



Oak Leaf

A Publication of the AFFTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Insert: Café du Matin flyer

2022 Santa House a rousing success!



Christmas came once again to the Benoit Mansion known as Oakland, with the house decked in holiday cheer and bustling with activity. As usual, the 44th Annual Santa House proved festive and well-received... but it goes without saying that such a monumental undertaking required much effort and countless volunteer hours to carry off. Starting well before Thanksgiving, folks began the multitude of set-up chores, such as crafting, assembling, carrying, toting, designing and decorating. Then during the multi-day event, volunteer hosts and hostesses performed tasks ranging from craft selling and cookie baking to car parking and puppeteering. Hard work and dedication were on display everywhere... just to name a few:

- **“Parking Lot Phil”**- who delighted in bringing joy to little ones with his talent.
- **Terry Bruns** - who wore two hats, serving as both Craft Lady and Santa’s Helper.
- **Santa Claus** (aka **Darryl Eaves**) - who played the part all seven (exhausting) days!

This year we were thrilled to welcome some new, young faces - six talented student volunteers who performed their puppeteering roles with smiling enthusiasm. We’re happy to report that a few of these elves had so much fun, they’ve decided to volunteer for extra duty serving as models at our upcoming **Café du Matin** in March. One lucky young lady will be wearing a copy of Mary Todd Lincoln’s 2nd Inaugural gown that is on display at the Smithsonian. (see p. 3 and flyer insert for details and reservations).



Year after year, and generation after generation, area families return to Oakland’s Santa House because they enjoy the beautiful decorations, the festive atmosphere, the warm memories, and the thrill of meeting Santa and Mrs. Claus in person... but most of all, they appreciate the hard work, dedication and friendliness of the folks at Oakland House Museum.

THANK YOU to all who contributed their time & talents to **Santa House 2022!**
We couldn’t have done it without you!



Chip Hiemenz IV and his son Quint celebrate the season at Oakland. They represent Benoit descendants, generations seven and eight. Wouldn't Louis be proud?

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!! Dates are set for a fun and eventful 2023...

AHS Membership Meetings

Spring - Sunday, April 23, 2023

Pot Luck Lunch 12:30 p.m. Meeting 1:30-3:30 p.m.
Program: Local Author Patrick Murphy discusses his books
Candy Men, The Irish in St. Louis and *Places to Pray*.

Fall - Sunday, October 22, 2023

Pot Luck Lunch 12:30 p.m. Meeting 1:30-3:30 p.m.
Program: To Be Announced

Bring your favorite dish and enjoy the company of other Society members for a pot luck luncheon, with drinks and desserts provided. A business meeting and an entertaining program will follow the luncheon.

2023 Open Luncheons

<i>Wednesday, April 5</i>	<i>Wednesday, August 9</i>
<i>Tuesday, May 9</i>	<i>Wednesday, September 13</i>
<i>Tuesday, June 13</i>	<i>Wednesday, October 11</i>
<i>Thursday, July 13</i>	<i>Tuesday, November 14</i>

These luncheons are open to the public, so come alone, bring a guest, or put together a group. What a delightful way to spend the afternoon with special friends! The Ladies of Oakland serve groups of 15-56. House tours, given by a docent in period dress, are at 11:00 a.m., followed by lunch at noon. The cost is \$30.00 per person. Please make reservations 2 weeks in advance by calling Jean McDaniel at (314) 821-7166.

Please note: Private Luncheons can be booked for groups of 15-56. Call Jean McDaniel at (314) 821-7166 at least 2 weeks in advance to reserve a date.

Open Houses for 2023

Beautiful Oakland House will be open to the public on the following Sundays from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

April 16 ~ May 21 ~ June 18 ~ July 16
August 20 ~ September 17 ~ October 15

Free to members \$10.00 for the general public

2023 Bunny Hutch

For a hoppin' good time, gather the little ones and hop on over to Oakland's Bunny Hutch! Now in its 27th year, Bunny Hutch is a much-anticipated spring treat. The event will feature an Easter egg hunt (weather permitting) or a puppet show, as well as story time with the Story Lady. In addition, each child will have a chance to make a "bunny bag," enjoy a treat, and pet a live rabbit. The photo ops will be wonderful, so don't forget your camera!

Reservations Required on Weekdays

Wednesday & Thursday, March 29 & 30

Hours: 9:00 a.m. - Noon

Weekday Reservations - Joan (314) 496-6225

NO RESERVATIONS needed on weekends

Saturday, March 25 & Sunday, March 26

Saturday, April 1 & Sunday, April 2

Hours: 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Watch for details on our website:

www.oaklandhousemuseum.org

Admission: \$7.00 per person

Payment at the door - cash, check or Stripe

For more information, contact:

Cindy Ahrens at Oakland House (314) 352-5654

Or visit our website: www.oaklandhousemuseum.org

Volunteers Needed:

Bunny Hutch Decorating - Saturday, March 18

Start 9:00 a.m. - Work until finished - Lunch will be served

Decoration Take-Down - Sunday, April 2

Start 3:00 p.m. after Bunny Hutch - Work until finished

If you have questions, or for more information, contact:

Nancy Herndon-Ulrich at (314) 814-4983



Your Help Needed! Let's spruce up, clean up & get organized to make this the best year ever!

Docent Meeting

Sunday, March 5, 2023 - 1:30 p.m. - Oakland House

For current docents, or for those interested in becoming one.

For more information, call Shirley Brinker (314) 631-8507.

Kitchen Volunteers Meeting

Tuesday, March 7, 2023 - 9:30 a.m.

A meeting has been called for all current and future Kitchen Ladies who serve the luncheons at Oakland.

We're always looking for new members.

For more information call: Rose Vitale (636) 225-7618
or Mary Jane Autry (314) 578-9158

Event Volunteer Meeting

Sunday, March 5, 2023 - 2:00 p.m. - Oakland House

Please come if interested in helping with weddings, receptions or other events held at the House.

For more information, call Rosie Miller (314) 892-3474.

Oakland House Spring Yard Clean-Up

Saturday, April 15, 2023 - 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Please bring your own rake or other yard equipment and help us spruce up the grounds. Lunch will be served.

For further information, contact Rosie Miller (314) 892-3474.

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND: Mark Your Calendars!

AHS 4th of July Breakfast Buffet ~ Tuesday, July 4, 2023 ~ 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Country Style Breakfast Buffet ~ Entertainment ~ 50/50 Drawing ~ Tours of Oakland House



Bits & Pieces

JOIN US FOR A "GAL"ENTINE'S DAY PARTY



Attention all those who have lost their valentines, have yet to find their valentines, or who celebrate with their valentines on another day... The first ever "Gal"entine's Day Party is planned for **Tuesday, February 14** from **6:30-8:30 pm**. Join us at the mansion for a special cookie decorating event and the opportunity to share in some drinks, friendship and fun! Hosted by **Baby Bear's Bakery** - \$35 per person (includes \$10 donation to Oakland House). Tickets must be purchased by February 10 online using the link: <https://www.babybearcookies.com/product/galentine-s-oakland-house/68>

ANCILLARY BOARD LOOKING FOR YOUNG MEMBERS



It's long been a goal of the Society to organize a group of younger people, not only to help with activities and learn the workings of AHS, but also to bring in new members and just have fun. To that end, an **Ancillary Board** was formed, kicking off their efforts with a **Paint & Wine Day** in 2019. The group has also been instrumental in planning last October's **Party with Poe** and the upcoming "Gal"entine's Day Party (see above). New faces and new ideas will help move our organization into the future. If you'd like to participate in this younger planning group, contact **Rhonda Kottemann** at rkottemann717@gmail.com.

THE LADIES OF OAKLAND DO IT AGAIN!



AHS offers a great big "THANK YOU" to the **Ladies of Oakland**. The Ladies presented the **Affton Historical Society** with a check for **\$6,202.30**, the result of many successful events and long hours of volunteer work in 2022. So many give selflessly of time and talents. We appreciate your open hearts and helping hands, and look forward to working with you again in 2023!

AMAZON SMILE PROGRAM ENDING IN FEBRUARY



The **AmazonSmile** program, which allows Amazon shoppers to direct a portion of their purchases to a charity of choice, will be ending effective February 20, 2023. The Affton Historical Society has been a participating charity for many years, and as such AHS will be receiving a one-time donation from Amazon equivalent to three months of our 2022 program earnings. In addition, we can continue to accrue donations until the program officially closes on February 20. So if you're planning an Amazon purchase between now and then, remember to sign on at smile.amazon.com and direct your donation to AHS.



Café du Matin (Morning Coffee)

Saturday, March 4, 2023

10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

You won't want to miss this delightful morning of coffee, tea, *les pâtisseries* and good company presented by the Ladies of Oakland! Our informative program will be:

Victorian Fashions on Parade

presented by **Nancy Herndon-Ulrich**

This fashion show will feature garments from the 1850's through 1890, and will highlight a copy of Mary Todd Lincoln's 2nd Inaugural Gown that is currently on display at the Smithsonian Institution.

The cost is \$20.00 per person. Reservations are required, and are on a "first-come, first-served" basis, so don't delay. For more information, see the insert in this newsletter or contact Pam Danklef at (314) 842-0149, (314) 503-6401 or jpdanklef@aol.com.

Do you LIKE flowers?

Do you LIKE being outdoors?

Do you LIKE digging in the dirt?

Then we'd LIKE you to join the **Oakland Garden Club!**



We'd love to have your help in keeping the Oakland grounds beautiful.

We garden on Mondays at 9:00 a.m.

beginning May 1st, weather permitting.

If interested, or for more information, call Rosie at (314) 892-3474.

Photos for this issue provided by Nancy Herndon-Ulrich Thanks!



Executive Board

Nancy Herndon-Ulrich
President

Becky Cox
Vice President

Mary Jane Autry
Treasurer

Steve Slayden
Recording Secretary

Darryl Eaves
Corresponding Secretary

Nancy Harmon
President
Ladies of Oakland

2023 Board of Directors

Bert Barry
Barnes Bradshaw
Shirley Brinker
John Cole
Ingrid Giddings
Mary Kirschman
Joan Komlos
Phillip Tafra

Pam Danklef
Membership Chair

Rosie Miller
Event Coordinator

Mary Kirschman
Publicity Chair

Patti Behlmann
Oak Leaf Editor

The Board meets at Oakland House at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of each month from January through November.

Members are welcome!



Affton Historical Society MASTER CALENDAR of EVENTS FOR 2023

A few members have requested that we publish a listing of all AHS events for the year in chronological order. Here is the result, ready to clip and post on your bulletin board or refrigerator. We hope you find it helpful.

February

- 9 - Board Meeting - 7 pm
- 14 - "Gal"entine's Day Party - 6:30-8:30 pm

March

- 4 - Café du Matin (Morning Coffee) - 10 am
- 5 - Docent Meeting - 1:30 pm
- 5 - Event Volunteer Meeting - 2 pm
- 7 - Kitchen Volunteers Meeting - 9:30 am
- 9 - Board Meeting - 7 pm
- 18 - Bunny Hutch Decorating - 9 am
- 21 - Ladies of Oakland Meeting - 1 pm
- 25 & 26 - Bunny Hutch - 11 am - 3 pm
- 29 & 30 - Bunny Hutch - 9 am - 12 noon

April

- 1 & 2 - Bunny Hutch - 11 am - 3 pm
- 2 - Take down Bunny Hutch Items - 3 pm
- 5 - Open Luncheon - Tour 11 am - Lunch 12 noon
- 13 - Board Meeting - 7 pm
- 15 - Spring Yard Clean-Up Day - 9 am - 4pm
- 16 - Sunday Open House - 2pm - 4pm
- 18 - Members' Appreciation Luncheon - 12 noon
followed by Ladies of Oakland Meeting - 1pm
- 23 - AHS Membership Meeting
Lunch 12:30 pm, Meeting 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm

May

- 9 - Open Luncheon - Tour 11 am - Lunch 12 noon
- 11 - Board Meeting - 7 pm
- 16 - Ladies of Oakland Meeting - 1 pm
- 21 - Sunday Open House - 2 pm - 4 pm

June

- 8 - Board Meeting - 7 pm
- 10 - Historic St. Louis Spring Tour - 10 am - 4 pm
- 13 - Open Luncheon - Tour 11 am - Lunch 12 noon
- 18 - Sunday Open House - 2 pm - 4 pm
- 20 - Ladies of Oakland Meeting - 12 noon
Salad Luncheon (note earlier time)

July

- 4 - Independence Day Breakfast - 8am - 11am
- 13 - Open Luncheon - Tour 11 am - Lunch 12 noon
- 13 - Board Meeting - 7 pm
- 16 - Sunday Open House - 2 pm - 4 pm
- 18 - Ladies of Oakland Meeting - 1 pm

August

- 9 - Open Luncheon - Tour 11 am - Lunch 12 noon
- 10 - Board Meeting - 7 pm
- 15 - Ladies of Oakland Meeting - 1 pm
- 20 - Sunday Open House - 2 pm - 4 pm

September

- 13 - Open Luncheon - Tour 11 am - Lunch 12 noon
- 14 - Board Meeting - 7 pm
- 17 - Sunday Open House - 2 pm - 4 pm
- 19 - Ladies of Oakland Meeting - 1 pm
- 28 - Ladies of Oakland Afternoon Tea - 1 pm - 3:30 pm

October

- 11 - Open Luncheon - Tour 11 am - Lunch 12 noon
- 12 - Board Meeting - 7 pm
- 15 - Sunday Open House - 2 pm - 4 pm
- 17 - Ladies of Oakland Meeting - 1 pm
- 22 - AHS Membership Meeting
Lunch 12:30 pm, Meeting 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm
- 27 - Party with Poe - 7 pm

November

- 4 - Fall Yard Clean-Up Day - 9 am
- 9 - Board Meeting - 7 pm
- 14 - Open Luncheon - Tour 11 am - Lunch 12 noon
- 21 - Ladies of Oakland Meeting - 1 pm

December

- 2 - Santa House Decorating - 9 am
- 9 & 10 - Santa House - 11 am - 3 pm
- 13 & 14 - Santa House - 9 am - noon
- 16 & 17 - Santa House - 11 am - 3 pm
- 23 - Members Christmas Party - 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm

January 2024

- 6 - Decorations Take Down - 9 am
- 9 - Calendar Planning Meeting - 9 am



RENT A MANSION

*BEAUTIFUL OAKLAND IS AVAILABLE
FOR WEDDINGS, SHOWERS,
ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS AND
OTHER SPECIAL OCCASIONS*

3 hour minimum rental ~ Use one of our caterers

**FOR INFORMATION & RESERVATIONS CALL:
Rosie Miller - (314) 892-3474**

To keep up with what's happening, VISIT US at www.oaklandhousemuseum.org

Also,  at "The Oakland House Museum"

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Oakland-House-Museum-213604058674332/>

Ladies of Oakland Meetings

The Ladies of Oakland meet at 1:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday, from March through November. Refreshments are served, and there is always an interesting speaker or other entertainment.

March 21, 2023 - 1:00 p.m.

Carol Ann Miller - "Sears Roebuck Catalog"

**** April 18, 2023 - 1:00 p.m. ****

Mary Voshage - "Are You Smarter Than a Scam Artist?"
Preceded by Members' Appreciation Luncheon @ 12:00 noon
(Reservations required for this meeting only - see below**)

May 16, 2023 - 1:00 p.m.

Laurene Taylor Shows - "Phyllis Diller"

June 20, 2023 - 12:00 noon

Barbara Kay - "Mary Todd Lincoln"
Salad Luncheon (note earlier time)
Bring your favorite salad or finger food

July 18, 2023 - 1:00 p.m.

Missouri Botanical Garden - "Recycling"

August 15, 2023 - 1:00 p.m.

Barney Bradshaw - "Life & Times of Absalom Grimes"

September 19, 2023 - 1:00 p.m.

Jerry Rabushka - "Cherry & Jerry Ragtime Band"

October 17, 2023 - 1:00 p.m.

Barney Bradshaw - "Witch Trials"

November 21, 2023 - 1:00 p.m.

Dan Fuller - "Riverboat Captains of Bellefontaine Cemetery"

Fun for everyone! Hope to see you there!

Nancy Harmon, President, Ladies of Oakland

**** Members Appreciation Luncheon ****

Tuesday, April 18, 2023 - 12 noon

(Followed by Ladies Meeting @ 1pm - Gents welcome too!)
Reservations Required - Sign up at March Ladies' meeting
or contact Nancy Herndon-Ulrich at (314) 814-4983

??? History Question ???

October History Question:

When did Gravois Road lose the tar and gravel and sport a concrete surface making travel from downtown to the Benoist Mansion less than a full day's travel?

Answer: Gravois Road received the first hard concrete surface in St. Louis County in 1914.

History Question for January:

Many changes were coming fast to the Oakland Estate. Robert Brookings had sold the Benoist Estate for the second time in 1905. Willard E. Winner purchased it for a new purpose other than a private home. What was his plan?

If you think you know the answer, contact
Nancy Herndon-Ulrich at (314) 814-4983 or
historicedzn@aol.com

Our Condolences



Our sympathy, thoughts and prayers go to the following members:

JoAnn Bobring

on the loss of her sister **Dee Holtmann**

Marge Pundmann

on the loss of her husband **Rick Pundmann**

Mary Jane Autry

on the loss of her husband **Charles Autry**

Ingrid Giddings

on the loss of her husband **Jerome Giddings**

And to the family & friends of long time member

Patricia Mohr on her recent passing.

AHS would like to express condolences to members who have recently lost a close family member. To notify us of your loss, please contact Pam at (314) 503-6401 or jpdanklef@aol.com.

Remembering Trudy Seise

We were saddened to learn of the passing of **Trudy Seise**, a devoted Society member and enthusiastic promoter of the Benoist Mansion. Trudy wore many hats at Oakland, willingly taking on any job necessary. She also chaired several Tea and Book Club events and served as President of the Ladies of Oakland. Rest easy, dear friend... and keep an eye on us from above.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome new members

Alice Lottmann

Mary Kay Thrower

Pat Knoerle-Jordan

who joined since the October Oak Leaf. Their addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses will appear in the new 2023 Membership Directory.



**Save the Date for the
Ladies of Oakland
Annual Afternoon Tea
Thursday, September 28, 2023
1:00 - 3:30 p.m.
\$35.00 per person**

(details in the July Oak Leaf)

Thought you'd like to know... After serving in her Oakland apron for many years, **Marilyn Hammon** decided to sell her home and move to Florida to be closer to family. We will miss her smile at meetings, luncheons, and other activities. Farewell, Marilyn - enjoy the sunshine!



This May, AHS will be listed as a registered non-profit organization for the 10th Annual **Give STL Day**. Please keep us in mind for your 2023 charitable giving plans. Watch for details in the April Oak Leaf.



AFFTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY – 2023 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RUNS FROM JANUARY 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31
(DUES ARE CONSIDERED DELINQUENT AFTER FEBRUARY 28 - **RENEW TODAY!**)

There are many members who work tirelessly for the Society - who give of their time as well as their treasure.

In order to accomplish all that they do, they need the financial and emotional support of other members who faithfully pay their dues, buy raffle tickets, bring their friends to Oakland and advocate for AHS in the community.

SO REMEMBER: YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS IMPORTANT... and “MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS PRIVILEGES!”

As a member in good standing, you are:

- Invited as our guest to the annual Members’ Christmas Party.
- Entitled to Open House tours at no charge.
- Invited to the Members Appreciation Luncheon.
- Automatically a member of the Ladies of Oakland and
 - On the mailing list to receive the *Oak Leaf* newsletter each quarter.



So be sure to renew your Society membership today and

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

AHS membership is for a calendar year, Jan 1 - Dec 31 - Dues are considered delinquent February 28.

In order to be included in the 2023 Membership Directory, dues must be received by February 28.

DETACH FORM BY CUTTING ON DOTTED LINES BEFORE COMPLETING & RETURNING WITH PAYMENT



Date _____ Amount Enclosed \$ _____ CHECK CASH
(circle one)

Please mail this form with
your check made payable to:

New Member? [] Yes [] No Renewing Member? [] Yes [] No

Affton Historical Society
P.O. Box 28855, Affton, MO 63123

Any changes in membership information? [] Yes [] No

PLEASE PRINT -

Name E-mail address

Address City State Zip

Phone Publication Preference (circle one)

Home Phone Cell Phone HOME CELL BOTH

Memberships Available:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| [] Individual \$25 | [] George I. Barnett Level \$101 - \$150 | [] Clemence Benoist Faris Level \$501 - \$1,000 |
| [] Couple \$45 | [] Kate Chopin Level \$151 - \$250 | [] Sarah Wilson Benoist Level \$1,001 - \$2,500 |
| [] Father de Smet Level \$46 - \$100 | [] Robert Brookings Level \$251 - \$500 | [] Louis Auguste Benoist Level \$2,501 + |



Members with e-mail addresses: If you have an e-mail address and are not receiving monthly e-mail updates on “Oakland House Museum Happenings,” please contact Pam Danklef at (314) 842-0149, (314) 503-6401 or jpdanklef@aol.com.

Membership Reminders: 2023 dues need to be paid by February 28. if you want your name to appear in the Membership Directory. If you have questions about membership status, or if any personal information is incorrect or needs updating, contact Pam Danklef at (314) 842-0149, (314) 503-6401 or jpdanklef@aol.com

Please Note: Membership information changes will appear in the new 2023 Membership Directory. Watch for it in February!



Many thanks to all the members who renewed their 2023 memberships early - and especially to those who chose to upgrade to a higher level of membership. Remember, all dues money goes toward the upkeep of Oakland House Museum.



VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

www.OAKLANDHOUSEMUSEUM.org