

# The Network

Spring 2024

## Announcements



Welcome to our new Oviatt House newsletter! We chose the newsletter name, *The Network*, as a way to celebrate the inclusion of the Oviatt house on the National Park Service's Network to Freedom. Our intent is to publish a newsletter quarterly. We hope you enjoy the new format!

## Volunteer Spotlight



Clive Fetzer

Oviatt House is grateful to highlight the contributions of volunteer Clive Fetzer, who was interviewed for this first edition of our Volunteer Spotlight.

**When did you first become involved with Oviatt House?** *For a number of years, the historic Oviatt house was left abandoned and greatly neglected. The prospect of successfully restoring the 1836 homestead seemed unlikely. I became involved with the project in April of 2022 when I began to see earnest activity taking place by dedicated volunteers in need of additional dedicated volunteers. My involvement is something I have never regretted.*

**What inspired you to become involved with the Oviatt House project?** *My inspiration to become involved and stay involved for as many years as will be required, came from the people with whom I am volunteering. It became immediately apparent that the men and women of Oviatt House, Inc. believed in what they were doing. They had a vision of what Oviatt House could once more become. They were and are dedicated to preserving the heritage and history of the Oviatt family and their ties to the Underground Railroad. Their vision became my vision, their commitment, my commitment.*

**What do you enjoy most about volunteering at Oviatt House?** *What I enjoy most about volunteering at Oviatt House is that I can witness progress taking place. I enjoy that every day is different and presents new skills to be learned. I enjoy the guidance and fellowship I receive from the people I work with. For anyone thinking of volunteering, you couldn't ask for a better crew.*

**What skills and talents help you the most while volunteering?** *Showing up at the Oviatt House with relatively few skills and talents, I think I benefitted most from my ability to listen, and my willingness to learn. I am not certain I have developed any talents, but I have learned a lot of skills. If I have talents, they would be to enjoy the people I work with, enjoy doing something worthwhile, and taking an interest in the history we are bringing back to life from an abandoned shell of a house.*

**What would you like the supporters of Oviatt House to know about your background?** *I believe that the most important thing for people to know about my background is that I had no background. I showed up with a hammer, and the crew put me to work, teaching me everything I know today about restoration and reconstruction. Professionally, I worked as a sterile processing tech in the OR at the Cleveland Clinic. Today I am a volunteer, still learning and honing my skills at the Oviatt House. What this tells me is that anyone can follow their vision and dedicate themselves to something meaningful that can benefit from their willingness to learn.*

**When not volunteering, what do you like to do?** *I like hiking, photography, birdwatching, studying the biodiversity of the plant and animal kingdoms, and walking my dog, Echo. So, for me all of those things come together at the Richfield Heritage Preserve. When I am not at the Oviatt House, I am frequently somewhere in the park pursuing my interests, and enjoying the changes which each season brings to the historic property that I know well.*

**Thank you Clive for your dedication to Oviatt House!**

# Restoration Front



Over the winter months, a small but dedicated crew has been working hard at a number of jobs at the Oviatt house. Much time has been spent tediously stripping away the layers of paint from doors and trim. Additionally, several key areas were prepared to showcase the construction techniques common in 1836. In the back room, a space was framed out to create the beginning of a storage closet. On the second floor, several areas with damaged floor boards were repaired with century-old flooring that was generously donated to us! All small steps toward our larger restoration goal!



Volunteer and Museum Development Committee Member Cathy Berlo works tediously stripping away layers of paint from an original piece of trim.

## Museum Development

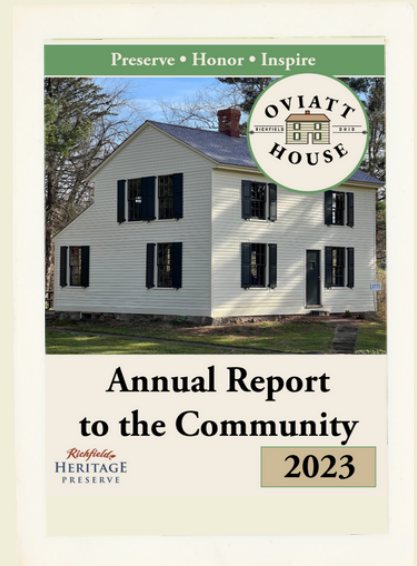
Thanks to a grant from the Network to Freedom and Association for the Study of the African American Life and History, funded by the 400 Years of African American History Commission, we are collecting historical information to compile a Reference Library that will be used as the foundational framework for exhibit planning. The grant covers research related costs and includes a stipend for University of Akron student interns enrolled in the Museum and Archives Certificate Program. We have made a lot of progress and work with our first intern is almost complete!



# 2023 Annual Report Released

In case you missed it, our third annual 2023 Annual Report to the Community was released. Check it out [here](#).

We made a lot of progress to the exterior in 2023, but we still have a long way to go to reach our restoration and museum goals! Please consider [donating](#) today.



## Join our Team!

Are you interested in fundraising, grant writing, and/or event planning? Oviatt House is seeking volunteers to serve on our Fundraising Committee. Please email us at [oviatthouse1836@gmail.com](mailto:oviatthouse1836@gmail.com) to join the fun!

## Save the Date!



Save the date for **Saturday, May 11, 2024** from **11:00 am - 3:00 pm** for our 2nd annual **May Day Celebration**. Join us for a fun-filled day of house tours and kids crafts and activities.

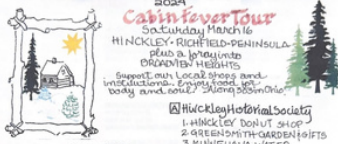
Follow our [Events](#) page for more information and links to our partner events hosted by the [Richfield Heritage Preserve](#), the [Friends of the Richfield Heritage Preserve](#), and the [Richfield Historical Society](#) or click on the event graphic.

We hope to see you soon!

# Upcoming Partner Events



## Cabin Fever Tour Saturday, March 16



- 2024 Cabin Fever Tour**  
Saturday March 16  
HINCKLEY-RICHFIELD-PENINSULA  
ROADS & LOCATIONS  
ORDANBY HEIGHTS
- Support our LOCAL shops and businesses. Enjoy the views and enjoy the ride!
- Hinckley Historical Society
  - Hinckley Donut Shop
  - Green Smith Garden Gifts
  - Minnehaha Water
  - Northern Dazez Salon
  - Richfield Historical Society
  - Richfield Branch Library
  - Olivia's Tavern
  - Greenwood Tenture
  - Richfield Branch Library
  - 7 RICHFIELD DR. DRAGAGEWOODS
  - COUNTY OF CLEVELAND
  - TRANSITIONAL DESIGN
  - DIFFERENT BRANCHES
  - ENERGY WELLNESS-UP
  - STONE HOUSE DOWN
  - SOMERVILLE'S ANTIQUE
  - CARTER MANOR
  - POLKA DOT DISHES
  - P.O.C. PIEROGI MARKET
  - STITCHES AND STYLISH
  - CLAYTON (ICE CREAM)
  - Peninsula Library
  - Cuyahoga Valley Museum
  - Peninsula Light Gallery
  - Peninsula Light Academy
  - Peninsula Light Academy
  - PURDIEBON FARMHOUSE

**SATURDAY MAR 16**  
2:00-4:00  
MEET BY THE LODGE  
**FRIENDS LET'S SEE WHAT'S HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT HIKE**

Join the Friends of Richfield Heritage Preserve (RHFP) for a "Let's See What's Hiding in Plain Sight" hike on Saturday, March 16, 2024, from 2-4 pm. James McCracken - a nature photographer whose passion is to capture the beauty and power of the natural world - will lead the hike and show attendees how to photograph nature scenes and objects in nature along the way. He's been photographing our world since his teen years and is interested in all things nature - woods, waterfalls, landscapes, gardens, and more. Look to bring a camera. This free hike will be held rain or shine so dress for the weather. Suitable hiking footwear and a reusable water bottle are recommended. Activities will meet by The Lodge.

MEET HERE: <https://www.richfieldheritagepreserve.org>  
REGISTER AND FRIENDS OF RHFP FOR EVENT UPDATES: <https://www.richfieldheritagepreserve.org>

Thanks to our sponsors:

**TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE PARK**  
Richfield HERITAGE PRESERVE

**MONDAY, APRIL 8TH ~ 1-4 PM**  
@ AMITY LAWN & THE LODGE

Solar Eclipse glasses will be available for purchase

**BURGERS & HOT DOGS, MUSIC, KID'S CRAFTS, FACE PAINTING & MORE!**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT SUSAN AT [VOLUNTEER-INFO@RHFP.ORG](mailto:VOLUNTEER-INFO@RHFP.ORG)



## "Growing Up Cleveland: Barnaby, Captain Penny, and Ghoulardi" Wednesday, April 10 at 7:00 pm



## "Black Friday - October 10, 1916" Wednesday, May 29 at 7:00 pm

HINCKLEY	CONTINUED	RICHFIELD (CONTINUED)	PENINSULA
BRIDGEMAN GARDEN ART SHOP 100 ROCK ROAD OPEN 10 AM TO 5 PM 0216 278 7112	DESSERT BREADS AND BUNS 405 STEVENSON RD OPEN 10 AM TO 5 PM 0216 278 7112	STONE & SAGE 410 STEVENSON RD OPEN 10 AM TO 5 PM 0216 278 7112	CONTEMPORARY HOME DECOR 170 WEST LAMAR STREET OPEN 10 AM TO 5 PM 0216 278 7112
BRIDGEMAN GARDEN ART SHOP 100 ROCK ROAD OPEN 10 AM TO 5 PM 0216 278 7112	DESSERT BREADS AND BUNS 405 STEVENSON RD OPEN 10 AM TO 5 PM 0216 278 7112	STONE & SAGE 410 STEVENSON RD OPEN 10 AM TO 5 PM 0216 278 7112	CONTEMPORARY HOME DECOR 170 WEST LAMAR STREET OPEN 10 AM TO 5 PM 0216 278 7112
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**2nd Annual Goat Derby & Craft Fair**

Richfield HERITAGE PRESERVE

**May 4, 2024**  
Amity Lawn

GOAT RACES, LIVE MUSIC, FOOD TRUCKS AND MORE

Thank you for being a part of



[oviathouse1836.com](http://oviathouse1836.com)

