

The Old House Guild of Sandusky

WINTER 2025 NEWS FOR MEMBERS 419-627-0640



OHG Board Recommits to the Mission

Mission of the Old House Guild

To promote historic preservation and the restoration of significant buildings, houses, sites, and objects in the 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.

During the past year the Board of the Old House Guild (OHG) of Sandusky paused to examine the history and mission of the organization. Incorporated in 1980, the Guild's purpose has been to promote historic preservation and restoration of significant buildings, houses, sites and objects in the Sandusky area. Recent examples of OHG efforts include the acquisition and sale of the Johnson House on Columbus Avenue, Do it Yourself seminars for property owners, annual community garden tours, and a recent workshop on how to apply for placement on the National Registry. The annual Christmas Candlelight Tour of Homes has been the organization's main fund raiser each year with the exception of pauses during Covid and most recently, the 2024 tour.

In addition to these efforts, the Guild has served as the site management contractor of the Cooke-Dorn Home at 1415 Columbus Avenue. Placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982, the property was built by Eleutheros Cooke and moved from the original site on the corner of Columbus and West Washington Row to the present location. Estelle Dorn bequeathed the property to the Ohio Historical Society, now the Ohio History Connection in 1995. Since then, tens of thousands of volunteer hours have been provided by the OHG membership to oversee the maintenance of the property along with seasonal tours of the home. The Guild receives a semiannual stipend to take care of minor maintenance issues and pay for utility costs. Major upkeep is left to the property owner, the Ohio History Connection.

Thirty years have passed and the exterior property as well as the interior furnishings have aged. Every year the state requests a list of necessary maintenance issues from the site managers of over 50 sites. The requests made by the Guild are sometimes funded but some go without funding for periods of time. Many of the conditions have not been updated since the 1950's when the home was furnished and occupied by the last owners. Furniture, carpeting, window treatments, paint and wallpaper are a few of the considerations that property owners replace over time. All of this presents a challenge during an era when museums across the country are struggling due to lack of public interest and appropriate levels of funding. In response to these issues, the Guild conducted a review of the property and invited local and regional contractors to provide repair and replacement estimates, along with the costs of converting the first floor back to the 1800's original appearance and the second floor to spaces representing local history such as the Underground Railroad, the American Crayon Company, and the Mad River and Lake Erie Railroad to name a few. These estimates have been provided to the Ohio History Connection.

The OHG Board determined it was time to return the property oversight to the state for several reasons. First, maintaining unpaid staff to conduct tours of the home is no longer sustainable. Second, the presentation of the site has not changed and the relevance of the tours has diminished. The Guild does not have the financial resources to transform the home into a museum. Third, the OHG Board recognized that the energy of the Guild should be shifted more towards the original mission to serve the community in important preservation work and support. After multiple meetings and conversations with the state, the OHG Board decided to notify the state that it will discontinue serving as the site management as of June 30 of this year.

The good news is that with this decision, the Guild will be devoting more organizational time and work to serve the Sandusky area. This will begin with the return of the annual tour of homes in December, including new features to be announced. Other initiatives under consideration include assisting property owners with applications for inclusion on the National Register, working with Sandusky City officials to explore potential partnerships that advance historic preservation and restoration work, and expansion of workshops and events for families and residents of the community.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact us via the email addresses listed at the end of this newsletter. We will provide updates at our annual membership dinner in May along with future plans and initiatives. This is the time to get involved in the events and projects of the Guild and reenergize our engagement of the Sandusky Community in our mission.



Message from OHG President

Dr. Richard Keller



Welcome back Suzanne Stuck

I am pleased to announce that Suzanne Stuck has rejoined our OHG Board. She returns with years of experience and is already providing valuable advice and service.

I hope that you can find time to read our winter edition of *News for Members* and learn more of the changes and projects underway with the Old House Guild. The OHG Board is focused on numerous initiatives to rejuvenate our efforts around the cornerstones of our original mission statement. Our Preservation Committee is looking at ways to promote and grow the work of our Guild with the priority of preserving the rich history of Sandusky. As always, please reach out to any of our board members to share your thoughts and ideas going forward. We need and welcome your involvement.

Events Committee

Linda Howell Mary Truka Suzanne Stuck

The Old House Guild Events Committee has been busy since our last D.I.Y. seminar trying to plan upcoming events for 2025. Even though life in Ohio during the winter slows down we have been busy planning some interesting events for our members and guests to enjoy. As mentioned in another paragraph the first activity will be another D.I.Y. program that will most likely take place in March or early April.

Moving on to warmer weather we will be hosting our annual dinner and membership meeting on Thursday, May 15th again at the Sandusky Yacht Club. More details will be provided in our spring newsletter.

This will be followed by the second of what we hope will become an annual event, Garden Tour 2025. Most of the plans and gardens are secured but we need one (possibly two) more in Sandusky. If you are aware of an outstanding garden please inform one of the board members. Our tour is branching out to include Perkins Township with 3 wonderful gardens. Remember--gardens can be other than flowers. Beautiful patios, vegetable gardens, unusual landscaping or terrace areas are things guests would love to see. Some of the participant comments have been . . .

“Oh I never would have thought to do that!”

“I have so many ideas for my yard now!”

“I’ll never have a yard like this but I appreciate the opportunity to get to see these.”

Later in the summer or early fall there will be another seminar and the year will end with the return of the Candlelight Tour of Homes. See more information in this issue. These events can only be a success with the help from members. You might have other ideas than the board and committee members so please join in planning these events. Watch your email for upcoming event news.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

2025 OHG ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING & DINNER



Thursday, May 15, 2025

SUMMER GARDEN TOUR - SUNDAY, JUNE 22, 2025

12:00-5:00 PM



Details to appear in our Spring 2025 Newsletter

November D.I.Y. Seminar - "Old Houses Through New Eyes"

The Sandusky Library was the site of our third in a series of free seminars for residents to attend. Mary Rody, survey and manager for the National Register in the State Historic Preservation office for the Ohio History Connection was the evening speaker.

Mary explained how to list a property on the National Register of Historic Places. The process begins with a questionnaire that the property owner must complete (see below). This event was planned to promote the Old House Guild's mission of promoting historic preservation. Following her in depth presentation complete with visual aid the floor was open to questions. Guests seem to appreciate the opportunity to learn more about the process of acquiring this status for their property. Ms. Rody also offered help from her office on further questions and help with the application process. For further information please check out <https://www.ohiohistory.org> or contact her directly at: Mary Rody, 800 E. 17th Ave., Columbus, Ohio 43211, phone 614-297-2300.





1st Step - Complete the Homeowner/Business Owner Questionnaire

State Historic Preservation Office
OHIO HISTORY
National Register of Historic Places
Petitioner Questionnaire Individual Private Form

The questionnaire is designed to help you determine whether a property is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Please note that this form provides guidelines and does not constitute a National Register nomination. A nomination to the National Register is made by the Secretary of the Interior, based on the National Register of Historic Places. For all program questions, refer to the National Register of Historic Places. To obtain information regarding a specific National Register question, please refer to the National Register of Historic Places Questionnaire Homeowner/Business Form.

Step 1: Answer These Questions

Is the property at least 50 years old?
 Yes No

Has it been included on any Department of the Interior approved list of eligible properties and sites?
 Yes No

Is it eligible for a local, state, or national historic landmark?
 Yes No

If you answer "Yes" to any of the questions above, you are eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. If you answer "No" to all of the questions above, you are not eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Step 2: Tell Us About The Property

1. Is the owner ready to transfer?
 Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

2. What is the property's address?
 Street Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

3. What is the name and address of the owner?
 Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

4. How many units are there?
 One Two Three Four Five Six Seven Eight Nine Ten Eleven Twelve Thirteen Fourteen Fifteen Sixteen Seventeen Eighteen Nineteen Twenty

Step 3: Pick One Reason Why the Property Should Be Listed on the National Register - A, B, C, or D. Answer the Questions in That Box, Then Go On to Step 4.

A. Historic
 The property is associated with a significant event, person, or organization.
 Examples: A building for a political campaign; a site of a major battle; a site of a significant event; a site of a significant person's life.

B. Architectural
 The property is a fine example of a particular style or type of architecture.
 Examples: A building designed by a famous architect; a building that is a good example of a particular style or type of architecture; a building that is a good example of a particular style or type of architecture.

C. Cultural
 The property is associated with a significant cultural activity or event.
 Examples: A site of a significant cultural activity; a site of a significant cultural event; a site of a significant cultural activity or event.

D. Archaeological
 The property is associated with a significant archaeological site.
 Examples: A site of a significant archaeological site; a site of a significant archaeological site; a site of a significant archaeological site.

Step 4: Tell Us About The Property's History

1. How long has the property been in your family?
 2. What changes have been made to the building(s), and if known, when?
 3. What are the names of the original and subsequent owners, and when they owned the property, if known?

Step 5: Tell Us About The Property's Current Use

1. How is the property currently used?
 2. How do you use the property?
 3. How do you use the property?
 4. How do you use the property?

Step 6: Take These Photos

1. Exterior view of the property from the street.
 2. Interior view of the property from the main entrance.
 3. Close-up view of the property's architectural details.
 4. Close-up view of the property's architectural details.
 5. Close-up view of the property's architectural details.

Step 7: Send Us Your Completed Questionnaire

Please send your questionnaire to the address or fax number listed below.
 Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
 Phone: _____ Fax: _____
 E-Mail Address: _____

D.I.Y. Seminar #4

The Events Committee is in the planning stages for our next DIY event. We are looking for "experts" on perhaps the following topics: refinishing wood floors, selecting correct period paint colors for both interior and exterior, hints on locating replacement parts that are historically correct for their property, repairs for slate or tile roofs. Maybe YOU are the "expert" as you have dealt with such projects OR you know a friend, a contractor that holds expertise in that arena? Please let us know any thoughts or suggestions that will assist us in arranging OHG's next DIY!

The date, time and specifics will be announced in an upcoming newsletter.



Christmas Candlelight Tour of Homes



Saturday/Sunday

December 6/7

5:00-9:00

Ed Stout & Laurie Hille

Looking Back at the Tour of Homes Through the Years

Beginnings . . . by Ed Stout

I have been connected with the Christmas Candlelight Tour of Homes since 1994, and I have been the chairman since 2013. Laurie Hille has joined me as co-chair since 2023. Over those years, I have seen many changes and growth in this annual event. I would like to take you on a journey of the tour origin and evolution through the years.

Beginning in 1980, the tour was established to be the major fund raiser for the Old House Guild of Sandusky. The name of the tour originated from a combination of Christmas, and the tradition of asking home owners to display candles throughout their dwelling. After a few years, the use of real candles was discontinued due to safety concerns, and the necessity of replacing candles for each night. The use of electric candles is still used by many of the homeowners as part of their decorations.

Tours Per Year . . .

We rented an office space in the Hubbard building when the tour was launched, and used the Follett Museum across the street as our base stop for the tour. Since then, the Follett Museum has been on every tour. Four private homes were featured with the first ten years except for 1985, when only three were presented.

In the subsequent years the number of participating homeowners continued as follows:

1990	5	1994	5	1998-2003	6
1991	6	1995	5	2004	5
1992	5	1996	5	2005	6
1993	6	1997	5	2006	7
				2007-2016	6
				2007-2017	8
				2018	6
				2019-2023	8

Note: No tours in 2020/2021 due to Covid and 2024 per a decision to pause

Changes and Additions . . .

Some changes had been made through the years. One occurred in 1996 when our tour base stop changed from the Follett Museum to the Cooke-Dorn Home. In that same year, we began the wreath raffle on the enclosed porch of the Cooke-Dorn. In 2012, we instituted free door prizes as an offering, and in 2016, a 50/50 raffle was added. We have featured special guests in the living room such as Santa and Mrs. Claus, Miss America of 1963, Jackie Mayer, and pianists to play the grand piano. Tour days were changed from Sunday and Monday to Saturday and Sunday, and the hours were expanded from 6pm to 9pm each evening to 5pm to 9pm, allowing tour-goers more time to view all the offerings.

A Variety of Locations . . .

Through the years we have featured ten churches: Calvary Episcopal, St. Mary's Catholic, First Baptist, First Congregational United Church of Christ, St. Stephens, Community Church of the Nazarene, Emmanuel United Church of Christ, The Calvary Temple, First Presbyterian, and Sets. Peter & Paul Catholic. We also have featured the Sandusky State Theater, Harlequins Theater, Firelands Symphony School of Music, the Sandusky City Greenhouse, the Maritime Museum, Market Street Antiques, the Masonic Temple Lodge, the Erie Residential Living facility, and a restored

apartment in the Donahue building and the Feick building. We also featured offerings of two boathouses, 582 and 585 Bimini Drive; three bed and breakfasts, the Cottage Rose, Wagner's 1844 Inn, and the Tea Rose; and four airbnbs, 415 Cove Street, 417 Columbus Avenue, and 610 & 914 West Washington Street.

Repeats . . .

Certain homes have been featured an additional time due to new owners who have greatly changed the home from its previous state when on the previous tour, or ones with a long time span from its previous showing. Those repeats are 519, 606, 631, 714 & 810 Wayne Street; 915 & 1309 Central Avenue; 718 Sycamore Line; 615 & 1439 Columbus Avenue; 1214 Ogontz Street; 1419 Marlboro Street; 622 Hancock; 226 42nd Street; 622 Hancock Street; 243 East Market Street; 337 East Water Street; and 323 East Adams Street.

New Features for 2025

The tour had been in existence for 44 years and we decided to take a good look at where we had been and considered rejuvenating the tour to return in 2025. In the coming months, we will be finalizing the details of the new rendition of the great Christmas Candlelight Tour of Homes. Homeowners have already indicated commitment to being on the 2025 and 2026 tours, with the 2025 tour being Saturday and Sunday, December 6th and 7th. We anticipate a great community response to the tour's return. In conclusion, I hope you have enjoyed learning of the tour's history and we look forward to seeing you all in December. Here are some pics from the 2023 tour . . .





Preservation

Mary Truka, Chair

Tim Berkey Betsy Berkey

Calling all OHG Members!

The Preservation Committee is reviewing the OHG's Board's practice of recognizing property owners for preservation work conducted at their residential and/or commercial site. Promoting historic preservation and the restoration of buildings, houses, sites, and objects is embedded in the Old House Guild's Mission Statement. We are requesting that you help us in identifying such work in process or completed around our city. More "eyes" on this project will enhance our endeavor. Time is of the essence as awards will be presented at our annual dinner on May 15th.

We look forward to hearing from you. Thank you!

Preservation Committee Works to Revise Awards Program -Draft-

The Preservation Committee is reviewing the OHG Board's practice of recognizing property owners for preservation work conducted at their residential and/or commercial site. We see a need to expand recognition awards to include other categories as stated in our mission statement. We have highlighted in red the objects to be considered and bold/underscored the categories we feel need more definition. Most of these are located in the National Park Service guidelines and locally in the Sandusky City preservation guidelines. We have listed these below for the board and membership to review and give us input:

Mission of the Old House Guild

*To promote historic preservation and the restoration of **significant buildings, houses, sites, and objects** in the 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.*

Preservation:

National Park Service - is defined as the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project. However, new exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment. The Standards for Preservation require retention of the greatest amount of historic fabric along with the building's historic form.

Sandusky City - means the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity and materials of an historic property.

Old House Guild definition -

Restoration:

National Park Service - Is defined as the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the

restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project. The Restoration Standards allow for the depiction of a building at a particular time in its history by preserving materials, features, finishes, and spaces from its period of significance and removing those from other periods.

Sandusky City - means the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project.

Old House Guild definition -

Rehabilitation:

National Park Service - is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. The Rehabilitation Standards acknowledge the need to alter or add to a historic building to meet continuing or new uses while retaining the building's historic character.

Sandusky City - means the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

Old House Guild definition -

Adaptive Reuse:

This term is not defined in the National and Sandusky standards, but frequently referred to as--

Adaptive reuse is the process of reusing an existing building for a purpose other than which it was originally built or designed for.

Examples in Sandusky: Vita, Osborn School, Former fire stations turned into residential/commercial properties, Sandusky Register building

Old House Guild definition -

NEW (not in our mission statement)

Reconstruction:

National Park Service - is defined as the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location. The Reconstruction Standards establish a limited framework for recreating a vanished or non-surviving building with new materials, primarily for interpretive purposes.

Sandusky City - means the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.

Old House Guild recommendation -

Funding Our Work

Laurie Hille - Treasurer

CD Investment

The Old House Guild has been investing funds using a CD through CIVISTA bank for a couple of years now. When the CD matured in October 2024 the Board chose to renew the CD. The CD was renewed for another seven-month term at a rate of 4.35%. During 2024, we made \$4,764.13 in interest income. We are so pleased with our earnings, keeping the funds local and with CIVISTA. When the CD matures again in May 2025 the board will evaluate our options.

2024 Audit

The bylaws of the Old House Guild call for an annual accounting of our revenues and expenditure. To comply with this requirement, the internal audit documenting all monthly receipts and expenditures, the resolutions from the minutes showing board approval of all financial transactions, and copies of December 2024 bank statements that verify ending balances from each of our accounts was submitted on January 4, 2025 to the Board. It is expected the Board will approve the audit during the February meeting. Hardcopies will be retained for any future accounting needs. All of our files are accessible to members for review upon request.

2025 Tax Return

The Olds House Guild of Sandusky is a 501c3 organization and thus is exempt from taxes that would normally apply to a business. The IRS has made it easier for nonprofits to file taxes via what is called a Form 990 which allows us to send an electronic short form postcard verifying our continued existence as a nonprofit. This filing was completed on January 21, 2025.

2025 Annual Budget

The Guild has a practice of establishing an annual budget. This allows our committees to plan and estimate their activities more effectively. The largest budgetary item to facilitate has been associated with the oversight of the

Cooke-Dorn Museum. As the Guild devotes more time and work to serve the Sandusky area, it is anticipated our budgetary practices may need to be reshaped during 2025. Throughout the year, the Board will be discussing our shifting needs as we transition away from the oversight and management of the Cooke-Dorn Museum so that we can adjust our budgeting accordingly.

Reminder Paypal/Credit Card Payments

I wanted to share a reminder that for your convenience Guild membership dues may be paid via Paypal through links available on our website. During 2024, \$333 came in using this method. We are increasing membership awareness of this option and have seen many payments flow in this way since the beginning of the new year. During 2025, we hope to expand the use of this service by making it another convenient way to purchase tickets online for our events.

Paypal/Credit Card Payments

Last year, we established methods to pay membership dues as well as make donations to the Guild via Paypal through links made available on our website.

Want to Donate to the Old House Guild?



Very easy to do! Use your phone and scan our QR code at the left. It is also located on our website. Or you can also write a check made out to the Old House Guild. You can use a credit card or if you have your own Paypal account, that will work as well. Thank you for your generous contributions!

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.

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

440-796-2185

besty.berkey@oldhouseguild.org

Note: we now post all past and present newsletters on our website so if you want to go back and read issues, they are there for your use. Click on the link below:

<https://www.oldhouseguild.org/newsletter/>

Membership

Membership Chair – Tracy Hille

Membership Drive 2025

We sent our Email notification to all the members back on January 28 regarding the 2025 dues. If you didn't receive it we had several come back as undeliverable. We can only assume that the Email address we have has changed or has a typo in it so we are sending those members a notice via the US Mail system. They will receive a pre-addressed envelope for them to use to make it easier to send in their dues.

Several Guild Members have never provided us with an Email address. For those members, a similar letter and pre-addressed envelope is being sent via US Mail.

How to Renew Your Membership: \$25 per family

1. Please click on this link that is for new and renewing members:

<https://www.oldhouseguild.org/membership/>

This will take you to the new membership form on the Old House Guild of Sandusky website. Please note we have provided spaces to add a second phone number and e-mail for a spouse, partner, or family member. This way all members in your household will receive the newsletter and any other communications. Just complete and click submit.

2. You will now be able to pay your dues online. Scroll down to the bottom of the membership page. Select your payment choice and complete. For those with Paypal accounts you can use that method. If you do not have a Paypal account, you can create one going to their website or you can simply use your own credit card. NOTE: If you don't want to pay online, still complete and submit your electronic application online and mail your check to:

Old House Guild of Sandusky 1415 Columbus Ave.
Sandusky, OH 44870

3. You will notice that you have the option of becoming a Lifetime Member. Just click the Lifetime Member icon and you will be directed to the donation page to make your payment of \$250.

NOTE: We will be sending you an email reminder in February! If your email address has changed, please forward the new one to our OHG email account. Thank you!

Volunteer with the Old House Guild

Opportunities

Garden Tour	Fundraising	Event Planner
DYI Event	Historic Research	Preservation
National Registry	Newsletter	Mailings
Candlelight Tour	Annual Dinner	Membership

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 **President** – Richard Keller **Vice President** – Timothy Berkey
 Secretary – Linda Howell **Treasurer** – Laurie Hille
 Preservation – Mary Truka **Candlelight Tour** – Ed Stout
 Membership – Tracy Hille **Newsletter** – Betsy Berkey
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