

Tiffin Historic Trust, Inc. • PO Box 333 • Tiffin, Ohio 44883-0333

Summer, 2024

Join Us in Our Own Backyard for the Annual Dinner & Awards Meeting

The Planning Committee for the June 13 Annual Membership Dinner and Awards Meeting decided to take advantage of the hard work done by our team of gardeners and eight local Boy Scouts from Troops 444 and 499. Instead of going to a local restaurant, for the first time the Annual Meeting is taking place in the Grammes-Brown Victorian Garden and Carriage House.

The event will begin at 5:30 p.m. with an opportunity to mingle and meet other members and friends of the Historic Trust while enjoying appetizers and a glass of wine or beer from the cash bar, followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m. catered by The Chandelier. There will even be a 50/50 drawing, so remember to bring some extra cash with you.

The guest speaker, Josh Dubbert, is the Hayes Presidential Center Historian and Victorian History Specialist whose interests include nineteenth-century American Victorian culture and architecture.

This year's Preservation Awards include some spectacular projects and special recognitions! The recipients will have an opportunity to describe their work.

The Business Meeting includes the election of Trustees and Officers; approval of the year-long work of the Strategic Planning Committee; a newly phrased Mission Statement; and a new set of Bylaws that are in compliance with current standards for non-profit organizations.



Remarks from the President Tim McKee



It has surely been a busy spring here at the Historic Trust! For the last year we've been working diligently on updating our organization Bylaws. In reviewing our

current documentation with resources from the Ohio Attorney General's office, it became clear that our Bylaws required a complete re-write. I'm pleased that we have finalized this document and it will be presented to the membership for ratification at the Annual Dinner and Membership Meeting.

Speaking of the Annual Dinner Meeting, we are so excited to host the event at the Grammes-Brown garden and carriage house!

We've added additional lighting, electrical outlets and a 75" TV for presentations. I'm pleased to announce that all of these upgrades were completed at no cost to the Trust through donations! In addition, much work has been accomplished in the garden. The garden club has done a fantastic job as always getting the garden in shape for the season.

We were also lucky enough to enlist the help of local Boy Scout troops to help with cleaning of the Carriage House, as well as the garden. The scouts did an incredible job! We greatly appreciate their assistance. Personally, I found it gratifying to work with the scouts and teach them a bit about the Historic Trust, the history of the property and why it's important to honor our heritage. Even these small opportunities

can help recruit our next generation historians.

As we move into our next fiscal year, we have many new and exciting events and resources available to our membership and the community as a whole. As a part of this process, we will be sending out a survey to our membership to gain better insight into the direction and programming offered by the Trust. We will use this information to continue to develop and fine tune our various offerings. When you receive your survey, I hope you'll spend a few minutes to complete it to help guide us into the future.

I'm looking forward to meeting many of you at the upcoming Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner and look forward to the ever evolving mission of the Tiffin Historic Trust.

Minutes of the Tiffin Historic Trust Annual Meeting, May 11, 2023

**6:00 p.m., Ironwood Steakhouse
4399 S. SR 231, Tiffin, Ohio**

Board Members Present: Nevin Martin, Karin Brown, Doug Collar, Brook Edwards, Jackie Fletcher, Mary Lewis, Robb Mack, Joan Martin, Vicki Ohl, Mike Pinkston, Jacob Price, Nancy Rubenstein, Jade Wagner, Ashley Woodruff

Not Present: Jan Betz

At 6:30 p.m. President Nevin Martin welcomed members and guests to the Annual Membership and Awards Dinner Meeting held at the Ironwood Steakhouse on May 11, 2023. He then introduced Donna Gross, the Downtown Tiffin Main Street Manager. Gross described her return to Tiffin and the establishment of her fitness business, Releve' Barre Studio. In February 2023 Gross replaced Amy Reinhart as Downtown Tiffin Main Street Manager. New to the position, Gross is learning the joys of downtown preservation, such as the discovery by Kip Keiffer of Tiffin Capital Investments, of an old advertising mural found while restoring 31 Court Street. Gross noted the availability of Tiffin Façade Grants. Curtis King gave the dinner invocation.

Following dinner, John Reino, owner of Reino's Pizza and Pasta, presented "An Insider's Glimpse of Business History in Tiffin's Historic District," a fascinating and amusing history of the numerous eateries and taverns that existed in downtown Tiffin, focusing on his own family's establishment in 1950 of a hamburger restaurant that later became Tiffin's oldest pizzeria.

Presentation of the Historic Preservation Awards is always a special portion of the meeting. This year's Nevin E. B. Martin Award given in memory of the Martin family's father, an early member of the board, was given by Lydia Atkin to Nevin and Katlyn Martin for their efforts in encouraging historic preservation in addition to their work on their own home at 238 Melmore Street. Doug Collar congratulated the Historic Preservation Plaque

recipients for their restoration work contributing to Tiffin's rich historic architecture. Preservation Awards went to:

Kit Tiell and Skylar Mettert for 92 South Washington Street, The Social Cigar store

Jacob Price and Jade Wagner for 95 Sycamore Street

Doug and Elaine Schubert for 201 Sycamore Street

Ryan and Marla Shultz for 472 South Washington Street

Saint Joseph Catholic Church at 36 Melmore Street, accepted by Rev. Anthony Coci

Cody and Rachel Myers for 252 Melmore Street

The Annual Membership Business meeting followed the presentation of awards. Doug Collar moved to approve the minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting, seconded by Jacob Price. The minutes were approved. Brook Edwards moved to accept the proposed budget for 2023-2024, seconded by Curtis King. The motion carried. The nominations committee of Joan Martin, Doug Collar and Jan Betz presented Amanda Davidson, Nevin Martin, Brook Edwards and Jackie Fletcher to serve a three year board term expiring in 2026. Jacob Price nominated Katelin Romick to fill the vacant position. Joan Martin moved and Jade Wagner seconded approval of the slate of trustees. The committee nominated the slate of officers to serve one-year terms: President, Nevin Martin; Vice-President, Jacob Price; Treasurer, Mike Pinkston; and Secretary, Nancy Rubenstein. Phyllis Watts moved to accept the proposed slate of officers, seconded by Barb Spitler. The motion carried. Jackie Fletcher and Mary Lewis were elected to serve as the 2023-2024 Nominations Committee.

Katelin Romick moved to adjourn at 8:40 p.m., seconded by Curtis King. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Rubenstein, Secretary

2024 Nominations Committee Report

Presented by Mary Lewis and Jackie Fletcher

Nominations to the Board of Trustees

Term Expiring 2027

Karin Brown

Rachel Crooks

Jennifer Kahler

Amber Clason

vacancy

Nominations for Officers, 2024-2025

President: Tim McKee

Vice President: Amanda

Davidson-Johnston

Treasurer: Mark Levans

Secretary: Nancy Rubenstein

Nominations Committee, 2024-2025

Jennifer Kahler, Katelin Romick,

Nancy Rubenstein

Current Members Board of Trustees

Term Expiring 2024: Karin Brown, Jennifer Kahler

Term Expiring 2025: John Bing, Mark Levans, Mary Lewis, Tim McKee, Nancy Rubenstein

Term Expiring 2026: Amanda Davidson-Johnston, Jackie Fletcher, Katelin Romick, vacancy, vacancy

TIFFIN HISTORIC TRUST
PROPOSED BUDGET FOR JULY 1, 2024-JUNE 30, 2025

	BUDGET 2023-2024	ACTUAL 9 Months 7/1/23-3/30/24	PROPOSED BUDGET 2024-2025
Income			
Membership	\$1,300	\$1,088	\$2,500
Donations/Memorials	\$10,600	\$7,383	\$5,000
Events	\$1,500	\$6,236	\$10,000
Rental Income	\$5,400	\$4,050	\$5,400
Goods Sold	\$50	\$108	\$225
Fundraisers	\$6,000	\$0	\$4,000
TOTAL INCOME	\$24,850	\$18,865	\$27,125
Expenses			
Advertising/Marketing	\$950	\$42	\$900
Accounting/Fees/Licenses	\$600	\$1,003	\$1,000
Insurance	\$3,600	\$2,535	\$3,200
Utilities	\$1,800	\$2,912	\$3,000
Office Expenses	\$200	\$509	\$600
Maintenance/Repairs	\$5,200	\$1,402	\$5,000
Internet/Phone	\$550	\$916	\$1,175
Contracting/Professional Fees	\$500	\$325	\$500
Events/Education	\$1,700	\$250	\$2,000
Transfer to Endowment	\$9,750	\$0	\$9,750
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$24,850	\$9,894	\$27,125

Budget Committee: Mary Lewis, Mark Levans-Treasurer

National Historic Preservation Month Proclamation Presented by Mayor Wilkinson

The regularly scheduled Historic Trust board meeting was delayed a day in order for President Tim McKee to attend the May 6 City Council Meeting. McKee was joined by founding member Mary Lewis and Secretary Nancy Rubenstein



who were in attendance to accept the City of Tiffin Mayoral Proclamation declaring May as National Historic Preservation Month.

In accepting the award, President McKee described the role of the Historic Trust for those unfamiliar with the organization. Noting that the goal of the group is to advance historic preservation, he emphasized that the Trust is

New Mission Statement Approved

During the Special Meeting of the Tiffin Historic Trust Board of Trustees on Sunday, August 20, 2023, Amanda Davidson-Johnston presented the proposed new Mission Statement which was approved by the board on June 3, 2024:

To Preserve and cultivate the historic heritage and architecture of the Tiffin-Seneca community through advocacy, collaboration, and education.

The proposed Bylaws that are to be approved at the Annual Meeting on June 13 provide an expanded explanation:

Article II: Purpose & Legal Powers

2.01 Purpose

(A)The Trust shall be a non-profit organization operated for education and charitable purposes within the definition of section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding section of any future amended Federal tax code.

(B)The Trust shall promote the preservation of historic properties through education, awareness, community collaboration, and public functions in the greater Tiffin Area/Seneca County Community and other such historic purposes that further the adopted mission of the organization as approved by the membership.

New Bylaws Waiting for Approval

The Strategic Planning Committee spent much of the past year working on updating the Tiffin Historic Trust's Bylaws to better reflect the goals of the Tiffin Historic Trust and to bring them up to date and in compliance with current requirements of non-profit organizations.

Copies of both the previous Bylaws and the new expanded Bylaws are posted on the Historic

also refocusing on being an educational and collaborative resource for the community. He commented that, although sometimes it is not in the best interest of the community to save a building, alternative solutions might exist such as moving it to a different location. Ultimately the Historic Trust's mission is to preserve our community history through its architecture.

McKee also invited members of City Council and the community to attend the May 20 Heritage Ohio Workshop on "Financial Tools and Incentives for Downtown Revitalization" that is being locally co-sponsored by the Historic Trust and TSEP. He also encouraged council members to join the Tiffin Historic Trust to be aware of our efforts and achievements. Notable within Tiffin is the work that was done to earn the designation of six Historic Districts within the National Register of Historic Places with signage provided by the Historic Trust.

Local Scout Troops Lend Their Hands and Backs to the Historic Trust

By Tim McKee

Local Boys Scouts from Troop 444 (St. Joseph's Catholic Church) and Troop 499 (Clinton Volunteer Fire Department) spent Saturday morning, April 27th, at the Tiffin Historic Trust headquarters assisting with cleanup in preparation for our Annual Meeting.

As part of Scouting's commitment to public service, eight youths from the two units participated in clearing the Carriage House at the back of the property behind the Grammes-Brown house.

Scouts, along with three members of our Board, moved materials, washed the walls & floors, and worked on raking, weeding and garden cleanup.

Trust Vice-President Jackie Fletcher thanked the youth for their hard work, noting that they "exceeded expectations," and did a "beautiful job." The work assisted our organization and also provided some educational opportunities by introducing the Scouts to the history of the home and the Trust's mission.

"This project was a joint effort between multiple Scout units and is the kind of service Scouting is known for," said Brook Edwards, Arrowwood District Chairman for Boy Scouts and Troop 444 parent. "As an organization, Scouting has had a long history of service to its community. The eight Scouts present today did a wonderful job and are looking forward to other opportunities such as these in the

community." According to Edwards, the Scouts provided thirty hours of service to our organization; we greatly appreciate their hard work and commitment to bettering our community!

Tiffin Historic Trust President
Tim McKee



Social Media with Katelin Romick



Social media coordinator Katelin Romick provided an update on how the Historic Trust is incorporating contemporary communications to promote the organization and its events.

She reports:

We've begun doing social media advertising for increasing our membership through

targeted ads.

I did a few Facebook and Instagram posts to generate interest in our recent event "Financial Tools & Incentives for Downtown Revitalization" while also promoting National Historic Preservation Month (using tools from @ Saving Places & The National Trust for Historic Preservation).

We have also been promoting our upcoming Annual Dinner and Preservation Awards Meeting by making a Facebook event page and doing multiple posts. We did 'partner posts' to support other involved community businesses such as The Chandelier Community Event Center (our caterer) and The Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Museum & Library (our guest speaker) for the upcoming event. In turn, these businesses have also shared our posts.

I did a radio interview on Friday, May 17th, with WTTF, and we did 2 weeks' worth of radio commercials to promote our Annual Dinner and Awards Meeting.

Expect to see the Tiffin Historic Trust in the news on many different electronic venues.

and Vice President Jackie Fletcher pose with the eight Boy Scouts who spent their Saturday clearing and cleaning the Historic Trust's Carriage House in preparation for the June 13 Annual Meeting.



Local Preservation News

Recognized as Among the Endangered by Preservation Ohio



The Octagon House on the Heidelberg Campus, 297 East Perry Street

The Octagon House

The Octagon House is threatened more by neglect than an intentional threat of demolition. Built in 1852 by Heidelberg professor of mathematics Jeremiah Good, it served as his family residence. In later years it had various owners, was subdivided into apartments, and in the 1960s it was rented for use as a men's dormitory. In 1979, the Octagon was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, being one of twelve buildings listed as the "Heidelberg College Multiple Resource Area." In 2007 the University purchased the property and over the years students have used it as a subject for their research projects. The University has not determined the best future for the building. It currently is used for storage and receives a minimum of maintenance. According to the description provided with the Endangered Historic Sites listing there is an organization willing to relocate the house on donated land.

[https://www.wikiwand.com/en/The_Octagon_\(Heidelberg_University\)](https://www.wikiwand.com/en/The_Octagon_(Heidelberg_University))

Despite all of its efforts and accolades for its work to promote Downtown Tiffin and its recent honor of being designated as an accredited Main Street America program, the City of Tiffin has now garnered the unfortunate status of having two of its iconic historic buildings included on Preservation Ohio's 2024 List of Ohio's Most Endangered Historic Sites! <https://preserveohio.com/2024/05/12/announcing-the-2024-list-of-ohios-most-endangered-historic-sites/>



In 2007 several Tiffin Historic Trust members joined the Friends of Beeghly Library to tour Heidelberg's Octagon House.



The Cunningham House, TCS Administration Offices

As reported in the Winter/Spring 2024 Issue of the Preservation Post, the Tiffin City Schools Administration Building, originally built as the A. A. Cunningham House at 244 S. Monroe Street, is slated for removal to make way for the redesigned Columbian High School. Local architect George Netcher built it in 1904. (The stucco house next door was just demolished by Tiffin City Schools.)

Tiffin Hosts a Heritage Ohio Workshop on Financial Incentives for Revitalization



Matt Wiederhold from Heritage Ohio and Donna Gross, Tiffin's Main Street Manager

Tiffin Historic Trust approached local government agencies with a proposal to cosponsor the Heritage Ohio workshop "Financial Tools and Incentives for Downtown Revitalization." Tiffin-Seneca Economic Partnership (TSEP), agreed to join the Trust in bringing the program to town on May 20, 2024, at the Chandelier Event Center. The Ohio Department of Development was also a sponsor. Attendees came from around the state as well as Tiffin.

Matt Wiederhold, Executive Director of Heritage Ohio, opened the meeting by asking "Why do we care about old buildings?" He replied, "Because they cannot take care of themselves. Care was taken when they were built but it is up to us to maintain them." Why are so many new buildings replicating the architecture of the historic old downtown designs when the original buildings were senselessly demolished? Do these new constructions really capture the spirit of place of the originals? Displaying photos of successful renovations and adaptive reuse projects that took advantage of tax credit programs and grants, Wiederhold stressed their benefits as economic development programs: creating jobs, increasing housing, raising property values, encouraging heritage tourism, creating a social impact, resulting in overall downtown revitalization!

Abby Marshal from the State Historic Preservation Office provided the history and background of the *National Register of Historic Places*, begun in 1966, and the State Historic Register. Ohio is notable for being third in the country in number of listings. Marshal outlined the process to apply for inclusion and criterions used to determine the worthiness of the property.

A nomination first goes to the State Historic Preservation Office for review and then is sent to the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Board and, if approved, goes on to the National Park Service for final approval and listing in the *National Register of Historic Places*. Being included in *The National Register* indicates a property is worthy of preservation. It does not prevent owners from remodeling, repairing, altering or even tearing down a property!

Nathan Bevil from the State Historic Preservation Office presented an overview of the Certified Local Government (CLG) program at federal, state and Ohio History Connection website provides the process for becoming a CLG <https://www.ohiohistory.org/preserving-ohio/certified-local-governments/becoming-a-certified-local-government/> CLG communities can apply for the highly competitive CLG Matching Grants which can be used for projects to identify historic, architectural, and archaeological resources through surveys, to nominate properties and districts for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, for community education, and to preserve and rehabilitate historic properties.



Preservation Office presented Governments (CLG) program, a local government levels. The CLG communities can apply for the highly competitive CLG Matching Grants which can be used for projects to identify historic, architectural, and archaeological resources through surveys, to nominate properties and districts for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, for community education, and to preserve and rehabilitate historic properties.

Sam DeCillis, also from the State Historic Preservation Office, ran through the very detailed process of applying for Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits for income producing projects, not single use homes or condos. See <https://www.ohiohistory.org/preserving-ohio/historic-tax-incentive/federal-historic-rehabilitation-tax-credit/> for eligibility rules and application instructions.

The final presentation of the afternoon was by Lisa Brownell of the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) who described the Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program which provides a "tax credit to leverage the private redevelopment of historic buildings."

The project application process is complex, but the ODOD staff assists the applicants to work through the requirements. The review procedure considers historic documentation, demographics, the economic impact of the project, local participation, a cost benefit analysis, including the benefit to the state. For more information go to <https://www.ohiohistory.org/preserving-ohio/historic-tax-incentive/ohio-historic-preservation-tax-credit/?swpmtx=b824a7b35db1998b29308eb367d7e0ee&swpmtxnonce=6f35e1ed67>



Following the presentation the speakers answered questions from the guests.

Past Events

Tracing Your House's History

There was an overflow turnout in the Tiffin-Seneca Public Library Frost Kalnow Room on March 26 when

Becky Hill



Tim McKee introducing Guest Speaker, **Becky Hill**



presented her program "Tracing Your House's History." It had been ten years since she gave a similar program for the Trust and interest was very high. Hill provided an updated handout for the attendees. This was a perfect way for the Trust to resume its educational programming.

Open Houses



In April the Grammes-Brown House was open for self-guided and docent described tours. The first tours were part of Tiffin's Solar Eclipse celebrations on Saturday, April 6, and Sunday, April 7. On Saturday,

April 20 and Sunday, April 21, the Grammes-Brown House was again open as a participant in the Destination Seneca County "Be a Tourist in Your own Town" event. The tour guides reported they enjoyed meeting visitors new to Tiffin, including an English woman visiting friends, as well as former Tiffinites



Coming Events

Thursday, June 13, 5:30 p.m.

Annual Dinner, Preservation Awards and Membership Meeting at the Grammes-Brown Garden and Carriage House. Sold Out!

Date To Be Announced

The Seneca County Museum and Tiffin Historic Trust will Celebrate Seneca County's Bicentennial by holding a collaborative event, possibly in August, perhaps in the Grammes-Brown Carriage House. Wait for Details!

Sunday, December 8, 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Annual Holiday House Tour. Save the date to attend this year's tour, Tiffin Historic Trust's major fundraiser.



Victor Luminaire Pedestal Fan - Cincinnati Victor Company of Cincinnati, Ohio

by Brook Edwards

While serving as a docent at the Grammes-Brown House, I took a closer look at the fan in the dining room. We have an absolute treasure there and I wanted to share my findings.

The fan in question is a Victor Luminaire Pedestal Fan from the Cincinnati Victor Company of Cincinnati, Ohio. The fan was designed by C.D. Ryder and patented in 1929. According to lore, the company designed the fan for movie theaters and other venues that would need low light and air circulation. By the early 1930's the fans had become popular with funeral homes and undertakers as a way to provide low light and air circulation at the head of a casket. Normally, light-colored bulbs of red, pink, or very

light yellow were used to cast light at the head of the casket. The fan was used to provide a constant air stream over the body to help keep winged insects



from landing. Apparently, the company was concerned that the new product line would create a reputation for the company that tied them to "death," so they discontinued the line.

Jackie Fletcher recalls being told when the fan was donated that it was used when funerals were still held in homes.

The fans were made of cast iron on pedestals in two sizes, 53" and 70" with six guards on the front and an ornate grill on the back. (Our fan currently is in the dining room and is facing backward, which is the prettier side!) The fan has two-speed cycles and two switches, one



This is the taller version of the fan https://www.antiquesatlas.com/antique/cincinnati_victor_co_luminaire_funeral_fan_tall_a126/as1011a126



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I want to help preserve our architectural heritage. Please enroll my friend/relative as a member in the following category:

- Annual Memberships: New Member
- Individual \$25 Business/Corporate \$100
 Supporting \$75 Lifetime \$1000

Visit tiffinhistorictrust.org for membership details and benefits of becoming a member.

Name _____
Address _____

Phone _____
Email _____



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Our Mission

To Preserve and cultivate the historic heritage and architecture of the Tiffin-Seneca community through advocacy, collaboration, and education.

Tiffin Historic Trust Board of Trustees Officers

- Tim McKee (President)
Jackie Fletcher (Vice-President)
Mark Levans (Treasurer)
Nancy Rubenstein (Secretary)

Term Expiring 2024	Term Expiring 2025	Term Expiring 2026
Karin Brown	John Bing	Amanda Davidson-
Jennifer Kahler	Mark Levans	Johnston
Vacancy	Mary Lewis	Jackie Fletcher
	Tim McKee	Katelin Romick
	Nancy Rubenstein	

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