



The Historian

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Preserving the past, present, and future of the Oakwood Community • March 2023

Wright at Home Returns in April!

The Oakwood Historical Society and Dayton History are pleased to announce the long-awaited return of a special history event – Wright at Home. Join us for this immersive tour on April 23, from noon to 5:00 p.m.

How many times have you driven by Hawthorn Hill and said to yourself “Someday I should visit Oakwood’s iconic landmark.” Well today is the day! The Wright at Home event features an open-house style experience in which knowledgeable docents are positioned throughout the home where Orville, Katharine and their father, Bishop Milton Wright, lived. They will share stories about the Wright family and about some of the illustrious visitors to Hawthorn Hill such as Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, and even Charles Lindbergh.

In addition to the house tour, docents will be available to take you on a short neighborhood walking tour where you will hear about Orville’s neighbors. Learn about the founder of Cheez-It crackers; a famous Dayton architect who designed many of the prominent homes and buildings in Oakwood; the rags-to-riches story of a German immigrant who earned the title “Maker of Machines”, and more. After the tours, relax with some light refreshments including Orville’s favorite cookies, meet Stephen Wright, great-grandnephew of Wilbur and Orville Wright, and peruse the gifts and books for sale about Oakwood and the Wright brothers.

Tickets can be purchased at www.shop.daytonhistory.org. Proceeds from this event will directly benefit Dayton History and the Oakwood Historical Society, two non-profit organizations dedicated to preserving and celebrating the history of our community. We hope to see you there!



Hawthorn Hill circa 1914

Courtesy of Wright State University Special Collections and Archives



News from the Homestead

The Long-Romspert House Museum and Homestead began its two-year preservation and improvement plan with the assistance of many volunteers, sponsors and Scouting projects.

Recently our summer kitchen cupola was safely removed by volunteer extraordinaire, Brian Sell. The cupola was then entirely refurbished and rebuilt by Troop 101 Scout Adam Chodkowski and his crew during an untimely cold wave. Wood was donated by Requarth and additional supplies by Adam’s family. The result is outstanding, and the cupola is now over-wintering in our summer kitchen, awaiting spring painting before (somehow) returning to the top of the summer kitchen. Where there is a will....

We’re also fortunate to be the beneficiary of a new, lovely refuse corral complete with concrete pad, trellis and stone garden path. Such an improvement to our once unsightly refuse area is thanks to Eagle Scout candidate David Salisbury, many volunteers, and Houser Concrete & Asphalt. These improvements were in addition to the summer’s earlier improvements of refurbishing our accessible ramp by Scout Henry Bolmida and the kitchen garden expansion by Scout Patrick Toussaint.

The homestead will receive a major facelift this spring with the exterior painting of the main building. Be on the lookout for a gorgeous “new” grand old lady on Far Hills Avenue.

Oakwood Historical Society 2023 Officers & Board of Trustees

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Far Hills Speaker Series

Historical Research/Archives

Tom Morrow

David Schmidt

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Board Meetings

Fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

1947 Far Hills Avenue (The Homestead)

Greetings Members,

The year 2023 is promising to be another great one for the Society!

We are partnering with Dayton History to bring back the very popular Wright at Home tour on April 23 – and it promises to be better than ever. You'll get the chance to tour inside Hawthorn Hill, join a docent-led walking tour of the surrounding neighborhood and much more. Our popular Far Hills Speaker Series in partnership with Wright Memorial Public Library continues this spring with some fascinating and engaging speakers and topics. We hope to see you at the library while we learn more about Oakwood's varied and beautiful architecture and both the past – and present – amazing gardens of Oakwood.

The Long-Romspert House Museum & Homestead is continuing to undergo many additional improvements this year – including the much-needed exterior painting of the house this spring. And we are now working to improve and revitalize our interior museum space to allow for more engaging exhibits and to better showcase the rich variety and scope of Oakwood's storied history. Our goal is to soon open our doors for more tours and open houses – and to better share this history with the community.

And our treasured Archives has just completed the first big stage of its renovation through the generous donations and tireless commitment of many – the transformation promises to further protect and preserve our history while providing a more ideal environment for our researchers and archivists as we continue onward with our mission.

The Society also warmly welcomes new 2023-2024 Board Members Tonya Dickie, Jeremiah Jenkins and Melissa Schlorman – who join us in our mission. We also welcome back all nine of our returning officers and board members. Thank you all for your continuing efforts and vision as we embark on our 49th year! And, as always – thank you to all our valued members, talented volunteers and dedicated sponsors. We are making history!

Kind regards,

Debra Edwards

President, The Oakwood Historical Society

Children's Summer Gardening Program

The Children's Summer Gardening Program will be returning this year. There will be regular sessions spread over the months of June, July, and August, held in the kitchen garden behind the homestead. Always a favorite, the activities include planting, harvesting, and making snacks from the produce. Watch for details on our website (www.oakwoodhistory.org) around the end of April. Slots are limited and the program fills quickly.



**THE OAKWOOD
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**



**ANNUAL REPORT
2022**



Archives and Acquisitions Committee

Debra Edwards, Chair

The Archives/Acquisitions Committee is responsible for the collecting, preserving, recording and displaying of documents and other artifacts of importance to the history of Oakwood. It also maintains the Society's archives and resource library.

It has been a busy and tremendous year for the Archives Committee, as we embarked on our two-year master plan of implementing more modern archival/preservation practices and improved organization of our archives—and much has been accomplished this past year through the countless hours of volunteer work and the generous donations of many.

We've also been the grateful recipient of many valuable artifacts that have been donated to the Society this past year, including a superb collection of vintage dresses, ranging from the 1880s to 1920s and originally belonging to one prominent Oakwood citizen, several historical photographs, documents, and a Runnymede Playhouse and 1906 Dayton Golf Club trophy. We have also received several items once belonging to the late Dorothy Carr.

Our hope is that our master plan will be completed during 2023 with a more conducive environment for both our treasures and researchers. We will also concentrate our efforts on pursuing grant opportunities that we enable us to further sustain and improve the archives and protect our varied collections for future generations.

Education Committee

Linda Pearson, Chair

The Education Committee is responsible for the development of educational programs for primary and secondary grades as well as for the general public. The programs include hands-on, interactive, lecture, and demonstration and are intended to teach listeners and participants about Oakwood history.

We once again offered our **Children's Summer Garden Program** where elementary-age children learned to plant, care for, and harvest summer vegetables and herbs, just as residents from years past. The children also prepared and ate a snack from the garden at each session.

In the spring, we hosted four sessions of 3rd grade Oakwood Schools elementary students plus a session for home-schooled children, who visited us as part of the **Social Studies curriculum** on the Community.

Four **Scout Eagle projects** provided us with garden and grounds improvements, which made a big difference for us, and we greatly appreciate their several hundred hours of service.

Using our lovely grounds, we offered **Fall Photo Sessions** to the community at a reasonable price. The community support was much appreciated and raised funds for ongoing maintenance.

We offered sessions on the long-standing art of how to tap maple trees and harvest the sap for **maple syrup**, hosted at the Grays' home, The Farm.

Our popular **Far Hills Speakers Series** held six successful and well-attended presentations. This program, which we run in partnership with Wright Memorial Public Library, is essential to our continuing mission of sharing our history with the community.

Donor Services

Leigh Turben, Chair

Donor Services works with our members, sponsors and donors to ensure financial support for the Society and its activities.

TOHS has partnered with The Dayton Foundation to offer an easy way to donate to your favorite non-profit organization. The Oakwood Historical Society currently has an Endowment Fund at The Dayton Foundation, and a link on our website (on the homepage) that will take you directly to their gifting service.

Using this link, we have participated in Giving Tuesday, and Year-End Giving campaigns, where funds are directly deposited into The Oakwood Historical Society's Endowment Fund. As a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization, we rely on the generosity of our members, sponsors and donors, and all donations are tax-deductible. Thank you for your ongoing support!

Maintenance Committee

Michele Oaks, Chair

The Maintenance Committee is responsible for the upkeep and repair of the Homestead buildings both inside and out, and any improvements/renovations to the buildings.

We've made significant progress toward the restoration of The Homestead this year, including:

- Repair of front porch entry stairs
- Reconstruction and repair of Summer Kitchen Cupola
- Enlargement of footprint of Kitchen Garden and painting of the wood perimeter fence
- Trash Enclosure Construction: concrete pad and wood screen
- Removal of two dead trees and pruning dead limbs on multiple trees
- Application of opaque stain on wood, ADA ramp
- Survey of Interior and Exterior Emergency and pathway lighting

This spring we will commence painting of the historic house exterior.

The goal for the Maintenance Committee in 2023 is to develop and implement a business plan which would establish an operating budget and include a possible Capital Campaign. This business plan would identify and allocate the needed money for annual repairs and maintenance as well as establish a separate account for funding long-term restoration of the House Museum.

Membership Committee

Leigh Turben, Membership Chair & Barb Miller, CRM Chair

The Membership Committee is responsible for promoting membership in the Society, and for maintaining membership records, including our mail distribution list.

The Society implemented a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system three years ago called Little Green Light, and it has been a wonderful tool to help us manage our memberships, sponsors and donors. Today we have 317 patrons, of which 193 are active:

- Individual: 60
- Individual Senior 65+: 27
- Individual Military: 2
- Family: 70
- Family Senior 65+: 21
- Family Military, Active: 6
- Bronze (\$75): 4
- Silver (\$100): 17
- Gold (\$200): 11
- Diamond (>\$200): 3
- Lifetime (no longer offered): 43
- Business: 1
- Complimentary (public entities and other historical societies): 28
- Sponsor: 24

The CRM system not only tracks your memberships, but it also assists us by sending reminder letters or emails when your memberships are expiring. Recently we implemented email reminder notices, and the response hasn't been as successful. We will continue to use email notifications but will follow-up with a paper letter if we haven't received your renewal. Please help us go green and check your spam folder to see if our reminder notice ended there. Thank you!

2022 Annual Financial Report

For the 12-month period ending December 31, 2022

Prepared by Treasurer Laura Bettinger

Revenue

Donations	\$9,037.
Membership Dues	4,870.
Special Events Profits	8,842.
Sponsorships	1,600.
Historical Markers*	2,511.
Merchandise Sales	<u>472.</u>
Total Revenue	\$27,332.

Expense

Utilities	\$5,973.
Property Maintenance	2,823.
Gardens and Grounds	4,551.
Newsletter, Postage, and Office	3,803.
Historical Markers*	3,245.
Insurance	4,520.
Professional Fees	<u>678.</u>
Total Expense	\$25,593.

Net Income **\$1,739.**

Capital Improvements

Front Steps	\$2,915.
Gutters and Roof	<u>1,010.</u>
Total Capital	\$3,925.

Net Cash **-\$2,187.**

**Additional funds were donated in 2021 for 2022 Historical Markers.*

Far Hills Speaker Series – Spring 2023 Upcoming Events

The Spring 2023 Far Hills Speaker Series (FHSS) celebrates all things Oakwood and Miami Valley. Please join us at the Wright Memorial Public Library Community Room for the remaining events in the Spring Series!



Classic Architecture of Oakwood with Speaker Mark Risley

Sunday, March 19 at 2:00 pm

Continuing last year’s celebration of the 150th anniversary of Oakwood’s platting, this lecture explores the multitude of architectural styles within Oakwood. The rich diversity of styles is reflective of our community and its history. As examples of our early 20th Century architecture are shared, the remarkable artistic details of the houses and historical stories associated with them will come to light.

Mark Risley is an active member of the Oakwood and larger Dayton community. Trained as an air traffic controller, he worked and retired from ABX Air, Inc. Mark became involved in the Oakwood Historical Society in 2006 and is President Emeritus, serving as President in 2007, 2011, and 2014-15. Mark currently serves on the Oakwood Budget Review Committee. Staying engaged in history and education, Mark is a lecturer on a variety of topics, including the Great Flood of 1913, craftsman homes, the Mound Builders and Oakwood’s Hidden Parks, and is an instructor for the University of Dayton’s Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Mark is also a contributor to the Oakwood Register’s Distinctive Homes section.



Gardens of Oakwood with The Garden Club of Dayton

Sunday, April 16 at 2:00 pm

On June 29, 1922, Katharine Houk Talbott gathered a group of her gardening friends to her home “Runnymede” in Dayton to form a garden club. The stated objective of the Garden Club of Dayton was to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening, to aid in the protection of native plants and birds and to encourage civic planting.

Oakwood residents Katharine Houk Talbott and Ethel Rike were the first two presidents of the Garden Club of Dayton. They are credited with its early success and wide recognition as one of the most outstanding cultural influences in Dayton. Three other members, Katherine Siebenthaler, Agnes Darrow and Marie Aull were given special mention for their exceptional contributions and service to the club.

The Garden Club of Dayton continues this mission to this day. In this presentation, Garden Club of Dayton members will walk us through the history of gardening in Oakwood. Beginning with the early landscaped formal gardens of Oakwood, through the changes gardens have undergone over the decades, we will welcome spring with this lecture on plants and gardens. There will be particular emphasis given to the current trend of native plants in residential gardens.

Registration requested: www.wrightlibrary.org

Current Health Department guidelines will be adhered to. Lectures may also be attended via Zoom (see Wright Memorial Public Library website for Zoom link).



CAROL J. HOLM
ATTORNEY AT LAW
Dayton, Ohio



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**THE OAKWOOD
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

1947 Far Hills Avenue
Dayton, OH 45419

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED
DATED MATERIAL

The Oakwood Historical Society Membership Form

Membership Categories *(Please check one)*

- Individual \$25.00
- Family \$35.00
- Business \$50.00
- Bronze \$75.00
- Silver \$100.00
- Gold \$200.00

Receive a \$5 Discount *(Check if applicable)*

- Student
- Senior
- Active Military

Please make Checks Payable to:

The Oakwood Historical Society

Mail Checks to: 1947 Far Hills Ave., Dayton, OH 45419

To Pay via Credit Card: Visit www.OakwoodHistory.org
and click "Get Involved", and then "Join"

Date _____

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Spouse/Partner _____

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.