

HISTORIC LOCUST GROVE GROVE GAZETTE



School Tours Help Students 'Walk in the Footsteps of History'

The big yellow buses pull up to the steps of the Visitors' Center about 10 a.m. The children emerge, talking and laughing and in constant motion. They calm down enough to watch a film about the people and events that shaped Locust Grove over the past 200 years.

And then they start their journey through history — walking in the footsteps of three Presidents of the United States, two famous explorers, a world-renowned artist, and all the people who lived and worked at Locust Grove.

"Educating our community's youth is one of the most important things we can do as a museum," says Locust Grove Curator of Collections and Education **Mary Beth Williams**. "Understanding the past is key to creating a better future for us all. By learning about the struggles our predecessors faced and the often-difficult conditions under which they lived, our student-visitors can better understand how our society, our city, and our country developed."

Visiting a house museum in particular can bring to life the people who lived and worked there. "With reconstructed outbuildings and 55 acres of fields, gardens, and woods, students receive a full sensory experience of history," Mary Beth adds.

✿ Students can **stand** in the rooms where George Rogers Clark lived, Lewis and Clark dined, the Audubons slept, and the children played.

✿ They can **hear** reminiscences of William Croghan in the dining room, of Lucy Croghan's advice to her daughters, and



enlarged workers sharing stories as they put their children to sleep.

✿ They can **smell** the smoke in the woodshop as the carpenter repairs yet another wooden spoon for the cook or shows how logs were hand-sawn into boards.

✿ They can **see** the difficulty of cooking over a hearth fire and **taste** cornbread that

would have been made by the enslaved cook using corn that would have been grown on the farm.

Life on the frontier was difficult — especially for the enslaved population who lived and worked at Locust Grove.

"While we can't take the students back in time, our docents do a great job of bringing the past to life," says Mary Beth. "A little imagination on their part helps students see the livestock in the fields, the neatly planted crops, and the people who

kept the farm running and the house in shape. With those insights, students can start to get a picture of what life was like before electricity, plumbing, hospitals, telephones, computers, and video games."

An average of 3,500–4,000 students each year have visited Locust Grove on field trips. They come from schools in Jefferson County and neighboring counties in Kentucky and Indiana.

"Obviously, we could not give all these tours without our invaluable docents," Mary Beth adds. "Our docents are amazing, not only for the hundreds of hours they dedicate to educating our community's youth, but for the energy and passion for history that they pass on to the next generation."



Photos top to bottom:

Curator of Collections and Education **Mary Beth Williams** in George Rogers Clark's room

Docent **Nancy Lee** with her group from Sacred Heart Model School.

Education Assistant and docent **Diane Statler** in the Hearth Kitchen

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The mission of Historic Locust Grove is to preserve and interpret the remaining 55-acres of William Croghan's estate, Locust Grove, with its circa 1792 house, outbuildings, collection and grounds as examples of early 19th-century frontier America, and to share the stories of the many people who contributed to the history of the site, emphasizing the experiences of George Rogers Clark, Revolutionary War hero and founder of Louisville.

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Director's Letter Carol Ely, Ph.D., *Executive Director – Historic Locust Grove*

As I write this on a 7-degree January day, our decision to cancel Locust Grove tours entirely in January makes so much sense!

Last winter we hosted only 153 visitors in January — most of them arriving with one school group on a single day — while in July we had more than 6,000 people come for tours, programs, and rental events.

This is the year that we begin putting our resources where our visitors are — or, more accurately if ungrammatically, “when” our visitors are. We’ve shifted our hours. For the summer months, from Memorial Day to Labor Day, we’ll be open until 5:30 p.m. — giving visitors an extra hour to make the trip out to Locust Grove.

And then, on Thursday evenings this summer, we’ll stay open even later with a special event or program each week — featuring food and drink with performances, workshops, tastings, special tours, and other festive experiences. Many of these will involve new partnerships with community organizations and allow more people to enjoy the beauty of our gardens and its historic setting in the summer twilight.

We’re very excited about our growing partnership with Kentucky Shakespeare. Last December’s presentation of *Macbeth* by candlelight in the Great Parlor delighted an audience that packed the room’s 60 seats. If you missed it, you’ll have another chance to experience a 17th century play in an 18th century room on Thursday, March 19. That’s when the Kentucky Shakespeare players will return with a presentation of *Hamlet* in the Great Parlor. And then, the full production of *Macbeth* will play out on Locust Grove’s grounds on Sunday, May 17.

In our own neighborhood, we’re pleased to work this year with our friends at the WaterWorks Museum just down River Road on a collaborative school program offering a visit to both sites. After years of being alone out here in the East End, another museum joins us! (*See story, page 5.*)

Other changes coming this year —

✿ Your favorite Gardeners’ Fair on the second weekend in May will have a few new features, including more of an emphasis on the revived interest in food gardening, and demonstrations and short how-to and hands-on activities in the vendor areas. Perhaps visiting chickens?

✿ So many people loved our free Fourth of July last year that it will be even bigger this year. We’ll continue with a with a strong Independence Day program theme, including reenactments and readings of the Declaration of Independence throughout the day.

✿ Also this summer, we’ll be presenting an alternative to July’s usual Jane Austen Festival. That incredibly popular event has been deferred until 2016 due to our partner JASNA’s hosting of the national Jane Austen convention in October. Locust Grove’s event will invite you to join us for a costumed picnic on the grounds while participating as wedding guests in a re-creation of the 1822 marriage ceremony of Ann Croghan and Thomas Jesup. For Austen fans, Kentucky Shakespeare will present a reading of some of Austen’s *Juvenilia* — her early and very funny works.

These changes to the “when” and “what” and “who” reflect our thinking about our audiences over the last few years. The physical changes proposed by the new Master Plan will take longer, but the big shift in our programs has already begun.

Thanks for your part in making 2015 into another great year!

First Wednesday Lecture Series

Our lecture series offers a variety of interesting speakers and unusual topics that relate to the lives of the Croghans, Clarks, and the region. Lectures are held on the first Wednesday of each month, except for January and May. Desserts and beverages are served at 1:00 p.m., with the lecture immediately following. Admission is \$5, or \$3 for Friends of Locust Grove.



The Very Rich and Scandalous Miss Croghan

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 1 PM

A biography of Mary Elizabeth Croghan Schenley would read like a shocking and adventure-filled soap opera. She was born at Locust Grove — the daughter of William Croghan Jr. and his wife, Mary O’Hara. They all returned to Pittsburgh, her mother’s hometown, where young Miss Croghan spent most of her youth. But at age 15, she eloped to England with a 43-year old captain in the British Army, Edward Schenley — rumored to be an illegitimate grandson of King George III. The ensuing scandal filled newspapers in the U.S. And that’s just the beginning. Join long-time Locust Grove leader and author **Gwynne Potts** to hear the juicy details of the Scandalous Miss Croghan.

‘What I Saw at Cane Ridge’

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 1 PM

Take a journey back to August 1801 to see how Kentucky was transformed from a lawless frontier population to a church-going state. Find out what drew more than 20,000 people (including Kentucky’s governor) to Cane Ridge to a week-long revival. First-person interpreter **Eddie Price** describes what happened in those fire-lit groves and cane-covered hills during what many contend to be “the pioneering event in the history of frontier camp meetings in America.”



March Used Book Sale

FRIDAY—SUNDAY, MARCH 6—8 MEMBERS’ PREVIEW SALE, MARCH 5 (*See details on back cover.*)



Kentucky Shakespeare: ‘Hamlet’ By Candlelight

THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 7 PM

“This above all: to thine own self be true.”

“Something’s rotten in the state of Denmark.”

“To be, or not to be: that is the question.”



Relish those familiar lines as you experience a chamber theatre reading of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* by candlelight in Locust Grove’s Great Parlor. This 90-minute version of one of Shakespeare’s most-beloved plays will be performed by members of Kentucky Shakespeare.

The group’s event in December was a sell out! So call now to reserve your seat for *Hamlet* — (502) 897-9845. Tickets: \$20 (\$15 for Friends of Locust Grove.) Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for light refreshments before the show. Seating is limited to 60 people. **Reservations are required.**

18th Century Thunder — A Revolutionary War Encampment

SATURDAY, APRIL 12 AND SUNDAY, APRIL 13 10 AM — 4:30 PM BOTH DAYS

It’s “Thunder Weekend” 18th-century style at Locust Grove — commemorating the arrival of Revolutionary War troops in 1778 commanded by Louisville’s founder and Locust Grove resident George Rogers Clark.

At 18th Century Thunder, you can talk to the soldier-reenactors and their families, learn about battle tactics, and participate in a wreath-laying ceremony honoring General Clark, complete with a 21-gun salute.

You can chat with the women in the hearth kitchen making food for some of the troops, and hear from the doctor about how he’d pull teeth, remove musket balls from victims, and see all the medicines and tools in his kit. Kids are encouraged to sign up as “soldiers” when the troops call for recruits. Concessions will be available.

SPECIAL PRICING! Admission: \$4 for adults; children 12 and under are free.

Emilie Strong Smith Chamber Music Series

This series of chamber music concerts offers concertgoers a unique opportunity to experience the music that the Clarks and Croghans would have heard in the room where they most likely would have enjoyed it — Locust Grove’s Great Parlor on the second floor of the historic house. Light refreshments at 5:00 p.m. on the first floor; concert begins upstairs at 5:30 p.m. Individual concerts are \$20 each.

Moscow on the Seine

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 5:30 PM

The Locust Grove Chamber Musicians present a program of French and Russian chamber music from the time of the Napoleonic wars.

Ayers and Arias From the 17th Century

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 5:30 PM

Such Sweete Melodie presents music of Merula, Schmelzer, Monteverdi, and Campion.

Guests, Interpreters Have Fun at Christmastide

Christmastide fun began the day after Thanksgiving as 10 of Locust Grove's first-person interpreters donned layer after layer of clothing under their period dress to be a part of the "Light Up Louisville" parade that ushers in the Christmas season.



"We were occasionally mistaken for the cast of 'A Christmas Carol,' laughs **Brian Cushing** (far left in photo above), Locust Grove's program coordinator. "But we took every opportunity to tell folks who we were portraying and encouraging people to attend Christmastide."

That next Friday and Saturday, Christmastide took over Locust Grove. The 1816 setting — in the historic house and its hearth kitchen — featured the Croghans, Clarks, and other family and friends gathering for a party at Locust Grove. Visitors from the 21st century were the guests at the party.

The 1816 characters spent time on all three floors of the house, interacting with all their guests. A fiddler roamed the paths outside, continuing to play and creating a magical welcome. The cook prepared foods authentic to the period and offered recipes for the guests to try at home. The 2014 guests described their experience as "beautiful," "exciting," and "more festive and enthusiastic than ever before," much to the delight of the 1816 characters.

"We want to give guests what you can't find in a history book — a living experience of the past that's accurate in every detail possible," adds Brian. "We hope we did."



Shakespeare Comes to Locust Grove

Locust Grove's Master Plan calls for more use of arts in the interpretation of the historic site. Kentucky Shakespeare is committed to historical performances and has a strong interest in community partnerships and outreach.

Locust Grove already has partnered with Kentucky Shakespeare for a summer camp. "And so, when **Brian Cushing** [Locust Grove's program coordinator] and I reached out to Kentucky Shakespeare's Education Director **Kyle Ware** — the ideas just flew," says **Carol Ely**, HLG's executive director.

The first partnership productions are an exploration of chamber theatre, with play readings in the Great Parlor of the historic house. **Macbeth** was a sell-out in December; **Hamlet** is on the schedule for March. "We've also talked about the possibilities of using the grounds as a performance space — with our gardens, hills, woods, and historic buildings as the setting," Carol says.

Kentucky Shakespeare shares Locust Grove's interest in the ways that theatre was presented in the past — not just in Shakespeare's time but afterwards. It has crafted performances using other literature of the past.

"When we mentioned this summer's Jane Austen alternative festival event, they were enthusiastic about bringing her works into their repertoire," Carol says. "We're going a little beyond our traditional mission in search of ways to attract new audiences and expand the concept of what a museum can or should be as a community resource."

"Kentucky Shakespeare has been reaching out into the community more this year, too," adds Carol. "There are so many possibilities to this partnership. To me, it's analogous to our chamber music concerts. We don't know exactly what the Croghans listened to, but the music we play was part of their experience of culture. As was Shakespeare."

"The Master Plan states that in the Croghans' day Locust Grove was a center of intellectual and cultural life in Louisville," she continues. "And it can be again. So that's what we're exploring. It's going to be an exciting partnership."

Locust Grove and Water Tower Museum To Offer Joint Field Trip for Schools

Locust Grove's **Mary Beth Williams**, curator of collections and education, and the Louisville Water Tower Park's **Channa Newman**, education program specialist, have developed a unique program that allows schools to visit two great sites in one day.



"Our proximity to each other, to the Ohio River, and to the importance of water at both sites are key elements in our programs," says Mary Beth. "Our sites are so close to each other and time away from classrooms is so limited these days. So we wanted teachers to be able to bring students to both of our sites in as convenient and productive manner as possible."

Louisville developed as a city because of the Falls of the Ohio. The Ohio River was the transportation of the 1800s. William Croghan operated a ferry boat from Locust Grove's riverbank across to Indiana. He also shipped goods to New Orleans via the Ohio and Mississippi rivers.

In its early days, Louisville was a most unhealthy place, earning the nickname "Graveyard of the West" due to its standing water and streams, a breeding ground for diseases. Only with the advent of the Louisville Water Company and clean water did the health of the community begin to improve.

Students will visit Locust Grove in the morning — learning about its history and people. "When we have a combo tour, our docents will put even more emphasis on the daily use of water at Locust Grove — hauling it from the well, dealing with chamber pots and wash basins, using cold spring water as a precursor for refrigeration," explains Mary Beth.

In the afternoon at the Water Tower Park, students will learn how the Louisville Water Company's clean water system made life so much better for citizens and helped to spur growth of the city and area.

The joint field trip will be \$7 per student, free for teachers, and \$11 per additional adult, with a maximum of 65 students. The joint tours will start this spring.

Spirit Award Winners: Lynn Swetnam Boone

What began as a, "Sure, I'll help get it started" has become a big part of the volunteer hours spent at Locust Grove by this quarter's Spirit Award Winner, **Lynn Swetnam Boone**.

That event she helped start back in March 2005 — Locust Grove's first Used Book Sale — has grown into a twice-yearly fundraiser that is now one of Locust Grove's top events. The first sale saw a then-amazing \$4,000 in sales. Last August's Used Book Sale brought in more than \$26,000!

Lynn always says that Locust Grove's Used Book Sales depend upon a core group of book sale volunteers without whom the sales would not succeed. But a great deal of credit goes to Lynn.

"She organizes the book sale volunteers, helps sort books during the year, and works long hours during the sales," points out Locust Grove Curator of Collections and Education, **Mary Beth Williams**.

Early on, Lynn also recruited some professional book dealers to volunteer their expertise in helping separate the \$1 and \$2 book donations from those of greater value.

"That smart move on Lynn's part — and the tireless vigilance of book professionals like **Charles Bartman** and **Harvey Venier** — has been a huge factor in the growth and popularity of our book sales," add Mary Beth.

With more than 30 years of service, Lynn is one of the longest-serving volunteers

at Locust Grove. Over the years, she's portrayed family members during the former Candlelight Tours, worked in the old gift shop, been a spinner during school field trips, and even rolled beeswax candles that used to be sold in the Museum Store.

Now, along with her many hours of work on the book sales, Lynn also gives tours on



a regular basis to walk-in visitors, helps out with a multitude of school tours and special events, and provides baked goods for First Wednesday Lectures and other special events.

Lynn developed her enthusiasm for Locust Grove from her mother, Mary Jane Swetnam, who also volunteered at Locust Grove for many years. Even while Lynn still was teaching high school

history and humanities, she volunteered during the summers as a docent.

"When I retired in 1997, Locust Grove became a part of my life," Lynn says. "I was able to spend a lot more time here — much to my delight."

"Meeting visitors and sharing this fantastic part of Kentucky's history is wonderful," she adds. "And I love it when I see some of my former students here with their children."

Lynn's husband **Bob** also is a part of Locust Grove's family — starting as a docent and then accepting a part-time job as one of Locust Grove's weekend managers, as well. "We both are so lucky to be a part of this marvelous community," Lynn adds with a huge smile.

**Ric Cusick —
A Great Friend of Locust Grove**

Locust Grove will miss **Robert “Ric” Cusick**, who died this past November. Ric served on Locust Grove’s Advisory Board for the past few years after a long association with the site that included service as the President of the Board of Regents (as our governing Board was then known).

He recently served as a member of our Master Plan Committee, helping us take the long view of our stewardship of Locust Grove. Ric’s interest in the history of arms and armaments was useful when we needed a courier to bring the George Rogers Clark sword, donated by Croghan descendents in California, back home to Kentucky. Ric hand-carried the (well-wrapped) sword onto a commercial airliner and charmed the pilots into inviting him to ride in the plane’s cockpit with them.

His generosity with his time and expertise was legendary. Locust Grove staff member **Brian Cushing** remembered Ric on Locust Grove’s Facebook page:

“Going to miss this fellow; never got to know him as well as I had hoped to. My most direct experience with him was when we began realizing that something wasn’t quite adding up about the story that had always been told about George Croghan’s sword at Locust Grove. It was he who came to the rescue with an enormous bag of reference material. We went through everything for a good hour or two. I was flattered that, with all of his experience, he still seemed to care what I had to say. It was a really amazing morning for me. It seems like all he did was help other people. We all will miss him very much.”

In Memoriam

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

- ◀ William H. Baker ▶
- ◀ Robert “Ric” Cusick ▶
- ◀ Jackie Johnson ▶
- ◀ Douglas Pope ▶

Enrollment/Renewal from Sept. 16 through Dec. 31, 2014

A HEARTY “THANK YOU” TO ALL OF THESE PEOPLE WHO RECENTLY JOINED OR RENEWED THEIR MEMBERSHIPS, AND TO ALL OF OUR LONGTIME 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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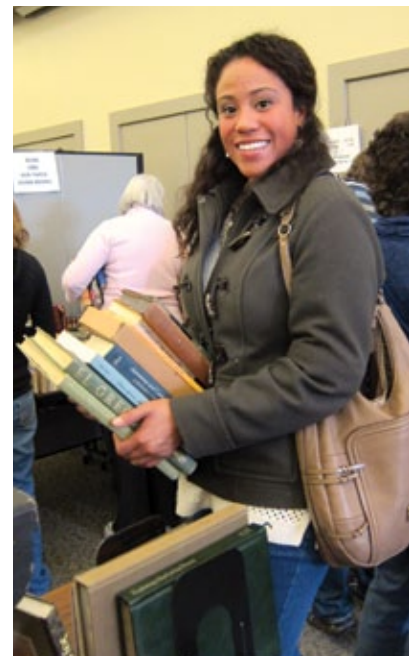
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