

LCHS Opens County History Center in 155-Year-Old Washington Avenue Mansion

ELYRIA, OH (April 27, 2012) — The Lorain County Historical Society (LCHS) is pleased to announce the opening of the Lorain County History Center, located at 284 Washington Avenue, Elyria, Ohio. A Dedication and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will be held on its front lawn on May 11, 2012 at 2 p.m. After the ceremony, the History Center will open to the public. Souvenirs will be given to the first 100 visitors attending. The History Center's opening weekend hours are Friday 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. and Mother's Day Sunday, May 13 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Attending the Dedication and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will be LCHS Director Bill Bird, State Senator Gayle Manning, State Representative Matt Lundy, Mayor Holly Brinda, LCHS Board Members and Staff, along with many others.

Executive Director, Bill Bird said about the opening, "At The Hickories, we are preserving a wonderful building and presenting a house museum which interprets the lifestyle of an early 1900's family of means. At the History Center, we will continue to serve our preservation mission since this building was originally slated for demolition. However, our usage of the new space will be totally different in that we created a museum in a house, which will provide many valuable resources and educational opportunities for people to learn about the history of the entire county."

This center will be set up so that visitors may self-guide throughout the themed exhibits currently on view.

The Lorain County History Center regular hours are Tuesday through Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Admission is \$5 per adult and ages 13 to 18, \$3.00 and children 6 to 12, \$2.00 (Children under six and LCHS Members FREE). Group tours of 10 or more are welcomed and are \$4 per adult. Please call LCHS at (440) 322-3341 to schedule a tour.

Become a member of LCHS and visit the History Center for free. Visit LCHS.org to join. Membership levels include \$35 for family; individual \$25; sustaining \$60; patron \$125; and heritage \$250. Join an affiliate group such as the Women's Association for \$10 or The Elyria Historical Association for \$5 with an LCHS membership.

The Lorain County History Center contains seven new galleries for exhibits, the Johnson Library, new administrative offices and a gift shop. In addition, there is a significant increase in storage space, which will allow LCHS to continue to collect and properly preserve important county artifacts and archival materials well into the future. Two floors of the facility will be open to the public and each will have Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility. One of the major exhibit galleries will be dedicated to rotating exhibits provided from local historical societies in Lorain County as well as local industries and even private collectors. Appropriate climate, lighting, and security controls have been provided in all exhibit galleries.

The Lorain County History Center located in the renovated Horace Starr House, a large Italianate-style mansion. It, along with its carriage house were both built in 1857 and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Ohio Cultural Facilities Commission approved \$500,000 for the portion of the project that included installation of an ADA-compliant elevator and restrooms; installation of an HVAC system; electrical and plumbing updates; and interior and exterior repairs and painting, including restoration of both masonry and wood details.