



# Society News

## Mark Your Calendar!

### HISTORIC DUBLIN WALKING TOURS

(see our website for details)

### COFFMAN HOMESTEAD

(see our website for more details)

### DHS SECOND SUNDAY SPEAKER SERIES

Location: Dublin Branch – Columbus Metropolitan Library

See the article in this newsletter for program dates and registration information.

### BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, April 28, 2026, 4–6:00 p

Dublin History Museum,  
35. S. High Street

### MUSEUM HOURS:

Friday, Saturday, Sunday: 12:00–4:00 p

Check our website [DublinOhioHistory.org](http://DublinOhioHistory.org) for special event hours



To learn about membership in the Society visit [DublinOhioHistory.org](http://DublinOhioHistory.org)

## Coming in Our Next Issue

### Dublin Celebrations

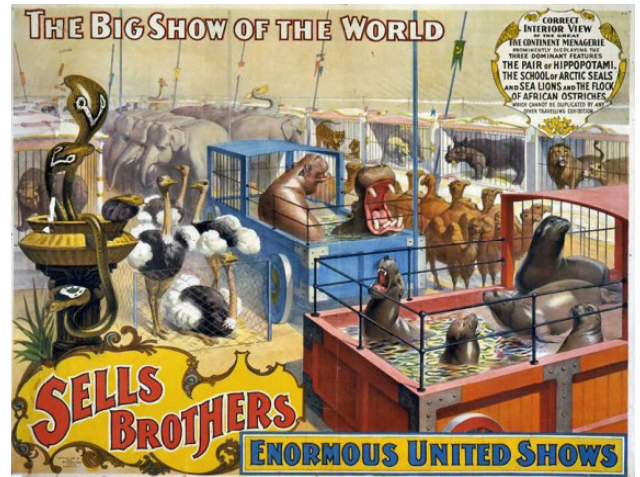
### Step Right Up!

Get excited as Dublin’s Historic District transforms itself into a vibrant tribute to the Sells Brothers Circus – weeks of festivities leading up to a once-of-a-kind Fourth of July parade. Plan on a special place and special time! Many details will be forthcoming in the May/June newsletter.

## The Sells Brothers Circus

### From Quiet Dublin to a National Stage

In the years following the Civil War, Dublin, Ohio was still a modest rural community—quiet streets, family farms, and a pace of life shaped by the rhythms of the Scioto River. Yet from this unlikely setting emerged one of the most celebrated circuses of the American Gilded Age. The story begins with four brothers—Lewis, Peter, Ephraim, and Allen Sells—whose ambition and showmanship transformed Dublin into the winter home of a world class traveling spectacle.



The Sells Brothers Circus officially launched in 1871, but its roots stretched back to the brothers’ early fascination with performance and exhibition. They began modestly, staging small shows and menageries, but their vision quickly expanded. By the mid 1870s, the brothers had established extensive winter quarters just north of Dublin. These grounds became a seasonal hub of activity: carpenters repairing wagons, seamstresses stitching elaborate costumes, trainers working with horses and elephants, and performers rehearsing daring acts that would soon astonish audiences across the country.

For Dublin residents, the circus was more than a business—it was a source of wonder. Children gathered near the grounds to watch acrobats practice or to catch a glimpse of exotic animals rarely seen in the Midwest. Local farmers sold hay and grain to feed the circus stock, and merchants supplied everything from lumber to lantern oil. The presence of the circus brought energy, color, and economic vitality to the village each winter.

By the 1880s, the Sells Brothers Circus had grown into one of the premier shows in the nation. It traveled on its own specially designed railroad train, a hallmark of the era’s great circuses. The show featured hundreds of performers, elaborate pageants, and a menagerie that rivaled any in the country. Their parade wagons—lavishly carved and brightly painted—were works of art that drew crowds long before the big top was raised. When the circus arrived in a town, it was an event: businesses closed, schools dismissed early, and thousands lined the streets to watch the grand procession.

The Sells brothers were innovators as well as showmen. They introduced themed spectacles that blended drama, choreography, and exotic imagery—“Arabian caravans,” “Roman chariot races,” and even simulated naval battles. Their productions pushed the boundaries

*Continued on page 2*

### DHS Museum Mission Statement

To provide the story of Dublin, and the surrounding area, through the sharing of our historical collections. Our purpose is to inspire and connect individuals to Dublin, while providing educational support and resources for research. | [DublinOhioHistory.org](http://DublinOhioHistory.org)



## Sells Brothers Circus (continued from page 1)

of what a circus could be, blending entertainment with theatrical storytelling. In doing so, they helped shape the golden age of American circus culture.

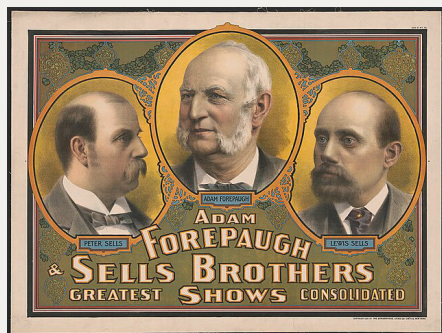
Despite their success, the brothers faced fierce competition from giants like P.T. Barnum and James A. Bailey. The circus industry was volatile, with rising costs, logistical challenges, and constant pressure to outdo rival shows. By the early 1900s, consolidation became inevitable. In 1907, the Sells Brothers Circus merged into the expanding Ringling empire, marking the end of its independent era. The Dublin winter quarters gradually fell silent, and the circus that had once brought national attention to the village became part of a larger story.

Yet the legacy of the Sells Brothers endures. Their influence lives on in photographs, posters, and the memories passed down through generations of Dublin families. The circus helped shape the identity of the community, reminding residents that extraordinary ambition can emerge from the most ordinary places. Today, as Dublin continues to grow and evolve, the echoes of circus wagons, trumpeting elephants, and cheering crowds remain part of its rich historical tapestry.

The Sells Brothers Circus was more than entertainment—it was a testament to creativity, resilience, and the power of imagination. And it all began right here, in the heart of Dublin, Ohio.



Title: Sells Brothers' enormous united shows--Rare zoological marvels ... Abstract/medium: 1 print (poster) : chromolithograph; c. 1895



Strobridge Lith. Co., Cincinnati & New York

## Enoch Fitz Henry (The Exile of Erin)

(Submitted by David Hartman)

According to his descendants, Enoch Fitz Henry was born in Armagh, Ireland on May 9, 1752. He was “pressed-ganged” or conscripted into the British Navy while on his way to school when he was thirteen years of age in 1765 and served on a British merchant vessel until the ship arrived in the West Indies. There, an epidemic of yellow fever decimated the crew. Having a decent education, he was soon appointed as ship’s clerk. This gave him a position of trust so that he was able to jump ship when it landed in New York.

He was living in Westchester County, New York at the time of the American Revolution. There he served the American forces under Major Samuel Lyon in March 1776. “Living near the enemy lines near New York City, he was constantly on alert, repelling the British and Tories from Morrison’s Point.” He fought at Danbury under General Rufus Putnam, at Horseneck, White Plains, Rye; Kingstreet and Stony Point under General Anthony Wayne. This information comes from his application for a soldier’s pension signed at Dublin, Ohio in 1832 and witnessed by the Reverend Benjamin Britton, John Sells and Dr. Albert Chapman.

After the Revolution he moved to Rutland, Vermont where he married Abigail Hartt. They were the parents of sixteen children. From Vermont the family moved back to New York and then from there to Pennsylvania. In 1815, the family moved to Coshocton County, Ohio until he and his wife moved to Mount Vernon, Ohio where they lived with one of their married daughters. Fitz Henry was a schoolteacher; he taught grammar and mathematics and when he lived in Dublin from 1829 until his death in 1835, he became the Washington Township clerk.

In April, 1825 he wrote a hauntingly poignant ballad about his youthful life in Ireland. It is entitled, “The Exile of Erin.” It reads in part:

*“There came to the beach a poor Exile of Erin  
The dew on his thin robe was heavy and chill  
For his Country he sighed when at twilight repairing  
To wander alone by the wind beaten hill  
But yet all its fond recollections suppressing  
One dying wish my lone bosom shall draw  
Erin, an Exile bequeaths thee his blessing  
Green be thy fields, sweetest isle of the ocean...”*

## Donations Always Needed

The Dublin Ohio Historical Society is a non-profit organization and funding of the museum, videos, city tours, special events, seminars are all funded by donations, corporate sponsors and grants. Donations of any amount are always welcome and are tax-deductible. You

**Thank you to Dublin Barber Shoppe for sponsoring this newsletter.**



## The “New” Coffman Homestead

The Coffman House is undergoing a refresh thanks to our generous donor Karen Gillmor. The Coffman House was restored around 1990 and after 35 years, it was time for some TLC. Tom Holton, Carol Homon and Marlen Mathias have headed up this project. Efforts were made to match paint colors, curtains and blinds to what was done in 1990. The upstairs bedrooms have been repainted, all new blinds have been installed, and all new curtains have been hung. Three new floor lamps were added as more lighting was needed in the parlor, dining room, and loft. The heavy stanchions were replaced with lighter weight ones.

John Leppert repaired the sink in the pantry and it now usable. With the help of IGS volunteers, Steve and Paula McCaw, Kari Parson, Rich Weber and Linda Zach, windows were cleaned, the home was dusted, and the pantry and closet under the stairs were cleaned and organized.

Additional work currently includes adding lights to make the kitchen brighter, repairing all four entry doors, installing screen doors, replacing the floor on the kitchen porch, painting the porch, putting a new Formica top in the pantry, reconfiguring the upstairs display case, and moving the dining room light over the table.

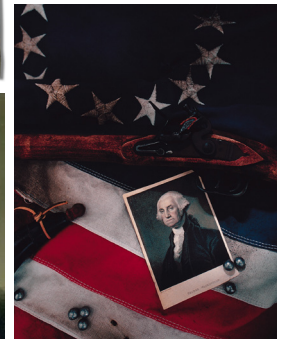
We are excited to have Chapman Elementary at the Coffman Homestead on May 7th and 8th as the first visitors to see the refreshed Coffman House.

The Coffman Homestead will be open monthly on the 3rd Sunday from 1 to 3:00 pm May through October, with special events at each open house. (See below)

### Special Attractions To Be Enjoyed At The Homestead:

*At all open house dates, pioneer games and free ice cream will be available.*

May 17th	Kids color a pot and take home a planted flower
June 22nd	Make a 1862 flag and take home
July 19th	Enjoy the Dublin Coronet Band
August 21st	Kids enjoy farm chores and learn farming tasks
September 20th	Kids create something with clay
October 18th	Apple games and Johnny Applesseed lore



## Second Sunday Speaker Series

Last Fall the Society inaugurated a new speaker series of short lectures pertaining to interesting Dublin-area topics. It quickly became so popular that the location had to be moved from the Museum to the Columbus Public Library on North High St, a now-permanent location. Thanks go to the Dublin branch of the Columbus Metropolitan Library for sponsoring the series. The recent presentation by Dr. Mark Stechschulte in which he discussed the history of medicine in Dublin was outstanding and was attended by over 100 people. Familiar Dublin names like Henry Karrer, Albert Chapman, Eli Pinney, Llewellyn McKtrick, and Harry Whitaker and their roles as early doctors in Dublin were discussed. Each program will be at 3:00PM on the second Sunday of each month, lasting an hour. The admission is free but a \$5.00 per person donation is appreciated or via our website @ dublinohiohistory.org. Here's the exciting schedule:

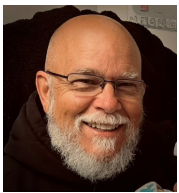
<b>May 10</b>	Dan Sullivan and Dave Shedloski, "The 50th Anniversary of The Memorial Tournament: Key moments in history and Jack's Inspiration"
<b>June 14</b>	Kathleen Fulmer Waler, "Honoring our Patriot Ancestors: A brief history of the DAR and highlights of other local patriots"
<b>July 12</b>	David Gerhardt, "The incredible story of Winifred Breegle: A naval cryptographer from 1944 until 1949"
<b>August 9</b>	Heather Miller, "The legacy and learnings of Wyandot removal: An intertwined history of the Wyandot and Dublin, Ohio"
<b>September 13</b>	Kevin Wood, "Abraham Lincoln: A new birth of freedom"
<b>October 11</b>	Becky Schisler, "Stories from 15 years of Dublin Ghost Walks"

**Reserve your seat at the Dublin Historical Society website, [DublinOhioHistory.org](http://DublinOhioHistory.org).** All ages are welcome. Admission is free. A voluntary donation of \$5.00 per person is appreciated. Check the website for more information and specific topics.



## Meet Our Trustees

### Perry Orange



Perry has been a Dublin resident for 24 years, and a member of the Dublin Historical Society for 5 years. His interest in history began at an early age. Originally from a

small town in southern NJ (Mt. Holly) which played an important role in the American Revolution.

Perry and his wife Angela, and their children Brad and Amanda moved to Ohio from Jacksonville, FL in 2002 for work.

Perry enjoyed a 38-year career with Prudential and Aetna in a wide array of positions in Operations. His experience with Call Centers, and Claim organizations earlier in his career, led him to leadership roles in Call/Claim Outsourcing. In this capacity travels took him to the Philippines, Jamaica, Columbia, and India. International responsibilities included Contract Negotiations, Performance Guarantee and Results Management, Process Improvement, Problem Solving, and Employee Satisfaction.

Perry retired in 2020. He and Angela enjoy time with their family more than anything. Married for 37 years, they are the proud parents of two and grandparents of five.

## Thank You Donors!

Nonprofit organizations cannot grow and flourish without considerable financial support. The Museum has certainly flourished, as evidenced by attendance, feedback, and awards. This could not have happened at its young age without generous support from donations and grants.

We want to thank those who have recently supported the Museum and the Society, including the City of Dublin grant, the Dublin Foundation grant, the Dublin Chamber of Commerce (\$500), Yoshi and Keiko Hidaka (\$500), the Catherine Ross Foundation (\$4,700), Mike and Ellen Jewell (\$1,200), Tom Bassett (\$200), Cap Clegg (\$3,000), Lynn and Clay Rose (\$3,000), and Karen Gillmor (\$10,000).

We also thank those who were able to contribute smaller amounts; these gifts are very much appreciated. Donations can be made on our website.

### Thank you very much!

*A special thanks to the City of Dublin for their continuing support.*



## Need Space for an Event or Meeting this Spring or Summer?

*Our rental space might be perfect for your needs.*

Looking for a small venue in downtown Dublin for an upcoming meeting or gathering? The Dublin Historical Society has a lovely indoor/outdoor rental space perfect for showers, meetings, small gatherings. Kitchen included so catering or coffee service from nearby restaurants makes it easy! We can allow access to the museum for your gathering if it would be enhanced with a taste of Dublin's rich history.

The best part — your rental fee is a donation to the society.

Email **Katie Cook** for details:  
[katie.cook@dublinohiohistory.org](mailto:katie.cook@dublinohiohistory.org)

## Great Museum Attendance

The Museum continues to enjoy popularity and good attendance, even through the Winter months. Visitors for 2026 to-date total 918. Since opening, there have been 6221 visitors from 43 states and 24 different countries. With special exhibits and America250, will it hit 10,000 this year?

## Be a Dublin Historical Society Volunteer!

Visit our website [DublinOhioHistory.org](http://DublinOhioHistory.org) to learn about the many opportunities available.

Volunteering at the Dublin Historical Society is a great way to learn more about history while helping to preserve the past for the enjoyment of future generations. Meeting new people, learning and sharing information and making a contribution to the Society are just a few of the benefits volunteers can receive for their time and efforts.

Here are some ways to make a difference:

- **Museum Staffing.** Meet and greet visitors to the DHS museum. Assist guests with questions and assist with guest registration. Hours extremely flexible.
- **Docents.** The Historical Society needs docents to give tours of the Coffman

Homestead and lead walking tours of the Dublin Historic District. Includes education and training. These are scheduled tours, so the dates and times are established in advance.

- **Communications.** If you have expertise in this area, we need people to write articles for our newsletter and to help maintain our website. *An immediate need is for people experienced in marketing, social media and technology enhancements.*
- **Educational Programming.** Volunteers are needed to develop programs and source speakers and help promote these events in the community at large.
- **Special Events.** We would appreciate help

from anyone who enjoys planning special events.

- **Fundraising and Corporate Sponsorship.** We need assistance fundraising and finding corporate sponsors for the Historical Society. This will also include membership drives and special events to increase our current membership base.

It's easy to become a DHS volunteer. Just simply go to our website at: [dublinohiohistory.org](http://dublinohiohistory.org) and click on the



'Volunteer' link and you can quickly sign-up there. Please come and join us!