RICHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

January through April 2026 Newsletter

Historical Museum of Richfield
www.richfieldohiohistoricalsociety.org

Hours of Operation
Open Tuesday & Thursday 9am to 12pm
Also open by appointment and upon request for special occasions - call **(330) 659-0336**

A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Happy 2026 Everyone!

Semiquincentennial (SemiQ) year is here! You're likely aware that 2026 is the 250th anniversary of our country's founding. Your Richfield Historical Society, led by our SemiQ Chair Kitty Butler, has many events scheduled for 2026! There are other articles in this newsletter outlining the events and dates for this celebration. Mark your calendars and hold on. It's going to be an amazing year!

As I write this, we are in the midst of a facelift for the Museum. New siding, new windows and better insulation will provide a more enjoyable location for Historical Society events. Consider renewing your membership so you will be the first to learn about all the exciting events planned for the new year.

Another project being worked on is the accessioning of display items in the Museum. Accessioning is defined as, "The formal, legal process of accepting objects into a permanent collection, involving documentation of ownership (provenance), assigning a unique accession number, describing the item, and committing to its long-term care as a public trust." The magnitude of this task is MONUMENTAL! The number of items in the Museum may well exceed 100,000! As an example, we have in our possession over 250 'insulators' from phone lines and electrical wires. Each item gets its own number and description which are then cataloged. The accession books will be filled in and filed for reference. The total number of file books could at the very least be SEVERAL HUNDRED BOOKS! Once this task is completed and the books are numbered, I will inform you -- in a future President's letter – of the total number of books and items. I can't even hazard a guess as to that number!

Hope to see you at the Museum.

Paul Swan, President

RICHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE

The Richfield Historical Society will be awarding a $500 scholarship to one graduating high school senior who is a resident of Richfield or who volunteers at the Richfield Historical Society's Museum -- and who best demonstrates that he/she "has a sincere interest in learning about history as well as helping to preserve and promote curiosity about it." Applicants are required to provide an essay of between 500 to 1,500 words about the importance of preserving local history. Deadline for submission is April 10, and the recipient will be announced at the May 26 Revere High School Senior Awards Assembly. Applications are available through the Revere High School guidance department or by contacting Karen Smik at kls1650@roadrunner.com.This is the thirteenth year for our scholarship program – and each year has generated excellent candidates as well as very thought-provoking essays.

SOCIETY SEEKING NEW ACCOUNTANT

After many years of service, our accountant announced she is cutting back on her workload. If you, or someone you know, would be interested in working with us, please contact RHS Treasurer Regina Taussig at (330) 888-3101 for details about our finances and nonprofit IRS/State of Ohio filing requirements.

TAKEMEBACK SERIES PRESENTATIONS --HELPING TO COMMEMORATE OUR COUNTRY'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY

On **Tuesday, April 14, 7-8 p.m.,** at Fellowship Hall (3903 Broadview Road), we'll learn about the **Underground Railroad** from **Kathy Dean-Dielman,** Commissioner of America 250-Ohio Organization and co-chair of their Untold Stories Committee.

On **Tuesday, May 19, 7-8 p.m.,** at Fellowship Hall, **Carl Quatraro** (of Speaking on Q) will present **"Traitor – The Tragic Tale of Benedict Arnold"**.

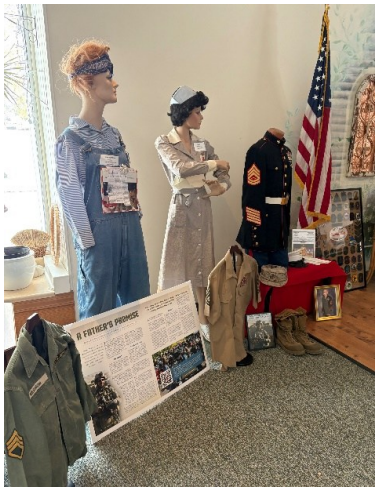
On **Tuesday, June 30, 7-8 p.m.,** at Fellowship Hall, **Dale Fellows** (with "We Made History" Presidential Living Historians) will present in full character "**George Washington and the Constitution**".

You'll learn about ***TakeMeBack*** presentations scheduled for the rest of the year in our next newsletter.

All talks are free, open to all interested individuals, and no advance registration is required.

A BIG THANK YOU TO THE RICHFIELD SENIOR CENTER

We've been busy at the Museum moving display cases north, south, east and west to accommodate the installation of new windows. We were wondering how to do our display for Veterans Day and are very thankful that the Richfield Senior Center allowed us some space. We estimate that over 100 people were able to view the display, and we got lots of positive feedback from everyone. Volunteers really did a great job moving all the uniforms, in a very respectful manner, from one building to another – and back again. We were also able to move all of our fragile glass lanterns there, which made a wonderful exhibit in their large display case!



CABIN FEVER TOUR RETURNS IN MARCH!

To help support local businesses and institutions, the Richfield Historical Society is holding its annual **Cabin Fever Tour** on **Saturday, March 21, 2026**. Created in 2009, it continues to be a popular event which offers individuals the opportunity to escape their winter doldrums and visit treasure houses of local history, art, antiques, cuisine, gardening, gift items, home furnishings and much more in the communities of Richfield, Hinckley, and Peninsula. The Museum will be open from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. that day and will hold a special drawing for a gift basket. Detailed information about all tour participants -- including their location, hours, and any special promotions they'll be offering on March 21 – will be posted online at richfieldohiohistoricalsociety.org and shared via email blasts.

Patronizing independent shops spares us the big box store experience, and dollars spent locally are more likely to stay within the community! For additional information, call the Richfield Historical Society at 330-659-0336.

Thank you to the following for supporting the Richfield Historical Society through your generous gifts:

Preservationist ($500.00 and up)

Village of Richfield

Sandy & Pat Norris *"250 for 25" donor*

Roger & Gwen Rains "*250 for 25" donor*

Jeff & Regina Taussig

Reggie Taussig "*250 for 25" donor*

Douglas Wisneski *in honor of Ellen Wisnieski Lazecko and in memory of Walter & Mildred Wisnieski*

Jon & Joan Wolf *in honor of Linda Fleming*

Curator ($100.00-$499.00)

Kitty Butler

Richard & Linda Fleming *in memory of Drew Gentner*

Dwayne & Cathy Gentner *in memory of Drew Gentner*

Steven Gerbasi

Mike & Sharon Hargrove

Scott Luther *in memory of Helen & Rudolph Luther*

Angie Remen

Peter Schueler

Karen Smik *in memory of Louise (Waltz) Patterson and Gerald Waltz / in memory of Drew Gentner*

Archivist ($50.00-$99.00)

Dean E. Davis

Patricia Healey *in memory of Ken & Evelyn Swan*

Richard Jandrey *in memory of Regina Jandrey*

Joann Martinak *in memory of Jerry & Jeff Martinak*

Roy Richardson

Mary M. Ryan *in memory of Richfield Elementary School on Rt 303*

Historian ($25.00-$49.00)

Bethel Church Membership

David & Karen Butera

Linda Corsi "*250 for 25" donor*

Judy Heit *in memory of Richfield Elementary School on Rt 303*

Don Laubacher

Roy Richardson

Tricia & Ethan Steiner

Rose Marie Torma

Researcher (any amount under $25.00)

Linda Wilhelm Murr *in memory of deceased classmates of Revere High Class of 1961*

Sheila Schreiner

David Stetz

Chris Sweet *in honor of the Eastwood & Vowles Family*

RICHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February to April 2026
John Brown educational video
Bath Elementary School

February 2026 – April 2026
Ten-site Local Historical Tour
Bath Elementary School

March 2026
250th USA Anniversary Display
Richfield Library

March 21, 2026
Cabin Fever Tour
Pick up a participating vendor map at Museum to support local businesses!

Spring 2026
Burma Shave-style signs
Bath Elementary School

April to October 2026
Historical Event Banners
Revere High School Stadium

April 14, 2026, 7:00 PM
TakeMeBack program
"The Underground Railroad"
Fellowship Hall

April 2026
Barns of Richfield Township & Village Driving Survey
Contact the Historical Society (330) 659-0336

April 18, 2026, 4:00 PM
Paul Revere Ride
Historic District

May 19, 2026, 7:00 PM
T*akeMeBack* program
"Traitor – The Tragic Tale of Benedict Arnold"
Fellowship Hall

May 25, 2026, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Memorial Day Open House
Richfield Historical Society Museum

May 27, 2026 , 6:30 PM
250th USA Anniversary Parade
Revere Middle School to Richfield Elementary School

June 2026
Annual Membership Meeting
Date and Time TBD

June 6, 2026, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Richfield Community Garage Sale
Sponsored by Richfield Civic Organization
Supported by The Richfield Times
Richfield Historical Society Museum

June 13, 2026, 11:00 AM– 4:00 PM
Richfield Historical Society Garden Tour and Plant Sale
Begin at Richfield Historical Society Museum

June 30, 2026, 7:00 PM
TakeMeBack program
"George Washington and the Constitution"
Washington is portrayed by Dale Fellows of We Made History
Fellowship Hall

July 4 2026, 9:00 AM to Noon
Patriot's Wall of Fame
American Revolutionary Exhibit and Presentation
Richfield Historical Society Museum

July 14, 2026, 7:00 PM
Akron Symphonic Winds Concert
Pavilion on the Green

July 28, 2026, 7:00 PM
TakeMeBack program
"Ohio Battles of the Revolutionary War"
Richfield Historical Society Museum

August 9, 2026, 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Picket Fence Art Show / Richfield Community Day
Richfield Woods Park

August 2026
TakeMeBack program
Fellowship Hall – Date and Time TBD

September 2026
TakeMeBack program
Fellowship Hall – Date and Time TBD

October 4, 2026, 1:00 PM
October History Walk
Revere High School actor portraying John Farnam, Revolutionary War Veteran
Fairview Cemetery

October 11, 2026, 1:00 PM
October History Walk
Revere High School Actor portraying Elijah Welton, Revolutionary War Veteran
West Richfield Cemetery

October 18, 2026, 1:00 PM
October History Walk
Walking route TBD

October 25, 2026, 1:00 PM
October History Walk
Walking route TBD

October 2026
TakeMeBack program
Fellowship Hall – Date and Time TBD

November 11, 2026, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Veteran's Day Military Uniform Exhibit
Richfield Historical Society Museum

December 2026
Wreaths Across America
Ohio Western Reserve National Cemetery
The Society will gladly place a wreath for Richfield veterans

John Brown: The Dulcimer Diaries
Musical and Theatrical Production
Provided to the Senior Class of Revere High School and the Richfield and Bath Communities - *Grant pending*

DID YOU KNOW ...

From www.history.com

Why Did Early Humans First Use Fire?

The control of **fire** was a critical element of early humans' survival and evolution. But how was it first used? While researchers have long proposed that early humans used fire to cook meat, some now argue they may have harnessed it mainly to smoke meat and to scare away animals.By calculating how much energy was gained by cooking meat on early fires, researchers determined that it was not worth the energy to build and maintain the fire for cooking alone. Instead, by smoking the meat, early humans could have ensured they could eat it for longer.

"When you hunt a big animal, you're getting about a million calories," explains Miki Ben-Dor, a paleoanthropologist at Israel's Tel Aviv University who authored the May 2025 study in the journal Frontiers in Nutrition. "And you could use it for quite some time—weeks, maybe—if you preserve it so you don't lose all of these calories."

Scientists have hypothesized that early humans started using fire about one million years ago. Some scientists suggest fire was first used even earlier by Homo erectus, who lived in Africa up to 1.9 million years ago—although studies suggest Homo erectus only "gathered" flames at the edges of wildfires and had no knowledge of making it with sticks and flints. Ben-Dor argues early humans may have started using fire to smoke meat as far back as one million years ago. This would predate not only our own human species, Homo sapiens, but also the Neanderthals and Denisovans before us.

December's Hidden Origins

The month's name comes from the Latin word "**decem**," meaning 10, as it was originally the 10th month in the Roman calendar. It became the 12th month under the Gregorian calendar and was extended to 31 days under the Julian calendar. December also marks the winter solstice in the Northern Hemisphere, typically around December 21-22, which marks the shortest day of the year. The full moon in December is known as the cold moon, a name derived from the Mohawk nation, whose traditional territory straddles the U.S.-Canada border. According to The Farmers' Almanac, other Native American tribes called it the "moon of the popping trees," "drift clearing moon" or "snow moon."

December traditions often trace back to ancient celebrations like Saturnalia, an ancient Roman festival that inspired many Christian customs. Saturnalia halted work, closed schools, and suspended many social norms, as people decorated their homes in greenery, feasted, played music and gave gifts.

Another midwinter pagan festival, Yule, or Jól, was celebrated by Vikings during the winter solstice. Rooted in pre-Christian traditions, Yule involved honoring the dead, with rituals such as feasting, drinking, making horse sacrifices and oath-swearing. And, as if you needed another event to add to your December calendar, take note that December 12 is Poinsettia Day (recognized by the U.S. House in 2002); December 15 is Bill of Rights Day, established by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1941; and December 26 is National Candy Cane Day, celebrating the season's beloved red-and-white striped treat.

Astronomically, December is home to the Geminid meteor shower, one of the year's most active meteor displays. Known for their green fireballs, the Geminids' meteors travel a super-speedy 78,000 miles per hour, with their radiant point (the spot in the sky from which they appear to originate) in the Gemini constellation, according to NASA.

In December 1965, astronauts aboard Gemini 6 played "Jingle Bells," making it the first song broadcast from space. While appropriate for the holiday season, it was a prank: After reporting a supposed unidentified object to Mission Control, Wally Schirra and Tom Stafford surprised everyone by performing the tune with a harmonica and sleigh bells they had secretly brought aboard.

In other December musical history, it was December 25, 1896, when John Philip Sousa came up with the iconic march "Stars and Stripes Forever." According to the U.S. Marine Corps, he was heading back to America from Europe on a steamer when inspiration hit.

MORE "DID YOU KNOW..."

The Failed 1846 Amendment That Tried to Contain Slavery

As the United States grew and expanded into new territories throughout the early to mid-19th century, divisions also deepened. At the heart of those divisions lay the issue of slavery. In 1846, a Pennsylvania representative named **David Wilmot** proposed legislation intended to bar slavery's expansion into the lands acquired after the Mexican-American War. Wilmot wasn't an abolitionist or an advocate for slavery. He and those affiliated with him, as members of the Free Soil Party, weren't fighting to preserve or abolish slavery. They were content to let slavery persist, however they wanted to prevent it from spreading as America expanded into new territory. Wilmot and those aligned with him wanted to create and preserve economic opportunities for white citizens.

The Wilmot Proviso failed to pass—and debate over the proposal exacerbated North-South tensions. The Wilmot Proviso was dead in three days. It passed twice in the U.S. House of Representatives where Northerners had the majority. But it failed in the U.S. Senate where there was an equal amount of support for the free states and the slave states. President James Polk's "Appropriation to Secure Peace Bill" passed in early 1847 without Wilmot's Proviso. in August of 1846, President Polk had put forward a special appropriations bill to ask Congress for $2,000,000 to acquire territory from Mexico as part of peace negotiations after the Mexican-American War, Wilmot's Proviso sought to keep slavery from expanding into any of that newly obtained land.

Although the Wilmot Proviso of 1846 didn't pass with Polk's appropriations bill, it still left a lasting legacy. The proposed amendment's purpose was simple and straightforward: slavery and involuntary servitude would be banned forever in all territories acquired as a result of the Mexican-American War. The only exception (much like in the 13th Amendment) would be unpaid labor as punishment for a crime.

The similarity in the wording of those two documents is not coincidental. The 13th Amendment borrowed some of its language from the Wilmot Proviso, which in turn took some of its language from the Northwest Ordinance of 1787.

Although Wilmot's Proviso failed by itself, it fueled volatile division and debate between the Northern and Southern states over slavery and ultimately made the Civil War more inevitable. It also spurred on the creation of the Republican Party because, as Boyd explains, "the Republican party was the culmination of this anti-slavery, abolitionist, but also mostly Free Soil rhetoric."

The Wilmot Proviso highlighted competing economic interests that inflamed North-South tensions around the topic of slavery, pushed the country closer to the Civil War, and continued to divide America well after the ratification of the 13th Amendment.

In Memory of

The Society lost a long-time member in October – **Helen Jean Marshall**. Helen and her husband Don were named Richfield's Citizens of the Year in 2001 because of their decades of volunteerism in the community. We are saddened by Helen's passing. She will most certainly be missed.

HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF RICHFIELD

RICHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

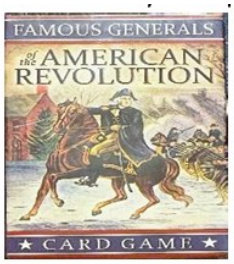
P.O. Box 215, 3907 Broadview Road, Richfield OH 44286
(330) 659-0336 www.richfieldohiohistoricalsociety.org

2026 Membership Application

Richfield Historical Society inc.
@RichfieldOHHistoricalS...

Dear Members and Friends of the Richfield Historical Society:

We are looking forward to all of our events celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States! We want to thank you for your support of these events. We continue to fundraise for everything we are planning! We are sendin out a calendar of events for 2026 in our newsletter so you can save all the dates. We have restocked our T-shirts so be sure to stop by and pick yours up ($20 in sizes S-M-



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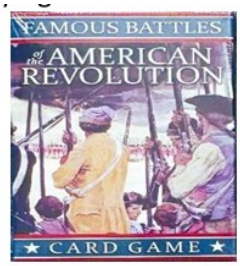

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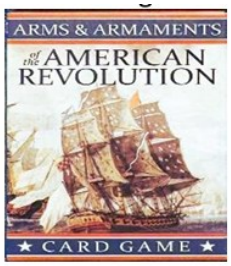

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DECK 4

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MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

$15 _____ INDIVIDUAL **$20 _____ FAMILY** **$5 _____ STUDENT**

$100 _____ BUSINESS **$150 _____ LIFETIME**

DONATIONS - PLEASE CONSIDER A DONATION IN ADDITION TO YOUR DUES

****Please check here if you would like the donation incentive gifts_____**

☐ $25-$49 HISTORIAN — Revolutionary War Playing Cards (1 deck) - Deck #_____

☐ $50-$99 ARCHIVIST — Revolutionary War Playing Cards (2 decks) - Deck #____ #_____

☐ $100-$499 CURATOR — Revolutionary War Playing Cards (3 decks) - Deck #____ #_____ #_____

☐ $500+ PRESERVATIONIST — Revolutionary War Playing Cards all four decks of cards and Green Bicentennial Throw

☐ UNDER $25 RESEARCHER

Please designate your donation in honor or in memory of: _____

NAME: _____

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HOME PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____

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SEND MY RHS NEWSLETTER VIA: _____MAIL _____EMAIL _____TEXT

IF PAYING BY CHECK, SEND COMPLETED FORM AND CHECK TO: RICHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY, PO BOX 215 RICHFIELD OH 44286

IF PAYING BY VENMO, TEXT A PICTURE OF YOUR COMPLETED MEMBERSHIP FORM TO (330) 888-3101

The Old Town Hall pictured in 1968 when it served as the Richfield Branch of the Akron-Summit County Public Library. The building was originally built around 1883 and is currently home to the Richfield Historical Society and Museum. It is undergoing a major facelift with new siding and windows being installed this winter.

Find us on: facebook

Find us on Facebook at
Historical Museum of Richfield, Ohio

The Richfield Historical Society Board of Trustees meets the first Monday of each month at the museum housed in the Old Town Hall.

The museum is open from 9:00 am to noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays and at various points during the year for special events. Please watch our website for news on the building's renovation which may interrupt our meeting and programming locations.

Follow our Facebook page or visit our website at **richfieldohiohistoricalsociety.org** to learn about upcoming events and more about the Society.

RICHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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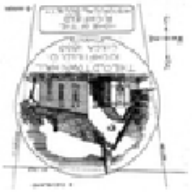

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