to enter Miami University, and Cora Hawley often had to rip off her glasses and use that penetrating look.

As for Frank Malsbary, he supplied the means for heating those extra rooms, but

eventually he took a little time off from delivering coal and courted the Blue Ash postmistress, married her, gave up the coal business, and lived happily ever after. By that time, Blue Ash had two secondary school buildings, city water and electricity.

Ed. note: Frank Malsbary was a descendant of one of the oldest families in Blue Ash. He was a founder of the Blue Ash Building and Loan, serving as president and on the board of directors. He was also an elder in the Blue Ash Presbyterian Church and a member of the Blue Ash Civic League. He died in 1963 at the age of 75, survived by his wife Faith.



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We have recently received several generous contributions:

Lysa Lynn Stanton, former Blue Ash resident, made a contribution in memory of her brother, Brian Christopher Stanton;

Linda Collett, Blue Ash resident, made a donation in honor of her parents, Melvin and Marian Schmidt, on the occasion of their 73rd wedding anniversary, which fell on the date of our July open house. Her father had been a prisoner of war in WW II, and he and Marian married shortly after he returned to the US;

Vice Mayor Marc Sirkin made a donation as he enjoyed a tour of the Historic Hunt House's July open house;

David Mowery and members of a historical society in Louisville, KY, made a donation after a spontaneous Hunt House tour provided by BAHS members Dave Davis and Tom Dwyer. They were closing the Hunt House after an afternoon of archiving when the Kentucky tour bus pulled into the driveway. They were on a tour retracing the John Morgan Historic Trail which led them directly to the Hunt House. They planned only to drive by and were delighted to see there were members there who could conduct a tour for them.

We appreciate these donations, as well as all those from guests at our events!

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The City of Blue Ash has been busy organizing several upgrades to the Hunt House. The warm summer gave them an opportunity to have a new cedar shingle roof installed, along with copper gutters and downspouts. The second project included new siding and roof on the garage, and lastly the gravel driveway has been resurfaced with blacktop.

Thanks to the city for continuing to maintain our jewel!

**We decked the halls...**



**...and trimmed the trees**



**...hung the stockings by the chimney with care...**



**...set out the cookies, egg nog and wassail...**



**...then we opened the door...**



**...and the guests came in, all afternoon!**



Guests stand in line for Elaine Holtman's wassail



Tom Bell talks about life in the Hunt House



Phyllis Dwyer entertains guests with dulcimer music

**A big thank you to all who visited the Hunt House for our Christmas Open House on December 8. It's always a pleasure to see visitors express so much interest in our efforts!**

**We'll say it again - another big thank you for the donations. Our events are free, so your donations help defray our expenses and are very much appreciated!**



**Blue Ash Historical Society  
2019 Calendar of Upcoming Events  
Hunt House, 4364 Hunt Road, Blue Ash**



Spring is in the air! Visitors will receive a small plant and have a chance to enter a drawing for a beautiful hanging basket.



In keeping with our annual Civil War theme, guest Mr. Bernie O'Bryan of the Civil War Museum in Ft. Wright, KY will be portraying General Lew Wallace, commander of Union Troops in Cincinnati during the Civil War. You won't want to miss this informative presentation.



Did you know that Blue Ash was the site of one of the first municipal airports in Ohio-first called Grisard Field, then Watson Airport, then Blue Ash Airport? Learn the history and importance of aviation and how it helped develop Blue Ash in the early 1900s.



Christmas at the Hunt House. Victorian-era decorations, refreshments, music.



**Please join us for any or all of our events!  
Visit our Facebook page, Blue Ash Historical Society,  
or website [www.blueashhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.blueashhistoricalsociety.org)  
for further information**