



# Columbia Historical Society Newsletter

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**Volume: January 2015**

## President's Message

Written By: Karen Richards, President



If you don't know me yet, then don't worry, I want to meet and get to know each of you over the coming year. I am Karen Richards, and I am your new Columbia Historical Society President.

I humbly take over for longtime former president, Mary Melnyk, who retired from the presidency in December 2014. It was a great pot-luck dinner meeting with a lot of great food and desserts. The society was able to surprise all of our outgoing officers with a well-deserved thank you and sendoff. Jim Hitchcock retired as Recording Secretary and Debi Hitchcock retired as Correspondence Secretary, both of which held their respective offices for several years. I would like to thank them all for donating their time and talents to this organization for so many years.

If you had not already heard, your officers for 2015-2016 are Karen Richards, President; Ken Roth, Vice President; Ronald B. Krisko, Treasurer; Blanche Nemeth, Recording Secretary; and Sharon Waldecker, Correspondence Secretary.

I am excited to work with my new team of officers and directors and lend my help to continue to grow this organization and its membership base, have interesting meeting topics and speakers, have a great 2015 Block House Day event, and begin work on new and interesting additional fundraising events for the society.

You may have noticed two main changes for 2015. One, you are reading this newsletter, which we decided to bring back in quarterly format in both print and electronic format. Two, due to ever increasing costs for running an organization (postage, copying, computer software, etc.), we have decided that dues need to be raised slightly in order to keep up with inflation and cost increases over the past 20 years. We also have different membership levels now including a Student Membership, Lifetime Membership, and Business Membership category. The new Lifetime Membership is a one-time payment where you will special recognition as a Lifetime Member of the society along with no longer receiving a yearly membership renewal request from us along. The Student Membership is more affordable for students 22 and under who are still in school. The Business Membership is for businesses wishing to join and to receive additional special benefits that include advertising in the quarterly newsletter and on the society's website and Facebook sites.

Please feel free to contact us at our new society telephone number (440-879-8188) if you have any questions or requests, or you can also contact us via e-mail, through our website, or on our Facebook page.

If you are interested in sharing your talents, skills, or time with the society, then please let us know, because we can always use more feedback, ideas, and helping hands.

## Upcoming Calendar of Events

Written By: Sharon Waldecker, Correspondence Secretary

02/10/15 – Columbia Historical Society Membership Meeting at 7:00 PM (social time) and 7:30 PM (program) at Columbia Town Hall. Program includes many old photos and trying to identify those in the photos so if you have any old photos, please bring them so we can scan them and try to help identify who is in them. Open to the public.

03/10/15 -- Columbia Historical Society Membership Meeting at 7:00 PM (social time) and 7:30 PM (program) at Columbia Town Hall. Program includes behind the scenes of the Lorain County Public Library (Columbia Branch). Open to the public.

04/14/15 -- Columbia Historical Society Membership Meeting at 7:00 PM (social time) and 7:30 PM (program) at Columbia Town Hall. Program includes how to create Ukrainian Easter eggs and what the various symbols mean. Open to the public.

04/21/15 – Northeastern Ohio Inter-museum Council (NEOIMC) Meeting and Dinner at Whitehall. Program: Columbia Historical Society hosts the NEOIMC members for a tour of the Bronson House Museum and Columbia Block House starting at 5:30 PM, and of Whitehall Columbia starting at 6:30 PM before sharing a meal together at 6:45 PM and then sharing meeting updates from each organization present starting at 7:45 PM. Please bring one can or boxed food item to donate to the Columbia Food Center. Tickets must be purchased ahead of time and will not be sold at the door.

05/12/15 -- Columbia Historical Society Membership Meeting at 7:00 PM (social time) and 7:30 PM (program) at Columbia Town Hall. Program includes: TBD. Open to the public.

07/16/15-07/19/15 – Columbia Community Garage Sale throughout Columbia Township including at the Bronson House Museum. Open to the public.

09/12/15 – Columbia Block House Day event at Lorain County Metro Park's Columbia Reservation. Time and program: TBD. Open to the public.

## 1812 Columbia Block House Project Grant Update

Written By: Ronald B. Krisko, Treasurer

Unfortunately, at this point 8 months after we started to work with the state on releasing our approved \$28,000 in state grant monies for the 1812 Columbia Block House Project, we had hoped to share a positive update with you. Even though we have provided the state with everything that they have asked for, we have yet to have our grant monies transferred to us. Within the next 30 days, we are hopeful that these monies will finally be released to us at which time we will provide you with another update.



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## Treasurer's Update

Written By: Ronald B. Krisko, Treasurer

Over the next few months, I will be working on completing and filing our annual 990 IRS tax return, registration with the State of Ohio, and end-of-year financials to share with the membership so stay tuned for further information as it becomes available. I have already filed and paid the sales tax due to the State of Ohio for 06/01/14-12/31/14. As of 01/01/15, we only had about \$2,216 in all of our accounts so every new membership, renewed membership, book or item sold, or donation really counts.

## Excerpt from We Remember Stories of Columbia Township (Volume 3) Book

Written By: Mary Ellen Jenkins

*1930 to 1980: The Early Years of the Columbia Volunteer Fire Department*

Mrs. Putt told how the Columbia Acme Grange was instrumental in starting the Columbia Fire Department, how Perry Heineman, Grange Master at the time, John Buckley, Forrest Ives and Ralph Linderman formed a committee to "investigate the situation."

In an anonymously written fire department history in the archives of the Columbia Historical Society, which seems to have been written sometime soon after 1980, the genesis of the fire department is recorded. "When fire destroyed the barn at the Tom Armitage farm in 1929 it sparked the formation of the Columbia Volunteer Fire Department." The history goes on to name the early volunteers: twenty-five men dedicated to community service. They were P.W. Heineman, Glenn Beaumont, Clyde Boone, Howard Boone, Laurence Burnett, Leon Cole, Henry Cletzer, Ross Churchward, Russell Fitch, Arthur Goodman, Harold Hales, Herbert Hales, Orlo Hales, Charles Hitchcock, Lyman Hitchcock, Ray Howard, Warren Ives, Leon Ives, Carroll Jones, Ralph Linderman, Lyle Martin, Happy Neff, Leonard Prindle, Hart Wilcox and Huet Hitchcock.

The history continues: On December 20, 1930 a motion to purchase Ford fire apparatus was made and on January 5, 1931 P.W. Heineman was hired as Fire Chief, and Lyman Hitchcock was hired as Assistant Chief. The first fire fighting unit was a used chemical engine purchased from the Berea Fire Department for \$50, and a two-wheel chemical rig was also included in the deal.

The engine had a 40-gallon tank that was filled with a mixture of soda and water. A lead jar filled with sulphuric [sic] acid was placed in the tank and when more pressure was required, at the fire, the lead jar was opened with a system of levers and a pressure of 255 pounds per square inch was created in less than a minute. Since the lead jar had to be hammered by hand, the production of these jars stopped as soon as better equipment was

built. During the following years, other equipment was purchased and built by the firemen.

When the fire department was first formed, the fire equipment was housed in a small garage in back of the town hall. This building still stands and is used today by the road crew to store equipment.

In 1942, the Columbia Township Trustees received inheritance taxes of \$16,000 from the estate of D. P. Osterling, who had owned the Columbia stone quarry where Jacquay Lake Park is now located. This inheritance tax was used to build the present fire station on Rt. 82 and also purchase 16 acres of property adjoining the fire station from the Columbia Park. It was also used to purchase a new 1942 Ford, 500 g.p.m. pumper truck, which was of navy design. Due to the war effort, fire trucks were very scarce.

*Interested in reading more? We Remember Stories of Columbia Township (Volume 3) is available for purchase from the Columbia Historical Society for a nominal price.*

## Technology Update

Written By: Ronald B. Krisko, Treasurer

The society has started to utilize technology more and more like many other non-profit organizations. This includes our website, Facebook page, and e-mail. This year, you will have a chance to let us know if you would like to receive the society's newsletter via e-mail, print, or both. You will also be able to read it on our website. You can choose to receive meeting reminders along with other select society information via e-mail. In order to receive e-mail from us, you have to provide us with your e-mail address on your membership renewal application. You can also "Like" us on Facebook in order to receive Facebook posting updates in your Facebook account. By utilizing and embracing technology, it allows us to better communicate with our members, receive more feedback from our members, and reduce our printing and mailing costs for some items.

## Officers and Board of Directors

Karen Richards, President      Kenneth Roth, Vice President  
Ronald B. Krisko, Treasurer      Blanche Nemeth, Recording Secretary  
Sharon Waldecker, Corresponding Secretary  
Barbara Hitchcock, Director of Technology  
Mary Melnyk, Director of History



**Whitehall**  
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