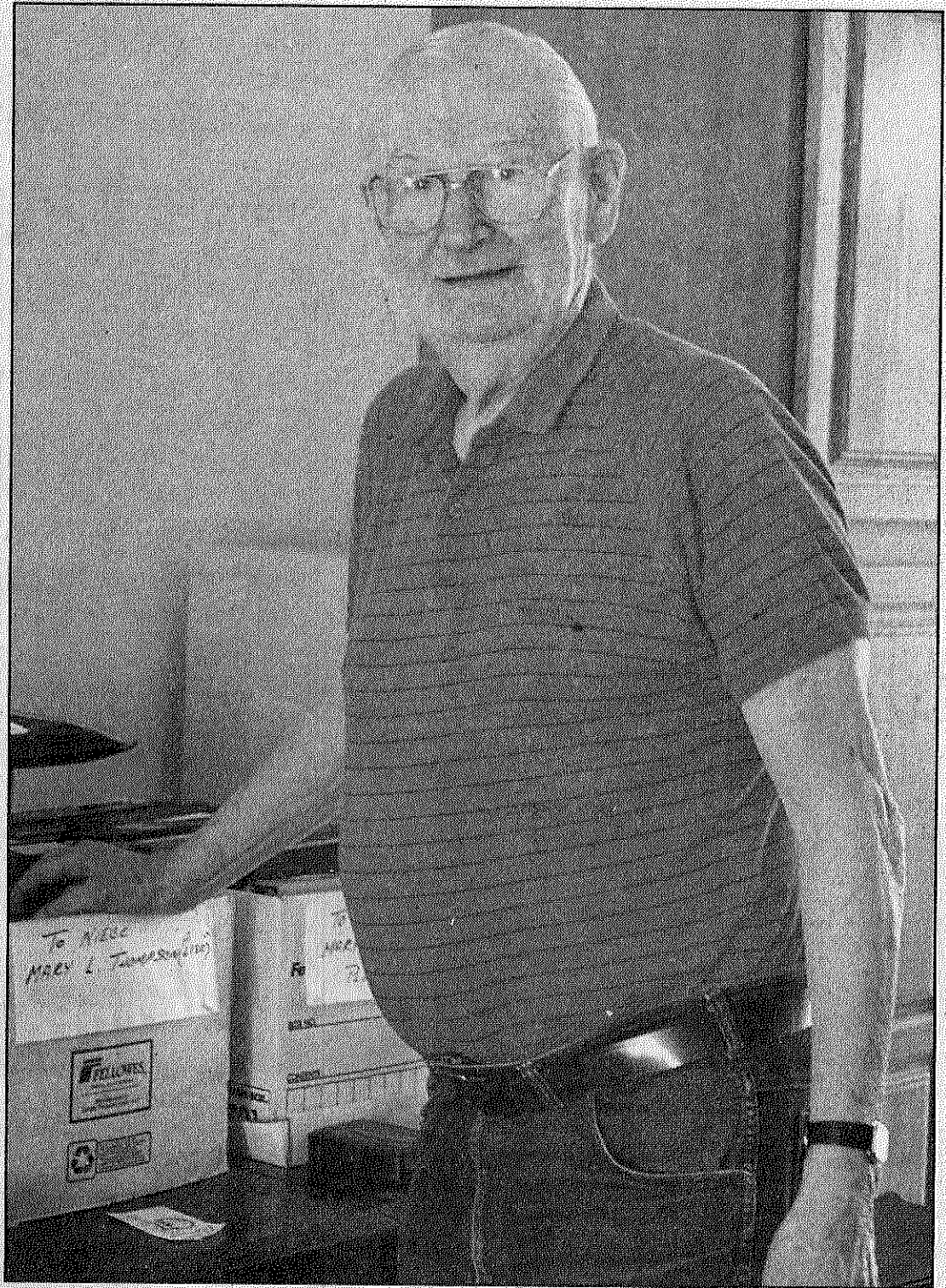


Prior to European settlements, the area around Wapakoneta served as a stronghold for American Indians.

The American Indian influence is still strong in Wapakoneta. Aside from its name, several streets derive their names from American Indians or their tribes.

Several important chiefs, including Blackhoof, lived in Wapakoneta.

The Shawnee Tribe was found throughout the region in the early parts of Ohio's settlement.



Fred Zint poses for a picture in front of the boxes that contain important facts about his family's history. Staff photo/Megan Veit

Staying in touch with history

By: MEGAN VEIT
Staff Writer

Since his 1984 return to Wapakoneta after an absence of several decades, Fred Zint started working on developing his knowledge of local history.

Boxes in his living room hold his families' history, Zint said he hopes to eventually share his findings with family members in Texas and the Ohio Historical Society.

"I'm not a student of Indian lore," Zint said, "but it's been fun to learn about."

Zint returned to his hometown to care for his mother and stayed in the area after her passing, sorting through family history which dates back to 1834.

At this time, his family operated a business in the building that is now Generations in Thyme. Mem-

bers of the family traded with Native Americans as part of their store business until it closed in 1876.

A photo of posed Shawnee tribesmen in their authentic garb perked Zint's interest in this piece of local and family history, and inspired him to contact the tribe.

"I wrote to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and they suggested that I write to the Eastern Shawnee tribe," Zint said.

The tribe responded, and Zint said he maintained correspondence for four or five letters.

Zint then approached town representatives about possible ways to include members of the Shawnee tribe in area events such as the Indian Summer Festival. Nothing came of the proposal, but Zint said there was no strong political movement

for such action at that time.

Zint has contributed pieces of family history to the Wapakoneta-based museum of the Auglaize County Historical Society, including gowns from his mother's days in the performing arts.

"My parents were in show business," Zint said. "They met in an opera chorus."

Together, the couple toured with The Shannon Players, a group that came to Wapakoneta during the 1920s, for a year doing plays and Vaudeville acts. His parents continued performing in various acts, as did much of their extended family.

The Dale, which was located on Fox Ranch Road, was opened during the early 1900s by four of Zint's uncles. The musical family used their experience playing as a family

orchestra and several in hotel orchestras to open up this large home as a club with nightly dances and music.

Zint said he remembers many stories from his parents' days in show business and the business of The Dale, which his father hoped to publish in a novel after his retirement.

Unfortunately, the book was never written. Zint's father passed away only a year after retiring.

"I'm the only one left that remembers the stories and anecdotal things," Zint said. "Who's going to preserve all these things?"

Zint said he hopes to pass the stories on through the records and memorabilia he has compiled.

Zint said he believes in the adage those whom do not learn from their history are bound to repeat it.

CALL US FOR A QUOTE!

Albert Sporting Goods

Team Uniforms & Equipment
Custom Lettering
Silkscreening
Embroidery
School Jackets

DOWNTOWN ST. MARYS
121 W. Spring St., St. Marys, OH 45885
419-394-4012 • FAX 419-394-2558
Email: albertsporting@wch.rr.com

OPEN EVENINGS & SATURDAYS!

Applefest
Shelby County

Join the fun!
Sept 7, 8 & 9

