Sam Thomas’ Legacy Lives On At Locust Grove  
by Gwynne Tuell Potts, HLG Board President

Although Sam established the Jefferson County Archives office, worked at The Filson Historical Society and the Mary and Barry Bingham Sr. Fund, and authored a score of books, those of us at Locust Grove thought of him primarily as ours. For more than 50 years, he patiently answered the same questions of a succession of directors and volunteers who relied upon his memory to provide details of Locust Grove’s restoration.

Sam was drafted to create the first “museum” room on the top floor of the Croghan house, and volunteered his expertise to help pull together the museum displays in the 1992 Visitors’ Center. He was at the center of negotiations to acquire George Rogers Clark’s 1812 sword and, for 50 years, was the heart of most discussions concerning interior and exterior preservation measures throughout our site.

Perhaps most importantly, Sam’s research set the standard for our museum. Sam expected the interpretation, programs, grounds, staff, and even the store to reflect the critical standards introduced during the restoration and meticulously employed in each of his subsequent projects.

Our museum has been fortunate in many of its leaders and supporters. But all who served and most of what was accomplished here were influenced by Sam’s work and his point of view — just as he, of course, was impacted by his experience at Locust Grove. There isn’t a museum press release or tour that does not contain information first uncovered by Sam. And in full circle, it was entirely appropriate that he chose this place for the gathering of those who cared for and admired him to exchange tears and laughter in his memory.

Former Historic Locust Grove advisor, Sharon Receveur, told The Courier-Journal that Sam “gave legs” to all Louisville’s historians. He did the same for Locust Grove.
The loss of Sam Thomas has made us even more aware of the legacy he left us in the area of historical research.

Besides his published and unpublished research on Clark and the Crogans, Sam generously left part of his research library to Locust Grove. This research will form the nucleus of our plan to establish a small archive in the Visitor Center and expand our capacity to develop rich narratives of life in the early republic.

Documentary historical research forms the basis of our interpretations. It’s how we know what Clark thought about his expeditions, what land William Croghan purchased (and his preference for coffee at all times of day), the names and ages of the enslaved who were emancipated, and even what Eliza Croghan felt about going away to boarding school (she cried).

But other sorts of research are equally important for a historical site. Recently, we had the benefit of the microscopic chemical research of Matthew Mosca to tell us that the house’s hallway was painted a brilliant verdigris and that wallpaper covered the walls of many rooms of the house. This kind of information, newly possible, allows an accuracy that was not available when the house was originally restored.

Architectural research on the grounds gives us information not only on the Crogan family’s life here, such as exactly the kind of imported porcelain dishes used to serve dinner, but also about the lives of the slaves in small cabins on the grounds. The research also reminds us of the native Americans who hunted and camped on this very spot for generations before the settlers came down the Ohio. The results of current research and archaeological surveys will improve and sharpen our ability to tell these stories.

This summer students from Indiana University Southeast undertook another sort of study — of our 30 acres of woods. This area, to the north and east of the buildings, has grown to replace the open fields of 18 acres. In 1987, he began the Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants — a unique nursery to preserve historic and Jefferson-related garden plants.

A reception with wine and hors d’oeuvres follows the lecture. Tickets are $20 for the general public, $15 for Friends of Locust Grove. Special patron tickets at $75 will include in a tour of Locust Grove’s gardens and grounds with Mr. Hatch at 5:00 p.m. before the lecture. Reservations are now being accepted. Please call Locust Grove at (502) 897-9845 to purchase your ticket.

This event is partially supported by a generous gift from the estate of long-time Locust Grove volunteer Marguerite Beauty. Thank you.
Ron Adkisson Named 2012 Kentucky History Teacher of the Year

Ron Adkisson — one of Locust Grove’s veteran costumed interpreters — has been honored as Kentucky’s 2012 History Teacher of the Year. Ron’s “commitment and creativity to getting students interested in history” was cited as the deciding factor in determining the winner. Here Ron speaks about his teaching methods:

GG: What is the relevance of teaching history to today’s students? Ron: History is still history. It is a story of the past. We all know that if we refuse to learn from the past, we are condemned to repeat it. Unfortunately, many students have had the study of history forced on them. It frequently is taught by professors/teachers who possess all of the answers — with the role of the student being to come in and benefit from the expertise of the teacher.

“Come in, sit down, be quiet, and don’t ask any questions,” the students are told. Taught in this manner, the story of our past becomes a long list of meaningless dates, events, and people. It’s no wonder so many people hate history!

This view of the study of history is what I’ve diligently tried to change. I stress — on the first day of school — that history is important. I give my students examples of why/how learning from our mistakes is important. After that brief lesson, every single moment is spent trying to help students relive the past. I tell the students and parents that we aren’t really going to study history, we are going to ‘Do’ history.

I believe that learning not only can be fun, it should be fun — especially the study of history. There are so many exciting stories and events to be explored. I firmly believe that all students can and will grow to appreciate our past and have the desire to preserve our precious heritage of history is taught in engaging manner.

GG: What are some of the activities you’ve created to bring history to life in your classroom? Ron: My students participate in several big projects each year, during which they are required to dress up in some type of “period attire.” We begin the year with a mock trial of Christopher Columbus. Some people in the community don’t like this one because they think people hate history!

This is probably the most memorable activity of the year for my students. When I bump into former students, they always want to know if I am still doing the Oregon Trail, and always have some story of the tragic events that they “encountered” on their simulated trip west.

To finish the year if time allows, Cheryl becomes Harriet Beecher Stowe and I am William Booth Taliaferro. These two historical characters engage in a spirited debate on slavery and the upcoming Civil War in America.

GG: What is the value of learning — and understanding — history? Ron: What’s really important is that the life of our Republic lies in the hands of each new generation of citizens. We are always only one generation away from losing what we have. Many of our founding fathers understood that the only way our country would ever survive was if the people were educated.

It’s my goal to teach my students their rights — but more importantly, to help them understand their responsibility. Democracy requires active participation!

Engage in a vigorous debate on whether the Colonies should declare independence or not. Before the kids’ Town Meeting, Cheryl and I transform my room into the parlor of George and Elizabeth Wright from Williamsburg, Va., in December of 1775. (Wright was Thomas Jefferson’s revered friend and tutor and a signer of the Declaration of Independence.) The room is candlelit and filled with artifacts from the time period. As the Wrights, we lead the kids through the events that are bringing us up to war with England.

In the spring as we start our unit on the Oregon Trail, my room is again transformed — this time into a general store in Independence, Mo., in 1849. We love to hear the kids gasp as they walk into the room for the first time and see the displays that we have created. Cheryl and I now are Elizabeth and Thomas Jefferson Yandell, owners of a general store at the head of the Oregon Trail.

This time, the students go through a wagon-loading activity as an introduction to the Oregon Trail Simulation that they will be doing for the next week. This is probably the most memorable activity of the year for my students. When I bump into former students, they always want to know if I am still doing the Oregon Trail, and always have some story of the tragic events that they “encountered” on their simulated trip west.

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Ron Adkisson and his wife Cheryl as owners of a general store in Independence, Mo., in 1849.

CHAMBER MUSIC SEASON TICKETS STILL AVAILABLE

The Emile Strong Smith Chamber Music Series allows you to experience music much as the Croghans and Clarks would have. Refreshments are served in the house at 5:00 p.m., the concerts begin at 5:30 p.m. in the second-floor Great Parlor. In addition to the four concerts this season, we’ll have a special fifth concert in April featuring the Kentucky Center Chamber Players. This concert is included at no extra cost for subscribers; individual tickets will be $20. Even though the October concert has passed, subscriptions still are available:

Patron, $100
Supporter, $50
Season Subscriber, $65.
Individual concert tickets are $20 each.

Call (502) 897-9845 for information or to purchase season tickets.

2012–2013 Emile Strong Smith Chamber Music Series

Christmas Pastoral
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 5:30 PM
Since Biblical times, shepherds and their flocks of sheep have been a central part of the Christmas story. The Locust Grove Chamber Players take you on a musical journey inspired by the shepherds of Europe and early America — including Silent Night in its original choral version, played on Locust Grove’s 1806 Broadwood fortepiano.

Piano Trios on the Locust Grove Broadwood
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2013, 5:30 PM
Early Music Specialist Bill Bauer leads a program of delightful piano trios by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Joseph Bouligne.

The Plucked Corde
SUNDAY, MARCH 24, 2013, 5:30 PM
Harpischord virtuoso Dr. Charles Metz returns to Locust Grove with his 1700s-era Italian pentagonal Italian Virginal, ancestral to the Florence maker Francesco Poggi. Locust Grove favorite Dr. Jeffrey Noonan joins Dr. Metz for a concert of music for the virginal and lute.

Romantic Chamber Music
SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 2013, 5 PM
In this Emile Strong Smith Chamber Music Series bonus concert, The Kentucky Center Chamber Players perform music by Claude de Boëuf, Porphyrie, and Brahms. This concert will be held in the Audubon Room of the Visitors’ Center. Please note that this concert starts a half-hour earlier than the other Chamber Music concerts.
Enrollment/Renewal from July 16, through October 15, 2012

We hereby “THANK YOU” to ALL of those people who recently J OINED OR RENEWED their MEMBERSHIPS, and to ALL of our LOYAL FRIENDS of LOCUST GROVE. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A FRIEND, PLEASE GO ONLINE TO WWW.LOCUSTGROVE.ORG, OR CALL US AT (502) 897-9845 FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND DETAILS.

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Jadine Anderson
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Bill & Bonnie Kagler
Julie & Kevin Larkin
Robert Logan

In Memoriam

Mary Lou Brock
Connie Guthrie
Samuel W. Thomas

We note with sadness the recent deaths of these members of Locust Grove family. We treasure their generous contributions to Locust Grove of their time, energy, support, and enthusiasm. Thank you.

In Memory of Mary Lou Brock
Byron Thurpe
Linda Thayer
Deborah Thomas
Ellen Timmons
Del Marie Vaccaro
James & Elizabeth Violes
Louise R. Wall
Scott & Anne Waters
Madeline Warner
Charles & Frances Wirth
Paula & Mike Wolf

In Memory of Mary Richard Allen
Mr. & Mrs. Robinson Beard
Edith S. Brubaker
Mr. & Mrs. G. Barrett Bernsle
Linda & Gordon Galden
Carol L. & David Dock
Mr. & Mrs. LaMar Gaston Jr.
Sandra
Mr. & Mrs. William Hancock Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley MacEachron
Mr. & Mrs. Samuel G. Miller
Eileen O’Leary & Scott Tudor
Mr. & Mrs. Douglas H. Owen Jr.
Joanne Owen
Gwynne Potts
Judy Rees
Ann Sanderlin
Louise Schumclan
Diane Stager
Mr. & Mrs. R. E. Sutherland
Mr. & Mrs. Preston Thomas
Lowery W. Wakinks Jr.
Theresa L. Westly

Thank You!

Sincere thanks go to GE Appliance and Robert Posthauser, GM Home Depot Sales and Marketing, for the generous donation of a French Door refrigerator to Historic Locust Grove. It is great to see such community involvement! See this and other exciting GE Appliance products at www.GEAppliances.com

Federal/Regency Era Costuming
SATURDAY, JAN. 19, 11 AM
Locust Grove and the Greater Louisville Jane Austen Society of North America (JASNA) will sponsor a free workshop on Federal/Regency era dress (late 18th and early 19th century). It will be led by Bonny Wise, regional coordinator of JASNA, and Maria Clements, JASNA member, reenactor, and theatre costumer — both of whom have been making Regency costumes for many years.

You’ll learn about pattern and fabric selection, inspiration and purchasing resources, measurement techniques — covering day, evening wear and accessories for men and women. This workshop is free for anyone interested in Regency attire — especially to wear to Locust Grove’s Historical Ball next week. It will be held on Saturday, February 16 to the Sixth Annual Jane Austen Festival in June. Light refreshments will be served.

Please RSVP to Locust Grove at (502) 897-9845. For more information, contact Robert Posthauser or Bonny Wise at wisew@globe.com

Thank You!

Friends of Locust Grove
To: Our Recent Donors

Thank you for your generous donation of time, energy, and financial contributions to Historic Locust Grove.

Donations received from July 16, through October 15, 2012

Many thanks to the hundreds of people who support Historic Locust Grove through various kinds of donations. We depend upon and deeply appreciate your generosity in making our enterprise a success.

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Mr. & Mrs. R. E. Sutherland
Mr. & Mrs. Preston Thomas
Lowery W. Wakinks Jr.
Theresa L. Westly

In Memory of 2012 Antiques Markets
Nina Ayers
Underwriting of 2012 Antiques Markets
The Antique Market at Distillery Commons
Crescent Hill Trail Company
Dorby Antiques Mall
Dorsey House Antiques & Mercantile
Dreamirk Art Craft Galleries
19th Century Modern
Judd & Karen Facts
Andrew Gullatt Antiques, LLC
Goodall’s Pearcy House Antiques
Nashum Antiques & Fine Art
The Ruby Rooster Antiques & Collectibles
Oakleigh Antiques
Steve Tipton, Antiquarian
Underwriting of 2012 Card Book Sales
Jeanne and John Vonka

2013 Winter Activities

Celebrate winter with a dance for all ages! Dress in period clothes from the era of your choice — from ancient Rome to Elizabethan, from the Revolutionary and Civil War periods to the 20th century. A live band will play music from various periods — with special instruction in some of the 19th century dances. Light refreshments will be available for purchase.

Space is limited and reservations are required.
Cost: $24 per person; $20 for Friends of Locust Grove and children 13 years of age and younger. Reservations will be accepted beginning December.
Co-sponsored by the Louisville Chapter of the Jane Austen Society of North America

Historical Ball
SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 7 PM – 10 PM

Celebrate winter with a dance for all ages! Dress in period clothes from the era of your choice — from ancient Rome to Elizabethan, from the Revolutionary and Civil War periods to the 20th century. A live band will play music from various periods — with special instruction in some of the 19th century dances. Light refreshments will be available for purchase.

Space is limited and reservations are required.
Cost: $24 per person; $20 for Friends of Locust Grove and children 13 years of age and younger. Reservations will be accepted beginning December.
Co-sponsored by the Louisville Chapter of the Jane Austen Society of North America

Spirit Award Winner: Claudia Rungue

Eastern Jefferson County, Claudia joined the Kentucky Department of Education in 1994 to help develop educational standards. That work led to her becoming involved at HLG. Claudia has served on the HLG’s Board of Directors for several terms and has now as member and as chair. She works as many special events as she can fit into her schedule, and really loves her new duties as a docent.
“I have enjoyed the opportunity to introduce visitors to Locust Grove,” Claudia says. “I feel so privileged each time I get to tell them about the people and events that make Locust Grove so special.”

Claudia adds that she is “inspired by the numerous volunteers who give much of their time as well as their talents and treasures to this organization.

“Like many of our Locust Grove volunteers, I love this place. When I enter the Visitors’ Center or walk up to the house, the hustle and bustle of daily living seems to slip away. Locust Grove is a lovely, peaceful property, rich in the history of our community and our state.”

HLG Board President Gwynne Potts says that there’s nothing Claudia cannot do. “Her contributions are characterized by thoughtfulness, preparation, enthusiasm, kindness, and a great sense of humor,” Gwynne says. “Every time I see her, I smile.”

Adds Program Director Mary Beth Williams, “Claudia’s dedication to improving the interpretation of our site and her educational expertise is invaluable to all of us here at Locust Grove.”

Weaving Workshop
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 10AM – 4PM

Create small woven projects while learning basic weaving techniques in this two-day workshop. A weaver from Louisville’s Little Louisville House will lead participants as they create small items on Lut Tat’s “Little Looms.” Cost includes supplies and the use of the Little Looms. Bring your lunch, scissors, and wear comfortable shoes! Class size is small, so space is very limited. $50

Miniatures Workshop
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 10AM – 4PM

Learn to knit or refresh your skills at this knitting class from Locust Grove Education Coordinator and long-time knitter Diane Statler. You’ll learn several patterns and techniques. if you create a scarf. Please bring a pair of size 8 knitting needles, a cable hook, a skein of worsted-weight yarn, and your lunch. $35

Knitting Workshop
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 10AM – 3PM

Learn to knit or refresh your skills at this knitting class from Locust Grove Education Coordinator and long-time knitter Diane Statler. You’ll learn several patterns and techniques. if you create a scarf. Please bring a pair of size 8 knitting needles, a cable hook, a skein of worsted-weight yarn, and your lunch. $35

GROVE GAZETTE
Candlelight Tours

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7, 5:30 PM — 9 PM
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8, 4 PM — 9 PM

The candles cast soft shadows on the decorations as Clark and Croghan family members greet their guests. Mantels and stairs are draped with fresh greens, while fruited arrangements grace tables and window sills. Music and dancing keep the spirits alive in the Grand Parlor upstairs — where everyone is welcome to join in. In the kitchen, the cook directs the preparation of desserts for the guests, taking time to chat with visitors entering her warm space.

In the Visitors’ Center Audubon Room, music and refreshments await all. Children are invited to create holiday crafts that the Croghan children might have made. Everyone can shop for gifts in the Museum Store and browse for that special present at the Holiday Book Fair. Admission is $6 for adults, $3 for children 12 years and under — with a maximum cost of $18 for the entire family.