

GROVE GAZETTE

Historic Locust Grove

561 Blankenbaker Lane

Louisville, KY 40207

(502) 897-9845

www.locustgrove.org



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Mary Lou Johnston — Spirit Award Winner



Spirit Award winner **Mary Lou “Lulu” Johnston** has been a devoted Locust Grove volunteer for four years. She started in the garden pulling weeds. After learning that she was actually pulling out flowers, she decided that she knew grass better. So she bought a push mower for Locust Grove, and ever since, Mary Lou can be found keeping our grass in order.

She does all sorts of jobs around the grounds, as well as parking cars at events, taking admissions at the gate, and always spreading laughter and cheer. Staff member **John Moses** who works with Mary Lou says, “No matter the task, Lulu is always willing to help. She knows what needs to be done and makes it happen.”

Mary Lou has retired a few times but still works in sales for the BellSouth Real Yellow Pages.

At the start of the Lewis & Clark Bicentennial celebration in 2003, Mary Lou decided to create a photo documentary of the entire Bicentennial Trail. For the next three years, she took photos at national Lewis & Clark bicentennial celebrations across the country, from Missouri to Montana.

Fellow Locust Grove volunteer **Nancy Winston**

accompanied Lulu on an off-road excursion of the LoLo Pass between Montana and Idaho. Nancy survived the voyage, often clinging to the door handle as Lulu drove up snowy paths with great drop-offs on either side. Lulu is fond of Nancy’s quote — “I never realized what a sheltered life I’ve lived until I traveled with Mary Lou.”

She assembled her photo documentary with the help of many Locust Grove volunteers and local historians, including **Jim Holmberg** of the Filson Historical Society and the late **Walter J. “Chip” Karcheski**, curator at the Frazier International History Museum.

Mary Lou is now selling her documentary and is giving all proceeds to Historic Locust Grove. It is available in the Museum Store.

Thank you, Mary Lou, for your generosity, dedication and enthusiasm.



Yearly Events Mark Your Calendars!

Afternoon Lecture Series

1:00 p.m. – the first Wednesday of the month (except January and May).

Used Book Sale

Great book bargains to support Locust Grove’s programs — held the second weekend in March.

‘18th Century Thunder’

Our Revolutionary War Encampment — held the Saturday and Sunday of “Thunder Weekend” in April.

Gardeners’ Fair

Friday, Saturday, Sunday — held the second weekend in May.

Mothers’ Day Brunch

Sunday during the Gardeners’ Fair. *Reservations required.*

Antiques Markets

Held on the last Sundays in June and in September.

18th Century Market Fair

Held Saturday and Sunday on the last weekend in October.

Holiday Candlelight Tours

Costumed interpreters from 1820 in the house and kitchen on the second weekend in December.

Used Book Sale, March 9, 10, 11



Locust Grove's third annual Used Book Sale is just around the corner.

We'll have thousands of books in all categories — from history and art to fiction and mysteries — plus children's and antiquarian books, audiobooks and more.

But to be successful, we need *your* books! We'll accept books in good condition, including paperbacks and hardcovers, as well as DVDs, cassettes, videotapes, and audiobooks. *Please, no textbooks or magazines.*

Drop off books at Locust Grove during our hours, seven days a week. If you need to have books picked up, just call 897-9845. All donations are tax-deductible. Just ask us for a receipt.

Proceeds support Historic Locust Grove's education and preservation programs.

Members-Only Preview Party
Friday, March 9, 5-7:30 p.m.
(Memberships available at the door)

Public Sales:
Sat. and Sun., March 10-11
10 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.
Sunday, 2-4:30 p.m. — \$5 per bag

From The Director's Desk

Carol Ely, PhD., *Executive Director*

Locust Grove is proud to be bucking a national trend.

Across the nation, according to *The New York Times* and national museum organizations, historic house museums are in decline. Some are closing entirely or being sold into private hands. All struggle to attract new audiences.

But here at Locust Grove, we saw our attendance go up by 9 percent during the fiscal year that ended in June 2006. And this year so far, our visitors have increased by more than 40 percent. Much of this increase has come, not through traditional guided tours, but through special programs.

We've been able to attract a core group of repeat visitors, such as the audience for our popular lecture series — often close to a capacity crowd, and on a Wednesday afternoon!

We have offered successful weekend and evening programs that have drawn new audiences, such as our recent blockbuster Lewis and Clark Homecoming events this past fall.

Thanks to enthusiastic underwriters in 2006, we were able to offer some of our programs free of charge, and we saw the numbers grow.

Now the Board and staff will be taking a fresh look at how we present our site to the public — what programs we offer, when, and what experiences our visitors can take away with them . . . experiences that will

encourage those visitors to return and to tell their friends about Locust Grove.

It is a challenge, but very exciting to be able to build on the strengths and quality of Locust Grove — our amazing volunteers, our superb buildings and collections, and our beautiful site — and then reach out, experiment, listen to our audiences, and try new things.

This willingness to try new things shone through our costumed interpreters who play the roles of Croghan family members and neighbors. This fall, they expanded their reach and performed the miracle of turning present into past during recent events.

The range of ages represented varied from four months to 80+ years old, and included a number of young people who were able to converse passionately (and in character) with visitors about

topics from the Napoleonic Wars to the proposed Louisville Canal projects.

Our invaluable corps of volunteer docents is equally committed to improving their knowledge of the site's history and their skills in conveying that history to visitors. They will be helping us to reinvent and revitalize the traditional tour this coming year.

While we all look forward to having our exciting new exhibit gallery, now nearing the end of its planning stage, we all know that it takes people to attract people. And so far, our people must be doing something right!

Carol Ely



An overflow crowd is on hand for Bud Clark's Wednesday lecture in November 2006.



Costumed interpreters of all ages bring the 1820s to life during our holiday Candlelight tours in December.

Grove Gazette is published quarterly by Historic Locust Grove, Inc. for members, volunteers and friends of Historic Locust Grove. © 2007

561 Blankenbaker Lane
Louisville, KY 40207
(502) 897-9845
(502) 896-2433
www.locustgrove.org

The mission of Historic Locust Grove, Inc. is to preserve and interpret the 55-acre site, with its circa 1790 house and out-buildings, the collection, and the gardens, as an example of early 19th Century frontier America.

It is also our mission to share the stories of the many people who contributed to the history of Locust Grove, emphasizing the life of General George Rogers Clark, Revolutionary War hero and founder of Louisville.

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Special Fall Events Bring Past To Life

See photos from all events on our website,
www.locustgrove.org at the "Photo Gallery" link



18th Century Market Fair (October 28-29)

After a soggy start to the weekend, the skies cleared and the crowds came, despite the 18th century mud! Great entertainment, stirring mock battles, and an arrogant French lacemaker made this third annual market fair a great success.



Lewis & Clark Homecoming Celebration (November 5-12)

Our week-long celebration of the return of William Clark and Meriwether Lewis to Locust Grove started with a wildly exciting Sunday event at Locust Grove. During the week, the Corps of Discovery reenactors set up camp, fascinating adults and children alike. On the actual bicentennial of Lewis and Clark's dinner at Locust Grove, Friends and honored guests dined in the home and Visitors' Center. Special lectures on Wednesday and Sunday made the weeklong celebration a real crowd-pleaser.



Holiday Candlelight Tours (December 8-9)

It was a special year for the 42 reenactors portraying the Clark and Croghan families. Four-month-old Levi Sutherland played an infant Croghan; and it was the last year for long-time reenactor Martin Schmidt to portray patriarch William Croghan. And for the first time, slavery was depicted in the kitchen by volunteers Dolores White and Jesse Daniels. The 1820s were alive!

From: 'George Rogers Clark and Locust Grove'
by Gwynne Tuell Potts and Samuel Thomas

When John James Audubon Came to Locust Grove

In keeping with this year's lecture series theme of important visitors to Locust Grove, this excerpt features John James Audubon. At the time he was befriended by the Croghan family, Audubon was a young, well-connected but impoverished French-speaking immigrant to America. He had settled his family in nearby Shippingport, and operated a small store in Louisville.

John James Audubon arrived at the Falls of the Ohio in the autumn of 1807, and as he drummed up business (and looked for birds to paint), his partner, Ferdinand Rozier, minded their store.

Immediately, "I became acquainted with the late hospitable and amiable Major William Croghan and his family," he later recorded in *The Birds of America*. The ornithologist would recall the relationship upon his arrival at Fort Croghan in Nebraska in May 1843. The temporary post was named "after my old friend of that name when I hunted Raccoons on his father's

plantation in Kentucky some thirty eight years ago, and whose father and my own were well acquainted, and fought together in conjunction with George Washington and Lafayette, during the Revolutionary War...."

Audubon returned to his father's estate near Philadelphia in 1808 and married Lucy Bakewell, the daughter of his next-door neighbor. He brought her to John Gwathmey's popular hotel, the Indian Queen, in Louisville. They visited Locust Grove frequently. "While talking one day about birds, Major Croghan "asked me if I had seen the trees in which the Swallows were supposed to spend the winter, but which they only entered, he said, for the purpose of roosting... I was informed that on my way back to town, there was a tree remarkable on account of the immense numbers that resorted to it, and the place in which it stood was described to me... I immediately formed the project of examining



GEORGE ROGERS CLARK
MILITARY LEADER IN THE POWDER WEST
&
LOCUST GROVE
THE CROGHAN HISTORICAL HUSBANDRY FIRM



This new book – a great read for any history buff – is available at Locust Grove's Museum Store and from our website at www.locustgrove.org.

the interior of the tree, which, as my kind friend Major Croghan had told me, proved the most remarkable I had ever met with." Audubon examined the sycamore and estimated that 9,000 chimney swallows roosted in its hollowed interior.

Audubon also became acquainted with the Clark brothers, noting William was "the first white man who ever crossed the Rocky Mountains." He would later claim falsely, "I had engaged to go with him, but was... unfortunately prevented."

George Rogers Clark was a principal source of information. When describing the plentiful numbers of Canadian geese in the middle of the country, Audubon cited Clark, "One of the first settlers on the banks of the Ohio, who... assured me... wild geese were so plentiful at all seasons of the year, that he was in the habit of having them shot to feed his soldiers, then garrisoned near Vincennes in the present state of Indiana."

*Excerpt from Page 95.
Authors: Gwynne Tuell Potts
and Samuel Thomas*

From The Garden

Sarah Dickerson, Gardener

This time of year, I often get asked about what's wrapped up behind the icehouse. The answer is figs! I wrap our fig trees in the fall to protect them from winter's freezing (and drying) winds.

Growing fig trees has always been a chancy hobby. Even Thomas Jefferson, in his more southern latitude, had to provide some protection.

In 1806, Jefferson directed his slave gardener, Wormley, to cover the figs with "straw rope"—a twine made of twisted straw.

A contemporary of Jefferson's, John Hartwell Cocke, preferred to cover figs with earth for protection. He'd cut the fig's roots on one side, dig a depression on the opposite side, and then tip the tree over. With the dirt he'd removed, he'd cover the limbs of the fig, where it would remain buried until its resurrection in spring.



Bernard McMahon, in his 1806 "American Gardener's Calendar," grew figs along a fence or wall. He'd nail the limbs to the structure and cover them with mat woven from the stringy bark of the bass tree. If the weather turned severe, he'd layer cedar or pine boughs over the trees, and cover the base with straw.

At Locust Grove, we use scrap fabrics to cover our trees. Once (if) we get real winter, I also will cover the trees with straw to keep them cozy, warm and safe until spring.

In Memorium

With sadness, we note some recent losses to our Locust Grove family. Two members of our Board of Advisors, **Mary McClure** and **Cerelda Allen**, both important in the early years of the site, passed away. Mrs. Allen served as the site's Regent (now called the Board President) from 1978 to 1980.

We also lost an enthusiastic former volunteer and former staff member, **Norma McNutt**. And finally, we are saddened by the recent death of **Joe Rodes**, an important supporter of Locust Grove through his presidency of the J. Graham Brown Foundation, and a key member of our community.

2007 AFTERNOON LECTURE SERIES

The theme of this year's series is "They Came to Locust Grove: Important Visitors to the Home." The Education Committee give many thanks to volunteer Melzie Wilson for inspiring this year's lecture series title with her recently published book, "They Came to Locust Grove."

Lectures are held on the first Wednesday of each month, except for January and May. This year, because the Fourth of July holiday falls on the first Wednesday, the July lecture will be on Wednesday, July 11, 2007. Desserts and coffee are served at 1:00 p.m., with the lecture immediately following. Admission is \$5, or \$3 for Friends of Locust Grove.

Portrait Artists Jarvis and Bush

Wednesday, February 7



Locust Grove's portrait of George Rogers Clark by Joseph Bush.

Portrait artist **John Wesley Jarvis** painted the portraits of Lucy and William Croghan in the Formal Parlor. **Joseph Bush** painted the George Rogers Clark portrait that hangs in the house — a portrait Bush said was one of the best likenesses he'd ever painted.

Estill Curtis Pennington, the Visiting Curator of Portraiture and Decorative Arts at the Filson Historical Society, will share stories about these two portrait artists who came to Locust Grove in the early 1800s.

Dr. Richard Ferguson

Wednesday, March 7

Dr. Richard Ferguson, one of Louisville's early doctors, amputated George Rogers Clark's leg in 1809. **Eugene Conner, MD**, formerly of the University of Louisville School of Medicine, will talk about this amputation and about what medicine was like when Dr. Ferguson would have visited Locust Grove in the 1800s.

Architects Macomber and Morgan

April 4, 2007

Walter Macomber was the noted Washington restoration architect who was in charge of the restoration of Locust Grove. He also restored Mount Vernon and supervised the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg. **Frederic Lindley Morgan**, considered Kentucky's foremost designer in Georgian Revival and Federal styles, prepared the restoration drawings and supervised the work at Locust Grove. **Sam Thomas**, local historian and former caretaker of Historic Locust Grove, will talk about these two architects who came to Locust Grove in the early 1960s.

CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT SERIES

Historic Locust Grove's Chamber Music Concerts offer a rare opportunity to enjoy music much as the Clarks and Croghans would have back in the early 1800s. You'll be served light refreshments at 5:00 p.m. in the family dining room of the house before ascending to the second-floor ballroom for the 5:30 p.m. concert.

Space is very limited and reservations are a must. Please call (502) 897-9845 to purchase tickets and confirm reservations.

Mirabel: A Period Instrument String Quartet

Sunday, February 11

Fresh from concerts in Dallas, Chicago, and Detroit, **Mirabel** presents a program of Mozart and Beethoven string quartets as the composers would have heard them.

A 200th Anniversary Salute

Sunday, April 1

Early keyboard specialist **Joan Parsley**, artistic director of Ensemble Musical Offering, helps celebrate the 200th anniversary of our Broadwood fortepiano with a Biedermeier afternoon of Schubert, Clementi, and others.

NEW VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Wednesday, February 14, 10:00 a.m.

and

Saturday, March 3, 10:00 a.m.

Locust Grove volunteers are essential to the daily operation of the site. If you would like to be part of our vital volunteer corps, please join us for this information and orientation session.

You'll hear about Historic Locust Grove's mission, our daily management, and receive detailed descriptions of our many volunteer opportunities.

Whether your interests lie in gardening, history, research, special events or retail operations, Locust Grove needs you!

Please call (502) 897-9845 for more information and to get learn how you can become a volunteer at Historic Locust Grove.



Volunteer **Lois Bordner** (seated), with Historic Locust Grove Executive Director **Carol Ely**.

Historic Locust Grove
CALENDAR

2007 WINTER WORKSHOPS

Revolutionary War Era Reenactor Information

Saturday, February 3, 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.



Want to spend your weekends in the 18th century — dressing in period outfits, cooking over a fire, and camping outdoors? Would you like to learn about military and camp life for soldiers, their families and camp followers during the Revolutionary War?

Come to this meeting to find out how to join a military reenactor group. Seasoned reenactor **Rod Smothers** and several other reenactors from Logan's Company will be on hand to give you all the information you need to get started. No charge.

Tatting Workshop

Saturday, February 10, 10:00 a.m. – 12 Noon

Tatting is a way of making durable lace with knots and loops, using a small shuttle. You can learn to do this popular 19th century craft from **Cindy Smaldone**, who has been tatting since she was a child. You'll learn the two basic knots and how to form picots (or loops), and have the chance to complete a simple butterfly while in class.

She'll provide the supplies, but please bring a small pair of scissors and eyeglasses for close work, if needed. This class is very limited so that hands-on help can be provided to each student. Fee: \$20, which includes supplies

Hearth Cooking for Adult and Child

Saturday, February 17
10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Bring a child and the two of you can learn to create a tasty meal using authentic hearth-cooking skills and cookware. Locust Grove's cooks will teach you the basics and help you create a memorable meal. Fee: \$30 for an adult and accompanying child, aged 10 and up.



Beginner's Dulcimer Class

Saturday, March 17, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

No musical background is required for this class with **Maureen Sellers**. She will discuss the history of the dulcimer and teach the basics of playing Kentucky's official state instrument. Topics include beginner-level basic strum, tune, and mnemonics to help students learn the rudiments of timing painlessly. Loaner instruments are available with advanced notice. Please bring a sack lunch. Class size is limited and reservations are required. Fee: \$35 per student.

An Introduction to Genealogy

Saturday, March 24, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Would you like to trace your family's history but don't know where to start or what resources are available to you? **Alberta Baker**, a local genealogist, will tell you how to get started. You'll learn about the resources you can use, how to access church records and census information, where to go for birth and death records, and other essentials. Fee: \$5 per student

Two-Part Children's Dulcimer Workshop

~ For children ages 10 and up ~

Saturday, March 31

Part One – Build Your Own Dulcimer

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Part Two – Learn To Play the Dulcimer

11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

The dulcimer is a great folk instrument that's simple to learn. Talented instructor **Maureen Sellers** will help children make their own dulcimers in the first session. In the second session, she'll offer a beginner's class for children. They'll learn to play on the dulcimers they just made. Loaner instruments will be available for those who do not attend the first session.



Maureen Sellers

The children will take a break around noon to tour the grounds and eat lunch. Please bring a sack lunch. Class size is limited and reservations are required.

Fees: Build your own dulcimer – \$55; Beginner's class only – \$20.

18TH CENTURY THUNDER

Saturday, April 21

10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 22

11:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.



You'll hear the thunder of muskets, the clang of the blacksmith's hammer, and the melodies of the fife and drum.

Men, women and children in Revolutionary War era gear will transport your family to another time – and provide a wonderful opportunity to bring history to life.

Companies representing General George Rogers Clark's troops from the Northwest Campaign will reenact life in a military camp, including surveying, cooking, drilling and other demonstrations. Admission: \$6 adults, \$3 children 6-12, free for children 5 and under.

From the Store

Jennifer Jansen,
Visitors Center Manager

Stop by the Museum Store in the Visitors Center for a trip back in history, through crafts, jewelry and books.

There's a great counted cross stitch sampler kit from the Posy Collection which incorporates design elements from all five samplers on display in Locust Grove. The finished size is 12" x 12" on 18-count Charles Craft fabric. The kit includes



needle, thread, pattern and instructions, all for \$25.

We've got a delightful Sterling silver charm of the house, ready for a bracelet or to be worn on a necklace.

Or perhaps you'd like to learn more about early American life with some of these new books:

These Fiery Frenchified Dames. Author **Susan Branson** examines the emerging power and contributions of post-Revolutionary women.

Whither the Early Republic. This is a collection of essays on all aspects of culture and society of the period.

Sensory Worlds in Early America. Author **Peter Charles Hoffer** offers a new understanding of the way that sight, smell, touch and taste helped shape the lives of Europeans, Indians, and Africans in the New World.

Remember: All "Friends of Locust Grove" get a 10-percent discount in the Museum Store.

Many Thanks To Our Recent Donors!

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 and involvement.

Thanks to the following people for their most recent donations.

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**Carol Ely, Executive Director
Historic Locust Grove
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Please include where and to whom you would like us to acknowledge your donation.

All donations are tax-deductible.

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Enrollment/Renewal – September 1, through December 31, 2006

Our "Friends of Historic Locust Grove" membership program began in January 2002. We now have more than 400 individual and family members.

A hearty "thank you" to all of these people who joined or renewed their memberships from June 1 through September 1, 2006, and to all of our longtime "Friends of Locust Grove"!

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Charles & Frances Wirth

To Become a Friend

Yearly memberships in the Friends of Locust Grove are available in three categories:

Individual — \$35

Family — \$50

Student — \$15

For membership information and details, please call us at (502) 897-9845.

Did You Know?

In the Visitors Center auditorium, there's a bell that has been on an interesting journey during the past 40 years. But it's home again, thanks to one of those chance encounters that you often just read about.

In pre-restoration photos of Locust Grove, a bell "cap" sat on the roof between the eastern



chimneys. The bell's rope extended into what had been a kitchen, a room originally added on to the house for Lucy Clark Croghan. During the Locust Grove restoration in the early 1960s, that kitchen was removed and so was the bell.

Around that time, a man from the West Coast wrote a letter to **Sam Thomas**, then Locust Grove's caretaker, asking if he could have the bell. He was Robert Owen Shrader, a grandson of the Smith family that had lived at Locust Grove in the 1860s.

This transaction was lost in memory until some 40 years later when Historic Locust Grove began to expand the interpretation of the site to beyond the period of the Croghans and began a search for the bell.

In October 2005, while on a tour of Locust Grove with WWII veterans, a woman mentioned to Sam and co-author **Gwynne Potts** that her family had once lived at Locust Grove. That woman's grandfather was Robert Owen Shrader.

Locating the lost bell took another year, but it has finally returned home.

And now you know.

Attention, Volunteers!

Nominations For Pilkington Award Now Open

The Locust Grove Volunteer Steering Committee created an award in 1998 to recognize volunteers — former or current — who have offered a lifetime of dedication and support to Historic Locust Grove.

The first winners — **Emilie Strong Smith** in 1998 and **Martin Schmidt** in 1999 — set the standard that the award celebrates.

In 2000, the award was named for **Audrey Pilkington** in recognition of her pioneering and positive energy in nurturing the Locust Grove volunteer corps and other programs at Locust Grove.



LaMar Gaston, 2006 winner

Four more volunteers have since received this honor — **Fred Atkinson** (2001), **Dorothy Martin** (2003), **Bob Pilkington** (2004) and **LaMar Gaston** (2006).

The steering committee considers candidates based on information and recommendations contained in nomination forms. If a 2007 winner is selected, the award will be announced at the volunteer appreciation party in April.

This is your chance to recognize your fellow volunteers! Pick up a nomination form from Program Director **Aileen Novick**. Nominations are due by 1:00 p.m., Feb. 21, 2007.