

OLIVE BRANCH SCHOOL PRESERVATION SOCIETY
ANNUAL REPORT
FOR
OCTOBER 1, 2009 - DECEMBER 31, 2010

During the latter part of 2009, the Olive Branch School Preservation Society (OBSPS) was involved in making final preparations for the dedication of the 1908 Olive Branch School building. January 17, 2010 was selected as the date for the formal dedication ceremony and the unveiling of the plaque which recognizes the building's placement on the National Register of Historic Places.

State of Ohio, Clark County, Bethel Township, and City of New Carlisle officials were invited to attend this historic event to be held in the Tecumseh High School auditorium. Dr. James Gay, Superintendent of Tecumseh School District, welcomed all those in attendance, an audience estimated to be 150 to 200. Among those in attendance were State Senator Christopher Widener who presented a Proclamation, Ross McGregor, Ohio House of Representatives, Barbara Powers, Ohio Historical Society, Denna Johnson, past President of the Ohio National Road Association (ONRA), Cyndie Gerken, current ONRA President, Marian Vance, President of Preservation Ohio, David Phares, Bethel Township Trustee, Kim Jones, New Carlisle City Manager and Richard Zsambok, New Carlisle Mayor along with many others.

Special guests included 100-year-old Martha Blakely Hawn, a 1927 graduate of Olive Branch, 98-year-old Charlene Flora, a teacher and Principal in the "Little Round School," and Mr. Harry Sheets, graduate, long-time bus driver, custodian and Director of Maintenance for the school district. They each expressed their thanks to all those who led the effort to secure listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Each shared their hope that our efforts to raise the necessary funding for the completion of renovations to the building would be realized, which would enable us to establish a Museum/Archival Center for Bethel Township. Sad to say but both Martha and Charlene have passed on to their reward since that historic day.

With the retirement of Matt Curtis, newly-appointed Tecumseh School District Assistant Superintendent, Brad Martin was welcomed at our July meeting. It was reported that Brownfield funds for the removal of asbestos were to be requested from the American Recovery Act. The cost for such a project was estimated at \$30,000. Due to the severity of the economic downturn, many funding sources whose investments have suffered huge losses, such as The Turner Foundation and others are not currently funding new projects. The OBSPS Trustees discussed a variety of other possible ways to raise funds including an Alumni membership drive, soliciting teachers who have had outstanding careers at Tecumseh, continued contact with other Foundations such as the Dayton Foundation and the Davidson Trust, and making application for possible State and Federal grants that may come open now and in the future. It was agreed that key components to the success in fund-raising are to remain positive and enthusiastic, maintain momentum, and institute an aggressive publicity campaign among our many constituents and those interested parties previously mentioned.

The OBSPS did not meet or conduct business for their Annual meeting which should have been scheduled in October 2010.

OLIVE BRANCH SCHOOL PRESERVATION SOCIETY
Oct. 1, 2009 through Dec. 31, 2010 ANNUAL REPORT
(Cont'd)

The January quarterly OBSPS meeting reviewed events and activities of the past year, reported a balance in the treasury of \$1000.00, and recommended that an audit should be completed in accordance with the OBSPS By-law requirement. Treasurer Pam Mustovich has been contacted and asked to provide bank statements for auditing. In regard to pending funding requests, Dr. Gay reported that our application for Brownfield funds was not approved.

A review was conducted of the various terms of office of the Society's Board of Trustees. The first election was held May 19, 2009, and the following were elected:

Two year term: Jane Manemann and John Sipe

Four year term: Bill Berry, Cyndie Gerken and Susan Morgan

Six year term: Jim Leathley, Ken Strickland, and Virgil Studebaker

All successive terms will be for three years.

The Finance Committee, which has been tasked with the responsibility of establishing a vision, setting goals and potential strategy for fund-raising ideas, has yet to meet for such purposes. Committee Chair Jim Leathley will work to schedule a meeting.

OBSPS By-law Article III, Section 5 – "Meetings," was amended to change the date of our quarterly meetings from the first to the second Monday of January, April, July and October.

Submitted by:

Bill Berry, Chairperson
OBSPSociety