

# The Oak Leaf

A Publication of the AFFTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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### Inserts:

2023 Membership Form \*  
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\* Return under separate cover \*

Membership check payable to AHS  
 and mailed to P.O. Box 28855.  
 Raffle check payable to  
 Ladies of Oakland and  
 mailed to Jackie Thurmond.



## Kate Chopin featured at Ladies' Tea

On September 29<sup>th</sup>, the *Ladies of Oakland* hosted their *Annual Afternoon Tea*, featuring the usual dainty delicacies as well as a very special guest. Donned in period finery, living history performer **Linda Spall** expertly portrayed Victorian author **Kate Chopin**. During Spall's fascinating program, attendees learned about Kate's controversial book, *The Awakening*, as well as her connections to Saint Louis, Oakland House and the Benoist family. We at Oakland never tire of the story of the young **Kate O'Flaherty** who met and courted her future husband **Oscar Chopin**, nephew of **Louis A. Benoist**, right within the walls of our beloved mansion.

To make the event even more of a treat, we were thrilled to welcome as special guests two of Kate's great-granddaughters, **Suzie Chopin** and **Barbara (Chopin) Lucks**. Suzie shared one fact that she finds fitting: if you stand by the grave of Oscar's Uncle Louis, and look a bit to the right, you'll be able to spot Kate's final resting place among the Benoist descendents in Calvary Cemetery.

The event realized an overall profit of \$1,230.00, which included a \$70 donation from Suzie Chopin - thank you! Six lucky winners took home the centerpieces which were created from tea pots donated by **Nancy Harmon** filled with flowers arranged and donated by **Rosie Miller** - thanks so much, ladies. This much-anticipated event would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of many people who organized, decorated, donated and prepared food, and gave countless hours of their time. Thank you to Tea Committee members **Pam Danklef** (Chair), **Rosie Miller**, **Nancy Herndon**, **Lucy Johnson**, **Suzie Slater**, **Dot Huebener** and **Sheila Savka**, as well as to servers **Mary Wells** and **Jean McDaniel**.



Linda Spall  
 portrays  
 Kate Chopin

Members of the  
 Tea Committee  
 are hard at work.  
 From left,  
 Pam Danklef,  
 Dot Huebener,  
 Suzie Slater,  
 Nancy Herndon and  
 Lucy Johnson.  
 Not pictured:  
 Sheila Savka  
 and Rosie Miller,  
 who was behind  
 the camera.



## AHS Fall Membership Meeting

*Sunday, October 23, 2022*

*Luncheon 12:30 p.m. Meeting 1:30-3:30 p.m.*

Bring your favorite side dish and enjoy the company of other members of the Affton Historical Society for a pot luck luncheon with meeting and program to follow. Drinks and desserts are provided. A slate of Executive Board Officers and Directors for 2023 will be presented, and nominations will be accepted from the floor. The program will feature *NiNi Harris* speaking about her book *Oldest St. Louis*.

## Ladies of Oakland Meetings

*Tuesday, October 18, 2022 - 1:00 p.m.*

We'll hold a costume contest, and Speaker *Doug Schneider* will talk about "Haunted Places in St. Louis."

*Tuesday, November 15, 2022 - 1:00 p.m.*

We will install officers for 2023, and the program will feature *Barbara Kay* portraying *Amelia Earhart*.

Refreshments will be served at both meetings.

## Last Open Luncheon of the Year

*Thursday, November 3, 2022*

There's only one open luncheon date left in 2022. It is open to everyone and provides a lovely opportunity to meet up with friends for a special day out or to just treat yourself. House tours, given by a docent in period dress, are at 11:00 a.m., followed by lunch, which is served at noon. The cost is \$22.00 per person and includes the tour. Please make your reservations 2 weeks in advance by calling:

*Jean McDaniel* at (314) 821-7166.

## Fall Lawn Clean-Up Day

*Saturday, November 12, 2022*

Volunteers are needed to spruce up the Oakland House grounds during our Fall Lawn Clean-Up Day. We will start at 9:00 a.m. and will end around 4:00 p.m. Lunch will be provided. Please bring your own rake, yard equipment and gardening gloves. Contact Rosie Miller at (314) 892-3474 for more information.



## !!! Santa Claus is coming to Oakland!

Mark your calendars for the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Affton Historical Society Santa House!

### Weekdays - Reservations are needed

Call Joan Komlos (314) 496-6225  
Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
Wed, Thu & Fri, December 7, 8 & 9

### Weekends - NO reservations needed

Hours: 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Saturday, December 3 & Sunday, December 4  
Saturday, December 10 & Sunday, December 11

For the little ones, each visit includes:

- \* Story Time and Puppet Show
- \* Visit with Santa in the Victorian parlor
- \* A home-baked cookie from Mrs. Claus

Remember to bring your camera and,  
no matter what your age...  
"be good for goodness sake!"

\* Craft items for sale

\* \$6.00 per person - cash, check or cards on Stripe

\* For more information, contact: (314) 814-4983  
or visit: [www.oaklandhousemuseum.org](http://www.oaklandhousemuseum.org)

## Holiday Decorating Help Needed

Help us "deck the halls" of Oakland for the holidays!

*Saturday, November 19, 2022*

We'll start at 9:00 a.m. and stop when finished,  
usually around 4:00 p.m.

Lunch will be served. Questions?

Call Nancy Herndon-Ulrich (314) 814-4983

## Annual Members' Christmas Party

*Saturday, December 17, 2022*

*1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.*

Why not take a break from the holiday hustle and bustle, and join us for the Annual Members' Christmas Party?

Come share good food & drink with your fellow Society members in the festive splendor of Oakland.

Free to all members.

For non-member guests, there is a \$5 charge.

Call Lucy Johnson at (314) 843-6346 for guest reservations.



## Santa House Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed each day of the 2022 Santa House to act as Santa's helper, cookie baker, Santa, Mrs. Claus, line control worker, and more. Workers needed on...

*Weekends: December 3 & 4 and 10 & 11 - 11am-3pm*

*Weekdays: December 7, 8 & 9 - 9am-1pm*

To sign up, or for more information, contact

Joan at [joankomlos@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joankomlos@sbcglobal.net) or 314-496-6225

## Santa's coming to town... in style!

For his arrival to Oakland, the man in red will be swapping out his reindeer for an Affton firetruck. Don't miss Santa's grand entrance at 10:30 a.m. on *Saturday, December 3 & Saturday, December 10*. Many thanks to our friends at the Affton Fire Protection District for arranging these special big rig arrivals!



Many thanks to "shutterbugs"  
Rosie Miller, Shara Storm and  
Nancy Herndon-Ulrich  
who provided photos for this issue.

## Who's Who at Oakland?

### Welcome "new" caretaker Cyndie Ahrens

News flash... a "new/old" caretaker has returned to the mansion. **Cyndie Ahrens** was a previous caretaker at Oakland for 3 ½ years before having to resign for personal reasons about 13 years ago. When she heard we were going to advertise the position, she immediately requested an application and began emptying her current home.

Cyndie left us with a spotless reputation and was enthusiastically recommended for the position when reviewed by our search committee. For some of the more heavy work, she will be ably assisted by her companion **Steve Slayden**. Cyndie and Steve (and pup Lilly Belle) have already moved in and are busily occupied with their duties, even though Cyndie is currently "hobbling" around after partial knee surgery. Be sure to congratulate Cyndie, Steve and Lilly the next time you see them at the mansion.



## A Spooky Society First:

### Join us as we PARTY with POE

Oakland has finally answered the call to host some sort of Halloween season program. The "spook houses" of years past are *nevermore*... our lovely mansion is much too well-restored for that... so instead we'll welcome lovers of **Edgar Allan Poe's** genius of scary stories. After light refreshments and relaxing on the main floor and veranda, the lights will dim. **Anne Williams**, a celebrated stage performer, will dramatically recite several selections of Poe's works from memory. That right, *from memory*, folks! This is a performance not to be missed... plus you have the added bonus of experiencing the mansion at night.



So be sure to mark your calendars to join us for:

**Party with Poe** at the  
**Benoist Oakland House Museum**  
Friday, October 28, 2022 7:00 pm  
Admission: \$10 per person



Please note: Attendees must be over the age of 18 - Younger people may not be able to maintain silence for the one hour program which cannot be interrupted.

## ??? History Question ???

### July History Question:

When was running water brought into Oakland?

**Answer:** Water was brought into Oakland by Robert S. Brookings in 1892. A 265-ft. well was sunk to provide the luxury of running water in the kitchen.

### History Question for October:

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?

If you think you know the answer, contact  
Nancy Herndon-Ulrich at  
(314) 814-4983 or [historicalcdzn@aol.com](mailto:historicalcdzn@aol.com)

## Our Condolences

Our sympathy, thoughts and prayers go to AHS Board Member  
**Steve Slayden**  
on the loss of his mother  
**Lillian Winter**

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 [jpganklef@aol.com](mailto:jpganklef@aol.com).

## Café du Matin - Morning Coffee

Saturday, March 4, 2023 10:00 a.m.

Details in the January *Oak Leaf*

## Annual Afternoon Tea

Thursday, September 28, 2023

Details in the July *Oak Leaf*

## Save the Dates for 2023



### Calendar Meeting

This meeting is to set the dates for the 2023 Event Calendar.

Tuesday, January 3, 2023 10:00 a.m.

## 2022 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*

## 2022 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday  
of each month from  
January through November.

Members are welcome!

Find Us On  
**facebook** 

## Directory Updates:

Please **WELCOME** the following **NEW MEMBERS** and add their contact information to your directory:

**STIRITZ, Mary (Mimi)** ..... 314-322-8480  
12 Wydown Terrace, St. Louis, MO 63105  
mm.stiritz@gmail.com

**MIKLOVIC, Linda** ..... 314-578-0677  
6789 Christopher Drive, St. Louis, MO 63129  
cheerful\_linda@yahoo.com

Please make the following changes and updates to your 2022 Membership Directory

**BELLINGER, Patrick** (new address)  
121 Brighton Way, St. Louis, MO 63105

**KOTTEMANN, Josh & Rhonda** (new address)  
1353 Timberbrook Drive, St. Louis, MO 63122

**REDECKER, Mark & Angie** (new address)  
7453 Grant Village #8, St. Louis, MO 63123

**RING, Paul & Barbara** (new address)  
145 Lanakila Place, Kihei, HI 96753

**SEISE, Trudy** (new address & phone)..... 314-678-8730  
Mary Queen & Mother #174  
7601 Watson Road, St. Louis, MO 63119

### PLEASE NOTE:

If your membership information is incorrect or incomplete, please contact Pam Danklef at (314) 503-6401, (314) 842-0149 or jpdanklef@aol.com

### IMPORTANT:

When contacting Pam Danklef at (314) 503-6401, (314) 842-0149 or jpdanklef@aol.com with a **new address**, be sure to include your **new phone number** as well. This is especially true for those of you who move to retirement communities (Laclede Groves, Bethesda, Cardinal Ritter, etc.) where you receive a new phone number.

**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) 503-6401, (314) 842-0149 or jpdanklef@aol.com.

**REMINDER:** 2022 memberships expire on December 31, and dues are considered delinquent after January 31. Memberships must be renewed February 1 in order to be included in the 2023 Membership Directory, so... **use the enclosed form to renew your membership TODAY!**



AmazonSmile purchases to AHS. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you already know, with the same products, prices and service - but with the added benefit of helping charitable organizations. Support AHS by starting your online shopping at [smile.amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com).

Affton Historical Society

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

Oakland House Museum

## Bits & Pieces



### AHS BAKE-LESS BAKE SALE

*A bake-less bake sale is underway,  
To support the Society - Hip-hip-hooray!  
We're all so busy - we've no time to bake*



*Cookies, pies, donuts... or even a cake.  
And you'd be surprised if you counted the cost,  
Of ingredients, energy and the time you'd have lost.*

*Baking sweet goodies is so much hard work...*

*But none of us wants our duties to shirk.*

*So instead, why not send us the actual price,  
Of a cake or a pie, or of something quite nice?*

*Then without fuss or bother, you'll have done your part  
With a generous spirit and a kind, willing heart.*

*Please drop your donation today in the mail*

*To help us succeed with our bake-less bake sale!*

NOTE: Bake-less bake sale proceeds will help fund House projects such as the purchase of a new storage shed for our tables and chairs. Donations of any amount are gladly accepted, so feel free to give more. And while you're at it, please send your favorite recipe. We are considering compiling a Society cookbook featuring members' favorite foods.

### MAIL DONATIONS TO:

Affton Historical Society - Bake-less Bake Sale  
P.O. Box 28855, Saint Louis, MO 63123



**Reminder: Food Pantry Donations Needed!** At their monthly meetings, the Ladies of Oakland collect food to donate to the Affton Food Pantry. Please consider bringing a donation to every Ladies meeting to help families in need in our community.



**MOVING??** Don't forget to notify us of your new mailing address... and phone number, too, if necessary.



Send your new contact information to:  
Affton Historical Society  
P.O. Box 28855  
St. Louis, MO 63123

### We appreciate your financial support!

#### Many Thanks to deSmet Level Donor:

Alvera Kriegshauser

#### Special Thanks to Chopin Level Donors:

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Morrissey

## Shopping Reminder:

If you do your Christmas shopping on Amazon.com, remember to direct a portion of your purchase to AHS. It's easy. Just sign on at [smile.amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) and register to make Affton Historical Society your charity of choice. Then, every time you shop, be sure to sign in through [smile.amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com). Amazon will donate 0.5% of your eligible

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

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

