

STARK COUNTY

## Meet Judy Pocock, president of the Plain Township Historical Society

**Patricia Faulhaber** Special to the Canton Repository

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Judy Pocock is the president of the Plain Township Historical Society. She is one of the founding members of the group which started in 2005.

The organization hosts a series of monthly events throughout the year, including regular meetings and fundraisers. Plus, members attend local genealogy events. Each meeting has a presenter who provides interesting talks about a variety of historically related topics.

Pocock graduated from Glenwood High School (now called GlenOak) and Kent State University with a bachelor's in education. She was an elementary school teacher at Plain Local Schools for 35 years and has taught all subjects. She has always had an interest in history and genealogy.

“In addition to working with the PTHS, I am also a research volunteer at the McKinley Presidential Museum where I have organized President McKinley and Ida's genealogies and lead a weekly local history discussion group,” Pocock said. “I am currently writing a book on what happened to the president's home in Canton.”

**Five questions with Marisa Rohn:** President of Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton

**Five questions with Doug Sibila:** CEO of Peoples Services

### Why are local historical societies so important?

Local historical societies are important because the members do a deep dive into the history and geography of a smaller area. Volunteers and members know the area and people well and can relate the past and present more easily.

## **What is your personal philosophy when it comes to preserving and promoting a community's history?**

My personal philosophy regarding preservation and promoting our township is the more we know and understand the people and properties the more likely we are to take care of them. Stories and buildings can become almost old friends and we feel thoughtful about keeping their presence and/or memory intact for future generations.

## **What one thing about Plain Township's history would surprise its residents?**

Our community would be surprised to know that historic Plain Township boundaries extended into what is now Canton city as far south as 17th Street. If people are researching Canton history in that area, they need to use old Plain Township records. Annexation has and is taking historic Plain Township land.

According to the PTHS website: "When Stark County was organized in 1809, five townships were created within it. Originally Plain Township included what are now Lake, Lawrence, and Jackson Townships in Stark County and Green and Franklin Townships in Summit County. Only a few settlers had already located in this territory.

"Two theories try to explain how PLAIN Township got its name. One idea says that part of the township was an open tract of land, or PLAIN. The other thought is that settlers from the East named the township the same as the old area they came from – PLAIN."

## **Would you detail a few of the duties you and other volunteers do for the historical society?**

Our board and members gather genealogies, land records, family histories and artifacts whose origins are within Plain Township. We are happy to help people who are researching the people and land ownership from history. We also are available to present programs on Plain Township history to the general public. We have monthly meetings on the third Monday evenings at the Plain Township Hall at 2600 Easton St. NE at 7 p.m.

## **Do you have a favorite historical location in the township, and why is it your favorite?**

I personally like the story of the tree that marked the center of Plain Township which is part of our logo. The tree was in the middle of the intersection of 55th Street and North Market Avenue for many years until automobile traffic made it unsafe.

*Editor's note: Five questions with ... is a Sunday feature that showcases a member of the Stark County community. If you'd like to recommend someone to participate, send an email to [newsroom@cantonrep.com](mailto:newsroom@cantonrep.com).*