

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



**Buckingham Lodge
1861**

Don Crain: His Service and Gift to Indian Hill

In November 2018, Donald L. Crain retired from his position as Village Solicitor. He was the third Solicitor of Indian Hill, following Pete Steer (1941-1973) and Ted High (1973-1998). Don was selected in 1998 as the best of ten applicants for the job.

Mr. Crain, then a partner with the law firm of Frost & Jacobs, now Frost Todd, Brown, LLC brought his personal experience in several areas including Ohio municipal law, public and private sector labor and employment law, arbitrations, contract negotiations, commercial law, and litigation. He had previous proficiency representing municipalities, school districts, counties, and townships as their counsel.

At his recent retirement, Don Crain stated, “During this past 20 years, it has been my greatest privilege to serve as Indian Hill’s Solicitor, as many view Indian Hill as one of the foremost communities to take up residence.” He recognized his responsibility to protect the integrity of the Village Charter of 1941 and its unique restrictive Zoning Code. He commented on “stewardship” as one of the roles he assumed when he worked to preserve and protect the governance, spectacular architecture, and natural areas of the wonderful community.

Looking back at the past, and recalling that the City Manager and Council were averse to overregulation, Mr. Crain and the Councils which he assisted kept new ordinances to a minimum. Many potential problems were resolved by personal communication with individuals. Only a few new major regulations were adopted. One was a property maintenance code, which ensured that property owners kept their lots tidy. Also fencing and wall size regulations were added to maintain the Charter’s goal of a “rural atmosphere”. Ohio and Hamilton County sewage requirements were passed for health standards. Other new laws regulated signage in the Village and prevented unwanted solicitors from appearing at residents’ homes. Council was careful not to over-legislate during Mr. Crain’s 20 years.

There were major accomplishments to which this esteemed Solicitor was party. One was the 2002 creation of the now 379 acre Grand Valley Preserve in Camp Dennison. He also negotiated two labor contracts which protected the Village’s management of both its public safety employees (2006) and public works employees (2008). Additionally Mr. Crain provided oversight of the addition of over 550 acres of Village parks and Green Areas Trust lands.

Inside the Village Administration Building, there is some magnificent artwork donated by former residents and past mayors. Don Crain augmented this collection with a stunning portrait in February 2019. As a graduate of Miami

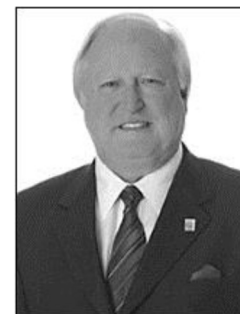


**Mark Kuenning & Don Crain with
Miami Indian portrait**

University, where he played basketball and baseball as a student, he has a long standing history with the institution, having served as a member and past Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and chair of the Development Committee of the Miami University Foundation Board. It was at Miami that Mr. Crain decided to practice law. He embodies the college’s code of “Love and Honor”.

This past February, at the regular monthly Council meeting, Mr. Crain greeted Mayor Kuenning, City Manager Dina Minneci, and Council members and provided a little history about the Native American tribes who inhabited southwestern Ohio in an earlier era. One such tribe was the Miami. Don then donated a signed John Ruthven print of a majestic Miami warrior, which was his parting gift to the citizens of Indian Hill. The print partially is a tribute to the name of the Village and also honors his alma mater. Council was most appreciative of this gesture and the framed print is currently hanging in Chambers.

As Solicitor, Mr. Crain was invaluable in his assistance to Council, the staff, and the City Manager for 20 years. He helped preserve the character and identity of the City of the Village of Indian Hill. As he retired, he thanked many people for fond memories. He deserves praise for his acumen, thoughtfulness, and dedication to this community for two decades. The Miami warrior print that he gifted the people of Indian Hill will always be a reminder of his loyal service.



Don Crain