

Fort Recovery State Museum Newsletter, October, 2020

Fort Jefferson Talk a Big Success

The September 6 presentation by Joe Beatty was a great success not only because it drew a large audience but because of the content shared that afternoon. Thanks not only to Joe but to the *Friends of Fort Jefferson*: Bill Light, Greg Shipley, Dr. David Cox and Janet Rhoades. If you would like more information on The Friends of Fort Jefferson, check: info@friendsoffortjefferson.org. Their mailing address is *Friends of Fort Jefferson*, Box 972, Greenville, Oh 45331. Membership is \$12 a year, and they meet the third Thursday of the month at the Shawnee Prairie Reserves, 4267 St. Rt. 502, Greenville.

What do You Know About Bank Notes? And a coincidence with our monument!

At the risk of showing impressive ignorance 😊, I did not know there was a time when local banks issued THEIR OWN money. I came to discover that when an active and interesting patron stopped by the museum to ask me if I had ever seen this ---



He asked that I take note of who signed this \$10 bill issued by the First National Bank of Celina. Do you see that it was signed by John Spriggs and W. E. Touvelle.? Touvelle became the Honorable Congressman Touvelle. It was he who was successful in getting the bill passed authorizing the erection of the Fort Recovery Monument, appropriating \$25,000 for that purpose! (The bill was then signed by President Taft.) The patron who has possession of this unique piece of history was so thoughtful to share it with me and with all of you via this newsletter. (Thanks to you patrons and other diverse informed museum visitors, being the site director has to be the most interesting job available. 😊)

The slow growth of federal currency provided an opening for privately issued money. Before the Great Depression, the banking system created many different types of currency. Rise of Bank Notes Deposits during the antebellum period were not a high debt priority or in much demand. States, therefore, gave banks the right to monetize their assets. By promising to pay the full value in specie (coined/money) whenever demanded, banks split large illiquid assets into smaller liquid ones. The notes were

denominated in dollars and resembled modern paper currency. Every note provided the denomination, the type of backing assets, and the name and location of the issuing bank. The note thus provided the relevant information for its use in either transactions or redemption. The issuing bank designed its notes uniquely and often depicted the bank president or concepts that were important to the bank (e.g., agriculture, manufacturing, and railroads). Before 1837, each bank petitioned for a unique charter from **its state legislature**) <https://commons.colgate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi>

Progress – Lighting of the Monument

Step-by-step, progress is being made toward the lighting of the Fort Recovery Monument. The architectural plans, developed and drawn by Chad Schroer of Garmann Miller, are now in the hands of the electrician, Mercer Electric, who will actually be doing the work. We are so fortunate that our lighting the monument project is being completed concurrently with the town's project of replacing all of the sidewalk lights at Monument Park. (The town is replacing them for much more cost effective lighting – the town pays the electrical bills for the park!) Doing both projects concurrently saves money because the ground boring for the underground wiring, the archaeological supervision which is required and other bills can be accomplished at the same time for both projects. Also employees of the village will be providing some of the important labor. Our museum is so pleased and thankful to have the great working relationship we have with the community, village personnel and with the Ohio History Connection folks.

Walk-By Museum

If you are in Fort Recovery, stop by the Walk-By museum located across the street from the museum in Krenning Park. **Helen LeFevre and Kim Rammel** have been busy creating new displays there. While stopping there to see the new displays, I observed **Linda Nietfeld** of the local library enjoying “book time” with preschoolers. It's so nice to see that important and inviting historical park being used in such positive ways.

Closed for the Season

Now that October has arrived, the museum is “closed” for the season. However, tours can be arranged by sending an email request (fortrecoverystatemuseum@yahoo.com, filling out the request on the museum website – www.fortrecoverymuseum.com, or by calling 419-375-4384. There is a \$50 minimum charge for special openings. That \$50 would include admission for six adults. (\$20 special opening, plus \$5 per adult admission.) For patrons, it would be just the special opening fee - \$20 – no personal admission charge.

Isaiah Totten, "INCIDENT" At Fort Recovery

"INCIDENT" At Fort Recovery, in the spring of 1852, a son of Daniel Vantrees, Esq., was grubbing on an out-lot owned by Isaiah Totten. When about to take his dinner he threw the grubbing-hoe to the roots of a large fallen rotten oak, when the blade of his hoe struck upon some metal. Upon investigation he found underneath the rotten wood some iron bands, which had enclosed a small wooden box. When the earth and wood were removed they found what seemed to be the contents of the box--nine hundred pieces of silver coin, Spanish doubloons, or near the value of \$14,000*. This was supposed to be the paymaster's box of gold, that "at the time of the battle of November the 4th, 1791, of General St. Clair's defeat," was placed on the east side of a large white oak, in a curvature made by fire or decay, on the field of battle, near a bluff bank. In the year 1818 a man appeared at Fort Recovery who claimed to be a Virginia soldier, and was in the battle at St. Clair's defeat; that he was in search of the lost treasure that was deposited under a standing oak on the battle-field. He remained some time, and was afterwards found dead in the woods. *1852, \$14,000 value now \$472,578.10

Happy Fall – And a Better 2021 – Hopefully Speaker Series back in full!