



Mission:

*Keeping Indian Hill's
Past and Present Alive
for Tomorrow*

Indian Hill Historical Society

E-Newsletter, October, 2020, Vol. 8

What's Been Happening This Past Quarter?

COVID-19, social distancing, etc. continue

We miss you! We had planned a terrific lineup of programs and events for the 2020-21 season. Due to on-going concerns relating to the virus and with new recommendations emerging daily, we made the difficult decision to cancel or postpone these events until we are able to gather together again safely. We are hoping that time will come soon.

In the interim, we are grateful for your support and your belief in what we do. It is our desire to continue to offer the quality programming that we are known for and to provide a welcoming atmosphere for the camaraderie that we enjoy so much.

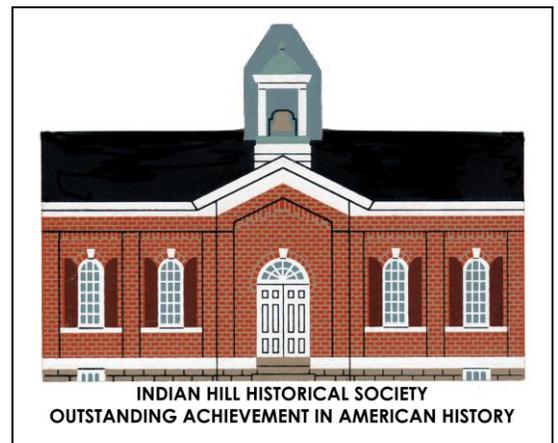
We are working behind the scenes to meet your expectations, and we look forward to resuming programming as soon as we are able. The office is open and ready to assist. More information will be forthcoming as plans unfold, so please stay tuned.

Outstanding Achievement in American History Award

Each year, the Indian Hill Historical Society awards two junior students, one at Cincinnati Country Day School (CCDS) and one at Indian High School, with the "Outstanding Achievement in American History" award. The winner is selected by the teachers at the respective schools and is based on students' participation in co-curricular activities related to American History and student government. This person also exemplifies a positive attitude, shows respect for others, and serves as a leader and role model in the school community.

Due to COVID-19, schools held virtual award ceremonies or postponed them. As previously reported in the [last newsletter](#), CCDS selected **Lila Weizer** received the Historical Society's honors and a \$500 check. In addition to her hard work in American History, she has also been involved with Science Olympiad, Cincinnati Symphony Youth Orchestra, Inner City Youth Organization, Stepping Stones, and CCDS Cross Country and Track & Field teams,

Indian Hill High School has recently nominated **Graham Pierce** for this award. Several of his teachers mentioned the following accolades:



- Graham is a student who truly thirsts for historical knowledge. He is in a constant search for the next answer. He knows all the deeper historical understandings that students much older and more experienced than him normally have. Grant approaches history differently than most students. He does not do it merely for a grade but to understand as much as possible.
- Graham Pierce is a true history scholar. He knows so much history from his personal reading and video viewing that he is deep into historical comparisons, counterfactuals, contextualization, and ultimate causes and effects, before classes even start. He challenges his teachers and fellow students to consider different perspectives and interpretations.

With the generosity of the Nippert Foundation, the Historical Society is pleased to recognize Graham's and Lila's passion for and achievements in American History.

New Leases for the Little Red Schoolhouse and Buckingham Lodge

The Historical Society has been leasing the two buildings from the Village for several decades, and recently has successfully negotiated two new leases for the next 20 years with options for future years. A major change with the new leases is that the Society will take on significantly more financial responsibility for the maintenance of the buildings, as the Village is working to manage its budget and reduce costs. Like most old buildings, there is always a to-do project list, and these structures are no different. The incredible support of the donors and members through the years makes it possible for the Society to take on these additional obligations.

The Historical Society is proud to be the steward for these two Village landmark buildings and is committed to keeping them relevant to the community. These wonderful structures have significant storied pasts, and they will continue to be part of the Village's future stories.

Member News, 3rd Quarter, 2020

New Members:

Jennifer & Robert Adams
 Barbara & Gregg Bardon
 Betsy & John Betagole
 Susan & Douglas Brengle
 Alison & William Bristol
 James Gerdson
 Susan & Jim Gibbs

Moira & Jeff Grainger
 Louise Head
 Alicia & Jeffrey Heinichen
 Kathy & Rich Hidy
 Lynn & Wayne Lippert
 Kathleen & Christopher Nordloh

Renewals:

Clare & Tom Ackermann
Judith Affatato
Kathryn Al-Lamadani
Jennifer & Harold Angus
Gail Bechtold
Mary Jo Beck
Jane & Larry Bennett
Sue & Jim Bero
Sema & Jagdish Bhati
Elizabeth & Rick Bieser
Susan & Neil Bortz
Sandra & David Bowen
Hazeleen & Leland
 Brewster
Sandra & Otto Budig
Stephanie & John Busam
Kathy Ciafardini
Jessica & Chris
 Cicchinelli
Sue & Tim Clarke
Richard Cocks
Carolyn Condorodis
Sue & Kent Cunningham
Emily & Ryan Conner
Jane & Edgar Cox
Jennifer & Brian Davis
Carol & Troy DeBord
Renie Dohrmann
Mary Jane & Donald
 Dolan
Helen Dupree
Jodi & Dan Feigelson
Noah Fleischmann
Sudie Geier
Ann Gentile
Mary & Jack Gimpel
Susan & Gary Green
Robert Greiwe
Roberta Hair
Stella & John Hassan
Janet & Cornelius Hauck

Melanie & Bruce Healey
Sally Heckscher
Jane & Bill Higgins
Sharan & Phil Hinkle
Lesley Gilbertson &
 William Hurford
Sandra & Stephen Joffe
Frani & Don Jones
Jeannette & Greg Jones
Ted Jones
Chris & Bill Judd
Cynthia & Kelly King
Teddy & John Kladakis
Patricia Klaus
Marianne & Don
 Klekamp
Jane & Ron Koppenhoefer
Leslie & John Krehbiel
Kym & Mark Kuenning
Barb & Eddie Lane
Caryn & Art Lee
Betty Letscher
Ina & Eddie Loftspring
Whitney & Phillip Long
Molly & Ted Lucien
Doug Manzler
Candace & Michael
 McCaw
Alicia Bridgeland &
 Don McGraw
Cassie & Lachlan McLean
Deborah & Don McMullen
Pam Middendorff
Audrey & Greg Miller
Deb & John Mitchell
Cynthia & Rick
 Muhlhauser
Stephen Oughterson
Emily & Gregg Pancero
Graham Pierce
Irene & Daniel Randolph

Phyllis Reichle
Janet Reynolds
Cynthia & Paul Riordan
Susan & John Roberts
Bonnie Roe
Diana & Basil Rowe
Lois Poe Rust
Melanie & Bob Schaeffer
Shirley Scharfenberger
Lynn & Jack Schiff, Jr.
Carol & Bill Schmidter
Michelle & Robert
 Schneider
Carolyn Schulteis
Pat Schwemlein
Rhonda & Larry
 Sheakley
Monique & Mike Sewell
Libby & Raleigh Sharrock
Gloria Uziel & Patrick
 Shea
John Shields
John Shepherd
Linda Siekmann
Lorinn Smith
Lori Gardner Sommer
Sarah & Steve Steinman
Rita & Don Stolper
Kay Sudbrack
Jane & Ed Terrill
Vicki & Mark Tullis
Mary Uhlenbrock
Cedric Vogel
Paula Watters
Tory Watters
Barbara & Irwin
 Weinberg
Jean Wiester
Debra & David Wright
Brenda Walker
Debra & William Zimmer

Interested in becoming a member? [Click here](#)

Thanks to Our Business Members

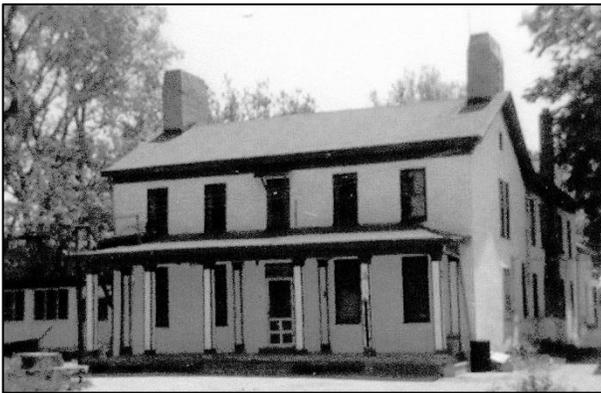
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The Elliotts and Elliott House

By Trish Krehbiel

I recently digitized both the Elliott House (9400 Given Rd) and Elliott Family files in our archives. The first step in digitizing requires a thorough read of the documents. Extensive files such as the Elliotts' contain photographs, correspondence, maps, invitations, printed programs, accounting records, slides & negatives, hand-written notes, and many xerox copies of news articles. Putting all the material in some semblance of order, both chronologically and by subject matter can be like solving a puzzle. The finished product of digitizing a file rich with local history achieves a well curated record, notated as completely as possible, available for research and telling a story or two of its own!

John Elliott, born in 1762, came to America from Ireland in 1784; married Mary Miller of Pennsylvania, and traveled with his family to southwest Ohio. John Elliott purchased approximately 112 acres on the Little Miami River where it meets Sycamore Creek for \$450 in 1800. As the history goes: the young Elliott family lived in a hollowed-out Sycamore tree measuring 11' in diameter while building a log cabin nearby. Elliott built his home on Given Road using local resources of stones and trees to construct the house that stands today adjacent to Livingston Lodge. He also established several mills nearby which were powered by the Little Miami River.



Elliott House, 1969, with stucco covering the original stone exterior

Ownership of Elliott House transferred through the years, landing with Henry S. Livingston who gave it to the United Jewish Social Agency in 1921 which ran Camp Livingston. In the late 1960s Camp Livingston vacated to donated land in Indiana, and the Village of Indian Hill bought Elliott House with the surrounding acreage. The Indian Hill schools used Elliott House and the prior Camp Livingston as an Outdoor Education Center until it was deemed unsafe. Councilwoman Betty Steer led an effort to preserve the House.

Through a collaborative effort with the nascent Indian Hill Historical Museum Association (today's Historical Society), funds were raised, architects consulted, and after 8 years of basic restoration, the house was protected by a new roof from the elements. Village Council offered Elliott House for sale to the public with the proviso that it be restored and lived in by the purchaser.

The renovations proved to be challenging from a building perspective to work with and preserve the 1800s design and also showed the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the builders. For example, the new owners of Elliott House discovered that the Elliotts arranged the room layout such that the fireplace flues traveled up at an angle to meet a single chimney; thereby having a fireplace to provide heat in each room without multiple chimneys sprouting from the roofline.

The 4-foot-thick stone foundation walls and 2-foot-thick stone walls came from the Little Miami River; without doubt underscoring the saying, "They don't build them like they used to."! Imagine the vision required of the new owners to look past the condition of Elliott House in 1984 – no windows, no doors, and wide-open holes in the floor.

The wood beams that supported the first and second floors had to be completely removed because of rot. Only the beam portions attached into the stone wall were sound. While under construction the roof load had to be supported at first from the basement and subsequently from the newly-laid first floor. A 40-foot beam that supported the roof was still intact. Challenging as

reconstruction had been, it takes pause to imagine John Elliott and his friends hewing and hoisting a 40-foot long wood beam up to a second story without the use of power equipment.



Portion of log gutter found during restoration

As the restoration continued, more amazing details were found. When the second story was being worked on, an old log gutter held up by iron braces was discovered. By counting the rings in the wood, it was determined to have come from a 117-year-old tree! Additionally, in one of the bedrooms, some plaster had been put over the stone. And since no one can resist writing in wet plaster, John and his son William wrote their names; John's writing matches his signature recorded on the property deed. Lastly, while on a two-story extension ladder with their 3 year-old daughter napping on the floor, the new owners found a surprising enclave of 20+ furry residents – bats to be

specific! Not many of us can see ourselves working evenings and weekends with a young child in tow renovating Elliott House.

The Elliott House was added to The National Register in 1976 because it stands as the oldest home left in the Miami Purchase of 1788 (land between the Little and Big Miami Rivers). Thankfully, the first family to live in Elliott House after more than 60 years heard the siren call of preservation providing a shining example of the Indian Hill Historical Society's mission to preserve and protect our Village heritage for future generations.



Elliott House after the renovations, which started in 1985



From the President:

October marks the beginning of harvest season and ushers in the traditional fall holidays -- Columbus Day and Halloween. Columbus Day celebrates Christopher Columbus's landing on an island in the Americas on October 12, 1492. His intent was to sail to the Orient, but instead he discovered a new continent. By opening up the New World, he paved the way for European colonization and vast change. But celebration of his historic discovery did not begin until three hundred years later when Italian and Catholic communities organized events honoring Columbus, his birthplace, and his faith. On the 400th anniversary of the voyage in 1892, President Benjamin Harrison proclaimed October 12th a one-time holiday, commemorating four centuries of American life. Franklin D. Roosevelt established it as a national holiday in 1937, and Richard M. Nixon designated the second Monday in October for its observance. This year Columbus Day falls exactly on October 12 – the 528th anniversary of Columbus's landing in the Bahamas. All federal offices are closed, and observances of the holiday often include parades, gatherings, and Italian meals.

In recent years Columbus Day has stirred controversy. Columbus has been reviled for being a very poor governor which resulted in the oppression and genocide of Native Americans. Columbus, Ohio, was named for Columbus, and this year his statue was removed from City Hall, the Columbus State Community College, and the Statehouse. The statues are in storage, and prominent Italian Americans are trying to find new homes for these monuments. After five hundred years, separating myth from fact remains a challenge.



Illustration of Columbus' ships

Halloween's origins can be traced back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain, which marked the end of the harvest and the beginning of winter. The Celts believed that the dead returned to earth on the night of Samhain and would light bonfires and wear costumes to ward off ghosts. Dressing in costumes and going door to door to request food or money was common in Ireland and Scotland,



Samhain festival

and the custom spread to North America as a result of massive Irish and Scottish immigration in the 1800s. Trick or treating became widespread in the United States by the 1930s. Tricks were naughty antics inflicted on those who failed to offer a treat. Youngsters would let air out of people's tires, soap windows, set pigs free from pens, and festoon toilet paper over trees and shrubs. By the end of the 1900s, however, tricks had progressed to vandalism such as pulling fire alarms, throwing bricks through windows, and detonating firecrackers. Municipalities soon developed measures to curtail the mayhem.

In Indian Hill, Halloween used to be observed on two nights: Damage Night on October 30 and Beggars' Night on October 31. Former residents recall taking a wagon apart and putting it back together on the roof of Jefferson School, rigging up a gas motor in the Armstrong Chapel cemetery to ring the bell in the church belfry, moving an entry gate to a barn roof, and stretching a wooden

picket fence across the road. The Rangers usually caught the culprits and sent them home. On Beggars' Night, costumed youths walked from house to house seeking goodies.

Trick or treating in the Village is restricted to specific hours, and parents often accompany their children as they traipse from house to house. In recent years, homeowners have added to the fun with elaborate decorations, hooting owls, and groaning organ music for atmosphere. It is uncertain how Covid-19 will affect this year's event. A full moon will shine on October 31, and it is hoped that young ghosts and goblins will be able to enjoy the Halloween traditions in Indian Hill's neighborhoods.



Rosemary D. Welsh
President



Office News:

As noted previously in the newsletter, due to the pandemic, the Historical Society's programs and gatherings have been put on hold until we can safely meet in person. We truly miss seeing you at these events, catching up on news, and enjoying listening to and learning from the various speakers. These get-togethers will occur again and we will celebrate our love of history. Until then, please know that we are still regularly in the office and are available to answer your calls or emails.



Buckingham Lodge

Your continued support and membership are truly appreciated and critical for keeping this organization a vital part of our community.

The Historical Society works to pursue the mission: *Keeping Indian Hill's Past and Present Alive for Tomorrow*. If you have memories of your life / adventures in Indian Hill that you would like to share, please let us know. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome. You may contact us through email: history@indianhill.org or phone: 513-891-1873.

Honoring Indian Hill's Past, Present, and Future,
The Indian Hill Historical Society

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