ERIE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Spring 2025

ErieCountyOhioHistory.org
Facebook: Erie County Historical Society
President-James Miller
Vice President-John Lippus
Secretary-Leslie Korenko
Treasurer-Monty Kaufman

SAVE THE DATES FOR THESE SPECIAL EVENTS – Don't worry, we will send out details as the event approaches. There will also be some pop-up events.

April 12 – Lecture: Death of FDR (we will send sign-up details shortly)
May 9 – A Members-Only tour of the Milan Museum's Galpin Glass Galleries (with a special mixology surprise)
Early September – we bring back the *Goodtime* boat cruise of Sandusky Bay
September 2 – Lecture-Lee A. Tregurtha & VJ Day at the Maritime Museum
November 9 – Our Annual Meeting with a presentation of the History of Wineries in Erie County.

CASTALIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY CLOSES ITS DOORS - We heard that the building they were housed in was demolished (after being purchased by the school), and before that, a lot of their items suffered serious water damage. This was the repository of Castalia area historical information and collectibles such as Blue Hole souvenirs and tufa rock statues. It is a great loss to the area. The Blue Hole remains privately owned and is not open to the public.

COOKE-DORN HOUSE TO CLOSE ITS DOORS - Starting this summer (2025), the Old House Guild announced that it will no longer provide day-to-day staffing for the local historic attraction at 1415 Columbus Ave. Guild members circled June 30 as the last day members would operate the property. Cooke-Dorn had regular hours for visitors several days a week in July and August and was open by appointment the rest of the year. It was also a regular stop for the annual Candlelight Tour of Homes that the guild provides most holiday seasons. Read More

SOME QUERIES WE ANSWERED

Info on Bartlett family –DAR- research needed - Help for vintage tractor repair 1940s Avery Tractor - Boat houses on Parker St-Sandusky\Tornado of 1922 - Dorn – old bottle of Old Island Muscatel found - Donation brochure for the Sandusky Tractor 10-20 model j - Historic Marker replacement request-Site of Shipyard - Family history Beerley/Birle - House on 802 W Washington Sandusky\Surf's up-wave pool in downtown Sandusky - 910 W Washington St, hidden room URR? - Milan Capt. Kelly/Kelleys Bldg. - Milan Walking tour type and F Taylor attorney question - Huron marker replacement - John Kelley – Lakewood connection - James Ellsworth-Sandusky or Sandusky County - Construction dates for a house – how to find - Recommendation for donation organization - Rye Beach Park history - History marker request – Wakeman quarry question - 1808 map of Firelands on our website - Capt. Pipe (Hopocan) American Indian 1820 (was for Sandusky Co.) - Holzaepfel-Cecil Laird & Jim Michael - Contact info for Berlin Hts. Historical - Donation of letters from 1915-16 - 250th Ohio celebration - URR tour, consult and research on Uncle Tom's Cabin, the real people behind the characters - Krupp & Herb families - Milan murders (Cassidy Family 1968) & Sheriff picture - Elisa Higgins & Lisha Flag - Donation of vintage dolls - Bischoff Glass (WV) - URR –tour, consult & genealogy of Uncle Tom's Characters - Where to find Wills - Old photos for Meijer stores - Immel and Schunk families - School request for Sandusky tour - Renasellear Twp. Background - Firelands membership info - Dumm album with Boeckling info - Boeckling stationary and Eggleston family - Mailed postcard for school project - Hinman & Floyd-Berlin Hts. - Samuel Walker genealogy (DAR related) - Wyandot Indians 1700s - Van Rasalear Twp history - Buehrle & Obergall families - Photo donation - Steuks history - Jehovah's Witnesses-1922 Cedar Point video - Donation post card-coliseum & Grove-Cedar Point - Blue Hole tour raffle - History books about Erie Co. - Fair info - Mayflies

OUR ANNUAL MEETING

We Feasted - The amazing Commodore Buffet featured a house salad, dinner rolls, coffee, hot tea, iced tea, carved top sirloin, seafood scampi with shrimp, mussels and scallops), green beans almondine, roasted redskins, and veggie pasta and the Sandusky Yacht Club's famous bread pudding.

Our Speaker was Molly Sampson, WAC Historian and Executive Director of the Maritime Museum of Sandusky. Her presentation centered around the pivotal role of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) during WWII, and explored how women in the WAC supported the U.S. war effort, both abroad and at home. She focused on Erie County's contributions through personal stories of local women who served, the challenges they faced, and their lasting legacy in shaping both military and civilian life during one of the most critical periods in history.

Here are the reports:

President's Report, James Miller **-** In 2024 we focused on historic markers, programs and the Underground Railroad. We are looking at new options for markers. In 2025 we hope to attract new, younger directors and partner with other organizations. This year we will focus on programs while celebrating the anniversary of the end of the war.

Secretary, Leslie Korenko - We have 135 active members – and 463 people who signed up for info on our website. Our **website** is really big with – 70 pages, 109 sub pages and 1600 media, documents & photos, and we add to it regularly. We now have over 1200 **Facebook** followers, and our more popular posts have reached 4,000 people. We share events held by historical organizations in and near Erie County. This helps promote their events. We answered well over 100 **queries** this year - either providing answers, getting answers through our Facebook page (our Followers are really great) or referring them to another source. Queries range from histories of houses, donation of items (which we generally refer to the Sandusky Library-thanks to Jeremy), family research, etc.

Treasurer, Monty Kaufman – We have a healthy cost management plan and over $50,000 in our reserve accounts.

Historic Markers, Chris Wimer **-** The Fort Sandusky marker is being recast due to damage. Restoration of markers continues: The two near the Boy with the Boot statue (Erie County and City of Sandusky) were restored through a cooperative venture with the City of Sandusky (these date back to 1953). Sandusky's First Congregation – restoration undertaken by the Trinity United Methodist Church.

Election of Board Members to 3-year terms – MaryAnn Groot, James Miller, Chris Wimer and Kaitlyn Brulia.

Election of Officers – 1-year terms

President – James O. Miller	Vice-President — John Lippus
Secretary — Leslie Korenko	Treasurer — Monty Kaufman

We welcome Volunteer Adam Biehl who will be working hard to bring us up to date on our Social Media presence. He has lots of plans and may be visiting museums in Erie Co. to do a quick YouTube video about the visit.

SPEAKING OF OUR BOARD MEMBERS

Board Members Jim Miller and Bob Speers did a talk about Wineries in Erie County for the Elder College at Firelands College on February 22.

We welcome new Board Member Kaitlyn Brulia. Kaitlyn is the Development Director of the Edison Birthplace Association in Milan, Ohio. She is a native of NE Ohio, having grown up in Sagamore Hills and Brecksville. Kaitlyn obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and Arabic from The Ohio State University. She developed her interest in local history and small museum administration during her time with the Ohio History Service Corps. Kaitlyn served two years at

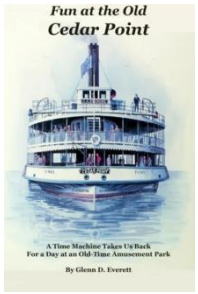
the Lorain Historical Society as part of the Ohio History Service Corps, an AmeriCorps program based out of the Ohio History Connection. Kaitlyn worked on a range of capacity-building projects at approximately 20 museums and history organizations across Northeast Ohio during her AmeriCorps service. As Development Director, Kaitlyn leverages her skills and knowledge to ensure the continued success of the Edison Birthplace through effective development strategies, donor engagement, and community outreach.

And we bid a reluctant Goodbye to David Biechele as he retires from the Board, having served since 2017. We will miss the nuggets of history that he often shared.

BIG THANKS TO THESE MEMBERS WHO DONATED TO US: Martha Abbott, Judith Corso, Doug & Jean Dickson, Larry Fletcher, Larry & Nancy Holkenborg, Bill & Karen Lally, Dean & Jane Lucal, Ann Patella, Michael & Sarah Prout, Barbara Ruggles, Robert Runner, Steve & Kat Shoffner, Gregg Snow and Special Thanks to John Hildebrandt.

SUPPORT OUR BUSINESS MEMBERS

GUNDLACH SHEET METAL WORKS, established in 1889, is a family owned and operated company specializing in the installation and repair of heating, air conditioning and ventilation systems. 419-625-4525 (Erie Co.) 419-668-0999 (Huron Co.) 419-734-7351 (Ottawa Co.).



THE 1870 PUBLISHING GROUP – Two great books about **Cedar Point: Rolling Through The Years** by Ken Miller is a look back across time at the Worlds' Greatest Amusement Park and **Fun at Old Cedar Point** by Glenn Everett, a look back in time at 1935 Cedar Point and downtown Sandusky.

OLD NEWS – A Fool-hardy Act - *Sandusky Register, November 24, 1886*

Wm. Mitcham, a sailor, having a good load of inspiration juice on board last night, proceeded to awake the echo's and everybody else on Water street at a late hour, and seeing Officer Groff coming after him, he turned and fled into the Mansfield House, out of the back door and hid behind some salt barrels on the Post dock. The officer followed and nearly captured him, when he started to run again and this time climbed on board of the *Louise* with the officer in close pursuit. Finding himself about to be captured Mitcham ran to the bow of the boat and deliberately sprang overboard and swam under Biemiller's dock where he was soon heard shouting for help, saying that he was dying by inches. Officers Groff and Houk made strenuous efforts to rescue the man by throwing planks, etc., for him to take hold of, but they could not persuade him to take hold of them. Captain Dwelle was then awakened and after some trouble one of the *Louise's* life boats was lowered, and a man sprang into it and rowed down under the dock and took the half drowned man on board. Instead of returning to the *Louise* as the officers expected he would, the man in the boat, who it seems was a relation of Mitcham, commenced rowing out into the lake.

There is a hole in the bottom of this boat, which is usually plugged, but on this occasion the plug could not found, so all this time the boat was rapidly filling with water and it looked as if both men would be drowned. Seeing their danger, Officer Groff ordered them to return at once or he would shoot them, at the same time drawing and firing his revolver into the water to frighten them. This had the desired effect, for the man turned the boat towards Hudson's dock, and after landing Mitcham, returned with the boat to the *Louise*, and was arrested for not obeying the officer. He gave his name as Vessy. In the meanwhile Mitcham, while trying to escape, ran plumb into the arms of Officer Houk who was there for that purpose. The prisoners were taken to the police station and locked up, charged with being drunk and disorderly. As Mitcham had been in the water nearly half an hour, he was pretty well soaked. The officers kindly provided him with dry clothes while his we once were drying.

MARITIME MUSEUM DIRECTOR & ECHS BOARD MEMBER WORKS ON NEW TYLER PERRY MOVIE

From the Sandusky Register - Look closely in the credits for "The Six Triple Eight," a new World War II movie, and you'll spot the name of Molly Sampson, the Sandusky Maritime Museum's director. Sampson's longtime historical re-enactment hobby helped her win her current job running the museum. And it also got her a gig as a historical consultant for the new movie.

"The Six Triple Eight," written and directed by Tyler Perry, is based on the true story of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion of the Women's Army Corps, an all-female auxiliary unit in the U.S. Army during World War II. The 6888th, meanwhile, was the only Women's Army Corps unit comprised primarily of Black women sent overseas during the war.

The unit was sent to Europe and tasked with eliminating a huge backlog of undelivered mail sent to Americans fighting the Nazis in Europe. The delay in the mail was considered a big problem for morale. The unit was given six months to eliminate the backlog of millions of pieces of mail and finished the job in just three months…

Sampson, 35, explained that since childhood, she's been involved in the living history movement. She started and built up the largest Women's Army Corps re-enactment group, which counts members from all over the world. That made her well-known among historians and museum officials dealing with the Women's Army Corps. "I kind of became the go-to expert," Sampson said.

During the pandemic, when Sampson was working for Visit Findlay, a tourism group in her Ohio hometown, the Sixth Cavalry Museum in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, contacted her to offer her a job. The museum, which knew Sampson from her Women's Army Corps re-enactment work, wanted to put together an exhibit on the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion.

Sampson was ready for a change, so she took the job and moved to Georgia, devoting months of hard work to the new display. The exhibit opened in February 2021. It was a nice item on Sampson's resume, and she believes it helped her get hired in May 2021 as the new director of the Sandusky Maritime Museum.

Meanwhile, Tyler Perry, the prolific actor and filmmaker, had run across an article about the 6888th Battalion and realized it would make a good movie. Perry and his staff were working on the movie as Sampson settled into her new job in Sandusky.

The movie's production designer, Sharon Busse, and a member of Busse's team traveled from Tyler Perry Studios in Atlanta to the exhibit at Fort Oglethorpe. Busse learned that Sampson had put together the exhibit. Sampson got a phone call in summer 2022 explaining that the movie needed a historical consultant and asking if she would be interested. "I said, 'Yeah, that sounds really cool,'" said Sampson, who had to sign a strict nondisclosure agreement, promising not to tell anyone about the film.

Working remotely — she never visited the set — Sampson worked on various historical details, and many of her suggestions were adopted, although Sampson regrets that some of the mistakes with the uniforms didn't get fixed. It's probably not something that most people would notice, she admits.

Sampson worked with costume designers and other people involved with the production but never interacted with Perry. Sampson did several months of work. On some days, she received as many as 10 emails. She said she was well-paid for her work. She couldn't make it to the movie premieres in Washington, D.C., and Atlanta but will watch the movie with friends when it shows on Netflix. And if Hollywood producers call for help in depicting the Women's Army Corps in other World War II movies, Sampson says she's ready to go to work. "There's some really cool (Women's Army Corps) stories that might be a great movie," Sampson said.

NEWS FROM THE PAST – September 1880 – A drayman named Kukert, who was hauling 5 kegs of powder from the Lake Shore depot to Barney & Ferris powder magazine yesterday, had a narrow escape from being run over by a Baltimore & Ohio train while en route to the powder house. The locomotive of the train just missed striking his wagon when he crossed the track.

NEWS FROM THE PAST – January 1875 – Evidencer of Cold Weather-During the recent cold spell the upper pond springs of Cold Creek at Castalia froze over, which a resident of the town for 60 years says it is the first time during that period.