

The Story of the Indian Hill Historical Society

The Indian Hill Historical Museum Association was begun in 1973 by a group of Village residents who wished to preserve The Little Red Schoolhouse, a Village landmark since 1873. Under the leadership of Tyler Emerson and Andrew C. Hauck, Jr., the building was repaired and restored. The Society recognizes Mrs. Emerson as Founder and President of the Indian Hill Museum Association and Mr. Hauck as restorer of the Little Red Schoolhouse and Co-Founder.

In 1974, the Board of Trustees stated that their plan for the Schoolhouse was “after restoration, to collect and contain here the history of Indian Hill and its region and to be an educational center.” Over 100 families supported the Indian Hill Historical Museum Association as “founders.” Each family contributed \$100 within the first year to establish a fund to restore the Schoolhouse, and their names are inscribed on the blackboard in the vestibule of the Schoolhouse. Others who played key roles include Vi Eustis, Margo Tytus, and Ted High.

In its early years, the organization was geared towards the concept of a “museum.” There was an emphasis on exhibits, with the idea that the Schoolhouse would be a museum to preserve and present artifacts and art pertaining to Indian Hill. Undoubtedly one of the most successful art exhibits was the Fanny show of 1975. With decreasing interest in exhibits and shows, the Board moved away from the concept of a museum and changed the name to “The Indian Hill Historical Society” in 1982.

Following the goal “to chronicle and preserve the history of this Village through photographs and research,” a collection of estate photos was started in 1977 based on the “Map of Camargo.” Virginia White’s first book, From Camargo to Indian Hill, was inspired by this pictorial exhibit. More recently, the Society embarked on a long-term project to digitize its extensive archives and looks forward to sharing them on-line in the future. The Society also adopted a strategic plan with the goals of broadening its appeal, improving its visibility, and increasing its accessibility.

Throughout its history, the Little Red Schoolhouse has served as a community center for the Village. A House Tour (1979-2018), the Village Christmas Party (1980-present), dinner programs, slide shows and travel talks, and musical and theatrical presentations have all had a place in the schedule for many years. Starting in 1992, the annual One-Room Schoolhouse Experience has welcomed local 4th graders to see what school was like in the late 1800s. Today’s programs focus on aspects of life in the Village and feature speakers on the history of Indian Hill.

The Society has taken a stand on matters pertaining to zoning and preservation and always encourages the retention of historic properties. In addition to the Schoolhouse, it has also worked to preserve properties such as Buckingham Lodge, the Elliott House, and the Jefferson School. The Society remains dedicated to the preservation of landmark properties in the Village through publications illustrating their value, the Historic Landmark Plaque program, and attention to current issues in Village planning.

To communicate the Village’s history, the Society published four major books in 1983, 1987, 1993, and 2009 (Indian Hill – A Point of View). This activity continues in the ongoing series of IHHS pages (since 1992) and “Images” pages (since 1996) in the Village Bulletin, in the Village video and DVD, “An

Indian Hill Scrapbook,” (1997), and most recently in “A Legacy of Green,” (2023), a documentary produced by the Trees and Trails Foundation. The Society also introduced its new Authors Series (2022) to wide acclaim, inviting noted historians Peter Cozzens and Alan Guelzo to address local history buffs and students alike.

Beginning in 2014, the Board established the “Indian Hill Historical Society Outstanding Achievement in American History Award.” The Award is given to two students each year, one at Indian Hill High School and one at Cincinnati Country Day School. These students demonstrate excellence in the areas of American History and extracurricular activities.

In 1998 a donation was made to modernize and expand the Village-specific character of the library at Buckingham Lodge. The Hauck Library was named in honor of Mr. Andrew Hauck, Jr., in recognition of his contributions and dedication to the Society, by donors Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Hauck, III. The library has continued to grow and develop into a significant resource center for students, researchers, genealogists, and anyone interested in local history.

Major bequests to the Society have also come from Webb & Ellen Hill in 2008 and from Louis and Louise Nippert (and their ensuing foundation) starting in 2012 to further our mission of “**Keeping Indian Hill’s Past and Present Alive for Tomorrow.**” The donor plaques at the Little Red Schoolhouse recognize their contributions and those of other significant donors.