



Fall 2024

HISTORIC LOCUST GROVE

# GROVE GAZETTE

## CELEBRATING 60 YEARS AT LOCUST GROVE — SHARE YOUR STORY!

*Raina Melvin, Director of Programming and Engagement*

On October 4, 2024, we celebrated a significant milestone: **60 years** since Historic Locust Grove opened its doors to the public.

To honor the history, stories, and community connections that make Locust Grove a cherished place, we're launching **Preserving Heritage, Building Community: 60 Years of Locust Grove** this coming spring. This online exhibition will showcase the memories of the people and experiences that have shaped this historic site.

Below, you'll see just a glimpse of the stories we've gathered so far — memories from family outings, snapshots of volunteers, and treasured experiences shared by visitors, staff, and volunteers over the years.

Now, we want your story to be part of this collection! Whether you're a long-time visitor, a recent guest, a neighbor, a volunteer, or an event participant, your contribution will add to the vibrant history of Locust Grove and highlight its role in our community.

Please submit your photos, stories, or memories to be featured in this exhibition. Help us commemorate this milestone to inspire future generations to connect with Locust Grove. Let's celebrate 60 years of history, heritage, and community together!

Just [click this link](#), fill in the information, and attach your photos. And thanks for your involvement.



*I volunteered at Locust Grove as a teenager in 1978. It was a special space just for me; a happy space. When I was there it was mine; my parents weren't involved. I had moved away when my dad, Don Roth, retired and started volunteering at Locust Grove. He called me to say that even though he was a grown man and had owned a business, all of a sudden people were introducing him as "Jill Herman's dad!" Jill's mother Ann Roth also spent several years baking goodies for Locust Grove's lectures.*  
— Jill Herman Whitten, Williamsburg, Va.

*The 2006 re-enactment of William Clark and Meriwether Lewis' visit to Locust Grove in November 1806 after their successful expedition to the Pacific was months in the planning. But when we saw the "explorers," "Gen. George Rogers Clark," and "York" approaching Locust Grove on horseback that chilly November morning, we were transported back 200 years. The reenactors portraying the Clark and Croghan family members were genuinely moved — as were many of us watching. It was an incredibly memorable experience.*  
— Jeannie Vezeau, Louisville, Ky.



*I've always loved visiting places that remind us of our history and past. We are to learn from our history to make a brighter future. I have visited Locust Grove many times — field trips, Jane Austen events, book sales, antiques markets, and even with the Cultural Pass. The photo is from the Fall 2017 Antiques Market is of my father, John Brauckmann (who has recently passed), and my son, Grayson Brauckmann.*  
— Dana Brauckmann, Louisville, Ky.



My first job in a museum was at the Paul Revere House in Boston. I was in college and I was lucky to get a summer internship at the 300-year old house of a Revolutionary leader.

It was the summer of 1976, the Bicentennial celebration of the founding of the country. Tens

of millions of tourists were in Boston that year. The Queen came to visit (I got a glimpse of the top of her head when her motorcade passed beneath the second story windows of the Revere House).

On July 4th, a Boston Pops concert on the banks of the Charles River drew 400,000 people and ended with a performance of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture, complete with cannons firing and the church bells of the city all ringing. Fireworks exploded overhead. The sky was black with clouds of smoke. The earth shook. It was glorious.

All this to say, here we are again. 2026 is the 250th birthday of America. Sadly, we don't seem to have the same sense of anticipation and celebration that was in the air 50 years ago. Committees and commissions in all the states are officially working on plans, and so is Locust Grove.

But our understanding of American history and the meaning of the Revolution is no longer a commonly held narrative and set of beliefs — if indeed it ever was. Americans see that our history is complicated. Messy. Not a clear trajectory from the origin point to today.

We are uncomfortable with celebration. We are well aware of our divisions.

However, that feeling was true in 1976 as well. At the time of the Bicentennial, Americans had been deeply and bitterly divided over the war in Vietnam that had ended just the year before. The Watergate scandal had tarnished faith in our government. Every idea about what the country was, and should be, was questioned.

But somehow we pulled together to recognize and celebrate the beginning of the American experiment in democratic government. We learned more about the 18th century process of separating from Great Britain to create a new country — politically, culturally, economically, intellectually, legally, diplomatically, and militarily. History museums were appreciated — and attended — as never before.

Can we do that again? Can we learn from the past and from each other, and ask the hard questions and also listen to the answers? Can we celebrate what has been good and great about this country and also see, and work to amend, the flaws and shortcomings? Could we all listen to a concert and watch the fireworks together and feel that we have collectively accomplished something good, if not yet perfect?

I'm interested to see what 2025's and 2026's programs bring us to help us understand more deeply and assess more truthfully the last 250 years of America — here at Locust Grove, in Kentucky, and all over this country. And I also want fireworks, and music, and cannons, and bells!

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Louisville, KY 40207  
(502) 897-9845  
[www.locustgrove.org](http://www.locustgrove.org)

The mission of Historic Locust Grove is to preserve and interpret the historic landscape and buildings of Locust Grove, the final home of Louisville's founder George Rogers Clark, and to tell the stories of all the individuals who lived and worked here, both free and enslaved, cultivating a deeper understanding of the present through a richer understanding of the past.

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# WITH GRATITUDE

## A SALUTE TO CAROL ELY, 2004—2024 — 20 YEARS OF PROGRESS

With copious amounts of appreciation, Locust Grove salutes CEO Carol Ely who is stepping down from her leadership role at the end of December 2024.

Over the past 20 years, the site has seen vast improvements to the



historic house and grounds — an interactive Gallery, a stunning Pavilion, as well as an ever-evolving focus on telling the stories of all who lived and worked here, both free and enslaved. Below are some highlights, with comments from some Locust Grove colleagues on the next page.



**2004**

The first 18th Century Market Fair, which continued delighting visitors for nearly 20 years

**2005**

The first Used Book Sale which raised \$4,000 for educational programs, now a widely popular event that is raising more than \$30,000 for education and programs.



**2006**

Celebration of William Clark and Meriwether Lewis' triumphant visit to Louisville after their expedition.

**2008**

Grand opening of new interactive Exhibit Gallery.



**2008 – 2010**

Re-restoration, re-furnishing, and re-interpretation of the historic house.



**2012**

Achieving accreditation from the American Association of Museums.

**2015**

"Thursday Summer Events," i.e. hearth cooking, crafting beer, guided walk thru LG's woods.

**2017**

Farm Distillery open; Major work to stabilize the house



**2018**

First Artist-in-Residence participant **Michael Twitty**, Historical foodways expert

**2019**

All things "Hamilton;" Slave-Dwelling project

**2020**

Start of Covid shutdown. Carol secured federal payroll protection funds to keep Locust Grove going

**2020 ongoing**

Extensive research, programs focused on enslaved community, "Unfolding the Story" tour



**2021**

Opening of Louisa's House, interpreting an enslaved family dwelling.

**2022**

Event Pavilion opens; new research library

**2023**

Updating the HVAC system in the house



**2024**

Major redesign of website; Gazette goes digital

# WITH GRATITUDE

## A SALUTE TO CAROL ELY, 2004—2024 — 20 YEARS OF PROGRESS

Ribbon-cutting for the  
Martin Schmidt  
Interactive Gallery



Ribbon-cutting for  
the Event Pavilion

*"Few people can boast they've led an organization for two decades, but Carol has shown great commitment to Locust Grove and always has been a staunch advocate for this historic site in so many ways. She is a very fine person to work with, and I will miss her."*

— **Kate Boyer**, former Board Chair, now Emerita member; led the Master Plan and the Capital Campaign committees.

*"Carol's dedication and leadership have allowed us to navigate many challenges throughout the years. Her passion, integrity, and vision have shaped Locust Grove into a community treasure. She is admired and will be missed by all."*

— **Chris Chappell**, former Board Chair and current vice-chair; head of the Search committee.



Touring the  
Interactive Gallery

*"When counting my blessings, high on the list is Carol's presence at Locust Grove. Her grace and wisdom have made the 20 years of her tenure a pleasure to watch and have provided great opportunities for meaningful participation. We wish her well and miss her already."*

— **Shirley Dumesnil**, former Board member, now Emerita; 60+-year volunteer, docent, book sale devotee

*"I am really going to miss Carol so much — as a friend and also as a person who has been always focused on doing the right thing for Locust Grove. She's a very special person."*

— **Nancy Lee**, former Board member, now an Emerita member; a docent for 31 years; and the host (she calls herself "the bouncer") at the auditorium door for Wednesday lectures.

*"Carol provided a steady hand during her 20-year tenure as Executive Director of Historic Locust Grove. She oversaw a major capital campaign, which resulted in the construction of an exciting Event Pavilion and new programs directed toward expanding audiences and enhancing visitor experiences. It was indeed a pleasure working with Carol on many initiatives at Locust Grove."*

— **Hunter G. Louis**, former Board Chair; Board member, now Emeritus; head of the Buildings committee

*"When I began helping with the fabulous book sales, I got to know Carol, the sale's greatest champion. When the current volunteer coordinator stepped down, Carol asked me to take over — which I've been doing now for several years. I am continually impressed with Carol's vast knowledge of American history as well as her dedication to Locust Grove and to the volunteers who help keep the lights on."*

— **Brenda Tuckson**, Board member, current Vice Chair; Book Sale volunteer coordinator; Volunteer Steering Committee.



Remarks at the  
2008 Independence  
Day celebration



Opening of the  
Farm Distillery



## LOCUST GROVE GOES TO SCHOOL

*Ronnie Dreistadt, Education Assistant*

What do you do when a kindergarten teacher asks if someone from Locust Grove would bring old toys to their classroom to show students the difference between Colonial-era and Modern-era toys? If you're like me, you imagine complete chaos!

But, thinking about different ways we can be more involved in our community, I said "Sure!" And then set to work on designing a structured program. The result — a 30-minute program called "Growing Up at Locust Grove", designed to meet Kentucky State Standards in a variety of subjects.

As 60 kindergarteners from Wilder Elementary quietly filed into the classroom, I knew the program was good. The more important question, though, was — Would they think it's good?

For the next 30 minutes, I asked them a lot of questions — What might you see at a museum? What kinds of animals do you think lived at this farm? I introduced them to the people who lived at Locust Grove, including the enslaved community, and especially how they lived and played.

On our virtual TV tour of the house, they realized the kitchen was in another building and looked nothing like our kitchens today. They realized that the bathroom was also nothing like what we have today. Could those children watch television? Play on iPads?

The rest of the program delves into the question — So what did children do back then?

The children were surprised that many of the things they are learning in kindergarten were also learned by the Croghan children in the Grand Parlor at Locust Grove. Things like shapes, colors, the letters of the alphabet — even learning their manners! They also discovered that the enslaved children learned as well, although typically (and unfairly) not the same things.

Free or enslaved, however, all children like to play. The final part of the program explores the toys, crafts, games, and activities that all children enjoyed. No Fortnite? No problem! The 19th century kids had the Cup and Ball Game. I brought a few of them with me so some of the kids could try them out — and discover how difficult and fun that simple game is.

When I pulled out a decorated balloon-shaped item, I asked, "What do you think this thing would be used for?" Their guesses — a pinata, a football, a bag? In a way, they were right. It was a pig's bladder which, in the 19th century, was used as toys — either inflated and tossed like balloons and balls or filled with dried peas and shaken like rattles.

We finished the program with a quick children's story, before having a short time for reflection and questions.

At the conclusion of that first program, I received a lot of positive feedback from teachers and students which causes me to think how this program might continue. What other grades could we include? What should we

charge? When should we offer programming? We're working on those answers now.

Currently, field trips for many schools are challenging or even out of the question. Dwindling budgets, transportation issues, and other factors severely curtail a teacher's ability to take their students on field trips. Yet, schools are starving to find ways for museums and cultural attractions to enhance their curriculum and partner in community engagement.

How do I know? Within a week of that first visit, four other schools contacted us for an outreach to visit their kindergarteners.

We are quite early in the planning stages, but Locust Grove has many lessons to teach. We want to expand our offerings to include more students in a variety of grades and subjects. In doing so, we could create community connections to benefit us all. Feel free to contact me at 502-897-9845 or at [education@locustgrove.org](mailto:education@locustgrove.org).



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## **Sovereign Nations, American Citizens: 100 Years of Indigenous Citizenship**

**Tuesday Evening, Nov. 19, 6 PM**

**The Filson Historical Society, 1310 S. Third Street**



Celebrate Native American Heritage Month at a panel discussion about Indigenous sovereignty and citizenship. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Snyder Act, which granted U.S. citizenship to Native Americans — a

milestone that continues to resonate deeply within Indigenous communities. Locust Grove and The Filson are partnering for this panel discussion.

Our panelists, each bringing their unique perspectives as Native individuals, will engage in a crucial dialogue on the complexities, challenges, and enduring importance of Indigenous sovereignty within the United States.



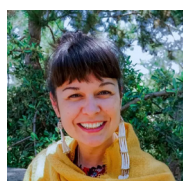
### **Moderator:**

**Raina Melvin** (Comanche Nation)  
— Locust Grove's Director of  
Programming and Engagement

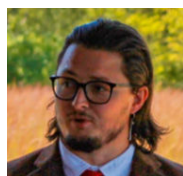


### **Panelists:**

**Dr. Liza Black** (Cherokee Nation)  
— author and professor at Indiana  
University



**Brandie Macdonald** (Chickasaw  
Nation) — Indiana University's  
Museum of Archaeology and  
Anthropology executive director



**Logan York** (Miami Tribe) — Tribal  
Historic Preservation Officer for the  
Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

This partnered event will take place  
at The Filson Historical Society, 1310 S.  
Third Street in Louisville. [Click here for  
reservations](#) (required).

## **Emilie Strong Smith Chamber Music Concerts**

The 41st season of Locust Grove's Chamber Music continues to present music that the Clarks and Croghans would have enjoyed in the early to mid-1800s. This season, the concerts will be in three settings — on the second floor of the historic house, in the Visitors' Center Audubon Room, and in the outdoor covered Pavilion. Individual tickets are \$22, or there are four Subscriber levels with additional benefits. [Click here to purchase subscriptions or individual tickets.](#)

### **Tudor Music from the Bottom of the Sea**

**Sunday, November 17,**

**Doors open at 5 PM; Concert begins at 5:30 PM**

*Second Floor of the Historic House*

On November 17th, you can ascend into the Great Parlor at Locust Grove and hear music connected to Henry VIII.

In July 1545, King Henry VIII's Flagship, *The Mary Rose*, sank during a battle near Portsmouth, England. In the hold was a cache of instruments. The ship was raised in 1988, and some 19,000 artifacts were recovered, including two Renaissance fiddles.

This program of Tudor-era music will be played on faithful reproductions of those sunken fiddles.

This concert will be held on the second floor of the historic house. Please keep in mind that there are stairs to reach the concert. Admission is \$22 for Non-members and \$20 for Members. You also can become a Chamber Music Subscriber, which includes tickets to three other concerts throughout the year. Check out our [website](#) for more information.



## **February Wednesday Afternoon Lecture**

**Speaker: Dr. Jacqueline Hudson**  
**Filson Historical Society**

**Wednesday, February 5, 2025**

**12:45 PM, doors open for refreshments,**

**1:15 PM, lecture begins**

Specific information about the subject of the lecture will be announced in January 2025 on Locust Grove's [website](#) and to email subscribers.

## **Locust Grove's Website Wins Award**

Locust Grove's new website has won **Best Museum Website Design** in the Web Excellence Awards — a group that recognizes and honors global excellence in web design. Kudos to Locust Grove's Director of Programming and Engagement **Raina Melvin**, Marketing Coordinator **Harlan Dawkins**, and **Landslide Creative** of Nashville, Tenn., for creating the website. [Click here](#) to explore Locust Grove's new website.



# EVENTS cont'd.

## Special Holiday Book Sale

**Members' Preview — Thursday, Dec. 5, 10 AM – 7 PM**

**Open to the Public — Friday — Sunday, Dec. 6 – 8,  
10AM – 4:30 PM**

***"Books make great gifts because they have whole worlds inside of them." Neil Gaiman***

At Locust Grove's Holiday Book Sale, you'll find a world of unique gift-worthy books in this special book sale. You'll find timeless classics and rare editions. Stunning books on art and artists, food and cooking, music and musicians, architecture and gardens, the Earth and space, vintage and unique children's books, and so much more. There's always a large collection of specially priced holiday-themed books for children and adults as well. Whether you're looking for a meaningful literary treasure or a special stocking stuffer, you'll find it at Locust Grove this holiday season.



## Winter on the Farm

**Saturday, Dec. 7, 10 AM – 4:30 PM**



It's a day of holiday cheer, music and fun for the whole family. Included are tours of the historic home in full holiday regalia, historic hands-on activities such as making orange pomanders, and a holiday-themed performance at 3:00 p.m. by the talented students at **Lincoln**

**Elementary Performing Arts School.** Plus, **Cafecito**, a Mexican coffee truck, will be on hand with Mexican hot chocolate, coffee, and Mexican baked treats.

In the Audubon Room will be the big Holiday Book Sale. Locust Grove volunteer and stellar baker **Judy Chang** will have a huge array of her special holiday baked goods for sale. And there are specials on books, foods, and holiday gifts in the Museum store — 25 percent off everything including sale items for members and not-yet-members will get 10 percent off everything.

Admission to Winter on the Farm's house tour is \$5 adult; children under 12; free. Admission to the Book Sale, Museum Store, and Gallery is free, as always.



## Museum Store Holiday Sales

Locust Grove's Museum Store celebrates the season with special discounts for members and all visitors. The store focuses on a wide selection of hand-crafted items, locally owned businesses, and Kentucky-themed merchandise to give as gifts — or to take home for yourself.

**Friday & Saturday, Nov. 29 & 30**

Members save 25 percent on everything, including sale items. Not-yet-members save 10 percent.

**Thursday, Dec 5: Book Sale Members' Preview Day**

Members save 30 percent off everything in the store.

**Friday – Sunday, Dec 6 – 8:**

**Book Sale and Winter on the Farm Weekend**

Members save 25 percent on everything in the store, including sale items. Not-yet-members save 10 percent.

**Tuesday – Saturday, Dec. 10 – 21: Holiday Clearance**

All remaining winter and holiday items will be 30–50 percent off. Members will receive their additional 10 percent discount.



## Cozy Winter Yoga

**Tuesday, February 18, 2025, 6:30 – 8 PM**

By the fireplace in the Audubon Room, you'll have a rejuvenating yoga. Unwind and stretch, guided by experienced instructors from **Studio Hustle**. Whether you're a seasoned yogi or just beginning your journey, this session promises peace and balance. Connect with your breath and let the stress of the outside world melt away. This is a donation-based class in partnership with local business Studio Hustle. To register for the session, [click here](#).



## NEW LOCUST GROVE STAFF MEMBERS



### Ronnie Dreistadt

Ronnie came to Locust Grove last year to be our part-time **Education Coordinator**, leading school groups and assisting with children and family programs.

He previously served in various roles at the Kentucky Derby Museum, which included leading its outreach program as well as serving as the Curator of Education where he led all outreach, virtual and in-house programming. He has designed, developed and taught many education programs to all age levels in a variety of curriculum disciplines.

His first love, however, is history. After leaving the Derby Museum in 2021 to pursue other professional interests, he was excited for the opportunity to be a part of the outstanding educational tradition at Locust Grove.

He has also worked at the Muncie Children's Museum in Muncie, Ind., and at the Culbertson Mansion State Historic Site in New Albany.

He fell in love with museum education as a college student at Indiana University Southeast, where he obtained a B.A. in History. He also holds an M.A. in Secondary Education from Spalding University.

Currently, he also works for the Veneto Collaboratory where he helps develop experiential programming for museums and cultural attractions nationwide. He lives in Sellersburg, Ind., with his wife Shellie and three children, Jacqueline, Caleb, and Mary Kate.



### Lydia Lewis

Lydia joined the staff this summer as our **Development and Membership Coordinator**, working on our fundraising efforts, including annual appeal, grant-writing, the capital campaign, sponsorships, and other fundraising events and programs. She is excited to support the important work of Locust Grove in our community and to raise funds for these efforts by helping to grow our membership and sponsors.

She came to Locust Grove from the World Affairs Council of Kentucky and Southern Indiana where she was the Sister Cities Program Manager. She also worked as the Volunteer Coordinator at Louisville Grows.

Lydia has a lifelong interest in history, beginning with a love of American Girl dolls and historical diary novels, then blossoming into visiting museums like Locust Grove. She received her B.A. in History and International Relations from Sweet Briar College in Virginia and has studied at St. Anne's College, Oxford University in England and at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. She has an M.A. in International Development from the Graduate Institute of Geneva in Switzerland.

Lydia comes from a musical family. Her mother is a regular performer with the Locust Grove Chamber Music concert series. Lydia is a classically trained singer and self-taught guitarist. This has taken her from St. Paul's Cathedral in London to the foothills of the Dolomites in northern Italy on performance tours.

She is a member of the Louisville Chamber Choir and is looking forward to upcoming performances of *The Messiah* with the Louisville Orchestra and of *Benjamin Britten's Ceremony of Carols* at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Anchorage.



## FAREWELL AND THANK YOU

We are saddened by the loss of **Edyth Wheeler**, who volunteered for us in several capacities. She originally came to us through her participation in the Jane Austen Society's Louisville chapter. During their annual festival here, she was usually stationed in the hospitality room, ready with a jar of Nutella or some other sandwich fixings for whoever needed a snack.

She was open and friendly and quickly became buddies with everyone, including our former Marketing Director **Hannah Zimmerman**. Hannah was updating our dairy and recruited Edyth to demonstrate butter-making for school tours and events. From there, Edyth started working in the Museum Store and quickly became friends with even more people. She always had a smile on her face when greeting guests, volunteers, or staff. And we all appreciated her kindness and positive attitude.



Before she came to Locust Grove, Edyth had a career as an author and educator in early childhood education, with a Ph. D. from George Mason University in Virginia. For 17 years, she was a Professor at Towson University in Maryland where she ran the Early Childhood Education Graduate Program.

Edyth always had lots of fun stories about her family, her travel, her career, and many anecdotes about her little dog, Sudds. Although we never met him, we seemed to know him well through her and felt his passing. We all looked forward

to hearing about her life stories, including her most recent vacation with her daughter to the Caribbean. Edyth lived a life which most people aspire to, and she lived it to the fullest. Her passing leaves a hole in our hearts and we all will miss her.

### LOCUST GROVE'S WINTER SCHEDULE



***We will be open during the days following Christmas — on Dec. 26, 27, and 28.*** (In the past few years we've been closed during that time, not as a matter of policy but instead due to construction projects on site.)

Then ***in January***, the site will be closed to the public for tours and no events are scheduled. ***In February***, the site will continue to be closed for tours, but some programs

such as the lecture series and yoga will take place.

***However, during those first two months of the year, our offices will be open for business*** such as planning, inquiries, rental contracts, book donations, and more.

***On March 1, we're back on the regular Tuesday-Saturday schedule.***

# HISTORIC LOCUST GROVE DONATIONS

Donations received from August 1 through October 31, 2024.

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

## Donations, Annual Fund, Other Gifts

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Jalane & Fred Anderson  
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Paul & Elizabeth Bergmann  
A. Blanford  
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### In Memory of Edyth Wheeler

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Virginia Cleveland  
Irene Rawlings  
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### In Honor of Andrea Merriweather

Tyra Fullam

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Anonymous Donor

## Grants

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Kentucky Humanities in  
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MSD Urban Reforestation Program

## Capital Campaign

The Alden Foundation

## Annual Fund Societies

**For people donating \$250 and up to  
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through October 31, 2024**

### George Rogers Clark Society (\$5,000+)

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## A TREE-MENDOUS VIEW!

The next time you're walking the grounds at Locust Grove, feel free to pause for a while on the "tree chair"



to be treated to a beautiful view of the grounds. This delightful feature was a fortuitous discovery when a tree that had to be taken down split into what looked like a chair. A bit of cutting and sanding and it's now a charming addition.



Historic Locust Grove  
561 Blankenbaker Lane  
Louisville, KY 40207  
(502) 897-9845  
[www.locustgrove.org](http://www.locustgrove.org)



Locust Grove is accredited  
by the American Alliance  
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