

The Vintage

Publication of the Madeira Historical Society
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Miller House Museum

Here it is, February 2024, 60 degrees outside, and there are buds on many trees, Daffodils, Crocuses, and Spring Beauties are up. Maybe an early spring is coming to Madeira, including a year to look forward to, but on to our newsletter.

We finished 2023 with a bang, including our annual business meeting and Christmas Dinner, again held at the Kenwood Country Club. What an honor that the Madeira



Elementary School students were able to entertain us with their repertoire of many Christmas carols. The students and their director made a great impression on those society members in attendance. Prior to our entertainment, the Florence V. Hoffmann award for service to the Madeira Historical Society was presented to Carol Heck. The award is presented every other year to someone who exemplifies what Nelson and Florence Hoffmann did for the society during their lifetimes.



Our outgoing president, Bob Bartlett, and outgoing treasurer, Donna Lienhart, both received gifts from the society. Bob, for serving as president for the past two years and Donna, for her ten years serving as our treasurer. Together, Bob and Donna installed accounting software, improved record keeping of members and our finances. In addition, Bob recently replaced our aging security system.



At our December business meeting, the society elected new officers and board members as follows, Doug Oppenheimer, President, Tom Frietch, Vice President, Bob Bartlett, Treasurer, Robin LeFevre, Recording Secretary, Tim Brock, Board Member & Council Liaison, Greg Johnson, Board Member, Les LeFevre, Board Member, Donna Lienhart, Board Member, Lisa Violand, Board Member, Carol Heck, Board Member, Librarian/Archivists, Liz Frederick, Museum Director. (At the time of our elections one position was unfilled, but has since been filled with the appointment of Mike Widmeyer) **Board member**, Greg Johnson has accepted the job of program chairman, and has decided that our first program will be,

“Madeira’s Diamond in the Rough”. This program explores the history of Madeira’s

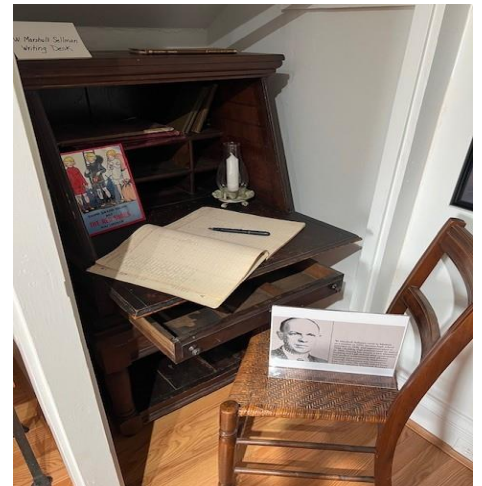




oldest standing building, constructed in 1839, on McCullum Road (now Shawnee Run Road). The program will be presented at the Madeira Branch Library on March 16, by the owner of the historic school building, Ken Cummings, beginning at 1 PM. The society will have an open membership meeting beginning at noon. Seen in the photo at left is our archivist standing with Ken Cummings prior to authoring her story in “Madeira Neighbors” where Carol wrote about the historic one-room school

building. Ken will elaborate and talk in more detail about “Madeira’s Diamond in the Rough”. This is expected to be a very exciting program.

On July 25, 1910, a baby was born in Winchester, located in Adams County, Ohio, and given the name William Marshall Sellman. You might say “so what”, but this child would grow up to become Superintendent of the Madeira School District, and have a school building named in his honor. Mr. Sellman passed away on June 29, 1993 at the age of 82. The Madeira Historical Society has recently received the hand-made desk crafted by Marshall’s father, William Verner Sellman, and used by both W. Verner and W. Marshall Sellman. The antique addition has already become an important contribution at the Miller House Museum. The desk was gifted to the society by W. Marshall Sellman’s granddaughter, Cathy McGonegle. Don’t forget to see the desk when you visit our museum where you can envision Mr. Sellman working at his desk.



Important changes coming for members, in the past the society has billed members of the society for annual dues in May, but beginning this year, your dues payment will be payable in June. This change will allow for some accounting changes and better notification to our members. Thank you for continuing support of the Society and the Miller House Museum.

Auto Attendant, Voice Mail, and greatly improved internet. Near the end of his term as president, Bob Bartlett changed our vender, we now have Alta Fiber (previously Cincinnati Bell). This change is a little bit higher in cost but the benefits are substantial. If you are in the Miller House, you should have access to Wi-Fi everywhere, and have excellent quality. The new service came with Auto Attendant and Voice Mail, allowing for callers to hear a greeting and leave a message. This improvement is important since we are all volunteers and our museum is unattended most of the time. We will make sure that messages that are left are responded to in a reasonable time.

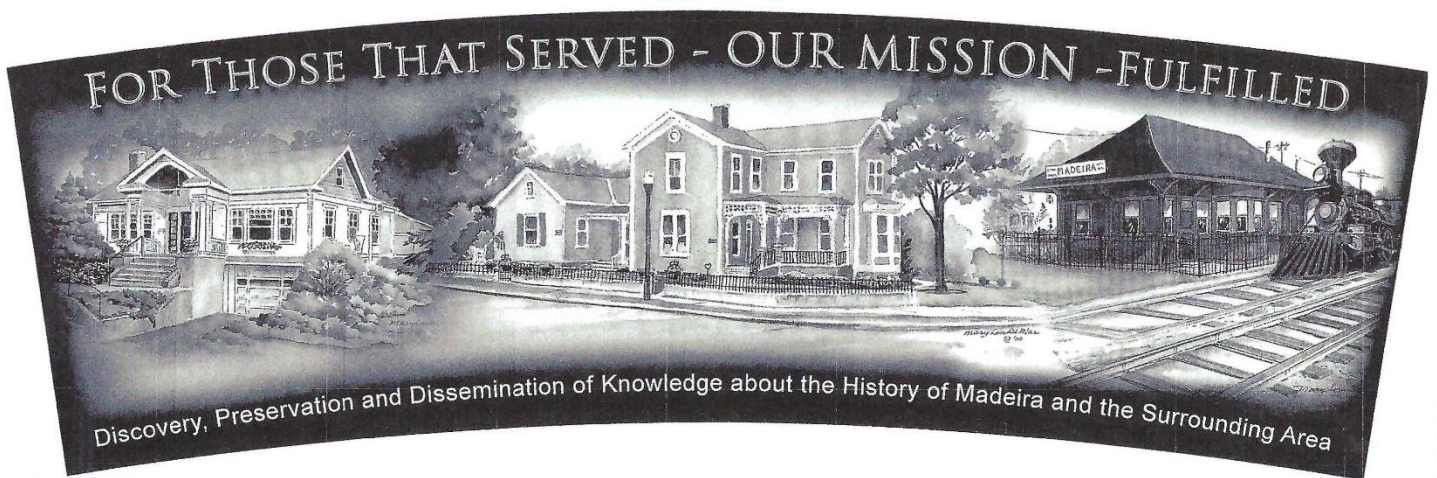
The Board now has twelve members. At the January 31st meeting of officers and board members, Madeira resident, Mike Widmeyer, was appointed per the Madeira Historical Society Constitution, temporarily as the “Communications Secretary”. Mike is spending time with Bob Bartlett learning and reviewing our accounting system and the society history in preparation for swapping board positions with Bob, who is serving as treasurer. Mike comes to the society with a past career in accounting work. His résumé shows a lifetime of working in business finance and government. Mike will become our treasurer and Bob will become our Communications Secretary. These two changes are expected to enhance our organization.

Our Financial position, a summary, 1/31/2024

Investments & Market Value	217,335.51
Operating Account	3,429.95
Earmarked Account	<u>5,489.95</u> (includes emergency reserve fund)
Total	\$226,254.67

Soon our new treasurer will take an inventory of our assets and state the value of those assets in our financial position.

Our memorial is on the horizon, after three years of fund raising and planning, the primary component has been ordered. The granite bench will be placed on the grounds surrounded by two Redbud trees. There will be a digital photo frame located inside the Miller House scrolling the names of Madeira Historical Society members that have passed away since our founding in 1972. Fund raising will continue for the landscaping. Thank you to those that have contributed thus far, making the memorial a success. The surface of the curved granite bench supported with two granite legs will include the graphics shown in the attached rendering. The face will say “Madeira Historical Society”



Planning has begun, The Madeira Historical Society Raffle “2024” has been approved by the board. Our last “major raffle” was in 2019, but was interrupted by the Covid outbreak. The raffle proceeds will be used to offset the cost of Miller House maintenance. Examples would be the cost of a new water heater or concrete repairs. We hope that members of the society, and friends of the society will buy and help sell the raffle tickets. We will begin soliciting donations for the raffle by March 1st and will begin selling the tickets at the Madeira Art Fair. Raffle winners will be drawn in August at the Madeira Street Dance.



On November 18, 2023, our program at the Madeira Public Library was about the George Meyer Lumber and Coal Company and Oscar Meyer. George Meyer, founder of the company was Oscar’s father. In

attendance were Oscar Meyer’s son, Richard Meyer, his granddaughter, and many friends of the Meyer family. Historical Society member, Les LeFevre, presented the program. As a teenager, Les was employed by Oscar Meyer to unload railroad cars in the lumber yard. Richard Meyer is pictured in the brown vest, Granddaughter is in the yellow outfit and Les LeFevre is wearing the plaid maroon shirt.



Museum Director planning changes, tentatively our Museum Director, Liz Frederick, is planning several changes within the Miller House Museum that when completed will provide some fresh displays. Look for specifics in future newsletters.

**Notes from the president,
February, 2024**

I accepted the position of President for very specific reasons, including....

The need to find a treasurer, someone who would help the society grow, someone with experience, familiar with our software that we are using and someone that could began performing the responsibilities quickly. Former President, Bob Bartlett, accepted the position of treasurer while we were finding his replacement. The Board has found a treasurer, local Madeira resident Mike Widmeyer. Mike will be introduced in our next issue of the Vintage.

My second reason was that the society needs to expand the value of their investment portfolio. Our investments pay for most of the current monthly operations cost. This includes costs such as the utility bills, insurance, and the cost of minor maintenance at the Miller House. In addition, I am focused on bringing in more funding from organizations that provide grants and donations. Currently, and for several years, our society has received funding locally that has been used to support the work done by our Archivist and Museum Director. They are each given a small quarterly stipend.

My third reason was that the society needs to be in a better position for the future. That means that our service to the community must reflect our past, but new ideas and sometimes a new "look", must be in our plans. This will be important if the museum is to increase the number of visitors and if the society is to attract new members and attract more people willing to serve in leadership roles. The society, was founded in 1972 and thanks to a supportive community, officers, board members, and membership, we expect to continue our successes well into the future.

Last, I want to thank you on behalf of our officers and board members, those that have been dedicated members and those that have supported the society financially. Also I would like to encourage you to continue supporting the Madeira Historical Society. Consider being a board member or an officer. If you are interested in becoming more involved, I want to discuss with you all of the opportunities. Send me a message at my personal email, consultdoug@fioptics.

**Doug Oppenheimer, President
Madeira Historical Society**

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