



# OAKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## ANNUAL REPORT 2014

President's Remarks

Treasurer's Report

Committees:

- Children's Programs
- Events
- Research and Outreach
- Facilities & Grounds
- Media
- Membership

# PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

## MARK RISLEY

2014 was an exciting 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary year at The Oakwood Historical Society.

In January and through the extensive efforts lead by Board member Leah Konicki, the society was instrumental in getting **Wright Memorial Public Library** designated on the National Registry of Historic Places. This brings a sense of pride to the entire community.

Increasing society **membership** by 150 was a goal of membership chairperson Leigh Turben. Through her indefatigable leadership, the membership rose by well over 200! It is through membership that we are able to maintain our headquarters, The Long-Romsper Homestead House Museum, and provide informative programs and presentations for our community and, sometimes, other communities and organizations throughout the Dayton area.

Joan Milligan and Ray Voelker have revamped our **website** with a new look and feel. Credit card capabilities has also been added so website visitors can purchase any of the many books and items featured in our gift section. We invite you to visit *www.oakwoodhistory.org* to explore more of The Oakwood Historical Society and see a listing of upcoming events and programs.

In April, we partnered with Dayton History for "Wright at Home". The society provided a walking tour of the neighborhood around **Hawthorn Hill** while Dayton History had Orville Wright's famous home open for tours.

## 2014 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Mark Risley  
Vice President: Harrison Gowdy  
Treasurer: Debra Schenk  
Assistant Treasurer: Leigh Turben  
Business Manager: Linda Pearson  
Secretary: Skippi Cross

Directors:  
Nicole Crawford  
Harry Ebeling  
Carol Holm  
Jacqueline Housel  
Lisa Kell  
Leah Konicki  
Susan Marra  
Susan McChesney  
Phyllis N. Miller  
Mackensie Wittmer

The society also collaborated with Wright Memorial Public Library to introduce the **Far Hills Speaker Series**. These public programs were held at the library and featured many speakers on various topics concerning the history of Oakwood and the Dayton area. They were well-attended and a new line-up of programs is already slated for 2015.

In May, the society participated in the That Day in May parade and held **A Taste of Wine and Cheese** that afternoon with the sponsorship of Dorothy Lane Market and the leadership of Debra Schenk. This event has become an Oakwood tradition as a chance for adults to relax at "The Homestead" after a day of community activities for TDIM.

Throughout the warmer months, our **Summer Garden Club** and **Children's History Camp** conducted by Linda Pearson and Lisa Kell gave area youths the opportunity to learn traditional gardening, meal preparations and home life from earlier decades. These programs sold out for the fourth year in a row!

In late summer, another new tradition, "**Classics on the Lawn**" had the beautifully maintained grounds and gardens of "The Homestead" festooned with some of the area's finest classic, exotic and special interest automobiles. Lunch by Oakwood's own Central Perc was enjoyed by exhibitors and attendees. Planned by Mark W. Risley, this is another event that is growing and is, also, gaining positive notoriety among area auto enthusiasts.

Thanks to a donation from the **Dorothy Koch Foundation** this past summer, new gutters were installed on "The Homestead" and all of the outbuildings in the fall.

The society continues to maintain our research and published historic papers **archive** at the Oakwood City Building providing valuable insight and great stories of Oakwood's remarkable history.

Lastly, the Board of The Oakwood Historical Society made the difficult decision to sell the adjacent property at **1945 Far Hills Ave.** We were very fortunate to have new owners who appreciate its history and have the desire to maintain its beauty in place in the community. Funds from the sale of the property have been placed in an endowment fund and the investment income will go toward the preservation and maintenance of our headquarters, The Long-Romspert Homestead House Museum. These funds will also help support our many programs while providing a degree of financial stability to the Society for some time to come.



# TREASURER'S

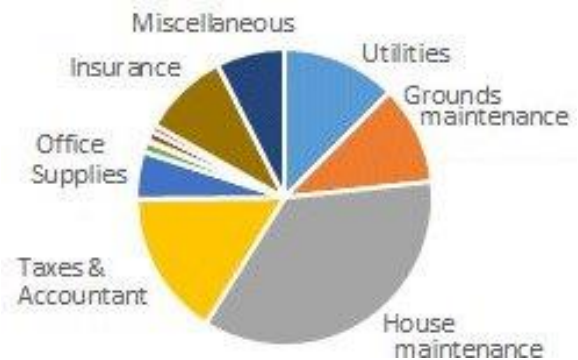
# REPORT

DEBRA SCHENK

## EXPENSES

|                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Electricity                | 763.12           |
| Water, sewer               | 1,303.01         |
| Phone                      | 540.04           |
| Gas                        | 2,161.00         |
| Insurance                  | 3,594.00         |
| Mowing                     | 1,000.00         |
| Snow, ice removal          | 1,198.28         |
| Yard maintenance           | 1,914.50         |
| Extermination              | 320.49           |
| Plumbing                   | 125.00           |
| City tax                   | 0                |
| Sales tax                  | 75.04            |
| 1945 FH tax                | 5,534.86         |
| 1947 FH tax                | 84.24            |
| Printing                   | 1,964.08         |
| Postage                    | 447.88           |
| Office supplies            | 55.00            |
| Advertising                | 400.00           |
| Credit card fees           | 288.91           |
| Dues                       | 0                |
| Accountant (tax filings)   | 360.00           |
| 1945 Far Hills maintenance | 5,423.10         |
| 1947 Far Hills maintenance | 7,323.10         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               | <b>38,106.28</b> |

(1)Miscellaneous expenses include Founder's day, program fee refund, and C'est Tout fundraiser expense, transfer to children's programming—\$375, TDIM, Wine tasting, State filing certificate, photographer fee, historic district plaque, flood books, repayment for loan—real estate tax.



## INCOME

|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| 3 Monthly endowment payments (\$650/mo.) | 1,950.00         |
| Rent / Sale of 1945                      | 210,065.85       |
| Transfer to Dayton Foundation / Savings  | 206,465.85       |
| Dues                                     | 6,105.00         |
| Donations                                | 11,103.96        |
| Transfer from savings                    | 2,000.00         |
| Sales                                    | 756.00           |
| Children's programs                      | 1,135.00         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                             | <b>35,114.11</b> |

Net revenue/expense (2,992.17)



# CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

LINDA PEARSON

This year we held two summer history programs during June. The theme was “An Old-Fashioned Fourth of July,” based on the holiday traditions from the turn of the century into the 1940s. The children discovered how people used to prepare for an exciting, patriotic and fun Fourth of July Celebration. We made noise makers and decorations, learned how our nation’s flag changed over time, played games of the times, made delicious authentic period foods, and prepared for a Grand Picnic on the lawn with hand-cranked ice cream on both of the final days!

Our children’s garden program, “Seasons in the Garden,” lasted from April through October. There were sixteen regular sessions plus “bonus” sessions as additional needs were identified during the year. The children learned about the entire growing season, from planting early season cool weather crops, to hot summer crops, to the very end of the season in October when they “put the garden to bed” for the winter. We used our new compost bins, built for the program as part of a Boy Scout Eagle project that also gave us a sturdy potting cart we can’t wait to use in the spring! We had a visit by red wiggler worms, used for container composting, and their owner who taught the children all about vermiculture. We cooked using produce from the garden at a number of our sessions, making everything from salsa to pizza to pumpkin pancakes. And, of course, the children planted, weeded, learned all about pests & beneficials, harvested and took home many bags full of organic produce throughout



the seasons. We’d like to thank our helpers, and Master Gardener Judy Payne for faithfully attending the many sessions we held, rain or shine.

Our garden has become part of the Community Gardening system at Metroparks. We have been visited by an evaluation team that seeks to learn about how the all the community gardens in the Dayton area operate. We have been offered a sign to post near our garden. We will post it this spring. It has the Five Rivers MetroParks logo on it and says, “Community Gardening with Five Rivers MetroParks.”

For 2015, we are looking for adults who can take over some of the responsibilities of organizing these programs with help from the existing team of Linda Pearson and Lisa Kell. At the moment we have a couple of volunteers for the garden sessions, but are still looking for anyone who would like to ease into some of the responsibilities for the history programs. We have accumulated a great cache of resources to use. There is a great deal of flexibility and opportunities for creativity which are satisfying to those who plan and run the programs – the sky (and the garden earth) are the limits!



## EVENTS

### HARRISON STAMM GOWDY

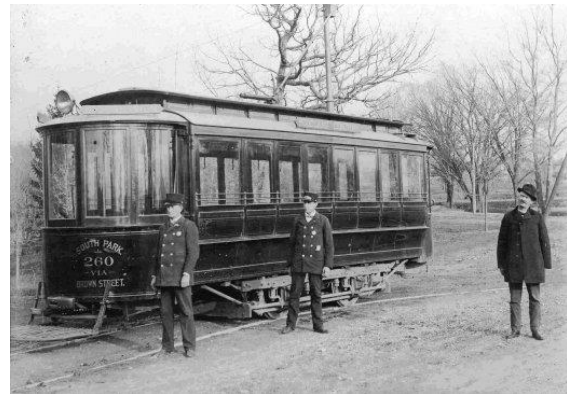
The **Special Events** Committee is responsible for three annual events. These events are designed to showcase The Long-Romsper House Museum. The chair works closely with the president of the Society.

2014 was a great year for The Oakwood Historical Society. We added a special event this year to celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. In January we held a membership dinner at C'Est Tout and silent auction. This event raised \$2000 dollars allowing us insert our membership brochure into the Oakwood Register! It was a great way to increase our exposure and open our 40<sup>th</sup> year.

The events committee continued to host our three annual events at the Long-Romsper House Museum. These events are the Wine Tasting in May, Classics on the Lawn in August, and Holiday at the Homestead in December. These events continue to grow and allow us to showcase our house museum for loyal and new audiences.

**Far Hills Speakers Series.** We collaborated with Wright Memorial Public Library, introducing the “Far Hills Speaker Series” of free presentations open to the public addressing Oakwood and/or Dayton’s

history. Last year we hosted seven presentations such as “The Classic Architecture of Oakwood,” “The Mound Builders,” “Beyond the Flyer III,” and “Public Transit in Oakwood from Early Days to Present.” All were well-attended, and the feedback from our guests was very positive.



**Annual fundraising Photo Shoot.** For a fee of \$50, an individual or group of any size can attend a 20 minute photo session on the lovely grounds of the homestead, and receive a CD with all the photos to take home and print off as desired. Photographer Betty Cochran has done this for us for 3 years. Her photos now grace a number of local holiday greeting cards and walls.

# RESEARCH AND OUTREACH

## MACKENSIE WITTMER

The Research and Outreach Committee is responsible for researching the history of Oakwood through primary sources, documenting the information and developing new, often one-time events for the public. This committee works closely with other society committees as well as private citizens and other organizations in Oakwood and the Dayton area.

Our committee has once again had a great year. This year we partnered with Dayton History in April to celebrate *Wright At Home: Oakwood 1914*. This special one-day event celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wright Family's move to Oakwood. Over 300 people joined us to tour Hawthorn Hill and the adjacent neighborhood to hear the stories about the neighbors, friends, and business partners that welcomed the Wright's to their new home.

The Research and Outreach Committee also works closely with our schools and in 2014 we talked to first graders at Harman School and with all the third graders in the

Oakwood City School District. These one-day presentations introduce students to what school was like over the last 100 years along with hands on activities that allow them map their neighborhood, play old-fashioned games, talk about and use artifacts from the past, and study historic photographs to better understand how historians look for clues.

Also, during the summer, Mackensie Wittmer hosted two events that allowed our friends to *Make History with Us!* These included a scavenger hunt to local public landmarks. This was a great way to connect with Oakwood families new and old. We had over 75 kids participate and prizes were given at the Oakwood Ice Cream Social to all kids that could name Oakwood's most famous decoder—Joseph Desch. Our other outreach program was making a collaboration with Wright Memorial Library to raise awareness for The Dayton Art Institute's Chihuly exhibit and the local resources to learn more about art glass. The event included painting and melting over 300 pieces of Chihuly-inspired plastic and then installing them on a dead tree at the library. The art continues to decorate the tree 6 months later.

Our committee also continued to preserve Oakwood's history by documenting and researching the history of our community resources. Jacquie Housel arranged our summer intern Mahaley Evans, a sophomore at Miami University. As part of her internship, Mahaley helped us begin our research on our next walking tour in the Maysfield neighborhood. We are continuing to work through her research and develop the stories we will be telling in our 2016 tour.

In October 2014, we hosted a walking tour of Schantz Park Historic District. The day was frigid and we saw our first signs of winter that day! But even with horrible conditions, people came out and supported us! We want to thank



everyone that helped to make the event special, from Rick Omlor and Elizabeth Hardy, who supported the reprint of the walking tour brochure; to Kevin and Katy Weaver who kindly opened their house at 201 E. Schantz for tours; to our event partners, Wright Memorial Library and Dayton History, who stood out in the cold with us!

If you haven't visited our website or Facebook recently, we think you'll be pleasantly surprised. Enjoy trivia and up-to-date information about all the activities of our organization. It is a great way to learn more!

## FACILITIES & GROUNDS

### MARK RISLEY

The Long-Romspert Homestead House Museum at 1947 Far Hills Avenue is one of Oakwood's best-known landmarks. Built in 1864, it was expanded and updated around 1920. Among its many rooms and outbuildings, can be found 4 kitchens which depict the history of domestic food preparation from a primitive hearth in the summer kitchen to the modern, electrical appliances in the 1920s side of the main house. "The Homestead" is decorated to represent the furnishings of the eras in which it has existed. The Oakwood Historical Society maintains it, not only as a museum, but in the atmosphere of a comfortable home to all who visit.

As with any large, older structure, constant maintenance is always required to keep "The Homestead" looking its best. Whether it's plumbing issues, peeling paint, a loose board,

removing poison ivy, chasing off "critters" ...well, it's always *something*.

Scout and youth programs help in providing the much-needed labor for some of our projects. Volunteers of all types are a great way to help keep costs under control.

The gardens are expertly maintained by our longtime gardener Jamie Sheehan. She is able to keep the gardens in bloom with a wide variety of colors throughout the growing season making "The Homestead" seem to rise from beds of nature's best. The lawn is mowed regularly in the warmer months and snow removal is done, as needed, to maintain access, even when "The Homestead" is at rest in the winter. A board member keeps fallen limbs picked up and can even be found, occasionally, splitting wood the old-fashioned way out behind the carriage house.

The Oakwood Historical Society takes pride in making "The Homestead" an attractive vision of history along our city's busiest thoroughfare. Funding from memberships, book and gift sales, events, donations and endowments help in keeping Oakwood's "home of history" alive. All of this is not possible without the generosity of the members, volunteers and those who attend our many programs and events. With a heartfelt Thank You—we never forget from where our support comes.





# MEDIA

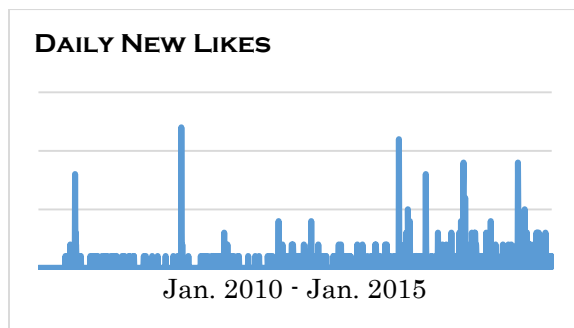
Three newsletters were mailed to members during the year. Stories included:

- History of the Wright Library, recently listed on National Register of Historic Places
- History of the Long-Romspert families and the homestead
- Oakwood resident Bill Hager and the donation of the homestead to the Oakwood Historical Society
- Beginning of the Oakwood Historical Society
- Early Dayton Automobile Manufacturers, including the Dayton Motor Car Co. and the Speedwell Motor Car Co.
- Research about the Maysfield and Houk plats
- The 1940 meeting of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Orville Wright in Oakwood
- The beginning of Hills & Dales: John H. Patterson & the Olmsteds
- Neoclassical architecture

Members can also keep in contact via Facebook, Twitter (@OakwoodHistory), Instagram (oakwoodhistory), and Pinterest.

## FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS, JANUARY:

|      |     |
|------|-----|
| 2010 | 0   |
| 2011 | 83  |
| 2012 | 125 |
| 2013 | 197 |
| 2014 | 284 |
| 2015 | 525 |



# MEMBERSHIP

LEIGH TURBEN

2014 was a turn-around year for membership. With a focus on building our base, we set a goal of reaching 150 members in 2014. I am delighted to tell you that as of 12/30/2014 we had 210 members! That represents a 192% increase from 72 when we began our membership drive!

More importantly, we have developed a system to maintain and grow our membership going forward, which encompasses quarterly follow-up of members, increased exposure to attract new members, and membership appreciation events.

- To increase our exposure in the community, we did a mass distribution of our newly-designed membership brochure in the *Oakwood Register*.

- To add convenience, we implemented credit card processing which enables us to offer online membership forms and payment through our website.

- The membership renewal form was included in our newsletters and a great reminder to our members.

- We setup our membership table at all of the Society's events, as well as events where we participate, such as the Care Walk, the Ice Cream Social, and the Oakwood Farmers' Market. The membership table allows us to display and sell our merchandise, as well as talk to anyone who is interested in learning more about our organization.

- Every new or renewing member receives a hand-written note thanking them for their contribution, including a personalized membership card and a tax donation receipt.

- Quarterly letters are sent to members whose memberships are expiring, including a

renewal form. If the individual has not renewed by our next quarterly mailing, one more letter will be sent to them. If they do not renew after 6 months, they are considered inactive.

- We sponsored two membership appreciation events at Graeters and Ben & Gerry's providing free ice cream cones to our members.

- Lastly, we partnered with ReMax Realtors and Jill Aldineh to publish a 2015 Oakwood calendar using historical photos, many from our archive. In return, all of our 2015 events were identified in their respective months. As well, our membership form was also included in the calendar.

Through our combined efforts, we are able raise enough funds from our membership fees (along with our monthly distribution from the endowment fund) to maintain our organization and continue our good work in the community.



# JOIN US

Please join our efforts to maintain, protect and promote the stories, artifacts and environment that make Oakwood unique. As a member you'll have the opportunity to participate in any of our activities or events. Our annual membership includes newsletters, periodic e-updates, free or discounted admission to programs, and invitations to members-only events. Join now and *Make History With Us!*

\$25 individual

\$35 family

\$50 business

Discount of \$5 for students, seniors and military

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer interests \_\_\_\_\_

Checks. Please make payable and send to:  
Oakwood Historical Society, 1947 Far Hills  
Ave., Oakwood, OH 45419 or join online  
[www.oakwoodhistory.org](http://www.oakwoodhistory.org).

# 2015 SLATE FOR BOARD

## **Executive Board:**

President: Mark W. Risley  
Vice-President: (Open)  
Treasurer: Carol Vinings  
Asst. Treasurer: Leigh Turben  
Secretary: Skippi Cross  
Business Manager: Linda Pearson

## **At-Large Board Members:**

Nicole Crawford  
Harry Ebeling  
Harrison Gowdy  
Karin Harris  
Carol Holm  
Susan Marra  
Phyllis Miller  
Donna Rosenbaum  
David Schmidt  
Aaron Willhoit  
Mackensie Wittmer

# 2015 CALENDAR OAKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

- February 7 ♦ **Members' Dinner at Carillon Brewing Co.**
- February 8 ♦ **Far Hills Speaker Series– Boulders, Bedrock and Brewing Water**
- March 15 ♦ **Far Hills Speaker Series – The Classic Architecture of Oakwood**
- April 12 ♦ **Far Hills Speaker Series – The Dayton Flight Factory**
- April 19 through October ♦ **Children's Gardening Program**
- April 26 ♦ **Wright at Home**, see Hawthorn Hill
- May 3 ♦ **Far Hills Speaker Series – Dayton Inventions: The People and Products**
- May 16 ♦ **Wine Tasting fundraiser** at the Long-Romsperst Homestead
- July 13-17 ♦ **"Good Old Summertime" Boys summer program**
- July 20-24 ♦ **"Good Old Summertime" Girls summer program**
- August 23 ♦ **Classics on the Lawn**
- September 13 ♦ **Far Hills Speaker Series – History, Mystery, Mayhem & Murder**
- September 27 and Oct. 4 ♦ **Annual Photo Shoot fundraiser**
- Oct. 4 ♦ **Woodland Days' Walk**
- November 8 ♦ **Far Hills Speaker Series – The Great Flood of 1913**
- December 13 ♦ **Holiday at the Homestead**



Oakwood Historical Society

1947 Far Hills Ave.

Oakwood, OH, 45419

(937) 299-3796

Email: [info@oakwoodhistory.org](mailto:info@oakwoodhistory.org)

Website: [www.oakwoodhistory.org](http://www.oakwoodhistory.org)