



Educational Farm & Nature Preserve

Legacy Series

An ongoing series of articles recounting the history of the Stratford Ecological Center and the Warner family

Legacy Series: Part 1 February, 2011

Gale Warner: The Heart of Stratford's Founding



Gale Warner

Did you know that Gale's Delaware County roots run deep?

Her great-great-great grandfather was an important player in the development of the Village of Stratford. He was Judge Hosea Williams, a merchant, Delaware County Commissioner and the first President of the Delaware County branch of the State Bank of Ohio, which later became the Delaware County National Bank. He established the Williams Opera House, located in downtown Delaware. In 1838, he partnered with Judge Caleb Howard to purchase the gristmill at Stratford Village from Colonel Forrest Meeker. This mill, on the "Whetstone" River (now the Olentangy), was soon converted to a paper mill, and had an undershot water wheel that provided power and turned the presses. The mill burned several years later, but was rebuilt. Hosea contributed stone building materials for the mill workers' homes and the Stratford Methodist Church (dedicated July 4, 1844). Several of these homes are still standing, and the "Old Stone Church" (on the corner of 315 and Rt. 23) is a gateway landmark to the Village of Stratford. The cemetery on the hill behind the church is on Stratford Ecological Center's property and is honored for its historical legacy by those who visit it.



Judge Hosea Williams
1792-1876

The portrait was painted in 1856 by
William Walcutt.

It hangs in the fireplace room at
Stratford.