

# Renewed Remembering: The Newsletter of the Conneaut Area Historical Society and the David Cummins Octagon House

January 2025

Volume 3, Issue 25

## Footsteps from the Past: Retracing the Epic 1928 Transcontinental Footrace



**Neil S. Weintraub**

**Co-founder and Director of Northern Arizona Trail Runners Association  
Retired**

**Williams and Tusayan Ranger District Archaeologist,  
Kaibab National Forest**

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Kaibab National Forest**

Neil S. Weintraub, speaker at our December Hump Day History meeting, presented a program about the 1928 Transcontinental Footrace that ended with an “inglorious climax.” The trajectory of the race passed through Conneaut.

### In this Issue:

Footsteps From the Past

Barn Quilt No. 13: The  
Blakeslee Log Cabin

Dock Talk Tales

## A Surprising Discovery in the Kaibab National Forest Collections

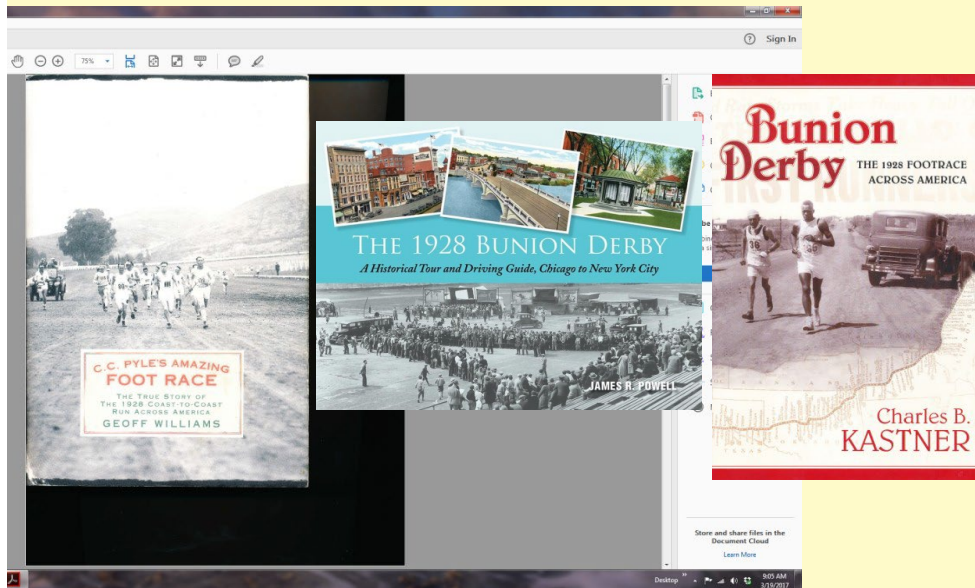


When I arrived on the Kaibab National Forest in June of 1990, I found the photo on the left in our collections on the left in our collections. I quickly learned that one of my mentors, Kaibab historian Teri Cleeland, was the first to nominate sections of Route 66 to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. As a result of her research, she found this photo and it piqued my interest in learning more about the race. Teri became known as the “Queen of Route 66” and is pictured on the right with a reporter from NBC in Tucson in the early 1990s.

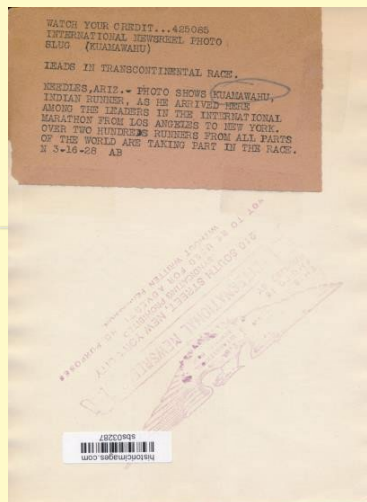
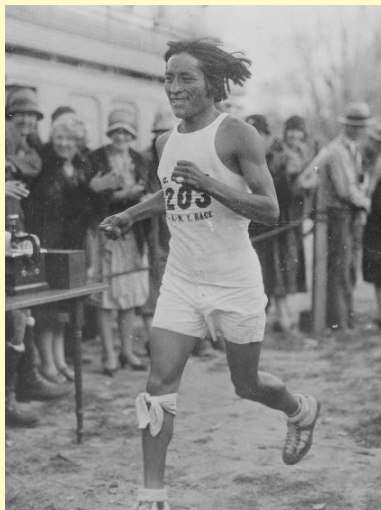
Osiyo TV – Cherokee Nation TV, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016



## Sources: Three Fascinating Books



## Hopi Runner Nicholas Qömawanu Photo AKA, "Nimble Nick"



# Coconino Sun

March 1928: 3 columns

# Winslow Daily Mail

January 1928: 2 columns

February 1928: 5 columns

March 1928: 16 columns

April 1928: 11 columns

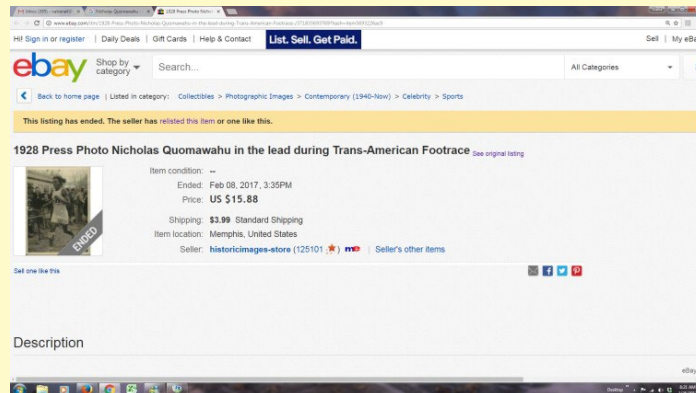
May 1928: 16 columns

# Conneaut News-Herald

Erie Dispatch-Herald

May 1928: 2 columns

## Sources: A Random Discovery on Ebay





## “Nimble Nick”



“Nimble Nick,” was sponsored by the Hubbell Trading Post and Lorenzo Hubbell Jr., and he barnstormed across the west running and winning races. He was also a priest of the Snake Dance, and lived at Old Oraibi, splitting time between Hopi and Winslow, in the employ of Fred Harvey...

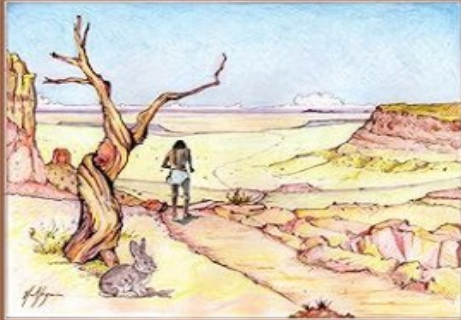
## A Personal Connection to the Past



On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, while volunteering with the Hopi Cultural Preservation office on a spring restoration project on the Kaibab National Forest, I asked my former co-work Joel Nicholas if he knew about “Nimble Nick”; his response, “That’s my great-great-grandfather!” I then asked Joel to pronounce his name, so here it is!



# HOPI RUNNERS



I just became aware of this must-read book that goes into great detail about Nicholas Qōmawanu and his participation in the 1928 footrace.

This is a great online discussion with Dr. Gilbert talking about his book:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FYuuHbrlpM&t=288is>

## Winslow Daily Mail: Tuesday Jan 17, 1928

PAGE SIX WINSLOW DAILY MAIL TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 1928

### U. S. Highway 66 Committee Meets Here Today

**Many Delegates Arrive In City For The Parley**

The Highway 66 committee met today in the city of Winslow, Ariz., to discuss the proposed route of the new highway from Los Angeles to Chicago. The committee, which is composed of representatives from the various states along the route, met in the city of Winslow, Ariz., to discuss the proposed route of the new highway from Los Angeles to Chicago. The committee, which is composed of representatives from the various states along the route, met in the city of Winslow, Ariz., to discuss the proposed route of the new highway from Los Angeles to Chicago.

'Yesterday Mr. Dawson held a meeting with local businessmen at which \$500, Winslow's share toward the big race was pledged, completing the list of cities who are financially backing the race.

One of the unique undertakings to call attention to 66 will be staged early next year when C. C. Pyle releases his 1,000 starters for his International Transcontinental Foot Race to be run from Los Angeles to New York City. From Los Angeles to Chicago the race will be over 17,866.

**\$50,000 In Prizes**  
 It is believed this race will attract lots of attention. Whoever wins the event will be richer by \$25,000 and pretty much of a hero. All told the distance is 3,100 miles, the longest marathon ever staged. Other prizes will bring the total awards to \$50,000, a tidy sum of money to lay out for expenses. It is estimated that the promoters will spend no less than \$300,000 to put the event over.

According to the promoters, about 1,000 entrants are to be permitted to start, though they would much prefer a smaller number.

# Winslow Daily Mail: Thursday Feb 16, 1928

PAGE TWO WINSLOW DAILY MAIL THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1928

## SPORTS

### Oraibi Indian Runner Enters Big Marathon

**HUBELL MAKES ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS ENTRY** Finally Lose

**NICKY WALKER IS SUSPENDED BY THE N. B. A.** Lumberjacks Defeated By Fat Emma's Team

**REPORT INDOOR TRACK AND FIELD MEETS FAIL TO AID OLYMPIC TRIALS OF SPRING** End Of St. Moritz Program Seen As Weather Is Warm

**Urges Co-Operation In Cattle Industry**



Laconic, in true Indian style, Chief Quonawahu said yesterday on the eve of his departure from Winslow, that he was going to win—nothing more. He boasted not of his prowess as a long distance runner and referred not to his great victory at Long Beach, N. Y. against a field of nationally known runners, but said briefly: "I am going to win".

And those who are sponsoring him, backing him and who have watched his training during the past six months in preparation for the event believe that the Hopi chieftain will bring victory to Arizona and to Hopi-land.

Over the vast stretches in Northern Arizona in the vicinity of Oraibi, 65 miles of Winslow as the crow flies, Quonawahu has covered incredible distances in periods that are almost unbelievable. In-

# Winslow Daily Mail: Tuesday Feb 21, 1928

PAGE TWO WINSLOW DAILY MAIL TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1928

## SPORTS

### Frank Lockhart Speeds Over Florida Track At 200 Miles An Hour In Unofficial Race

**SOUGHT EAGERLY BY MAJORS** Bruce Caldwell

**New Sprint Star Famed On Gotham Track Is Report** Tommy Loughran To Return Home Tuesday

**Quonawahu Wins First In The L. A. Practice Race** WINSLOW HIGH OUTCLASSED BY HOLBROOK FIVE



According to a telegram received yesterday by F. M. Parker from Lorenzo Hubbell from Los Angeles, Nicholas Quonawaku, midget Hopi Indian, took first place in the 15-mile running race that C. C. Pyle held Sunday as preliminary to his March 4 cross country marathon from Los Angeles to New York. Quonawaku covered the distance in one hour and 22 minutes.



## Winslow Daily Mail: Thursday, March 8, 1928



"Nimble Nick" received a hero's welcome in Needles, California. He was welcomed with cheers and applause from a large Native American crowd and a 12-piece Mohave Indian marching brass band accompanied him for the last two miles into town.

However, he incurred a heel injury that eventually sidelined him and forced him to drop out of the race eight miles east of Seligman. Nick had been one of the lead runners out of Los Angeles, but the heel injury and a sprained ankle were too much to overcome.

## Winslow Daily Mail: Wednesday, Feb 22, 1928



"This ought to convince the most skeptical that Mr. CC Pyle's go-as-you-can run from Los Angeles to New York, 3400 miles, will get started as planned on March 4. All entries in the race are given a physical examination, and our lower panel shows Promoter Pyle an interested spectator to the examination given to William C. Hart, a 65-year-old British veteran, by the camp doctor. The center panel gives a view of the runners hurrying out of their tents where they are living to the rigid training given daily. The top panel shows the runners at gymnastic drill. At the extreme right is shown Harold Johnson who walked from Detroit to Los Angeles to enter the race. Surely, it must be a great racked this cross-country stuff!"



# Coconino Sun: Friday, March 9, 1928



The excitement builds as the runners approach Flagstaff!

# Coconino Sun: Friday, March 9, 1928



<https://www.plugshare.com/location/45461>

Some things never change!

## Winslow Daily Mail: Sunday, March 11, 1928



## Needles to Oatman: Monday, March 12th, 1928



<https://www.facebook.com/oatmantailsofTime/posts/pfbid0zZMuzmzKagunPBdq20j25yCEGCHXefnjqfENBmasCpaR6RjGEqwi95EHgDZHTzjl>

I discovered this photo on the left of the race taken of Arthur Newton of Rhodesia (right) running against Phillip Granville (left) thanks to Leanne Toohey's Facebook comment about this presentation I gave in Winslow, AZ in April! I then discovered this remarkable photo of Nimble Nick on the Oatman Tailings of Time Historical Society Facebook page.



## Oatman to Kingman: Tuesday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 1928



<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10226362281375832&set=pcb.2547008402102636>

Just yesterday, I found this photo of runners arriving in Kingman on the Oatman Tailings of Time Historical Society Facebook page. The post by Andy Sansom captioned the photo, "Kingman, Front Street" (Today Andy Devine Avenue)

## Coconino Sun: Friday, March 16<sup>th</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup>, 1928



Because the Coconino Sun was a weekly paper, the news of the day of the race was not reported until March 23<sup>rd</sup> when the coverage stated:

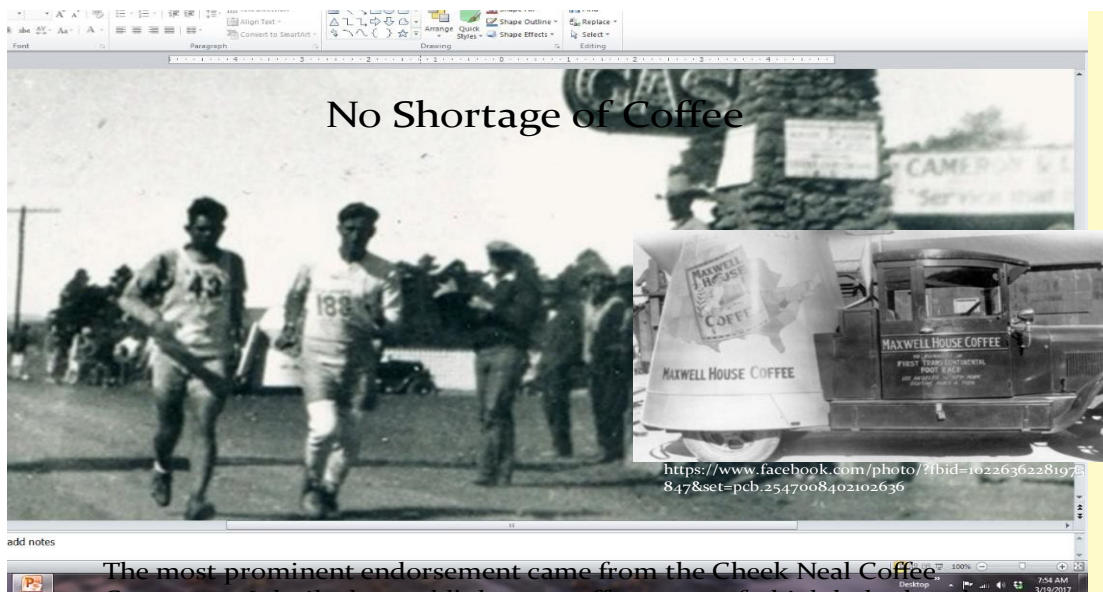
"It was pretty much a holiday here (Flagstaff) with hundreds going out to meet the runners at various points west."

## Bunion Derby in Maine (Parks), AZ, March 17, 1928



Photo Credit: archives, Kaibab National Forest

Maine (now Parks), Arizona: Andy Payne #43 (left), winner of the race and John Cronick #188 (right) – 10<sup>th</sup> Place.



The most prominent endorsement came from the Cheek Neal Coffee Company – it built the world's largest coffeepot at 11 ft. high bolted to the chassis of a truck. They served 90 gallons of Maxwell House coffee a day to the runners (see Oatman Tailings of Time Historical Society Facebook page!).



Bunions Derby Passes through Flagstaff, March 18, 1928



<http://archive.library.nau.edu/cdm/ref/collection/cpa/id/8762>:

Winslow Daily Mail: Sunday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 1928

## Pyle Carnival Arrives Today; Racers Tomorrow

The Pyle carnival company arrives in this city today according to the announcement made earlier in the week.

The official car of the marathon crew was here last blazing the way for the company to this city they will show at the Bazel

for the marathon racers when they arrive here Monday night.

The racers come from Flagstaff to Two Guns today and spend the night at that point near Canyon Diablo, coming to this city Monday and remaining over night, leaving Tuesday morning for Holbrook, their next stop.

There yet is interest in the race on the part of the local people but much of it subsided when it was learned that the local runner, Quomawahu, was out of the race.

7 (UP)  
in the

Two Guns to Winslow proved to be a rough stretch.....(P. 19 Quote)

## Winslow Daily Mail: Tuesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 1928

### WINSLOW TURNED OUT STRONG MONDAY FOR ARRIVAL OF PYLE'S STRING MARATHONERS

In spite of the fact that the pride of this section—Quomawabu, had dropped out of the big Pyle parade to the eastern seaboard, the people of this city had not lost interest in the big show that came here Sunday and Monday.

The carnival arrived and set up the tents and stands on Sunday at the Bazell Camp Ground and on Monday morning, the racers began early to come up the long highway.

The carnival drew a 'big crowd on Sunday and Monday and there was a considerable delegation out early yesterday morning to await the arrival of the runners from Two Guns, where they spent Sunday night.

The incoming Pyle show was accompanied by thrumming of motors in gigantic buses, trucks and other cars of all descriptions bearing all the paraphernalia of a full-sized carnival show. The first cars to arrive were those of the officials and those bearing the carnival while a host of others having to do with the racers, arrived Monday morning.

The day proved a fine one for both the racers and spectators.

Quomawabu was "the prettiest 25-mile runner he ever saw." Others had something to say of the local man.

The affair was handled with good nature by the 'men in charge.'

Many people saw the men arrive and others will see them leave about seven o'clock this morning.

Varied were the emotions expressed by the crowd gathered and their cheers and expressions of sympathy mingled, depending on the apparent condition of the men.

The bunch is off for Holbrook this morning for their stop to night.

### Phoenix Suffers \$15,000 Fire Loss

(By United Press Transcontinental Wire)

PHOENIX, Ariz., March 19 — Damage of approximately \$15,000 was caused today when fire swept the transformer building of the Central Arizona Light and Power Company here. Firemen said they believed the blaze started from a

Football Hall of Fame's Red Grange, AKA the Galloping Ghost visited Winslow! (picture taken in NYC)

Red Grange, famed grid star and co-promoter with Pyle of the race today addressed students of the Winslow High School. From near and far the natives come to see the great Grange who is another Lindbergh in his inostentation.



(Original Caption) Red Grange, perennial football hero, instructs a group of juvenile griman how to buck the line. This little lesson took place during a lull in a practise session of the Chicago Bears at DeWitt Clinton Park, New York City, December 8th. Tomorrow the bears meet the New York Giants in The title clash at the polo grounds.

## Winslow Daily Mail: Wednesday, March 21st, 1928

### DILKS LANDS FIRST TODAY AT HOLBROOK; HINT PYLE MAY STRIKE FINANCE SHORTAGE

ALBUQUERQUE, N. M., March 20 (UP)—The first indication that C. C. Pyle might run into financial difficulties in connection with his Los Angeles-to-New York foot race came today when the mayor of Albuquerque said that the prospect of entertaining the marathoners was not alluring enough to warrant a contribution of \$2,000 to the race fund.

"I'll show them the detour," said Mayor Clyde Tingley when informed of reports that Albuquerque would be skipped by the transcontinental racers if the money were not forthcoming.

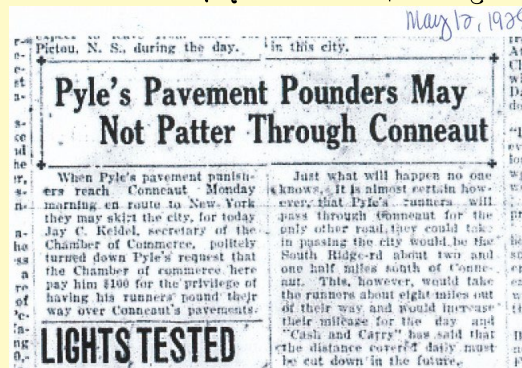
Pyle representatives here have denied any threat to omit the city from the race route but have insisted that Albuquerque should raise the money, as other points have done in order to share the race publicity. It appeared, however, that no funds would be raised for that purpose here.

The mayor of Albuquerque also had heard what happened in Holbrook when.....(P. 121 quote).

As it turned out, the dispute between Pyle and Mayor Clyde Tingley of Albuquerque escalated and much to the disappointment of runners hoping to enjoy the city, they were not allowed to come into Albuquerque. During the detour far to the south to Los Lunas, runners got caught in a blinding sandstorm!

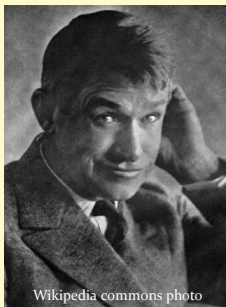
After this reporting, the Winslow News continued to regularly report the race's results, throughout April and May, until its "Inglorious Climax", on May 26<sup>th</sup>.

## Conneaut News-Herald: May 12th, 1928



When Pyle's pavement punishers reach Conneaut Monday morning en route to New York, they may skirt the city, for today, Jay C. Keidel, secretary for the Chamber of Commerce, politely turned down Pyle's request that the Chamber of Commerce here pay him \$100 for the privilege of having his runners pound their way over Conneaut's pavements. Just what will happen no one knows. It is almost certain however, that Pyle's runners will pass through Conneaut for the only other road they could take in passing the city would be the South Ridge rd almost two- and one-half miles south of Conneaut. This however, would take the runners about eight miles out of their way and would increase their mileage for the day and **Cash and Carry Pile** has said that the distance covered must be cut down in the future."

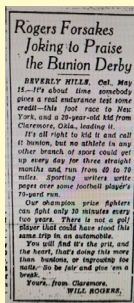
## Will Rogers New York Times 5/14/1928 Letter



Wikipedia commons photo

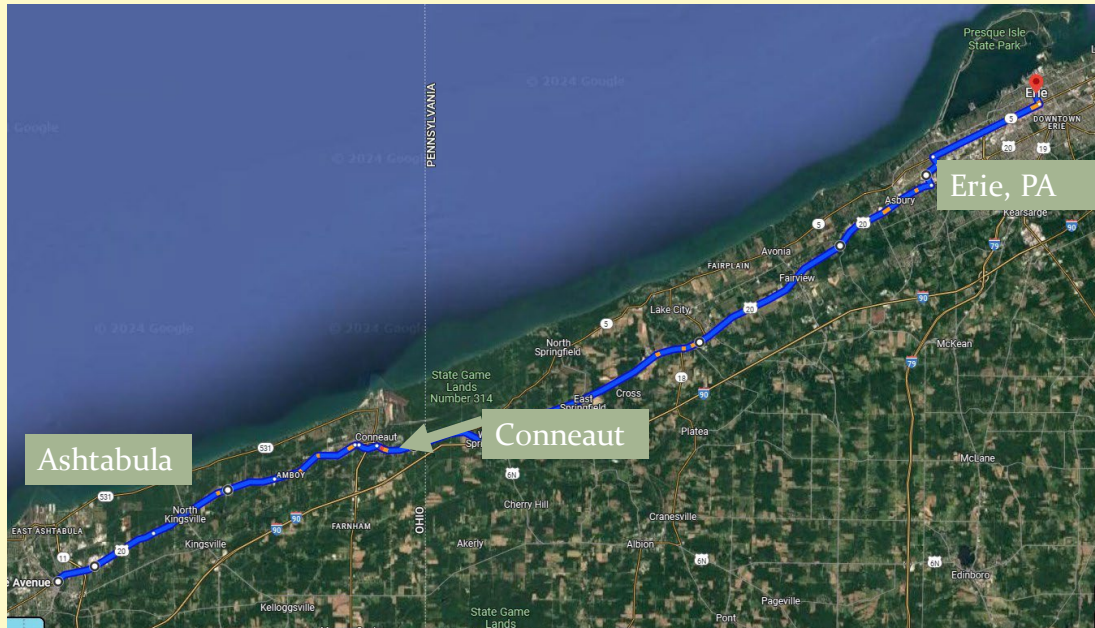
On May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1928, famed vaudeville actor and syndicated humorist Will Rogers (1879 to 1935) and a personal friend of leader Andy Payne, both from Claremore, Oklahoma, wrote in a letter to the New York Times:

"It's about time somebody gave a real endurance test some credit—the foot race to New York, and a 20-year-old kid from Claremore, Okla., leading it. It's all right to kid it and call it bunion, but no athlete in any other branch of sport could get up every day for three straight months and run from 40-70 miles. Sporting writers write pages over some football player's seventy-yard run. Our champion prize fighters can only fight thirty minutes every two years. There is not a golf player in America that could have stood this same trip in an automobile. You will find it's the grit and heart that's doing this more than bunions, or ingrowing toe nails, so be fair and give 'em a break.' Yours, from Claremore, Will Rogers"





## May 15, 1928: 45.8 Miles, Ashtabula, OH to Erie, PA



55 bunioneers followed US 20 from Ashtabula to Erie.

## Conneaut News-Herald: Tuesday, May 15th, 1928

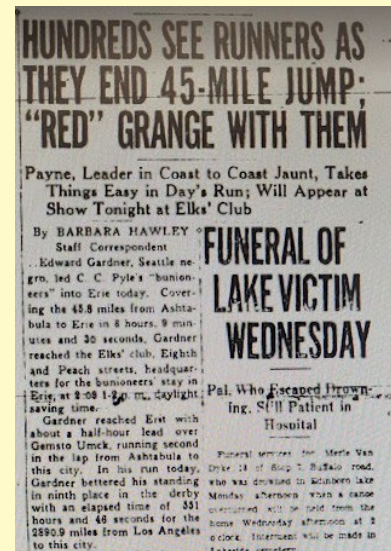


"Amid cheers of several hundred Conneaut residents gathered at the west city limits to watch the vanguard of C.C. Pyle's bunion derbyists plod their way into Conneaut. Ernest Cormey of San Bernadino, Calif, brother of Mrs C. L. Tuttle, Grove St, this city, shoved his weary legs over the city limit line, the first of 55 runners to pass through Conneaut today.

Ernie was running beautifully, and he had as his companion Edward Gardner, Seattle negro. Both were running smoothly and seemingly with no exertion."



## Erie Dispatch-Herald: Tuesday, May 16th, 1928



"Edward Gardner, Seattle negro, led C.C. Pyle's Bunioneers into Erie today. Covering the 45.8 miles from Ashtabula to Erie in 8 hours, 9 minutes and thirty seconds." This corresponds to 10 minutes 41 seconds per mile!

## The Inglorious Climax



P. 333; Some of the 55 finishers, with winner Andy Payne (#43); James R. Powell's *The 1928 Bunion Derby, A Historical Driving Guide*, Chicago to New York City

## Northern Arizona Trail Runners Association Runs Kaibab Route 66!



One left, NATRA runners head east bound below Ash Fork Hill. This is the same path “Bunioneers” took on the leg between Seligman and Williams on March 16<sup>th</sup>, 1928. This was originally the “Old Trails Highway”. Imagine running this in the cold wet snow.....On right, runners further east approaching Williams on the “Devil Dog” Route 66 Mountain Bike Loop.

*"Midnight, the Stars and You"*  
*Ray Noble and His Orchestra*



*The End*

## We Remember

“Remembering” was the name of the original Conneaut Area Historical Society newsletter. Joan Barnett was the last editor, and with her death and the Covid pandemic the newsletter has not been published for a time. It seemed fitting to name this new version of the old newsletter “Renewed Remembering,” in honor of the former editors including Louise Legeza and Joan Barnett who edited and published the newsletter for so many years. We hope you enjoy it!

## The President’s Paragraph

The Conneaut Area Historical Society wants to thank you for your continued support. As always, new members are welcome. You can call: 440-599-6011 with further questions or write to Conneaut Area Historical Society, P.O. Box 563, Conneaut Ohio, 44030. Our Historical Museum street address is: 518 Mill Street and our David Cummins Octagon House address is 301 Liberty Street, Conneaut, Ohio 44030. Come and visit us.  
Jim Jones, President

## Up to Date and Doing with the Conneaut Area Historical Society and the David Cummins Octagon House

Another Conneaut Area Historical Museum season has whizzed by as fast as the summer. We celebrated our 28<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Labor Day weekend with free hot dogs and festivities. It has been an eventful 28<sup>th</sup> years, full of progress, joys, and sorrows. In the last few years we have lost some long-time, faithful members, including Jack Mathay, Rosemary Bennett, and Karl Rowbotham in July. They are missed and mourned, both in the Society and in the Conneaut Community.

Our joys include reopening the David Cummins Octagon House with a June Open House. We plan to keep it open all winter as a base of operations for our historical society, since the historical museum doesn’t have heat. The Octagon House hours are Friday, 12 to 3, and on Saturdays and Sundays we are open from 12 to 5. Come and visit us. As well as antiques and a unique building, we have Conneaut history displays, scrapbooks, city directories, school year books, and military, musical, and other interesting exhibits.

We have a monthly history program on the third Wednesday of every month that we changed from Time Travel Tuesday to Hump Day History



Wednesday. Conneaut native Beth Anthony will be presenting our January 2025 Conneaut History program.

We are encouraging public school and home-schooling parents and teachers to bring pupils to the Octagon House for a field trip to glimpse into the past. Come and have fun and win prizes in local history bees, including Conneaut and Ashtabula County History Bees.

We also have a Senior Coloring group on the third Monday of each month. The ladies (but gentlemen welcome too!) enjoy coloring pictures to display and in their Conneaut and Ashtabula History coloring books which they take home with them.

Our research library is stocked with material waiting for people to come in and use, and we have over 100 scrapbooks crammed full of Conneaut History. Come and explore!

In December we had our first Octagon House Tea. We had to cancel the first two that we scheduled because of the weather. We had planned to have two separate teas because of space limitations, but we finally decided to have one tea on December 14<sup>th</sup>. The tea had a World War II Theme, featuring Glenn Miller music and Connie Naylor reading some of her grandmother's letters that she wrote as she came of age during the World War II years. Twelve-year-old Aubrie also modeled some of our vintage clothing to the delight of the tea goers. We are planning to have four seasonal teas a year: a spring, summer, fall, and Christmas tea.

We are working on several new exhibits, including the panoramic photographs of William Haines and a Pittsburgh & Conneaut Dock exhibit.

We are busy and we know you are too, but take some time to drop in and see us at the David Cummins Octagon House, and mark next Memorial Day on your calendar for the next season for the Conneaut Area Historical Museum and the David Cummings Octagon House.

### Conneaut Area Historical Museum

| <b>Steering Committee</b> |               |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Jim Jones                 | Nancy Lamb    |
| Jerry Anderson            | Debbie Herbel |
| Delmas Bennett            | Mo Tanner     |
| Jim Lyon                  | Kathy Warnes  |
| Jerrv Janco               | Pat Jones     |

| <b>Officers</b>                    |
|------------------------------------|
| <b>President:</b> Jim Jones        |
| <b>Vice-President:</b> Jerry Janco |
| <b>Secretary:</b> Debbie Jones     |
| <b>Treasurer:</b> Pat Jones        |
| <b>Historian:</b> Kathy Warnes     |





### Barn Quilt Square No. 13

In the fall of 2023, Steering Committee Member Debbie Herbel painted our museum Barn Quilt and it is proudly displayed on the front of our museum. We are thrilled to be a square in the Ashtabula County Barn Quilt patchwork and a traveler on the Ashtabula Barn Quilt Trail. The barn quilts celebrate Ashtabula County's agricultural heritage, including the Underground Railroad network, natural areas preservation, and Great Lakes maritime history.

Barn quilts stretch from the Ashtabula Lighthouse to the Pennsylvania borders and into Lake and Trumbull Counties. These trail guides take visitors to the heart and stories of Ashtabula County history. More than 110 barn quilts on both public and private buildings display the tourism and historical attractions of Ashtabula County. For more about the history, purpose, and quilt creators of the Barn Quilt Trail, go to their website at Ashtabula County Barn Quilt Trail.

The first barn quilt square on the [Ashtabula County Barn Quilt Trail](#) is located on the Blakeslee Log Cabin barn: 441 Seven Hills Road, Plymouth Township.

### The Blakeslee Log Cabin: Hardy Log Cabin Home

John Gardner Blakeslee wouldn't be at all surprised that the log cabin he built in 1810 is still standing, 212 years after he built it on part of the 840 acres he owned. After all, he had built it to provide a lasting home for his family and it has lasted for more than two centuries. The log cabin is older than Ashtabula County, the county it now calls home, since Ashtabula County was officially created from Trumbull County on January 11, 1811.

The Blakeslee Log Cabin, located at the intersection of Route 11 and Plymouth Ridge Road, has weathered many changes during its more than two century existence, including renovations, the birth of Route 11, railroad tracks, Ohio Department of Transportation buildings, and modern homes, as well as the changeable Ashtabula County weather. For more than 200 years, it has been part of Plymouth Township.

Born in Plymouth, Connecticut on January 29, 1789, to Sala and Mary Blakeslee, John spent his childhood in Plymouth. When he reached his twenties he decided to strike out on his own and in 1809 he visited the Hubbard family in Ashtabula County. After spending the winter with his family in Connecticut, he returned to Ashtabula County to settle down permanently. He is listed in the 1810 census as a residential farmer in the southern part of Ashtabula Township. Plymouth Township did not exist until 1838, when it was created from Ashtabula Township and named after Plymouth, Connecticut, the original home of John and many of his family members.

The Ashtabula County Historical Society documents reveal that John built his cabin in 1810, and that he had a vision of how it would look when he built it, based on the cabin building customs of his day. According to a 2023 Jefferson Gazette story by Bob Ettinger, The Blakeslee Cabin “is a rectangular double-room cabin with front and back doors facing each other on the front and rear sides of the cabin. In its original incarnation, measured 21 feet by 28 feet and sats on a perfect north-south axis.”

The original roof boards of the cabin’s gabled roof were covered with hand-crafted wooden shakes and the porch shingles are visible from the porch floor. The walls are composed of split logs sixteen to eighteen inches thick and are hand-hewn for smoothness. The exterior walls are rough-hewn with half dovetail corner notching.

John’s 840 acres featured trees, trees, and more trees, thick underbrush, wildflowers, very few natural paths, and only one road, the Girdled Road that the Connecticut Land Company had hacked from the forest. The Girdled Road ran from Kelloggsville by way of Sheffield, through Plymouth and west through Saybrook, Austinburg and other communities before it ended near Cleveland.

John eventually erected a springhouse and other outbuildings and cleared a portion of his land for crops. Given the frontier custom of settlers helping each other with building cabins and barn raisings, it is probably that John’s neighbors helped him build his cabin. John had several neighbors. In 1804-1805, William Thompson and Thomas McGahhe and their families settled on lot number five in Ashtabula Township. Samuel White had settled on 200 acres of land near John’s property in 1806. In the spring of



1806, David Burnet settled on lot number twelve, and in 1807 Thomas Gordon purchased 240 acres in lot number six and settled there with his family in the spring of 1808. Captain Moses Hall emigrated from Connecticut in 1811, beginning his pioneer life on the northwest corner lot.

More families from Plymouth, Connecticut arrived in Ashtabula Township that first decade of settlement, including Zadock Mann, Joseph and Warner Mann, Lynus Hall, Titus Seymour and Elias C. Upson as well as John Blakeslee and his grandfather Asher. Following their Episcopalian traditions, several of the early settlers conducted the first Episcopal church service west of the Alleghany Mountains in the Blakeslee Log Cabin, with Zadock Mann serving as the lay leader. The same group later established St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Ashtabula.

The Blakeslee family genealogy shows that they produced a succession of Blakeslee cabin heirs, although not all of them continued to live in the Blakeslee cabin.

John Gardner Blakeslee was born on June 29, 1789, in Litchfield, Connecticut and he died in Ashtabula County on September 29, 1828, at age 39. He is buried in the old section of Maple Grove Cemetery in Ashtabula.

John married Esther Rice Hall Blakeslee Warner (She married David Warner after John's death) in 1813. Esther was the daughter of Plymouth, Connecticut pioneers. They had two daughters, Lucy and Charlotte and three sons, Hobart, Chauncey, and Salmon. Lucy Blakeslee later married Felix Ross and moved into the log cabin. In 1815, John's father Sala Blakeslee Sr. bought 193 acres of land from Nehemiah Hubbard in the vicinity of Ashtabula Harbor. John's grandfather Asher Blakeslee purchased 380 acres of land adjoining his acreage. In 1817, John's father Sala, Sr., his mother Mary, his brothers Sala II, and William, and his sisters Sabra, Mary, Caroline, and Asenath moved to Ashtabula County. John also added a two-room shed to the north end of his cabin around this time, possibly to accommodate some of his family members.

After John died in 1827, his younger brother Sala II, continued to work at the Blakeslee fam. He married Lidea Pierce in 1830 and in 1834, they moved to Oquawka, Illinois, later settling in Knox County, Illinois. Esther lived in the cabin, presumably until her death in 1865. After Esther's death until about 1871, Geroge Williard owned the cabin and then he sold it to

Julia Whalen, a Blakeslee descendant. After purchasing the cabin for \$700, Julia lived in it until 1902, when the DeSorbes family bought it and lived there until 1989. In 1989, the Ashtabula County Historical Society purchased the land and the cabin.

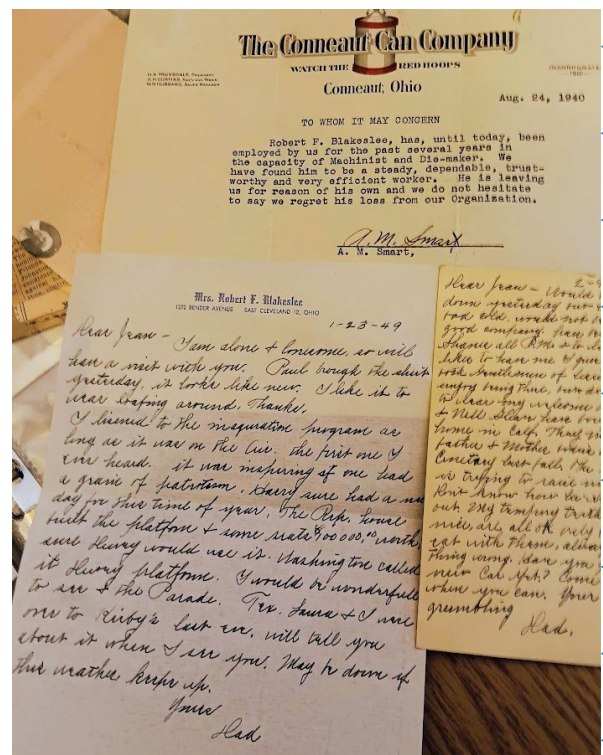
Although John's descendants no longer occupy his original log cabin, his descendants continue to leave their footprints across Ashtabula County history. John's brothers expanded the family roots to Iowa, Illinois, Idaho, and closer to home in Cleveland, and Ashtabula County, including Ashtabula and Conneaut. One of the Blakeslee descendants, Robert Frank Blakeslee and his wife Lyda Nelson Blakeslee had Conneaut roots and are buried in Glenwood Cemetery.

Since 1989, the Ashtabula County Historical Society has been restoring and renovating the cabin, adding such improvements as a wooden porch floor to replace the dirt floor, repairing walls and sagging ceiling joists, and deteriorating floor boards.

In 1998, The Blakeslee Log Cabin secured a place on the National Register of Historic Places. It is opened every September to celebrate Log Cabin Days with historical festivities. The Blakeslee Log Cabin is one of the rare



survivors of the early log homes built in the Connecticut Western Reserve and it is a tangible heritage of the hardy settlers





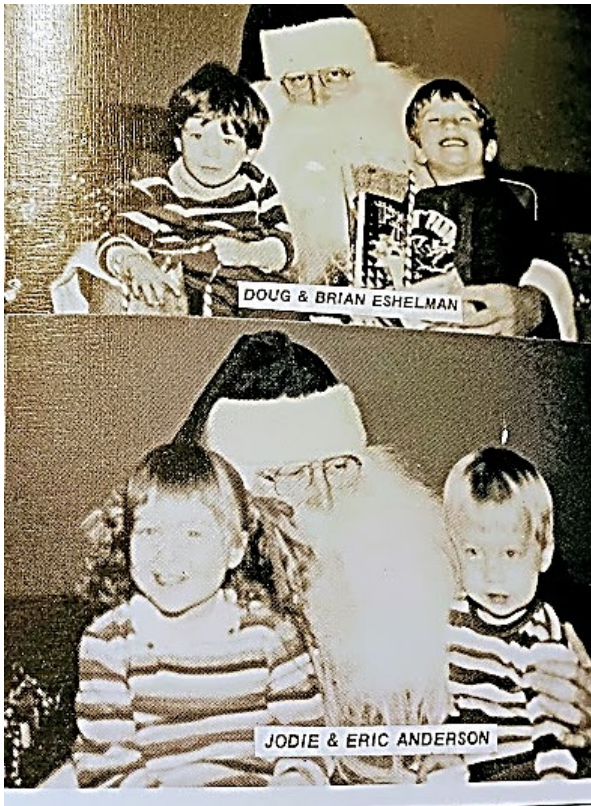
who forged new lives in the wilderness of the Connecticut Western Reserve.

## Dock Talk Tales

January 1982

### The Eighth Annual P & C Dock Children's Christmas Party

The Eighth Annual Company Union Children's Christmas Party held December 13, 1981, from 1 to 5 p.m. at the American Legion Hall in Conneaut attracted approximately 250 children, their parents or grandparents, and some retirees.



Each of the children was interviewed by Santa and was given a box of candy and a stocking filled with many goodies.

Cookies were donated by some



employees and others were obtained from Squire Bakery in Ashtabula. Soft drinks were furnished courtesy of the Automatic Venders of Warren, Ohio. Ray Bisbee donated all of the coffee. Among those who helped serve the luncheon were John Coe, Mark and Pam Brady, Carol Eaton, and John Carpenter.

A special thankyou is extended to Ed Javorich who beautifully portrayed that old gentleman St. Nicholas, on very short notice. Thanks to Carol Eaton there were extras stuffed in all the stockings.

Due to an oversight, our regular photographer was not engaged for the evening. Gerry Anderson when he learned of our predicament agreed to share with us the pictures that he had taken of the party. So he deserves our "Special Special thanks."

John Eaton and Marty Wickham wish to thank all who helped in any way to make this Christmas party a success. On behalf of the dock family, we thank the Christmas Party Committee for organizing and planning work involved in producing this annual event.

### Dock Talk Tales

January 1951

Plans for a new brick Main Gate Building were on the drawing board. The building was scheduled for completion in the spring.

January 1971

Richard Holmes had a winning ticket in the Optimist's Club benefit which gave him a three-minute-grocery=gathering spree through the aisles of Loblaws. Jim Wintringham was the Club's president. Holmes headed for the meat department and carried off a first prize worth \$426.00,

January 1976

Rich Eckonen, clerk in the storeroom swallowed a Y-shaped piece of chicken bone which became lodged in his throat. Local hospital personnel were unable to remove it and he was transported to Erie He was placed on a tilting operating table, given anesthetic, and turned almost upside down while the bone was extricated without surgery. Rich was soon back on the job, but to him the thought of a chicken dinner was not quite as savory as it used to be.

# Patron's Pages

## Join Our Patrons Program

The Conneaut Area Historical Museum is excited to announce a new Merchant Patron program which is available to any local business who desires to help our museum to function and improve. For \$50 per year (January to December, renewable every year) we will include your business name and phone number in the publications the museum produces, including a monthly newsletter, any future books the museum produces, and our website. If interested, send your donation of \$50.00 to P.O. Box 563, Conneaut, Ohio 44030. We will include you in our list of great merchants and businesses in this area.

*American Legion Post 151*

*162 Broad Street*

*Conneaut, Ohio*

*440-593-2205*

*Crafty Shanty 153 Park  
Avenue Conneaut, Ohio  
44030*

*Biscotti's Restaurant  
186 Park Avenue*

*Conneaut, Ohio  
44030*

*440-593-6766*

*Leslie & Donald O'Bell*

*2 Bretenahl Place*

*Bretenahl, Ohio 44108*

*Kathi's Golden  
Retrievers of Albion*

*11790 Penside Road  
Albion, PA 16401*

*Maureen Mo Tanner*

*930 Main Street*

*Conneaut, Ohio 44030*

*Angela's Café*

*268 Lake Road*

*Conneaut, Ohio 44030*

*440-593-6060*

*Chris Brecht State Farm  
Insurance Agency 216  
Main Street Suite B  
Conneaut, Ohio 44030  
440-593-1191*

*Gerdes Pharmacy  
245 Main Street  
Conneaut, Ohio  
440-593-2578*

*Lake Erie Auto West  
Main Road Conneaut,  
Ohio 44030*

*Conneaut Dairy  
Queen 1009 Main  
Street Conneaut,  
Ohio 440-593-  
2765*

*Conneaut Creek  
Veterinary Clinic West  
Main Street  
Conneaut, Ohio  
44030*

*Lynn Armington  
48 Ranch Road  
Willoughby,  
Ohio 44094*

*Marcy Funeral  
Home 208 Liberty  
Street Conneaut,  
Ohio 44030*

*Susanne Trigg Canfield, OH*

*Normal for Norway is a culture shock  
humor podcast where in each episode two  
foreigners living in Oslo discuss one weird  
thing about Norway. Listen to Normal for  
Norway wherever you get your podcasts!*



# Membership Application



The dues period runs from January through December.

Single \$15.00\_\_\_\_\_

Couple \$20.00\_\_\_\_\_

Family \$25.00\_\_\_\_\_

Patron \$50.00\_\_\_\_\_

Name\_\_\_\_\_Address\_\_\_\_\_

City\_\_\_\_\_State\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_Zip Code\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number\_\_\_\_\_

Would you be willing to volunteer at the Museum or at the Octagon House during the summer months or help us with winter projects?

The Conneaut Area Historical Museum is open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from noon until 5 p.m., starting on Memorial Day and ending on Labor Day.

The David Cummins Octagon House is open from Memorial Day to Labor Day from noon until 5 p.m. We also plan on keeping the Octagon House open during the winter for special programs and tours. What day or time is best for you?

Thank you for your membership.

P.O. Box 563. Conneaut, Ohio 44030