

# Newtown Municipal Center and the American Indian Education Center



Dedicated November 12, 2013



Baptist Church,  
Newtown, O.



**Newtown Baptist Church 1841-1955**



**Newtown Fire Department 1957-2003**  
**Little Miami Joint Fire Rescue 2003-2011**



# BUILDING HISTORY



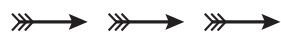
The First Baptist Church of Newtown was built in 1841 with Reverend Daniel Bryant as minister. Typical for the period, locally available materials were utilized in the construction of the church. The original exterior walls were four bricks in width, and locally mined clay was no doubt used to produce the bricks on site. A portion of the interior preserves the rough nature of both the bricks and craftsmanship.

Readily attainable wood was used for the on-site construction of the hand hewn wood timber trusses. These original, remarkable structures span thirty-six feet with each truss weighing over one ton. The metal fasteners on the trusses were all preserved and appear to be hand forged, probably by local blacksmiths.

The windows of the church were filled with ornamental glass, of which one has been restored and is displayed in the building. The original steeple that sat atop the existing cupola was lost in a 1915 storm.

In 1955, the congregation moved to a new location on Main Street, and in 1957 the old building was sold to the Newtown Volunteer Firemen's Association. In 1980, the Fire Department decided to construct a hose tower addition to the building. Early in the project, the firemen unearthed a skeleton buried in a shallow grave. Subsequent digging would reveal 22 Woodland Indian remains. Recovered intact were two ornamental conch shell gorgets. Carved with Woodland animals indigenous to Ohio, the 7" diameter amulet depicts an opossum, while the 6" diameter shell shows a wild cat. The pieces, dated AD 450-900, are considered of national historic significance as they illustrate these Indians traveled to, or traded with, the coastal areas.

The Fire District relocated in 2011 to their new facility on Main Street; this allowed the return of the building to the Village of Newtown.





# NEWTOWN MUNICIPAL CENTER

The Newtown Municipal Center is three new facilities located in one historic building. The back half of the old fire house has been renovated as Village offices and conference space. Newtown Village Council chambers now occupy the former fire truck bay in the front of the building. With the design help of the Cincinnati Museum Center and a grant from the Ohio Cultural Facilities Commission, the Municipal Center houses a new American Indian Education Center which surrounds Council chambers.

The Education Center incorporates museum displays which chronicle the rich history of the Prehistoric Native Americans who lived in the Little Miami River Valley prior to the settlement of Newtown. The space was designed to accommodate group lectures and multimedia presentations as well, and is open for touring school groups and the general public. The original stone engraving over the door on the front of the building has been highlighted to commemorate the Baptist Church congregation that originally built and occupied the building. Now in its third life, the building was designed with an open ceiling in the former sanctuary/ fire truck bay. This reveals the rugged craftsmanship of the Church's hand hewn trusses. The wood support for the former steeple is also now visible above the new vestibule.

Energy efficiency was considered wherever practical. The Municipal Center is now insulated to meet today's standards. LED light fixtures have been installed throughout the building, using less energy and generating less heat, thereby reducing air-conditioning costs. In addition, high efficiency glass shields the Museum exhibits from ultra-violet rays while maximizing daylight.



# AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION CENTER

- ◊ **FLAG SPRING (ODDFELLOWS) CEMETERY MOUND:** 3541 Round Bottom Road  
*Period Represented:* Early Woodland (Adena) ca. 1000 BC to BC/AD or Middle Woodland (Hopewell) BC/AD boundary to AD 400  
A large mound stands approximately 12 feet high, and has a basal diameter of approximately 100 feet. Today, it is one of the tallest mounds still surviving in Southwest Ohio and has never been excavated. This site is on the National Register of Historic Places.
- ◊ **HAHN VILLAGE:** Just west of Newtown at the north end of Clear Creek Park, Anderson Township  
*Period Represented:* Late Woodland AD 400-1000; Middle Fort Ancient AD 1200-1400; Late Fort Ancient AD 1450-1625  
This site is one of the most intact and significant Late Prehistoric sites in the Central Ohio River Valley. A roughly circular Middle Fort Ancient village with an empty plaza lies in the center of this 8-12 acre site. A single wall trench house was fully exposed between 2008 and 2010 by the Cincinnati Museum Center. Remote sensing and excavations reveal that the remainder of the landform contains diagnostic features and artifacts of the late Fort Ancient Madisonville phase. This site is on the National Register of Historic Places.
- ◊ **NEWTOWN FIREHOUSE:** 3537 Church Street  
*Period Represented:* Late Woodland AD 400  
This site is one of the most significant Native American sites in the Central Ohio River Valley. The brick building, built as a Baptist Church in 1841 and later converted to a firehouse, sits on a Native American village and burial site. Skeletons were uncovered during the original construction of the Baptist Church and again during the construction of a hose tower in 1980. The latter construction exposed a half dozen burials, some of which contained exotic grave goods, including a pair of engraved marine shell gorgets. Subsequent excavations in 2006 revealed additional burials, habitation debris, trash pits, and additional exotic grave goods.





- ◇ **SPEARHEAD (WALKER) MOUND:** South of State Route 32 – Ivy Hills Subdivision  
*Period Represented:* Adena 1000 BC to BC/AD  
Covering approximately one acre, the mound was nearly 40 feet high with the width at base varying from 150 to 250 feet, the largest mound in Hamilton County. The Mound was not excavated during the nineteenth century, but during the Depression. Tunnels were constructed into the interior where log tomb burials were exposed. It was destroyed by graveling in the 1940s.
- ◇ **TURNER EARTHWORKS:** Corner of Round Bottom Road and Mount Carmel Road, Anderson Township  
*Period Represented:* Hopewell BC/AD boundary to AD 400  
Now mostly destroyed through graveling operations undertaken after WWII, the Turner Earthworks was one of the most unique geometric earthworks. Situated just south of the Little Miami River on a large series of elevated terraces, the earthwork complex consisted of a large oval enclosure with up to 12 mounds and two crescent-shaped earthworks. The oval was connected via a graded way to a higher terrace, where it terminated into an elevated circle that contained two additional mounds. The Turner Complex was the scene of large scale excavations by Peabody Museum at Harvard during the 1880s and 1890s. Those excavations produced spectacular artifacts including those made from copper, mica and other materials.
- ◇ **TURPIN SITE:** West of the intersection of State Route 32 and Clough Pike, Anderson Township  
*Period Represented:* Late Woodland AD 400-1000 and Middle Fort Ancient AD 1200-1400  
The Turpin Site was the scene of intense excavations carried out by Peabody Museum at Harvard in the 1880s, and the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History between 1946 and 1949, and again between 1969 and 1972. The site contained several Fort Ancient age mounds, and exhibits a broad and deep midden representing both occupations. The site is on the National Register of Historic Places.

We greatly appreciate the efforts of the State of Ohio, whose investment in the Village of Newtown American Indian Education Center of Hamilton County will continue to benefit the lives of Ohioans for years to come.

**With very special thanks:**

Cincinnati Museum Center – consultant to the project. Scientific input was provided by Bob Genheimer, the George Rieveschl curator of archeology. Exhibit design and fabrication services led by Chris Novy, Bob Nienaber, Dave Might, and Sarah Lima.

The University of Cincinnati - Interactive Video Exhibit by CERHAS, in collaboration with The Ancient Ohio Trail.

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