



Olmsted 200

Two Centuries and More History of Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township –
First Farmed in 1814 and Settled in 1815

Issue 124

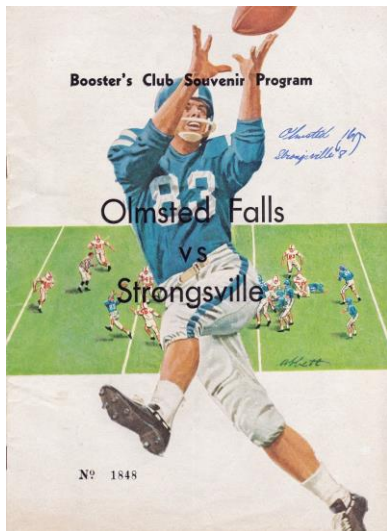
September 1, 2023

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Old Football Programs Are Like a Time Capsule

It's high school football season. It has been for a few weeks now because both the school year and the football season begin in August in the 21st century. But many people who grew up in Olmsted in the 20th century remember when the school year began the Wednesday after Labor Day, and the first football game was played on Friday evening two days after that.



This was the program for the Bulldogs' game against Strongsville.

People who were on the field and those who stayed on the sidelines formed many of their fondest high school memories under the Friday night lights. Mike Gibson, who grew up in Olmsted Falls until his family moved to the West Coast, cherished those memories so much that he kept the game programs for more than six decades until this year, when he decided to share them with *Olmsted 200*. Most of them are from home games, but a few are from away games. As he noted in an email, the ads in the programs read like a time capsule of Olmsted in the decades after World War II.

“The list of patrons and donors reads like a ‘Who's Who’ of Olmsted Falls history,” Gibson wrote. “I even found that my father was VP of the football boosters in 1961.”

The list of boosters and patrons in one program totaled at least 277 over two pages, but because some of those listed were families and businesses, the list easily

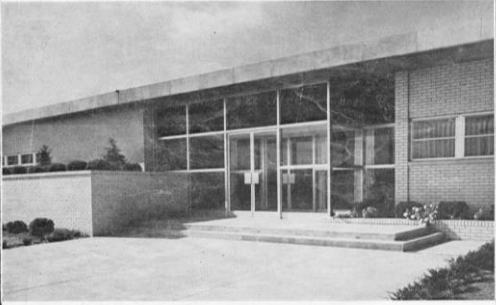
represented at least 300 people. That total doesn't include another 58 businesses that shared three pages of small advertisements and one that had an entire page for itself. Some of the businesses were in neighboring communities, including Berea and North Olmsted, but most of them were in Olmsted Falls, Olmsted Township or West View (which had not yet merged with Olmsted Falls).

REEDS <i>Inc.</i> REAL ESTATE - INSURANCE 19054 Detroit Road Rocky River 16, Ohio R. D. REED ADams 5-3224 EDison 1-3616 M. C. ALEXANDER ADams 5-3009		
BARNUM'S MEAT IS HARD TO BEAT Good Luck Bulldogs Hall Gardens, Inc. GREENHOUSE McKee and Cook Roads AD 5-3177	Baker Funeral Home Day and Night Ambulance Service BErea 4-1331	<i>Compliments of</i> Saumers Complete Shopping Center Bagley & Stearns
Good Luck Bulldogs Hall Gardens, Inc. GREENHOUSE McKee and Cook Roads AD 5-3177	Roy Hecker's SOHIO SERVICE Columbia & Bagley Roads ADams 5-3009	HALL BROTHERS, Inc. Wholesale meat for freezers ADams 5-3363
Hynes Sheet Metal HEATING AND SHEET METAL GAS - OIL - COAL AIR CONDITIONING DOWN SPOUTING - GUTTERS 8153 Orchard St. AD 5-2586	RALPH JOCKE'S GARAGE <i>General Auto Repair</i> 9254 Columbia Rd. Westview, Ohio AD 5-2281	R. J. PANULO, Cement Contractor Residential - Commercial - Industrial Basements - Driveways - Sidewalks Patches - Etc. 8222 Lindberg BRea 4-5457
Leslie Heating Service Summer and Winter Air Conditioning 7322 River Rd. AD 5-3132	K & S BUILDERS Residential and Commercial Buildings 4871 SOUTH HILLS DRIVE CLEVELAND 9, OHIO FL 1-4077	<i>Compliments of</i> Rudy's Barber Shop
QUALITY MASONRY WORK A. L. WURSTNER 8469 Columbia Rd. OLMDSTED FALLS, OHIO ADams 5-2416 Free Estimates	<i>Compliments of</i> E. D. Thiem Tool Co. 26945 W. Bagley Road Olmsted Falls, Ohio ADams 5-3871	Westview Concrete Corp. 26000 Sprague Road ADams 5-2090
AD 5-3363 COLUMBIA Building Products Co., Inc. 23961 Elm Street Olmsted Falls, Ohio	<i>Compliments of</i> Olmsted Falls Kiwanis Club Boys and Girls Committee	THE OLMSTED FALLS LUMBER COMPANY Olmsted Falls, Ohio ADams 5-3041


Kucklick's Furniture Carpets - Appliances 8881/4 Columbia Road AD 5-3383	Mika's Tavern 9535 Columbia Rd. Westview AD 5-8032	JOHN P. KUZMAN, Builder Quality Small Homes Now Building on Brookside "In the Heart of Olmsted Falls" Olmsted Falls, Ohio ADams 5-2358
<i>Compliments of A Friend</i> "Good Luck Bulldogs"	SCHADY'S SERVICE STATION CHRISTENSEN & SCHADY COLUMBIA & WATER ST.	ART ABRAM & SONS TEXACO SERVICE 7180 Columbia Road Olmsted Falls, Ohio <i>Compliments of</i> OLMSTED AUTO SERVICE 24577 Bagley Road BE 4-5074
The Matthei's	MORLEY Tractor and Implement Service SEPTIC TANKS - WATER LINES - TRENCHING 7445 Lewis Road Olmsted Falls, Ohio Phone: BErea 4-1223	WESTVIEW LUMBER AND SUPPLY CO. AD 5-3371
E. M. JENKINS INSURANCE 8439 USHER RD. AD 5-3204	Filipek Brothers Builders, Inc. Residential and Commercial Buildings Westview, Ohio AD 5-3185	EDWARD H. SCANLON & Associates "GROWERS OF TAILORED TREES" 7621 Lewis Road Olmsted Falls, Ohio ADams 5-2314
P. Simmerer's Sons Hardware 71 Years of Dependable Service 8112 Columbia Road AD 5-3152	Foods and Juicers for Better Health! Have you tried Tiger Milk? WOW! NATURAL FOODS, Inc. Greater Cincinnati's Greatest Food 8615 Usher Rd. AD 5-3636	CHARLES H. BONSEY Insurance Service 7784 Brookside ADams 5-3148 Olmsted Falls, Ohio
The United Farmers' Exchange Ass'n Olmsted Falls AD 5-3112 Columbia Station BE 6-3705 Coal - Feed - Grain - Farm Supplies	Don's Service Center Cook and Columbia Road Mechanic on duty 9 to 6 U-Haul Trailers AD 5-2826	Royal Crest Farm Dairy COLUMBIA STATION, OHIO Quality pasteurized dairy products Serving Olmsted Falls for over 20 Years BE 6-2581
KUJANEK INSURANCE AGENCY 26 FRONT ST. BERE, OHIO BErea 4-8188 Life - Fire - Auto - Casualty - Bonds	<i>Compliments of</i> GROSPITCH GREENHOUSE 8526 Stearns Road	<i>Frank Railback's</i> Barber Shop 93 Front Street Berea, Ohio

FAROHS Fine Candies Kaufman's ADams 5-2128 OLMDSTED FALLS, OHIO 8079 Columbia Road MEN & BOYS SPORTWEAR		WESTVIEW CLEANERS 9106 Columbia Rd. ADams 5-3191 We call for and deliver USE OUR STORAGE VAULT
Enjoy Cracker barrel hospitality at SCOTT'S VILLAGE PHARMACY 8093 Columbia Rd. AD 5-3990	Sashko Welding Shop 26070 North Depot ADams 5-3988	DON C. WILKS INVESTMENT SECURITIES ADams 5-2849
W. G. CASPER REALTY Berea Area Multiple Listing Exchange ADams 5-3733 8083 Columbia Rd. Olmsted Falls	HIRSCH'S SUPERETTE Corner of Cook & Fitch Roads Groceries Beer and Wine to Go ADams 5-2786	Westview Gardens 25555 Bronson Road Fish Fries & Spaghetti
<i>Compliments of</i> HOMELINKS GOLF CLUB, Inc. 28370 John Rd. AD 5-3271	<i>Compliments of</i> KNIGHT BROTHERS, Inc. Wallpaper Manufacturers 717 Lakeside MA 1-2974	THE ALBERT M. HIGLEY CO. General Contractors
Springvale Country Club George Biddolph - Pro - Mgr. Canterbury Rd. N. Olmsted, Ohio	Dairyman's Ohio Farmers Milk Co. 3206 W. 106 St. ORchard 1-2300	WESTVIEW Appliance Center FRIGIDAIRE MAYTAG RCA ZENITH TAYTAN 8020 COLUMBIA RD AD 5-4340
<i>Compliments of</i> President-ERIC NYROS	<i>The only one that ever makes money without advertising</i> - - - is the U. S. Mint OLMSTED FALLS PRINTING ADams 5-3630	
<i>Compliments of</i> A FRIEND	COLUMBIA Building Products Co., Inc. 23961 Elm Street Olmsted Falls, Ohio	
BE A BOOSTER		

Hi Neighbor . . .



Dairypak Butler extends best wishes
 to the "BULLDOGS"
 of Olmsted Falls

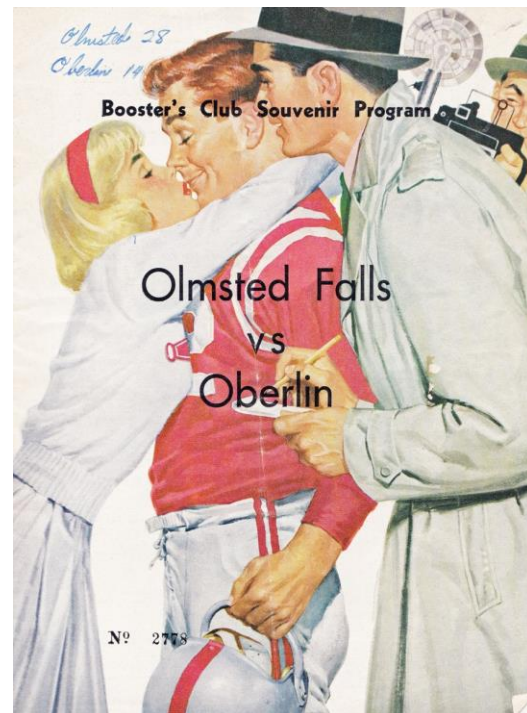
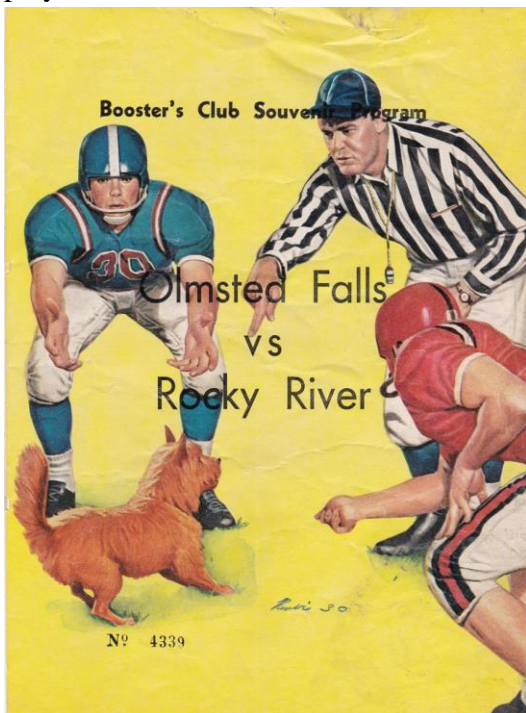
Dairypak  **Butler, inc.**
"Brightest Name in CREATIVE Packaging"

These are the four pages of ads for local businesses that appeared in the programs.

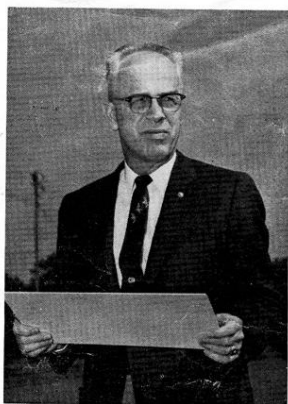
Among the businesses that bought ads were: Barnum's grocery, Saumers Shopping Center, Hall Gardens (greenhouse-grown goods), Hall Brothers (meats), Roy Hecker's Sohio Service, Hynes Sheet Metal, Ralph Jocke's Garage, Leslie Heating Service, Rudy's Barber Shop, A.L. Wurstner (masonry), E.D. Thiem Tool Company, Westview Concrete Corporation, Columbia Building Products (two ads), Olmsted Falls Lumber Company, Kucklick's Furniture, Miska's Tavern, John P. Kuzman (builder), Schady's Service Station, Art Abram & Sons Texaco Service, Olmsted Auto Service, Matthei's (tavern), Morley Tractor and Implement Service, Westview Lumber and Supply Company, E.M. Jenkins Insurance, Filipek Brothers Builders, Edward H. Scanlon & Associates (growers of tailored trees), P. Simmerer's Sons Hardware, Natural Foods (later Vitamix), Charles H. Bonsey Insurance Service, United Farmers' Exchange Association, Len's Service Center, Gropitch Greenhouse, Kaufman's store, Westview Cleaners, Scott's Village Pharmacy, Sashko Welding Shop, Don C. Wilks Investment Securities, W.G. Casper Realty, Hirsch's Superette, Westview Gardens, Homelinks Golf Club, Westview Appliance Center, Olmsted Falls Printing, and Dairypak Butler. That doesn't include businesses located outside Olmsted Falls, Olmsted Township and West View.

Most of those businesses no longer exist. A few of them continue under different owners and different names. That's testimony to how much has changed over six decades.

The covers of the programs carried artwork of football-related scenes produced in a style like that of Norman Rockwell, sometimes humorous and sometimes just showing players in action.



The cover artwork for these programs for the Rocky River and Oberlin games show amusing slice-of-life moments rather athletic action.



General Douglas McArthur stated that many of his characteristics which have served him best in his life are those which were developed on the athletic field.

In our experiences with girls and boys it has been noticeable that delinquents seldom have devoted very much of their time to their church, to the Scouts, and to athletics.

A wholesome and well-integrated sports program in your schools can bolster and strengthen the total educational effort. We are constantly striving toward this objective.

Your boys and girls, your coaching staff, and all of your school officials appreciate your support of the football program. By our mutual efforts, Olmsted Falls will continue to play and live like champions.

Loren D. Early
Superintendent of Schools

Booster and Patrons

George W. Campbell	Frank Stager, Jr.	Mrs. Carl Gerbasi
Arthur F. Brown	Mrs. Frank Kolarik	E. E. Grall
Ken Fathauer	Mr. and Mrs. A. Nelson Hood	Edward J. Lack
Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Wright	Coach and Mrs. Wally Hood	Mr. Marhely
Edith Blodgett	Miss Kristina Hood	Mrs. M. B. Lukacz
Mr. and Mrs. Carl Sprague	Miss Mary Lou Shady	Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wenning
Lee Blodgett	Mr. Linn Oring	S. H. Berthold
Mr. and Mrs. Julian Molosky	Miss Janet Oring	Frances J. Peters
Mr. Daniel Barlock	Miss Joan Oring	Mr. David Stombaugh
Leslie W. Hoberecht	Mr. and Mrs. Elwood Oring	Ronnie and Sally Revelt
Leonard A. Davidson	Thomas Parker	(Class of '57 and '58)
A. Snyder	Mr. and Mrs. Bill Reeder	Robert R. Carroll
Mrs. Edward Flanagan	Mr. Paul Martin, Sr.	Edwin J. Stevens
Earl H. Uhr	Charles D. Harford	Mr. and Mrs. M. H. Jones
Mr. and Mrs. John Higgs	Mr. and Mrs. T. Blechschmidt	Carl Lingmen
Robert D. Reed	Grady Dorsey	Mrs. William Jelen
Malcolm Knight	Mrs. George Largent	Emory J. Anderson
Mr. Robert J. Tomasch	Mr. and Mrs. Fred A. Mariano	Kathryn F. Richards
Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Buckles	M. Kolosko	Mr. E. R. Graf
Frederick F. Franklin	Calvin Mulligan	Mrs. Hermine Bender
T. P. Harkness	W. S. Gravener	Mr. and Mrs. Dale H. Hecker
Frank Tath	Mrs. Dean Ziehm	Arthur C. Berry
Joseph Cuccia	Bryner D. Walkins	Irma Jean
M. Asad	Mrs. William Francisco	and George Sagaser
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hecker	Donald Faus	Mr. Robert L. Schraff
Bob Pohm	David L. Ward	Mr. Chas. S. Kujawa

This is the page in the football program carrying the message from Loren Early, who then was in his first year as superintendent of schools, and part of the list of a few hundred boosters and patrons.

In his message on one page, Loren Early, who then was superintendent of schools, said students who kept busy in athletics, as well as in church activities and scouting, were more likely to develop good character and less likely to be delinquents.

“A wholesome and well-integrated sports program in your schools can bolster and strengthen the total educational effort,” he wrote. “We are constantly striving toward this objective.”

According to Walter Holzworth in his 1966 book on Olmsted history, Early took over as superintendent of the school system on August 1, 1960, when he was 51 years old. He was a graduate of Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, and received a master's degree from Columbia University.

Before coming to Olmsted Falls, Early had been superintendent of schools in Lisbon, Ohio. That was after serving as a junior high school principal in Salem, Ohio.

Early was still superintendent in 1964 and 1965, when he and the school board got voters to approve a bond issue, and they made plans to build a new high school, which opened in 1968.

“My class of 1965 was a great example of the postwar baby boom and how schools were built quickly,” Gibson wrote.

When Gibson attended kindergarten in 1952-1953, it was held in the Olmsted Falls Village Hall, which also served as the firehouse and police station, because there was no room in the school district's single building at the corner of Bagley Road and

Division Street (later Mapleway Drive). (The old Village Hall is the same building that now houses the Moosehead Hoof and Ladder No. 3 restaurant. The former school now houses Olmsted Falls City Hall and the police station.)

When Gibson went to first grade in 1953-1954, it was in the old school building at Bagley and Division, but the school system built Falls Elementary School west of there in time for him to enter second grade in the new school in September 1954. But two years later, when he entered fourth grade, he went back to the old school building. Beginning in September 1957, he returned to the new elementary school, thanks to two expansion projects, for fifth and sixth grades. In 1959, Gibson returned to the old school for grades seven through 11 – and he would have graduated from there if his family had not moved before his senior year.

Because the school population continued to grow, the district added Fitch Elementary School in 1958 and Lenox Elementary School in 1961. Planning then soon began for the new high school, which opened in September 1968.

“It’s interesting that the Olmsted programs do not print the actual date of the game,” Gibson wrote. He said the only way he could determine which year each program came from was by looking at the dated message from the Olmsted Falls Booster Club, which filled one page.

In that message, the Booster Club made its case for support from the public.

“Because of Ohio law, Board of Education tax money may not be use [sic] to subsidize interscholastic sports, therefore we find it necessary to turn to our fans and public for help,” the club said in the message in the 1960 football programs.

Olmsted Falls Booster Club

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED AND APPRECIATED
Meetings Every Monday Night During Football
Time 8:00 • Place High School

WHY —

Because of Ohio law, Board of Education tax money may not be use to subsidize interscholastic sports, therefore we find it necessary to turn to our fans and public for help.

HOW —

By raising funds through the programs, membership drives and contributions, advertising money plus selling programs is our Big Project. Membership is \$1.00 and the drive is conducted by the Varsity Players. Another project was our dance in January.

WHAT —

The Booster Club has helped in many ways. Film, equipment, blocking sleds, and other ways such as after the game snacks for both squads. Our new white game jerseys are from the Booster Club.

1960 OFFICERS

President—ERIC NYROS

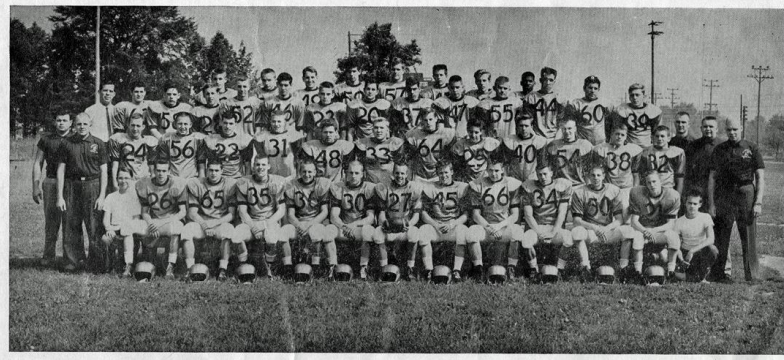
Secretary-Treasurer—BILL UVEGES

This is the message the 1960 officers of the Booster Club put in the football programs. It was the only page that included a date. All the photos of the inside program pages are from the 1960 game at which Olmsted Falls hosted Rocky River. All photos in this story are courtesy of Mike Gibson.

Membership in the club cost \$1.00. The club also raised money by selling game programs, selling ads in those programs, collecting contributions, and holding a January dance.

“The Booster Club has helped in many ways,” the message said. “Film, equipment, blocking sleds, and other ways such as after the game snacks for both squads. Our new white game jerseys are from the Booster Club.”

The home game programs included group photos of the Bulldogs football team, the coaches, the marching band and the cheerleaders.



Each program included photos of the football coaches, the marching band and the cheerleaders, as seen to the left, and the football team, as seen above. Those shots were taken at the old football field, which then was along Mapleway Drive, just south of the railroad tracks.

BE REALLY REFRESHED!... CALL FOR COKE!

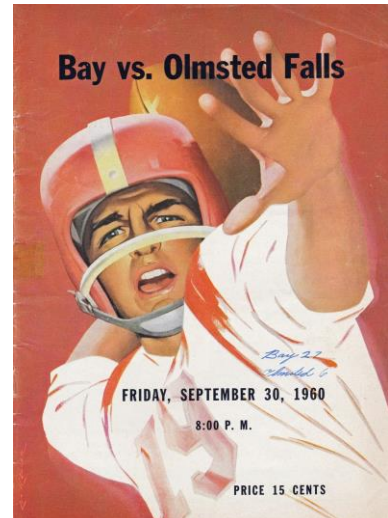
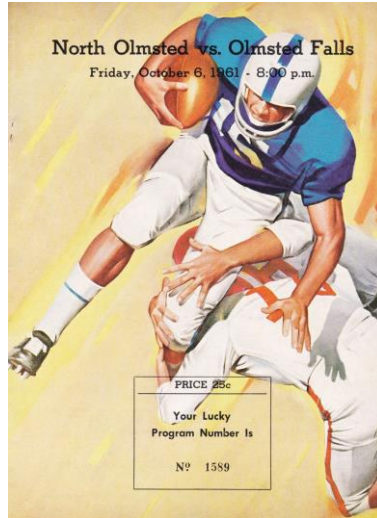
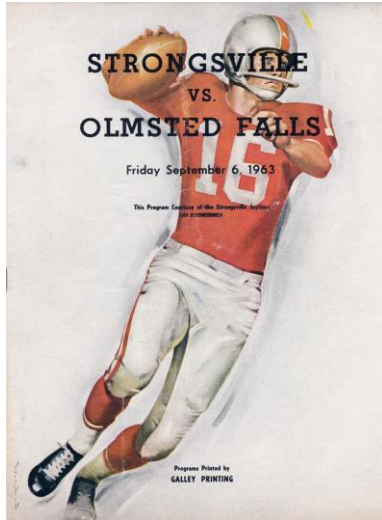
OLMSTED BULLDOGS		ROCKY RIVER HIGH SCHOOL	
60 Carl Gerbas	E	54 Del Buckles	G
38 Dale Hecker	HB	35 Dick Christensen	G
48 Jim Kamer	QB	21 Dennis Dalton	HB
26 Joe Kautman	C	29 Frank Edwards	T
52 Bruce Kenn	E	25 John Huff	HB
47 Al Koshier	HB	40 D. Khrenovsky	E
55 Bob Linn	T	22 Ken Kriemont	HB
23 Cy Senko	E	65 Jim Laut	E
46 Wayne Thacker	E	50 Dave Mariano	T
44 Ron Wolfe	E	32 Ron Molaskey	HB
58 H. Burnett	HB	34 Jim Muehlheim	FB
43 F. Franklin	G	33 Dan McRae	T
28 M. Gammalo	G	66 Steve Nichols	C
41 D. Hemming	QB	36 J. Potrykowski	C
57 John Lerzel	C	45 Dan Roney	FB
42 Mike Martin	G	30 Dave Rostal	G
63 Hank Metzner	T	26 Larry Saunders	E
49 Dick Neal	FB	64 Bob Silver	E
59 D. Tomanek	E	31 Jack Schwartz	E
53 Jim Wright	T	27 Jim Taliak	QB
Letterman		29 Joe Bak	G
COACHES		24 Leslie Brodigan	C
A. Wallace		34 Chuck Chapman	HB
Edward T.		34 Russ Gohert	QB
Thomas R.			
Allen Burn			
David Kunda			
Jerry Karp			
CHEERLEADERS			
Judy Parker			
Judy Schraft			
Judy Cook			
Karen Melander			
Sandy Miller			
Lucy Scharman			
Pat Conway			
STATISTICIANS			
Dave Palmer			
Mark Sanderson			
MANAGERS			
Linn Oring			
Stuffy Lauffer			
Stan Polacek			
20 Joel Skala		37 Jim Roney	
21 Jim Linden		38 Bruce Walling	
22 Fred Thomas		39 Terry Raney	
23 Scott Nehoda		40 Warren Van Tine	
24 Dick Roastler		41 Randy Barth	
25 Chuck Ogan		42 Bill Gust	
26 Wayne Cimperman		43 Denay Turkany	
27 Jim Allen		44 Gordon Myers	
28 Kan Keverleber		45 Bob Weist	
29 John Lowey		46 George Purdy	
80 Ross Carson		47 Jim Napier	
31 Ed Lewarchick		48 Jim Weston	
82 Norm Beres		49 Dave Robinson	
83 Lyle Westerfield		50 Tom Weston	
84 Ron Lodzieski		51 Steve McClure	
35 Herb Miller		52 Blair McNeill	
36 Bill Maerlander			
COACHES		CHEERLEADERS	
Vince Gandoli		Jean Ann Howell	
Don Frail		Sue Skully	
Dick Hoskin		Cheryl Walker	
Dave Bischo		Joan Lindow	
Don Chadwick		Sue Lindstrom	
Don Kelly		Patricia Russell	
BAND DIRECTOR		MANAGERS	
Hardan Thomas		Jim Smayner	
ATH. MANAGER		Jim Davies	
Bill Nelson		Paul Strom	

REFEREES' SIGNALS

PROCEDURE SIGNALS

The center pages of each program listed the members of the home and visiting football teams, their coaches, cheerleaders and others, and they showed a big ad for Coca-Cola.

In 1959, the Olmsted Falls football team went undefeated. As Gibson recalls, that inspired many boys to go out for Coach Wally Hood’s football program in the following years. Gibson played football during his eighth-grade year but considers that a “mistake.” His talent was in music, so he attended all the games – home and away – during his high school years in 1961, 1962 and 1963 as a member of the band.



These covers are for away games Mike Gibson attended in (from left) Strongsville in 1963, North Olmsted in 1961 and Bay Village in 1960. Each has the same type of picture similar in style to that of Norman Rockwell that Olmsted Falls used on its programs. But unlike the Olmsted Falls programs, these included the date of each game.

Olmsted Benefitted from Milk Carton Maker for Decades

The one company that placed a full-page ad, including a photo, in the high school football programs from six decades ago was Dairypak Butler, Inc. That was fitting because the Dairypak plant was a close neighbor to the football field, just across the railroad tracks along Mapleway Drive. A new football field at the new high school replaced the old field in the 1970s, but the plant kept going for five more decades – although now its future is in question.



The current public library (seen from the rear here) occupies just part of the land where the high school football field once was located.

At the time Dairypak ran its ad in the football programs, its Olmsted Falls plant was just a few years old. As Walter Holzworth wrote in his 1966 book on Olmsted history, it was a rare industrial operation in a largely residential community.

“In 1957 Clarke Marion, the president of the Dairy Pak Corporation, turned the first spade of soggy earth in a weed patch on Division Street in a ground breaking ceremony

to build a new industry that was one answer to Olmsted Falls hopes of securing desirable industrial support to bolster the economy of a village woefully lacking industry,” he wrote. (Until the name was changed in the 1950s, Mapleway Drive was called Division Street, perhaps because it once was the border between Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township. Also, although Holzworth wrote that ground was broken for the plant in 1957, it opened in 1957, so the groundbreaking might have occurred in 1956.)



The facility that began as the Dairypak plant lies just across the railroad tracks from the previous site of the high school football field along Mapleway Drive.

“The type of industry such as the Dairy Pak was a prize sought by every community anxious for industrial growth,” Holzworth wrote. He said it raised hopes that Olmsted Township might attract similar plants to an industrial park proposed for land between Fitch Road and Stearns Road north of what then was the New York Central (now Norfolk Southern) railroad tracks. However, attracting such small industrial plants proved to be difficult over the decades for Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township, and the lack of a bigger industrial base is one reason why Olmsted’s taxes have been relatively higher for residents than those of many nearby communities.

The Dairypak plant, which made gable-topped milk cartons, went through ownership and name changes over the years but remained a welcomed employer and taxpayer in Olmsted Falls all the way until early 2023. As Holzworth explained, Dairypak was founded in 1948 as a subsidiary of Champion Paper and Fiber Company and the Gardener Board and Carton Company. Diamond National Corporation also invested in the company.

Clarke Marion became Dairypak’s first president in 1948, the same year the company opened its first plant at 5250 Brookpark Road in Cleveland. It built subsequent plants in Georgia in 1950, Iowa in 1952 and Texas in 1954. In 1956, Dairypak acquired control of the Butler Paper Products Company, which had a plant in Toledo, Ohio, as well as one in Iowa. Butler, which was established in 1923, “was the leading producer of high quality paraffined [*sic*] cartons for ice cream, butter, margarine, and other products,” Holzworth wrote.

In 1957, Dairypak moved into its new \$2 million plant and general office building in Olmsted Falls and moved out of its Cleveland plant. At the same time, the company planned another new plant for New Jersey that opened in 1958. By that time, the operations of Dairypak and Butler had become fully integrated, and the company’s name became Dairypak Butler, Inc. In 1962, Champion Paper and Fiber Company bought Diamond National Corporation, and Dairypak became a Champion subsidiary.

When Holzworth wrote about Dairypak a few years later, he indicated the company had established itself as a good corporate neighbor in Olmsted Falls.

“The Dairy Pak with its plant and surroundings excellently designed and maintained affords the opportunities for employment in a clean industry; its record of good management and labor relations; with a profit sharing incentive and a wide range of health, accident, death and retirement benefits are in direct proof that a factory or industry need not be an ugly addition to the community, but one of its greatest assets,” he wrote.



This help wanted ad ran in the January 20, 1957, issue of the Plain Dealer, as the Olmsted Falls plant got ready to open.

In a June 1, 1957, *Plain Dealer* story, reporter Richard G. Carter wrote that the Dairypak plant in Olmsted Falls occupied 144,000 square feet in its long, low brick building, employed 150 persons, and produced 70 million milk cartons each month. Those cartons, ranging from half-pint to two gallons, began as part of one-ton rolls of polyethylene feedboard, he wrote.

Carter wrote that the Dairypak plant supplied several dairies in northeastern Ohio, and it also shipped cartons to Canada, Panama, Bermuda, Venezuela and Puerto Rico – and previously, Europe as well.

“In all, about five carloads of feedboard are unloaded daily at a railroad siding in the warehouse area,” he wrote. “By day’s end, 25 to 30 semitrailers loaded with finished cartons will have departed.”

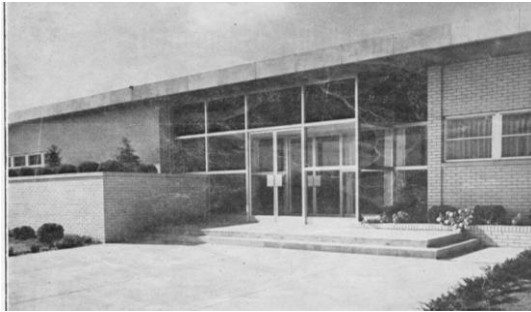
Dairypak made its Pure-pak brand of cartons under a license from the Ex-Cell-O Corporation of Detroit, Carter wrote.

The plant went along like that for a few decades. In 1997, Champion announced it wanted to divest some of its holdings in what it considered to be non-strategic product segments. Among the reasons Champion wanted to divest of the holdings that included Dairypak was overcapacity in the paper industry and a declining market for paper cartons to hold milk and juice.

On May 14, 1999, Champion announced it had completed the sale of five Dairypak plants, including the one in Olmsted Falls, as well as a mill and another facility in North Carolina. Blue Ridge Paper Products, Inc. acquired those assets for \$200 million – \$170 million cash and a \$30 million note.

Blue Ridge was a new corporation created by KPS Special Situations Fund, LP, a New York-based investment fund. The ownership of the company was split between KPS and the employees at the facilities. It was considered the country’s largest union-led buyout since 1994. A story in the summer 1999 issue of *Owners at Work*, the newsletter

of the Ohio Employee Ownership Center, called the buyout a “successful venture.” It noted that employment at the Olmsted Falls plant was 165 workers, which was down from more than 200 a few years earlier, but it still was the largest employer in the city.



The plant at 7620 Mapleway Drive has changed little since the left photo appeared in the early 1960s football programs. The right photo was taken August 5, 2023.

“This buyout was our only choice,” the story quotes employee Pete Dagostino as saying. “Nobody likes the concessions we had to take.” He had worked at the plant since the 1950s and led the Olmsted Falls workers at the time of the buyout as president of Local 673 of the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers International Union.

The story said Olmsted Falls Mayor Tom Jones applauded the employees for having the confidence to buy the plant. “There’s always been a good relationship between the company and the city,” the story quoted him as saying. “As a matter of fact, the Board of Education has its offices in the plant. I anticipate that will continue. I’m pleased the employees bought the plant!”

The employees took a 15 percent reduction in wages and benefits over seven years to pay for the stock they would receive in Blue Ridge. A reported 74 percent of the employees at the Olmsted Falls plant voted to ratify the contract. That was higher than the overall 60 percent approval provided by workers at all the affected facilities.

The buyout seemed to go well initially. Blue Ridge even expanded in 2000 by buying from Westvaco Corporation a liquid-packaging plant in Richmond, Virginia. *Paper, Film & Foil Converter Magazine* called the employee stock ownership venture “a happy ending” for the workers.

But within several years, the company ran into trouble. According to a September 5, 2007, story in *Smoky Mountain News* of Waynesville, North Carolina, Blue Ridge posted a \$7.6 million loss in the second quarter of 2007. An August 24, 2007, internal company memo announced that Blue Ridge had been sold to Evergreen Packaging Group, which was owned by a New Zealand company. As a result of the sale of their shares in the company, the Blue Ridge employees were expected to receive payouts averaging about \$20,000 each.

In 2010, Reynolds Group Holdings Limited acquired Evergreen Packaging. Reynolds already owned Pactiv, which made food and beverage packaging for an international market. In 2020, Evergreen and Pactiv were combined and became Pactiv Evergreen.



In March 2023, Pactiv Evergreen announced it would restructure its beverage merchandising operations, including the closing of the Olmsted Falls plant, as well as a mill in Canton, North Carolina, in the second quarter of the year. The production from the Olmsted Falls plant would be reallocated to other

facilities. Of the 1,300 jobs affected, 160 were at the Olmsted Falls plant. The company cited “a challenging market environment” for the downsizing.

The sign in front of the plant still identifies it as the Olmsted Falls Facility for Evergreen Packaging.

When Cleveland TV station WOIO reported on Pactiv Evergreen’s announcement on March 8, the station quoted Olmsted Falls Mayor James Graven as saying, “I am committed to bringing new jobs and investment to this industrial property. The city will take action to assist in marketing this property to attract new industry. We will also work with our governmental partners to assist the employees in their transition.”

Sixty-six years since Dairypak opened the Olmsted Falls plant, it’s not clear whether this is the end of the line for it or just one more in a series of transitions.

(Note: the spelling of Dairypak has been inconsistent over the years. Holzworth and others made it two words, Dairy Pak. Yet others referred to it as DairyPak. The company’s ads in the early 1960s football programs and the 1957 *Plain Dealer* help wanted ad spelled it as Dairypak, so that is the version used in this story, except in quotations.)

Church Cooperation 125 Years Ago Hinted at Later Merger

It surely wasn’t evident 125 years ago, but in hindsight, a few newspaper items back then seemed to hint at a major development that occurred in Olmsted Falls less than two decades later, when the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Congregational Church merged to form the Olmsted Community Church. The churches were located across Columbia Street (now Columbia Road) from each other.

Back in 1898, they were friendly rivals as the community’s two Protestant churches on the northern end of downtown Olmsted Falls, while the Roman Catholic church, Saint Mary of the Falls, stood on the southern end of downtown.



The Congregational Church, seen in the photo on the left, stood on the east side of Columbia Street next to the old town hall and, directly across from the Methodist Episcopal Church, seen in the drawing on the right that depicts it with the steeple that later blew off in a 1910 storm.

The two Protestant churches were so friendly that an item in the Olmsted Falls column of the *Berea Advertiser* for July 8, 1898, said: “Our two churches have arranged to hold union meetings at the Cong. Church on Sunday evenings. The pastors will alternate in preaching.”

Those joint meetings were likely the result of renovations at the Methodist church building, which was the subject of another item in that same column: “The Methodists are hard at work on the repairs of their church. Owing to the scarcity of laborers the work is progressing slowly but surely.”

In a subsequent issue of the newspaper 125 years ago this month on September 9, 1898, the Olmsted Falls column included these two follow-up items:

- “The M.E. church is nearing completion and will be ready for occupancy on Sunday the 8th of Sept. The improvement will be highly gratifying to the public.”
- “Mr. George Prechtel, the painter and decorator, is putting on the finishing touches of the M.E. church and to say he is doing a fine job is putting it mildly. He is a first class artist in his line.”

On September 30, 1898, the newspaper reported: “Services will be conducted on Sunday, the 18th, in the M.E. church for the first time since the repairs were commenced several weeks ago. The morning services were conducted by the presiding elder and the evening services by Rev. Mills of Berea. The church is a fine improvement over the old arrangements.”

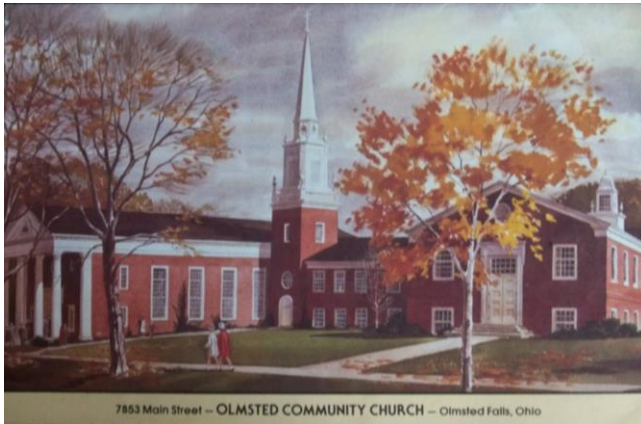
A few months later, the December 2, 1898, issue of the *Advertiser* included an item that indicated the renovation issue was not quite settled: “We hope the oyster supper and social to be held at the parlors of the M.E. church Tuesday evening, the 29th, will be a

financial success as they are sorely in need of funds to finish the improvements on the church.”

The cooperation that resulted in joint Sunday evening meetings at the Congregational Church while the Methodist Episcopal Church underwent renovations was not a one-time occurrence. It was not even the first time they helped each other. In 1889, when the Methodist Episcopal Church went through other renovations to modernize it, the congregation held services in the Congregational Church, and the two held joint Sunday school classes.

As they went into the early years of the 20th century, the two churches shared and cooperated off and on. At times, they alternated from week to week the church in which joint Sunday services were held. By early 1915, the two congregations began serious considerations of merging. Late in 1916, each church formed a committee to study the issue.

In 1917, the merger occurred. One of the terms of the agreement was that the



Olmsted Community Church used this artist's depiction of its current building for many years during the late 20th century.

newly united church would maintain “no binding ties with any one denomination.” The members then used the Methodist building for worship services and the Congregational building for Sunday school classes and community meetings.

That arrangement lasted until the mid-1950s when the congregation built the current Olmsted Community Church on Main Street to replace the two older buildings, tore down the former Congregational Church building and sold the former

Methodist Episcopal Church building. That latter building served as a masonic lodge for decades until developer Clint Williams bought it and turned it into the Grand Pacific Wedding Chapel.

More on the history of the Olmsted Community Church and its predecessors can be found in Issues 44 and 45 of *Olmsted 200* from January and February 2017.

Still to Come

The next issue of *Olmsted 200* will include stories about Olmsted's first family and the community's relationship with African American people, a development in the community's relationship with the railroad, and a hint about when one Grand Pacific Junction structure might have been built.

If you know of other people who would like to receive *Olmsted 200* by email, please feel free to forward it to them. They can get on the distribution list by sending a request to: wallacestar@hotmail.com. *Olmsted 200* has readers in several states beyond Ohio, including Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, West Virginia and Wisconsin, and as well as overseas in the Netherlands, Germany and Japan.

Your questions and comments about *Olmsted 200* are welcome. Perhaps there is something about Olmsted's history that you would like to have pulled out of *Olmsted 200*'s extensive archives. Or perhaps you have information or photos about the community's history that you would like to share.

If you have missed any of the past issues of *Olmsted 200* or want to share them with someone else, all of them can be found on Olmsted Township's website. Go to <https://www.olmstedtownshipohio.gov/290/Past-Newsletters-Olmsted-200>. A list of *Olmsted 200* issues is on the right side. Click on the number of the issue you want to read. All *Olmsted 200* issues also are available on the website of the City of Olmsted Falls. Find them at: http://www.olmstedfalls.org/olmsted_falls_history/index.php. A link to *Olmsted 200* can be found on the left side of the page.

Except where otherwise noted, all articles in *Olmsted 200* are written by Jim Wallace. Thanks go to Mary Louise King for helping in proofreading and editing many issues. Thanks also go to David Kennedy for frequently contributing research and insight for some stories. Written contributions and photos, as well as comments and questions about items in this newsletter, will be considered for publication. Send any correspondence by email to: wallacestar@hotmail.com.

Olmsted 200 is written, researched and edited by Jim Wallace, who is solely responsible for its content. He is co-author (with Bruce Banks) of *The Olmsted Story: A Brief History of Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township*, published in 2010 by The History Press of Charleston, S.C. *The Olmsted Story* is available at Angelina's Pizza in Olmsted Falls and the Berea Historical Society's Mahler Museum & History Center and through online booksellers.

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