



The Historian

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Preserving the past, present, and future of the Oakwood Community • March 2026

Celebrating America250: Oakwood's Role in the Revolutionary Narrative

As we embark on a year filled with festivities and reflections in honor of America250, Oakwood stands poised to celebrate not only a significant milestone in the United States' history but also the rich contributions our community has made to that story. This year, as we commemorate the 250th anniversary of the American Declaration of Independence, it's essential to acknowledge the local history that weaves into the broader tapestry of our past.

The Revolutionary War was a pivotal chapter in American history, igniting a spirit of independence and unyielding resilience that would shape the United States. This area, though not readily associated with the Revolutionary War, was nevertheless part of that history and since then, has played its part in supporting the United States' ideals through its early settlers and their progressive visions. Established in the early 20th century, Oakwood was built on values of community, education, and innovation - all ideals that stemmed from the foundational principles fought for during the Revolutionary period.



In 2026, the Nation will recognize 250 years since the Declaration of Independence, an event that continues to resonate powerfully today. In Oakwood, this anniversary aligns perfectly with our commitment to historical education and community engagement. This year promises an array of events that will honor both the local and national legacy of the American Revolution.



The Oakwood Historical Society will host a series of talks and inclusive events, showcasing artifacts from our history and highlighting the contributions of local ancestors who fought or supported the war efforts. Local historians will collaborate with schools, other historical societies and the City to foster a deeper understanding of how the ideals of liberty, justice, and democracy, born from the Revolution, are embodied in our town today.

Moreover, we intend to engage the younger generation, to inspire curiosity about the United States' founding principles. These initiatives are not just about celebrating history but also about instilling a sense of pride and responsibility in our community's youth as they learn about the sacrifices made for the freedoms they enjoy today.

As we honor the legacy of those who fought for independence, we invite all residents of Oakwood to participate in this exciting year ahead. Together, let's delve into the captivating history of our nation and celebrate the vital role our community has played in shaping American ideals. Join us as we embark on this journey of remembrance, reflection, and renewed commitment to the principles that unite us all.



THE OAKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2026 Officers and Board of Trustees

OFFICERSAnne Febus, *President*Andrew Lloyd, *Vice President*Tonya Dickie, *Treasurer*Karen Bartley, *Assistant Treasurer*Karen Bartley, *Secretary*Linda Pearson, *Property Manager*TOHS COMMITTEE CHAIRSDebra Edward,
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*Education*Karen Bartley, Debra Edwards
*House Museum*Karen Bartley,
*Membership*Mary Aponte,
*Newsletter, Publications, Promotions*Ann Febus,
*Special Events, Fundraising*Jill Brooks,
*Sponsorships*Jonathan Pearson, Jose Aponte,
*Technology*BOARD MEETINGS

Members of The Oakwood Historical Society are invited to attend organizational meetings on the even number months (Feb., Apr., June, etc). The general public will be invited to one meeting per year at a date to be determined. All meetings take place at the House Museum at 6:30 pm.

**Dear Members and Friends of
The Oakwood Historical Society,**

The new year promises to be a very successful one for The Oakwood Historical Society!

We are fortunate to live in a community that values its rich history. As in years past, the Society will offer events that highlight this proud heritage. These include a tour of Hawthorn Hill, participation in cemetery, garden and neighborhood walking tours, and visits to our newly renovated house museum. Also, because of your love of history and education, we will again provide the popular *Far Hills Speaker Series*, lectures and exhibits at the house museum, and various activities in partnership with Oakwood schools.

In addition to these activities, this year we are happy to share in the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Some of the America250 events on the Society's calendar are planned in coordination with the city of Oakwood, Wright Memorial Library and our neighboring communities. Please stay tuned as these activities are announced and be sure to join the fun!

As the new president of The Oakwood Historical Society's Board of Directors, I am especially grateful to be part of an outstanding team. We are fortunate to have the continued talents of board members Karen Bartley, Linda Pearson, Tonya Dickie and Jill Brooks. In addition, we welcome the talents of our new vice president, Andrew Lloyd. That said, we will certainly miss our retiring board members: Jeremiah Jenkins, Soheavy Jenkins and Debra Schenk. I can't overstate the contributions they made towards the current success and future growth of our organization.

And, as always – I want to thank you, our valued Society members, sponsors, and donors. Your support is vital to achieving our goals. In addition, thank you to our talented volunteers! If you haven't volunteered recently, please join us!

We are making history together!

Ann Febus

President, The Oakwood Historical Society

Save the Date!

March 15 – Far Hills Speaker Series at Wright Memorial Public Library 2pm: The Story of Carillon Park

April 19 – Far Hills Speaker Series at Wright Memorial Public Library 2pm: Anniversary of “The shot heard round the world”

– Plant a tree at the Homestead followed by an informal social

April 26 – Tour of Hawthorn Hill (must pre-register at Daytonhistory.org)

Mid-April – Register for Children’s Garden Program (Oakwoodhistory.org)

May 10 – November 8 – Guided House Museum Tours (second and fourth Sunday of each month from 1-3 pm)

May 17 – August 23 – Children’s Garden Program

Summer – America250 Events (to be announced)

June – Oakwood Hidden Parks Walking Tour

Fall - America250 Valley Forge Tour

September – Fireside Chat, House Museum, Members Only (space is limited)

October – Fall Photo Shoot

– Classics on the Lawn (annual car show)

December – Holiday Home Tour

Snow Days

Sledding down Hawthorn Hill by Oakwood children dates back to early rural Oakwood, before the Wright Brothers flew their first airplane or later built their famous “success mansion.”

Mabel Creager Barnes, the daughter of the Oakwood Village Marshall, Walter Creager, recalled in an oral history of growing up on her father’s small farm at the corner of Harman Avenue and Ridgeway Road, and of sledding down that legendary hill.

“Just west of our home was a big woods and the Oakwood water tower. Children from all over the neighborhood would come over. There weren’t too many of us at that time. The water tank would overflow... and great big icicles were hanging down. We had our own hill to slide down. We really did have fun.”

Edward Koehnen, another early Oakwood child, resided at the intersection of W. Dixon and Harman Avenues. He fondly recalled in an oral history the slightly more adventurous experience during his childhood of snow sledding down Harman Avenue, making the curve onto Far Hills and continuing to the Five Points intersection.

“If there wasn’t a streetcar, we were lucky, and we’d go down Main Street and go as far as the NCR office building.”

While Oakwood children have been sledding down Hawthorn Hill for generations, we’d strongly advise against recreating Master Koehnen’s trip down today’s much busier Far Hills Avenue, despite the lack of streetcars.

Far Hills Speaker Series 2026

The *Far Hills Speaker Series* (FHSS) has been a consistent Oakwood educational and community program, in partnership with the Wright Memorial Public Library, since 2014. Our most recent chair, Donna Rosenbaum, took it on starting with the 2020 season when she was faced with the challenges of COVID and the extensive remodeling at the library, our hosting location. We concluded the 2025 season with over 2000 attendees, not counting the 100's of views of the various presentations on the Library's YouTube channel.

The topic for the presentation on **March 15** is "*The Story of Carillon Park.*" The presenters are Alex Heckman and Steve Lucht. Alex is Vice President, Museum Operations, managing the museum operations and staff for Dayton History. Steve is the Carillon Park Curator, managing collections and exhibits. The program will highlight the recently published book, "*A Living Landmark: The Story of Carillon Historical Park.*" The book is a history of Carillon Park, an open-air museum located in Dayton, Ohio.

The topic for the **April 19** is America250, "*Anniversary of the shot heard round the world*" and will be presented by Andrew Lloyd. Andrew is the Vice-President of The Oakwood Historical Society and an avid student of American History.

Their families originated from England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Germany and more. They fought in a cause that took them from New England to Virginia, the Southern Campaign of General Greene and the battlefields that brought forth the United States of America. Veterans of Valley Forge, Brandywine, Yorktown lie at rest in Montgomery County, a county named after General Montgomery of the Continental Army, and adjacent to Greene County, after another Continental General, Nathaniel Greene. This talk looks at those veterans, their links to Montgomery County, Oakwood and Centerville, and their roles in the war that changed our country. It aims to put some context into the incredible sacrifices and achievements of those individuals and bring to the fore anecdotes on their road to Ohio.

Following the talk, a tree, donated by Green Oakwood, will be planted on the Homestead grounds followed by drinks and snacks. These activities are the kick-off for Oakwood's America250 events and celebration.

Holiday Open House



The House Museum was brightly lit and decorated for our Holiday event on Sunday afternoon December 7. In front of the house, our one-horse open sleigh was outlined in lights with an invitation to take your own photos while sitting in the sleigh.

Over 100 people attended the event to enjoy refreshments, live holiday music, and tours of the museum, which has been undergoing re-interpretation.

The aroma of freshly baking cookies wafted from the fully functional 1920's kitchen where the 1920's gas stove was baking gingerbread cookies to serve on the refreshment table.

In addition, approximately 25 children attended with their families to make winter crafts. The children all went home with a pinecone loaded with peanut butter and birdseed to hang in their yards to feed the winter birds, as well as handmade old-fashioned paper chains for decorating at their homes.





In the Summer Kitchen, a warm fire greeted visitors with spiced cider simmering over the open hearth, along with a fire crew tending the cider and greeting guests. We were fortunate to have student helpers from Oakwood High School to help staff some of these activities. This was the first time we have held this event in a while, as volunteers and board members have been heavily involved with the Holiday

Home Tours in recent years. With the Holiday Home Tours going to an every-other-year schedule, this opened up the time for the event at the Homestead.



A Tour of Hawthorn Hill

On April 26, The Oakwood Historical Society and Dayton History will once again join forces to offer you a chance to tour Hawthorn Hill, the stately home of Orville Wright and the Wright family. While you are touring the home, you will no doubt reflect on the family's success and ingenuity as there is evidence of the creative genius throughout the mansion. But we also invite our guests to imagine the notable figures who decades ago walked the very same rooms and halls of Hawthorn Hill.



A crowd gathers at Hawthorn Hill to catch a glimpse of Charles Lindbergh

William Preston Mayfield, photographer; From the collections of DAYTON HISTORY

After the completion of the home in 1914, the Wright family welcomed extended family, old neighbors, and friends. There were also visits from important members of the growing aviation community in Dayton. Milton Wright noted in his diary that John Patterson, the cash register magnate, visited about once a month. But because Orville and Wilbur gained a great deal of worldwide fame from their extraordinary accomplishments, the list of visitors to the mansion also included many who were quite prominent from outside of Dayton. Orville and family were hosts to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, poet Carl Sandburg, King Constantine of Greece, and inventors Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas Edison. Perhaps most famously, in 1927 Hawthorn Hill welcomed the famed pilot, Charles Lindbergh, just recently back from his groundbreaking solo transatlantic flight. The fellow

aviators reluctantly made a brief appearance on the balcony of Hawthorn Hill to satisfy a growing crowd of Daytonians anxious to see both heroes.

Please join us for this Wright at Home event! 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 famous neighbors. To register for this exciting event, please go to **Daytonhistory.org**. Proceeds from this event directly benefit Dayton History and The Oakwood Historical Society, two non-profit organizations dedicated to preserving and celebrating the history of our community.



For additional information, please contact The Oakwood Historical Society: info@oakwoodhistory.org. We hope to see you there!

Children's Summer Garden Program

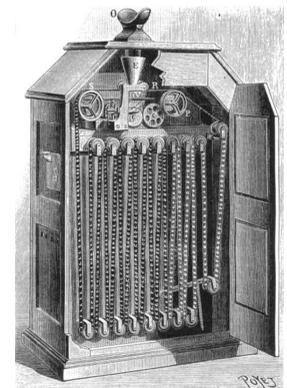
Since The Oakwood Historical Society began offering summer garden classes in 2010, children from Grades 1-4 have been involved in gardening adventures at the Homestead. Scheduled over the summer break and overlapping the end of one school year and the beginning of the next one, students participate in planting, tending, and harvesting vegetables and herbs. Each session also includes preparing and eating an easy snack using produce from the garden as well as visits from local experts in various garden topics. Classes are held in the fenced garden behind the Homestead, with additional class time in the nearby Summer Kitchen.

This year, registration will begin in mid-April. Classes will begin on May 17 and continue for 8 sessions, every other Sunday afternoon. Watch for more details on our website (oakwoodhistory.org) in the spring.



Ohio Goes to the Movies

From the first flicker of Ohioan Thomas Edison's invention of the Kinetoscope to the red-carpet premieres of today, Ohio has helped shape the moves we remember and love. Ohio Goes to the Movies is a 250-day celebration across every one of Ohio's 88 counties. Featuring iconic Ohio-centric movies spotlighting our homegrown talent in front of and behind the camera. Visit <http://ohiogoes to the movies.org> to explore the Ohio Movie Database (OMD), which is a catalog listing of some of Ohio's vast connections to the film industry, whether it be working in front of the camera or behind the scenes (including industry influencers and musicians), as well as movies made in Ohio, about Ohio or Ohioans. The OMD also includes a section sorted by county so it's easy to find your local movie connections. How many movie stars can you identify from Oakwood?



Financial Report

Coming Soon - 2025 Annual Report. It will be posted on our website and a hard copy can be mailed upon request.

The Oakwood Historical Society is a non-profit organization, and therefore all donations are tax deductible. Last year, we also received a donation for our first Room Sponsorship Program, and we hope to receive other room sponsorships this year. A plaque is placed in the room of choice honoring the donor.

Society Receives State Grant

The Society has recently received a sizable Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant from the State Library of Ohio for the conservation and preservation of our rare original 1912 Olmsted Brothers landscape plan.

This Olmsted plan encompasses a large area of West Oakwood, including Hills and Dales Park. It was commissioned by a group of Oakwood's leading citizens at the turn of the last century.

The original plan is currently with the University of Cincinnati Preservation Lab to begin its extensive conservation and preservation work. The Society expects to have the refurbished plan returned by August of this year and a copy of the plan will be showcased in an Olmsted Brothers exhibit at our House Museum this fall. The original will be placed in our archive.

The DLM Good Neighbor Program

Through the Dorothy Lane Market (DLM) Good Neighbor Program, you have the opportunity to choose The Oakwood Historical Society as a participating nonprofit to credit with your purchases made during a calendar year. At the end of each year, DLM makes a generous donation. So, just select The Oakwood Historical Society and scan your Club DLM card each time you shop!

HOW TO ENROLL Step 1: Become a Club DLM member and use your Club DLM card every time you shop. Step 2: Choose your Good Neighbor selection each calendar year by visiting Guest Services at any DLM location or online at DorothyLane.com/GoodNeighbor. Please note that at the start of each calendar year, Club DLM card members will need to re-enroll to select their benefiting Good Neighbor organization, as this information does not carry over year to year.

The Oakwood Historical Society Membership Form

Membership Categories (check one)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual..... \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Bronze \$75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$35 | <input type="checkbox"/> Silver \$100 |
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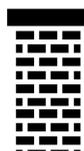
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