



Fall 2021

HISTORIC LOCUST GROVE

GROVE GAZETTE

LOCUST GROVE'S POLLINATOR MEADOW TAKES SHAPE



After years of painstaking work, Locust Grove's gardener and its groundskeeper are finally seeing exciting results in the broad meadow at the east of the site's historic house.

Gardener **Sarah Sutherland** is delighted with the progress she's seen this season. "Slowly the wildflowers have been coming up and shedding seeds," she says. "I often go into the meadow to gather and toss those seeds around to give them a hand."

When Buildings and Groundskeeper **Geoffrey McMahon** joined Locust Grove's staff a couple of years ago, he was excited to learn about the pollinator meadow. "I was elated at the prospect of providing critical habitat for the numerous species of flora and fauna that share the 55 acres of our site," he says.



But achieving that goal has not been easy nor quick. The idea of not mowing at least a part of the field had been kicked around for quite a while. But when Locust Grove stopped mowing the field about 20 years ago, a neighbor called to complain that her house was "next to a weed patch!"

Obviously, just stopping mowing was not the answer.



"The people who lived in this region in the 18th and 19th century didn't know lawns as we know them," says Executive Director **Carol Ely**. "Uncultivated areas were filled with native grasses and flowers, and it's that landscape that we aim to recreate. This also has the ecological benefit of providing a safe habitat for pollinators like bees and butterflies, as well as birds and other beneficial species."

With excellent advice and support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Metro Parks naturalists, and other regional



conservation specialists, Locust Grove embarked on several rounds of applying approved organic herbicides to mitigate invasive grasses and wildflowers.

"It was only partially effective – and the wet spring that year didn't help," says Carol. "Eventually we were able to seed the meadow with selected native flowers and grasses – just in time for a legendary drought to begin."



But by the next spring, the hardier plants survived, and slowly the wildflowers and native grasses have taken hold. "We now have wildflowers like Purple Coneflower, Monarda, False Sunflower, Butterfly Milkweed, and Ohio Spiderwort, to name a few," says Sarah.

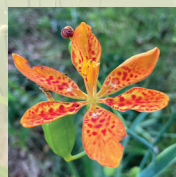


Adds Geoffrey, "We now are exploring the next steps to maintain the current wildflowers and grasses and to prevent invasive woody species from gaining a foothold. We hope to recruit a corps of volunteers who can be trained to identify and remove the invasive plants."

Meanwhile, visitors can explore the meadow using the walking paths that have been carved into the hill.



"On my walks in and around the meadow, it is not uncommon to see several species of birds taking advantage of the variety and density of the foliage," Geoffrey says. "Bluebirds, especially, seem to thrive in the woodland–meadow interface. And the return of field mice and other small mammals are attracting birds of prey like red-shouldered hawks."



Carol points out that, "With patience and time and a little help, the meadow will be a beautiful, natural, historically accurate, and beneficial part of the unique landscape of Locust Grove."

www.locustgrove.org

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

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.

We've reached peak construction on site now, with maximum dust and disruption, but the shape of the final project is clear.



Workers pour concrete for the front entry ramp.

The pavilion has a solid floor and a beautiful wooden ceiling. The kitchen, storage rooms, and outdoor enclosure for equipment and the loading area are framed in. Walkways link the different segments — and the concrete for the new main entrance ramp was poured today.

The auditorium is almost usable again. Work to shore up the cabin basement is complete. New interpretive signs for the outbuildings are installed. And we can see to the end of the everlasting construction period at last.

This realizes a vision that we dreamed together starting 10 years ago — with surveys, focus groups, strategic planning sessions, and then a lot of hard work raising funds to make it real. When all is completed, we will have programming and revenue possibilities that will make Locust Grove both more relevant to the community and more self-sustaining financially. A spring grand opening is planned!

But we aren't there yet. The pandemic plus construction has made this past year quite difficult, financially and programmatically. Last year we got through with help from federal PPP funds and with an extraordinarily generous outpouring of support from our donors. But what was one exceptional year has turned into two, and our attendance and programs have not rebounded yet.

This year's annual appeal will go out in November, and we will rely again on this generous community to help us get through to spring. By then, we are confident that with new facilities and new and revitalized program offerings, we'll regain the fiscal equilibrium that has been unbalanced by this pandemic. Please consider a meaningful gift to Locust Grove when the appeal reaches you.

In the meantime, we will continue our work to tell the inclusive story of all who lived in this historic place — and we are grateful to all of you for joining us on the journey.

OUR SITE WILL BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2022

During the closure, we'll continue to answer the phone and email, take reservations, and answer questions.

We also will be finalizing the construction of the pavilion and the improvements to the Audubon Room, reorganizing and moving, and continuing our research and planning for 2022.

See you on March first!



Welcome, Kate Widdowson!

We're delighted to welcome **Kate Widdowson** in the new position of Development and Membership Coordinator. She will work on raising funds and developing supporters for Locust Grove. The job includes grant writing, the Capital Campaign, event sponsorships, online fundraisers, the annual appeal, and creating new benefits for members and potential members.

A Florida native, Kate moved here from Tallahassee a few



Greetings from Kate

Hello! I am very excited to be joining the Locust Grove team. The importance and impact of historic sites is a subject close to my heart. I understand the indispensable responsibility we all hold to preserve and share this place and its stories with everyone for years to come.

In my first few weeks here, I have been so impressed and happy to see what an extraordinary community of volunteers and members we have at Locust Grove.

As you all know, Locust Grove is a great community space to learn something new, explore something old, attend events, make new connections, spend time with family and friends, and take your dog for a walk, — the possibilities are endless!

I will continue to ensure that becoming a member is a great way to stay connected with everything we have to offer. I am looking forward to getting to know all of you soon. Please feel free to reach out to me at kwiddowson@locustgrove.org with any ideas, questions, concerns, stories, or just to say hi!

years ago where she worked at several small museums and historic houses. She did the whole range of museum jobs — from installing exhibits to leading tours, managing memberships, ticketing, social media, and living history.

Kate has a B.A. in Art History and an M.S. in Interior Design from Florida State University. She volunteered at Locust Grove briefly several years ago for the Hamilton Festival and at the Jane Austen Festival.

Welcome to Historic Locust Grove's New Board Members

Sidney Edwards is an actress, singer, dancer, and improv artist. Since first coming to Locust Grove as an intern several years ago, she has been integral to the development of our interpretation of the enslaved community here. She is currently an Assistant Professor and Director of the African American Theatre Program at the University of Louisville. A native of North Carolina, she has a BFA in musical theater and an MFA in theater and performance as well as a graduate certificate in African American theatre. She has a "passion for arts education" and, in addition to performing and teaching at the university level, she has worked with young audiences.

Chris Green, CPA, is the Chief Financial Officer for

Delta Dental of Kentucky and was formerly with ARG Financial Group. He first came to Locust Grove as our auditor with Buetow, LeMastus & Dick. After leaving that position, he joined our Finance Committee and our Board where he provided leadership in professionalizing our financial management systems and HR practices. He has served on the Board as

Treasurer and then as President from 2016-2018 and will now again take on the role of Treasurer.

Janet Guerin Muller has been in Human Resources with an emphasis in Diversity Services and Products, working in both corporate and non-profit organizations. She is a "people person" whose goal is to help widen the horizons of our community. She joins the HLG

Board to "... serve in honor of my great-grandfather, Mark Copeland, born into slavery in Rutherford County, Tenn. Being a board member will bring me full circle to my 'Pop' and his wife, who died in 1919. Pop is in my heart and is my touchstone — and he connects me to the powerful work being done at Locust Grove."

Margy Thomas is a native of Nashville but has lived in Louisville for most of her life where she has been an active and important member of the community. She brings years of skill and service in non-profit management — serving, among others, the Brown Cancer Center, the Louisville Ballet, Bernheim Forest, and was among the first women to serve on the board of Saint Xavier High School. Along with her late husband and our esteemed friend, **Preston Thomas**, Margy has been a supporter of Historic Locust Grove for many years.



NEW INSIGHTS INTO WILLIAM C

From “William Clark, York, and Slavery” by James J. Holmberg, *We Proceeded On*, August 2021

[In this excerpt, after the expedition’s return, York has briefly come to Louisville from St. Louis, where he has been forced to relocate with Clark.]

... York took advantage of the opportunity to visit his wife and family and apparently told people he had permission to stay for four or five months rather than weeks. When word reached William of York’s exaggeration of the time allotted to him, Clark was more than a “little displeased.” [I] intended to have punished him but Govr. Lewis has insisted on my only hiring him out in Kentucky which perhaps will be best,” he wrote Jonathan [Clark] on December 17, 1808. “This I leave entirely to you, perhaps if he has a Severe master a while he may do Some Service, I do not wish him again in this Country untill he applies himself to Come and give over that wife of his. . . .”

Months passed with no word about York’s status. William’s curiosity and perhaps anticipation regarding York’s bending to his will was such by March of 1809 that he asked Jonathan “what has becom of York? and the horse.”

Locust Grove is a significant part of the story of America’s most consequential and well-known exploration, the Corps of Discovery expedition to the Pacific Ocean and back from 1803-1806.

Almost without fanfare last year, Locust Grove and other historic places along the route of the explorers from the Falls of the Ohio to Washington City were added to the Lewis and Clark Trail’s Eastern Legacy route. The route is signed, managed, and interpreted by the National Park Service. With support from NPS, we expect to offer new programming based on new scholarship and new questions.

The August issue of the magazine of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, **We Proceeded On**, features a detailed and provocative



World-reknown Louisville sculptor Ed Hamilton presented this casting of that statue to Locu

... Whether York applied to William to return to St. Louis or the latter requested he be sent back isn’t known. During his stay in Louisville York might have been

Four Historic Sites Focus on History of the Enslaved Kaitlyn Tisdale, Director of Interpretation

Historic Locust Grove is a proud member of the newly formed **Louisville Coalition on the History of the Enslaved**. This coalition is a partnership between four historic sites in Louisville, all with a history of enslavement: **Farmington Historic Plantation; Oxmoor Farm Foundation; Riverside, the Farnsley-Moremén Landing; and Locust Grove.**

Together, and in partnership with The Slave Dwelling Project and other like-minded organizations, it is our mission to interpret and share the stories of the men, women, and children enslaved on our sites, and to find relevance between these stories of the past and the events of the present.

In late October, the Coalition held its first joint program in partnership with **Joe McGill** of The Slave Dwelling Project. It began at Locust Grove with two *Unfolding the Story* tours. The participants were immersed in the year 1816 as they followed historic interpreters of the family’s enslaved laundress and enslaved distillery assistant through their daily chores.

Early that evening, participants toured Historic Oxmoor Farm and then joined a campfire discussion in front of Oxmoor’s four remaining slave dwellings. More than 35 people engaged in spirited conversations led by Joe McGill. Three of the

participants opted for an “overnight camp stay” in one of the slave dwellings.

The following morning, participants toured Historic Farmington Plantation and then joined experts and historians to discuss the changes that historic sites are making to shift the narrative to include the enslaved communities who lived at each site. The moderator was NPR contributor, **Dan Gediman**, whose recent podcast *The Reckoning* delved into Kentucky’s history of slavery.

The activities concluded at Riverside, the Farnsley-Moremén Landing with outdoor-cooking and brick-making demonstrations.



WILLIAM CLARK AND THE 'EXPEDITION'

article by the Filson Historical Society's **James Holmberg**, an expert on the expedition and the role of the Clark family members. He has graciously allowed us to print excerpts from his article here.

Holmberg juxtaposes William Clark's understanding of himself as an enslaver struggling with reconciling his own actions with what a "good" man should do. Meanwhile, the expedition's enslaved member, York struggled to be legally, physically, and psychologically free of the bonds of enslavement. Holmberg asks us to reflect on how we are to see Clark in the light of the evidence of his treatment of those he enslaved.



York was related to the people enslaved at Locust Grove and certainly spent time here, with and without Clark.

something of a floater among Clark family members or hired out only for short periods . . . York apparently let his unhappiness and resentment be known. . . . Edmund

Hamilton created a statue of York that is on display in 2005, then-Mayor David Armstrong at Locust Grove.

Jerome Bias described the foodways of enslaved people as he prepared traditional foods. Over the open fire, he baked cornbread and cushaw (squash) pie and incredibly tasty greens. In another area, **Rodney Prioleau** demonstrated the craft of brick making — a skill many enslaved people practiced.

The Louisville Coalition on the History of the Enslaved is a partnership devoted to collaboration in research, interpretation, and presentation of the history of slavery in Kentucky.

The Coalition's future plans include more partnership in programming, collaborative interpretative efforts, and

educational outreach across the state. We at Locust Grove are proud to be a part of this team of historians and educators.

Far Left: **Tajleed Hardy** as enslaved distillery worker Alfred described the work at Locust Grove's small farm distillery to visitors taking the "Unfolding the Story" tour.

Left: Visitors enjoy the foods that African American foodways expert **Jerome Bias** (far right) had prepared on the open fire at Riverside.



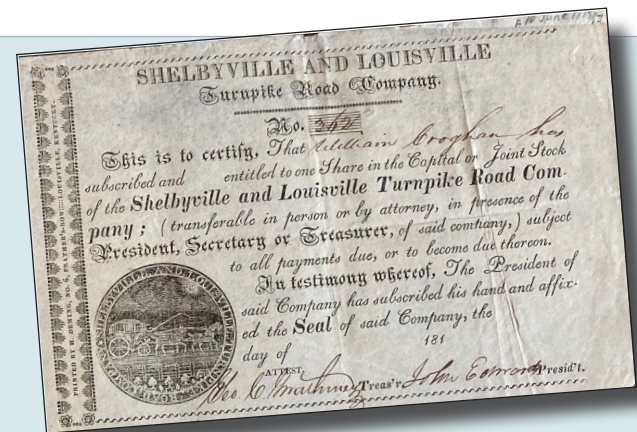
'I fear you will think that I have become a Severe master,'

— William Clark

Clark wrote his brother in early September 1809, when he learned that William planned to send York back to Louisville after his return to St. Louis that spring that "I don't like him nor does any other person in this country and was it not for their friendship for you I Believe he w[oul]d have been roughly used when he was up last."

It was indeed back to Louisville for York . . . William documents his "insolent and Sulky" behavior in letters to Jonathan. He became so disgusted with him that he sent him to Louisville to be hired or sold. York might be near his wife and family but it was not for an enjoyable visit. . . . Manumission was still off the table as far as William was concerned. . . . York was back with Clark by May 1809. . . "He is here but of very little Service to me, insolent and Sulky. I gave him a Severe trouncing the other day. . . ."

[After years of conflict during which York was repeatedly hired out, often deliberately to cruel masters to teach him to submit, around 1820 Clark apparently freed York, who became a wagon driver, but probably died soon afterward in an epidemic.]



William Croghan, Investor

Louisville's commercial growth at the beginning of the 19th century created a demand for land transportation to and from the other growing urban areas of the region.

In 1818, the Louisville and Shelbyville Turnpike Road Company was authorized by the state legislature to raise funds to construct a toll road from Louisville to Shelbyville, later to Frankfort and Lexington.

This turnpike, long and straight, was the first of many turnpike spokes radiating out from the city hub, such as Taylorsville Road, Brownsboro Road, River Road, and others. William Croghan purchased stock in this enterprise, which followed the routes of what we now know as Frankfort Avenue and Shelbyville Road.

Image courtesy of the Filson Historical Society.



SPIRIT AWARD WINNER:
Dave Phipps

When this issue's Spirit Award Winner, **Dave Phipps**, began volunteering at Locust Grove some six years ago, he became the site's "Bucket Man" — making the leather fire buckets you see next to the fireplaces in each room.

Dave enjoys demonstrating leather-making at nearly every Locust Grove event — 18th Century Market Fairs, encampments, Jane Austen Festivals, and in the summer on Culture Pass Tuesdays for school kids. Dave volunteers most Thursdays and is one of the favorite demonstrators during school field trips.

"I am delighted to show the kids how bucket brigades work," he says. "I love seeing their reactions when I tell them they must throw the empty bucket from the fire to the rear of the line for more water. Big grins when they realize they have permission to toss the bucket."

Dave retired from the Pentagon as an Army civilian. He came to Kentucky from Michigan in 1976 to go to the Armor School at Fort Knox, later settling in Elizabethtown in 1980 where he



raised his three children.

Dave appreciates that Locust Grove gives him a way to enjoy his love of reenacting as well as a place to pursue his leathercrafting hobby. "It's fun for me to help visitors discover something new," he says. "Often, people don't even know about leather fire buckets nor how essential they were in the centuries before the advent of fire stations.

Leather was the go-to product back then, much like plastic and nylon are today."

He's especially proud that he can live in this region of Kentucky. "Its history is important to us and to our nation," he adds. "I am pleased to be doing my part to ensure that all of this history is preserved and passed down to future generations."

Locust Grove also is pleased that Dave has found his way to be a part of the volunteer team. "We so appreciate Dave's steady presence and his willingness to do whatever it takes to help our programs succeed," adds Director of Interpretation **Kaitlyn Tisdale**.

LOCUST GROVE'S BOOK SALE RETURNS!

"Books may well be the only true magic."
— Alice Hoffman

You'll experience that magic ten-fold at Locust Grove's book sale in early December!

The long pause between sales on-site means that mountains of books have been donated and are being sorted and priced — so many that we'll have two full weekends for the sale. Our auditorium is still in mid-renovation, but it will be ready for the sale.

We'll have the full range of books — all prices, all categories, including the special gift-quality books, used and new, that we traditionally offer in our smaller December sale. History, Fiction, Cookbooks, Children's, Mysteries, Art and Craft, Religion, and more. We'll have a section of remaindered books at great prices as well.

Mark your calendar — and scoop up the magic this December!

Members' Only Preview — Thursday, Dec. 2, 10 AM–7 PM.

You must be a member to be admitted — but that's easy. Go to locustgrove.org/participate/become-a-member or sign up at the door. On Members' Day, there's no need to schedule a time slot. But we have a limit of 75 people in the room at one time.

Open Sales over two weekends:

Friday, Dec. 3 and Sunday, Dec. 5, 10 AM–5:30 PM.

Saturday, Dec. 4, 10 AM– 7 PM in conjunction with Winter on the Farm

Friday–Sunday, Dec. 10-12, 10 AM–5:30 PM. each day

You'll need to make reservations online at locustgrove.org for reserved time slots. There's a limit of 75 at any one time. But, if you can't reserve in advance, we will welcome walk-ins up to the limit of 75 people in the room.

COVID protocols will apply. Masks are required. Extra ventilation has been added to the room.



A portion of donated books—ready to be sorted into categories for the sale.



Do Your Holiday Shopping at Locust Grove!

The Museum Store has great gifts and bargains galore this season. General store hours during the holidays are:

Tuesdays–Saturdays, 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Sundays, Nov. 28, 11 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Dec. 5 and 12,
10 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

Holiday Sale — Nov. 30–Dec. 9. Save 20% on almost everything in the store.

Holiday Clearance — Dec. 10–Dec. 23. Winter and holiday items on sale; Other select items, 30–50% off.

Special Sales Days:

“Small Business Black Friday” — Fri., Nov. 26 and Sat., Nov. 27. Save 20% on almost everything.

“Museum Store Sunday” Discount for Members’ Only — Nov. 28. Members save 35% off on items not already discounted. Take an additional 15% off marked price for sale items. Cookies, cider, and snacks will be served.

During Book Sale Members’ Only Preview — Dec. 2. Members save 25% off on items not already on sale.

IN MEMORIAM



**Roberta Dickson
Marti Plager
Al Shands
Jean Lee Treitz**

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

DONATIONS RECEIVED FROM AUGUST 1 THROUGH OCTOBER 31, 2021

Many thanks to the hundreds of people who support Historic Locust Grove through memberships and various kinds of donations. We depend upon and deeply appreciate your generosity and involvement.

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Ellen Bland & Jim Aubrey
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December Book Sale!

Members Only: Thursday, Dec. 2

Open Sales: Friday thru Sunday,
Dec. 3–5 and Dec. 10–12

Fall 2021

WINTER ON THE FARM — Saturday, December 4, 12 Noon– 7 PM (A Members' Special Event)

It's winter at Locust Grove in 1816. Join us on **Saturday, Dec. 4 from 12 Noon to 7:00 p.m.** as the Croghan family and the enslaved community busily prepare for the cold season ahead. In the hearth kitchen, Lucy is crafting her holiday menu with the cook, Nan, while the enslaved kitchen workers are preserving food to prepare for the winter season. Women are spinning, knitting, and sewing warm winter garments.

Outside, enslaved men are storing up wood and provisions for the cold days and nights ahead. In the house, the Croghan men are discussing the news of the day and settling their yearly



account books. For their evening entertainment, the family learns new games and the children produce a play, all lit by the glow of candlelight.

Returning to 2021 in the Visitors' Center, you can stop by the December Book Sale (limit of 75 people in the auditorium at a time) or find gifts and bargains at the Museum Store's Holiday Sale. Come prepared for outdoor weather. \$5 per person, children under 5, free.

COVID protocols are in effect; masks are required in all indoor spaces. RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED TO GUARANTEE ADMISSION. See www.locustgrove.org for details.

This new event adds elements of Christmastide to the winter activities of the farm. This year we must limit this event to members only because the ongoing construction means our parking is extremely scarce. Not a member? It's easy. Go to www.locustgrove.org and click on "Participate." Neighbors who can walk to Locust Grove also are invited.



HISTORIC LOCUST GROVE
GROVE GAZETTE

www.locustgrove.org