




The Old Farm House (Owen Brown House)

as remembered
by **Richard Yarger**
former resident of the
present Munroe Falls Museum





MEET THE YARGERS

**Austin C. (b 1883-d 1948) and
Pearl Myers Yarger (b 5-10-1885 d 6-9-59)
married September 27, 1905 and began
their family at Crosier Street, in Akron, Ohio.**

Austin and Pearl had four children:

Ruth (Klever)

Ethel (Mathers)

Albert Glenwood (Bert)

Elenore (Johnston)

Austin C. and Pearl Myers Yarger moved their family to 83 Munroe Falls Avenue in 1922 and sold it in 1957.





This house was built by Owen Brown, father of abolitionist John Brown, in 1851 and is today houses the Munroe Falls Historical Society Museum.


**The Yarger House; Elenore (child of Austin and Pearl Yarger;
sister to Bert Yarger)**



**Austin's brother, Sam,
also lived on the property
in a small two room
house at the back
of the property.**

Pictured are Sam (left)
and Austin (right)





Pearl Yarger





MEET DICK YARGER, OUR STORYTELLER

Dick Yarger, son of Albert (Bert) Yarger and Elizabeth Mary Faulder (Mary), grandson of Austin and Pearl Yarger shares his memories of growing up in the Old Farm House.

- **Dick was born May 30, 1935.**
- **Eventually Dick moved in with his grandparents, Austin and Pearl Yarger when his parents divorced.**

Dick Gaylord and Bert Yarger



Richard Yarger was named after Bert's best friend, Richard Gaylord (pictured to left.) Both men (Dick and Bert) worked at Tastee Bakery. Bert was a mechanic.

Richard (Dick) Yarger was known as "Sonny" while growing up.



The Yarger Farm House Layout

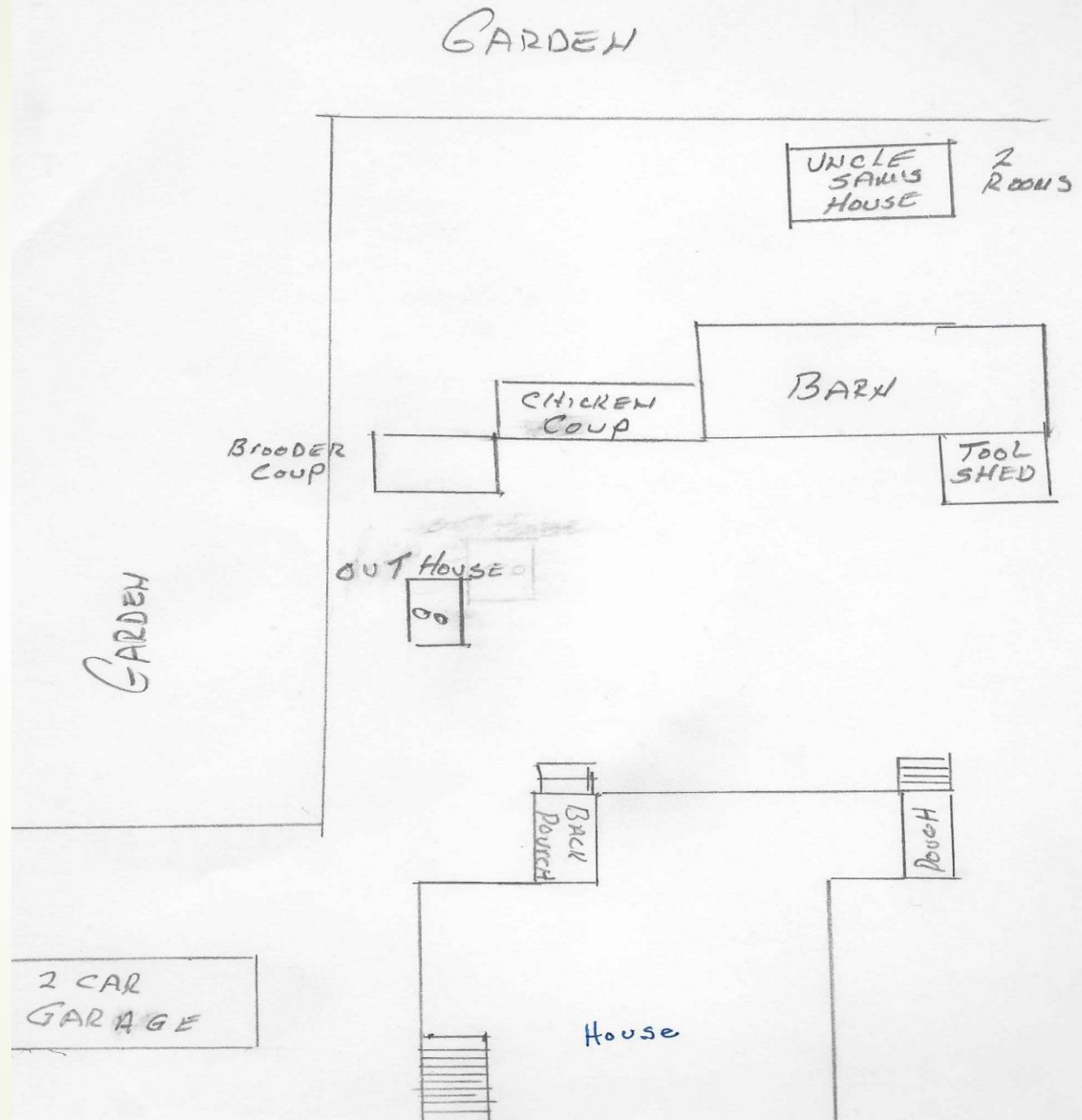
- The Yarger home had three bedrooms upstairs.
- Austin and Pearl Yarger's bedroom was the now Loom Room upstairs.
- Dick and his father shared the blue room bedroom. Dick's dad, Bert, was a mechanic at Tastee Bakery.
- Dick's aunt Ethel, and her daughter Juanita's bedroom was the now Parlor Room.
- The present office was a small bedroom with a bed which was often used by guests, or by neighbors who had a little too much to drink at the town square dance and came into the unlocked Yarger house to "sleep it off."



A scuttle and closets

- ▶ **A scuttle is a ceiling opening to the attic. One is on the second floor in a room that is presently a closet nearest the stairway.**
- ▶ **The second floor has four closets, one with the scuttle, and another between the Blue and Loom rooms. The Blue room has a closet, as does the Parlor room (formerly bedrooms.) This feature was not always built into homes, so the Yarger house was, indeed, a desirable home as it had features not found in most homes of its time.**

Lay of the Land





The Lay of the Land

- The Yarger home had a dirt floored garage (which has since been torn down and replaced) next to the house.
- In the back was barn, a brooder house for chickens with a longer building for the chicken coop. Attached to the barn was a pigpen. They had a hay mow and a tool shed.
- Behind the barn a small 2 bedroom house was built for Uncle Sam Yarger. Sam was a Bible reader and had a heart of gold and was also most charitable. When mail would arrive at the post office it was addressed merely to “Uncle Sam.”
- The Yargers had a cow, horse, pigs and chickens.
- The Yargers farmed potatoes, tomatoes, corn, rhubarb, green beans, and alfalfa for the hay mow for the cow and horse. They also had a grape arbor and small apple orchard.



The Living Room

- ▶ The house still had the two front doors leading into the now living room. When it was first built there was a wall dividing space so the right entrance door led into a small bank, and the left entrance door led into the house itself. The porch was originally a wrap around wooden porch with scrollwork at the top of the porch pillars. There were also shutters on the windows.
- ▶ The sunrise emblem is still seen on the front of the house near the roof line. It is not an oxeye or bull's eye (oeil-de-boeuf or eye of the bull) which is a small window. Instead it is a wooden sunrise emblem which added a touch of elegance to the house.
- ▶ While the Yargers lived in the house the two front doors remained, however the wall that separated the bank from the house had been removed.
- ▶ A white picket fence also graced the front of the property.





Egress to basement

- **The present back porch covers what once was an egress, a cell trap door to the basement, protected by two large doors which protected the outside stairway to the basement.**
- **Eventually the egress was removed and a porch covered this area.**
- **The basement was also accessible from inside the house. The doorway is near the bathroom.**
- **The basement had a furnace which was added 1946 or 1947.**




The kitchen

- The kitchen had at that time a small room sectioned off for a double rinse tub and the washing machine. It also had a back door so laundry could be taken out to hang on the line to dry. The wall partition and that door are no longer there.
- The kitchen had a coal stove in it. Off the main kitchen is a small mudroom porch, and outside that room was an entrance to the basement where rows of preserves and canned vegetables were kept by Dick's grandmother.



The bathroom

- ▶ There was no bathroom in the house for many years. Baths were taken in a big round gray tub. Water was heated on a coal stove in the kitchen. Everyone used the outside outhouse for a bathroom. In 1946 or 1947 a bathroom was installed.
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THEN AND NOW



Shutters, second front door, and the wooden wrap around porch and picket fence were removed over the years.

Dick Yarger as a child



Cousin Denny Myers, who lived across the street, and Dick Yarger (the blonde) were always dressed up for school. Notice their lunch pails!

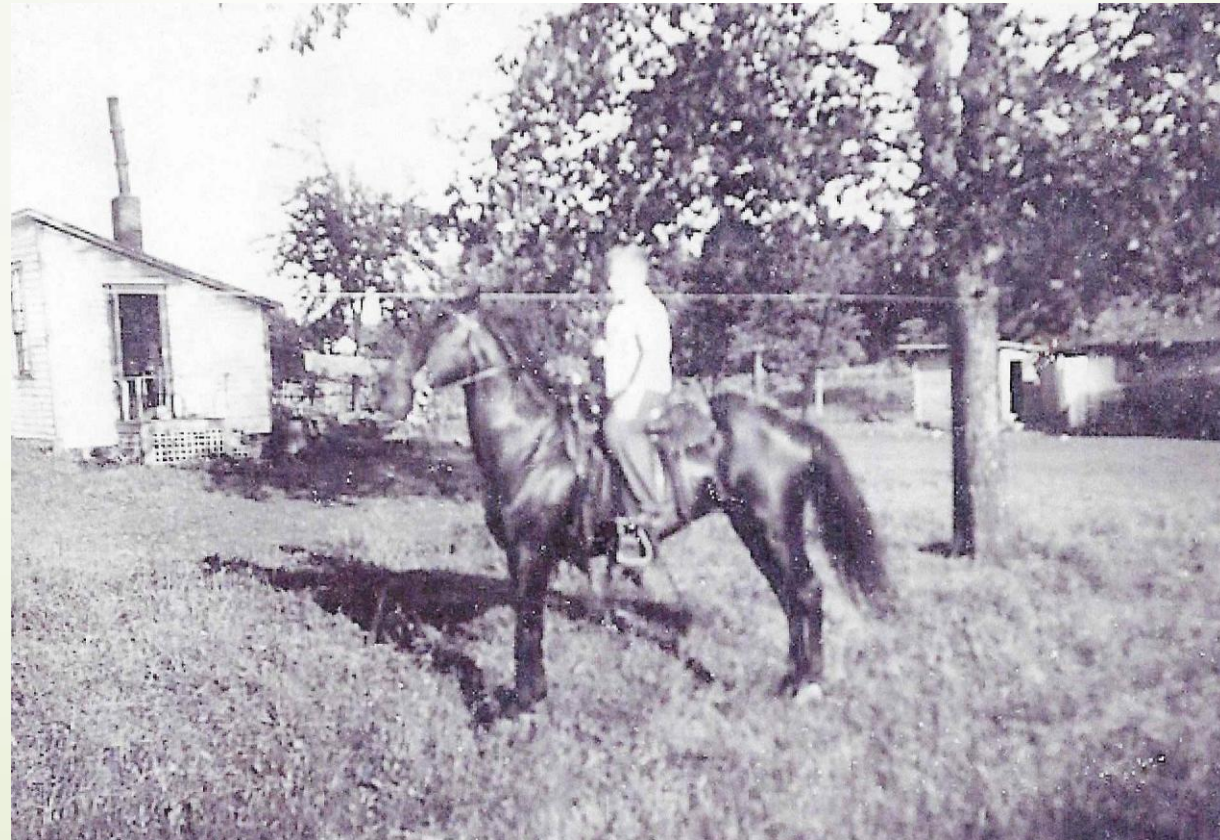
Denny became Dick's best-man at his marriage to Muriel.



Boys will be boys!

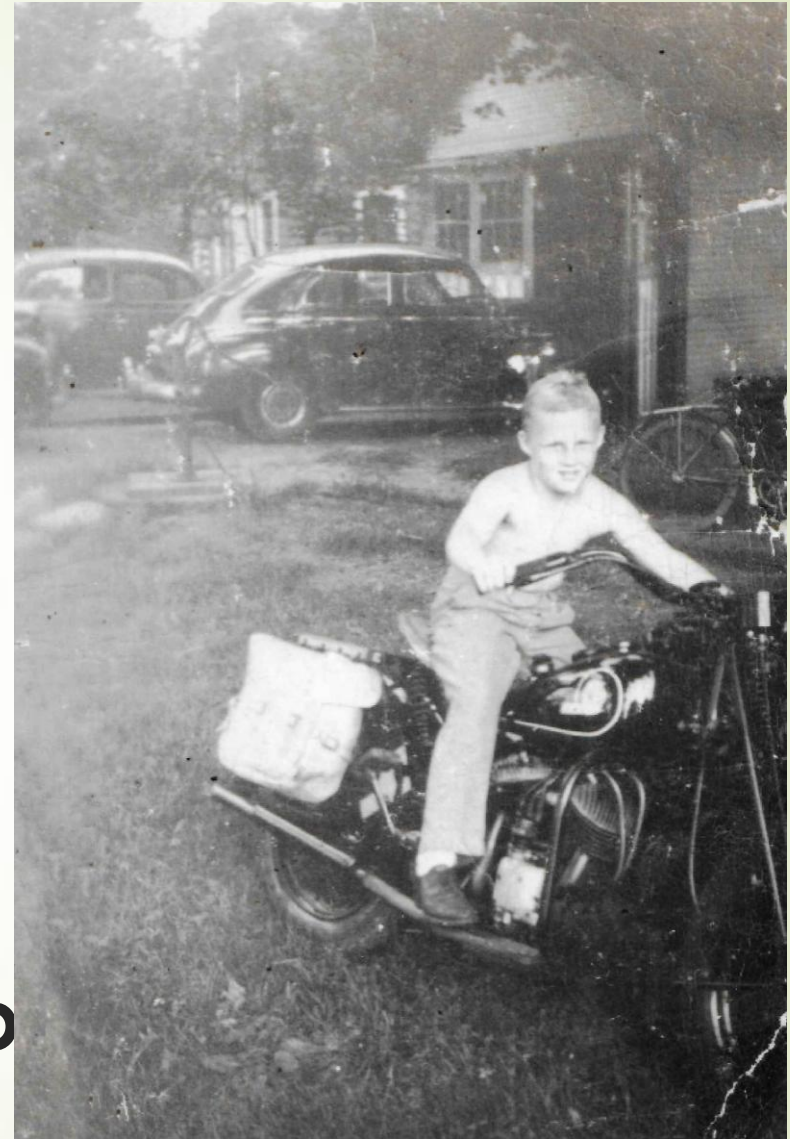
- Dick fondly recalls creating what he called a roller coaster, but was much like a zip line. He attached a rope to an apple tree and attached pulleys to it with a hanging rope. Someone would climb the tree, hang on the rope which someone below would grab and pull the rider across the yard.
- One day cousin Denny Myers and Dick were playing while fields were being plowed. Denny dared Dick to throw a rock over the tractor driver's head. Of course, Dick took the challenge however, the rock hit the driver directly in the back of the head. Both boys scrambled to get home. As Dick arrived at the door of his house the tractor driver caught up with him. Dick recalls paying the price of his misdeed first from his grandmother, then from his dad.

Dick Yarger on his horse, Jacket. You can see the clothesline behind Dick. His “roller coaster” zipline was in the back by the orchard. You can also see the brooder house and chicken coop on the right.



**Dick Yarger
sitting on his
father's motorcycle.**

**Can you see the
handpump behind
Dick? This was the
main source of water
for gardening. There
was also a hand pump
in the kitchen.**





Dick's memories of Munroe Falls during the 1930's-'50's.

- The gray building which today houses a barber shop was at one time a grocery store with a gas pump, and the Post Office. Upstairs Harriet Elson had her art studio and Dick purchased two paintings: one of the dam, and one of a lady with hat boxes with the names of local stores. He still has these today!
- Town Hall was on the corner of Rte. 91 and Munroe Falls Avenue. Originally it was a school house. Eventually that building was moved and is presently where City Hall is located.
- Town Hall hosted weekly square dances. Adults brought their own bottle of "beverages." Grandpa Guisewait, a neighbor who owned the huge Victorian house on Rte. 91, was the square dance caller and after the dance they had boxing matches. Dick recalls at age seven being put into the ring with huge Hulk-like boxing gloves to box against friend and next door neighbor, Henry Predico.

Dick Yarger holding a shotgun; picnic at the barbeque built by Bert.

Standing in back:
Sam Yarger, Gladys Yarger
(stepmother to Dick,)
Bert Yarger, Aunt Eleanor
is sitting in front of Bert;
Aunt Ethel in working on the
barbeque. Grandma
Yarger is facing the
barbeque.



“Uncle Sam’s mail...when mail came for Sam Yarger it was often addressed to Uncle Sam as everyone in town knew him as that!



Uncle Sam in the living room of house. Dick Yarger is at the side.

A rodeo was held in a large open field to the right of the Yarger house (toward Cuyahoga Falls, in the early 1950's. It was held just past the Yarger House going toward Cuyahoga Falls. Munroe Falls Avenue is on the right of this picture.



Dick Yarger's cousin riding Jacket, the horse.



Uncle Sam on Jacket. See Sam's little house in the background.



THE GEISTWEITE HOME: *A Mainstay in Munroe Falls*

One of Munroe Falls' well-known families resided for years in one of the community's most notable domiciles—the Geistweite House, located at 21 North Main Street.

Built in 1868, the distinctive dwelling place sits hard by the site where the Pennsylvania & Ohio Canal once flowed. A long-time resident of the address, Maxine Kline, recalled that her father, Theron Geistweite, filled in adjacent parts of the old canal with dirt and bricks to try to correct water problems at the house.

Designed in the (Charles) Eastlake Architecture Style, the home's first owner was Newton W. Taylor, who held a great deal of local real estate. The building housed many businesses at one time or another. Subsequent owners or occupants were David



The Geistweite Home

Thomas (1886), Frank and Ada Keister (1889), Samuel Rearick (1899), George Dixon (1904), John Kepler (1910), Millie Geistweite (1925), Theron Geistweite (1960), and Maxine Kline (1963).

One ancestor of the Geistweites was Washington Geistweite, who was alive in 1857 but about whom little information could be found.

Maxine Kline recalled her father, Theron, as a "jack of all trades" who passed away in 1962. Among the unusual jobs he performed was training horses to pull funeral coaches, moving buildings, and transporting school children with horse-drawn wagons.

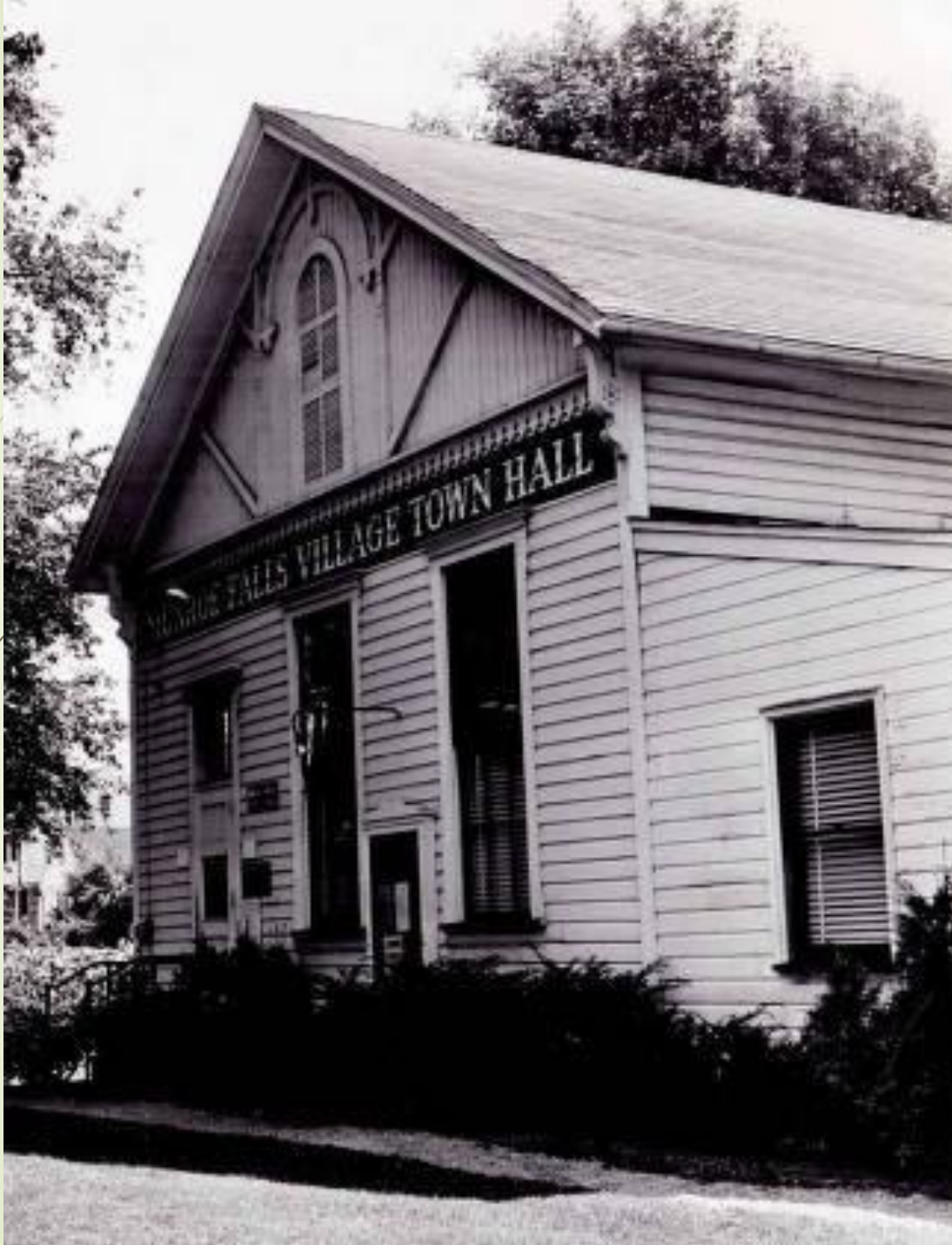
Later, he was recognized as the first person to convey Stow students in a motorized "bus." His daughter recalled that the vehicle was a Willys Knight truck.



GUISE HOUSE



Dating to about 1885, the Guise House is an interesting architectural example. It is located at 147 South Main, Munroe Falls.



Originally the schoolhouse which was located on the corner of Rte. 91 and Munroe Falls Avenue and later moved to the current location as City Hall.

SKETCHES / By Dennis Haas

Former school

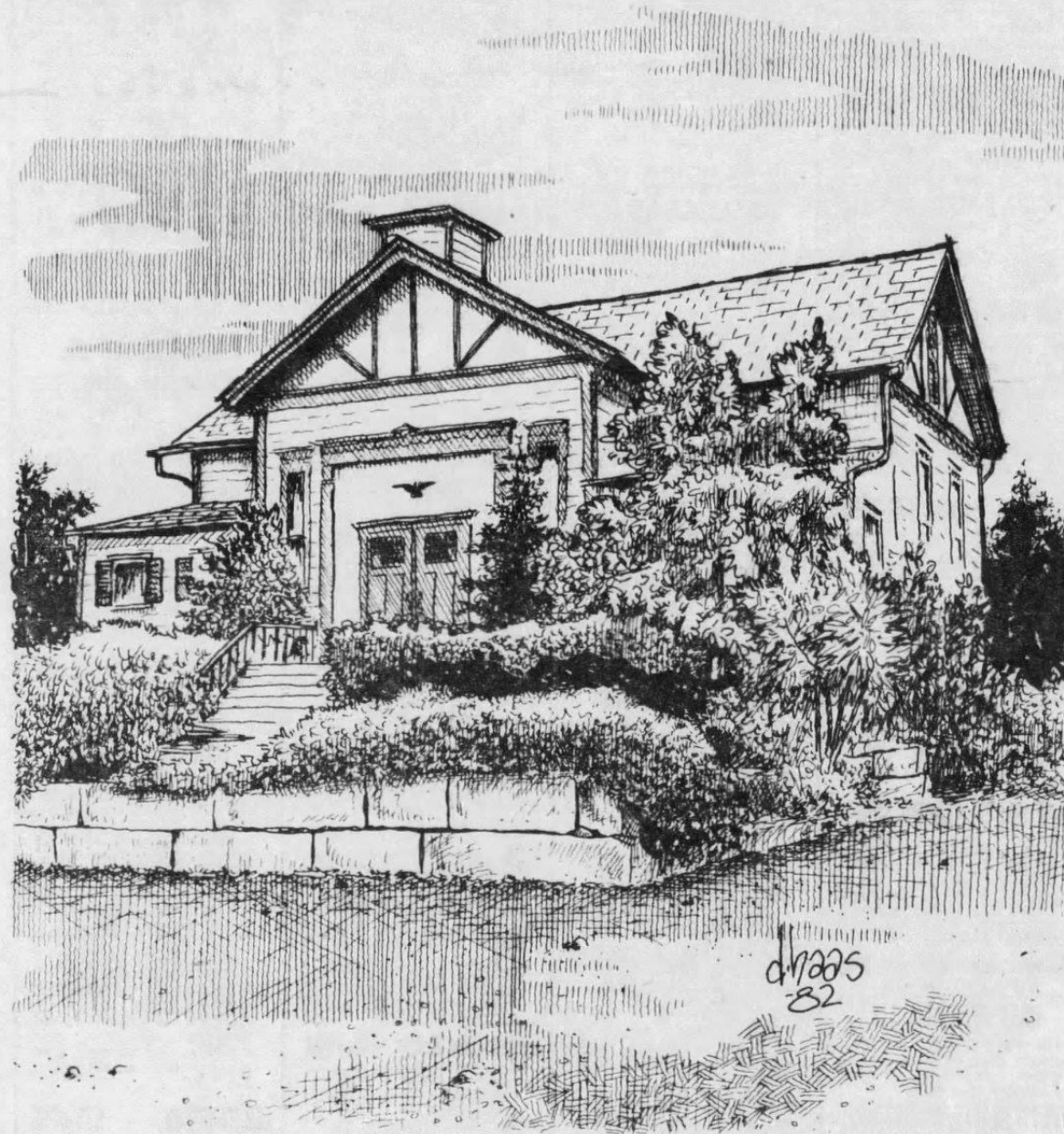
The Munroe Falls Town Hall on Munroe Falls Avenue has served a variety of purposes since it was built as a one-room schoolhouse about 1885.

Later, a steeple was added, and the building was used temporarily as a Methodist church, according to local historian Maxine Kline.

Over the years, it served as a community center for civic functions, and new additions were made to meet needs, including adding a large entranceway. The village took over the building in the '30s, Mrs. Kline said.

Originally, it was located on the southwest corner of Munroe Falls Avenue and Ohio 91. But it was moved down the street to its present site in the late '60s to make room for a bank.

For most of its life, the former schoolhouse was painted white, but now the two-story structure is a camel color. It used to have a bell tower and steeple.





Memories



- **The Tip Top Restaurant had curb service when Dick was young. All the boys would drive their cars there to show off their “set of wheels.”**
- **Eddy Parson had a gas station. He loved having the local kids bring their cars to the station. One time he sent Dick to pick up someone’s car to be hand-washed at the station. Eddy charged \$1.50, and gave \$1.25 to Dick for cleaning the car. That was big money in the day!**
- **A Sunoco was on the corner of Rte. 91 and Rte. 59 which was part of the Marhofer corner. Marhofer would always take care of the boy’s cars at a low price.**

Working and Playing in Munroe Falls

- ▶ **Dick would walk to what is now Munroe Falls Metro Park. He was a “paper picker,” which meant he picked up litter from those who had picnicked and swam at the park. He was paid ten cents an hour. The next year he got a one cent raise. When in high school Dick got his lifeguard certification and then life guarded at the park.**
- ▶ **Waterworks was much different back in Dick’s day. They had a huge swimming pool with diving boards. There were diving contests and free swim lessons. Passes were free for Cuyahoga Falls residents, but not for Munroe Falls residents. However, Dick figured out that if you took the free swim lessons you could stay and use the park afterward.**
- ▶ **Across from Waterworks was a huge pond (which is now drained) and kids would go ice skating there.**
- ▶ **Hay rides were available on Stow Road and that was always a fun time for area kids.**



School

- **Dick went to Stow Grade School which was where Highland School is located.**
- **He also attended the brand new Workman High School, which was then on the corner of Rte. 91 and Graham Road, where the present Marc's plaza is located.**
- **Dick played football, basketball, baseball, and was on the newspaper staff and other clubs. His biggest interest? Girls! He enjoyed going to school dances and dating Cuyahoga Falls and Stow girls.**



WW II Years

- It was not unusual for planes to fly overhead during the war years. The planes came in from the west coast and flew to the east coast where they would refuel then head to Greenland, then to war.
- Dick Miller was about ten years older than Dick Yarger. He had joined the army and became a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne. He was there at Normandy.
- When Dick Miller came home from war he drove up to his home across from the Yarger home. His car was a yellow Plymouth convertible. Dick says that his friend and neighbor inspired him to join the army and also become a paratrooper. Dick Yarger was in the 11th Airborne and flew into Germany in January, 1956.



Dick Miller

- **Dick Miller started his own business on Rte. 91 called Dusty's Tavern. The building still stands there today and is called Brewster's Pub.**
 - **Dick Yarger and Dick Miller remained friends for years.**
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After the Army

- Dick Yarger returned from the Army and attended the University of Akron (Then UA.) After a year he determined it was not a right fit for him.
- Dick began working on Rte. 59 at Pat Carlosi Cadillac and Olds dealer in sales in 1959.
- It was in 1959 that Pearl Yarger, Dick's grandmother, passed away.
- March 13, 1960 Dick jumped in a car with a blonde on his arm and headed for California. He had a job at an Olds/Cad dealer in Redondo Beach, California. He married Neva.
- Dick decided to change careers and work for Goodyear Tire as a store manager trainee. At this time he divorced and remarried a gal named Georgeanne. They had a son named Richard.



California Living

- ▶ Dick left the Goodyear store and began work for a beer distributing company which offered him more money. Money was not the answer and after that realization came to pass, Dick went back to Goodyear and ended up working for Ralph Williams Ford selling Goodyear Tires. They were the biggest dealer of tires in southern California. He stayed there for several years.
- ▶ Dick was good at his job and worked for several dealers, but one day was called and to be let go because he was too good at his job and was making too much money with his commissions. This time he went to a company doing the same work and negotiated a salary.
- ▶ Eventually Dick realized he needed to start his own company. Nick Ray, a Vietnam Vet, joined him and they bought an existing business and called it Titan Tire. They did tires, brakes and alignment, and when things got tough they sold Christmas trees on their lot.



Expansion

- ▶ Titan Tire began to pick up and in 1979 the two bought another store, Nick running one and Dick running the other.
- ▶ Business was good, and on August 1, 1999, Dick retired. He moved to Sun City, Palm Desert, Ca.



Love of his life

- In 1976, Dick divorced Georgana. His mother was ill and he came back to Ohio May 1, 1976. His cousin convinced him to come to a dance with him. The dance was sponsored by Parents Without Partners. Dick knew he wasn't qualified to go as he wasn't a member, yet he went anyway.
- His cousin went to a table to talk to someone and while standing with him Dick saw a beautiful woman. He did not speak to her, but before long she came up to him and identified herself as the President of the club. "I know everyone here, but I do not know you," she declared. It was love at first sight. Muriel became Dick's wife.

Dick and Muriel Yarger wedding picture from September 23, 1977, with best man, cousin Dennis and Marlene Myers.





Happily Ever After

- **Dick and Muriel are living a great life in California. In 2003 they moved to Sun City, Palm Desert, California. Dick remains active playing golf, going to the gym, volunteering at the Palm Springs Museum, and serving on the Board of the Salvation Army.**
- **A happy life changing moment happened August 3, 2019. He met a daughter he never knew he had. DNA brought him together with Cynthia. Not only did he gain a daughter, but he now has grandchildren and great grandchildren.**
- **Life is good!**