



Inside

President's Note	2
Historic Clothes, Games, Gadgets come to Harman School	3
First Annual Wine Tasting is a Success	4
Feature article: <i>Life during Oakwood's Heyday</i> ..	5-6
2009 Programming	6
Membership Renewal	7
The Gallery Gift Shoppe	7
OHS Membership Form	8

Address changes

Did you know that if your mail is returned to the sender for any reason – change of address, death, temporary hold for winter vacation, and forwarding instructions – the sender gets charged 50 cents! Please help us hold down our costs by notifying us of both temporary and permanent address changes. Send an e-mail to our website (www.oakwoodhistory.org) with a request to forward to the membership chair or you can send an email directly to membership chair Teresa Prosser at teresa.prosser@sinclair.edu.

Parks Walking Tour Returns

On June 20, 2009, the Oakwood Historical Society invites you to join on us for one of our favorite outings: The Parks Walking Tour. Beginning at 10:00am at Smith School, shuttles will take guests to the first stop on the tour, Loy Garden. From here, the tour will continue walking through Elizabeth Garden and Houk Stream. Along the way participants will learn about the history, horticulture and wildlife of these treasured landscapes. The tour concludes with shuttles picking guests up at the end of Houk Stream and taking them to Smith Garden where refreshments will be served. Those interested in walking to Smith



Above - Houk Stream, left - Loy Gardens



Garden are also welcome to come and enjoy this lovely sanctuary.

The tour is free and open to the public. For more information please contact Kjrsten Goeller, Chair of Program/Events for the Oakwood Historical Society, at 298-1268 or kjrsten.goeller@sinclair.edu

Family Picnic slated for July 12

On July 12th, the Oakwood Historical Society is hosting the annual Old-Fashioned Family Picnic on the grounds of the Long-Romspert Homestead. This treasured yearly event missed the 2008 program calendar, but not this year. From 5-8pm, delicious food and cool drinks will be served as folks wander the beautiful gardens and enjoy the many restorations of the Homestead. Look for your reservation postcard in the mail and an announcement in the Oakwood Register later this month.

Special parking is available behind the Homestead. Side-street parking or a leisurely stroll up to picnic is recommended. For additional details, please contact Kjrsten Goeller, Programs/Events chair, at kjrsten.goeller@sinclair.edu.

OHS Committees

Please get involved...

Archives & Acquisitions

Harry Ebeling • 293-0611
hebeling@aol.com

Docent training

Alex Heckman • 296-1301
aheckman@daytonoakwood.org

Education

Linda Pearson
648-9702
lindapinoh@gmail.com
Lisa Kell 299-2267
charybdismom@yahoo.com

Facilities/Grounds

Maintenance

Mark Risley • 294-2537
therisleys@ameritech.net

Fundraising/Membership

Teresa Prosser • 293-8506
teresa.prosser@sinclair.edu

Preservation

Harrison Stamm Gowdy
643-4075
stammgowdy@sbcglobal.net

Programs and Events

Kjirsten Goeller
298-1268
kjirsten.goeller@sinclair.edu

Restoration

Teresa Prosser • 293-8506
teresa.prosser@sinclair.edu
Phyllis Miller • 299-3837

Website

Mackensie Wittmer • 294-2831
mwittmer@gmail.com

A note from the president

As you know, we have a new gem in the community, a gem that belongs to us all: the Long-Romspert Homestead. For the Society's board, this means a focus on how to share this gem...

That starts with the Homestead being open for the first time on a regular schedule. From April through October, the Homestead is open for tours the first and third Sunday from 1-3 pm. The public is invited to tour the Homestead, the outbuildings, and the grounds with the help of a knowledgeable docent who can explain the interesting history of the Longs and the Romsperts and how these family histories are also the history of Oakwood and the nation. If you are interested in volunteering your time to serve as a docent, please contact Alex Heckman, our docent trainer, via email at aheckman@daytonhistory.org or by calling 296-1301.

This sharing also means going to others and not just waiting for others to come to us. Again, another first was taking educational programs built on the history of the Homestead and its artifacts into the schools. These were extremely well-received by teachers

and students alike and will, no doubt, become a standard offering (please see story on page three. For additional information, please contact Linda Pearson and Lisa Kell, co-chairs of the Education Committee, or visit our website at www.oakwoodhistory.org.

Sharing also means creating ways to bring others to the Homestead, and this means developing additional programs and events. One such event was the May wine tasting event "Starting at Home," the first of what we hope will become an annual spring fundraiser, the proceeds of which will go to the continued maintenance of the Homestead (please see story on page four. A fall family fundraising event, entitled "Fun on the Farm," is also planned and promises to have something for everyone! Look for details soon. And, of course, we will continue the very popular summer children's programs.

The Long-Romspert Homestead is indeed a gem, and it is a gem that sparkles for all of us....won't you join us?

Teresa Prosser, President

Centennial CD available for gift giving

Many of you have seen or heard about the CD prepared for last summer's Centennial celebration. The CD traces the history of Oakwood from 1909 (and before) and was professionally produced. Thanks to the support of NCR and the City, the sale profits go to the Oakwood Historical Society!

Many hours went into the preparation of this once-in-a-lifetime CD that you and your family can enjoy for years to come. Under the leadership of historical society vice-president and committee chair Harrison Gowdy, board members Mackensie Wittmer and Harry Ebeling, with help from other community members, provided a detailed history, archival photographs, and first-person interviews. Their efforts culminated in countless hours of editing and fine-tuning. The CD was outlined by Prof. Roy Flynn of the University of Dayton and narrated by Carl Day, well-known local broadcaster.

Take advantage of the opportunity to get one for yourself and as a gift for family and friends! Copies may be purchased at the City Building/City Manager's Office on 30 Park Ave. for \$10 each. Get them while you can!

Historic clothing, games, and gadgets make a visit to Harman School

Four classes of third grade students at Harman Elementary School were treated to a morning of antique household gadgets and old time children's hoops games as the Oakwood Historical Society brought its first children's programs into the school in early May.



Harrison Gowdy explaining various household gadgets.

The program was developed to complement the third grade social studies curriculum, which involves studying local history. The Oakwood Historical Society members brought in several items from the Long-Romspert Homestead for display and teaching. There were four different stations where students could learn about clothing, children's games, how to look at old photographs, and household gadgets which made life easier for families one hundred plus years ago.

The students learned that gadgets to help with food preparation were some of the earliest household inventions. These household tools were based on the principles of simple machines, which the students had already studied in science. Some gadgets still look much the same today, but the use of others was hard to guess. Among the less recognizable tools were a sausage stuffer and a mayonnaise maker. Two nutcrackers looked completely different from each other and worked on different scientific principles.

At the clothing workshop, where there was replica children's clothing on display, there was also a discussion about how clothes used to be made and how much work it was to take care of clothes. At the next station, children could look at old photographs and discover what could be learned not only from the main figures in the pictures but also from the incidental details and the backgrounds in the photos.

A slide show focused on the lives of children in Oakwood from the early 1900's through the 1920's. Some of the photos show open farm land, while others illustrate the development of streetcars and the building of Oakwood's schools.

Finally, the students were able to try rolling a hoop and playing at ball and cup, both common children's games in the nineteenth century.

The Oakwood Historical Society has been developing and offering children's programs for almost a year. New programs continue to be developed to assist children and adults in understanding the past of our community and how people lived here in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Committee Reports

Docent Training **Alex Heckman—**

Several training dates in May and early June will be identified soon so that everyone's schedules can be accommodated. If anyone is interested in becoming a docent for the Homestead, please contact Alex Heckman at aheckman@daytonhistory.org. It's a lot of fun, doesn't take much time, and is a great way to participate in your society!

Education **Linda Pearson—**

Society volunteers presented a program to third grade children at Harman Elementary School on Monday May 4, which included a large group presentation and small group activities. Presenters included OHS board members Harry Ebeling, Harrison Stamm-Gowdy, Mark Risley, Lisa Kell, and Linda Pearson. Two summer programs for school children are being planned for July. In addition, planning has begun on a food preservation workshop and a series of doll workshops for fall. For additional information, please contact Linda Pearson at lindapinoh@gmail.com or by calling 648-9702.

Fundraising **Teresa Prosser—**

Planning continues for September's Fun on the Farm event, which will serve as the society's fall fundraising event. More details to come. Questions or ideas or wish to help? Please contact programs/events chair Kjirsten Goeller at kjirsten.goeller@sinclair.edu

Committee Reports

Membership

Teresa Prosser—

Membership renewals continue to come in; the final reminder will be placed in the summer issue of the newsletter. After that, those not renewing will be deleted.

Preservation

Harriston Stamm-Gowdy—

Work continues on the preservation handbook, due to be completed yet this year.

Programs and Events

Kjirsten Goeller—

The potluck dinner and program with Barb Powers of the Ohio Historical Society/Historic Preservation Office went well, with approximately 20 members in attendance. We met a new member, ate good food, and enjoyed a wonderful presentation from Barb on the development of country estates and the historic landscapes and gardens associated with those estates. Many attendees stay after the program to ask Barb more questions...always a sign of an interesting program!

Help wanted!

The Oakwood Historical Society is looking for someone to maintain the Society's death records. This could be the job for you if you are already a regular reader of the obituaries in the *Dayton Daily News*, the *Oakwood Register* and the *KO Times*. All that's required are newspapers and scissors in hand while scanning the papers regularly and snipping the obits of Oakwood residents. OHS supplies the three-ring binder. Old timers welcome! Please contact Archives chair Harry Ebeling at hebeling@aol.com for more information.

Homestead receives Eagle help on needed projects

Thanks to three Boy Scout Eagle projects, new paint, shelves and a cupboard, and a new "old fashioned" kitchen garden are either finished or will be completed this summer.

In these challenging economic times, volunteer projects are very helpful for non-profit organizations such as historical society, and we are no different!

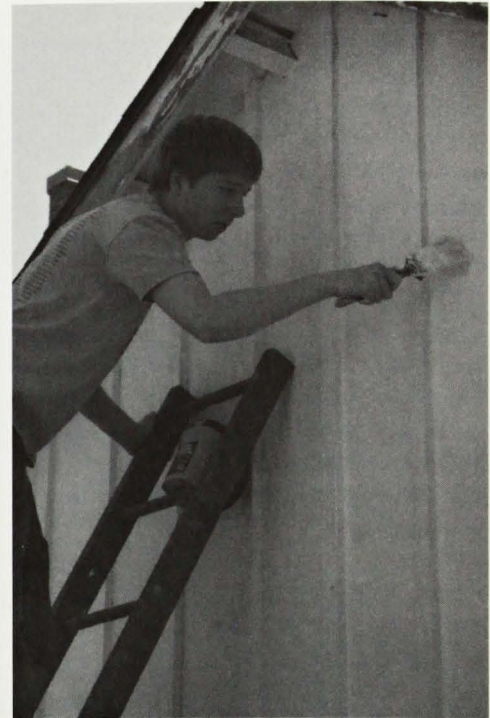
This spring, Peter Schweizer along with troop members, friends and family scraped and painted the exterior of two of the out buildings. The pump house exterior paint had been peeling badly with the summer kitchen threatening to do the same. Scraped, primed, and with two coats of fresh paint, they are now in very good shape. The project took longer than expected, due to the rainy spring weather. While doing this work, it was discovered that some of the summer kitchen doors need additional carpentry. We were glad to find this out before the problems became emergencies.

During this upcoming summer, two other projects will be completed which will enhance the programs being offered at the homestead and enable additional programs to be developed.

Phillip Sizek and volunteers will be building shelves for use in storing dishes in the summer kitchen during children's programs, plus a period appropriate moveable cupboard that can fit into an available spot just inside the homestead's back door. This cupboard will be used to store additional program supplies. Phillip has done detailed drawings of the projects and calculated the cost of materials and work hours needed for the project which was approved by the board. Phillip will begin work after school ends for the summer.

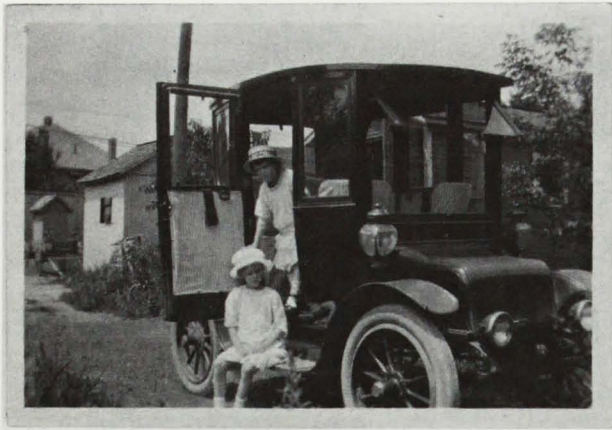
Mitch Thomas recently had his proposal approved by the board as well. He and volunteers will be putting in a kitchen garden in the grassy area just behind the 1920's kitchen. The garden will be approximately 12 x 18 feet in size surrounded by a picket fence painted using the leftover paint from the painting project. Mitch has had the soil tested, consulted with garden experts on amendments, designed the picket fence, and figured out the cost of supplies and number of man hours needed. His goal is to have the garden ready to plant by the end of June, weather permitting. Members of the board of directors are developing a historically appropriate list of plants for this garden. Various programs planned for the future will use the garden.

We are very fortunate that Oakwood Boy Scout Troop 101 had several boys looking for Eagle projects. The boys were pleased that we had projects that needed to be done and that OHS could provide the funds for the materials. This is a win-win situation for both the boys and the historical society. Eagle scouts always welcome and appreciate community participation. Volunteer labor is important to all Eagle projects. If you would like to assist with either of the summer projects, contact Linda Pearson at 648-9702.



Life in the Oakwood Heyday

By Harrison Stamm-Gowdy



Have you ever wondered what life was like for the families that built the houses in Oakwood during its heyday from 1900 to 1930? I often wonder how the family that built my house used the spaces that I now have. We are a family of four, but most likely the original family was larger and occupied less space. For example, my refinished third floor originally functioned as an attic, and the first owners survived with one bathroom and an unfinished basement. Instead of finding a place to store two cars, the builders of my house had maybe one car but more likely had none.

In the nineteenth century, Ohio, like most of the U.S., was a rural state; in 1860 83 percent of Ohioans lived in rural areas. By 1900, however, only 52 percent of Ohioans lived in rural areas. As America became increasingly urban, more men left home to work, leaving their wives to take care of home and children. They worked to clock time now, rather than the more natural rhythms of rural farm life.

Urban living was also changing. With the advent of the automobile, cities were able to expand beyond the first few blocks of the streetcar line. According to the Federal Highway Administration, in 1900, there were only 8,000 motor vehicles registered in the United States; twenty years later, that number had grown to nine and a quarter million. The number of registered vehicles grew at a staggering pace, and by 1930 had reached 27 million. The automobile meant that commuters were no longer dependent

on streetcar lines, and cities evolved accordingly. However, development was still compact compared by today's standards. The typical house of the early twentieth century was characterized by a spacious porch and a compact plan with fewer rooms than its Victorian counterpart. The homes reflected the more modest incomes of suburban families, as well as households which were maintained without servants.

This was the age of "modern" and whatever the chore, the "modern" woman was expected not only to utilize the most current techniques, but also to accept house-keeping as one of her major responsibilities. Ideally, she should find it joyous, pleasant, and rewarding. By maintaining an efficient household, one equipped with new laborsaving devices, she could devote more time to improving the health, comfort, and happiness of herself and her family. It was felt that when a housewife created the right kind of home, she was doing an important part of the world's work. Ironically, the new labor saving devices brought more work with less domestic help than in the earlier era. Thus, the woman of the house had, at best, limited leisure time.

Rising prosperity during this era stimulated a demand for mass-produced consumer goods that especially affected women. The

continued on page 6

Committee Reports

Restoration

Teresa Prosser —

Items continue to come our way through Dayton History. We need to work on getting the 1920's children's room staged as soon as the textile inventory is completed. With that room staged, the home-
stead is complete!

Website—

Mackensie Wittmer

General content from the centennial film info and items from Harry are being added to the website. Board member Mackensie Wittmer is reviewing all of the raw material that went into the making of the Oakwood centennial film.

Wish List!

In the course of our restoration work, we have found "gaps" in what we need to complete the staging of several rooms. Perhaps somewhere in your attic, garage, or back closet, you might have one or more of the items listed below. If so and if you are willing to donate, please let Teresa know by calling her at 293-8506 or emailing her at teresa.prosser@sinclair.edu.

Because the society is a non-profit organization, your donation is tax-deductible. Thanks for your help!

- Antique Victorian era wash bowl and pitcher
- Antique China head doll
- Antique Victorian artwork
- Persian style throw rugs
- Twin size sheets (top and bottom)

2009 Programs

The Society's new Board met in January and firmed up the programs for the coming year. Here's our plan:

June 20 – Park Walking Tour
10:00 a.m. Various locations

July 12 – Picnic at the Homestead
5:00 p.m., Homestead

Sept. 19– Fun on the Farm
1:00 p.m., Homestead

Oct. 24 – Graveyard Tour at Woodland Cemetery
Woodland Cemetery

Nov. 12 – Founders Day & Annual Meeting
6:00 p.m., Dayton Country Club

Dec.13 – Holidays at the Homestead
1:00 p.m., Homestead

installment plan, a new phenomenon in the 1920s, meant families could easily purchase washing machines, vacuum cleaners, and electric appliances—any and all objects required to properly maintain the home and care for the family. Since women made or influenced the purchase of most household products, the majority of advertisers directed their appeals specifically to them. The ads glorified domesticity, depicting housework as an exciting and creative “adventure.”

After women won the right to vote in 1920, most women tired of reform movements and were instead eager to enjoy themselves. Women’s clubs previously devoted to social service and reform causes turned to sponsoring games of bridge and Mah-jongg. Increasing mobility and a worldlier outlook also encouraged more women to socialize at one another’s homes. They also enjoyed the entertainment of movies, concerts and plays. Informal parties replaced once-proper formal occasions, now considered “stiff and cumbersome.” For example, bridge and Mah-jongg parties and ladies’ luncheons replaced teas, while informal supper parties were favored over dinner parties.

Gardening, a leisure pastime for ladies since the late 1800s, continued to be popular as a hobby in the 1920s. Women, particularly those with time and money, were also encouraged to pursue more active pastimes, like tennis and golf. Partly because of this trend, the number of country clubs grew rapidly during this era.

The 1920s saw a trend toward more permissive child rearing, and it became accepted that play was the young child’s ways of learning. Play, in a sense, became the “work” of children. During this era, reformers felt that special children’s spaces were desirable for physically isolating children’s play, from playrooms to playgrounds.

Mass production and aggressive marketing to parents, focusing on different age groups, led to a new sophistication in the toy industry. While foreign toy manufacturers, especially from Germany, had dominated for decades, the American toy and doll industries mushroomed during this era. The wholesale value

of American toys and games increased twelve times between 1899 (\$8.29 million) and 1919 (\$70.17 million). New toys like baby dolls emerged, and there was a huge increase in existing choices. Toys reflected the full range of adult consumer goods as well as current new inventions while encouraging children’s imaginations and helping them prepare to meet future challenges.

In Dayton, St Mary’s College was renamed the University of Dayton and the first art museum was opened in a home at St. Clair and Monument streets. James M. Cox, Dayton’s own newspaperman and three-time Ohio governor, kicked off his presidential nomination. Cox, who had a Progressive Era platform, chose Franklin D. Roosevelt as his running mate. He ran against another Ohioan, Warren G. Harding, who promoted returning the nation to normalcy after World War I.

The 1920s brought many changes to American life, and Oakwood and its houses stand as a bridge between the old, dense urban development of the nineteenth century and the sprawling suburban development that would become the hallmark of later decades. The houses were built not only on the edge of Dayton, but on the edge of the future.

Selected Sources:

- Braden, Donna. *Leisure and Entertainment in America*. Dearborn, MI: Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village, 1988.
- Calvert, Karin. “Children in the House, 1890-1930.” *American Home Life, 1880-1930: A Social History of Spaces and Services*, edited by Jessica H. Foy and Thomas J. Schlereth. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992. Chapter 3.
- Cross, Gary. *Kids’ Stuff: Toys and the Changing World of American Childhood*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- McClelland, Linda Flint. *Historic Residential Suburbs in the National Register*. CRM No. 1 2002.
- McMurry, Sally Ann. *Farms and Farmhouses in 19th Century America: Vernacular Design and Social Change*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

First Annual Wine Tasting Event a Success

The Oakwood Historical Society hosted a wine tasting on Saturday, May 16 at the Long-Romspert Homestead. This first time fundraising event was held from 3:00 to 6:00 PM to complement That Day in May festivities.



Todd Templin of Dorothy Lane

Market poured a variety of fine wines as Vail Miller, Jr. of Heidelberg Distributing offered an assortment of unique ales. Fresh fruits, cheeses, spreads, and crackers were served in the 1920s period dining room of the Homestead.

Attendees were treated to tours of the home's recently restored interior and enjoyed their refreshments in an open air, café-like setting on the Homestead's substantial front porch. Due to its success, the society plans to make this event an annual tradition.

Our thanks goes to Kjirsten Goeller, programs/events chair, for doing a stellar job in organizing this event, and our most appreciation goes to Dorothy Lane Market and Heidelberg Distributing for their sponsorship of this premier event.

Membership Renewal Time

It's time to renew your membership for 2009! Your membership not only entitles you to the Quarterly Newsletter but also to the satisfaction of knowing you are helping to support the work of your historical society, the keepers of our history.

So, won't you take a minute or two and renew your membership now? You'll be glad you did! Please just complete the membership form on the back page of this newsletter, and send it in today. Thank you!

Is this your last newsletter?

Before sending the next Quarterly Newsletter, we will be cleaning out our records of folks who have not renewed. The newsletter is the way we spread the word about all the things we're planning for your enjoyment. If you haven't already renewed, please complete the membership form below and send it in today. Thank you!

The Gallery Gift Shoppe

The society offers several items for sale in our Gallery Gift Shoppe; questions or requests can be made through our website at oakwoodhistory.org or by calling 299-3793.

Oakwood: The Far Hills Centennial Edition

The standard history updated in 2008
\$25.00 plus \$2.50 for mailing if desired

An Oakwood Scrapbook

History and remembrances – 2000
\$15.00

Oakwood Tour Bus tour of homes for Anniversary of Flight – 2003

\$5.00

A Place to Live

Schantz Park Sales Brochure – 1914 (reprint)
\$20.00

Matted print of the Long-Romspert Homestead

Signed by the artist, David Smith
\$8.00

Notecards of the Long-Romspert Homestead

By artist David Smith
\$2.50 for set of five

Memorial Brick

Call for details and order form
\$100.00



THE OAKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1947 Far Hills Avenue • Dayton, Ohio 45419

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Dayton, Ohio
Permit No. 1391

Newsletter Editor: Anne Rasmussen

Visit the Oakwood Historical Society website at:
www.oakwoodhistory.org

Change Service Requested
Dated Material

2009

OAKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Teresa Prosser
President

Mackensie Wittmer
Vice President

Harry Ebeling
Treasurer

Harrison Stamm Gowdy
Secretary

DIRECTORS

Amy Bryant
Kjirsten Goeller
Alex Heckman
Leah Konicki
Phyllis N. Miller
Linda Pearson
Mark Risley
Marilynn Sheehan
Karen Fleming

Oakwood Historical Society Membership Form

Membership Categories (please check one)

<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$10.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Adult	\$20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$30.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Business	\$30.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsoring	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$200.00

Date: _____

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Spouse: _____

Business/ Organization (if applicable): _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

The information that you submit will be used only by the Oakwood Historical Society and not given or sold to outside parties. Please make check payable to: Oakwood Historical Society Mail to: 1947 Far Hills Ave, Dayton, OH 45419