



Centerville- Washington History

The Curator

The newsletter of Centerville-Washington History

Director's Thoughts

By Cheryl Meyer



Summer is a wonderful time of the year. The warmth of the sun, the sound of children playing outside, or the smell of a meal prepared on the grill all remind us that this is the time of year when we try to relax and regroup. Centerville-Washington History faced challenges this

last year but out of those challenges, many good things came to be. We are greeting the future with a smile on our faces and a renewed jig in our step. Thank you for being so supportive. I am very grateful.

I would like to remind you that this is a good time to talk to your friends, family, or other community members regarding a Centerville-Washington History membership. Members support the preservation and promotion of our local history by funding programs, exhibits, classes, events, operations, and much more with their annual dues. Membership in our organization is an invitation to new experiences. An afternoon at the Walton House or Asahel Wright House museums provide learning opportunities. A visit to Nutt Cottage can offer information about the community or local family history. In addition, membership includes discounts on our publications and gift items.

On another front, I would like to speak about volunteerism. We are planning on having most of our events this year and with that comes the need for volunteers. Whether it be with our museums, educational programming, Hometown Holiday Walk, Speaker Series, Sense of Taste, or helping with our museum gardens, there is always something to be done. If you would like to be involved, please contact me and I will help you find a good fit.

On a personal note, I have some exciting news to share. Mark and I are first-time grandparents!!! Our son and his wife brought a beautiful baby boy, Elias Mark Meyer, into this world in March. In June, our daughter and her husband are expecting a little girl. Our family is growing and Mark and I are overjoyed. We truly have much to be thankful for.

'Till we meet again, friends, remember ...

It Takes a Village

Presidents Letter

By Ed Ross, President

After a very tough year, we are slowly getting back to what used to be normal. Our museums are now open, our summer programs are filling up, and Americana will be back on a smaller scale. We are planning our Sense of Taste at Benham's Grove on Sept. 9.

Another 40 volunteers pitched in to finish cleaning the headstones at the old Centerville cemetery. Our hired experts have been fixing broken and tilted headstones and will be continuing until complete. This fall when we tour the third graders through they will no longer ask why so many stones are broken or leaning.

The first batch of memorial bricks have been set in the Walton house sidewalk and there is room for many more. These are a great everlasting gift to those you love or respect.

The Antique Village has finally reopened and our sales are booming! I guess people were waiting to get in and buy some of that wonderful stuff.

We're also excited to welcome our new board members who have fresh new ideas and energy. They will certainly make a positive contribution.

Be safe and enjoy the beautiful weather we waited so long for.

Incoming Board Members

Centerville-Washington History is a fantastic organization to be involved with. The friendships are lasting and the desire to share our history is strong. We are fortunate to see members of our community want to become involved with our organization. Their energy and excitement will help Centerville-Washington History continue with our mission of promoting the history of our local area. Please welcome our incoming 2021 Board Members.

Terry O'Brien
Brenda Badgely
Jerry and Hylda Strange
Tom and Susan Boyd
Angi Gomez



The Mission of Centerville-Washington History is to connect the community to its heritage by collecting, preserving, interpreting and promoting the history of our local area. Centerville-Washington History is partially funded by the city of Centerville and Washington Township.

Centerville Genealogy

By Susan Melville, Financial Manager and
Newsletter Editor

Curator's Corner

By Joellen Ulliman, Curator

A Fresh New Look

With shut-downs and pandemic panic, many folks used extra time at home to clean. I did the same -- here at the Nutt Cottage Research Center.

I cleaned every square inch last March, top to bottom. I cleaned shelves, walls, floors, and things that were on the "someday when I have time" list. Not only did I have some time, I also felt the importance of readying the cottage for the day our doors would reopen. I wanted all possible germs gone! It was one of the best ways we knew at the time to combat the illusive Covid-19.

Being a perfectionist, I proudly took the curtains home to wash and press. My feeling of triumph faded quickly as I pulled them, piece by piece, out of the washer. Some of the fabric was torn, and my heart dropped when I saw that the front door curtain was in shreds, long noodle-y shreds.

After drying and pressing, I was able to piece together the café window curtains and even did some fancy hand stitching to hide small holes. Two panels were complete casualties; I re-situated what was salvageable so that the office and front room windows were covered. Fortunately, unused curtains at home worked perfectly in the cottage restroom.

The door panel, though... a completely different story. I searched the internet and stores as they reopened for a replacement, but to no avail. The original was hand made specifically for that door by former society member Vicki Williamson. She and her husband Tom were instrumental in the 2004 restoration of the Nutt Cottage when it was bequeathed to us by Lois Zizert.

Although I do a minimal amount of sewing, I have neither a machine nor skills for major projects. At a complete loss (of the curtain, a lot of privacy, safety, and pride), I put mannequins and messages in the door window to distract people from peering into the cottage from heavily traveled Main Street. I became accustomed to placing valuable items out of easy view.

Until last week... when Vicki Williamson magically appeared at my door for the second time in a month. She typically came to share donations, but this time she left with a promise to sew a new front door panel.

Imagine my complete surprise when she appeared again, days later, holding a brand new, custom-made door curtain. I now have a grateful view... of a talented, kindhearted community member.



Over the past few years while walking my dog in the neighborhood I have visited with Cheryl Meyer. As we talked she always mentioned her amazing job at Centerville Washington History and the wonderful people she works with. When Cheryl mentioned there was an opening with Peggy's retirement I quickly applied and was thrilled to be offered the job as the new finance manager.

Our family moved to Centerville from California in 1996 after finishing graduate school. We moved into the Pleasant Hill neighborhood with our two little daughters. Soon we added three more children to our family and many years of devoted parenting. Our last child is currently a sophomore at Centerville High School and although we enjoy all the final fun and chaos of raising a family we are enjoying a chance to begin new hobbies and adventures. I love gardening, hiking and reading.

A few years ago I began taking classes in genealogy and found that I really loved studying about my ancestors through old records and journals. When I started working at Centerville Washington History I didn't expect to find a personal connection to historical Centerville figures. During a recent family vacation I checked my family genealogy and was surprised to find out that Dr. John Hole is my fifth cousin seven times removed. Asahel Wright is my fourth cousin seven times removed and Colonel Edward Deeds is my eighth cousin two times removed. These may not be close connections but this little glimpse into my own history reminded me that there are people that share my DNA all over the world. I grew up in New York but a little part of me was in Centerville long before I got here.

Although I cannot possibly replace Peggy, with her infinite knowledge and gentle spirit, I know that part of me belongs here in these old buildings filled with history of relatives I am just learning about.

Save the date for an
all-membership picnic!

Thursday, August 12

5:30 – 7:30 pm

Oak Grove Park; Noon Optimist Shelter

Details to come!

Centerville-Washington History scholarship winner, Madelyn Combs

For the fourth consecutive year, Centerville-Washington History is awarding a scholarship, in the amount of \$1,000, to a deserving Centerville High School graduate. Requirements for CWH Scholarship applicants include: a graduating senior who has attended CHS for all four years, GPA of 3.0 or above, and must be accepted at and planning to attend an Ohio four year (public or private) college or university as a full-time student majoring in education or history.



Congratulations to the 2020-21 CWH Scholarship winner Madelyn Combs. This exceptional young lady has demonstrated her musical talents and leadership abilities as a member of the Centerville Jazz Band, United Sounds, Pep Band and the Jazz Ensemble. She has been accepted into the National Honor Society and German National Honor Society. Camp Counselor and Vacation Bible School leader are among Madelyn's volunteer roles with Epiphany Lutheran Church. Madelyn plans to major in Middle Childhood Education and minor in History at Bowling Green State University. Centerville-Washington History congratulates Madelyn, along with her parents Michael and Jessica Combs, for her high school achievements. Best wishes for continued success at Bowling Green State University!

All-Call for Yearbooks

By Joellen Ulliman, Curator

A recent project of mine is re-organizing the Centerville High School yearbooks in our collection. It is fun to see the progression and growth in our school system through the eyes of former students.



The earliest yearbook in our collection is 1938. Interestingly, yearbooks from 1938-50 are all paperback! Our most current edition is 2001.

I am on the hunt for these "missing" volumes. These are the years we need:

1961, 1962, 1963, 1972 (we have a damaged edition, would like one in better shape), 1977, 1981, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2002-present. Contact Joellen at 931-312-0040 before donating.

Centerville-Washington History MONTHLY SPEAKER SERIES

2021-2022

Third Tuesday of the month

Free and open to the public!

Enjoy refreshments and historical education.

Donations welcome and appreciated.

****RecPlex West Theater (Rec West)**

965 Miamisburg Centerville Rd.

Reception 6:30 p.m.

Program 7:00 p.m.

October 19, 2021

Raymond Szymanski

Swamp Gas Revisited:

The True Story of the 1966 Michigan UFO

November 16, 2021

Paul Cooper

Japan Attacks Pearl Harbor:

December 7, 1941

January 18, 2022

Tony Kroeger

Hidden History of Dayton

February 15, 2022

Mike Williams

FDR's Confidential Crusader

March 15, 2022

Jim Miller

Warrior Two-Six: A Helicopter Pilot's Story

April 19, 2022

Andrew Walsh

Lost Dayton

May 17, 2022

General John Allen

The Future of Afghanistan,

Women's Rights and Role of Civil Society

****In person presentations are the goal for this series. However, presentations may shift to a digital format as needed. State and local health guidelines will be followed.**
CentervilleWashingtonHistory.org

Thank you to our Business Members

Solid Rock Roofing • TOPOS • Antiques Village



Fond Farewell

By Cheryl Meyer, Director

As we head into a promising 2021, we see changes in every corner of Centerville-Washington History. One such change involves our Board of Trustees. With bittersweet emotions, I announce that Adam and Bootie Zengel, Steve Feverston, and Marian Sensenbaugh have stepped down from our Board of Trustees. They have all been very actively involved in our organization for many years and plan to remain active. Below are their own thoughts as they reflect over the years and a listing of some of their favorite past projects. We thank each of them for their many years of service and support. They will truly be missed!



Adam Zengel:

"When Centerville-Washington History inherited the Nutt Cottage, Vickie Bondi asked if I would go over and check the house and basement. I found the house in total abandonment, no care for a long time, which was expected. When I went to the basement I found it to be flooded. This was not good! I

quickly got a replacement sump pump and pumped the water out. I fixed a few other things and then they let Dave Hufnagle, Tom Williamson, Dave Brooker and me restore and stabilize the whole place. I guess we were at the right place at the right time."

Board member 2013-2021

Led volunteer effort in Chicken House relocation

Overseer of many projects for the historic preservation of the local community

Supervisor of facilities maintenance and museums repairs

Aaron Nutt Cottage Restoration supervisor

Walton House garden committee

Bootie Zengel:

"I have enjoyed seeing how CWH has evolved over the years into the vibrant organization it is today and all the really good friends we have met over the years. Working in the Walton House garden was a favorite activity, and Chautauqua was an outstanding event, as were the many Americana Festivals, Holiday Walks, and Victorian Teas."

Board member 1998-2021

President of the Board of Trustees 2005-2007

Organizer of countless events

Walton House garden committee leader

Victorian Tea committee

Centerville-Washington History gift shop

"It was all done as a Labor of Love!"

-Adam and Bootie Zengel



Steve Feverston:

"The LORD blessed me with the opportunity to serve this wonderful organization and its energetic and enthusiastic people. The fondest memories I have are the Americana Festival Street Fairs. These were the times that Centerville-Washington History shone its brightest. All vol-

unteers and staff worked hard and made these events a true success, not just in the record number of guests who visited the Asahel Wright Museum, but joy and happiness we brought to our guests and to each other. These are the times I will always treasure."

Board member 2015 – 2021

President 2015 – 2019; Treasurer 2019 – 2021

Led efforts to refresh outward face of society with new name, logo, and website

Established and chaired Scholarship committee

Served on Publication committee to edit and re-publish

"A Sense of Place"

Designed and constructed a full-scale replica of the obelisk traffic signal at Main and Franklin Streets.



Marian Sensenbaugh:

"After retiring from teaching I wanted to volunteer in the community and fortunately found Centerville-Washington History where my love of history and teaching could be combined. Most of my

experiences were on the Education Committee which found the Summer Youth Program just beginning. Donna Clark and I developed and presented several classes along with school tours. These classes still continue to be a vibrant educational part of the society. My life has been enriched by meeting so many wonderful members and staff who are all warm, talented and caring people. I look forward to many more rewarding opportunities."

Board member 2007-2021

Vice President & Chair of the Monthly Speaker Series

Chair of the Victorian Tea

Chair of the Volunteer Dinner

School Tour guide; Presenter of Summer Youth Programs

Welcome New Members

Christopher Boice • William and Erin Boice

Tom and Susan Boyd • Jennifer Fair

Angi Gomez • Thomas Kidwell

Reid and Susan Melville • Terry Obrien

Elizabeth Rover • David Strange

Scott and Tonya Zipperian

A Garden Moment

By Cheryl Meyer, Director

*A garden is a good teacher.
It teaches patience and careful watchfulness.
It teaches industry and thrift, above all it teaches entire trust.*

Gertrude Jekyll (2011)

April 10 was to be a rainy day but Mother Nature smiled down on Centerville-Washington History with part of the day staying dry. A group of 10 volunteers met at the Walton House at noon for a garden cleanup session under the leadership of Mary Higgins. This garden is extremely special to Mary because it has been dedicated as the Mary Jane Smith garden, in memory of Mary's mother.

The day proved to be fruitful in cleaning up the garden and getting ready for Mary to work her spring magic. It was quite enjoyable working side by side with members of our organization. Thank you to the following for giving up part of their Saturday and helping out in the Walton House garden:

**Mary Higgins • Brenda Badgely • Ed Ross
Adam Zengel • Phil Kern • Susan Melville
Ralph and Karen King • Mark and Cheryl Meyer**



Medicinal Plants & Folk Remedies

In partnership with the Centerville-Washington Park District, CWH will present "Medicinal Plants & Folk Remedies." Learn about our first local physician, Dr. John Hole, and the remedies used to treat the ailments of early Ohio settlers. The popularity and allure of traveling medicine shows will also be discussed. At the end of the program, the Park District will provide a small number of native prairie seeds for planting. This program will take place outdoors. Insect repellent is recommended.

Ages 14 and up

Friday, Aug 6th

7:00-8:00 PM

The Walton House Museum, 89 West Franklin Street
Register for this event on the park district's website.
Contact Melissa Wagner, Education Coordinator, at 937-291-2223 for more information.

In Sympathy

Our condolences go out to the family and friends of members:

Sally Beals, former Mayor of Centerville (1996-2003) and member of City Council, who passed away April 16, 2021.

Pauline Hennessey, beloved mother, wife and grandmother, who passed away January 16, 2021.

John R Callander passed away on February 24 at the age of 90 after a life of service and volunteerism.

Save the Date!



A culinary tasting event sponsored by
Centerville-Washington History

Thursday, September 9, 2021

5-8 pm

Tickets Available for Purchase in July!

Contact cwths@sbcglobal.net for sponsorship opportunities or call the Walton House for more information.

Entertainment

Cash Bar

Walton House Walk of Fame Commemorative Bricks

Two commemorative brick walkways complement the beautiful gardens at the Walton House. You have the opportunity to join fellow community members commemorating your family, or a special someone, on the Walton House Walks of Fame. Due to the generosity of *Snyder Brick & Block*, there is a brick waiting for you! Thank that special teacher, honor your club or a family member with a lasting gift. Your brick will be enjoyed by visitors for years to come as they learn about the history of our community.



Bricks will be added to the walkway as minimum order numbers are met. You will be notified after installation.

*Place an order
today!*

Inscription on the brick should read as follows:

First line:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
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Second line:

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Please indicate one character per space provided above.

Spaces between words and punctuation marks count as characters.

(Please submit separate forms with a single payment for additional bricks)

☐ This is a gift. Please contact me.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

_____ First Brick @ \$100 \$ _____

_____ add'l brick(s) @ \$75 \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

Payment Type: ☐ Check # _____ ☐ Credit Card

Card No. _____

Cardholder Signature: _____ Exp. Date: ____/____/____

Please make your check payable to and/or return form to:

Centerville-Washington History

89 West Franklin Street
Centerville, OH 45459

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Your contributions may be tax deductible. Receipt will be issued.

Is Not About This Frederick C. Smith

By Jerry Strange



Frederick C. Smith

A few weeks ago Lee Snyder, of Snyder Brick and Block and a former Township trustee, was telling me about Frederick C. Smith, the CEO of Huffy Corporation in the 1960s, who lived on Mad River Road and how he (that is, Fred) had lobbied to keep

Mad River Road a two lane country road when county officials were giving some thought to widening it to accommodate an in-

crease in traffic volume, and that he (Lee) thought I should write an article for The Curator about Fred; which I thought about doing, but instead, as much as I believe that Fred deserves an article in The Curator, decided to write about Mad River Road, because I was curious about how it got its name.

Mad River Road runs south from the Arbor Mall on W. David Road in Kettering through Washington Township to Route 725 at the Dayton Mall in Miami Township.

You may or may not know that the Mad River originates in Logan County and has its confluence with the Great Miami River at Deeds Park in North Dayton. So, why is a road that connects two shopping malls called Mad River Road when its most northern extent is more that seven miles from the Mad River? The answer lies in its history.

Mad River Road is actually the last remaining traceable segment of the first overland route between Dayton and Cincinnati. It was laid out in 1795 by Daniel C. Cooper, a surveyor and miller who was involved in the early settlement of Dayton, to provide an overland route for the European migration and settlement of Dayton and the fertile land of the Mad River area (much to the displeasure of the Shawnees.)

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Mad River Road was the only road from the Ohio River to the Mad River area. So, at the time, it was an appropriate name for the road. Over time, the existence of the historic road south and north of the five-mile segment we know as Mad River Road has disappeared, leaving us with a pleasant country road (apparently because of Fred C. Smith's efforts to keep it pastoral) named for a river that is more than seven miles away.

Homesteading Ohio Program

By Melissa Wagner

Beginning in the 18th century, families undertaking the journey to the Ohio Territory were met with numerous hardships along the way. On May 1st, Centerville-Washington History, in collaboration with the Centerville-Washington Park District, offered a simulation of the 10-day journey by our first local settlers as they traveled from Cincinnati to Washington Township.

Upon arrival participant groups were asked to choose one of four character profiles, modeled after our local founders, to represent them in the simulation. Profile selections included Surveyor, Carpenter, Doctor, and War Veteran/Farmer. Incorporating some strategy into the game, players were asked to note that each character has advantages, disadvantages, and the ability to help others along the trail.

After choosing a character profile, families took time to pack their "wagon" for the journey. Wagon size and content count varied by profile. Possible supplies for the journey included a grinding stone, blankets, a spinning wheel and cooking pots. Families discussed and listed their chosen items. Some items were referenced along the trail, which brought the group advantages for having brought them along. In addition, each participant was given a pre-determined amount of food and money points for the journey.

Keeping track of food and money points along the one mile Purple Trail at Bill Yeck Park was encouraged to give a sense of how early settlers dealt with food and money shortages. The goal of this educational game was to reach the end of the trail with food to spare and enough money to buy a few hundred acres for living.

Along the trail, there were "Situation Stations" which might indicate a broken wagon or injured horse. Certain stations cost or earned money, food or time points. Thanks to Karen and Ralph King, Phil Kern and Ed Ross for helping to make the day such a success for the guest historical travelers.



An Ohio Inventor - Charles M Hall

By Phil Kern - CWH

Charles M Hall -
Ohio Inventor



Charles Martin Hall was born in Thompson, Ohio, on December 6, 1863 but spent much of his youth in Oberlin, Ohio. As a child, Hall was an avid reader. After reading his father's college chemistry textbook, Hall decided to become a chemist. He constructed his own chemistry laboratory in his parents' home after he graduated from Oberlin College in 1885.

On February 23, 1886, Hall discovered a process that made aluminum easy to manufacture and feasible for commercial use. On July 9, 1886, Hall filed for his first patent. This process was also discovered at nearly the same time by the Frenchman Paul Héroult, and it has come to be known as the Hall-Héroult process.

It took Hall two years to find a company willing to utilize his discovery. In late 1887, he introduced his manufacturing process to the Cowles Electric Smelting Company in New York and in 1888 the company ceased manufacturing aluminum. Undaunted, Hall took a position with the Pittsburgh Reduction Company in Pennsylvania. This company eventually became the Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa) and was the leading aluminum manufacture in the United States during the 1890s. Hall became vice-president of the firm in 1890 and continued to perform research & development. During his lifetime, he applied for and was granted over 22 U.S. patents, mostly on aluminum products for the automotive, airplane and building construction industries. He became a very wealthy man and because of his election to the Board of Trustees of Oberlin College in 1905, after his death he left the college approximately five million dollars.

Hall died in Daytona, Florida on December 27, 1914, (the same year as Héroult as they both were born the same year), twenty-one days after he had reached the age of 51 and was buried in the Westwood Cemetery in Oberlin.

In his last will and testament, besides the contribution to Oberlin College, Hall left the vast majority of his fortune to charity. His generosity contributed to the establishment of the Harvard-Yenching Institute, a leading foundation dedicated to advancing higher education in Asia in the humanities and social sciences.



BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW! The Great Seal of the State of Ohio

The State of Ohio has had an official seal for more than two hundred years. Over that time, the state government has modified the seal several times. The current state seal was adopted in 1996.

The seal illustrates Ohio's diverse geography. In the background stands Mount Logan in Ross County. Separating Mount Logan from the rest of the seal is the Scioto River. In the foreground is a freshly harvested wheat field. In the field stands a sheaf of wheat, illustrating the importance of agriculture in Ohio. Nearby stand seventeen arrows that resemble the sheaf of wheat. The seventeen arrows represent Ohio's Native Americans as well as the fact that Ohio was the seventeenth state to join the

United States of America. At the top of the seal is the sun, with thirteen rays protruding outwards. The thirteen rays represent the thirteen colonies that became the original thirteen states of the United States.

Some early versions of the seal also had a canal boat on the river, a blacksmith & a farmer with their tools, and in 1997 a suggestion was made to have the Wright Brothers airplane flying above the fields.

According to historical lore, the seal was based on the eastern view from Adena, the home of Thomas Worthington near Chillicothe. Worthington was one of Ohio's first two United States senators and he served as the sixth governor of the state.

Centerville-Washington History
89 West Franklin Street
Centerville, Ohio 45459

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Centerville- Washington History

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(June 2021-May 2022)

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E-mail: cwths@sbcglobal.net

Staff/Title & Email

Cheryl Meyer

Executive Director

cherylcwths@sbcglobal.net

Karen King

Administrative Assistant

karencwths@sbcglobal.net

Facilities/Phone & Hours

**CW History Headquarters
Walton House Museum**

89 West Franklin Street
Centerville, Ohio 45459

(937) 433-0123

Tuesday-Friday Noon-4 PM

Joellen Ulliman

Curator

joellencwths@sbcglobal.net

Nutt Cottage Research Center

78 North Main Street
Centerville, Ohio 45459

(937) 312-0040

Melissa Wagner

Education Coordinator

melissacwh@sbcglobal.net

Susan Melville

Finance Manager, Newsletter Ed.

susancwh@sbcglobal.net

**Asahel Wright Museum
School Museum**

26 North Main Street
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