Heritage Reserve News

Stow Historical Society

Volume 48, Issue 4 *www.stowhistory.org* *November 2026*

CELEBRATING 250

THE HARVEST FESTIVAL

APPLE BUTTER

by Meredith Morgan

Stirring apple butter has been an annual tradition since the first Harvest Festival in the mid-seventies. As a very young child, Ben Delaney recalls watching a group of volunteers gathered in a circle in the barn peeling, coring, and cutting apples into big chunks. The apple pieces were cooked down for eight to ten hours to make the apple butter.

Meredith Morgan supervises the stirring.

This year Ben, family, and friends arrived at Heritage Park early in the morning to make apple butter in a different way. The BIG shiny-on-the-inside blackened-on-the-outside copper kettle was brought out to its stand. The first gallon of apple cider was poured in, and that helped determine if the kettle was level. The fire below the kettle was started and the constant stirring began. Two more gallons of cider were added. Then the first forty pound bag of apple "mash" from Cooper's Mill in Bucyrus was carefully poured in. The stirring had to continue.

The City of Stow provides firewood each year, but it must be split and stacked. The fire needs constant attention too. If it's not hot enough, the butter won't cook properly. If it's too hot, the butter "glugs" out of the kettle, like the mudpots at Yellowstone National Park, and the product is wasted.

Three more forty pound bags of mash were added and the stirring got harder. After about five or six hours when the apple butter is at the right consistency, cloves, cinnamon, and a small amount of sugar are added. The butter cooks about another thirty minutes. Then the volunteers move quickly to jar the apple butter. This year, the bees made this step in the process more interesting. We didn't want anyone to find a bee in their jar of apple butter. Once jarred, the apple butter is processed in a boiling water bath. We made 103 jars on Saturday and 84 jars on Sunday.

So, times have changed and the way we make apple butter has changed. It's still a lot of fun to spend the day working with family and friends. And it is also fun to answer questions from the attendees at the Festival and try to convince them to take a turn stirring – hopefully, a long turn.

Continued on Page 4

Stow Historical Society
P. O. Box 1425
Stow, OH 44224
stowhistorical@gmail.com
www.stowhistory.org

2026 Officers

President
Bryan Menke
330-329-0739
stowhistorical@gmail.com

Vice President
Tammie Menke
330-342-9918
menketammie6@gmail.com

Recording Secretary
John Baranek
financestow@gmail.com

Corresponding Secretary
Karen Fritschel
330-603-3983
karenfritschel@gmail.com

Treasurer
Tim Burns
330-703-4807
timburns999@gmail.com

Trustee
Denny Reiser
330-603-7194
denny_reiser@yahoo.com

Trustee
Tom Stephan
330-730-6591
tstephan@neo.rr.com

Editor
John Duckworth
johnduc@icloud.com

Heritage Reserve News
Deadlines:
Jan. 1 for Winter. Apr. 1 for Spring
July 1 for Summer. Oct. 1 for Fall.

Bryan Menke - President

Welcome to our fall edition of Heritage Reserve News.

In preparation of America's 250th anniversary, many volunteers were busy cleaning, weeding, and mulching our historical houses.

I hope you had an opportunity to stop by our annual Harvest Festival September 26th and 27th. The weather was perfect both days and we had a record number of vendors this year. Of coarse all of the Festival could not be made possible without our many volunteers. Your Stow Historical Society is a non-profit 501 C(3) organization all run by volunteers to preserve and teach the history of Stow.

I wish I could list all the names of our Festival volunteers, but I would inevitably forget to mention one or two, and that would be unfortunate. I do need to mention our dedicated Board of Directors and a few responsibilities they manage during the Festival.

Tammie Menke, our Vice President, is our vendor coordinator. She spends countless hours receiving vendor applications, payments, and vendor booth layout inside and outside the Heritage Barn. Her job seems to be the most stressful on the Festival Committee.

Tim Burns, our Treasurer, marketing director, parking coordinator, and vendor layout director.

John Baranek, our Recording Secretary and the Festival role of managing the money box for food and Apple Butter purchases.

Karen Fritschel, our Corresponding Secretary and all her help with sponsorships and help in the Museums.

Denny Reiser, our Trustee and master gardener for getting all the museums landscape in top notch along with help in managing the School House.

Tom Stephan, our Trustee who you might know as "the voice of Stow" and being our Festival announcer.

The Stow Munroe Falls High School student volunteers, the blacksmiths, apple butter stirrers, museum caretakers, weavers and spinners, woodcarvers, Stow Munroe Falls Library, Stow Parks and Recreation, OSU Extension, and the list goes on.

I would also like to thank Bill and Cheryl Starcher from Bill Starcher Art and Mark & Jackie Ashworth for their above and beyond help in staying after the Festival helping to take down tents, tables, and chairs. Many hands made light work for everyone.

By the time of this newsletter printing, the rebuilding of our Heritage House should be underway. Good things take time and after three years, plans have been approved and our general contractor will be busy getting the house under roof before winter.

Since the opening of our 1976 time capsule in June of 2026, we have been collecting items for our new time capsule to be buried in front of the rebuilt Heritage House for opening in 2076. If you have a

small item for the capsule, please bring it to one of our next meetings. Please see the following guidelines below that we will be using to accept time capsule items.

We morn the loss of one of our Trustees, Houston Morgan of 98 years. I have personally known Mr. Morgan for 47 years. He was a mentor to me throughout my life. Since 1978, the Morgan family has been and still is associated with the making of the Apple Butter during the Festival. Houston Morgan will be forever missed, but what he has taught us will never be forgotten and will be passed down for generations to come.

I hope to see you at one of our next events.

Thank you

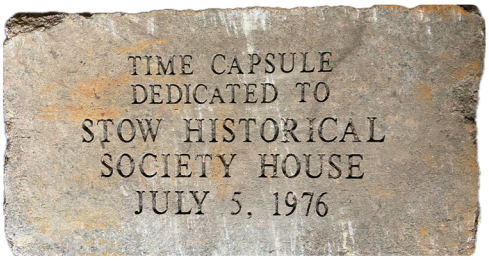
Bryan Menke

Would you like to be part of History?

More specifically, part of Stow History?

The Stow Historical Society is planning to bury a time capsule representative of persons, places, and things in Stow, and we want YOU to be a part of it!

In 50 years (2076 or 2077), when the time capsule will be opened, Stowites will enjoy seeing what life was like with our government. schools. churches, clubs, non-profits, businesses, retail, parks, transportation, restaurants, and anything else you can think of that would be a good representation of Stow in 2026. Obviously, things that are clearly dated and identified would be most interesting. Pictures – lots of pictures – are always perfect for a time capsule. Whatever tells the story of your group, your club, your church, your school, your business, your neighborhood, your Stow-centric anything – that's what we want to bury in the time capsule.



Items should be small enough to fit inside a large airtight container, and should be brought to the Stow Historical Society meetings or gatherings in the next few months all at the Stewart School House in the Heritage Reserve of Silver Springs Park: Regular Monthly Meeting, November 9 at 6:00 pm (History of Stow's original safety center) and the Old-fashioned Holiday Sing Along, December 14 at 6:00 pm. Items submitted will be included at the discretion of Historical Society Board of Trustees.

"If you don't know history, it's as if you were born yesterday. If you were born yesterday then any leader can tell you anything."

Howard Zinn

Blacksmiths

Bob Reed

Ben Delaney said that he was inspired to start blacksmithing when he traveled to Cass Scenic Railroad with his family including Grandpa Houston Morgan where he smelled the coal smoke as a boy.

Through the years he was around blacksmithing in Scouting and various volunteer positions. Friend and mentor Bob "Blaster" Reed has been sharing his passion for blacksmithing with Ben for many years. Currently they work together to show visitors their skills at the forge during the annual Stow Historical Society Harvest Festival.

Ben Delaney

Weavers

Weavers Dianna Phillips and Claire Bourguet demonstrate spinning for visiting families in the historic Starr House.

Claire Bourguet

Dianna Phillips

Tree City Carvers

In the summer of 1988, a small group of men and women met in Kent to establish a club for those with an interest in the art of wood carving. They elected officers, chose the name **Tree City Carvers**, and agreed to meet once a month to carve and share their interest and skills with one another.

Today after 38 years the club members still meet several times each month at the Fred Fuller Park Shelter House on Middlebury Rd. in Kent. Carve-ins are held at 6:00pm every 2nd & 4th Wednesday of the month. During the carve-ins members meet to work on a group project or individual projects. This is also a great time to network with other carvers and learn something new. A club business meeting is on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm. The highlight of the monthly meeting is a show-and-tell period. Members show and discuss carving and woodburning projects they have completed or are currently working on. Meetings might also include discussions and demonstrations on various subjects of interest, presented by members or guest speakers.

Rich Bowels works on a relief carving.

Chuck Reminder in background carving his "Little people" which are on the table. The large carving is from Del Proudfoot.

Del Proudfoot, Earl Pamfilie, Jan McClure, and Vickie Yendriga.

The club also sponsors group projects in which all members who wish may participate. Club members display their work at fairs, shows, and public functions to demonstrate their woodworking and wood burning techniques. Classes and work sessions in different types of wood working include: Relief carving, Chip carving, Carving In The Round, Whittling, and Wood burning. Classes for kids include Soap carving.

The club is always looking for new members and still includes several of its original members. Men and women, from beginner to advanced carvers, come from Portage, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Stark, Summit, and Trumbull Counties for fellowship, to hone their carving skills, to and keep the woodworking tradition alive. ◆

Volunteers

The heart of the Harvest festival is the wonderful community of volunteers that come together to help preserve local History for future generations! ◆

Judy Griggs

THE HARVEST FESTIVAL

CELEBRATING 250

Festival Photos by Tammie Menke and Tim Burns

Houston Morgan: A Wonderful Ride

By Rev. David Weyrick

I met Houston Morgan more than 50 years ago through Scouting. Houston loved Scouting.

He also loved photography. He loved Stow and its history. And it's no big secret, Houston loved trains. He loved watching them, photographing them, and recording their sounds. And if Houston could find an excuse to take some family members, friends or Scouts along for the ride, so much the better. So perhaps there is no better way to remember Houston's 98 years of life than as one very long train trip.

Houston boarded his train on April 17, 1928. His first station was Akron and then Silver Lake, where a boy who would spend much of his life outdoors first began discovering the world around him.

Before long, the train stopped at a station called Scouting. Scouting climbed aboard with Houston and never got off.

He became an Eagle Scout and spent countless nights at Camp Manatoc as a Scout, staff member, and later an adult leader. Through the years he received some of Scouting's highest honors, including the Silver Beaver Award and the National Outstanding Eagle Scout Award. But the patches and plaques and awards were never really the point.

The people were.

Houston's Scouting adventures took him to the Florida Sea Base, Maine, Tinnerman Canoe Base, Philmont Scout Ranch, and many other places. Along the way, an awful lot of young people climbed aboard Houston's train.

Some traveled with him for only a few stops. Others traveled with him for years. I know there are men and women today who can look back across the decades and say, "Part of the reason I became the person I am is because, for a while, I rode with Houston Morgan."

But there was another very important station along Houston's route: Stow High School. That is where Houston met a young woman named Marylee. Houston wanted a date for a dance, and Marylee soon realized she was dating a Boy Scout. She should have considered herself warned. But she climbed aboard anyway.

Houston and Marylee became traveling companions. Together they traveled through college and pharmacy school, marriage and the arrival of six children: Marianne, Houston Jr., Margaret, Meredith, Marilyn, and Howard. The train was getting crowded. And noisy. And wonderful. Eventually there would be grandchildren and great-grandchildren waiting at stations farther down the line.

There would be more than 50 years in pharmacy. There would be Camp Manatoc

and Philmont. There would be family camping trips and adventures across the country. And there would always be Stow.

Houston graduated from Stow High School in 1946 and had been a Stow resident since 1957. He watched the community change enormously during his lifetime, but he didn't simply watch its history. He became part of it.

Houston and Marylee were active members of the Stow Historical Society and familiar faces at its events. Anyone who spent time around the annual Harvest Festival might remember them stirring apple butter. Houston also served for many years on the Stow Parks and Recreation Board and twice had the honor of serving as Grand Marshal of Stow's Fourth of July Parade. And, of course, there were trains. Lots and lots of trains. Houston especially loved the Cass Scenic Railroad in West Virginia, where he photographed and sound-recorded the old logging engines. But even there, Houston didn't keep the experience to himself. He brought family. He brought friends. He brought Scouts.

That seems to me to have been one of the themes of Houston's entire life. He didn't just go places. He took people with him. Maybe that is one of the measures of a life well lived. The question isn't simply, "Where did you go?" Perhaps the more important question is, "Who traveled with you?"

Houston had an extraordinary number of traveling companions. Some shared only a few miles. Some shared many. One shared most of the journey. Marylee.

In 2012, after nearly a lifetime of traveling side by side, Houston came to a station where Marylee got off the train. Houston remained aboard for another 14 years.

He kept traveling.

He kept telling stories.

He kept loving Scouting.

He kept loving Stow.

He kept loving trains.

And he kept missing Marylee every single day.

For 98 years, Houston Morgan rode that train. What a ride. Think about what he saw along the way. He watched Stow change from the community of his childhood into the city it is today. He watched generations of Scouts put on the uniform. He watched his children grow up, followed by grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

He watched steam rise from locomotives. He watched sunsets at Philmont. He stirred apple butter in Stow. He dispensed medicine as a pharmacist. And with his own hands, he carved more than 150 neckerchief slides for Eagle Scouts.

For nearly a century, Houston collected traveling companions: family, friends, Scouts, Scouters, neighbors, customers, and countless others whose lives intersected his for one station or perhaps 50.

I was fortunate enough to be one of them. Several years ago, Houston told me that when the time came, he wanted me to "say a few good words" about him. We called it our deal. Through the years, every so often Houston would remind me, "Now remember our deal." I remembered. After all, a Scout keeps his word.

Houston's train reached its final earthly station on August 20, 2026. Even at 98, somehow it seemed there should have been one more story. One more laugh. One more Scouting memory. One more conversation about Stow. One more tale about a train. One more neckerchief slide to carve.

But perhaps those of us who were fortunate enough to travel with Houston shouldn't simply mourn that his ride has ended. We should be grateful that, for part of our own journey, we got to ride with him. And I like to imagine that when Houston finally stepped onto that platform, someone who had arrived 14 years earlier was waiting for him.

I can picture Marylee looking down the platform and seeing Houston coming toward her. No doubt she smiled as did Houston. And perhaps she said, "What took you so long?"

So maybe goodbye isn't quite the right word for Houston Morgan. Maybe it's simply this: We'll see you farther down the line.

Thanks for the ride, Houston. It was a wonderful one. ◈

Calendar
& Volunteer Opportunities:

Please check the website (stowhistory.org) for up-to-date information.

November 9th 2026
Monday 6:00
Stewart School House
Who keeps us safe?
History of Stow's original Safety Center!

November 14th 2026
Saturday 11:00
Members' Autumn Brunch
Stewart School House
RSVP to 330-342-9918

December 12th 2026
Saturday 10am – Noon
Heritage Reserve
House Decorating

December 14th 2026
Monday 6:00
Heritage Reserve
Old Fashioned Holiday Sing Along
Cookies will be served!
Bring the whole family!

We also need student photographers and journalists to document our meetings and events for volunteer hours.