

LORAIN COUNTY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

2023 Annual Report



MISSION

To collect, preserve, and share the history of Lorain County to educate and inspire present and future generations.

VISION

To be a respected hub of learning about history, where all people are encouraged to discover and develop a passion for the past, engage in relevant study and educational experiences, and make history a meaningful part of their lives.

Above: Archivist Eric Greenly gives a tour at The Hickories during the Holiday Open House.

Cover: In fall 2023, LCHS was invited to install an exhibit of Lorain County history in the Ohio Statehouse's Governor Thomas Worthington Center. Our display, in two lighted cases, highlights important industries in Lorain County such as agriculture and shipbuilding and contains artifacts manufactured in the county such as the Garford padded bicycle saddle and the red RIDGID pipe wrench. It also has significant aspects of Lorain County's history, like the Oberlin-Wellington Rescue of 1858, a key moment in the history of abolitionism before the Civil War, and the founding of Lorain County Community College, the first community college in Ohio to have a permanent campus. The Worthington Center is used nearly every day as a classroom for school groups and others who are meeting in the Statehouse. It is also open to the public when not reserved. The exhibit has been so well received that LCHS was asked to allow the exhibit to remain from its original end date of May until August 2024.

Page 3: LCHS's annual Valentine Tea weekend at The Hickories is one of LCHS's biggest fundraising events.



STRATEGIC FOCUS

1. Improved Interpretation

What stories do we want to tell and how will we tell them?

2. Facilities Planning

What are our short-term and long-term plans for our properties? What improvements are needed for collections storage and exhibit space? How can we pay for this?

3. Financial Resiliency

How do we ensure that there are adequate funds available to support our mission so that LCHS thrives now and into the future?



2023 HIGHLIGHTS



Lorain County was formed on paper from parts of Cuyahoga, Huron and Medina Counties on December 26, 1822. Thus the official kickoff for the **Lorain County Bicentennial** took place on December 26, 2022, and LCHS started 2023 with a plan to celebrate! We have taken advantage of the opportunity to promote Lorain County history in this special anniversary year.

Throughout 2023, LCHS offered a **monthly Bicentennial Speaker Series**. Some presentations were given online while others were in person and offered the chance to tour a historic site. A variety of topics were covered, including the history of the Western Reserve, the Lorain County Metro Park District, the 103rd O.V.I., archaeology and early people of the county, and the Oberlin-Wellington Rescue.



With the support of Friends of the Hickories, we contracted with Durable Slate, a well-known roofing contractor who has previously worked for LCHS, to **repair The Hickories' historic slate roof**. Additional funds for the project were raised through **Connect to a Cause**, the twelve-hour fundraising day facilitated through the Community Foundation of Lorain County, and our Annual Fund year-end campaign.

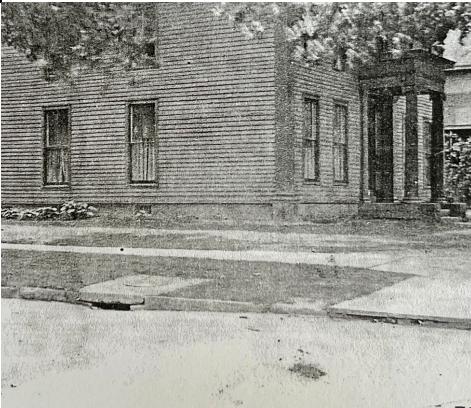
LCHS successfully transitioned its **archival collection records** to a cloud-based searchable database. We added over 500 materials to the collection in 2023, and answered 121 queries from the public concerning possible donations or historical research. A box with 322 negatives from the Bemis Collection was researched, digitized, and added to the collections database.



LCHS acquired **five properties in the West by the River Historic District** in Elyria. These properties, including 304 West Avenue, were gifts to the organization from John F. "Jack" Smith (1927-2012). Jack was a decades-long supporter of LCHS. He was an Endowed Life Member and Director Emeritus of LCHS. Our Board and committee has been working to secure the properties and determine the next steps for LCHS.



LCHS offered a free **Genealogy Workshop Series** with national expert Deborah Abbott. The first two sessions focused on basics of research, with how to get started and vital records. The third session focused on slave records. Dr. Abbott is a professional genealogist specializing in genealogical methodology, manuscript collections, and African American family research.



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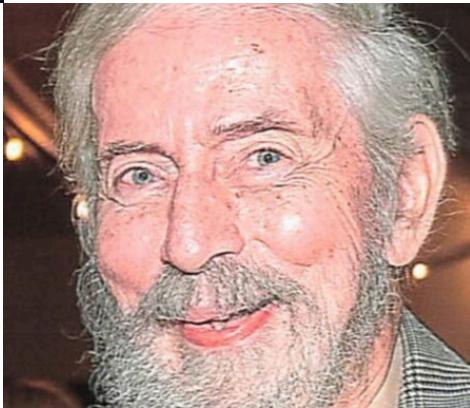
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George Strom
Director Emeritus



George Strom, Director Emeritus and an Endowed Life Member of LCHS, passed away in September 2023. An LCHS Board member for decades, he served as president for over twenty years. Under George's leadership, LCHS purchased The Hickories as its first permanent home and initiated the Starr House project to create the Lorain County History Center.



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STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES



*For the Year Ended
December 31, 2023*

REVENUE & OTHER SUPPORT

Contributions and Membership.....	\$355,818
Educational Funding.....	65,453
Grants.....	40,000
Special Events, Fundraisers, Programs.....	29,973
Investment Income used for Operations.....	171,242
Rental Income.....	22,047
Other.....	11,236
Total Revenue & Other Support.....	\$695,769

EXPENSES

Salaries, Payroll Taxes.....	\$152,816
Building/Grounds Maint. & Operations.....	128,138
Administrative, Office Operations, Misc.....	20,318
Legal & Professional Fees.....	41,090
Programs & Projects Costs.....	10,943
Development & Fundraising.....	8,558
Other.....	11,787
Total Expenses.....	\$373,650

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS.....	\$322,119
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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

December 31, 2023



ASSETS

Cash & Cash Equivalents.....	\$28,679
Other Receivable.....	18,300
Investments.....	1,179,542
Property & Equipment, net of accum. depreciation.....	965,955
Total Assets.....	\$2,187,476

LIABILITIES

.....	\$ -
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NET ASSETS

Total Net Assets.....	\$2,187,476
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TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS.....	\$2,187,476
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FINANCIAL NOTES

2023 brought around some note-worthy changes to our Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet). LCHS acquired \$308,000 of Buildings through a generous donation from the Smith Estate bringing our total Net Assets to \$2,187,476 as compared to \$1,865,957 for the prior year.

Our Statement of Activities (Profit and Loss Statement) was also enhanced by the \$308,000 of donated buildings along with some positive gains on our investments resulting in a \$322,119 positive Change in Net Assets (Net Profit) for the year ended 2023.

We are grateful to the Community Foundation of Lorain County and the Elyria Rotary for grant funding in 2023. Thank you!

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284 Washington Avenue
Elyria



THE HICKORIES MUSEUM

509 Washington Avenue
Elyria



UNDER DEVELOPMENT: SMITH HOUSE MUSEUM

304 West Avenue
Elyria

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Executive Director

Amanda Davidson-Johnston
Education & Tour Coordinator

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