



The
Oakwood
Historical Society

— Make History With Us —

Historian

Preserving the past, present, and future of the Oakwood Community • Winter 2017

2017 - A Year in Review

—Leigh Turben



The Oakwood Historical Society had a great year of events, teaching, learning, sharing, reminiscing and entertaining our members and friends. We sponsored twenty-one events in 2017, ranging from the always popular *Classics on the Lawn* to our annual *Taste of Wine and Cheese on That Day in May* to everyone's favorite *Wright at Home* where we partnered with Dayton History to tour hundreds of people through and around Hawthorn Hill. New this year was Haunted Halloween at *The Homestead!* It was a fearfully fun time for adults including beer, wine and lots of finger food. The *Far Hills Speaker Series*, which we host with the Wright Memorial Public Library, continues to educate, inform and enlighten us on a variety of fun and interesting subjects. Check out our 2018 schedule! You won't want to miss them!

Check out the rest of this edition of the *Historian* for a recap of our 2017 events!

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January 29 - Far Hills Speaker Series – Where the Mad Men Are – Mid-Century Modern Landmarks in the Miami Valley.

March 5 -Far Hills Speaker Series – Public Transit in Oakwood from the Early Days to the Present.

April 23 - Wright at Home – Our tour of Hawthorn Hill and surrounding homes in historic Oakwood, was co-sponsored with Dayton History. The fourth event was a smashing success with seven hundred and twenty guests touring through the majestic Hawthorn Hill - a single day record for the site!

April 30 - Where Town and Country Meet: a pictorial tour of Oakwood in 1913. To gain a better understanding of Oakwood and its people during this time, our speaker took us on a tour described in an article published in the *Dayton Daily News* on July 22, 1913.

May – October - Herb Garden Academy – NEW! Students in grades 4-7 met twice a month from May to October to learn & explore with herbs from our own kitchen garden behind the 1920's addition to *The Homestead*. There was hands-on fun growing, harvesting, cooking and making household projects using herbs and other garden vegetables.

May 7 - Far Hills Speaker Series –The Lost Gettysburg Address. David Dixon, the author of *The Lost Gettysburg Address* and presenter, took us on an exciting journey through some of the most dramatic events of the Civil War.

May 20 - That Day in May Parade –This annual event began with a parade down Shafor Blvd. John Gray provided our “vintage” chariot, with several family members aboard dressed as the Wright family. They passed out May Day cones which included candy, membership forms and a packet of seeds to ‘Help Us Grow’.



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**THE OAKWOOD
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- 2018 -

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Message from the President

As the incoming President for 2018, I am excited and anxious about the new year, and overwhelmed with the talent and enthusiasm of the members and volunteers who come together every year to preserve and promote the history of Oakwood!

My family and I have enjoyed living in Oakwood for 27 years. I knew Oakwood would be my “forever” home shortly after we moved into our house on Shafor. It was a Saturday in May; my husband was outside working on the lawn, and I was upstairs unpacking boxes. All of a sudden, I heard my husband loudly calling my name. I rushed downstairs, only to see the Oakwood High School Band march by. Yes, it was *That Day in May*, and I knew at that moment that I was home. We are so very fortunate to live in this beautiful, community-centered and historic town.

I was recruited onto the Board of *The Oakwood Historical Society* 5 years ago, during which I served as membership chair, assistant treasurer, vice president, and organizer of the *Far Hills Speaker Series*. As a banker for 30 years, my contribution to *The Society* has mostly been on the business side. That is not to say that I don't take great pride in my 1923, *Sears and Roebuck*, Honor Bilt home, or revel in learning about the rich history of our neighborhood. I am thankful to Carol Holm, our president for the last two years, for her leadership and support, as well as for the talented and committed board members and volunteers who work tirelessly to promote interest in the history of Oakwood through research, education and preservation.

The new board is looking forward to 2018 with exciting new ideas, plans and programs to increase our presence, and become even more relevant to the community of Oakwood. We thank you for this opportunity, and your ongoing support.

Leigh Turben
President

The Far Hills Speaker Series - Leigh Turben

The Far Hills Speaker Series is a partnership between the *Wright Memorial Library* and *The Oakwood Historical Society*. In its 5th year, the program offering free presentations continues to grow, inform and entertain. We have several new speakers, and are presenting our first “series” of presentations in the fall, where we are highlighting Dayton in WWII. You'll want to mark your calendar for all of these presentations.

FHSS 2018 Schedule

January 21 - *Jack Egan, Dayton Lawyer - A Short History of Dayton's Dark Side from 1899 to 1936*. A captivating tale of Jack Egan, prominent defense attorney for a bewildering assortment of bank robbers, bootleggers, hit men, con men, and gangsters. Presented by David Greer, Esq.

February 18 - *Railway Transportation and the Rise of the South Dayton Suburbs*. How the earliest suburban plats to the south of Dayton developed under the influence of steam and electric-powered railways. Presented by David Schmidt.

March 18 - *Street Names of Dayton*. The men and women whose streets bear their name and how they contributed to the history of Dayton. Presented by Angie Hoschouer.

April 15 - *The Classic Architecture of Oakwood*. Learn about some of Oakwood's well-preserved homes and public buildings representing the best of 20th century architecture in America. Presented by Mark W. Risley.

Fall WWII Series:

September 16 - *Dayton Codebreakers*. The remarkable history of Joseph Desch, the WAVES and the Dayton Codebreakers. Presented by Jim Charters

October 21 - *Polonium in the Playhouse*. An intriguing story of secret chemical production for the atomic bomb. Learn about how the Talbot Family's *Runnymede Playhouse* in Oakwood served as a top-secret laboratory where the triggering mechanisms for the atomic bombs were developed. Presented by Mark W. Risley

November 18 - *The Russian Spy in the Dayton Manhattan Project*. Learn about George Koval: American-born spy who gave secrets of the atomic bomb to the Soviet Union. Presented by Bob Bowman.

2017 - A Year in Review (cont)

May 20 - *A Taste of Wine and Cheese - The Long-Romspert Homestead* provided the perfect setting for a relaxing afternoon after the hustle and bustle of *That Day in May*. Arrow Wine provided a fine assortment of wine and beer to choose from as guests sampled a wide selection of cheeses and appetizers. This fund raiser has become an annual activity in Oakwood - one we enjoy and look forward to every year.

June 4 - *Far Hills Speaker Series* –The Mound Builders. When early explorers came to the Ohio Valley, they found mysterious earthen structures in the forms of mounds, enclosures and effigies. This program explored many of the area's ancient earthworks, people who built them, their reasons, and their fates.

June 10 - *Tour of The Dayton Arcade* – We were very fortunate to get a special tour of the 100+ year old Arcade in Dayton, which was specifically organized for Historical Society members. The Arcade was a major downtown magnet for many years. We were able to learn some of the history of the building, and see the condition it is in now as well as hear plans for the future development.

August 20 - *Classics on the Lawn* – Forty-six classic and special interest automobiles assembled under the tall pines of the *The Homestead* as TOHS presented its 7th annual *Classics on the Lawn Car Show and Open House*. Several hundred guests and car owners enjoyed the warm summer afternoon, tours of *The Homestead* and lunch catered by *Zombie Dogz* gourmet hot dog food truck.

September 17 - *Far Hills Speaker Series* – Bishop Milton Wright: Father of Wilbur & Orville. Bob Bowman, past president of the *Franklin Area Historical Society*, presented the life and times of Milton Wright, father to Dayton's most famous brothers.

September 24 & October 8 - *Annual Photo Shoot* – Local photographer Betty Cochran shared her talent with Oakwood residents by scheduling 20-minute photo sessions. *The Long-Romspert Homestead* was the perfect backdrop for these pictures with beautiful gardens, classic cars and historic charm. Many thanks to Elizabeth McGrath, high school tech volunteer, and Jeff Christmas, volunteer Santa Claus.

October 1 - *Discover Woodland Days* – TOHS partnered with Woodland Cemetery for the 3rd year as sponsors of the *Woodland Days' Walk*. Volunteers dressed in period costumes depicted the life and times of Woodland's most famous and infamous residents as we strolled through the beautiful historic garden cemetery.

October 14 - *Haunted Halloween at The Homestead* – This was our first adult Halloween party! *The Homestead* was cloaked with eerie mystique, while our costumed guests enjoyed delicious libations, hearty appetizers and sweet treats. The party would not have been complete without a fortune teller, tarot card reader and selfie stations to document the festive evening!

October 15 - *Far Hills Speaker Series* – The Legend of Roswell. Mark W. Risley, past president of *The Oakwood Historical Society*, presented The Legend of Roswell, to more than 60 attendees. It is an intriguing and iconic UFO story based on eyewitness accounts. In 1947, "something" crashed in the desert outside of Roswell, New Mexico. This program took a look at the iconic UFO story that just won't go away, including a possible connection with Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

October 21 - *Hidden Oakwood Walk Park Tour* – Tucked away in the heart of Oakwood, three connecting, wooded trails invite calm reflection, colorful scenery and an appreciation of our natural environment. TOHS partnered with Wright Memorial Public Library to explore our trio of natural parks in Oakwood including Loy Gardens, Elizabeth Gardens and Houk Stream. Due to the success of this program, it has become an annual event!

November 2 - *TOHS Annual Meeting* – The board welcomed members of *The Society* and the Oakwood community to the *Annual Meeting* and free presentation at St. Paul's Episcopal Church of Oakwood. David Schmidt's presentation *Railway Transportation and the Rise of the South Dayton Suburbs* described how the earliest suburban plats to the south of Dayton developed under the influence of steam and electric-powered railways.

2017 - A Year in Review (cont)

November 19 - *Far Hills Speaker Series* – Flyers in the Finals. 1967 Dayton Flyers, an un-ranked Cinderella team, defies the odds and makes it to the NCAA finals. Michael Williams, author of *Flyers in the Finals* talked about this amazing time for The University of Dayton.

December 3, 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM - *Holidays at the Homestead* – Enjoy an old-fashioned holiday setting with vintage decorations, hands-on crafts, and festive food and drink at *The Long-Romspert Homestead*. The smell of gingerbread cookies baking in the 1920's kitchen will remind you of Christmas past. Ring in the holidays at the historic *Long-Romspert House Museum and Homestead*.

December 10, 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM - *Winter Market and Elf Shoppe* – *The Long-Romspert House Museum and Homestead* is proud to host the Winter Market and Elf Shoppe with the founders of *Oakwood Farmers' Market*. Enjoy the historic charm of this extraordinary home and museum as you browse through the unique gifts by local artisans – holiday shopping at its best.

Sponsors & Partners

We owe a special thanks to our partners and sponsors who, without their help, our newsletters and events would not be possible:

All the Car Enthusiasts Who Loaned Us Their Classic Cars – *Classics on the Lawn*

Arrow Wine – *A Taste of Wine and Cheese*

Betty Cochran – Annual Photo Shoot

Carol J. Holm, Attorney at Law – *Quarterly* Newsletter Sponsor

Central Perc – *Classics on Lawn*

Dayton History – *Wright at Home*

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IBM International Foundation – Matching contribution, \$50 annually for qualifying members

LCNB National Bank – *Quarterly* Newsletter Sponsor

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Oakwood Farmers' Market – Winter Market and Elf Shoppe

Park Avenue Antiques – *Quarterly* Newsletter Sponsor

Reichard Buick – *Classics on Lawn*

The Flower Shoppe – *Quarterly* Newsletter Sponsor

The UPS Store Oakwood – *Quarterly* Newsletter Sponsor & Printer

The Wright Memorial Public Library – *The Far Hills Speaker Series* and *Hidden Oakwood Walk*

Warped Wing Brewery – *Halloween at The Homestead*

Woodland Cemetery and Arboretum – *Woodland Days' Walking Tour*

Zachary Kell – *Quarterly* Newsletter Graphic Designer

Zombie Dogs – *Classics on the Lawn*

Committee Reports

Archives - Melissa Dalton

We had a current board member take over the archives this year, and projects are underway. Transcription of a collection held by TOHS of oral histories of Oakwood is ongoing, but this project requires the use of some special equipment *The Society* does not have in its possession and is a work in progress. We were lucky enough to have an intern Olivia Hessler work on this project over the summer, and she did a wonderful job. If anyone has an interest in transcribing the remaining oral histories, contact us!

Additionally, we recently started a project to inventory the entire archival collection. Our goal here is to gain a better understanding of what we have and make it more accessible to researchers. This is a long process, but is much needed. A special thanks to our volunteer and new board member for 2018, Lori Auttersson, for taking on such a project!

Children's Programs - Linda Pearson

This year we held an *Herb Garden Academy* for older elementary/early junior high aged children. Last year the garden was renovated for a *Boy Scouts of America* Eagle project, so we reaped the benefit of the newly refurbished beds and improved fencing. Lush growth and very little critter damage was the result this year! We have had 13 sessions over 5 months, beginning with planting and ending with harvest. During the growing period we focused on cooking, making household items using the herbs we grew in the garden, and drying herbs for storage. The program ended in late October with a celebration of homemade pizza, as well as herb mixes, herb teas and herb sachets to take home.

Communications - Leanne DeLange

Continued modes of external event notification proved successful. Resources used included "It's Great in Dayton" email distribution, *The Dayton Daily News* online activity section, the *Oakwood Register*, *Facebook*, *The Oakwood Historical Society* website, signage, manual postings at various local businesses, the *Oakwood Farmer's Market* and the *Quarterly* newsletter. Due to the successful attendance of the events communicated, we will continue to use these electronic and face-to-face mediums as well as to pursue new opportunities as they arise.

A new mode of internal communication was established to increase board efficiency and focus time towards value-added activities. *The Oakwood Historical Society* has a *Google Docs* link which enables real-time editing by multiple parties of a single document, eliminating email attachments & editing lag time. In the coming year, the board will continue to advocate for expanded usage of organizational tools.

Community Outreach:

Architectural Survey for the City of Oakwood - Linda Pearson

One of the most common inquiries TOHS receives is from people asking about old photos of their Oakwood homes. Unfortunately, we don't have many. To remedy that dilemma, TOHS decided to begin a photographic archive that will include every building in town. At the beginning of the summer we advertised for volunteers to help with the photo project. As the summer went on, we continued to get more volunteers. By the end of the summer we had over 50 volunteers assisting in the project. At this point, most of the photos have been taken and returned to us. We have a volunteer who has offered to organize the photos so they will be accessible to our community in the future.

Cook Park Dedication - Mark W. Risley

The Oakwood Historical Society is proud to have been a contributor to the renovation of a small park on the corner of Oakwood Avenue and Schenck Avenue. The renovation included new landscaping with park benches, and various playground equipment, providing a wonderful green space where Oakwood residents and their children can come together and enjoy the outdoors. The park was dedicated as *Cook Park* on October 28, respectfully named after Judy Cook who served the City of Oakwood for 23 years, eight of those as our mayor.

OHS Committees

Please get involved...

Archives & Acquisitions

Lori Autterson
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Education

Linda Pearson
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&

Lisa Kell
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Events

Board members (by event)

Facilities/Grounds

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Facilities/Interior

Phyllis N. Miller, consultant

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Publicity

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Website

Melissa Dalton
mel@meldalton.com

Committee Reports (cont)**Community Outreach:***House Blueprint Project* - Tiffany Rubin

TOHS was given by the city a collection of old house blueprints which we want to distribute to the current homeowners. As a result of the project, we reunited many happy residents with their blueprints. Through their donations, we raised enough money to resume this project next year.

Oakwood Farmer's Market - Tiffany Rubin

TOHS re-entered as a presence at the market this year, having a positive impact and bringing awareness back into the community.

Fundraiser Photo Shoot - Linda Pearson

This was our 6th year offering photos taken on the grounds of the Homestead. Our photographer came for two days to take photos of individuals, groups, and even a few dogs. We had an antique car and an antique couch to use as props for the photos. This year our volunteer Santa was available for any who wanted to get early Christmas photos taken.

Grounds & Facilities - Mark W. Risley

The Long-Romspert Homestead House Museum located at 1947 Far Hills Ave. serves as the headquarters for *The Oakwood Historical Society*. The original part of the house was built in 1864 making it one of the oldest homes in Oakwood. The flower gardens are lovingly tended by longtime, dedicated gardener Jamie Sheehan who ensures the plantings provide a constantly-changing, colorful appearance throughout the warmer seasons. The lawn is regularly mowed by *Depend-A-Lawn* surrounding *The Homestead* with a carpet-like smoothness, perfect for our annual car show. City services provide yard waste removal and refuse pick-up.

Weed and pest control are ongoing tasks. Tree trimming, leaf removal and limb pick-up are performed by board volunteers. Paint touch-up, stucco repair and interior cleaning are other projects that are performed through volunteer efforts. Fortunately, no major repairs have been required for 2017. Boy Scout Eagle Projects are also an effective way to maintain *The Homestead's* classic appearance. This year, a scout is working on the restoration of the 1920s garage to make it more efficient for storage and to provide space for an automobile and artifacts depicting the early days of motoring. Another young man is renovating the handicap ramp, as well as installing a railing on the small south porch in accordance with the request of our insurance provider. Thank you to Logan Connally for the garage project, and Peter Salisbury for the ramp!

Newsletter & Graphic Design - Lisa & Zachary Kell

"Zachary and I have enjoyed being the graphic designer and editor, respectively, of the *Historian* these past years. Creating an informative and educational publication has been an ongoing process, one that we are now handing over to new volunteers to continue developing, perhaps in a fresh direction. Additionally, Zach was pleased to have accomplished the rebranding of *The Oakwood Historical Society* in 2015 and hopes the revitalization it spurred will continue. It has been a privilege to serve in our positions, and we wish our replacements and TOHS the best of luck in the future." - Lisa

If anyone is interested in becoming our new editor and/or graphic design manager, please let us know!

Committee Reports (cont)

Social Media - Melissa Dalton & Tiffany Rubin

We have continued to grow our online and social media presence! We now have several people posting to *Facebook* and, consequently, we are posting more events and updating them with photos, allowing for even more information to make it to our viewers. As a result, we are garnering more likes and receiving communications daily through our page.

TOHS's Website - Melissa Dalton & Leanne DeLange

Our website is getting a facelift! We hope that with the redesign we will be able to better serve our patrons. We were fortunate to identify a knowledgeable university student with the expertise to update *The Oakwood Historical Society* website that was originally created over 7 years ago. Although it was updated 3 years ago, we felt that a more user-friendly interface would allow for easier updates and better communication. Several objectives achieved with the redesign include: an updated user-friendly foundation such that new format updates can be made by individuals who may not possess software development skills; increased interest in *The Society's* activities using newer design & photojournalism techniques; and streamlined organization for ease of website navigation implemented by an objective third party. It is a "Commercial Off the Shelf" approach at no extra charge to *The Society*. A small gift certificate was provided to Ms. Elisabeth Bruesewitz, the website designer, for her time and progress.

The website should be fully functioning by the end of the year. Watch for our changes!

Treasurer's Report - Brian Mettling

So far, this year, TOHS has brought in \$18,296 in gross income. With the generous support from our Donors (\$5,043), Memberships (\$2,080), Local Business donations (\$1,500), and Events (\$5,660) and Merchandise Sales. We also transferred \$3,600 from our long term general savings fund for sustainment activities.

We have numerous expenses that can be broken into categories of Homestead Occupancy (\$12,415), Society Expenses (\$3,579), and Event Expenses (\$2,112). We also voted to contribute \$5,000 to support the creation of Cook Park. While most of our operating years are surplus, this year we expended \$4810 more than we brought in, mainly due to this contribution to our community.

Available Leadership Opportunities

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Archivist | Fundraisers | Research Analysts |
| Business Manager | Enthusiasts | Retail Sales Manager |
| Children's Programs | Gardening & Cooking | Secretary |
| Director / Assistants | Grounds & Facilities Manager | Treasurer |
| Community Outreach | Membership Coordinator | Vice President |
| Representatives | Museum Docents | Webmaster |
| Education Facilitators | News / Media Specialists | |
| Email Communications | Newsletter Editor / Writers | |
| Expediter | Newsletter Graphic Designer | |
| Event Coordinators | President | |



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**THE OAKWOOD
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

1947 Far Hills Avenue
Dayton, OH 45419

**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED
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The Oakwood Historical Society Membership Form

Membership Categories (Please Check One)

_____ Individual _____	\$25.00
_____ Family _____	\$35.00
_____ Business _____	\$50.00
_____ Bronze _____	\$75.00
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Date _____

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Spouse: _____

Business/Organization (if applicable): _____

Address: _____

City/State _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number _____

E-mail Address: _____

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