



# ***The Old House Guild of Sandusky***

**Fall 2022 NEWS FOR MEMBERS 419-627-0640**

**MEMBERS GATHER FOR OUR ANNUAL DINNER MEETING**



## **Annual Membership Dinner Enjoyed by All**

### **Events Committee**

Linda Howell & Mary Truka

Thursday, October 18, members gathered to enjoy food and fellowship during a relaxing evening event. It was such a pleasure to be able to socialize once again. As members arrived, they were welcomed for a brief social time with appetizers and wine. This was followed by a delicious meal provided by Creative Catering. Our waiter staff, Cindy & Neil made certain all guest were well fed, delivering a nice selection of desserts to every table. We were very pleased to find they had thoughtfully packaged all the remaining food which was delivered to Victory Kitchen.

Dinner was followed with a brief "State of the Old House Guild," presented by the OHG Board. President, Dr. Richard Keller began by welcoming everyone and highlighting some of the past major accomplishments with emphasis on the purchase, major improvements, and sale of the Johnson House. Board member followed with brief, informative talks on the workings of their office and/or assigned committee. A great deal is happening in our organization. We hope these short talks informed members and encouraged anyone interested in volunteering or becoming a member of the board to express an interest. We have upcoming events and open board vacancies. Please let us know your interests.

Following our reports, Mr. Nathan Bevil of the Ohio History Connection presented

information and tips on how to approach the preservation and maintenance of an historic home and property. Our membership's interest in preservation led to numerous questions for Mr. Beville regarding how to take care of their own historic property. His responses were well received, and we thanked him for his presentation and work.



*Thanks to all  
who attended*



## Message from OHG President

Dr. Richard Keller



*Thanks to our Events  
Committee for  
providing a wonderful  
annual dinner meeting*

Progress best occurs as a result of that perfect combination, talent, and dedication. Our mission of historic preservation is fostered by substantial efforts that include maintaining and displaying our museum, promotional activities via the “Candlelight Tour”, and by facilitating renovation of Sandusky’s historic homes and commercial buildings. Speaking for the Old House Guild board, we thank you for your interest and support.

## Mission of the Old House Guild

*To promote historic preservation and the restoration of significant buildings, houses, sites, and objects in Sandusky, Ohio area. To encourage the rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of such properties. To accomplish these purposes by means of meetings, publications, surveys, and tours. To act as a non-profit organization and to apply for any grants that may be appropriate to further the cause of historic preservation.*



*Ellie Damm*

*1924-2013*

**First President**

**The Old House Guild of Sandusky**

Ellie Damm's legacy in preservation runs deep and wide, both in our local community and also statewide. Using the help of dozens of volunteers, she organized and coordinated the 1979 placement of over 1400 Sandusky buildings on the Ohio Historic Inventory, resulting in over 100 accepted on the National Register of Historic Places. Ellie was the founder and first president of the Old House Guild and for nine years led the annual Christmas Candlelight Tour of Homes. Her leadership brought the Guild, local, state, and national awards. She coordinated a local workshop of a National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1980, a follow-up National Trust Clinic in 1981, and a Preservation Office Tax Workshop in 1982. And for years, Ellie chaired the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board.

Ellie's preservation work lives on in our community allowing generations to enjoy the rich history and architecture illustrated in her book, *Treasure by the Bay*. If you have not read her book, copies can be found at the Sandusky Library. It is a wonderful presentation of pictures and descriptions of many buildings that are familiar as you drive the streets of our city. As previously announced, the Old House Guild plans to conduct a second inventory of structures built between 1929-1972 to add to the state historic inventory. This is scheduled for 2023. **We will need many volunteers, just like the original inventory.** Please consider joining us in this important work! Finally, we thought it would be appropriate to name this initiative in 2023, the . . .

***Ellie Damm Memorial Inventory***



**Preservation Committee**

Will Schram &amp; Linda Smith

**Update Requests to 1979 Inventory Sent to Property Owners**

In our last column we asked for your help with a massive mailing to the owners of properties listed on the 1979 Inventory of historic buildings, both residential and commercial. The mailing represents the first phase of a joint effort of the Guild and Sandusky City to ask property owners to examine a copy of the original inventory form and make corrections, add new information and include current descriptions. Phase two will be a citywide extension of the inventory by adding structures built between 1929-72 that are historically representative of the architecture of the time and/or bear historical significance of the owners/occupiers. This will occur in 2023.

Linda & I copied the much of the original inventory forms and as we got close to our October deadline, a group of volunteers jumped in to help with the duplication, run copies of our letter, blank inventory form (for corrections), a self-addressed/stamped return envelope and an OHG form offering a free one-year membership for returning the form. On October 17, 1510 pieces of mail were placed in the USPS for delivery. We would like to thank the following members for providing over 72 hours to complete this project:

Linda Howell

Dick Howell

Ed Stout

Barb Cicalese

Betsy Berkey

Tim Berkey

We would also like to thank the Mylander Foundation for fully funding the cost of the first phase of this project. We will report initial findings of the mailing in our winter newsletter.



# Cooke-Dorn Museum

**Site Manager** Ed Stout



## Happenings at the Cooke-Dorn House

Many things are happening or in the planning stages at the Cooke-Dorn House. First, after years of planning and several in execution, the storm window project will see its completion this fall. All windows have also been given UV protection to aid in heat transfer and sunlight deterioration of the home's contents. This also secures added protection to the home's original 1843 construction window glass. The final cost of this project will total around \$39,000.



The kitchen has had new period appropriate wallpaper installed to replace the badly curling existing paper. Painting will be done in this area as well. The driveway which was repaved in 2020 will be seal coated this fall. An improved stone walkway on the south side of the home was installed this summer for better use by visitors walking the grounds.

Work is being done in the greenhouse to repair and fortify the plant trays that have weakened or broken. Our yearly fall trim back and clean-up of the landscaping will be completed in October. The Ohio History Connection (OHC) is researching replicating the enclosed porch's grooved rubber wall covering in areas where it has dry rotted.

The biggest project which should begin next spring will be to address the badly deteriorating exterior north stucco wall. The outer 1992 layer of stucco placed over the original 1879 stucco has trapped moisture and compromised both layers of stucco. This has caused extensive cracking in the surface, delamination between the layers and areas of the stucco falling off the wall. The north wall will be taken back to the base stone wall and a traditional breathable stucco reapplied. The initial estimated cost for this project is around \$96,000. Some funding has already been secured and we are working with the Ohio History Connection to see this gets completed.

We are also discussing changes to the interior with OHC to reflect more of the influence and look of the home to when the Cooke family resided there. Additionally, we are considering more displays to showcase elements of Sandusky history and improve visitor interest in the museum. This was always a consideration from the museum's inception in April of 1996.

As stewards, we are continually looking to maintain and improve the museum. We look forward to 2023 being an exciting and transformative year.

## **Candlelight Tour of Homes Returns**

**Tour Director**      Ed Stout

The Old House Guild's Annual Christmas Candlelight Tour of Homes is returning after a two-year absence due to the Covid pandemic of 2020 and 2021. Anticipation is riding high with people asking as early as this past April if we were going to have the tour this year. There will be changes to its format from previous years resulting from the survey we sent to all Guild members and previous tour homeowners of the last twenty years.

The tour will take place this year on Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> and Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup> between the hours of 5pm to 9pm. That gives an additional hour each night for

participants to view our selection of eight featured homes and the two museums. The change in days also makes it easier for tour homeowners.

Tickets will be sold at Corso's Flower & Garden Center, Bailey's Home Decor Shoppe, Barnes Nursery and Lake Erie Shores & Islands Center. They will also be sold at the Cooke-Dorn House on the nights of the tour. Tickets will be \$15 purchased in advance and \$20 the days of the tour, cash or check only.

We look forward to seeing you all as we joyfully bring back a well-loved community holiday event. *A copy of the flyer is included for your convenience and sharing.*

## We Need Volunteers for the Tour!

We need volunteers who can help with the tour on one of the two evenings:

Ticket checkers at host homes

Head counters at host homes

Ticket sales at Cooke-Dorn or Follett Museum

Porch of Wreaths, 50/50 raffle helpers at the Cooke-Dorn

Hosts at the Cooke-Dorn

Call Ed Stout (419) 357-7473 if you can help us!





# *The Old House Guild of Sandusky*

*Presents*

## *Christmas Candlelight Tour of Homes*

*Saturday/Sunday*

*December 3-4, 2022*

*5-9:00 PM*



Get your tickets beginning Nov.  
25

\$15.00 Advance (prior to Dec. 3)

\$20.00 Days of Tour

\*Cash or check payable to the **Old House Guild**

*Don't miss the Porch of Wreaths, 50/50 raffles, and Free door prizes at the Cooke-Dorn!*

(you must have tour ticket & register at the Cooke-Dorn on tour nights)

## *Featured Sites*



*Cooke-Dorn House – 1415 Columbus Avenue*

*Steve & Kim Thomas - 1621 Columbus Avenue*

*Alan Griffith & Leslie Murray – 1231 Wayne Street*

*Scott Schell & Wendy Kromer – 714 Wayne Street*

*Follett House – 404 Wayne Street*

*Chris & Roberta Wiedle – 403 East Adams Street*

*Frank Lord & Beth Semler – 119 Hancock Street*

*Larren & Kim Wikel - 417 Columbus Avenue*

*Frank & Michelle Griffith – 914 West Washington Street*

*Tyler & Margaret Sea - 1512 Central Avenue*

*\*Please respect the property owners by removing your shoes upon entering the home.*

*\*No interior photography permitted without the homeowner's permission*

## Funding Our Work

Dr. Timothy Berkey

Treasurer

### How we pay for things

The OHG pays for bills from three basic revenue streams. First, we serve as site management for the Cooke-Dorn Museum. When the Dorn's gifted their home to the state, they also provided an endowment to maintain the property. The Ohio History Connection (OHC) retains those funds and provides us with a semiannual stipend to cover utilities and minor repairs. These stipends, along with any donations made by visitors to the museum are deposited into an account out of which property expenses are paid. Typical expenses include utilities, landscaping, lawn maintenance, housekeeping, security and fire protection, and annual services such as tree trimming, pest control, backflow testing, fall cleanup, snow removal and ongoing minor repairs. Whenever there are major repairs, the Guild submits the proposed bills to the state for approval and reimbursement or direct payment to contractors. A recent example is repair of the circular drive and parking area. Another is the major repair needed on the exterior stucco.

A second revenue stream comes from the Guild's fundraising efforts, along with donations and membership fees. These funds are deposited into a separate account and are used to pay for activities of the Guild. Our largest annual expense is our membership dinner/meeting which is free to all current members. Special events such as this summer bus tour of historic buildings and past activities like the antique appraisal fair are also paid out of this fund. Two years ago, we embarked on our largest project funded by this account, the purchase and sale of the historic Johnson House. We are proud of this project and with the eventual sale, were able to recover all the Guild funds that were invested. Our largest revenue comes from the annual Christmas Candlelight Tour of Homes and as you know, has been suspended since 2019 due to Covid.

And a third account was created this year to hold funds raised from our capital campaign. The source of these funds come from private foundations that respond to grants we submit for special projects. We are very lucky that many of these foundations are local and serve to promote the betterment of our community. When our grant applications succeed, the funds are deposited in a separate account. All expenditures from this account are tied directly back to the grant request budgets.

### Capital Campaign Continues

**Sidney Frohman Foundation:** A down payment was sent to Sommers Wood Craft from the generous gift provided by the Frohman Foundation that will complete the replacement of wood storm windows. Sommers will duplicate the original frames to keep them historically correct.

**Randolph J. & Estelle M. Dorn Foundation:** As stated in Ed Stout's report there is extensive exterior stucco and masonry repair work needed for the Cooke-Dorn Museum. The Dorn Foundation made a generous donation of a portion of the request. We have asked the Ohio History Connection to provide the remainder of the cost. Their Director of Facilities will bring in his architectural team to evaluate the work and prepare a Request for Proposals to be issued in order to select a contractor for the work. This will occur in 2023.

**The Mylander Foundation:** At the time of this newsletter, a mailing was sent to over 1500 property owners in the city asking them to update an enclosed photocopy of the original 1979 historic inventory placed on the state data base of historic properties. Once returned to the Guild, current information will be reviewed and eventually updated on the Ohio History Connection electronic data base. The entire cost of the mailing was underwritten by the Mylander Foundation.

**Erie County Foundation:** a grant request was submitted to underwrite the cost of producing self-guided tours of the Cooke-Dorn Museum. We are awaiting their response. Future grant opportunities are continuously reviewed by our OHG board and considered when planning upcoming projects.

### **Grant Funding for the 2023 Citywide Inventory**

As you are aware, we will be conducting a citywide inventory of homes and businesses (constructed between 1929-1972) during 2023. Once the specific plans are established, we will be examining available grants to cover the cost of this second phase. And once the inventory is completed, we will also consider grants to assist any property owner who wishes to apply to have their structure listed on the National Registry.

### **Donations to the Guild**

The OHG collects two types of donations. Visitors to the Cooke-Dorn Museum are encouraged to leave a small donation as they tour the facility. Those funds are deposited into our Cooke-Dorn account and used for upkeep and support for the museum building and grounds. The second type of donation we receive is specifically for the Old House Guild organization and used for our ongoing projects, the annual dinner, and special events. Keep in mind that our main fundraiser for the Guild has been the annual Christmas Candlelight Tour of Homes. This year will be the first since 2019 that we will have been able to raise those funds due to Covid. Some members have sent us checks designated for the Guild and we are appreciative.



## From the Editor

Betsy Berkey      Editor

Thank you for the positive feedback regarding our newsletter. Our goal is to provide you with information about current Guild initiatives, upcoming activities, and most important, plans to keep us focused on our important work of preservation. Each quarter we ask the chairs and officers to submit articles to accomplish this. In addition, I reach out to others who can contribute interesting stories that I hope you find worthy of reading. We will publish one more quarterly newsletter in December, coinciding with our Christmas Candlelight Tour of Homes. We hope that all of you can participate in the tour as well as volunteer on one of two evenings.

Again, please know that we enjoy hearing from our members if you have something interesting about the history of the city or the Guild that you would like to share, email me if you are willing to submit an article. And even if you are uncomfortable writing, you can jot down some notes or call and story-tell. I'll take it from there and work with you on a piece that shares your story!

Betsy Berkey - [betsy.w.berkey@gmail.com](mailto:betsy.w.berkey@gmail.com)

440-796-2185

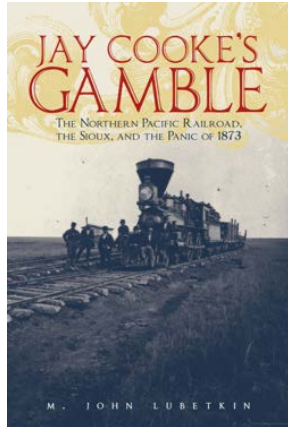
**Starting this fall, we will be placing all past and present newsletters on our website so if you want to go back and read issues, these will be stored and available for your use.**

## Membership

Betsy Berkey      Membership Chair

We are in the process of updating our annual membership form to go out in January. For those who have not become lifetime members, the annual fee is being increased to \$25 for a couple/family. Compared to other museums, this remains a good value. Membership includes free admission to our annual dinner, a quarterly newsletter, and most importantly, numerous opportunities to get involved in Guild projects, events, and enjoy fellowship with our members.

And we are always open to feedback and suggestions from our membership. If there is something you feel the Guild should explore as a project, initiative, or event, please don't hesitate to email me or call so that I can pass it along to our board for consideration. My contact information is **listed above under my newsletter editor section.**

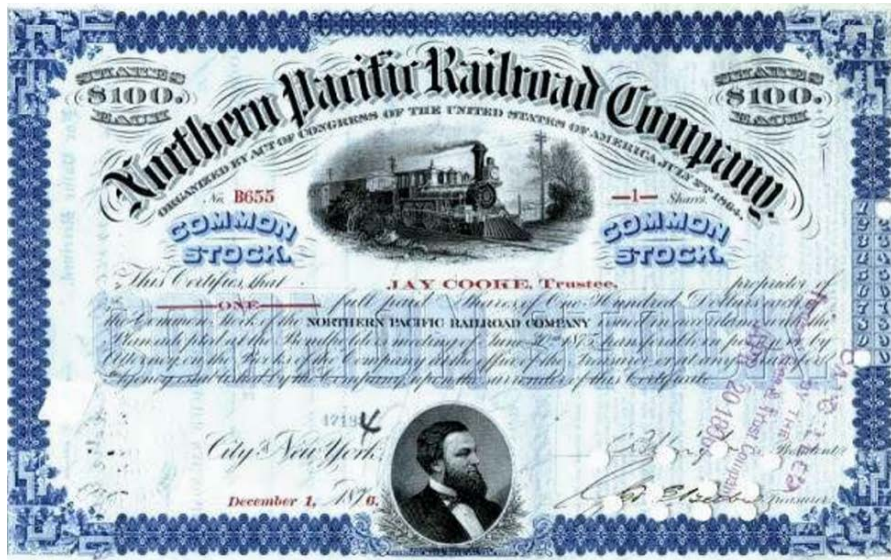
*Book Review**Jay Cooke's Gamble, The Northern Pacific Railroad, The Sioux, and the Panic of 1873, by M. John Lubetkin - Part II*

M. John Lubetkin is a retired cable television executive and author of four books with the University of Oklahoma Press. His book, *Jay Cooke's Gamble* received a Spur Award for the best historical nonfiction by the Western Writers of America.

**Dr. Timothy Berkey**

Picking up from where we left off, Lubetkin provides the historical groundwork for the title of his book. Jay Cooke's investment in the construction of the Northern Pacific (NP) Railroad was indeed a big gamble with multiple risks. In Chapter 9, "The Fear of Redskins, the author reveals the difficulties encountered with the army's assignment to escort NP surveyors through the Yellowstone Valley. Two groups were to complete their work to create a continuous survey line from Duluth to Puget Sound. This required crossing Sioux territory, something Sitting Bull had warned not to do. Over the coming months, multiple skirmishes ensued, including the Battle of Poker Flat whereby 300 warriors crossed the Yellowstone River to ambush the army and steal horses and cattle. The conflict ended in a stalemate with Sitting Bull walking close to his enemy line and defiantly sitting and smoking a pipe while Crazy Horse rode up and down to make the same statement to army troops. In the months ahead, the army used Gatling guns to keep the Sioux at bay, but the war continued to slow the work of the surveying teams. These events were covered by the newspapers and led to widespread public uncertainty about the progress and security of their investment in the project bond offerings.

At the same time, Jay Cooke realized the need to replace the president of the NP, Gregory Smith. Smith had political ties in government as well as relationships with the board of the railroad. Smith was a poor project manager and drained the company coffers with extravagant expenditures while bond sales to finance the construction continued to plummet. Project delays were caused by corruption in field operations including fake surveys, poor town plotting and high real estate prices that discouraged the settlement of land bordering the railroad path. In addition, sinkage of tracks in Minnesota required them to be removed, backfilled with tons of gravel, and rebuilt, adding enormous costs.

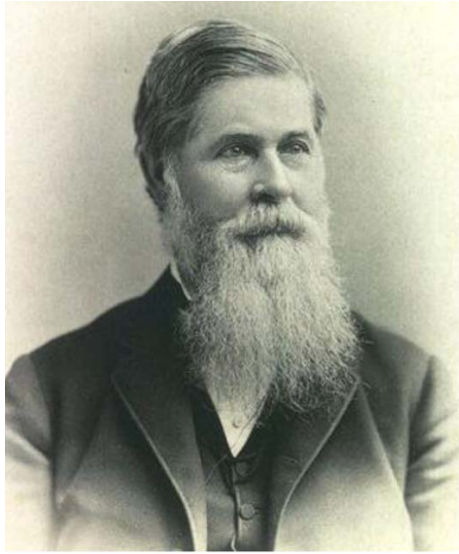


But Cooke's financial issues grew larger. General George Custer was brought in to further contain the conflict with the Sioux nation. Custer overstated the threat in a major article in the *New York Tribune* and *New York Times* which frightened the financial markets. The NP board met in September of 1873 and lowered the interest rates on bonds, thus sparking a discussion of a run on NP bonds. Stocks began to tumble causing Grant to travel to Cooke's estate, Ogontz in Philadelphia. By the following week, Wall Street asked Cooke to provide a million dollars to save his investment house, Cooke & Co. The company had no funds to cover the request and suspended operations and closed their doors. Stocks and bonds fell quickly and the market was in turmoil. Although not a complete crash, historians likened the panic to the events of 1929.

Surprisingly, the Northern Pacific did not collapse. The board completed the work of the railroad by exchanging land for bonds. The final spike was driven on September, 1883. Jay Cooke's gamble leaned heavily on his superior reputation as a financial genius. But when that reputation was weakened by multiple factors, his career was over. Cooke declared bankruptcy, left his estate Ogontz to a young girl's school and for the next 30 years lived in his daughter's home, a broken man.

In the end, Jay Cooke's life had far-reaching influence on America. He is credited for ensuring the defeat of the Confederacy by encouraging the average person to invest in war bonds. Yet, while he did achieve building most of the North Pacific, thousands of Americans lost their fortunes on the failure of Cooke's railroad bonds. Before his death, family and friends shared their feelings that Cooke came to terms with his mistakes and found peace in his faith. He taught Sunday school, studied the Bible, and practiced a quiet and reflective end to his life. The author finishes his book with citing Cooke's last words after listening to a final prayer on his death bed, "Amen. That was the right prayer."





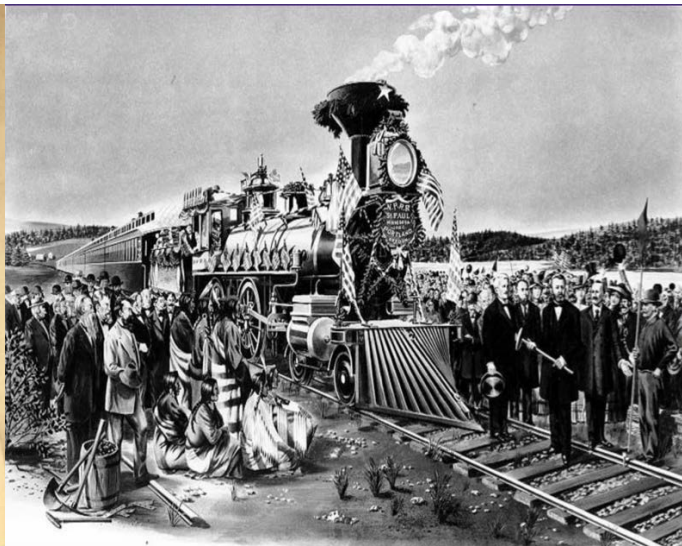
Jay Cooke



Ogontz Estate



Sitting Bull



Completion of Northern Pacific



## Volunteer with the Old House Guild

### Opportunities

Museum Tour Guide	Fundraising	Event Helper
Grounds Helper	Historic Research	Sign Painter
Historic Inventory	Holiday Decorating	Mailings
Candlelight Tour Helper	Annual Dinner Helper	Membership

**We are going to need dozens of volunteers for next summer/fall to conduct the second citywide inventory of homes and businesses. More information will follow.**

*And if you have any other talent to share in our organization, please let us know by calling or emailing us at the contacts listed below.*

### How to Contact Us

Board Members	<b>President</b> – Richard Keller	<b>Vice President</b> – Jack Mineo
	<b>Secretary</b> – Linda Howell	<b>Treasurer</b> – Timothy Berkey
	<b>Site Manager</b> – Ed Stout	<b>Member</b> – Mary Truka
	<b>Member</b> – Will Schram	<b>Member</b> – Linda Smith

**Address:** Old House Guild of Sandusky 1415 Columbus Ave. Sandusky, OH 44087

**Phone:** 419-627-0640 **Email:** [info@oldhouseguild.org](mailto:info@oldhouseguild.org)

**Website:** [www.oldhouseguild.org](http://www.oldhouseguild.org) **Facebook:** Old House Guild of Sandusky

# Coming Soon!

## Updates to Our Website



### THE OLD HOUSE GUILD OF SANDUSKY

[HOME](#)[ABOUT](#)[CANDLELIGHT TOUR](#)[CONTACT](#)

**Group Tours** – if you are bringing a group of eight or more to the Cooke-Dorn Museum, **please call 419-357-7473** to schedule your tour.

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