



1947 Far Hills Avenue  
Dayton, OH 45419

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## For the Record: Oakwood and the Flood of 1913

--Harrison Stamm Gowdy

Dayton is less than a year away from remembering one of its most famous events—the Flood of 1913. Stories about the flood, often called Ohio's greatest natural disaster, and how it greatly changed the City of Dayton are well documented. For years, however, another story has also been told: The development of Oakwood was the result of the flood. The fact is the development of our city was already well under way and, with or without the flood, its path was already laid by the tracks of streetcar lines running along Far Hills Avenue.

The flood was in March and, after six days, the city counted more than 360 people dead, 65,000 people without homes, 20,000 homes destroyed, and a staggering amount of property damage and debris throughout the city totaling \$2 billion in today's dollars.



The Kuhns Building at 4th and Main Streets

The cleanup took over a year and the economic recovery took nearly a decade. The damage was centered on downtown and to the residents and businesses within the city limits. These areas were a mixture of early residential properties that were at one time the most sought-after homes, but over the years had become more lower- and middle-class housing due to their location adjacent to industrial factories and downtown businesses.

See Flood on page 4

### 1913 Flood Timeline

<p>3/21, Friday:</p> <p><i>Rain, strong winds, temperatures in the 60s</i></p>	<p>3/22, Saturday:</p> <p><i>Sunny, second storm, temperatures falling to the 20s; saturated ground freezes</i></p>	<p>3/23, Easter Sunday:</p> <p><i>Between 8-11 inches of rain; river reaches an all-time high stage of 11.6 feet.</i></p>	<p>3/25, Tuesday:</p> <p><i>Herman Street (in North Dayton) levee weakens; 6 a.m. water overflows levees; 8 a.m. downtown levees fail</i></p>	<p>3/26, Wednesday:</p> <p><i>Water 20-feet deep in downtown; gas explosions start several fires, including one near 5th and Wilkinson that destroys a city block.</i></p>
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## Message from the President

Time flies when you're having fun! How did we suddenly end up half way through the calendar year? That's what happened as we prepared for Celebrating Scouting at our April Open House. Be sure to read Harry's article as he continues the history of scouting with the Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts, and to see more photos from this fun event go to [www.oakwoodhistory.org](http://www.oakwoodhistory.org).

To give you an idea of what else the society has been busy with this spring, here is a quick list! Three well attended lectures held at Wright Library, a traveling history program for third-grade students at Harman Elementary School, the annual Wine Tasting and fundraiser after That Day in May, a special exhibit of artwork by Oakwood native David Smith, six high-school students providing volunteer service at the Homestead, many tours of the Homestead at the request of various civic groups, and historic information developed for the dedication of Creager Field as a dog park.

In this issue, you'll read several articles about the 1913 Flood. As the anniversary year approaches, you may be wondering what Oakwood was like in the years before. "For the Record" and "10 Facts about Oakwood" do exactly that as Harrison and Mackensie give us a better and more accurate understanding of our history.

Our regular articles on architecture and the children's program are inside too and a new one on "Announcements" where you can read more about our summer intern and what's planned for the next open house in August.

For all readers, and especially for all our loyal supporters over the years, we have exciting news. We have just learned that The Oakwood Historical Society has been selected to receive a 2012 Historic Preservation Award from Dayton History. This comes after years spent by many volunteers working on the historical homestead, both the physical facility and the programs. The award will be given out on July 26 at 5:00 p.m. during Dayton History's Annual Meeting. We encourage members of the historical society to attend this event. Watch our website and local media for more details as the date draws near.



*Linda Pearson*

Linda Pearson

## Committee Reports

### Archives & Acquisitions

Mr. & Mrs. Jewett of Centerville recently donated three pieces of Eastlake furniture. They are in good condition and are currently on display in the music room.

Work continues in cleaning out files in the Archives (in the basement of the city building) to make space for the ever increasing number of historical materials. New board members have an interest in maintaining these materials; they will be rearranging and indexing them. This effort will support the regular requests from researchers and groups having celebrations.

### Education

The Seasons in the Garden program are ongoing and preparations are in process for the children's Summer Programs.

### Facilities/Grounds

Thanks to an early spring, the gardens have been in bloom since late March. Like many older homes, there is a list of items to be done from painting to screen door repair to gutter guard installation and beyond. Eagle Scout projects have played a large role over the years in repairing or updating the Long-Romspert Homestead. This year will be no different as a project is in the planning stages to replenish the gravel driveway and install a few low stone walls along cutaway areas of the driveway. It is truly an ongoing, team effort to maintain "The Homestead" as one of Oakwood's premier landmarks.

## Scouting in Oakwood, Part 2

--Harry Ebeling

*In the last issue of the newsletter, we began the story of scouting in Oakwood highlighting the Boy Scouts; with this issue, we continue the summary with the Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts. We learned much by sharing information, stories, pictures and artifacts at the Open House in April, and, while impossible to condense in a single article, I'll try to provide a snapshot of these groups in our city.*

### Cub Scouts

There are several old reports about Cub Scouts, but the most consistent information indicates the scouts were established 1929 as a national pilot project in several towns, including Dayton. The first pack was chartered as No. 1 at Victory ME Church on North Dixie Drive on September 5, 1930.

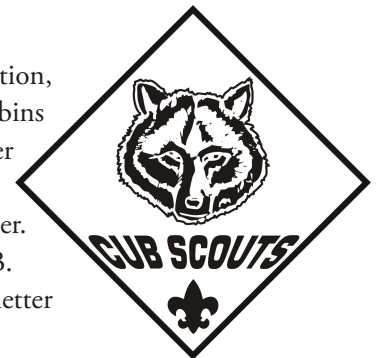
St. Paul's Church in Oakwood sponsored Pack 2, which received its charter on October 13, 1930. Mr. Whitehead was the Regional Scout Leader, and Insko Williams (an early Oakwood resident and an Eagle Scout from Christ Episcopal Church), was the Pack Advisor with Don Chase as Cub Master.



The Oakwood boys marched in a Scout Jamboree at the State Fairgrounds in Columbus that year, a few with uniforms designed locally using the Oakwood school colors of blue and gold. The parade was filmed by Pathe News and shown locally in theaters, thus establishing the uniform nationally by default.

Our clippings file is empty for the 1930s and little is recorded about the Depression era, but Pack 101 weathered the storm through the war years with pack meetings held at various homes and monitored by den mothers and scout leaders. Activities included earning the gold-and-silver arrow badges as boys progressed through Wolf, Bear, and Lion ranks advancing to Boy Scout status.

During World War II, the scouts spent time on scrap collection, which was deposited on large wooden red, white, and blue bins located strategically throughout the city. For three years after the war, a circus was held to gather food for Europe. Among the Cubmasters were Dan Schryver and L.O. Warner. In 1947, a second Pack was formed at the Oakwood E.U. B. (now the Methodist Church on Shafor Boulevard. A 1948 letter lists 86 boys in Pack 101 and 82 boys in Pack 152.



A report of a "Roundup" in February 1950 shows local fathers dressed in Western outfits for recognition of Cubs, Scouts, and Explorers. Named in the report are Warner Kiefaber, Carl Foreman, John Olt, Jack Reeder, and Lucien Ahlers; Milton Wagner was elected Council Leader for the 14th successive year. Ticket stubs show an outing to Cincinnati for a ball game for Packs 101 and 151 in 1940. These names show a high level of interest and support from the community.

Cub Scouts participated in outdoor events at our Open House. Pictures of blue-and-gold banquets through the years were displayed along with pictures of loyal parents and leaders such as James Rich, Chuck McCune, Don Stutson, Bob Reemelin, and Jim Erbaugh.



### Facilities/Interior

Work has been completed on the chimneys (identified as the source of the water problem); interior repairs are underway with plastering and repainting. Work on a new screen door (for the side entrance) is also in process.

### Research & Outreach

The Town of Oakwood lecture was presented in April with a request from the Wright Library staff for a repeat presentation. Revisions to the walking-tour booklet are in process and collaborations with the library staff continue.

### Programs & Presentations

Presented the annual "traveling show" to the students at Harman School  
Hosted private tours of the Homestead, including groups from 10 Wilmington Place, the Historical Society of Vandalia-Butler, and the Red Hat Society Presented The Thunderstorm and The Classic Architecture of Oakwood Homes

## For the Record: Oakwood and the Flood of 1913

(continued)

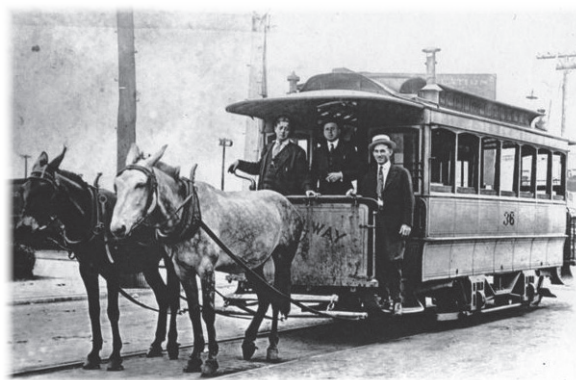
**B**y 1913, the overall picture of downtown Dayton was changing as the outlying streetcar neighborhoods were growing. These neighborhoods included Oakwood, Dayton View, South Park, Grafton Hill, and St. Anne's Hill. They advertised modern living with new homes, no businesses within residential areas, parks and sidewalks, clean safe environments with yards, trees, and fresh air. When the flood came, these unaffected areas certainly looked more promising to residents rebuilding and to city leaders who could concentrate on making a new modern downtown.

The story that the flood was the reason for the creation of Oakwood is not true. Development of the city began years before as streetcars allowed citizens to travel in 10 minutes as far as they could walk in 30 minutes and it was the primary mode of transportation for all residents.

Oakwood was bustling in the teens and twenties. Developers would entice prospective buyers with advertisements stating that the Oakwood streetcar offered 12-minute service to the center of Dayton with an under 5-minute schedule while still being *"up where the birds sing—up where you can enjoy the hot summer days in the shade of stately forest trees—up where you can live a simple life and yet have every city convenience at your fingertips."* Bill Biddle, an early resident describes his neighborhood as *"Peach Orchard was a dirt street—well oiled...I didn't own a car when I moved out here. I rode the Oakwood Streetcar and walked 2 and 1/2 blocks. It seemed like every day when I went to work and came back there was a new house started."*

Today, the suburban model remains much the same with transportation driving growth. As improvements continue in our highway system and travel becomes easier we continue to sprawl further away from the older built-up areas. The I-75 corridor between Cincinnati and Dayton is now known as a megalopolis with Warren County as the second largest growing area in Ohio. The omnibus that began this cycle is now known as the Greater Dayton RTA and it too has recently announced expanding its routes in Greene and Warren counties and eliminating the electric trolleys we have in Oakwood for diesel buses.

Oakwood's history as a first suburb makes it the unique and beautiful place we experience everyday. While many first-tier suburbs are experiencing central city-like challenges—aging infrastructure, deteriorating schools and commercial corridors, and inadequate housing—Oakwood is one of the more fortunate for it remains affluent and small and continues to be an anchor for metropolitan stability.



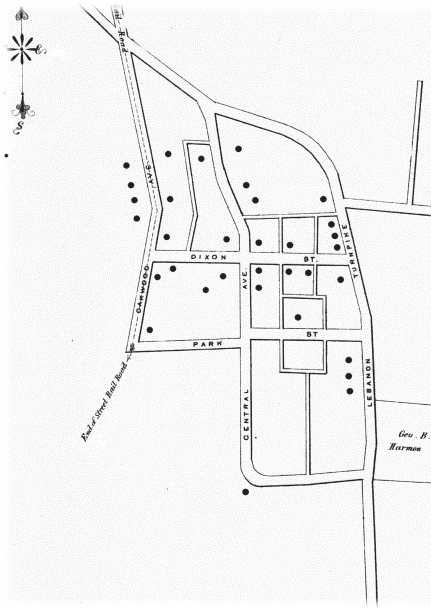
## 10 Facts about Oakwood - 1908

--Mackensie Wittmer

- 28 homes are in the defined "Town of Oakwood."
- 67 homes are in the area that would become the City of Oakwood.
- Children attend school in a red brick schoolhouse on Cincinnati Pike (today's West Schantz, Sugar Camp).



703 Oakwood Avenue



Homes in 1910

- East Drive (not Dorothy Lane) was the main east-west road.
- 36 men signed the petition to incorporate as a city in 1907 to stave off annexation into the City of Dayton
- Walter Creager was the first marshall; his gun is on display at the Oakwood City Building.
- H. E. Talbott, an engineer, was the first mayor; city council meet in the garage of 703 Oakwood Avenue.
- One of the first city expenditures was for 2 cuspidors (spittoons).
- Col. Robert Patterson's log cabin sat on the north corner of Five Points intersection (Far Hills, Oakwood, and Thurston Avenues); it was moved there by John H. Patterson and deeded as a park to the Village of Oakwood in his will.
- Today's Schantz Historic Park District was being constructed on 188 lots by Adam Schantz Jr., brewer of Schantz & Schwind beer and bottler of Lily Water.

## Oakwood Architecture *Italian Renaissance*

--Mark Risley

**T**his design originated during the Renaissance Period which lasted from the late 13th to early 16th centuries. It became a popular revival style in America from 1890 to 1935, fitting nicely into Oakwood's housing expansion of the early 20th century.

The Mediterranean influence is apparent in the use of stucco and tile; details include a hipped (or four surfaced) tile roof with wide, overhanging eaves, sometimes fitted with decorative brackets. First story windows and entryways are usually full length with arches supported by artistic columns. The stucco or stone façade is normally, but not always, symmetrical.



Oakwood has many well-preserved examples of this architectural style with its artistic details and traditional Italian styling.

## Scouting in Oakwood, Part 2 (continued)

### Girl Scouts

Girl Scouts in Oakwood were formed in May 1918 with eight girls. The first Patrol Leader was Mrs. Ruth Wolf; the second leader was Miss Frances Patterson, the long-time art teacher at Harman School. A 1919 article with a picture of Mrs. Thelma Shroyer Morris with girls in uniforms describes the uniform as “long blouse over skirt and also a one piece coat dress, both in khaki, with a leather belt, letters G.S. embroidered in black on a square of khaki appliquéd on both points of collar, and a felt hat or new khaki hat, flat crowned.” This description sounds like one of the uniforms worn in the style show at the Open House.

Once again, we find familiar names from Oakwood’s past on a page in our clippings file: Henrietta Clunet Light, Katherine Houk Talbot, Mrs. Hubert Estabrook, Mrs E.G. Biechler, and Mrs. Roger Woodhall. A faded copy of a newspaper story shows Mrs. George Shroyer presenting an American Flag to Troop 1 in honor of her daughter Thelma Shroyer and Dorothy Switzer, first Girl Scouts in Dayton. A copy of a membership card for Catherine Hadelor is dated May 10, 1922.

By 1959, 10 Girl Scouts were off to Europe for nine weeks after planning for six years, a trip repeated in 1963 by 17 girls with both trips sponsored by St Paul’s. Also in 1963, Mrs. Robert Light and Mrs. Ed Warner were elected to the National Girl Scout Board, and Paula MacIlwaine was named a professional leader for Oakwood Girl Scouts. Clippings also record a 1964 Brownie “Fly Up” ceremony at Smith School, the 1965 National Senior Roundup in Farragut, Idaho, attended by 19 girls from Oakwood, and a campout in 1966 of a Cadet Troop from Harman School at Whip-Poor-Will led by Mrs. Joey Thiele.



Although our documentation falls off after the ‘60s, we know that Girl Scouting is alive and well because of events at the April Open House. The area Buckeye Trails Council provided extensive displays, thanks to Betty Bryant and her daughter. If you have fond memories of Girl Scouts, you would have been proud of the many displays that traced Girl Scouts back to 1918 and found the commentary interesting. Marilyn Sheehan, former society board member, lent photos of her troop attending Girl Scout Camp at Whip-Poor-Will. Visitors and friends of scouting also enjoyed a wonderful fashion show with local girls modeling uniforms to show how they’ve changed through the years.

### Children’s Programs

#### Summer Camp “Weaves” Fun with Learning

--Linda Pearson & Lisa Kell

At this year’s summer camp, children can learn to use our restored antique rug loom, which was manufactured locally in Springfield in the early 20th century and sold in this area. We will be tying in the weaving with the local history of groups who would have used the loom: immigrants arriving in Dayton in the early part of the 20th century.

Almost all of us have come from immigrant families at some point in our past so we will explore a few of the groups that made our country strong. Children will learn about how these immigrants live, worked and played; they will weave on the loom, make and eat delicious ethnic food, create period crafts, and play typical games of the early 1900’s!

For more information and to download the registration form, visit [www.oakwoodhistory.org](http://www.oakwoodhistory.org).

June 18—22,

Monday thru Friday, 9 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. for children entering grades 4, 5, 6; includes five mornings plus snacks

June 25—28,

Monday thru Thursday, 9 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. for children entering grades 1, 2, 3; includes four mornings plus snacks

**Girl Scouts, Inc.**  
National Headquarters  
100 LEXINGTON AVE., CITY OF NEW YORK

This is to Certify That  
*Catherine Hadelor*  
Upon the recommendation of her captain, registered as a member of the GIRL SCOUTS for the year ending *May 10-1922* with the understanding that as a Scout she will at all times fulfill the Scout Promise.

"On My Honor I Will Try:"  
To do my duty to God and to my country.  
To help other people at all times.  
To obey the Scout laws.

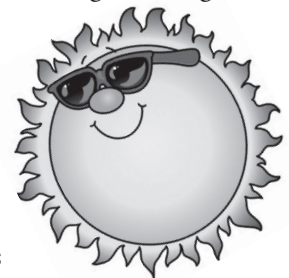
*Julietta Lee* President  
*Rose Mabel Chabate* Patroness

MEMBERSHIP CARD

This is to certify that the Scout named on the front of this certificate is a member in good standing of the  
Troop *1* Panel \_\_\_\_\_  
City of *Dayton*  
State of *Ohio*  
*Frances H. Patterson* Scout Captain

SCOUT HISTORY

Qualified as Tenderfoot	192
Second Class Scout	192
First Class Scout	192
Corporal	192
Patrol Leader	192





**OHS Committees**

Please get involved...

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**Announcements***Welcome to Jessica Mickley, Summer Intern*

The society board welcomes Jessica Mickley who will be working at the Homestead this summer. A senior at Miami University, Jessica is majoring in American Studies with a minor in Film Studies; on campus, she has worked at the William Homes McGuffey Museum where she enjoyed giving tours, researching artifacts and learning about the university and the city of Oxford.



Jessica is looking forward to "helping out in anyway I can" and, as board members review the long list of projects needing attention, they are grateful for the help. Please join us in giving Jessica a warm welcome to Oakwood and Dayton.

*Summer Open House to Feature Classic Automobiles*

After the success of last year's "Classics on the Lawn," The Oakwood Historical Society will repeat the program again this year. Last August, nearly 40 of the area's best classic British cars were on display on the lawn of the Homestead, which was



also open for tours. This year, plans are already underway to highlight classic automobiles from a bygone era when cars were much more a form of art than they are today. Watch in local publications or visit us online at [www.oakwoodhistory.org](http://www.oakwoodhistory.org) for developing details of the society's Summer Open House on August 5th.

*Dayton's Historic Flood of 1913 to be Commemorated*

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Great Flood of 1913, a region-wide committee has been established to plan commemorative programs regarding this historic event. The committee consists of communities, historical organizations, universities and libraries from as far north as Piqua and down the Great Miami River corridor south to Hamilton. Dayton will play a central part, but all communities along the river were adversely affected and will be well-represented.

Society board member and past president Mark Risley has joined the steering committee. Historical data and photographs are being gathered and there are plans for publications and programs in various media. Already, there have been several local presentations on the flood and there are more in the planning stages.

The 1913 flood holds fascinating stories of the disaster, the loss, the aftermath, the public impact and the remarkable recovery of these communities. The flood control systems developed in response to this event are still in use throughout the world today. Dayton not only taught the world to fly, it also taught the world to control its flood waters.

Watch local media for developments on the 1913 flood centennial commemoration or visit [www.oakwoodhistory.org](http://www.oakwoodhistory.org).

**THE OAKWOOD  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**



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(937) 299-3793  
Website:  
www.oakwoodhistory.org  
E-mail:  
info@oakwoodhistory.org



***Please Renew Your Membership!***

***The 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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