

2023 Biennial Seminar – “History in the Hills”

Imagine and picture this...the beautiful rolling hills of Gallia and Jackson Counties as the scenic backdrop for a summer biennial seminar. Add near picture perfect weather and you achieve the ideal setting for the 2023 ADSOEF/OSO Biennial Seminar recently held June 8-10.

OSO members gathered in Gallipolis, at the Quality Inn, Thursday evening, June 8, to begin their historical journey of southern Ohio. Debby Canter, OSO President welcomed the attendees to the “History in the Hills.” After dinner, Jeanne Jindra, Director of the Welsh Studies Center at the University of Rio Grande, spoke about the intriguing history of the Welsh settlers in Gallia and Jackson Counties. Following her notable presentation, group fellowship, card and board games were enjoyed by all.

On day two, the attendees boarded the **Fun Bus** at 8 AM to take the “history seekers” to visit various area sites of significance and interest. Stops were made at the John Gee Black Historical Center, the French Art Colony, Our House Tavern, the Bob Evans Farm, Michael’s Ice Cream, and the Lillian Jones Museum. The Welsh American Heritage Museum was on the schedule, but unfortunately seminar participants were unable to visit as it was recently closed due to much needed roof repairs and HVAC renovations.

Lunch was enjoyed in downtown Gallipolis at the Courtside Restaurant. A late afternoon refreshment break and stop in Jackson at Michael’s Ice Cream, an old-fashioned ice cream parlor, was a “huge” hit and just what the attendees needed to complete their final leg of the bus tour of Jackson Lake and the Oak Hill areas. (I promised not to tell how many or who ordered the infamous gooey “bubble” sundae at Michael’s...and surprisingly it didn’t seem to spoil anyone’s dinner appetite!)

Dinner was served back at the Quality Inn, followed by disc jockey entertainment, for the remainder of the evening, by *Musical Memories*. Memories were made as members danced and sang to their favorite requests. Some were even brave enough to try the karaoke mic! (...and I shall not mention any names here either!)

After breakfast the third day, everyone packed up, loaded their cars, checked out, and proceeded to the Railroad Freight Station Museum for a fascinating trip down the railway’s memory lane. It was then on to our final destination the University of Rio Grande. Host Jake Bapst, a university archivist, and enthusiast, spoke

passionately about the origins and past phases of the University, which included some interesting tales and fun facts about its famous students/attendees. Truly an inspiring presentation and a delightful final act to end our seminar's journey!!

Included in this 2023 Biennial synopsis is a photo collage, organized and assembled by our multi-talented OSO editor, Cathy Tenney. I hope you enjoy it, for the seminar was indeed fun-filled and genuinely educational and like the collage...all rolled into one neat package. Our group may have been smaller than expected and/or anticipated, but we sure did have a really good time having fun while learning the many historical facts about what went on in the "hills of southern Ohio!"