

ANNUAL REPORT

October 2023 through September 2024



**Delaware County
Historical Society**

Our History, Our Heritage

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

The Delaware County Historical Society has had a wonderful year, and I want to personally thank our members, the people that enjoy coming to our events, and the citizens of Delaware County and elsewhere. Our museums and the exhibits at the Nash House, Meeker Home and the Old Jail continue to receive positive reviews.

Below are some highlights from 2024:

Our volunteers, our members, the Board of Trustees and the staff of the Delaware County Historical Society have all worked very hard to continue the success of the past and establish new programs for the present and the future will be even better.

Some of our past programs are listed below:

- A Victorian Tea at the Nash House in October
- Ongoing programs at the Old Jail
- A Roaring Twenties exhibit at the Nash House
- Theme-based programs around the various holidays

Our volunteers without question are simply outstanding and many things that we do would not be successful without their help. We continue to look for new and unique programs to bring historical events from the past to the present. We will continue this model going forward and if you have any ideas, concepts or new and

unique ways to have fun, please bring them to our attention.

I would personally like to thank the staff, the Board, and volunteers for their continued support. The majority of our programs generally sell out so that's a clear indication that we're moving in the right direction for our community and our partners.

As both a board member and a resident of Delaware County I'm always looking forward to the next big idea or program. The time and effort that we continue to put into the past will absolutely create success for the future. There's no other way but to say thank you for your ongoing support, ideas and unwavering passion for history.

— **Michael Butler**
DCHS Board President



OFFICERS

President – Michael Butler

Executive Vice President – David Hejmanowski

Development Vice President – Alice Frazier

Vice President of Board Operations – Eric Anderson

Secretary – Brenda Eldridge

TRUSTEES

Sherry Carmichael

Susie Daily

Dave Kerr

Brittany Maufort

Tito Paul

Nancy Reger

Brent Carson – President Emeritus

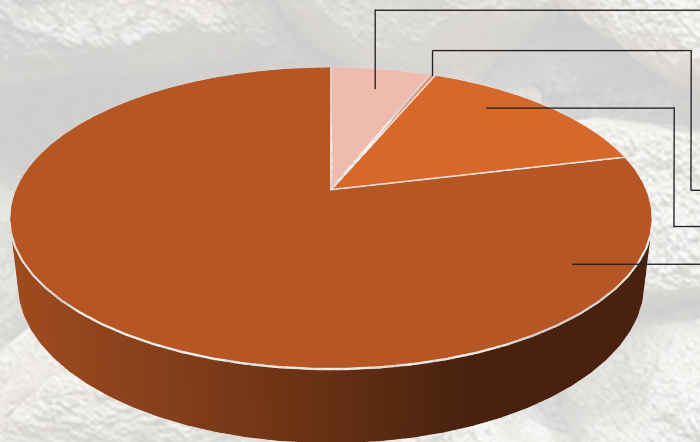
STAFF

Donna Meyer, *Executive Director*

Melissa Stroupe, *Sales and Event Manager*

FINANCIAL REPORT

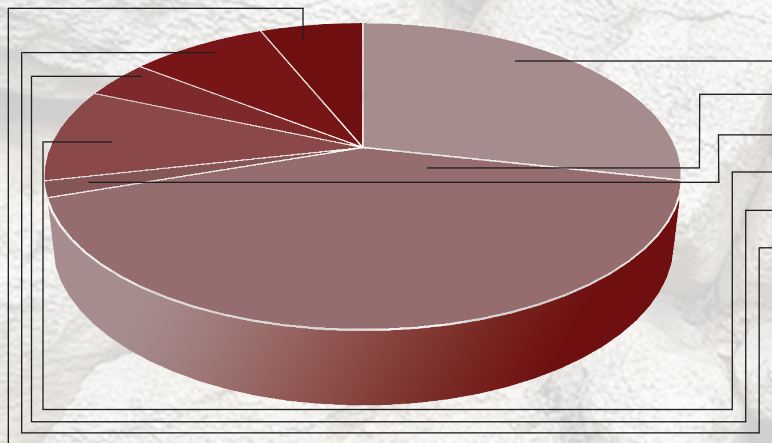
October 2023 through September 2024



ASSETS

Bank Accounts	\$ 174,134
Accounts Receivable	\$ 9,347
Other Current Assets/Endowments	\$ 432,561
Fixed Assets	\$ 2,281,607

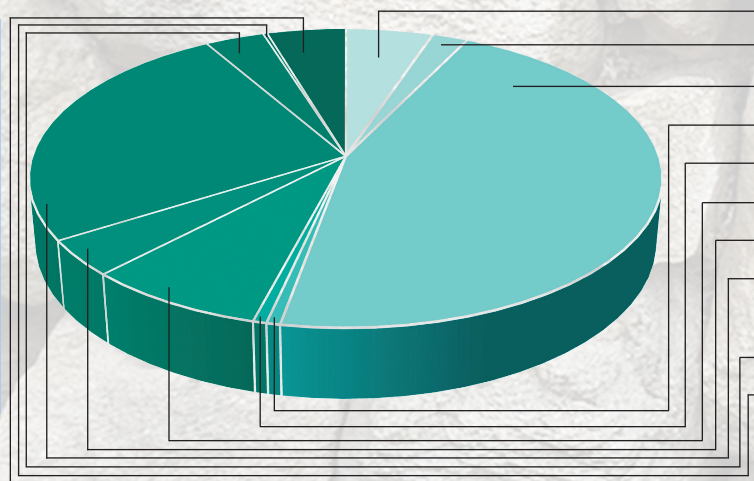
Total Assets **\$2,897,649**



EXPENSES

Administrative & Fund Raising	\$ 113,177
Venue	\$ 165,066
Programs/Exhibits/Education	\$ 6,761
Property	\$ 39,304
Utilities	\$ 16,021
IT	\$ 33,163
Jail	\$ 24,914

Total Expenses **\$398,366**



INCOME

Sponsorships & Grants	\$ 21,791
Memberships	\$ 8,871
Venue & Barn Rental	\$ 193,397
Museum & Library	\$ 2,600
Curriculum Support	\$ 2,572
Jail Income	\$ 34,253
Programs & Fundraisers	\$ 16,492
Donations	\$ 108,409
(not including restricted donations)	
Endowment	\$ 14,703
Sales & Misc	\$ 1,045
Income from the Historic Jail	\$ 19,600

Total Income **\$ 391,865**

These figures do not include depreciation or restricted funds.

COMMUNITY VISIBILITY

We Collect and Preserve

Between October 1, 2023, and September 30, 2024, the Cryder Library volunteers have cataloged 2,335 items, to make the total items cataloged 28,703. We have 12,153 available at DelawareOhio.PastPerfectOnline.com. The online records include 10,876 photos and 95 records which link to an electronic version of the publications. Cryder volunteers have answered 79 questions from the public and assisted with research in support of the Society programs, newsletter articles and exhibits. Phase 2 of 3 planned changes in the Cryder Research Library was completed by moving/removing walls and shelves for better exhibit space and less visual clutter. A new exhibit replaces the exhibit that was installed in 1977 (see top photo in the far right sidebar).

A digital copy of the *Delaware Daily Journal Herald* is now available on OhioMemory.org from 1902 to 1929, which makes it easy to learn what was happening in Delaware County 100 years ago.

Our Volunteers

Between October 2023 and September 2024, 85 active volunteers reported an amazing 14,042 hours! Our volunteers work on a variety of projects including cataloging artifacts, researching, museum docents and monitors, gardening, and of course committee and board members. The estimated value

of this service, according to IndependentSector.org, is nearly \$470,267!

We Generate Interest in Our History

We celebrate another successful year filled with tours, and new exhibits at our five museums and offsite at local sites, as well as offerings of community programs serving over 3500 students and adults.

We held several Victorian Teas this year at the Nash House and added to the Willis Records Center exhibits with new text panels about the Brown Jug, and School Days, along with a display case on Voting. This was a highly visible location this year with the Delaware County Board of Elections there. The next display at that location will present the life and work of our Mr. Frank B. Willis. At First Fridays and during the Arts Festival, we were able to open the Historic Jail and Sheriff's Residence for tours and will continue to do so, weather permitting.

Our Oral History project continued to roll along this year with interviews about 100-year + Businesses (OWU, and Ohio Living: Sarah Moore) as well as "First Women" which culminated into a special program in August (see bottom 2 photos on the right sidebar).

We continue to provide entries in Clio (theclio.com) which works by using Google Maps to show the history and

other information about a historic location or building. Delaware County already has nearly 40 entries!

We have taken on the ambitious effort of compiling a list of county barns built before 1950. Based on a similar effort in Wayne County, we want to archive as much information on these barns as possible, so very important as these symbols of agriculture are disappearing from our landscape.



UPCOMING PROJECTS

New Parking Lot!

We were recently informed that we will receive funding from the State's Capital Budget to install and expand our parking lot at the Barn at Stratford. This will help ensure more space for school buses as well as a mud-free parking area for our many event guests. We are deeply grateful to State Senator Andrew Brenner for once again, championing our cause and seeing that the state budget includes our request.

Stabilizing the Meeker House Stairs

We have received a grant

from the Ohio History Fund to provide the work needed to ensure the 201 year old Meeker House stairs are safe and stable for visitors. The work will be completed before the spring reopening.

America 250 - OH Delaware County

The Delaware County Historical Society is providing leadership for the America 250 - OH Delaware County activities. With representatives from all over the county, here are a few ideas that have been discussed:

Recognizing the many

Revolutionary War Soldiers buried in our county by ensuring they have markers honoring them; hold a driving cemetery tour with reenactors; explore our native population in 1776; research early and later immigrants; and form a student ambassador group for high school students.



IN MEMORIAM

We mourn the loss of a cherished member of our Curriculum Support committee, T.K. Cellar, who passed away this summer. T.K. had served as a past board member and made a significant impact as an educator with a passion for local history. His teaching skills and commitment to the community made him a standout member of our committee. Well-liked and deeply respected by all, his absence will be felt profoundly. We were honored to host his celebration of life, where friends and former students came together to share stories and memories of T.K., celebrating the profound influence he had on so many lives. He will be greatly missed.

OUR MEMBERS

In addition to our over 340 total members, we would like to thank our Life & Business Members.

LIFE MEMBERS

American Legion Post 115, Eric Anderson, Alice Baker, Sharon Baxter, Steve and Genevieve Berry, John and Debra Blakeslee, Linda Browning, Michael Butler, Tim Calvin (Ottawa Bota Farm), Kevin and Kosby Carrico, Brent Carson, Charles and Kay Caudy, Darlene Caulkins, Liz and Christopher Collins, Becky Cornett, Edmund and Diane Cox, Louis Crognale, Sandra Cryder, John and Yvonne Dewey, Brenda Eldridge, Elizabeth A. (Beth) Fisher, Jan Fleischmann, John and Lynn Foreman, Marion Foster, Alice Frazier, Bob and Holly Gerspacher, Gerald Glenn and Margo Bartlett, David Gormley, Arlene and Jim Gregory, Max Griffith, Geoff Gruendl, Cheryl Hagerty, Jeffrey Hamilton and Judith Brozek, Adam Hansberry, Carrie Harris, David and Ashley Hejmanowski, Julie Heston, Elizabeth Sue Heston, Mark and Carrie Hickman, Jack Hilborn, Karen Hildebrand, Ralph and Diane Hodges, Chris Hon, Louis and Margaret Iverson, Karl Jentgen, Steve and Joy Kaser, William and Virginia Kavage, Mary Ellen Kelly, Roger Koch, Janell Kuck, Don Lateiner, John Lewis, Susan Logan, Barbara Martin, Steve Martin, R. Blake and Molly Michael, Paul Monks, Rick Munday, Ray Myers, John O'Brien, Sue Packard, David Parker, David and Mary Ann Pemberton, Sr., Dwayne Petko, David and Regie Powell, Gregg Powers, Greg and Melanie Powers, Philip Powers, Kristina Prengaman, Zach Price, Tom Price, David Pritchard, Susan Ratcliffe, Barbara Reed, Bill and Kay Rietz, Bob and Nancy Rietz, John L. and Diana P. Roach, John Rodeheffer, Deanna Rush, Lauren Schaefer, David and Leslie Shade, Sharon Shaw, Steve Shaw, Betty Sheets, Vickie R. Sheets, Dennis and Linda Sheets, Lloyd "Buck" and Sharlene Shoaf, Carolyn and Gary Skinner, Sally Smith, Jim Smith, Marjorie Snook, Norman (Pete) Snook, Margaret Snyder, Vladimir and Margaret Steffel, Christine Stelloh-Garner, J. Patrick and Claire K.A. Sullivan, Tamara Tangen, John Tetz, Barbara Hall Thatcher-Williams, Jon and Jessica Thimdit, William Thompson, Meleah Powers Wagner, Jeff and Laura Waltz, Teresa Watkins, Lynne Powers Weber, Rex Welker, Steve Wells, Dorinda Wills, Thomas Workman, John Yelavich.

BUSINESS MEMBERS

Buckeye State Bank
Delaware Auto Care
First Commonwealth Bank
Frame Artistry
Lucy Depp Civic Association
Mail Pro 1 LLC
Manos, Martin, & Pergram Co., LPA
NVIRONMENT
Smith-Feike-Minton Insurance Inc.
Triad Architects



GRANTORS, DONORS & SPONSORS

Thanks to our benefactors, we have raised nearly \$75,000 in donations, grants and sponsorships over the past 12 months. These gifts provide vital support of our programs and operations, as we serve the public in many ways, including providing educational programs tied in with the curriculum requirements of our schools, public programs which we presented both live and virtually, exhibits at our museums, and more.

We depend on members and donors for our funding as we continue our mission of preserving our treasured past. We welcome conversations about Legacy Giving for those who want to ensure their memory lives on in a most meaningful way. For more information about how you can share our passion and be a part of our mission, go to our website: <https://delaware-ohiohistory.org/financial-donation/> or call Donna Meyer, 740-369-3831 x3.

You can also point your smartphone camera at this QR Code to be taken directly to our website.

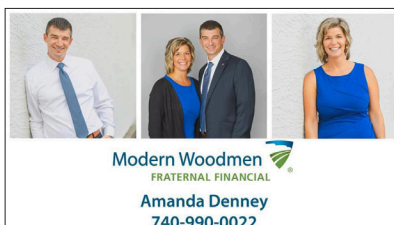


We are grateful to our program and event sponsors for providing the resources needed to create programs and special events this year:

Thanks to The Ron Sabatino Family Fund, and the Charles H. and Betty J. Sheets Family Donor Advised Fund for funding our Meeker Homestead Museum exhibits.



Tito Paul
State Farm Insurance Agent
7 E Winter Street
Delaware, Ohio 43015
Office: (740) 369-4537



WE EDUCATE

Among our most requested school programs are Early Settlers and the American Indians and Long Ago Days. We continue to provide special Tote Bags full of lesson plans and educational information to local 3rd grade teachers.

This year's award-winning "The Journey to Delaware County" exhibit at the Meeker Homestead Museum continued to draw crowds particularly with our elementary and middle school students. The exhibit will be upgraded this winter when museum curator Benny Shoults and his team begin to install the upcoming exhibit "Wilderness Transformed", which will reopen next spring. Both exhibits have been funded through grants from and administered by the Delaware County Foundation – The Ron Sabatino Family Fund, and the Charles H and Betty J Sheets Family Donor Advised Fund. Many thanks to these folks and their families for ensuring we can continue our efforts.

This year the Nash House offered an exhibit on the "Roaring Twenties." This coincided with the "Bootleggers vs. the Sheriff" exhibit at the Historic Jail. Upcoming at Nash is "The Englishman: John Robinson, Artist and Craftsman." If you attended the Delaware County Fair then you saw our DCHS booth highlighting agriculture, designed by Steve Schmidt and Benny Shoults.

We welcome your suggestions and thank you for your support!



2024 PROGRAMS & EVENTS

We began with a Cemetery Walk at Oak Grove Cemetery in October 2023 with reenactors portraying individuals such as Frederick M. Bauereis, Ezra Griswold, Clarence Hazelton, Delphina Mendenhall and Mary Grady, among others. We also held a Victorian Tea in October at the Nash House Museum. In November, Brent Carson gave a presentation on his new book, *Carried Treasures*, which he wrote in collaboration with Ric Stranges. January's Zoom program was on "Delaware County Industrial History: The Village of Stratford, from Mills to Auto Sales." In February, we had a return visit from Dr. Ted McDaniels, courtesy of Ohio Humanities, presenting "Understanding Black History Through Black Music, Part 2."

In anticipation of the upcoming total eclipse, our March program featured astronomer Tom Burns, presenting "Solar Eclipses: In the Shadow of the Moon." The event was a preview of our Eclipse Traditions program held during the eclipse. In April, Nancy Fleming and Watson Walker, Jr. presented "Communities: The Black Communities in Delaware County before 1860". In May we held a program about the life of a Galena native, Jay Norton Dyer, Delaware County's Pioneer Naval Aviator. In June, Steve Schmitt and Bill Rietz presented "Swimming in Delaware County." In June, we also held the Annual Stratford Festival and Ice Cream Social. July's program was given by DCHS volunteer, Beverly Larson who presented "The History of the Girls' Industrial School."

In August, volunteer Karen Cowan moderated a panel discussion with "First Women of Delaware County." Eight women who were "the first females" or "near first females" in their professions talked about how they earned their positions, what aided in their journey and what obstacles they met as they navigated their careers.

The Program Committee is continuing to work on 2025 and 2026 programs. The theme for 2025 is Agriculture in Delaware County.

This year we have hosted 27 weddings and a record 42 special events, which included retirement parties, celebrations of life, birthday parties, school celebrations and graduation parties. We also hosted an ongoing reservation with the North Unitarian Universalist Congregation, standing reservations with the Chamber of Commerce, and 3 auctions with Amelia Jeffers.

Each year we are honored to support the memory of local loved ones as a space for Celebrations of Life. This year we celebrated the life of DCHS Volunteer T. K. Cellar.

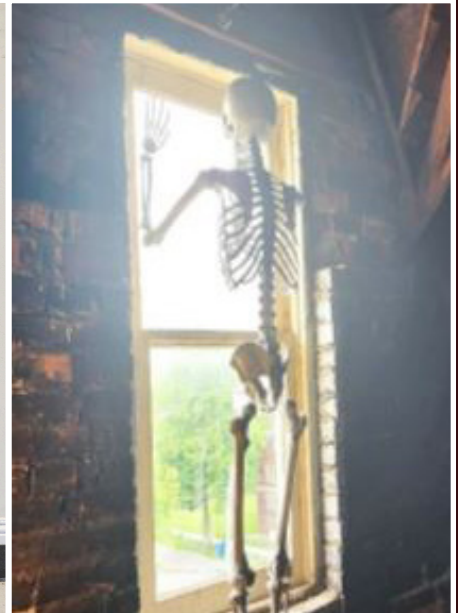


2024 PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Memorable events in the barn include the Delaware Ohio Pride adult prom and a company party that included a live mariachi band and outdoor games including a mechanical bull.

The Eclipse Traditions program was a life-changing experience that honored the last time a total eclipse occurred in Ohio during the time of Tecumseh. We paid tribute by focusing on the stories we know and the evidence we have of Indigenous and Tribal people in this area.

Speaking of culture, we are fortunate enough to live in a diverse area and have a venue flexible enough to accommodate all kinds of celebrations and cuisine. Events highlighting our ever-changing community include many Indian families having held baby blessings and sari parties. A Brazilian ranch family wedding was held with Brazilian cuisine and a lively party. No matter what the occasion might be, we are always open to finding a way to make it unique and beautiful.



AWARD WINNER!

We are very proud to announce that Susan Logan, our Education Committee Chair and Librarian, has been awarded the Ohio Local History Alliance Outstanding Achievement Award. This statewide award recognizes people who have made outstanding contributions to Ohio's historical societies. Susan spends countless hours at the Cryder Research Library and is involved in nearly aspect of our organization.

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we enter this season of gratitude, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible support I have received from our board and volunteers throughout my 9 years as Executive Director of the Historical Society. Their wisdom, energy, and creativity never cease to amaze me, and I am deeply grateful for their dedication to preserving and promoting our local history.

In particular, I want to highlight Brent Carson, whose relentless enthusiasm for sharing our community's historical narratives is truly inspiring. Like the Energizer Bunny, he never seems to slow down! I also want to acknowledge our Board President, Michael Butler, who will be stepping down at the end of the year. His guidance and leadership have been invaluable, and I will miss his presence on our board.

We continue to keep the Historic Jail and Sheriff's Residence open for tours and as office spaces, generating much-needed income. The community's interest in this beautiful 146-year-old building is growing as more people recognize it as a remarkable piece of architectural history. We are especially thankful to the Delaware County Commissioners for their support, which enabled us to secure funding for the installation of an ADA-compliant bathroom, enhancing accessibility for all our visitors.

I also take immense pride in the beautiful Barn at Stratford and the successful events we've held there. This past spring's

Eclipse Traditions and the summer's Stratford Festival and Ice Cream Social were just a few of the highlights that brought our community together in celebration. However, with such success comes ongoing challenges. As stewards of six historic buildings—most of which date back to the 1800s—we frequently face maintenance issues. Every week seems to present a new leak or clog, and while we are committed to preserving these treasures, it requires significant time and resources. We rely heavily on donations and memberships to keep our operations running smoothly.

While we enjoyed a robust year for weddings and events, the increasing number of event venues opening within the county presents new hurdles in securing bookings. Thankfully, Melissa Stroupe is more than equipped to tackle this challenge. I am immensely grateful for her leadership and the hard work of our dedicated venue staff, who ensure that our events are successful and address any unexpected issues that arise.

As we move forward, we continue to seek volunteers, donations, memberships, and most importantly—your ideas! Your support truly makes a difference, and I can assure you that joining our efforts will be a rewarding experience. Thank you for being a part of our community and for your ongoing commitment to preserving our local history. Here's to a wonderful season of gratitude!

— **Donna Meyer**
Executive Director



CORE ELEMENTS

OUR VISION:

A community that values its history as it plans its future.

OUR MISSION:

Delaware County Historical Society strives to be a trusted resource to preserve and connect the diverse stories and fabric of the past to the people of today and tomorrow through education and engagement.

OUR CORE VALUES:

1. We delight in discovery. Curiosity about the past illuminates our present and helps us prepare to navigate tomorrow.
2. We welcome you. We seek to provide hospitable spaces for all to gather, engage, learn, and build community. We embrace a diversity of perspectives in our storytelling and within our organization.
3. We get things done. We are committed to our communities and tackle the responsibility of preserving and interpreting our unfolding history with energy.
4. We collaborate. We are enthusiastically committed to the cultural and geographic communities that were and are in Delaware County and embrace working alongside them to preserve, understand, and share the region's historic people, events and objects.
5. We are stewards. We promote preservation of places, artifacts, stories and memories.



**Delaware County
Historical Society**
Our History, Our Heritage

Meeker Homestead Museum
The Barn at Stratford

2690 Stratford Rd., Delaware, OH 43015

Cryder Historical Center &
Research Library
Nash House Museum

157 East William St., Delaware, OH 43015

Millworker Cottage

2571 Stratford Rd., Delaware, OH 43015

Historic Jail & Sheriff's Residence

20 West Central Ave., Delaware, OH 43015