



# RICHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

September to December 2023 Newsletter

Historical Museum of Richfield  
[www.richfieldohiohistoricalsociety.org](http://www.richfieldohiohistoricalsociety.org)

### Hours of Operation

Open Tuesday & Thursday 9am to 12pm  
Also open by appointment and upon request for special occasions - call (330) 659-0336

## A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Summer is waning, and it's hard to believe school has started. Community Day was a success -- and now we're into our fall programming! The next event will be the return to our antiques roadshow -- now titled "Antique Detective". This event has been missing for a number of years -- and we're glad our professional antiques expert, Jane Langol, will return on September 9 to provide some background and an estimated value on items brought by attendees. Participants need to register in advance to provide time for her to do some research. Look within this newsletter for complete details.

Due to Covid, we haven't held our Annual Meeting in several years -- but we have it scheduled this year for Sunday, October 29, 2:00 p.m., at Fellowship Hall. I encourage you to attend to see what has been accomplished since the last Annual Meeting and to hear reports on upcoming events and about acquisitions within the Museum. We've been busy since our last Annual Meeting!

October will be here sooner than we expect and that will bring our annual fall walking history tours. These walks, which will be held every Sunday in October from 1-2 p.m., are always worth your time and are very enjoyable as well as informative and entertaining. More information is contained within this newsletter and will be posted on our website.

Lastly, it has been 25 years since Richfield and the Szitar family donated the tree used for the Rockefeller Center holiday celebration in New York City! The Society is hosting a presentation on Saturday, November 4, at 2:00 p.m. in commemoration of this very special anniversary. Read on for more information.

It has once again been a busy year, and I hope to see you at one or more of our events!

Paul Swan, President



## Don't Miss

## RHS Membership Meeting To Be Held October 29

Be sure to join us on **Sunday, October 29, 2:00 p.m.**, at Richfield Fellowship Hall (3903 Broadview Road), for our RHS membership meeting where we'll hear a "State of the Society" and learn about preliminary plans for 2024. The election of RHS officers and trustees will take place -- with ballots being mailed and emailed in advance to members. Members will also be treated to a special "Picture This" presentation -- which will feature pictures and fascinating narrative about some of Richfield's history -- by RHS Vice President and Webmaster Mark Mitchell. Cider and donuts will be offered!

## GOT ANTIQUES?

## LET OUR DETECTIVE HELP DISCOVER THEIR VALUE



Discover the value of a favorite flea market find or treasured family heirloom at the Richfield Historical Society's "Antique Detective" event to be held on Saturday, September 9, at Richfield Fellowship Hall (3903 Broadview Road). Registration will begin at 10:30 a.m. From 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Jane Langol -- a local professional with over 35 years of experience collecting and dealing in antiques -- will evaluate your artifacts for just \$5 each (limit of three items per person). Pre-registration is required. Space is limited. Please email a brief description -- with a picture, if possible -- of each item you would like evaluated (so our appraiser can do a little research ahead of time) to [kls1650@roadrunner.com](mailto:kls1650@roadrunner.com). Payment should be brought with you to the event. Be sure to include your name, email address, and phone number so we can confirm receipt of your registration and follow up with any questions the appraiser may have about your item(s). For more information, please contact Karen Smik at [kls1650@roadrunner.com](mailto:kls1650@roadrunner.com) or 330-659-4750.

## HISTORY OF RICHFIELD OCTOBER WALKING TOURS — TAKE A STROLL DOWN MEMORY LANE

Join the Richfield Historical Society at 1:00 p.m. on any Sunday afternoon during the month of October for a stroll down memory lane with its annual History of Richfield Walking Tours. Its narrators/storytellers will take



you on a leisurely walk (each one approximately 1 mile) as you enjoy a 1-hour talk. Participants will meet at the Museum (located at 3907 Broadview Road) for the start of

each tour except the October 29 tour, where attendees will meet by the flagpole at the West Richfield Cemetery (located at 4219 Broadview Road). Details are still being finalized as of this writing so look for tour specifics on our website.

## THANKS FOR SUPPORTING OUR RECYCLING FUNDRAISER!

A BIG thank you to all our members and friends for the HUGE response to our electronics and ink cartridge recycling fundraiser! We collected 174 empty ink cartridges and 14 large toner cartridges! We will patiently turn in ten a month to Staples and be rewarded \$2 for each cartridge. We also collected tons of obsolete laptops, printers, scanners, telephones, monitors, etc. We can turn in one item per month to Staples and earn a \$5 reward for each. In total, we will receive just under \$500 worth of rewards during the next 20 months. Thank you so much for taking the time to clean out your old electronics and bring them to the Museum!

Thank you for  
**RECYCLING!**



You may be wondering what we use these rewards for. We purchase ink for our printers, paper, envelopes, page protectors, notebooks, and other office supplies. Recently, we used our rewards to have a banner printed for display at our events. You may have seen it at our Richfield Community Day table on August 13th.



## HELP US CELEBRATE THE 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE RICHFIELD TREE AT ROCKEFELLER CENTER!

Join us on **Saturday, November 4 at 2:00 pm** at Fellowship Hall (3903 Broadview Road) in "Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Richfield Tree in Rockefeller Center" by Lauren Lanphear. In 1998, a search was conducted by Rockefeller Center Gardens for the perfect Christmas tree to grace Rockefeller Center in New York City. A 75-foot-tall Norway spruce was found in the front yard of Ethel and Adolph Szitar right here in Richfield! Lauren Lanphear, certified arborist and President of Forest City Tree Protection Co. Inc., will share all the steps taken from the time it was found until it reached its destination to ensure the huge tree was healthy and strong, perfectly shaped, and safely bound up so the branches would bend and not break in transport to New York City. It's an amazing story – and one you won't want to miss!

## MUSEUM OPEN VETERANS DAY WITH SPECIAL DISPLAY

The Museum will be open on Thursday, November 9, from 9 am to 12 pm and on Saturday, November 11, from 9 am to 1 pm -- with a special display of military uniforms dating from the Civil War to the Vietnam War--in observance of Veterans Day and to honor all those who have served our country.

World War I – known at the time as “The Great War” – officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. Fighting ceased seven months earlier, however, when an armistice -- or temporary cessation of hostilities -- between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.” Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week on which it falls. The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to honor America’s veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good. *(From the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ website.)*





## DID YOU KNOW ...

From [www.history.com](http://www.history.com)

During what was known as the **Dust Bowl**, American-born migrants -- as they traveled west from the drought-ravaged Midwest -- were viewed as disease-ridden intruders who would sponge off the government. Eight decades ago, hordes of migrants poured into California in search of a place to live and work. But those refugees weren't from other countries. They were Americans and former inhabitants of the Great Plains and the Midwest who had lost their homes and livelihoods. Years of severe drought had ravaged millions of acres of farmland. Many migrants were enticed by flyers advertising jobs picking crops, according to the Library of Congress. And even though they were American-born, the Dust Bowl migrants still were viewed as intruders by many in California, who saw them as competing with longtime residents for work -- which was hard to come by during the Great Depression. Others considered them parasites who would depend on government relief.

The **first convicted murderer in America** was one of the 102 passengers aboard the historic 1620 voyage of the **Mayflower**. One family on that ship became synonymous with trouble. The Billingtons -- John, his wife and their two teenage boys -- were described by William Bradford, the governor of Plymouth, as "one of the most profanest families" in the English colony. The Billingtons weren't Separatists, the religious refugees also known as the Pilgrims. They were one of the many "strangers," as Bradford called them, who were recruited for the Mayflower voyage by its London investors. While it was common for non-Separatists to disagree with and even criticize the Pilgrim leadership in Plymouth, John Billington's behavior repeatedly crossed the line. "The level of anger that's hinted at in [the records of Plymouth] is serious and significant," according to the executive director of the Pilgrim Hall Museum in Plymouth, Massachusetts. "In John Billington, we have someone who publicly expresses rage, discontent and makes mutinous speeches -- and who ultimately commits the greatest act of violence by murdering a fellow colonist." In 1630, Billington was "found guilty of willful murder; by plain and notorious evidence" and was hanged for his crime. With that heinous act, Billington entered history as the first English colonist to be executed for murder.

**Beanie Babies** were one of the 1990s biggest fads: colorful, pellet-filled plush toys given cutesy names and an aura of collectability. By mid-decade, investment mania reached such dizzying heights that an active collectors' "gray market" developed. Beanie Babies became a popular alternative asset with some examples of the \$5 toy -- in mint condition and their original hanging tag -- selling for thousands of dollars apiece. Amid such hysteria, an underground economy began to flourish—and with it, a wave of criminality. Theft, fraud, and counterfeiting spun up over fuzzy-faced soft toys with names such as "Bananas" (a monkey), "Hairy" (a spider) and "Humphrey" (a camel). Some opportunists who crossed the legal line to profit from the craze spent years in jail as a result. In the end, the excessive greed seemed to infect the parent company Ty Inc. -- which was accused not of criminality but of trying to manipulate the market. The company's efforts eventually contributed to the implosion of the 1990s' fad.

### *In Memoriam*



We were saddened to learn that long-time RHS member Nancy Hartman passed away. We will certainly miss her and express our condolences to her family.

#### RICHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Paul Swan, President

Mark Mitchell, Vice President

Karen Smik, Treasurer

Reggie Taussig, Secretary

Kitty Butler, Trustee      Linda Fleming, Trustee

Michal Swan, Trustee      Scott Luther, Trustee

Bob Neillie, Honorary Trustee



Find us on Facebook at  
Historical Museum of Richfield, Ohio



# RICHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## 2023 MEMBERSHIP DUES AND DONATIONS

### Membership Program

The Richfield Historical Society is a nonprofit organization. Its membership year runs from January through December. Members receive a newsletter filled with information about Society activities and fascinating facts about history. We also hold many special events, such as our *TakeMeBack* Series and *PictureThis* presentations, throughout the year that are free to our members. In addition, members receive discounts on our Museum merchandise. Now is the time to renew your membership for 2023, if you haven't already done so -- and ask a friend to join as well! Since membership dues only finance a small portion of the operational expenses, monetary gifts (through our Donor Program) are encouraged to provide services to the public as well as to strengthen education and preservation.

_____ Individual Membership	\$15.00	_____ Business Membership	\$100.00
_____ Family Membership	\$20.00	_____ Lifetime Membership	\$150.00
_____ Student Membership	\$5.00		

(ages 17 and under)

### Donor Program

Donations are the primary source of unrestricted, contributed income for the Historical Museum of Richfield. Your donation builds a foundation of unrestricted support -- meaning your gift will be used where it is needed most. Your continued sponsorship will help us provide services, special events and programs that will promote appreciation for Richfield's diverse cultural, social and economic history. Please consider making an "investment" to keep Richfield's past alive and help preserve our future. Remember, RHS is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization and eligible for employer matching funds. You may also want to consider including the Richfield Historical Society in your will.

***In addition to your RHS membership dues, please consider making a donation to the Society.*** Levels available are:

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Please check here if you wish to receive the "incentive" gift(s) for your donation (note that incentive gifts are offered for donations only)**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Historian** – \$25.00-\$49.99 ~ Receives RHS Presents Richfield, Ohio Playing Cards 1st or 2nd Edition, (**circle your choice of edition**) and newsletter
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Archivist** – \$50.00-\$99.99~ Receives RHS Presents Richfield, Ohio Playing Cards 1st or 2nd Edition, (**circle your choice of edition**) and newsletter
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Curator** – \$100.00-\$499.99 ~ Receives both sets of RHS Presents Richfield, Ohio Playing Cards and newsletter
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Preservationist** – \$500.00 and up ~ Receives Richfield Bicentennial Throw, both sets of RHS Presents Richfield, Ohio Playing Cards and newsletter. **Please circle your choice of throw color:      RED      GREEN      BLUE**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Researcher** – any amount under \$25.00

Donation Made in Memory or Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

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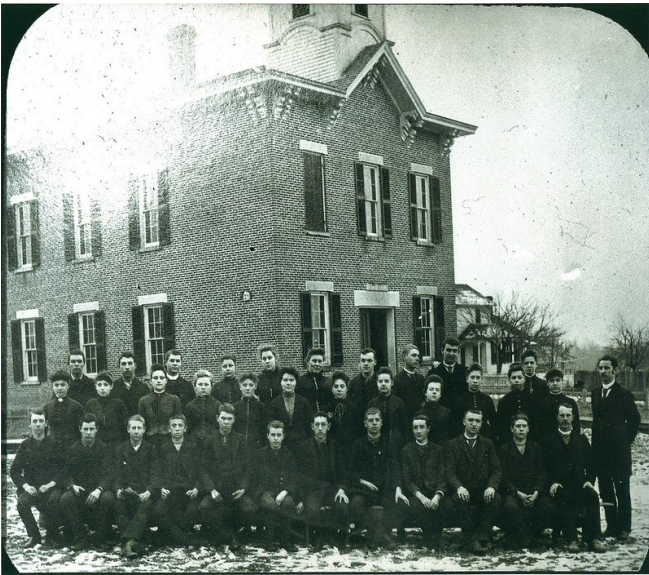
Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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I prefer to receive my copy of the RHS newsletter by (check one):      \_\_\_\_\_ regular mail      \_\_\_\_\_ email

# Back to School!

A look back at Richfield's school history



**West Richfield High School** and students, 1889 — This school burned in 1905 and was rebuilt. It is now part of the Masonic Temple to the south of the town green.



**Richfield Center High School** and students, circa 1909 — Built in 1887 to replace the form high school which had burnt down. The high school classes met on the ground floor while elementary grades met on the second floor. It was torn down in 1916 to make way for the new brick centralized school.



In 1914, Richfield decided to combine all their local schools into one. **Richfield Centralized School** was opened in 1916. This school was located across from the Richfield United Church of Christ on Streetsboro Road and served the community until 1994. It was first a K-12 school and more classrooms were added in 1934. Another addition as part of the Works Projects Administration which included the auditorium/gymnasium and bus garage. The last graduating class from Richfield High School was in the spring of 1951.



**Richfield High School** students in the center room on the third floor circa 1921. Note the RHS class pennants on the wall in the back of the classroom.



**The Richfield High School Football team** in 1924. Front row L-R: Bill Etzel, Buell Davidson, Ralph Petre, Ray Wilson, Bardy Lyons, Frances Davidson, Tony Mancz. 2nd row, L-R: Andrew Botar, Frank Kahaun, Ted Garman, Orrin Goodson. 3rd row, L-R: John Mancz, Archie "Pink" Meyers, Gifford "Pat" Horn, Mr. Parsons



Thank you to the following for supporting the Richfield Historical Society through your generous gifts:

**Preservationist - \$500 and up**

E.B. Miller *in honor of the Revere Class of '61*                      The Village of Richfield

Jon Alan Wolf *in appreciation of Linda Fleming's long-time dedication to the Society*

**Curator - \$100 to \$499**

Melissa Haslinger *in memory of Joanne Hutchinson*

Donna Nelson *in memory of Bertha (Carter) Grimm*

Lynn Richardson *in memory of Eunice Merton*

Russell Sibert

Jeff and Regina Taussig

Jack Welton

Karen Smik – *in memory of Louise (Waltz) Patterson and Gerald Waltz*

**Archivist - \$50 to \$99**

Judy Heit *in memory of Jean Heiser*

Richard Jandrey *in memory of Regina Jandrey*

Heather & Dennis Liccardi

Edna Larson *in memory of Ed & Myrtle Haslem and Fred Larson*

Joann Martinak *in memory of Jerry & Jeff Martinak*

Richard Roznovsky

Mary M. Ryan *in memory of Richfield Elementary School on Rt. 303*

**Historian - \$25 to \$49**

Clive Fetzer *in honor of Paul Swan and his support for the historical heritage of the Richfield Heritage Preserve*

Amy Hsu

Don Laubacher

Sue Serdinak & Mark Parker

Rose Marie Torma *in memory of Jane & Joe Torma*

**Researcher - under \$25**

Linda Corsi

Diane Fenci

Helen J. Marshall

Linda Murr *in memory of Eva and Bob Oviatt*

Roy Richardson

Tricia Steiner

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