



CRIDERSVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY Newsletter

JANUARY - FEBRUARY - MARCH 2026

Annual BEEF & NOODLE DINNER

The Historical Society will be hosting our Annual Old-Fashioned Beef & Noodle Dinner on Thursday, April 30 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Cridersville Elementary School Cafeteria. This is one of our longest running and most successful fund-raising events.

The menu includes a generous portion of beef and noodles, mashed potatoes, applesauce, home-style bread, choice of dessert, and beverage. The donation for the meal is \$13.00. Tickets are available from Historical Society members or can be purchased at the door. Carry out orders will be available.

We hope you will be able to join us for an afternoon and evening of great food and good conversation.



Our dear and much-missed friend, Lori Bellman serving drinks at last year's Beef & Noodle Dinner. Unfortunately, Lori unexpectedly passed away on August 25, 2025.

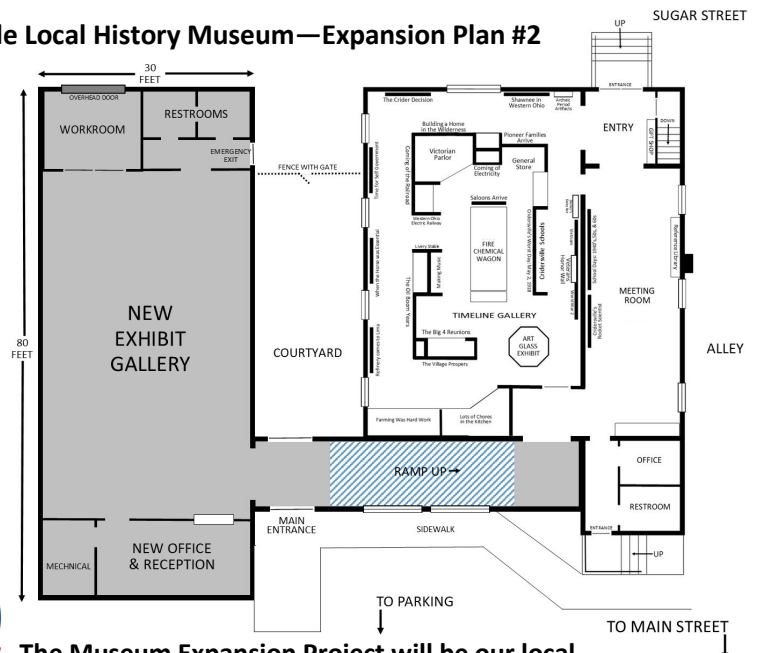
EXPANSION PLANS Change to Reduce Cost

As we have been moving forward with our expansion plans for the museum, our consultants have raised concerns about the load-impact on the west wall of the museum. The original wood-frame structure was built in 1880. The west wall contains four large windows. There is worry about the ability of this wall to carry the load of the proposed addition. With that in mind, our consultants are recommending we do borings filled with concrete for support columns to carry the load. This represents a significant additional cost for the project.

Considering these added costs, they have proposed an alternate design concept. It involves a separate 30'x80' structure west of the existing building connected with a hallway that would contain the ramp necessary to make the existing building fully accessible. This approach will reduce costs. Our board has recently approved the plan. Our consultants will now develop construction documents and cost estimates. We can then begin our fundraising campaign for the project. **We will keep you posted, as we move forward.**

Cridersville Local History Museum—Expansion Plan #2

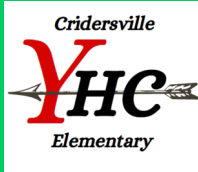
**MORE
SPACE
TO TELL
MORE
STORIES
ABOUT
OUR
LOCAL
HISTORY**



The Museum Expansion Project will be our local AMERICA 250 Commemorative Project.

Preserving Our Past For Future Generations

YOUNG HISTORIANS CLUB VISITS THE MUSEUM



This is now the fourth year for our Young Historians Club in partnership with Cridersville Elementary School. It has been a great success. This year the club has been focusing on the prehistoric peoples who lived in western Ohio during the Archaic Period.

Each year, the Club spends an afternoon at the museum for a private tour. We hosted the Young Historians on Monday, March 9.

Club members had the opportunity for an up close and personal viewing of Archaic Period stone and flint tools found in the Cridersville area—items made by people who were here 6,000 years ago. We know they were here, because they “left their stuff.”

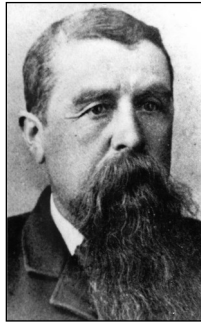
ARTIFACTS FROM OUR COLLECTION THAT YOUNG HISTORIANS WERE ABLE TO VIEW AND TOUCH



**There is a lot to
discover from our
local history!**

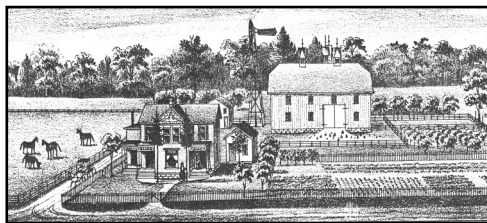
**Our Young Historians Club
enables our student members
to enjoy the fun of history.**

A Local History Biography JOHN REICHELDERFER



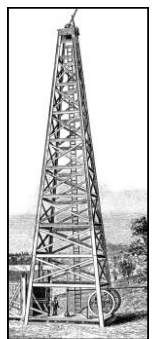
John Reicheldefer was born on March 31, 1841. He was the son of William and Sarah (Stepleton) Reichelderfer. He was one of their ten children. In the spring of 1862, he married Susan Crider, the daughter of Ephraim and Polly Crider, the founders of Cridersville. Susan and John had two children, Celestia and Edward.

On October 2, 1862, John enlisted in Company G of the 81st Ohio Volunteer Infantry to serve in the Civil War. He joined his regiment in Corinth, Mississippi. In the spring of 1863, he participated in the Atlanta Campaign under the command of General William Tecumseh Sherman. He witnessed the surrender of Confederate General Joseph E. Johnson in North Carolina, and participated in the Grand Review Parade in Washington DC at the end of the war. During his service, he attained the rank of Sergeant. After the war, he became actively involved in the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), a national Civil War veterans organization.



John and Susan lived with their children on a farm located on National Road, west of Cridersville. Their farmhouse remains today.

John was a successful farmer, farming more than 400 acres. Tragically, his wife Susan died in 1884. When oil was discovered in Lima in 1885, the oil boom soon spread to the Cridersville area. John had 12 oil wells on his farm. One of the wells was producing 20,000 barrels per year. With the added prosperity from oil, he invested in several business ventures in Cridersville, including a stockyard, lumber yard, and bank. In March of 1887, John married Sophia Danner, a local school teacher.



Auglaize County
Courthouse
in 1884

John was also actively involved in local government. He served as a member of the local school board and Duchouquet Township trustee. In 1884, he was elected an Auglaize County Commissioner. He retired from the Commissioners in 1891. His brother-in-law, Abraham Crider, had been elected an Allen County Commissioner in 1882.

John Reichelderfer died on December 20, 1904. At the time of his death, his estate value was \$65,000. In today's values, it would total \$2.4 million.



250th Celebration HOMCOMING & PICNIC IN CRIDERSVILLE

The America 250-Ohio Homecoming and Picnic program was created to promote and encourage communities across the state, to come together to honor our nation's history and Ohio's contributions over 250 years! Our local historical society is planning to host a picnic in Legacy Park on Saturday, July 25th. We invite you to join us in the celebration! We will be one of more than 100 local picnics planned throughout the state.

Plans for our picnic will include great food options, a Local History Tent with free Ohio history activity booklets, a Craft Tent with activities for children, old-fashioned kids games, a local history tour that will take you to visit local history sites including our



local museum and bring you back to the picnic, and much more! It will be a day of GREAT FUN! We invite you to join in the celebration!

The state-wide picnic program is being coordinated by the Ohio History Connection. The main sponsor for the initiative is Cenovus Energy with its local refinery in

Lima—a legacy of our region's Oil Boom Era from 1885-1910. If you would like to become involved in planning and participating at the picnic, please contact Greg Myers at 419-733-0568 or gmyers@bright.net. It will be a day to remember!



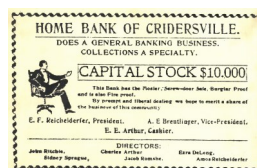
WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN IN THE FUN OF LOCAL HISTORY!

The HOME BANK of CRIDERSVILLE



The original Home Bank office in the Shaffer Block building, located in the 100 block of East Main Street.

John Reichelderfer founded the Home Bank in 1903. When he died in 1904, his son Edward assumed leadership of the bank.



The Home Bank building at 120 W. Main Street in 1962.

Advertisement for the Home Bank in 1910.



The bank prospered and grew in assets over more than a decade. On May 2, 1918, the bank's offices were destroyed in Criddersville's Great Fire. The only thing that survived the fire was the cast iron safe of the Home Bank. After it cooled, the safe was opened and the contents survived. The bank was one of the first businesses to rebound after the fire. It opened temporary offices in a home at 111 W. Main Street. Plans for a new building on the northeast corner of W. Main and Gay Streets began. The bank moved into the building in 1920. Its offices were in the west half of the building and the Stepleton Grocery—another business destroyed by the fire—was in the east half. The second floor provided space for lodge meetings.

The Home Bank merged with the First National Bank of Wapakoneta in 1961. A new branch office was built at 609 E. Main Street in 1963. Over the years, the 111 W. Main Street bank building has been the site of several businesses. Unfortunately, leaks in the roof have caused serious structural damage. The Village of Criddersville purchased the building in 2025. It is scheduled for demolition this year. It will provide space for future expansion of the Village Hall.



Dine & Donate
**FUND
RAISING
EVENT**

Beer Barrel

1840 S. Dixie Highway
Lima, Ohio

Friday, April 10, 2026
5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Enjoy an excellent meal and
our Historical Society will
receive 15% of your
total purchase from the
Beer Barrel for our
upcoming local history
museum expansion project.

This offer applies to dine-in
or carryout orders

**ENJOY A GREAT MEAL
FOR A GOOD CAUSE!**

You must tell your server
about this promotion.

OUR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Greg Myers, President
Lisa Lowry, Treasurer
Melanie Klouchek, Secretary

Board of Trustees:

Jerry Dicus Frank Valenti
Luann Everett Beverly Wood
Shaun Wenrick

MUSEUM HOURS

Second and Fourth Sunday

April through October

1:00 PM—4:00 PM

Special tours can be arranged throughout
the year by calling 419-733-0568



Learn more on our
Facebook page



MEMBER
**OHIO LOCAL
HISTORY ALLIANCE**
Inspire. Connect. Educate.

New to the Museum Collection



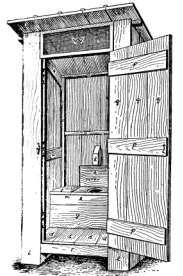
A TRULY REMARKABLE CHAIR

This Windsor-style chair was likely hand-crafted in the 1850s or 1860s. It served two purposes. It could be used for sitting. Or more importantly, it was designed for going to the restroom. It was called a “potty chair”. When needed, a panel in the seat could be lifted out of the chair revealing a chamber pot within a box beneath the seat.

After using the chair, the chamber pot could be removed through a door at the back of the chair, emptied, cleaned, and returned to the chair. The phrase “going to the

potty” likely came from the use of chamber pots.

Having a chair like this in your home prevented the need to walk outside the house to the family’s toilet known as the “outhouse” or “privy”. The development of indoor plumbing and bathrooms in the early 1900s, ended the need for chamber pots and outhouses.



OUTHOUSE



Don't forget to renew your membership.

—BECOMING A MEMBER—

Our mission is to save our local heritage for future generations. We do this through exhibits at our museums, our special public education programs, and our activities with local students.

**It is important work and it is fun.
We invite you to join us in the fun.**

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Individual — \$10 Student — \$5
Dual Membership — \$20 per couple
Patron Levels — \$50, \$100, or \$250
Corporate Levels — \$100 or \$250

Please make membership payments to:

Cridersville Historical Society, P.O. Box 2444, Cridersville, Ohio 45806

CRIDERSVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

111 W. Sugar Street

P.O. Box 2444

Cridersville, Ohio 45806

Preserving Our Past For Future Generations