Delaware County Historical Society

Delaware County Historical Society
Our History, Our Heritage

Delaware County Historian

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SPRING 2019

90 Years Ago: Talkies Come to the Strand

By Steve Shaw

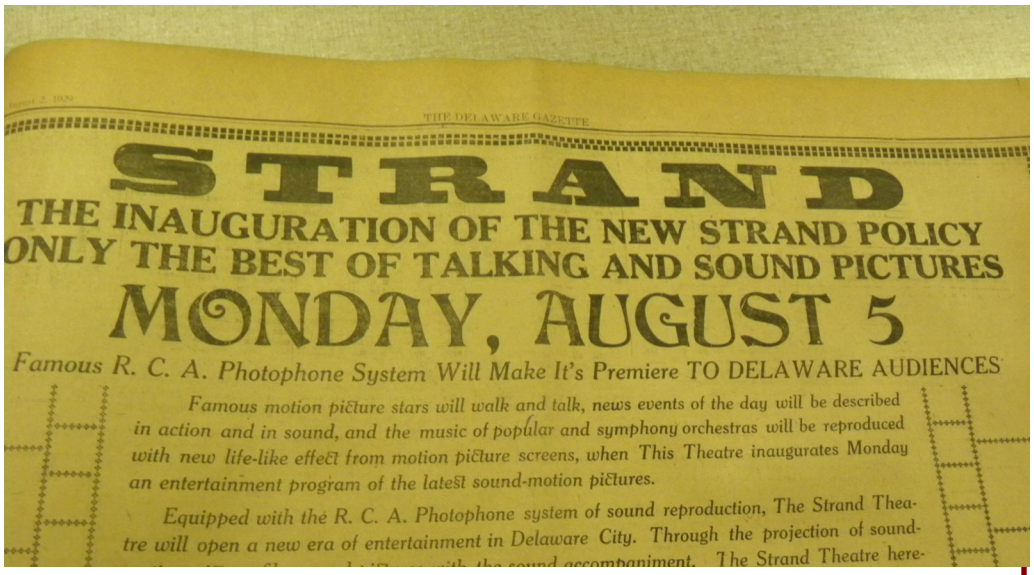
A Delaware Gazette headline on July 30, 1929 announced that "Talkies Will Open Soon In Local Theatre". The Strand Theatre had been in business just 13 years when new technology started changing the way movies would be delivered. In 1927 Warner Brothers debuted what became known as the first "talkie". It was the *Jazz Singer* starring Al Jolson. It was a hybrid that incorporated sound into a largely silent film. The new technology was a hit and it became apparent that movies with sound were the future. Just two years later the Strand invested in the technology needed to showcase the new era of films.

The Gazette article mentioned how the RCA Photophone system would allow the audience "to see famous stars to walk and talk, news events of the day would be presented in sound, and symphony orchestras would be presented with new life like effects…." For the Strand it meant employees would have to install and learn new technology. Work for musicians to accompany the silent movies would be a thing of the past. Movie goers would learn new courtesies of staying silent during speaking parts. The story on the screen could be moved along by sounds off the screen such as a door banging, wind blowing or hushed voices in another room.

On Monday August 5th 1929 you could be entertained by a new talkie for 30 cents at the Strand. The first movie with sound at the Strand Theatre was *The Donovan Affair*. The stars were Jack Holt and Dorothy Revier. Both of the stars managed the transition from silent films to talking movies. The director, Frank Capra, also made a successful transition from silent films to pictures with sound. Future credits included *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* and *It's a Wonderful Life*.

The Strand Theatre has remained a fixture in the Delaware community. It has since that time continued to adjust to changing tastes of entertainment and movie going. In the 1980's it

(Continued on page 2)



THE DELAWARE GAZETTE

STRAND

THE INAUGURATION OF THE NEW STRAND POLICY
ONLY THE BEST OF TALKING AND SOUND PICTURES

MONDAY, AUGUST 5

Famous R. C. A. Photophone System Will Make It's Premiere TO DELAWARE AUDIENCES

Famous motion picture stars will walk and talk, news events of the day will be described in action and in sound, and the music of popular and symphony orchestras will be reproduced with new life-like effect from motion picture screens, when This Theatre inaugurates Monday an entertainment program of the latest sound-motion pictures.

Equipped with the R. C. A. Photophone system of sound reproduction, The Strand Theatre will open a new era of entertainment in Delaware City. Through the projection of sound-

Delaware Gazette July 30 1929

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Director's Column	3
Africa Road	4
World Wide Games	5
Thank You!	6
Vogel Lectures Meeker Museum	7
Black Soldier Comes to Life	8
Summer Camps for Kids!	9
Upcoming Events	10

(Continued from page 1)
expanded to three screens. More recently it invested into new digital technology to deliver the motion picture experience.



Strand Theater from the Balcony
(Photo from thestrandtheater.net)



First talkie in Delaware
(Photo from FilmForum.org)

DELAWARE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established 1947

Our Mission: To promote and sustain interest in the history of Delaware County, Ohio, through historic preservation and education.

Our Vision: To be a continuing, self-sustaining source of and a repository for historical information and artifacts which fosters lifelong interest in Delaware County history through community engagement, education and historic preservation.

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info@delawareohiohistory.org

Newsletter Editor: Steve Shaw
Contributions of original historical research concerning Delaware County, Ohio, are welcome.
Send your contributions to the attention of the Newsletter Editor at any of the above addresses.

2019 New Beginnings



Director's Column By Donna Meyer



Dear Friends,

It's still early in the year and we have had so much going on already. Our beloved Garth Oberlander Barn, which has beautified Stratford Road since 1848, underwent an amazing restoration over the last three months. Expert timberframers from northeast Ohio replaced damaged beams and columns as well as bents and sleepers (I didn't make those up – they are real barn timber terms). They were lucky to find old reclaimed wood from other barns that had been taken down. We are receiving a grant from the State of Ohio, which will cover most (but not all) of the expenses. Look for an announcement about a fundraiser dinner—The Banquet in the Barn, on Friday, June 28 from 5:30—8 pm, and you can see all the restorations in the historic barn which will allow our barn to be around for another 171 years.

Due to the temporary closing of the barn, our monthly programs have been held at the William Street United Methodist Church. They have been most accommodating and welcoming. The January program on American Indians was very well attended. In February, the church was filled to the brim as over 220 people attended our February program on the Underground Railroad, featuring our Curriculum Support Committee's Readers Theater. And our March program featured a Civil War reenactor in a masterful presentation.

As we prepare to shake off the long winter doldrums and welcome Spring, we are also welcoming the beginning of our busy wedding season at the Barn at Stratford. We celebrated the reopening of the Meeker Museum on April 28th with an exhibit on "Delaware County Great Beginnings" which features notable people from Delaware who got their start here. I bet you will be surprised at all the extraordinary individuals from Delaware who went on to do amazing things. The museum is open every Sunday from 2-5. Admission is free and we always welcome donations.

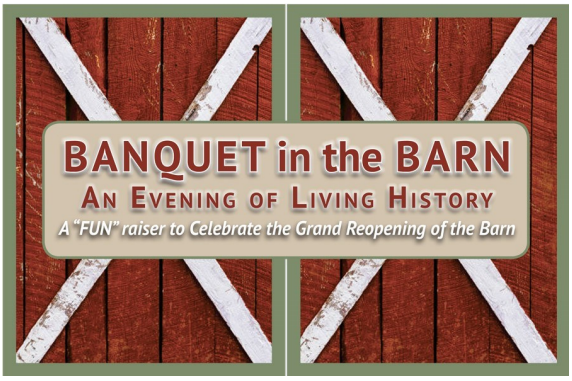
Spring is about change and one big change is the addition of signage at the Meeker property, both on Stratford Road and US Route 23. Thanks to the generosity of the Delaware County Commissioners and the expert design and installation from Waterford Signs, people will have no doubt where we are located.

For the first time ever, we are planning not just one but two summer camps for kids. Children are much more interested when they can be a part of living history. More information on those camps are in this newsletter. We are planning a "fun" raiser at the end of June. It will be a dinner with an historic twist and will feature a video about the barn restoration process. We are also looking forward to programs on Frederick Douglass, a tour of the Village of Stratford, and even one on boomerangs which will be held on the Meeker lawn.

Last year we were given the "Millworker Cottage" which is located at the end of Meeker Way on Stratford Road. Stratford resident Jake Ball has been working to fix the exterior as well as the flooring and it will be turned into a "look through the window" type of museum, giving a glimpse of what mid 1800s life was like in Stratford. We are truly fortunate to have talented people we can call on to help us in our preservation efforts.

If you would like to participate in these exciting new ventures, please let us know. We are always in need of volunteers, donations, members, and supporters. I promise you will not be bored!

Donna



Banquet at the Barn

An Evening of Living History

Grand reopening of the Barn at Stratford

2690 Stratford Road, Delaware, Ohio 43015
Ticketed Event - Friday, June 28, 5:30 — 8pm
Dinner, Historic Reenactors, Live Auction, Cash Bar

Africa Road

By Donna Meyer

Africa Road – how did it get its name? That's a question we are asked often. But to answer, we must travel back to Africa, Ohio. Now considered a "semi-ghost town", Africa used to be known as East Orange, and was located on the east side of Alum Creek (which used to be an actual "creek"), near the intersection of Africa and Lewis Center/Big Walnut Roads. According to the *1880 Delaware County History*, East Orange "did not seem to have any special founding".

The Ohio Historic Marker, located at Alum Creek below the Dam Recreation Area off Lewis Center Road, east of South Old State Road tells the story of one of the most active individuals involved in the Underground Railroad. The text reads:

"Samuel Patterson arrived in East Orange in 1824 and, within a few years, began to hide runaway slaves in his home. He also invited anti-slavery speakers to the pulpit of the East Orange Methodist Church, which brought Patterson and his neighbors into conflict with the bishop. Following their consciences, they became Wesleyan Methodists and built a new church. A pro-slavery neighbor mocked them by calling their community Africa, and so East Orange was renamed. The village has disappeared, but several homes owned by Patterson and his neighbors still stand in this vicinity.

In 1859, slaves from a North Carolina plantation owned by the Alston family were sent north. The plantation's mistress had disapproved of slavery and made arrangements for the slaves to travel to Ohio and freedom. These slaves moved to the community of Africa, lived in log homes, were employed by the anti-slavery farmers, and joined the Wesleyan Methodist Church. After the Civil War the freed slaves left Africa and settled in the communities of Delaware and Westerville, and Van Wert and Paulding counties."

One Underground Railroad station to the south of the Patterson home was in the Hanby House in Westerville. The Hanby's were abolitionists and opened their home as a temporary stop for slaves escaping to Canada. Here, son Benjamin Hanby, an Otterbein College student, heard the story a slave had told about his sweetheart, Nelly Gray, who had been taken by slave-owners. He wrote a song which became the (then) well-known "Darling Nelly Gray".

"One night I went to see her, but "She's gone!" the neighbors say.

The white man bound her with his chain;



Historical Marker near Lewis Center and Africa Road

(Photo by Donna Meyer)

They have taken her to Georgia for to wear her life away,

As she toils in the cotton and the cane."

Songs such as this and writings, like those of Ohioan Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin, sensitized northerners to the conditions of slavery and helped to initiate the anti-slavery movement. Hanby's home is now a historic landmark standing adjacent to the Otterbein University campus and his grave is in the nearby Otterbein Cemetery in Westerville, Ohio.

Much of Africa today is underwater due to the construction of Alum Creek Lake in 1976. Alum Creek State Park is an adjacent recreation area which receives over three million visitors annually. Because the town of Africa is located next to this park and located within sight of the Alum Creek Dam, many visitors will recognize the town and the road, but may not be aware of the area's historic significance.

Africa was "saluted" on the country music television show "Hee Haw" in 1973. At that time, it had a population of 16. It is thought to be the only town in the world named after the Underground Railroad.

To learn more about the Underground Railroad and the homes in the county which were thought to be on the route, please visit our website – www.delawareohiohistory.org and select the History Walks and Tours dropdown. Though most of the homes are now private, you can take a self guided driving tour.

Newsletter Articles Are Wanted!

We want to publish articles written about Delaware County history in this newsletter.

Send your submission or your questions to **director@delawareohiohistory.org**

World Wide Games

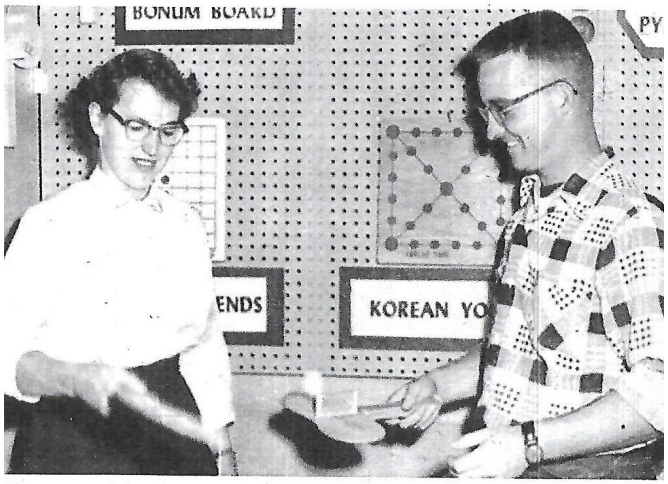
By Steve Schmitt

World Wide Games was founded in Delaware by Warren and Mary Lea Bailey in 1953. They had moved from Riverton, WV, to Delaware where Warren's brother Oscar and has wife Sara worked for Lynn and Katherine Rohrbough's Cooperative Recreation Service (CRS). CRS operated at the Rohrbaugh farm located on State Route 203 west of Delaware. Warren and Mary Lea rented a house on the Rohrbough's farm. Warren worked part-time for CRS and began making their initial six games in his shop in one of the spare rooms in the house.

The Rohrbough's purchased a farm on State Route 37 west of Delaware and established Homestead Acres where their employees could buy lots and build homes. They also built Holiday Hill on the property. Holiday Hills was a popular place for square dancing and other events. Warren and Mary



Steve Schmitt & Mary Lea Bailey enjoying a table game
(Photo by Brad Cowen)



Using two of the devices they manufacture, Mary Lea plays scoop golf while Warren uses a skill game that's a sort of one-man version of table tennis.

1959 photo from the Columbus Dispatch Sunday Magazine
(Photo from Columbus Dispatch Magazine May 12, 1957)

Lea built a house there and moved World Wide Games operations to the new house.

Both Warren and Mary Lea worked full time. Warren managed the design and production operations and was a talented woodworker with hardwood industry experience. His skills were reflected in the quality and durability of the games they produced. Mary Lea handled the bookkeeping and printed materials including instructions and catalogs. At its peak World Wide Games employed 10 people.

In 1966 they purchased the Holiday Hills building and moved operations out of their house. The building included fabrication and finishing shops and a showroom where games could be played and purchased. There was a large fireplace and Mary Lea Bailey usually kept a pitcher of orange Tang and cookies for visitors. The showroom was a fun place to spend an afternoon as many Delaware County residents will remember.

During over 30 years World Wide Games introduced new games and puzzles as well as related recreational materials such as books and pamphlets. Their 1955 Holiday catalog of games offered 18 games for sale. The last catalog in 1986 was 25 pages long with games, puzzles and toys. Their products were primarily manufactured by World Wide Games, but there were also games they imported from high-quality companies such as Brio of Sweden.

In 1986 the Baileys retired and sold World Wide Games to S&S Arts and Crafts of Colchester, CT. Production continued at the Delaware facility for another 12 years with daughter Linda Johnson managing the operations. Warren and Mary Lea enjoyed traveling during their retirement. Warren passed away in 2016. Mary Lea resides in Delaware and recently participated in a video-recorded oral history of World Wide Games with historian Steve Schmitt.

Steve Schmitt will be giving a presentation on World Wide Games at the May 16th meeting of the Delaware County Historical Society. Many examples of World Wide Games products will be available to play just like in the World Wide Games showroom.

The following have made financial donations to the Delaware County Historical Society between 10/1/18 and 3/15/19. Their generous donations will help us create programs and exhibits, preserve our historic buildings, and pass along our rich heritage to future generations. For information about how you can help us make a difference in a most meaningful way, visit www.delawareohiohistory.org.



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Vogel Lectures



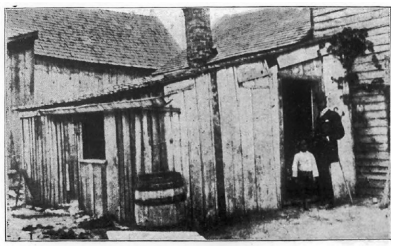
Left to right: Jan Fleischmann, Roger Koch, Jack Hilborn, Ezra Vogel, Donna Meyer, Benny Shoults, Brent Carson.

Several DCHS board members and the Executive Director attended the Vogel Lecture given on Monday, April 8th at OWU's Hamilton-Williams Campus Center. Historian Julie Mujic presented 'A Vast Change Had Come Over the Streets': The Postwar Lives of World War I Veterans. Mujic's presentation represents Ohio Wesleyan's 35th annual Joseph and Edith Vogel Lecture sponsored by the Department of History.

The Vogel Lecture is made possible by a generous gift from their son, Ezra F. Vogel, Ph.D. (shown here in photo), a 1950 Ohio Wesleyan graduate, native of Delaware, and retired professor of East Asian Studies at Harvard University. Vogel is also a DCHS life member and supporter of the Society.

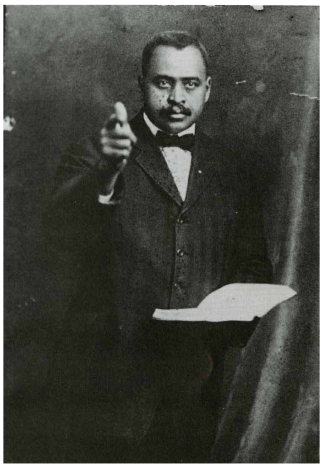
Meeker House Museum— New Exhibit
E. W. B. Curry, The Curry Institute and African-Americans' Rights in Ohio

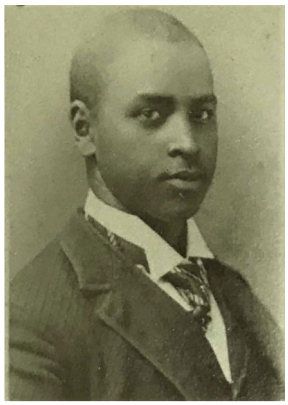
From the modest beginnings of the "Shed" School, "A Place of Learning for Young and for Old". To the culmination of a life's work, The Curry Institute, a "Tuskegee for the North"



The Shed Kitchen School. 1880.







This Exhibit is brought to you as a collaboration between the Delaware Historical Society (Benny Shoults, Curator) and Ohio Wesleyan University Students (HIST/ BWS 300.1, "African-Americans and U.S. Law," [Keionna Badie, Jayson Blankenship, Quentin Broomfield, Justin Friday, Miko Harper, Carrie Kubicki, Shannon Leimbach, Tiff Moore, Tyler Palmer, Marquis Sena, Sixin Wang, Profs. Barbara Terzian and Dawn Chisebe]. Special thanks to OWU student Sam Kaiser, Graphic Designer.

Black Soldier Comes to Life

By Steve Shaw

The Black Soldier in the Civil War Comes to Life Through Historic Reenactment

On March 21st Anthony Gibbs from the Ohio History Connection brought history to life. Mr. Gibbs is a teaching artist bringing history alive through character reenactments. Mr. Gibbs brought a historical perspective of the average black soldier. The social and historical background that led to America's Civil War were summarized. Slavery of blacks was the cause of numerous conflicts in the country during the mid 19th century, one example being the Dred Scot Decision of 1857 that determined slaves in a free state were still considered property of their owners. The beginning of the Civil War in 1861 brought the issue of slavery to the forefront. From the beginning of the war, blacks offered to volunteer to fight the war. Questions were raised on their ability to be a soldier and their willingness to fight. Freed blacks, former slaves, and even blacks from Canada had to fight for the honor of serving their country. Mr. Gibbs explained that the motivation to enter this struggle were centered on principals of freedom, equality and citizenship. By 1862 the legal basis to establish colored infantry regiments was in place. The next step was enlistment and organization of units of colored infantry. The 54th and 55th Massachusetts Colored Volunteer Infantry proved that the concerns about the ability to be good soldiers and the willingness to fight were misguided and they were quickly proved wrong. Mr. Gibbs described how the average Colored Volunteer Infantry unit felt pressured to demonstrate doing their duty by showing above average levels of tenacity, responsibility, and by being extraordinary in carrying out their duties.



Historical Marker—North Sandusky Street Delaware
(photo by Brad Cowan)

African Americans from Delaware County were part of the volunteer troop effort from the beginning. The 1908 History of Delaware County listed at least 11 Delaware County natives that were part of the 55th Massachusetts Colored Volunteer Infantry.

The gallant efforts of the 54th and 55th infantries paved the way for more units of freed African Americans. The 5th United States Colored Infantry was organized and trained at Camp Delaware just southeast of the city. Thirty soldiers were from Delaware.

The same 1908 Delaware County History accounted for 56 African Americans that served militarily during the Civil War.



Anthony Gibbs– Teaching Artist
(photo by Brad Cowan)

June 1929 article in the Delaware Gazette announced that Adoniram Warrick had passed away. Mr. Warrick was the last surviving soldier from the 5th United States Colored Volunteer Infantry in the local Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) post. He is buried in Oak Grove cemetery.

It's a Summer of History Camps for Kids!

His Story, Her Story, Your Story: Exploring History Through Cemeteries

Monday, June 3 - Thursday, June 6, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
For students entering Grades 4, 5 or 6 in the fall

Campers will travel back in time to develop a character's or family member's story which will showcase the week's discoveries. A visit to Oak Grove Cemetery, the Delaware County Genealogical Society, the Delaware County Historical Society's library and the Barn at Stratford will be paired with daily hands-on crafts and games from times gone-by. Surprise visitors from the past will be featured throughout the week. Crafts include tombstone rubbings, frakturs, tintypes, and more. The camp will culminate in a gallery presenting campers' artwork and/or reenactments highlighting camp events.

Camp fee - $125 first child FAMILY DISCOUNT: $95 for the second child

Registration forms may be picked up at the Cryder Historical Center and Research Library, the Meeker Homestead and the Delaware County District Library Main Branch. For more information visit www.delawareohiohistory.org or email schools@delawareohiohistory.org. You may also call 740-369-3831 ext 1.

Camp T-Shirts, art supplies, some costumes, daily snacks and research materials will be provided.

Registration deadline is May 29.

Generously supported by the Rotary Foundation of Delaware County

Adventures in Archaeology for Students - "Can You Dig It?"

Monday, July 29 – Friday, August 2, from 9 am – 4 pm
For students age 8 to 14 – limited space

This Summer Camp will be managed by Ohio Valley Archaeology Inc.
Camp fee - $140, includes t shirt, water, snacks, handouts and teaching materials

Children will discover the secrets in the soil on the grounds of the Meeker Homestead, 2690 Stratford Road in Delaware.

Activities include an initial tutorial on what archaeology is, how it works, what kinds of things we will be looking for and what kinds of data we should collect. Students will learn about how to identify artifacts and what they may find during excavation.

Working in three or four-person teams, students will excavate over features identified in radar and magnetic surveys. Campers will learn excavating techniques, screening, field identification of artifacts, how to make field drawings, and how to collaborate as a team.

Students will learn how to properly clean artifacts after excavation and the importance of keeping artifacts with the appropriate provenience. They will also be instructed on the beginnings of artifact identification and analysis and what happens to materials after excavation.

Equipment will be supplied. Students are responsible for personal protective gear such as protective gloves, sun block and work gloves.

Registration forms may be picked up at the Cryder Historical Center and Research Library and the Meeker Homestead. For more information visit www.delawareohiohistory.org or email director@delawareohiohistory.org. You may also call 740-369-3831 ext 3. Deadline to register – July 19.

Thank You Volunteers, Members, and Donors for your continued support of the Delaware County Historical Society!

Help Preserve Our Historical Legacy

Gifts and bequests have played an important role in the preservation of Delaware County history. The Delaware County Historical Society is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization.

Planning now may make your gift more meaningful and reduce taxes on your estate. Please consider the Delaware County Historical Society when making your estate plans.

Upcoming Events

May 16	"World Wide Games" the history of a Delaware company that sold wooden games Presented by Steve Schmidt Barn at Stratford, 7 p.m.
May 18-19	"Delaware Arts Festival" Visit our booth
June 3-6	"His Story, Her Story, Your Story" History Camp Exploring History Through Cemeteries
June 20	"Frederick Douglass" Presented by Tracey Sumner, Sr. William Street UMC, 28 W. William St., Delaware, 7 pm
June 28	"Banquet at the Barn" Dinner, Historic Reenactors, Live Auction, Cash Bar Ticketed Event, 5:30 –8 pm Barn at Stratford
July 14	"Boomerang History," Delaware connection and demonstration Presented by Chet Snouffer Barn at Stratford, 6 p.m.
July 29 —Aug 2	"Adventures in Archaeology" History camp for students Daily 9am-4pm
August 11	"Tour of Stratford Community and Church" Preregistration and Tickets required ($10 members/$20 non-member adults) Barn at Stratford, 2-4 pm
September 12	"Little Brown Jug Memories" Barn at Stratford, 7pm
September 14-21	"Delaware County Fair" Visit our booth
October 13	"Oak Grove Cemetery Walk" Reenactors will portray notable county residents who were buried there Oak Grove Cemetery, 1pm
November 13	"Annual Meeting" Professor Tom Burns as Hiram Perkins Barn at Stratford, 7pm
December 1	"Nash House Holiday Open House"

And many more to come!

Program tickets may be reserved at the Society's office, 2690 Stratford Road, or at the Cryder Historical Center, 157 E. William Street, Delaware

Check our website for more information as it becomes available.

If you are planning to attend any of our free events, please consider preregistering on Eventbrite.com (search Delaware County Historical Society) to ensure adequate seating for the event.

Thank you 2019 program sponsors!

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To become a program sponsor, please contact Executive Director Donna Meyer

More Ways To Help The Society

Volunteers Needed!

The Society has a critical need for volunteers! There are dozens of ways that you can help our Society grow. If you can help, contact the Society at volunteer@delawareohiohistory.org

Our Executive Director needs an **Office Assistant** to help her with many different projects. Hours can vary, with up to 8-10 hours per week. This person should have some proficiency with Microsoft Office applications and customer service. Contact Donna Meyer at director@delawareohiohistory.org.

We have priority needs for **docents** at the Meeker Homestead Museum and for **cataloguers** at the library in the Cryder Historical Center. No experience is necessary—we will provide all the training. Just bring your enthusiasm!

There are opportunities to help the Communications committee—writing blogs and press releases, posting to social media and more! If you are interested, please contact Lynn Foreman at lforeman@delawareohiohistory.org.

Committee Members Are Needed

The Society is growing rapidly and needs volunteers to serve on its many committees. Our active committees and subcommittees are as follows:

Buildings and Grounds
Education
Library Subcommittee
Museums & Exhibits Subcommittee
Programs Subcommittee
Collections Subcommittee
Curriculum Support Subcommittee
Historic Preservation Subcommittee
Communications
Information Technology
Membership
Finance and Budget
Resource Creation

To find out how you can serve, contact Susan Logan at volunteer@delawareohiohistory.org.

www.barnatstratford.org
our event venue web site

Support the Society While You Shop

There are 2 ways:

Kroger

Kroger is committed to helping our organization grow and prosper by donating funds through Kroger Community Rewards. All you have to do is shop at Kroger and swipe your Plus Card! The only catch is you have to remember to re-enroll each year in May, but it is easy to do so:

1. Visit https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow/
2. Click the View Details button under "I'm a Customer"
3. Login to your Kroger account (create a new account or reset your password if necessary)
4. Use code 84793 to select the Delaware County Historical Society as your rewards organization
5. Then shop at any Kroger store or Turkey Hill Mini Market

AmazonSmile

When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to the Delaware County Historical Society for any product marked "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on the product detail page. You use your same Amazon account, and your shopping cart and other account settings are also the same.

On your first visit to AmazonSmile, you need to select the Delaware County Historical Society as your charitable organization before you begin shopping. Amazon will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make will result in a donation.

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Historical Society

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