



The
Oakwood
Historical Society

— Make History With Us —

The Historian

Preserving the past, present, and future of the Oakwood Community • Fall 2021

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Letter from the President

With the sun of summertime at our backs, September invites autumn in to share her vibrant hues and refreshingly cooler temperatures. Although autumn signals the transition from green trees to those a little more colorful, Oakwood bounces back to life with the mass decorating of homes in anticipation of Beggar's Night. Halloween is a magical time in our little city, and everyone gets to be someone or something different, if only for one night out of the year. We look forward to homes lit up with a variety of styled lights and decorated with scary creatures during our evening walks.



*Tiffany Rubin
President of Oakwood
Historical Society*

Scarecrow Row emerges and the community debates the merits of each Scarecrow Row entry. Families enjoy festivals and bonfires and possibly a late picnic or two. Excitement is in the air as football games begin and you can hear the band playing from Mack Hummon stadium.

The Oakwood Historical Society is gearing up for fall by planning a community picnic this year on September 25th from 2-5 pm. Follow us on our website or social media pages to learn more about how to purchase a ticket for this and other upcoming events.

Tiffany Rubin
President

Spotlighting a Oakwood Treasure History of The Little Exchange

The Beginning...1950

Mrs. George H. Mead (Elsie) and her good friend and neighbor, Mrs. George Haig (Ruth), first conceived the idea in the spring of 1950. In the Fall of that year, with the help of another dear friend and neighbor, Mrs. Walter S. Carr (Dotty), the first Little Exchange opened in the home of Mrs. Haig, on the corner of Katherine Terrance and Runnymede Road in Oakwood. The purpose was two-fold: "to give gainful employment to those unable to work outside the home, to create an outlet for their work, and as a result to donate the proceeds from this work to deserving charities." "The Little Exchange was established for the purpose of being helpful in our community." The name, Little Exchange, took its meaning from the "little exchange" of goods for money.



The Little Exchange in 1951

There were five original Trustees. In addition to Mmes. Mead, Haig and Carr, Mrs. James M. Cox, Sr (Margretta) and Mrs. Robert Dun Patterson (Henrietta) were invited to be trustees.

It was a memorable beginning when on the very day of the grand opening of the Shop in Mrs. Haig's living room, a police officer arrived to inform the ladies that they were in violation of a zoning ordinance! Because they were genuine in their charitable purposes, the ladies were permitted to remain open throughout the fall and the Christmas holidays, closing in January 1951.



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**THE
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While it seemed most unfortunate at the time, this incident actually hastened the success of The Little Exchange by forcing the trustees to consider a permanent location more quickly than they might have otherwise. Mrs. Mead found a suitable home for the shop in the former Katherine Wright Library, Oakwood's Public Library at 45 Park Avenue, where 70 years hence the Shop continues to thrive. The property, as well as an endowment to support it, was generously donated by Mrs. Mead to The Little Exchange Foundation.

After extensive renovations, the Shop officially opened on Park Avenue in 1951 with 31 volunteers and two paid employees. Upstairs a Nearly New Shop, featuring clothing on consignment, was operated by an additional 24 volunteers.

Exquisitely hand-knit baby clothes, sweaters, socks and charmingly original children's dresses were the hallmark of the Shop. During this first decade of business, The Little Exchange established itself as a unique place to shop with many one-of-a-kind items.

The charities supported in those early days were: the Red Cross, Sightless Children, Barney's Convalescent Hospital, the Jimmy Bevis Research Fund for Leukemia and other smaller local charities.

The 1960s

In 1958, Mrs. Mead was elected the first President of the Children's Hospital Society of Dayton. The goal of this group was to build a much-wished-for children's hospital. After convincing the public of the need for such a hospital, this society merged with the Barney Convalescent Hospital to form Barney's Children's Medical Center. Elsie Mead was elected the first Chairman of the Board of this organization. Thus began a new focus for The Little Exchange and a third purpose was added to The Little Exchange mission: to donate the proceeds of the Exchange to the Children's Medical Center. In 1961 and again in 1962, \$2000.00 was donated to this cause.

In 1963, Mrs. Nelson Mead (Ruth) formed the first Woman's Board of the Barney Children's Medical Center. This same year, Ruth Mead wrote thanking The Little Exchange Foundation for their generous contribution of \$5,000.00, "bringing them closer to the reality of a Children's Hospital for the Dayton area."

The Shop grew...brides were registered, lists were kept, and the advent of the bridal shelves for the gifts selected by individual began! Mrs. C.E. Drury (Ruthie), a talented knitter herself, designed patterns for socks and sweaters for the 25 "knitters" who kept The Little Ex filled with very special items: matching father/son tennis sweaters and adorable bonnets and sweaters for infants. Creative Board members sketched original designs for custom children's clothing. Birds and bugs and angels were popular motifs to adorn children's clothing; the clothes were personalized and monogrammed.

The reputation of the Shop grew as a unique place to shop. Cashmere sweaters were trimmed beautifully and became a specialty of the Shop. Mrs. James M. Cox, Sr., designed these sweaters; she worked "miracles with ribbons, embroideries and other trims."

There was china...and antiques from Europe purchased by Mrs. Mead on one of her trips abroad. There were Lowestoft cups and saucers, antique silver, serpentine chests and stunning antique Sheraton sideboards; exquisite handmade miniature scenes were created and placed under glass domes. In 1964, Winnie Lysell became the manager for The Little Ex. From the beginning Winnie had a long love of, and familiarity with the Shop. She had beautifully decorated cashmere sweaters and made charming children's clothing for The Little Exchange since its

beginning days. Mrs. Russell Theurmer (Ellie) was the volunteer head of The Nearly New Shop at this point. In 1967, the first patients were admitted to the new Barney's Children's Medical Center. During the decade of the 60's, The Little Exchange donated \$86,111.00, to this cause.

Additionally, The Little Exchange made the first payment on a pledge of \$17,000.00 toward a new elevator costing \$48,000.00. This elevator is still in use today, fifty years hence!

The 1970s

The 1970's began with a buying trip to Europe by Mrs. Mead, accompanied by Mrs. Carr; beautiful and affordable antiques and lovely and unusual china and porcelains were purchased.

As the decade opened, a total of \$121,120.00 had been donated to Barney's Children's Medical Center, with a new high of \$15,000.00 given in 1972. Also in 1972, Arlene Saul joined the staff of The Little Exchange as bookkeeper. In the early 70's, The Nearly New Chairman was Mrs. Thomas Frazier (Jenny).

The organization and responsibilities expanded, and there was a need to increase the number of board members, as well as to attract younger members and customers. In the mid 1970's, there was a new focus on buying for men and teenagers and there was a continual search for accomplished "knitters and sewers". Mrs. James Frame (Marilyn) was in charge of the specialty Christmas decorations created at the Mead Work-Shop, located at Mrs. Mead's residence...and there were special Christmas shows. Advertising was expanded to include spots on radio and TV and ads in the Kettering- Oakwood Times. While the Shop featured elegant giftware, there was a continual emphasis on hand-made original designs of children's clothing and sweaters. Over a period of 20 years, from 1958-1978, a quarter of a million dollars had been donated to the Barney's Children's Medical Center.

In 1978, Mrs. Mead announced at the Board Meeting of The Little Exchange that she was resigning. "No one paid any attention, and the meeting moved on..." as noted in minutes. However in 1979, Mrs. Mead announced that she would retire from the Board and that Mrs. H.M. Huffman (Jane) and Mrs. C.E. Drury (Ruthie) would be serving as Co-Chairmen. An Associate Board was formed in 1979, Mrs. Richard C. Cammerer (Molly) and Mrs. W. Anthony Huffman (Pokey) were to be the liaison between the Board of Trustees and the newly formed Associate Board, the purpose of which was to involve younger members of the community.

The 1980s

There were many changes as this decade began...both to the make-up of the Board of Trustees and to the physical face of the Shop.

Major changes were needed in the Shop after almost 30 years on Park Avenue. The front porch was rebuilt, new roofing was added, windows were glazed and siding was installed; inside there was fresh paint and new wallpaper!

In 1980, Ruthie Drury assumed Chairmanship after Jane Huffman, moving from Dayton, resigned. Velma Huston succeeded Jenny Frazier as head of The Nearly New Shop which posted increased profits yearly. Under the creative guidance of Molly Cammerer, the Christmas Open House was developed. The event was enormously successful with gross sales at the first one in 1982 of \$3000.00! In 1982, \$20,000.00 was donated to Children's Medical Center, with contributions totaling \$356,436.50, to date. In 1984, funds for three neo-natal units were donated to CMC. And in 1986, a 4-year, \$150,000.00 pledge was made toward a Neurological Center.

A commitment was made to further communicate our mission to our customers and to continue to educate them as to the purpose of the Shop. A lovely tea honoring all our volunteers was hosted at the home of Mrs. Richard H. Grant III (Mimi).

In the same year, the Board made some important changes in order to fuel and manage growth. Mrs. Richard C. Cammerer (Molly) and Mrs. John R. Folkerth (Carolyn) were made Co-Chairmen of the Board. A Rotating Board was adopted with a three-year term and the option to continue for an additional three years. The Board of trustees assumed the responsibility of staffing the Shop on Saturdays. The advertising budget was increased, an Executive Committee was formed and Mrs. Virginia Frazier (Jenny) became the new Chairman of The Nearly New Shop.

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New patterns of china were carried as “open stock”, small pieces of furniture were added to the inventory and monogramming was again being featured; a new guide list for brides was created; and in 1988 Winnie Lysell celebrated her 25th year as the Manager of The Little Exchange. An era ended in 1988 with the death of Mrs. Walter S. Carr, the last of our original trustees, everyone’s “Aunt Dotty”, who was devoted to The Little Exchange and dearly loved by all. The decade ended with 34 brides registered over a 5-month period, sales were up \$45,000.00 over the previous year and New York was added as a market for buying trips. On the housekeeping side, there were several improvements. A new light post and sign were added to the front of the Shop; siding and a new light fixture were added in the back of the building, the powder room was carpeted, painted and papered...and unfortunately, a new roof was required!



The Little Exchange today

The 1990s

The Little Exchange pledged \$130,000.00, to a Respiratory Therapy Treatment Center in May 1990. Antiques again became a focus at The Little Exchange and the Board set aside a fund for buying them; Irish crystal and Herend Pottery were carried in the Shop and gift certificates were created; buying trips were increased to 4-days at markets in Atlanta and Chicago and the very first copy machine was purchased for the Shop! There were so many enthusiastic and qualified new volunteers that each shift had a minimum of 3 volunteers per shift.

In 1991, Molly Cammerer assumed full Chairmanship of the Board of Trustees. While Carolyn Folkerth relinquished her duties as Co-Chairman, thankfully she remained on the Board and in 1994 was appointed Treasurer.

A new “Guidelines for Brides” was created and the very personal service of delivering gifts continued...a trademark of The Little Exchange since its beginning! More redecorating in 1992, freshening up the Children’s and Glamour Rooms...and the Little Ex. became a non-smoking facility. A \$125,000.00 pledge was made for pediatric neurosurgical equipment to be used in the treatments of epilepsy and cerebral palsy.

Several local Women’s Golf Associations began purchasing their gold prizes from The Little Exchange. The Shop added Saturday business hours to the Monday, Wednesday, Friday summer schedule; a paid employee was hired to assist volunteers on Saturdays; the Shop began to carry a small line of gourmet food. The advertising budget was increased to \$2,500.00 annually and by the decade’s conclusion, the budget for advertising has been further increased to \$5,000.00!

In 1993, Mrs. Hap Holloway (Louise), a volunteer of 25 years, retired as a Board Member and head of The Nearly New Shop, and Mrs. Eric G. Gibbs (Jerry), who had volunteered with great dedication at the Shop since 1969, assumed these positions. Remodeling took place that same year in The Nearly New Shop.

In 1994, Ruth Drury, whose mother, Mrs. George H. Haig, was a founding member of The Little Ex, retired from the Board. Her retirement was accepted with great regret. Ruthie had been Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and a devoted volunteer. Her guidance and wisdom had spanned many years and continues today to influence the direction of the Little Exchange. She was made a lifetime Honorary Board Member. The Little Ex had a technological explosion in 1995: a fax machine and a computer were added...very progressive!

Winnie Lysell, after 31 years of loyal service to The Little Exchange, retired in 1995. There was a lovely reception for her and the “Glamour Room” at the Shop was renamed “Winnie’s Room” in her honor. In that same year, \$150,000.00 was pledged over a four-year period for the Patient Resource Center.

1998 marked a milestone when total donations over a 38-year period from The Little Exchange to Dayton Children’s Hospital surpassed \$1,000,000.00!

In 1999, a new pledge of \$150,000.00 was made toward the Comfort Care Program, a program serving terminally ill children and their families.

The New Millennium

Early in the 2000’s The Little Exchange went from accepting house accounts to purchasing a computer cash register and actually accepting credit cards. It was indeed a sign of the times!

The Board initiated a Sticks and Bricks Campaign of \$150,000 for necessary repairs and updates to the over one hundred year old building. This included new wiring, new windows and basically replacing floor and plumbing. That project took over 2 years.

These days every purchase at The Little Exchange benefits The Family Resource Connection at Dayton Children’s, helping over 500 families every month – that’s 6000 families a year who are helped when faced with basic food, housing, and transportation insecurities. The 70 volunteers are proud that the shop has donated over \$1.7 Million to date!

Hidden Manor Tour

On Saturday, June 19, after an all night torrential downpour and tornado warning, the Hidden Manor was finally revealed to an exclusive 136 guests, under a bright sunshine filled day. This beautiful manor home is located in one of the most exclusive neighborhoods in Oakwood, hidden within the boundaries of Hills and Dales Park, the Dayton Country Club, and the Centennial Park at Houk Stream.

Built in 1927 by the Gardner family in the “cottage” style of a Tudor Manor, it is the quintessential Oakwood mansion, replete with the requisite turret. Over 40 years later it became the home of the beloved Oakwood citizens, Ludolph and Francine van der Hoeven, both medical doctors and community leaders, who resided in the home for another 25 years.

For those following our teasers about this very special “hidden” home, here are the answers:

The Gardner family donated the current pool at the Oakwood Community Center in 1971, in memory of their grandson, William E. Gardner, who tragically died of natural causes at the young age of 17.

The Garden Club of Dayton and the City of Oakwood also welcomed guests to the “hidden garden” of Francine van der Hoeven during the tour. This special place, nestled within the Centennial Park of Houk Stream, is dedicated to her memory.

The famous actor, who’s parents were the original butler and personal maid of the Gardner family, was Gordon Jump of WKRP of Cincinnati and the Soap TV series fame. His uncle founded Jump’s Gourmet Peanuts here in Oakwood. We hope you enjoyed the peanuts!

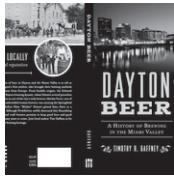
The current owners, Dayan and Steven Harlamert, very kindly and graciously opened this historical and magnificent home to The Oakwood Historical Society for the community of Oakwood, and we are very grateful for their passion of Oakwood history, and for allowing us to share its history with you on this very special tour.

Mark your calendars for December 4, for our 3rd Holiday Home Tour. We will be showcasing several historic homes in our very own Schantz neighborhood, a National Historic District, plus a special tour of the Frederick Patterson home. Tickets will go on sale in November, and we will open up the ticket sales for a limited time to The Oakwood Historical Society members prior to the public sale.



Far Hills Speaker Series – Fall 2021 Program

The lectures will be presented in the Oakwood High School Auditorium. Should there be concerns due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Fall series will be presented virtually.



Dayton Beer: A History of Brewing in the Miami Valley

Sunday, September 19 at 2:00 p.m., Oakwood High School Auditorium

Author Timothy R. Gaffney has lived in the Miami Valley most of his life and has worked as a writer for area newspapers since 1974. His latest book is *Dayton Beer: A History of Brewing in the Miami Valley*.

The Miami Valley has a long history of commercial brewing and was among the first industries in early settlements in the Miami Valley, dating back to the beginning of the 19th century. Gaffney searched thousands of records in local libraries, historical societies, county offices and ancestry databases across seven counties to ferret out the identities of long-forgotten brewers and their often-untold stories.

From humble origins, the Schwind brothers founded a Dayton brewing dynasty. Adam Schantz arrived penniless and amassed a fortune as one of the city's early brewers. Martha Vorce, one of the region's unheralded woman brewery owners, was running the Springfield Brewery a decade before Springfield's Eliza "Mother" Stewart gained international fame as a temperance leader. *Dayton Beer* also describes the temperance movement's long march to Prohibition—and the sudden, devastating impact it had on local breweries across the Miami Valley.



History, Mystery, Mayhem and Murder

Sunday, October 17 at 2:00 p.m., Oakwood High School Auditorium

Presenter Angie Hoschouer has a passion for Dayton's history and is involved with several community organizations including the Dayton Region's Walk of Fame and University of Dayton Osher's Lifelong Learning Institute. She is the president of the Randolph Twp. Historical Society.

Dayton rich history is full of tales, some of which are so surprising that you will be on the edge of your seat. Tales of mayhem are told in this chilling presentation of murders, assaults, revenge, negligence, and hopelessness that took place in Dayton's past. The lecture includes the real-life history, mystery, mayhem and murder stories of the likes of Bessie Little, Charles Stimmel, Joseph Shide, Maurice Dejadins and Nelson Driggs. Graphic details are given and may not be appropriate for all audiences.

Oakwood's First Residents: The Prehistory of the Miami Valley



Sunday, November 21 at 2:00 p.m., Oakwood High School Auditorium

Archaeologist, Bill Kennedy is a specialist in pre-contact native peoples of Ohio and has worked on archaeological sites of all time periods. He is especially knowledgeable about wooden architecture and is widely known for his work building full-scale reconstructions of thatch and daub homes at SunWatch and Fort Ancient. Bill comes from a family of builders and grew up working on historic and modern architecture.

Oakwood's earliest European settlers and traders of the 1700's found sites rich in the culture of its previous inhabitants. Well established trade routes, pottery manufacturing areas, and earthwork/mound sites in the Miami Valley tell the stories of Oakwood and the Miami Valley's earliest inhabitants. Sites of note will include the mounds here in Oakwood as well as sites near Carillion Park, Wegerzyn Gardens and SunWatch.

During the Woodland period (800 B.C. to A.D. 1200) the earlier inhabitants of the Miami Valley lived in villages, developed a rich ritual and artistic life, began building earthworks and mounds, some of which were used for burial. While they still hunted and gathered food, they cultivated crops. The population of Woodland people expanded dramatically, and groups lived in larger villages with defensive walls or ditches built for protection. Ritual and artistic endeavors waned during the Late Woodland period, as did trading with other groups. There were not new earthworks or mounds during this later period.

During the late prehistoric period (A.D. 900 to 1650), villages were larger, often built on high ground, near a river, and often surrounded by a wooden stockade. Earthworks returned during this period but were not built with the frequency that they were during the Woodland period.



Education Corner

The biggest project of course is. THE Summer Garden Program.

Today was our 5th session of the season. Since the last board meeting we have had beekeepers visit us, bringing a bee suit, hive sections, and a drilled log for a native bee home.

We baked a bee skep cake (pan borrowed from the library) for the event, and biscuits for the honey brought by the beekeepers for us to share.

For the event, and biscuits for the honey brought by the beekeepers for us to share. We also did some garden harvesting. See kids holding the harvested garlic.

Today was all about the squash family (aka cucurbits). We harvested cucumbers, checked our winter squash (what a surprise when the first squash started to appear, as we thought it would be a zucchini!), and had cucurbit themed snacks. Watermelon, cucumber cupcakes, and cucumber sandwiches with homemade horseradish dug from our garden. We completed our program at the end of August.



Fall Photo Shoot

Our annual Fall Photo Shoot is slated for October 10th and 17th with returning photographer, Betty Cochran. Check out our website and social media pages for additional details.

Hope to see you here!



CAROL J. HOLM
ATTORNEY AT LAW
Dayton, Ohio



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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
- Silver \$100.00
- Gold \$200.00

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The information that you submit will be used only by the Oakwood Historical Society and will not be given or sold to outside parties.