

# THE HISTORIAN

Preserving the past, present, and future of the Oakwood Community  
Winter 2024-2025

## THE OAKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S 6TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY HOME TOUR

This year's Holiday Home Tour featured four houses, along with the Frederick Patterson house. All of the houses have fascinating histories related to their architectural designs, the lives of the people who built and lived in them, and artifacts that current owners found in the houses.

Holiday Home Tour home owners and docents did a wonderful job introducing the houses and pointing out unique house features to visitors.

We appreciate the home owners who shared their beautiful, historical, and architecturally significant homes, the 300 people who bought tickets to this event, and the volunteers who made this day possible. We heard from many people that Holiday Home Tour is an annual tradition that signifies the start of the holiday season. We look forward to being a part of the Oakwood community's holiday season in 2025.

*Jill Brooks*

*Holiday Home Tour 2024 Chairperson*



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[info@oakwoodhistory.org](mailto:info@oakwoodhistory.org)

# HAPPY 2025 FROM OUR NEWSLETTER SPONSORS!



## FAR HILLS SPEAKER SERIES

*Oakwood Historical Society Far Hills Speaker Series presentations are held in the Wright Memorial Public Library's Community Room:*

*[wrightlibrary.org/local-speaker-series](http://wrightlibrary.org/local-speaker-series)*

### **February 16, "The Mound Builders in Ohio"**

*Presenter: Mark Risley*

When settlers arrived in the Ohio area, they were impressed to find large, mysterious earthworks in the shapes of mounds, enclosures and animal effigies. This program visits some of these sites, many in the Dayton region, and looks at the ancient indigenous people who built them.



### **March 16, "Old Chillicothe and Great Council State Park"**

*Presenter: Ryan Dimisa*

Great Council State Park honors Shawnee history and resilience. Experience the story of Old Chillicothe, capital of the Shawnee people in the late 1770s.



### **April 6, "Dayton's Great Jazz Musicians"**

*Presenter: Jimmy Leach*

Hear about the lives and music of great jazz musicians who were born or raised in Dayton. Featured musicians: composer Billy Strayhorn; trumpeter Snooky Young; guitarist John Scofield; trombonist Booty Wood; singers Ada Lee & Little Miss Cornshucks; saxophonist Bud Shank; trumpeter Tim Hagans; tubist/bassist Gene Mayl; and banjoist Dave Greer.





## THE OAKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY CELEBRATES ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY!

On November 7, 2024, The Oakwood Historical Society held its Annual Meeting in conjunction with a celebration of the 50 years since its founding. Twenty-five people attended the very enjoyable event held in the Long-Romsper House Museum.

After a short board meeting that included the financial statement and the election of 2025 board members, meeting attendees heard a brief history of the founding members and the goals and aspirations of that visionary group. Early members Tom and Judy Thompson were in attendance, and Judy now assists in the archives organizing the oral histories. The Thompsons shared additional information about those early years, including the beginnings of That Day In May during the Bicentennial of 1976. Judy also shared how the book *Oakwood: The Far Hills* by Bruce and Virginia Ronald came to fruition.



# THE OAKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY CELEBRATES ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY!

After the formal meeting adjourned, everyone enjoyed wine and hors d'oeuvres while conversing, viewing the recent changes and improvements in the museum, and sharing more stories of The Oakwood Historical Society's history.

We are grateful to all of our members, volunteers, and sponsors for their support over these past 50 years. Original members Delores Klaber, Mary Lynn Monnin, Toni Winger, and Carol Collins have continued to promote the Society's mission over the years. A special thanks goes to generous sponsors for this event. The Spicy Olive provided lovely party favor bags for guests, and Dow Moving donated time to move extremely heavy items as we develop a new look and purpose for the museum for the next 50 years.





## **JULIA JOHNSTON PATTERSON: THE MOST WONDERFUL GRANDMA**

*David Schmidt*

“In 1833 I came to Dayton as a bride,” wrote eighty-three-year-old Julia in 1895. “I was married in Piqua, February 23, 1833. We came from Piqua part of the way (my husband and myself) in a carriage, and part of the way on horse-back.” Thus began Julia Johnston Patterson’s new life in Dayton after having grown up on a farm that was a favored destination for visits by Miami and Shawanoese Indians.

Juliana Johnston had married Jefferson Patterson, the youngest son of Col. Robert and Elizabeth Lindsay Patterson (the latter whom Julia recalled as being “a very tall lady”). Col. Patterson had been an officer in the Kentucky militia during the Revolutionary War and was one of the founders of Lexington, Kentucky. Col. Patterson moved with his family in 1804 to the outskirts of Dayton, where the Pattersons took up residence in a log house in the present-day Pointe Oakwood area. In 1816, Col. Patterson built the core of what is now the historic Patterson Homestead at 1815 Brown Street. The Patterson family’s new home stood on Col. Patterson’s “Rubicon Farm,” which eventually encompassed more than 2000 acres, including much of what is now the northern part of Oakwood.

After Jefferson and Julia Patterson moved to Dayton, they lived in the downtown area for about three years before moving to Rubicon Farm, which Jefferson Patterson inherited after his father’s passing. The younger Pattersons eventually had eleven children, although several of them succumbed to sicknesses at relatively early ages. Those surviving well into adulthood included Robert Patterson (born 1833); Stephen J. Patterson (born 1842); John H. Patterson (born 1844); Frank J. Patterson (born 1849); and Julia W. Patterson (born 1857).



*Julia Johnston Patterson*

## **JULIA JOHNSTON PATTERSON: THE MOST WONDERFUL GRANDMA**

Among the many visitors to Rubicon Farm was young Charlotte Reeve (later Charlotte Reeve Conover), who was born in Dayton in 1855. Charlotte received an excellent education and she became an accomplished writer. Charlotte maintained a lifelong friendship with the Patterson family and she documented much of the family's history. She reminisced of Rubicon Farm:

The farm, the farmhouse, the family in it were a type of the kind of life indigenous to American soil; best of the best while it lasted, forever to be regretted that it is gone. The middle aged and elderly people in Dayton [ca. 1907], who were a part of that life from time to time, as they happened to be the guests of one or the other of [the Patterson] children, will testify that nowhere else did they have quite such good times as at the Patterson farm. The house was always full. The gate on Main Street or the gate on Brown Street was forever swinging open to admit carriage loads of people. . . . In all that this involved, the hospitality, the mothering, the housekeeping, the charity, Mrs. [Julia Johnston] Patterson will always be remembered as the head and front.

Charlotte Conover wrote that Jefferson Patterson's "larger, wider interests," including his service in Ohio's state legislature, kept him away from Rubicon Farm much of the time, and that Julia managed the farm with much help from her children.

[Under Julia's direction] the bread was baked, the butter churned, the fruit preserved, the cider pressed, the meat butchered and smoked, the candles dipped, the herbs dried, the sugar boiled. As soon as the boys were old enough they went after cows, fed the calves, picked up chips, filled wood-boxes, worked the churn-dasher, and turned the sausage mill. The girls dusted, tended baby, (there was always a baby to tend), and helped mother with the stocking-darning.

## **JULIA JOHNSTON PATTERSON: THE MOST WONDERFUL GRANDMA**

Yet despite the responsibilities of the family and farm, Julia “neglected no call from friends or her church.” Charlotte Conover recalled that “it seemed perfectly natural that Mrs. Patterson should be always having company, always sitting down to a table with several young guests; always having sewing-societies in the parlor, or church picnics on the lawn, and never tired, never cross, never distracted, never depressed.” Charlotte attributed Julia’s abilities to “an iron constitution to begin with, an infinite capacity for work, and a genius for arranging details.” Julia’s strong character was to help her withstand the unexpected death of Jefferson Patterson in 1863.

In 1864, John H. Patterson volunteered for service in the Civil War. Patterson and other volunteers from the Dayton area were instructed to report to the temporary “Camp Lowe,” which had been formed at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds. After spending the night there, they were scheduled to leave Dayton the next day. Arriving at the “camp,” the recruits discovered they were to simply sleep in horse stalls. After settling in, the young men initially kept up each other’s spirits with jokes and songs. But as the evening wore on, “the cold bit in,” as Charlotte Conover wrote, “and they longed for a bed. Then, four of the more enterprising boys wrenched a board from the Main Street side [of the Fairgrounds] and crawled out.” From there, they walked to Rubicon Farm, where they intended to find greater comfort sleeping in the hay loft in the Patterson family’s barn.

But Mrs. Patterson heard of it [Conover continued], and brought them to the house where, in her good feather beds, they slept until morning. It was deserting, of course, but they didn’t know it, and the United States Government never found it out. At daybreak the party returned, crawled through the hole in the fence, and once more answered their country’s call.



## **JULIA JOHNSTON PATTERSON: THE MOST WONDERFUL GRANDMA**

Julia was to lose two of her sons to sickness in the years immediately following the end of the Civil War. At the time, wastewater flowed in an open stream across Rubicon Farm from what was then known as the Southern Ohio Lunatic Asylum. A family friend wrote that Julia believed the deaths of her sons would not have occurred had there not been delay in what was to be the later installation of an underground conduit to carry the wastewater.

In the meantime, Julia sought to leave the environment at the farm and in 1868 she moved to a new home in downtown Dayton. Julia traveled frequently with her children and she regularly entertained her family and friends through the rest of her life. At Julia's Third Street home, Charlotte Conover wrote, "Mrs. Patterson became a most interesting talker. Her reminiscences were of wide range and rich content" as she recalled her life in Piqua among the Miami and Shawanoese Indians who regularly visited the Johnston home. Conover continued:

Mrs. Patterson herself had been born in a blockhouse, and had heard many an Indian alarm, knew of their habits, could talk by the hour of those times . . . Her children's children came to see her, and heard these tales. They will remember her strong lined face, the white cap, and the white puffs of silken hair each side of it, and they will think that no one else ever had so fine, so wonderful a grandma as they did.

And they will not be wrong.

**Oakwood Historical  
Society**

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Donna Rosenbaum

*Far Hills Speaker Series*

Historical Research/

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Debra Edwards

David Schmidt

Board Meetings

*Fourth Monday of each  
month at 7 p.m.*

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members of The Oakwood Historical Society,

Now that we've closed the chapter on 2024, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to our dedicated board members, committee members, volunteers, and the entire membership base for a fantastic year. Your commitment and enthusiasm have been instrumental in making our events and initiatives a success. I would especially like to recognize everyone who contributed to our Holiday Home Tour, which was a spectacular way to conclude the year. Your hard work and passion truly shone through, and I am grateful for your continued support in preserving Oakwood's rich history.

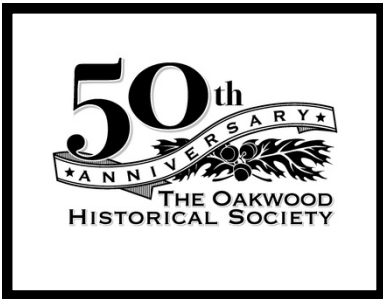
Looking ahead to 2025, we are filled with excitement and anticipation for what lies ahead. We have a great lineup of programs, events, and initiatives planned that will further our mission of celebrating and protecting our community's heritage. From educational opportunities to engaging community events, we are committed to providing meaningful ways for members to connect with our shared history and each other.

As we embark on this new year, I encourage you to consider getting more involved with the Society. We have several committee opportunities available that offer rewarding ways to contribute your time and talents. Whether your interests lie in event planning, historical research, or community outreach, there is a place for you to make an impact. Your participation is vital to our continued success, and we welcome all who wish to play a role in shaping our future.

Thank you once again for your dedication and enthusiasm. Together, we will continue to honor Oakwood's past while building an even brighter future.

*Jeremiah Jenkins*

*President, The Oakwood Historical Society*



**THE OAKWOOD  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
1947 Far Hills Avenue  
Dayton, OH 45419

## THE OAKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

### Membership Categories (check one)

- Individual ..... \$25
- Family ..... \$25
- Business ..... \$50
- Bronze ..... \$75
- Silver ..... \$100
- Gold ..... \$200

### \$5 Discount (check if applicable)

- Student     Senior     Active Military

***Please make checks payable to:***

*The Oakwood Historical Society*

***Mail checks to:***

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***Learn more at:***

*<https://www.oakwoodhistory.org/get/join.html>*

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