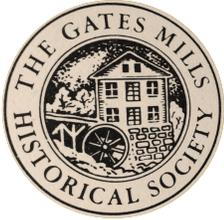


# THE GATES MILLS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE MUSEUM AT THE SOUTHWICK HOUSE  
7580 OLD MILL ROAD, GATES MILLS, OH. 44040



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SEE PHOTOS OF GATES MILLS THROUGH THE YEARS ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE.

THE MUSEUM IS OPEN BY APPOINTMENT. 440-423-1040

## *Thank you, Horace Fletcher!*



The beautiful black wrought iron street signs in the Village are the artistry of the late Horace Fletcher. Fletcher was a handyman in the Village who was commissioned by the Village Council in the 1940's to beautify the town.

The black ironwork is a frame for the carved white nameplate bearing the street's name in brush script. A scene sits atop the nameplate. Each scene is different, yet a hunting and horse theme unites them all. One entrance sign to the Village is a polo scene proclaiming the Village was founded in 1826. Another is a horse and jumper clearing a fence, while another one is a horse and buggy declaring the Village is a Bird Sanctuary. Hunters and hunting dogs are a motif as are game birds and barns.

An avid reader, Fletcher became versed in many areas, particularly engineering. Fletcher was a self-taught artist who demonstrated his creative talents in many ways. One time he fashioned a perfect pair of false teeth from a hambone. Another time, Fletcher created his own automobile license plate, but he used the wrong number sequence. The police pulled Fletcher over and brought him before a judge. Village lore has it that Fletcher asked local residents Mr. Ernst and Mr. Jones to represent him, and Fletcher only received a warning.

Fletcher was a freethinker and a hippie ahead of his time. He lived with his mother in a forbidding house that had neither lights nor water and was guarded by watchdogs and ringed with fences. Ah, the good old days!

