

Lake County History Center News

November 2015—January 2016

Volume 56 Issue 4



History Begins with You!

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Home for the Holidays

Mark your
calendars for
December 3-5th!
This fantastic
Victorian
Christmas event is
back again.

Please note that
no mistletoe
market will be
held this year.
Decorations, a
café, bake sale
items, and
Christmas gifts will
be available!

Brand new exhibit wing for 2016!

The 150th Civil War Anniversary series has come to a close, and so has our Civil War Exhibit Wing. We are happy to introduce a new exhibition to our museum, special for the 2016 Republican National Convention and election year, “Formation of an Election: Voting Lake County.” The exhibit will open on January 15, 2016 with a member and VIP celebration and cocktail hour.

This exhibit, a far cry from being a partisan showcase, displays all political parties, nation-changing issues, and movements that affected Lake County as well as the nation. Did you know that with the exception of the last presidential election, Lake County has gone the way of Ohio, and thus the nation, since the 1960's?

The exhibit consists of an interactive voting booth where visitors can learn about the importance of Lake County as a “bellwether” to national elections, an entire room dedicated to the Suffragette Movement focusing on Frances Jennings Casement, a “Hall of Honor” where we feature Lake County notables who ran for political office at various levels of government, Art and Advertising of Political Campaigns focusing on Frederick Opper, fashions and music of the elections, and a staged room dedicated to the campaign of James A. Garfield.

This exhibit will be open for general admission starting on January 19, 2016. Fee for museum admission is \$3 for non-members.

Government 101

Interested in teaching your children, scout troops, and students the importance of getting involved in their government? Join us for our “Tally-Ho: Branches of Government” program. This exciting field trip will transport students to the Lake County Administration building where they learn about voting, and how government works for the benefit of its citizens. A short journey next door to the County Court House will put the students into an actual court room to learn from a local judge how the judicial system works as a branch of government and how the branches work together to operate the city, county, state, and federal governments. This field trip gives students an opportunity to meet local officials, and have a better understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and how to participate in community life and the American democratic system. To inquire about the tour, or to book, please call Tonya at 440-639-2945.



CONTACT US

Lake County History Center

415 Riverside Dr.

Painesville Twp, OH 44077

440-639-2945

www.lakehistory.org

Board President: Josh Strickland

Executive Director: Elizabeth Connor

Collections Manager: Lynn Vandevort

Adult Education Director: Barb Whidden

Youth Education Director: Tonya Basic

Bookkeeper: Becky Tuma

Ohio Arts Council Continues Support

We are grateful to once again be recipients of Ohio Arts Council (OAC) funding. Due to our dedication to the arts, support of local artists, and unique programming, we are honored to have the OAC increase their funding support for the Society.

The Ohio Arts Council funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally, and economically and provides leadership and voice for the arts to transform people and communities.

“Scrooge! Little Dickens Victorian Tea”

“Scrooge!” at Fine Arts Association; Little Dickens Victorian Tea at the History Center

Book, Music and Lyrics by Leslie Bricusse, Directed by Ann Hedger

This musical re-telling of Charles Dickens’ Christmas classic about the miserly Ebenezer Scrooge reminds us what the spirit of Christmas is all about! Rated PG. SPECIAL PACKAGE OFFER!! Join us for our “Little Dickens Victorian Tea” Package which includes a Victorian inspired tea at Lake County History Center (415 Riverside Drive, Painesville Twp) followed by the Scrooge! performance at Fine Arts on December, 19, 2015. Tea begins at noon. Performance begins at 2:00 pm. Purchase tickets at **the Fine Arts Association** by calling 440-951-7500.

#SecondSundays at the Center

Join Tonya and the Youth Education Department for a brand new series in 2016! Every second Sunday, come to the Center for a great educational program fit for the whole family. Here is a 2015 teaser:

November 8, 2015; 3 - 4:30pm

Thanksgiving is a perfect time to learn about the Native Americans that lived here over 350 years ago. We will be learning what an Archaeologist does and what an artifact is by participating in a mini-archaeological dig! We will do Native American chores such as grind corn with rocks, hear a story, and more. \$5/child (preschoolers must be accompanied by an adult)

Speakers Bureau at the Center

Clevelanders in the Civil War

November 7, 2015; 1pm

In this entertaining “storybook,” we meet some well-known Clevelanders: John D. Rockefeller’s youngest brother who joined up at 16, early settler superwoman, Rebecca Rouse, L.H. Severance, Marcus A Hanna, plus one of Lincoln’s guards, Cleveland’s first Civil War fatality, and other equally fascinating Clevelanders with less familiar names. Marge Wilson’s humor and enthusiasm dramatize these well-researched vignettes.

Lake County in the Civil War

November 14, 2015; 1pm

The Civil War touched every village, town and city in the nation, but how did it touch Lake County? Learn what happens to Lucius A. Prouty at the battle of Perryville, and Charles Carroll at Gettysburg. Hear the anger in the letter of a Painesville veteran who writes home to the Painesville Telegraph that their replacements are just boys, not men.

Presented by David Lintern of the James A. Garfield National Historic Site and Northeast Ohio Civil War Roundtable.

Members get in FREE for Speakers programs, but we do still ask for an RSVP. Please call 440-639-2945 or register on our website at www.lakehistory.org to let us know you’re coming!

Get your Stocking Stuffers, or Treat Yourself with these great options...

**Win a trip to Maui
and \$5,000!**

The winning ticket will win a trip to Hawaii for 10 days at a premier condo perched on the 13th fairway of the North Ka'anapali Championship Golf Course with room for 6 people.

Enjoy a 180 degree view of the ocean and \$5,000 in cash for airfare/dinner/etc.

Tickets are \$100 each and will be drawn at Deja Vu on Feb. 6, 2016.

Register at www.lakehistory.org

Only 300 tickets will be sold. Call 440-639-2945 to purchase yours.



Donated by Tom and Libby Hill.
Please see ticket for full details.

Looking for other unique gifts this holiday season?

The Lake County History Center has a great selection of books to purchase, fun projects to do with the kids over break, and DIY genealogy kits! Taste some of our old-fashioned candy and test your knowledge with a trivia game. Make sure to reserve or purchase your holiday gifts from us soon—we'll even giftwrap them for you!



Homer Harper

“One of the foremost lawyers in the county’s history”

On Facebook, there is a page called The Lost Art of Manliness. It covers such topics as, “How to Escape Quicksand”, “Love Is All You Need: The Longest Longitudinal Study on Men Ever Conducted” “Bringing Back Common Sense”, “What is Honor?”, and “How to Entertain Your Toddler without a Smartphone”. While a Facebook page can be enlightening and entertaining, sometimes real life examples make better lessons. Lake County’s own Homer Harper is one such example.

In the run up to our new exhibits on Formation of an Election, this article about Homer Harper is a sneak peek into the content of the exhibits. Lake County has many such fine individuals that will be featured in the exhibits that will also feature a look at Lake County as a Bellwether of National Elections; Frances Jennings Casement and the Suffragette Movement; Art, Fashion, and Music of Elections; the James A. Garfield Campaign; and an Interactive Voting Exhibit where visitors can cast their votes on current election issues.

Homer Harper made his home in Perry and Painesville. He grew up attending Perry public schools in the middle of the 19th century and then attended the Madison Seminary (high school). He attended Kenyon College, taught school in several Midwest states, and then returned to Lake County to study law in the offices of Judge Jerome B. Burrows. After passing the bar examine he practiced law for more than 50 years being active until the time of his death in 1935.

Harper become one of the most revered attorneys in the area practicing with George W. Alvord, Elbert Blakely and Harry T. Nolan and serving five times as Lake County’s Prosecuting Attorney. The law firm were considered to be an “unbeatable legal combination.” During his time with the law firm, Harper was involved with some of the era’s most infamous cases. He prosecuted Stanley Jones in the murder of Painesville attorney A. A. Amidon. Amidon was handling a case involving Jones’s wife. Jones shot Amidon at his home. In a book Pioneer Sketches by M.P. Sargent, the reading of the verdict was described:

“Stanley M. Jones was convicted of murder in the first degree for killing lawyer A. A. Amidon, on the evening of August 30, 1880. Jones’ friends were sanguine that the jury would fail to agree. When the verdict was announced Jones did not move a muscle nor indicate in any manner that he was the person most affected by the awful words, but retained the same unconcerned, characteristic action throughout the entire trial. His attorneys filed a motion for a new trial... The shooting occurred on Friday, and as the jury brought in a verdict on Friday it caused the superstitious to hint that Jones was doomed. Jones was sentenced to be hung, but in April and May a petition was circulated and signed by many hundreds of citizens for a commutation of the death sentence to that of imprisonment for life. This the Pardon Board granted, in June, 1891.”

Another infamous case Harper was involved with was the defense of Ann Ingersoll in a kidnapping case that garnered national attention. Ingersoll was accused of kidnapping a young boy named Gerald Lapiner from Chicago and holding him in the Octagon house on Mentor Avenue in Painesville. The disappearance of the Lapiner child was already national news, and a neighbor of Ingersoll became suspicious when Ingersoll mistakenly told someone that the child was a girl, but it became known that the child was, in fact a boy. The neighbor of Ingersoll contacted the Chicago police with her suspicions and the investigation that followed revealed that the child was indeed Gerald Lapiner. The case involved prolonged legal action to extradite Ingersoll to Illinois. The case was considered a success for the defense team because their delay tactics allowed time for an investigation into the mental health history of Ingersoll before she was placed on trial in Illinois.

A third infamous trial Harper was involved with was the defense of Joseph Linard in the death of his wife in Leroy Township in 1921. While awaiting trial, Joseph cut his throat, his last words being “I’m innocent”.

Linhart was laid to rest under the infamous “Not Guilty” grave in Evergreen Cemetery, featured on the television show, “Ripley’s ‘Believe it or Not.’” After arguing over a cow, Linhart’s wife disappeared. He was later accused of his wife’s murder after she was found dead in a well. Linhart hired Harper, who was said to have never lost a case. Before Linhart could be tried, however, he slit his throat with a razor. Many speculated that Linhart’s suicide was an affirmation of his guilt which meant that Harper had “lost” his first case. However, Harper had the words “Not Guilty,” along with an inaccurate date of death, engraved on Linhart’s tombstone. Because Linhart’s death prevented him from being found guilty or innocent, Harper claimed that he still had not lost a case.

Harper was considered a brilliant legal mind, but he was well known for his wit and literary prowess. One newspaper dubbed him the “uncrowned poet laureate of Lake County.” He could recite from memory page after page from Shakespeare, Tennyson, and other classical authors. He was an accomplished writer authoring books of poetry entitled Wealth 1909 and Poems published in 1927. During December 1912, the ornamental exterior carvings of the Lake County Courthouse were completed. On tablets on each side of the main entrance were carved two inscriptions authored by Harper.

In 1899 Harper addressed a reunion of the Madison Seminary. His speech is the definition of eloquence:

“The days since we listened to the voice of the old bell, have fled like the wind and the shadow. The western hills are not so far away, nor the sighing of the evening breeze in the willows so sorrowful. We tread the emerald carpet of the campus and the azure sky still arches over us; the morn still opes her gates of amethyst and scatters her garlands as of yore – but alas, we have seen these sights so often! Hope, the illusive painter of youth, no longer limns the canvas with the aspiring facies of our school-day dreams. Through the departed years, Time the iconoclast, has been busy breaking our dearest images. Fading pictures and long-forgotten echoes are around us and with us today, and thank God, for these blessed treasures of the unreturning Past.”

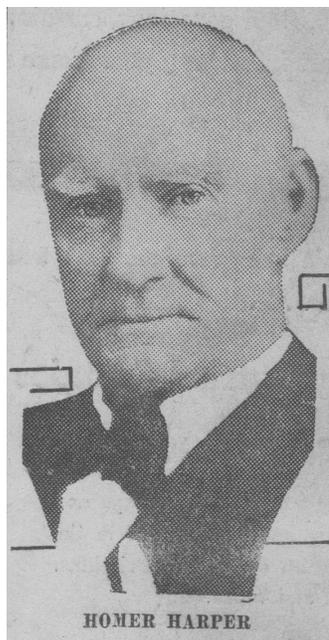
Beware the person who might think to verbally challenge Harper! In today’s lingo, Harper “ripped” an out-of-town a lawyer in an important case who declared “So you are my opponent? Well, well, I eat fellows like you every day for breakfast.” Harper is said to have calmly replied: “Hmm; if that is so, you ought to have more brains in your stomach than you have in your head.”

Though exceedingly successful in his professional life, Harper suffered tragedy after tragedy in his personal life. Harper’s first wife, Cora Bell Smith died the year her ran for Lake County Prosecutor for the final time. His son was killed when he fell from the Nickel Plate railroad trestle. His daughter by his second wife, Dee Potter, died while just a child. His second book of poems was dedicated to “Betty Lou, my nine year old daughter...” His poem “Dimples” reflects his love and loss:

Dimples
What makes the dimples, little girl,
That dent your cheeks, So fair?
They catch the sunshine in their depths,
And keep it prisoned there.

I know; your cradle bark was rocked,
By mother kind and good-
Ofit by her side,
In manly pride,
Your father smiling stood –
No hateful word, no cruel glance,
No cloud before the sun –
Love, welcome guest, his finger prest
Upon your cheek, my little one,
And made the dimples, pretty one.

Harper was professionally and personally elegant, but running for office was an inglorious, necessary evil for him. In his diary from 1912, numerous entries reveal the strenuous schedule he had to keep many times noting “slept in office last night”:



Tuesday, May 21 – Primary election in office all day. Carried primaries by 100 votes.

Monday, October 14 – Slept in office last night. Arrived at courthouse as the clock was striking nine.

Saturday, October 19 – In office all day. In evening went to Madison with Rev. Wm. Howard (Howland?) and attended a Republican meeting reaching home at 11 pm.

Sunday, May 20 – Slept in office.

Saturday, October 20 – In office during day. Went to Richmond in eve. To make Republican speech.

Monday, October 28 – In office till one o clock. Then went to Willoughby and made a speech.

Friday, November 1 – Went to Concord to make a speech... very cold and snowy. Hailed.

Tuesday, November 5 – Election day. Defeated H.T. Nolan for Pros Atty. Elected.

During these trying months and those following, there were entries “went to hospital to see Mrs. H.” Cora died in December that year.

As is often the case, centennials bring a revival of the ways of the 100 year old former era. Today there is a revival of the men’s fashions in facial hair from the turn of the last century. Downton Abbey is the most popular British TV show EVER, and the Facebook page The Art of Manliness is peppered with images from 100 years ago and encourages men of today to learn the reading list of Theodore Roosevelt, posts quotes from famous men including James A. Garfield, an article on traveling the Oregon Trail, the old time strong man’s 15 minute morning routine, and a post on cheap recreation of the past. Homer Harper embodies the best of that era being eulogized in one obituary in this way, “His keen, analytical mind, his tact, his deep understanding of human nature, and his integrity formed a combination that won for him a position of prominence early in his chosen career, and as time went on he built up a reputation as one of the foremost lawyers in the county’s history.”



Did You Know?

Our Collections Department answers research requests internationally! In addition to the requests from across Ohio, we have helped researchers from Florida, California, Arizona, Utah, Texas, Iowa, Oregon, Pennsylvania, New York, North and South Carolina, Quebec, and more.

Welcome New Members !

Joseph and Diane Wantz
Lois McGee
Terry and Mary Ann O'Brien
Ruthann MacDonald
Kenneth Hare
Judy W. Murphy
Joan Spence
Patricia Budzilek
Joseph M. Graf
Eric and Charity Kaleal
Tom Krupa
Joe and Lynne Mazeika
Kermit and Marcia Merritt
Keith and Sandy Thompson
Ryan Cox
Linda Reed
Brian Yenkevich
Elizabeth Schick

A special thank you to all of our members who have renewed their memberships this year. There are too many names to list here, but we hope to see you at our upcoming events. Life & Platinum members are listed on a plaque in the lobby. Please visit soon!

General Membership Meeting Notice

Please join us for a general membership meeting on November 18, 2015 at 7pm in Heritage Hall at the Lake County History Center. This meeting is open to all active members in good standing. At the meeting, we will be voting on 2016 Board members and constitutional amendments.

Please note that this is a business meeting and no refreshments will be provided. If you would like to check the status of your membership, please call our front desk at 440-639-2945 and someone will get back to you on your membership status.

Peaseware Sign Donation

We are so fortunate to have the support of our community and a community that truly understands the importance of not only preserving our area's history, but interpreting it and sharing it with future generations.

Last month, we were honored to welcome the Sidley family into the museum with a truly remarkable donation.

The sign for the J C Brown Wood Turning sign was donated by Jan Sidley by bequest. The sign was presented to the History Center by Bob and Al Buescher and Carolyn Martin representing Jan's family. The sign dates to the 1860 to 1880 period of the woodturning mill known for Peaseware. The Brown family name came to be associated with the Pease mill after marrying into the Pease family.

The Lake County Historical Society has a great collection of Peaseware including a spice box, pincushion, spool holder, and urn. The Society also holds multiple photos of the mill and different objects that were created there, and family and business history. It is fantastic to be able to add the sign into our collection.

Thank you again to the Sidley family!



In the Community... **AND** ...at the History Center

Willoughby Public Library

November 5, 2015 at 7pm

Join the staff of the Lake County Historical Society as we give a presentation on the "Remarkable Ladies of Lake County" at the Willoughby Public Library. To make a reservation for this program, please call 440-942-3200.

Friends of James A. Garfield National Historic Site

Friday, November 6, 2015 at 4 p.m.-8 p.m.

James A. Garfield Symposium Session—"Garfield in Washington." In partnership with the Friends of James A. Garfield NHS, the site is pleased to co-host the second annual James A. Garfield Symposium! The theme of this year's event is "Garfield in Washington." The Friday session is at James A. Garfield NHS and will feature a tour of the Garfield home and a catered reception. For more information or to register, please contact the Friends of James A. Garfield NHS at friendsofJamesAGarfieldNHS@gmail.com. REGISTRATION REQUIRED.

Madison Historical Society; Madison Public Library

November 19, 2015 at 7pm

Barbara Hacha is a local author who has done extensive research on the history of hobos of yesterday and today. Please call 440-417-1959 to RSVP.

James A. Garfield National Historic Site

December 1 at 12 p.m.

Holiday Music in Wartime—Lawnfield Lunch and Lecture Series. The holiday season is here again! The winter holidays are always particularly important and difficult during wartime. Learn about some of the most poignant holiday songs from the Civil War era, World War II, and others! Singing of some of the songs will be featured. Reservation required; please call Skye Restaurant at 440-974-3572 to make reservations. Skye is located inside Lawnfield Inn & Suites at 8434 Mentor Avenue, just a few blocks east of James A. Garfield NHS.

Fairport Harbor Marine Museum and Lighthouse

December 5, 2015

Join the lighthouse and Fairport Harbor for their annual Harbor Holidays and Grinch Visit. This event is hugely popular with families and is great for those out-of-town guests. To find out more, please call (440) 354-4825.

Dine Around Series

November 4, 2015: 6pm at Lake County History Center Celebrate Veteran's Day with an interactive musical commemoration of Veterans and Salute to Soldiers. The menu for the evening is herb stuffed chicken breast, mashed potatoes and gravy, carrots, cranberry salad, and ginger bread with caramel sauce. Cost: \$35 members/\$40 non-members.

Paranormal Exploration of the Lake County History Center

November 6, 2015

From 1852 until 2004 it was the Lake County Poor House (Lake County Home) and was used to house the indigent of our county. The stories of the real people who were a part of the Lake County Home range from mildly humorous to downright terrifying. Come explore the place from a paranormal investigative perspective and find out for yourself just what might be haunting the former Poor House! Cost: \$40

Clevelanders in the Civil War

November 7, 2015; 1pm

An entertaining "storybook" presenting the "War of the Rebellion" as it interfaces with Cleveland history and individual lives pre-war, during the "rebellion," and post-war home-again. We meet some well-known Clevelanders: John D. Rockefeller's youngest brother who joined up at 16, early settler superwoman, Rebecca Rouse, L.H. Severance, Marcus A Hanna, plus one of Lincoln's guards, Cleveland's first Civil War fatality, and other equally fascinating Clevelanders with less familiar names. Marge Wilson's humor and enthusiasm dramatize these well-researched vignettes. Cost: \$5 non-members, FREE members

Ladies Who Lunch

November 18, 2015: 12 noon at Lake County History Center Join Barbara Whidden and her collection of chimney sweep figurines in this fascinating program. Lunch will consist of chicken salad croissants, fresh fruit, dessert, and beverage. Cost \$15.

Home for the Holidays

December 3-5, 2015

Voted a History Center most popular event with glorious Christmas trees, lavish Victorian decor, wreaths, ribbons, bows, Father Christmas, and more. Group tours welcome with RSVP. Cost: \$3

Visit our full Lake County History Center event calendar and purchase your tickets online at www.lakehistory.org.



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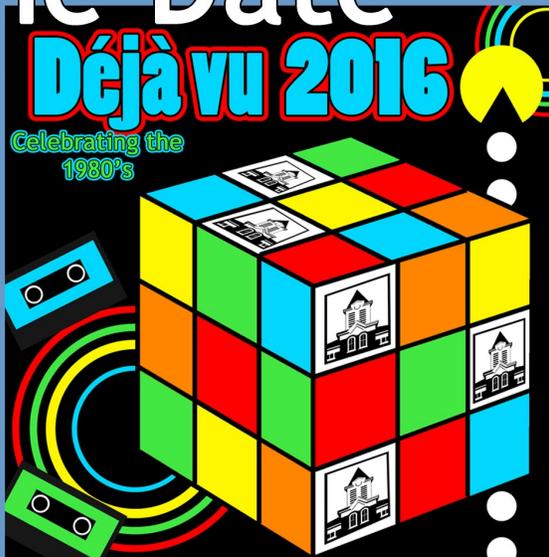
Save the Date for déjà vu: 1980's

Save the Date

Register Online
lakehistory.org
or call
(440) 639-2947



St. Noel's Banquet Center
Saturday, February 6th
5:30pm - 10:00pm



Frank Milbourn, Pauline Krug, Arthur S. Holden, teacher at Lake Erie College; involved with LAB (Learning About Business) at Lake Erie College in 1982.

Presented by Dworken & Bernstein

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www.LakeHistory.org

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