

# Heritage Reserve News

## Stow Historical Society

Volume 46, Issue 1

[www.stowhistory.org](http://www.stowhistory.org)

February 2024

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Heritage Reserve News

Deadlines:

Apr. 1 for May      July 1 for Aug.

Oct. 1 for Nov      Jan. 1 for Feb.



Heritage House Museum, pictured in 2019

The Heritage House Museum was the first of Stow Historical Society's historic buildings to be placed at Heritage Reserve Park in 1972. It is also the oldest and largest of the buildings. Many of us have memories of when we first saw this impressive structure (maybe on a third grade school tour) - and some of us may remember the disrepair it was in when it was moved to its current location. Through the hard work of many volunteers Heritage House was refurbished and dedicated in 1976, the same year as our country's Bicentennial.

Heritage House, of course, was not always known by that name. It was built as a private home by Elizabeth and William Parke circa 1838. The house originally stood near the inter-

section of Graham and Fishcreek Roads on fifty acres the Parkes had purchased from the state of Connecticut in what was then known as the Western Reserve.



Paul Coleman points to the sign indicating that the "White House" was donated to Stow Historical Society, and will be restored at Silver Springs Park, photo circa early 1970's.

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Bryan Menke - President



## What Happens Next?

**H**ello and Happy New Year everyone, Welcome to our first newsletter of 2024 and just looking ahead, it will be a very busy year for the Stow Historical Society. The most frequently asked question addressed to me the last three months centered around the future of our 1838 Heritage House. Since our devastating fire on October 15<sup>th</sup>, the report from the Stow Fire Marshall's office has reported the cause of fire to be undetermined. This comes as a relief to all our caretakers and volunteers of the museum knowing that nothing was mistakenly overlooked while the house was in their care. I did ask for a thorough fire, electrical, and structural inspection of our remaining four buildings. The inspection was completed in December, and we are in safety compliance. Our next meeting in January with City officials and the insurance company will determine the direction and timeline for rebuilding.

As I reminisce about the projects I have worked on around the historic buildings, it started back in 1982 when first volunteered. (I met my wife in the Heritage House in 1983) In 1985 I managed the painting of the Heritage House for my Eagle Scout Project. A few years later I helped in rebuilding the Darrow House after it was moved. Then our son managed his Eagle Scout Project on the Darrow House exterior years later. As I remember volunteering for these many projects and helping at the Harvest Festivals, nothing compares to the work that now needs to be accomplished at the Heritage House. With all of the contents from the Heritage House now in two storage pods and scattered throughout the other four museums, the work continues as we

photograph and document every item that needs to be deaccessioned accordingly or cleaned and restored to its original state. I have come to realize that removing the contents, restoring items, rebuilding a historical house, and then moving everything that was not destroyed back in is going to be the single largest project the Historical Society will have ever completed. Yes, it will be done with the hours of many volunteers and donations that have helped so far. As the volunteers work through the months of December through February with no heat or restroom facilities, I cannot express how truly grateful I am as they continue providing their service to ensure that Stow's history remains permanently preserved for many generations to come. Stay tuned as we may need volunteers for certain rebuilding projects. If you would like to donate, go to our [Gofund.me/7d56421](https://gofund.me/7d56421) on our website - [stowhistory.org](https://stowhistory.org) or our Facebook page - [facebook.com/StowOHHistoricalSociety](https://facebook.com/StowOHHistoricalSociety).

The year 2024 will be our busiest year ever with the rebuilding of the museum, hosting spring school tours, bringing back the Joshua Stow Festival on June 22<sup>nd</sup> and our Harvest Festival on September 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> 2024. You can read more about the later two events in future newsletters. Be sure to mark your calendars now.

Have a wonderful New Year and I look forward to seeing you either at our regular meetings or at one of the events.

Thank you,  
Bryan Menke ♦

## Heritage House Fire Fund Raising

**S**ince October 18<sup>th</sup>, with donations through the GoFundMe site as well as many donations sent directly to our PO Box, we have raised more than \$7,500 at the end of the year in 2023. We are so pleased and grateful for all of your continued support of this effort.

We still have our GoFundMe link ([gofund.me/7d56421](https://gofund.me/7d56421)) on our website [stowhistory.org](https://stowhistory.org) and on our Facebook Page ([facebook.com/StowOHHistoricalSociety](https://facebook.com/StowOHHistoricalSociety)). Please continue to consider

donating through this fund to help in this restoration.

Alternatively, if you would prefer to support the cause with a paper check, please make the check out to "Stow Historical Society" with the Memo Section: "Heritage House Fire". Mail it to

**Stow Historical Society**  
PO Box 1425  
Stow, Ohio 44224

# Calendar

Times, dates, and locations may change due to the Oct. 15<sup>th</sup> fire.

Please check the website ([stowhistory.org](http://stowhistory.org)) for up-to-date information.

**March 14, 2024**

Thursday, 4:00 – Stow Public Library  
Meeting

Michael Lucas presents: “Abolition  
Restoration Cemetery workshop”

**April 11, 2024**

Thursday, 4:00 – Stow Public Library  
Meeting

“Life Story” an interview of a long- time  
Stow resident! Keep checking the website  
for this month’s special person!

**April 14, 2024**

Sunday, 2:00-4:00 – Heritage Reserve Park  
Museums open

**June 13, 2024**

Thursday, 4:00

Former Hanson farm on Call Road  
home of Mark and Jackie Ashworth,  
Meeting

**June 22, 2024**

Saturday 10:00-4:00 – Heritage Reserve Park  
Stow Historical Society’s  
Joshua Stow Festival

**August 8, 2024**

Thursday, 6:00 pm – Heritage Barn  
Annual Picnic

**September 28-29, 2024**

Saturday & Sunday  
Heritage Reserve Park  
Stow Historical Society Harvest Festival

## Stow Historical Society Membership Application

Please accept my membership fee for the following type:

Individual	\$10
Family	\$20
Contributing	\$30
Sustaining	\$50
Business	\$100
Lifetime	\$200

“If you want to understand today  
you have to search yesterday.”

– Pearl S. Buck

Membership Total Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Interests (circle)

Archives    Building & Grounds    Festival    School Tours

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Stow Historical Society  
PO Box 1425  
Stow, Ohio 44224

Mail application and personal check to:



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In later years, the house served as a stage coach stop. One traveler posted a sign outside the house. The sign pointed west and said, "Oregon – 1000 miles." So, that intersection was dubbed "Oregon Corners."

The house again reverted back to a private home and we are fortunate to have the recollections of Marybell Crist Poole who lived as a child in the house with her parents, John Allan Crist and Margaret Ann Ritchie Crist, from 1916 to 1931. She recalls:



**Heritage House on its way to Silver Springs Park, photo circa early 1970's**

"My folks wanted to get out of Akron and into the country. They bought the home, which had fifty-five acres; and at first they raised garden produce and operated a truck garden. Eventually, they had a little home-built roadside stand, where Graham Road Plaza is.

My grandmother, Elizabeth Karr Ritchie, lived nearby in a house that was south of Graham Road on Fishcreek Road. She owned the land on both sides of the road, and the only house near hers was directly on the bend of Fishcreek Road, south of her house. Where the Sto-Kent Lanes are today (at 3870 Fishcreek Road, but now gone) was the Stewart Farm; and there were no other houses until one reached a settlement by Kent Road."

Mrs. Poole's parents were musicians, with her mother



**Heritage House dedication, July 5, 1976**  
teaching piano lessons and her father playing in street bands and in dance bands at Silver Lake and Brady Lake.



**Stow Historical Society member Tom Troyer working on restoration of the Heritage House.**

She remembers the band concerts and ice cream festivals that her family held on the front lawn, where friends and neighbors came to hear the music, eat ice cream and socialize. Mr. Crist often held band rehearsals in the living room where the family piano was located. All the furniture would have to be moved out of the

room to accommodate the various band members.



**SHS member ladies making crafts for the museum store, 1970's**

Mrs. Poole shares another story of a fire that burned the back roof and some of the rafters. "In the upstairs of the house, there was one room finished off; and when I was a little girl, there was a fire right in the middle of the summer. There were wood shingles on the back of the house, and Dad had just put a new roof on the front. Sparks from the



stove set the back of the roof on fire and burnt the rafters. The neighbors didn't think to call the new fire department. Needless to say, my Dad had to put a new roof on the back of the house."

In the early 1970's plans were put in place to build a plaza on the corner of Fishcreek and Graham Roads. Instead of razing the big white house, developer Stan Boltz donated the building to Stow Historical Society. Led by Historical Society President Paul Coleman, the Society then undertook the monumental task of having the building moved to Silver Springs Park and restoring it. Members held fund raisers and volunteered hundreds of hours to restore the house. Two memorable volunteers



**Stow third graders visiting for annual tour of Heritage House**

were Charles Barker and Tom Troyer. Heritage House was dedicated in 1976 and has since been the site of Harvest Festivals, Christmas events, a museum store, and ice cream socials. Before the renovation it was even used as a Haunted House, operated by the Stow Kiwanis Club.



**Marylee Morgan decorating the Heritage House Christmas Tree**

School tours of Heritage House, established by founding member Sarah Hibbard Amlung, are still a part of every Stow third grader's curriculum. Heritage House has also welcomed thousands of visitors at every Harvest Festival since 1978.

Although the future of Heritage House remains uncertain, we can be assured the memories will last a lifetime. ♦

## ◊ OCTOBER MEETING AND CEMETERY TOUR

Our October meeting at Stow's First Christian Church was made possible with the guidance of long-time member and past Historian Marjorie Howard. We were able to walk the halls full of historical timeline pictures and see the photos of the original Chapel restoration process.

We left to visit the Stow Cemetery close to the original site where the congregation met.

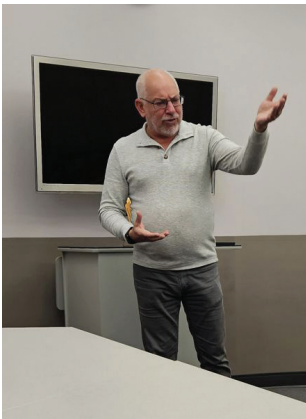
We were greeted by two members Teri Siroki and Rachel Brownridge who led us in a Historical walk to view the tombstones and learn about some of Stow's earliest settlers. ♦





## NOVEMBER MEETING LOCAL AUTHOR PRESENTS “OH SUSANNAH”

Gary Beckley, local author and volunteer of Stow Historical Society was the presenter at the November meeting! His new book “Oh! Susannah” explores a woman’s role in society during Civil War era America that follows the life of the author’s 3<sup>rd</sup>-great-grandmother. ♦



## THE STOW HISTORICAL SOCIETY AUTUMN BRUNCH!



The Autumn Brunch for Volunteers on November 18<sup>th</sup> was well attended with over 30 members and friends gathering to eat, socialize, and enjoy the beautiful day together! ♦



Photo by Michael Cryst

## December Meeting Stow Christmas 1873

Our carolers followed a lantern lit path back in time to the Mary Starr house and were warmly greeted by Suzanne Call-Cryst in the kitchen with homemade cookies! The antique 1800’s pump organ was played by

Julia Schnellenberger for all to join in singing favorite Christmas songs!

Suzanne is a Caretaker of the Starr house as well as President of the Local Grange chapter which will be celebrating 150 years in “Darrowville”



Image by Freepik



adies and gentlemen, esteemed guests,



Today, let us transport ourselves to the Stow, Ohio area in the year 1873, as we journey back to a time when this charming community celebrated Christmas with its own unique traditions and character. As we explore the Christmas season of 1873 in Stow,

we will delve into various aspects, including the weather, traditions, family life, decorations, food, lifestyle, economics, vocations, jobs, and the population of this bygone era.

**Weather:** In the winter of 1873, the Stow area was blessed with the hallmark climate of a Northeastern Ohio winter. The landscape was often covered in a pristine layer of snow, and the crisp, cold air enhanced the feeling of seasonal festivity. The snow brought an added layer of enchantment to the holiday season.

**Traditions:** Christmas traditions in Stow, Ohio in 1873 revolved around the core values of family and community. Attending church services on Christmas Eve was a central tradition, bringing people together to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Caroling was also a beloved activity, with families and friends singing songs of joy and goodwill.

**Family Life:** Family life was at the heart of Christmas celebrations. The holiday season was a time for families to reunite and create cherished memories. Relatives often traveled from near and far to be together during this special time, and homes were filled with the warmth of love and laughter.

**Decorations:** While the decorations in 1873 were simpler compared to today's standards,

they were no less meaningful. Homes were adorned with handmade ornaments, including paper chains, popcorn strings, and colorful baubles. Evergreen wreaths and holly branches added a touch of nature's beauty to the decor.

**Food:** Christmas dinners in Stow, Ohio featured a hearty and traditional menu. Families enjoyed roasted meats such as turkey, ham, and beef, complemented by stuffing, mashed potatoes, and seasonal vegetables. Desserts included fruitcakes, mince pies, and gingerbread, all lovingly prepared from scratch.

**Lifestyle:** The lifestyle in Stow, Ohio in 1873 was characterized by a strong sense of community and simplicity. People relished the joy of small-town living, where everyone knew their neighbors and gatherings were filled with warmth and camaraderie. Simple pleasures like sleigh rides and ice skating brought joy to the season.

**Economics:** The region was primarily agrarian, with farming being the dominant vocation. Many families relied on the land, tending to crops and livestock. Small-town merchants, blacksmiths, and craftsmen played essential roles in the local economy, serving the needs of the community.

**Population:** In 1873, the population of Stow, Ohio, was a tight-knit community of individuals and families. The town's residents, primarily of European descent, formed a closely woven social fabric, celebrating their shared traditions and embracing the values of faith and family.

In conclusion, the Christmas of 1873 in the Stow, Ohio area was a time of simplicity, unity, and cherished traditions. It was a celebration deeply rooted in family, community, and the values of faith and love. As we gather to celebrate Christmas today, may we draw inspiration from the past and continue to honor the timeless traditions and the spirit of togetherness that make this season truly magical. Merry Christmas to you all!

By *Suzanne Call-Cryst* ♦



STOW HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 1425  
STOW, OH 44224

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

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## Heritage Reserve Store

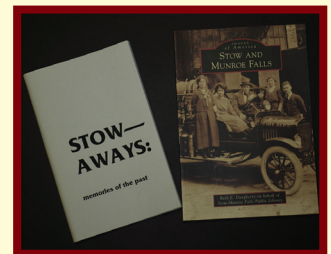
Stow Historical Society offers products for sale with proceeds going toward the maintenance and preservation of the collection. Contact a Board Member if interested. Items include:

Heritage Plates: \$4 each



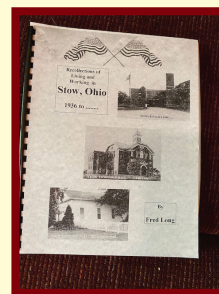
*Images of America: Stow and Munroe Falls*  
by Beth E. Daugherty: \$22.

*Stow-Aways: Memories of the Past*  
by Garnet Byrne: \$3.



*Recollections of Living and Working in Stow, Ohio  
1936 to...* by Fred Long: \$15.

Stories of a Stow Native  
by Fred Long: \$25.



Note Cards: 6/\$5

