



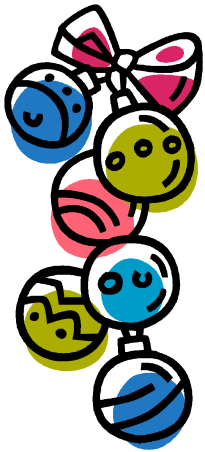
1947 Far Hills Avenue
Dayton, OH 45419

THE OAKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Quarterly

Issue 4

December 2010



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Holidays at the Homestead

Join the Oakwood Historical Society for "Holidays at the Homestead" on Sunday, Dec 12th from 2:00 to 5:00 PM at the Long-Romsperst Homestead, 1947 Far Hills Avenue, just one block from Wright Library.

Come and enjoy traditional holiday decorations, treats, and music at this public open house. This popular event is highlighted by society members dressed in costume assisting bakers and decorators of all ages in making period-appropriate Christmas goodies.

We are also looking for volunteer pianists to play Christmas songs on the grand piano during the open house. To put your name on the list or for more information, please contact Linda Pearson at (937) 648-9702 or lindapinoh@gmail.com. All ages and levels of learners are welcome.

The Long-Romsperst Homestead House Museum features period furnishings, historic artifacts and gallery displays highlighting American life from the 1860s to the 1920s.

There is limited handicapped parking behind the Homestead and visitors are encouraged to use nearby on-street parking or enjoy a walk to this historic Oakwood landmark. It's a great way to spend the afternoon before the "Lighting of Oakwood" in the evening.

We hope to see you Sunday, December 12th.



OHS Committees

Please get involved . . .

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A Message from the President

The holiday season is upon us! The Oakwood Historical Society is making preparations, too. We recently hosted our annual dinner and meeting at the Dayton Country Club. I hope that you were able to join us for a presentation on the Miami-Erie Canal System and its influence on the formation and shape of Oakwood. It was also a time to celebrate our accomplishments of the year.

I'd like to extend a huge thank you and congratulations to Linda Pearson and Lisa Kell who created and ran the most wonderful garden program for children this summer. This monthly program was outstanding. I'd like to also celebrate Mark Risley and his committee for the creation of the Shafor Heights Walking Tour. If you have not completed this walking tour yet, I'd encourage you to do so. Thanks, Mark for your leadership and wisdom on this project.

I'd also like to thank Mark Risley and Linda Pearson for stepping up into leadership roles for the Oakwood Historical Society next year. Mark will be president, and Linda his vice-president. Both have several years' experience volunteering at the society and around town. We are in good hands.

Preparations are underway for our annual Holiday Open House on December 12th at 2p.m. Please join us for an afternoon of holiday cheer. More details are in this newsletter.

On a final note, as you are pondering your New Year's resolutions, may I ask that you consider volunteering at the historical society? We have a variety of opportunities, and are particularly looking for people to help with publicity, membership, and mailings. I love volunteering with the historical society. It is a wonderful chance to come together with a group of diverse individuals all interested in the City of Oakwood. It's a unique opportunity to learn about our city and develop a strong sense of community and place. Please email me at mwittmer@gmail.com if you would be interested in getting involved.

Thanks for your support and all the best for a great holiday season!

—Mackensie Wittmer

New Exhibit: Ethel's Bells

The generosity of Ethel Romspert began in 1985 with her gift of the Homestead to our community and continues through to today as the Oakwood Historical Society receives more of her possessions many with personal documentation. Through them, we are able to tell the story of early Oakwood with rich detail and make the Homestead a living history.

A recent "find" returned to us by Dayton History was a box of bells that Ethel collected over the years. There are over 30 bells of all shapes and sizes, each having a special memory Ethel thought worth preserving. Each bell is numbered; a loose-leaf notebook describes each one in her careful, school teacher's handwriting.

Some of the bells in Ethel's collection are shown in the photo; some of the descriptions are copied here revealing personal stories of family and friends. (The number of the bell is in parentheses.)

Sleigh Bells: A strand of 31 bells used in the 1890's, perhaps earlier, worn around the body of the horse owned by my father and mother—Mr. & Mrs. A.S. Gilbert—Germantown (1)

School bell used in the little country school, the Moses School, just north of Germantown, by Aunt Laura Gilbert—her first school, about 1885 (2) Note: Aunt Laura was an artist as well as a teacher; two of her paintings are in the Homestead.

School bell used by A.H. Romspert, Laura's Long's husband, Hab's grandfather, when he taught in the little country school on Dorothy Lane in 1870 (5)

Bell purchased for a miniature Christmas Tree, December 1910 at 1947 Far Hills Ave. "First Christmas of our marriage." (7)

Christmas Tree bell—1923. "First Christmas Tree in the new wing at 1947 Far Hills Ave." (8)

Bells off Sleigh bells given to me by Mrs. Laura Romspert. (10)

Other bells were given to Ethel by friends and her parents from travels and in gift exchanges for the Friendly Garden Club from 1941 through 1957.

An exhibit of Ethel's collection is now in the new museum room. During your next visit to the Homestead, be sure to stop in and look at this impressive and well documented collection.

—Harry Ebeling

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SOCIETY
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Ethel's Bell Collection

Meet Ed Herrman

Attention Snowbirds!

We all wish you a great time down South—really we do, but please don't make us pay! Here's what happens to us when you're gone and how you can help.

Even though you may have your mail on hold, when we mail the newsletter and other notices to you, the U.S. Post Office returns the pieces to us and charges us 50¢! Would you please help your society by letting us know how to handle your mail by sending us a note indicating the option that works for you?

Hold my mail until _____ (specify date)

Send my mail to the address below until _____ (specify date)

Remove my name from the mailing list until _____ (specify date)

Please mail your preference to the Oakwood Historical Society at 1947 Far Hills Avenue.

Thank you for your support!

Visitors familiar with the Homestead built by Harry Long know that it was home to several families. Harry's daughter, Laura Romspert, moved her family back to the home when her husband died. The south side of the house was converted to a separate house for Mr. Bartch and his daughters; a new home was added to the north side for Laura's son Harry and his wife Ethel.



It's a rare treat to find someone who actually knew the residents of the Homestead. Meet Edgar Herrman. Born and raised in Oakwood, Ed can trace his family tree back to John Shroyer, one of the early settlers in Oakwood, and to Laura Romspert. As a young boy, Ed would ride along with his grandmother to visit her aunt Laura--or Aunt Loll, as she was called. *In the First Person* is Ed's account of visits to the Homestead.

Though Ed has lived in several cities, he has always considered Oakwood home. (Some members may have heard his presentation on the National Road.) Ed and his wife, Evie, are now back in the area and both are enthusiastic supporters of the Oakwood Historical Society.

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A Homestead Visit—In the First Person

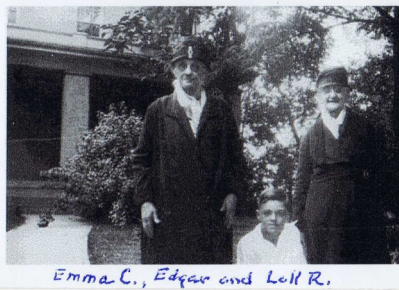
In the late 1920s and the early 1930s, my Grandmother Moore learned to drive a new 1927 Essex Super Six. Her trips were in Oakwood, Beavertown, Bellbrook, Belmont, Fairmont, Centerville and William's Grocery on Park Avenue. She visited aunts, cousins and her many friends. She never had an accident and only one flat tire; she bought gas from Will James for about 12¢ a gallon.

When I wasn't in school, Grandma would include me when she took the "Ladies" on the trips. The older ladies always wore black dresses, coats, hats, but not Grandma Moore. She always wore a bright print dress and was neatly tailored. We would ride in her Essex, which she called "Billy" with the ladies in the back seat and me in the front.

We parked in back like we do now and walked through the breezeway to enter Aunt Loll's kitchen without knocking. She would answer our calls while staying seated in her favorite chair in the living room.

After everyone was seated in their customary places on the couch or chairs, the conversation began. It covered weather, taxes, health, doctor's house calls, neighbors and politics -- President Roosevelt always received a great amount of conversation! There also were repeated subjects: Loll's rental properties with tenants' challenges, the price of groceries, and lots of gossip!

There weren't any books for me to peruse so I spent my time listening and looking at things in the room. The arms and backs of chairs and couch were covered with lace doilies. The mantel held a weather vane, a little Swiss house with a boy and girl going in or coming out, depending on the weather. On the hearth was an ever alert china fox terrier. The rug had squares, which I would count dozens of times.



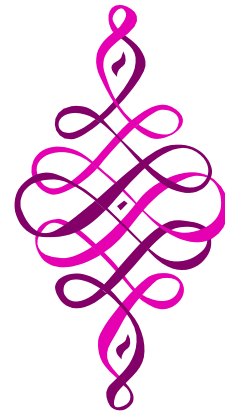
Aunt Loll always sat by the second south window with a large black purse next to the chair. On every move the purse was with her. The tall windows had similar length lace curtains. The wallpaper was a faded neutral cream with some little design. I can't remember where family pictures hung. She had a radio, but I believe that was in the next room, where in the winter months the coal stove was located. Surprisingly, I never recall any of the ladies having to use the bathroom, which may be because of those steep steps to the second floor.

When I grew tired of all the talk, I would escape to the yard. Nothing was different from previous visits, but it was good to be outside. The neighborhood was not yet developed, but I do remember a few houses on Grandon Road. The summer kitchen was used for doing laundry, washing on one side and drying on the other.

I seldom went to the north side of the house because that's where the "Unknowns" lived, Harry and Ethel Romspert. I never saw them in any of my visits. There was a small garage in the back that served "Hab's" Ford. I know this because I peeked in the window when I felt it was safe to do so. The south part of the property was different. In summer months, that part of the yard had attractive flowerbeds, and occasionally the Bartch sisters, Mealy and Creety, would be present in their gardens with friendly greetings. (continued, page 7)

Dorothy Lane Market's Good Neighbor Program

In the coming year, DLM will donate \$40,000 to area non-profits. By registering your DLM Club Card at the customer service desk or online, you can choose an organization to support. You must re-register each year. Each time your card is scanned, the organization is credited with the purchase. At the end of the year, non-profits receive a pro-rated portion of the total \$40,000. Please consider registering your DLM Club Card for the Oakwood Historical Society. Last year we received over \$100 from this program!



Oakwood Historical Society 2010 Winter Holiday Programs

Celebrating the Roaring 20's

ELEMENTARY CHILDREN Grades 1-6, K with older sibling

Celebrate the holidays of the 1920's, a time of progress and prosperity in Dayton. Electricity was reaching many of the homes in the area, and everyone wanted an electric train under their tree. We will celebrate this fun time period with baking, making ornaments, and learning about the 1920's. Everyone will find out what a Glitterhouse is and make one to take home.

Two programs, each two sessions long.

Session 1: Saturday & Sunday, Dec 18 & 19, 2 p.m. to 4:30p.m

Session 2: Monday & Tuesday, Dec 20 & 21, 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon

Program Registration

Parent's Name(s) _____
 Address _____
 Phone Number(s) _____
 Parents Email(s) _____

Child's Name(s) _____ Grade ____ Session 1: _____ Session 2: _____
 Circle Applicable Rate: \$20 Member \$30 Non Member (see membership coupon on last page)

Mail completed application and payment to:

Oakwood Historical Society, Attention Children's Programs, 1947 Far Hills Ave., Dayton, OH 45419

For questions, call Linda Pearson at (937) 648-9702 or Lindapinoh@gmail.com

To be put on our email list for announcements of future programs, please send an e-mail to Lindapinoh@gmail.com. Flyers are NOT distributed to the schools for all programs. Upcoming programs include: Seasons in the Garden, monthly from April to Oct 2011. Children's historic summer programs: Grades 1-3 June 27-30, 2011. Grades 4-6 June 20-22, 2011.

Meet Ed Herrman (from page 1)

Finally the ladies would appear and we would take our assigned seats in Billy. Grandma would step on the clutch pedal and put her right foot on the starter and the Super Six engine would roar into action ---next shift to "first" gear and then clutch to "second" and down the south drive. Far Hills was very different than it is today; usually there wasn't any traffic to hinder our entrance to the street. On the way home there usually were many remarks about what they heard and saw. Nothing vicious, just ladies' talk!

--Edgar Herrman



Edgar Jr. and Carrie Moore - new 1927 Essex "Billie"

Last Chance for Historic Plaques

The Oakwood Historical Society is re-issuing the Schantz Park Historic District plaques for sale, for only the second and most likely the last time since they were first available in 1995. This National Register Historic District is a treasure for our city, and we're sure many residents of the park will want to proudly display the plaque. For residents not living in the park, the plaque may be a perfect gift for friends who live there.

Which Homes Can Display the Plaques?

Any home within the boundaries of the designated historic district can display the plaque. Please see the diagram of the park for the specific boundaries.

How much does a plaque cost?

The cost is \$100 per plaque if 10 orders are received or \$150 if less than 10 orders are received. If fewer than 10 orders are received, you will be notified that the higher amount is due. Please put your telephone number on your check.

How do I order a plaque?

Make a check payable to the Oakwood Historical Society and then either mail it to the Society or Harrison Gowdy.

Oakwood Historical Society
 1947 Far Hills Avenue
 Dayton, OH 45419

Harrison Gowdy
 452 Irving Avenue
 Dayton, OH 45409

What if I need more information?

For questions, contact Harrison by email at stammgowdy@sbcglobal.net.



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Please renew your membership!

Oakwood Historical Society Membership Form

Membership Categories (please check one)

- Student\$10.00
 Individual Adult.....\$20.00
 Family\$30.00
 Business\$30.00
 Sponsoring\$50.00
 Sustaining \$100.00
 Patron \$200.00

Date _____

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Spouse: _____

Business/Organization (if applicable): _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____ Zip: _____

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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 and mail to: 1947 Far Hills Ave, Dayton, OH 45419