

# **Olmsted Historical Society**

Annual Report 2016

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Mission statement: To Preserve yesterday for today and tomorrow

Officers: President: Janice Mettler

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Directors: Jim Gearhart, Bob Lamb, Cindy Lentz, Bill Batteiger, David Neville, Pat Welty.

This has been a busy year that moved Frostville forward. Moving the Thompson house was a huge accomplishment, and the society is very proud to have the team of David Neville, Paul Schumann, and Jack Boss heading up the project. The Schoolhouse committee was very actively planning the building and raising funds. Our Farmers Markets were busy every weekend. Add in 7 events, 3 classes, weddings, sales, tours, and meetings. All these things made Frostville a vibrant village, a space that provided families educational and fun times.

## **Measures of Success.**

The Olmsted Historical Society has always been successful at its endeavors. It has been in existence since 1960, has grown in size, maintains Frostville village

as it has grown into a compound of ten buildings, and provided both educational and entertainment opportunities to surrounding communities.

The time has come for our success to be counted in more tangible ways. One of the ways is to count volunteer hours. Our members are willing to do what needs to be done without seeking attention, so getting them to count the hours they contribute has been difficult. Our first attempt at an annual calculation of volunteer hours is 4,414 hours.

The other means of measuring success is a count of the number of people who visit Frostville. Since access to our grounds are not limited by fences, we can only get partial counts and estimations. We believe that 9665 people attended our events, 18,220 attended summer Farm Market, 3600 winter Farm Market, and 2,000 attended weddings. Grand total of 33,485 guests this year.

A finance committee was formed. Budgets were created for each building and committee, giving everyone an opportunity to make repairs and improvements. A second annual audit as completed. The Thompson house was moved to our grounds, and the Schoolhouse committee grew the building fund to over \$38,000

## **Events**

### **Farm Market:**

Angie Obbish, Manager of the Farmers Market has been actively promoting the market and Frostville through a series of talks and presentations. April 2016 she did a presentation in conjunction with Metro Health on farm to table eating for children and parents at North Olmsted Library. She had Mini Manna Farms, one of our market vendors give pea seedlings for the children to take home and plant. She has been asked to present two more such programs next year, one for children and one for adults.

April 2016 she served on the Committee for the Earth Fair, sponsored by the North Olmsted Arts Council. Our Farmers Market vendors participated in the Earth Fair held in the North Olmsted Community Cabin.

August 2016 Angie participated in The Art of Living Local Project with Great Northern Mall and gave a presentation on the market. This led to the Great Northern Mall management having our market come to Great Northern for a special event in early October. Angie is now Great Northern Mall's Consultant and Community Liaison for future such events in 2017. This will include bringing the Frostville's Farmers Market to the Mall on a monthly basis starting in February of 2017. We will set up a table and display with our promotional material to promote the Olmsted Historical Society.

### Winter Farmer's Market.

Angie Obbish, from Medina, Ohio is our Farmers Market Manager. She has done a fantastic job in promoting, organizing and running the market. Through her leadership our market vendors have grown.

We started our 2016 season with our indoor farmer's market in our Events Barn. The market met twice a month on Saturdays 10:00-2:00pm, from November to April. We have limited space for about 17 vendors. They offer grass fed meat, organic eggs, baked goods, hypotonic grown lettuce, seasonal vegetables, herbs, organic coffee, and arts & crafts and much more.

Summer Farmer's Market.

Starting the first Saturday in May through the last Saturday in October from 9:00-1:00pm, the farmers market is outdoors on the grounds of Frostville. We have over 20-30 vendors who offer a nice variety of fresh vegetables, organic eggs, gluten free breads, grass fed beef, baked goods, arts & crafts, and much more. We average 600-700 visitors a week at the Farmers Market. Then in November we return to our winter market hours.

Frostville Pancake Breakfast Sundays March 6, 13, 20.

For the last twenty years we have held our annual pancake breakfast on the first three Sundays in March. We serve pancakes, sausage, orange juice, coffee and tea. This year over 1000 people (adults & children) joined us for breakfast. We plan our dates to coincide with the Rocky River Nature Center's annual maple syrup event.

Frostville History Day Sunday, June 26.

Every year we plan this event as a salute to our arm forces. This year we had German, Civil War, and WWII re-enactors who each set up an encampment and display. The WWII group held a small mock battle. Our Display Barn highlighted our large collection of military artifacts. All our historical buildings were open including our general store and food booth.

Frostville Tea. Sunday July 10<sup>th</sup> and September 25<sup>th</sup>

The Society held its third annual tea & luncheon. We sold a total of 196 tickets, raffled 12 Baskets for our program on Queen Victoria. The program was held in the Frostville Church and the tea/lunch in the Events Barn. We had 12 members who volunteered to hostess the two teas. We were so proud of our member, Angie Cadwallader, who gave a spectacular performance as the Queen. Both programs were a huge success and sold out weeks in advance. All proceeds were donated to the Schoolhouse project.

Grease, the Musical July 28,29,30 and August 4,5,6

Grease was performed in the evenings to large crowds. North Olmsted residents Mike and Brenda LaRochelle, who are involved in performing arts, directed and produced the Play. The performers were high school graduates of North Olmsted High School. This was the second year they produced and directed a play/musical at Frostville. This event was a big hit with the general

public and we had well over 1000 people attend consisting of seniors, young adults and families.

Frostville Cruise-in and Antique Gas Engine Show, Sunday, August 7.

This event was greeted with the rumble of 50's and 60's classic cars. Over 60 classic cars, 40 antique gas/steam engines and motor scooters were set up around our museum grounds. The Crooked River Band play 60's & up music for the crowds. They have a following and were a favorite with the crowd. All our historical buildings were open including our food booth and general store. This is a great event for young and old alike. We had a large crowd of seniors attend this year.

Pumpkinville in the Valley, Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>

This event was held for the third year in a row. This year the North Olmsted Kiwanis Club was actively involved in helping with the event. We had the Girl Scouts, North Olmsted SITES & Key Club students who volunteered to work the event. Our program was aimed towards families, children and adults. We had plenty of games to test the skill of all the children. No child went home without some type of prize. We offered pony and wagon rides for a small fee. The North Olmsted Community Council sponsored the rental fee for the wagon ride. We had two bounce houses for older and younger children. There was roasted corn, hot pretzels, and plenty of healthy foods. All our historical building were opened. Over 3000 people came to Frostville that day.

Holidays at Frostville. November 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>

This is our "end of the season" program; *"Thank You to the Public for Supporting Us"*. We offered free cookies, coffee, tea and hot chocolate to the general public. We had hot soups and other foods for sale including a great bake sale provided by our members.

Friday night was our candle light walk and the weather was 68 degrees. The walkways were lit with candles around the perimeter. All the homes were period decorated. In our Events Barn we had Mrs. Claus, a free Photo Shoot Frame set up for kids and parents to take holiday pictures, a silent auction for a 26" Reebok Bicycle and 10 wonderful baskets were raffled off. In the Frostville Church, Holiday music, Sing-a-longs, the reading of Night Before Christmas by Mrs. Claus, and a Puppet & Magic show.

All buildings were opened. Although Friday night the weather was 68 degrees, but the other two days were cold & rainy, yet we still had a great turnout.

Events Committee: George (Chair) & Angie Cadwallader, Jan Mettler, Bev Weseling Lee Brenneison, and Pat Welty.

## **Programs**

Pat Welty, a member, taught three Spring and Summer art and craft classes for a small supply fee. The first class demonstrated making a moss lined herb basket.

The other two classes were on acrylic painting of a large Sunflower on slates. All three programs were successful.

## **Building Reports:**

### **Briggs House**

House Members: Jane Crider, Elenor Davis, Carol Lange, Norm & Chris Rehark, Cliff & Anne Schreiber, Wilma Kepperley

2016 has been a year of excitement and refurbishing of the Briggs Home. We were very fortunate that the Questers' David R. Bain 1491 Chapter voted to support this home by petitioning their international and state organizations for grants. They received the Questers International Grant in the amount of \$4,186.00 to remove the carpet in the lower level of the home and to replace and/or refurbish the original flooring. The local Chapter 1491 raised \$814.00 making the total \$5,000.00 given to the Society for the flooring project. Paul Accordinio and Ken Soukup, both new members, took on the organizing, estimating, purchasing, and work, along with volunteers from the Society, of stripping off carpet in the dining and kitchen areas. As they were performing this task, they went under the home to look at the condition of the wood flooring from the bottom and found the supports bracing the home were falling over. They worked on supports in late fall and will continue with the flooring in the spring of 2017.

The Questers Chapter listed above received the Ohio State Grant of \$494.00 to upholster a settee. They contributed \$395.40 from various fundraising activities making the total of \$889.40 given to the Society for this project. The settee was upholstered in gold & burgundy material which was what Will Elliott remembered were the colors.

Barbara & John Masterson, (Barbara is the daughter of Will Briggs Elliott) loaned a kitchen cupboard to the Briggs Home. It is a tall, hand-pegged corner cupboard built in the early 1800's. It holds many of our antique kitchen utensils.

An oil hanging chandelier was purchased for the Briggs dining room. This will be installed in 2017 after the flooring project is complete. We would like to see it electrified and replace the modern ceiling light which was installed years ago when the Society used this home as their Meeting House.

Artificial fruits, vegetables, a baked chicken, eggs, cheese, a loaf of bread and a pie were purchased to add to the ambiance of the dining and kitchen areas. These items help to make the home more personable and realistic for our guests.

Chris Rehark sewed curtains for our parlor and family living areas. The ivory, light linen material was purchased by monies that have been donated by Bob Crider, son of Marion (Elliott/Briggs) & Harry Crider. Bob has been a generous supporter of the Society and the Briggs Home. Bob donated \$5,000 in 2016 - \$2,500 for the General Fund and \$2,500 for the Briggs Restricted Fund. The items mentioned in this report were purchased this year from his generosity.

The Will Briggs Elliott family, Anne Schreiber, George Elliott, Barbara Masterson & Beverly Fowle, loaned many original Briggs' family items they inherited for use in the home. Three binders of 78 records, a stave bucket with rope handle made from the original Briggs flax machine found in the landing way of the home, the settee, 3 straight back woven chairs, a woven-seat rocking chair, a 2-man saw and Henry Briggs' pocket

watch. These items accompany the many Briggs' items loaned to the Society in the past – a wooden rocking chair, 3 ladder-back chairs rewoven with hickory bark by Will Elliott, a bugle, violin, flax machine and many pictures showing the Briggs family life in the home since 1836 till it was donated to the Society in 1969. An original oil painting of the R. T. Elliott home was donated by Cliff and Anne Schreiber hangs in the parlor. Reuben Elliott grew up in his Grandparent's home after his parents died and he met Helen Briggs who lived in the Briggs home which was located across the street on Lorain Road.

A parlor chair upholstered in a burgundy and gold paisley which was found in the A. C. Reed home which was purchased by Will Briggs Elliott which was located at 28890 Lorain Rd, in N Olmsted was donated by Ben and Terri Miyares. Terri is a member of the Questers David R Bain Chapter 1491.

Additional toys and books were added to the children's bedrooms from items found by Bob Lamb. Many of the toys and books found in these rooms have been made possible by him. The children who visit the home like viewing these rooms.

In July, the Briggs' family had a reunion at Frostville. 53 relatives got together for a good time reminiscing our times together at holiday picnics. Thanksgiving and Christmas. We toured the church which we were all attended and the majority of us got married. We put together a time capsule which will be placed in the Briggs' home and is to be open by a relative in 2041.

As you can see, a lot has happened in 2016 and we are looking forward to the reopening of the Briggs' home in 2017

Anne Elliott Schreiber

## Carpenter House

House members: Linda Bartsche, Jack Boss, Jillian Haunestein, Carol Henninger, Jan Mettler, Donna Nordgren, Kathy Valentine, Ginny Villwock.

The volunteers all feel honored to be able to show off this beautiful home to our guests. This year a beautiful Victorian sofa and upholstered rocker were donated for the parlor. They originally belonged to a Civil War era plantation owner in Georgia. New wooden benches, made by our members, were added to both side of the front door, and an American flag of the period flies by the porch. Artificial fruits and vegetables now add a touch of home.

The biggest improvement was made in early November when electric lighting was added. The small spotlights, above doorways, provide indirect lighting to each room illuminating artifacts and room details. They were first used during our holiday candlelight walk; the glow from inside made the house come alive.

## Church

Church committee: Cindy and Jim Lentz, Lea and Goeff Thomas.

There were 15 weddings held at our church between April 9, and November 15. Most weddings have the maximum number of guests -136. Besides weddings, the church was used for the Queen's Tea in July and showcased many musicians, storytelling, a sing-a-long, puppet show and magician during Holidays at Frostville.

We also had a surprise proposal (she said yes). The church generated \$8700.

### Display Barn

Last year the lighting in the Display Barn was greatly enhanced. The large, horse-drawn wooden hearse and about 20 related artifacts were also transferred from the Display Barn to the refurbished and relocated Hearse Barn. This provided an opportunity to rearrange the artifacts in the Display Barn and, amongst other things, create an area to display artifacts related to women and children. This has been a very popular attraction. This year additional artifacts were added to the women and children area and another area was added to display office equipment. Display cases were also added to showcase member-loaned artifacts on temporary display. Approximately 30 artifacts were put on the Display Barn inventory this year, but the most significant artifact acquired this year was a large, early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, fully functional, grape crusher & wine press. Unfortunately, this acquisition has nearly maxed out the display space available in the Display Barn.

### Military Room

The Military Room, which currently has nearly 400 artifacts on display, is literally bursting at the seams. Many of its artifacts are now interspersed with approximately 475 unrelated artifacts in the Display Barn. Approximately 45 new artifacts were put on the Military Room inventory this year, including several significant Civil War and World War II items.

Two Civil War Sharpshooter reenactor uniforms with related equipment (binoculars, canteens, tin cups, cap & cartridge pouches, and haversack) were acquired at the end of the year. They are literally "show stoppers," transformational additions to an already very strong collection of Civil War artifacts. A pair of World War II snowshoes were also put on display this year, which provide a springboard to a discussion of the U.S. Army's only Mountain Division that fought in Italy at the end of the war and captured Mussolini's private retreat

### Thompson House

The Thompson house was built in 1838 on Butternut Ridge Rd which is now in the city of North Olmsted's Historic District. The house was built by one of the early pioneer families for whom we have considerable history. The Thompsons, particularly Priscilla Sears Thompson, were a colorful and vital part of the early history of the area. The North Olmsted Board of Education purchased the Thompson house in 2012 as it was in front of their property on Butternut Ridge Rd. In February 2013, the BOE filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness with the City of North Olmsted Landmarks Commission to

demolish the house. Landmarks convinced the BOE to table the request while alternatives to demolition were explored.

In 2015, the BOE won a \$60 million levy to build a new high school and middle school on the current site of the North Olmsted Middle School and surrounding property. The plan did not include preserving the house. No real progress had been made toward saving the house so Landmarks was resigned to allowing the certificate of appropriateness when notified the BOE was returning with a request in the fall of 2015. Literally, 2 days before the Landmarks meeting an anonymous member of the OHS offered to donate \$15K toward the moving of the house to Frostville. Thus began a hectic campaign to raise the money, get the permits, contract with a house mover and, finally, prepare and move the house. The BOE, who was originally anything but thrilled about the delay in demolition, ultimately contributed \$10K of the \$30K moving cost. This was under the condition that the house be moved before April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016.

Paul Schumann and David Neville became co-chairs for the project.

Many members of the OHS then became involved with preparing the house for the move during the winter of 2015/2016. It was a difficult but fascinating endeavor where we rediscovered much about what had been done with the house over the years and how much a few dedicated people could accomplish.

The process also required unprecedented cooperation between the BOE, The city of North Olmsted, The Cleveland Metroparks and the Olmsted Historical Society.

Differences were set aside and all parties worked together to make the move happen.

In the two weeks before the move the OHS completed preparation of the house, actually cutting the portions being preserved into four parts. On March 24<sup>th</sup>, just a few days before the deadline, Wolfe moving company finished attaching equipment to the house portions and transferred them to the Frostville campus.

We originally planned to bring the house down and leave it on the I-beams used for the move supported by cribs (temporary supports) rather than put in the foundation. We later decided there were too many complications with this scheme. We decided instead, to build the foundation immediately and allow the movers to take their beams and supports. We had three months to complete this so we had to get right to it. We also found that the requirements for the foundation caused the work to be more difficult and costly than expected. We were able to complete enough of the foundation for the movers to remove their equipment in the three months but needed to raise a lot more money to do this.

We've been very fortunate that there have been generous people who came through with the cash we needed. The move was \$30K. The foundation has cost \$30K and we still need an estimated \$10K to complete it. There have been many additional costs such as for the contractor who removed and replaced the roof of the two story portion and for materials. The money so far has come from:

\$45K private donations

\$10K North Olmsted Schools

\$5K Employer matching donations

The balance from money raised so far came from a Go Fund Me site and other Frostville fundraising

Besides the \$10K needed to complete the foundation there are going to be other costs to get the house where it needs to be before we switch all focus to the schoolhouse

construction. The committee is optimistic that folks will come through, as they have in the past, with everything needed.

#### Prechtal House

Committee Members: Sissy Kwiatkowski, Chair, Lee and Jean Brenneison, Richard Marsh.

#### Jenkins Cabin

Committee Members: Bob Batteiger, Bill Batteiger.

#### General Store:

Committee members: Pat Welty - Chair, Cindy Farkas, Mary Lou Cooper, Donna Nordgren

## **Committees**

### Curator Committee

The Curator Committee is in the midst of a multi-year effort to create the Olmsted Historical Society's first comprehensive, up-to-date, readily searchable, digital inventory of historic artifacts in its possession. Last year, in the first full year of this effort, initial entries were made for the artifacts in the Carpenter House, Display Barn, Military Room and General Store. Photographs of the artifacts in the Carpenter House, Display Barn and Military Room were also taken. This year, initial entries were made for the Jenkins Cabin, Workshop, Hearse Barn, Church and the first floor of the Events Barn.

Approximately 2,000 artifacts in nine locations are currently available in the OHS database. These entries can be sorted by location within a building or space (e.g. parlor), collection (e.g. general collection or society used items), category (e.g. household utensils), object name (e.g. quilts), donor name (e.g. William Elliott), approximate age (e.g. early 1800's), status (e.g. on display or out on loan), acquisition value (e.g. \$4,000) and acceptance restrictions, if any.

This summer a comprehensive six-week examination was initiated to ascertain what was stored in the Events Barn Loft. Many historic artifacts (approximately 650) had been gathering dust there; on the floor, in the storage units, above the rafters and in the hip roof area, for decades. Most had never been put on display. Many, approximately one-third, were duplicates of artifacts on display elsewhere on the Frostville Campus.

About 50 of the most interesting artifacts found in the Events Barn Loft were put on display. Then decisions were made regarding the remaining artifacts. Most were placed back in storage, but approximately 200 artifacts were brought downstairs where they were sorted, priced and sold on two successive weekends at the end of July. This initiative not only provided needed revenue for Frostville. It also opened up more storage space in the Loft and provided a new mechanism for locating the items stored there. Plans are afoot to increase the storage capacity of the Loft in the next few years through the use of large rolling shelving units.

Unfortunately, due to the resources devoted to this initiative, no photographs were taken of historic artifacts this year, but this will resume next year.

### Finance Committee

Chairman: Anne Schreiber, Treasurer

Members: Jim Gearhart, David Konold, Bill & Donna Nordgren, Chris Steward, Kathy Valentine

In keeping with the Society's By Laws, a Finance Committee was formed to help the Treasurer to prepare an annual budget. The budget was passed by the Board of Directors. The Committee members, except for Anne Schreiber, conducted the 2015 audit of the Society's financial records under the direction of Jim Lentz. The audit was approved by the Board of Directors and the general membership. It was noted that David Konold did an outstanding job as Treasurer and is an asset to the Society and this Committee.

The Committee chose a few items to budget for 2016 and asked Anne to track certain other income and expenses so we could refine our budget for 2017. The Chairmen of the various houses and committees were asked to submit budgets for 2016. The Committee looked at past years expenses and developed a budget based on their wants and history. This gave the below-listed entities a guide for their purchasing for 2016. It was decided by the Committee that all Marketing for our various events would not be deducted from each event's profits but rather from the General Fund.

The Committee was a help to Anne as she took on the responsibilities of Treasurer. She depended on their input and looks forward to another successful year in 2017.

### Schoolhouse Committee

Committee members: Jan Mettler, Chair, GeorgeMettler, Len Abrams, Carol Travis, Angie and George Cadwallader, Jillian Hauenstein, Cliff and Anne Schreiber, Debbie Porter, John and Char Yaroma, BevWesleing.

Our committee met throughout the year to finalize the design and planning of our 19<sup>th</sup> Century Schoolhouse. We met with Jesse Shook, a Cleveland Metroparks architect who provided us with the drawings and scale for the building. We hope to hire our own structural engineer, Mr. Isaac Lewin, who will help us with the foundation and Mr. Jack Boss, a contractor will do the work.

Jillian Hauenstein is gathering information to apply for a grant from the Cuyahoga Arts and Culture Foundation.

Anne Schreiber and Jan Mettler applied for a grant from First Federal of Lakewood.

Our Schoolhouse Fundraising Chairperson, Angie Cadwallader, along with other members of the society, planned and raised money for the Schoolhouse. She contacted local businesses and private individuals to become sponsors (\$25 or more) to support the tea.

A program chaired by Bev Weseling was called "Chairs of Frostville." Several of our talented ladies designed and painted a total of 10 chairs and sold tickets at the Farmers Market and our other events to raise funds.

In September, we held a Pancake Breakfast as a fundraiser for the Schoolhouse project..

Another schoolhouse fund raiser project chaired by Debbie Porter is "That's My Brick". We are selling engraved red bricks \$50 each for the walkway

of the schoolhouse. We just started this program in late fall and it is slowly growing. It is available to our members and the general public.

## Outreach

Jan Mettler has been working with Jen Graham, historian/naturalist at the Rocky River Metropark to develop a program for 3rd and 4th graders who visit Frostville. Some of the buildings are used to enhance and illustrate the ideas presented in those lessons. We had 4 groups of day campers come to visit.

Two adult groups were given tours: an antique auto club and the Herb Guild.

David Neville gave a talk on the Thompson house move in early September at the North Olmsted Public Library.

We hosted the Chamber of Commerce luncheon in June.

Two Questers groups held meetings here.

The Herb Guild had a luncheon and meeting in August.

Briggs family had a reunion in July

Elyria Catholic High School used the Jenkins cabin as a backdrop for a filmmaking class.

## **Olmsted Historical Society Annual Plan 2017**

1. Review and revise by-laws.
2. Create policy manual.
3. Annual audit of finances
4. Set kitchen goals to include Metropark sustainability guidelines.  
Evaluate cost to profit ratio of food prices.
  - a. use seasonal, fresh, local produce as much as possible
  - b. real butter, olive, safflower, or sunflower oils are to be used
  - c. as much as possible high fructose corn syrup will not be used
  - d. compost all coffee grounds
  - e. minimize waste by careful planning, ordering, and production.
5. Create a marketing committee to be in charge of all sponsorships and fund-raising.
6. Get control of master keys.

7. Improve the flow of information by starting a online newsletter. Keep website and facebook current and coordinated.

8. Get corresponding secretary.

9. Improve participation and increase number of members.

10. Develop volunteer manual and train docents.