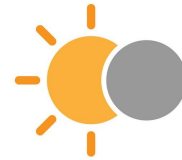




The Pioneer
The Quarterly Newsletter of the
The Early Settlers Association of the Western Reserve
<https://www.earlysettlers.org>



Greetings ESA members and friends. We hope this issue finds you well and will further our collective efforts to preserve and inspire greater understanding of the traditions of the Western Reserve.

From the President

Mary Artino, ESA President

Dear Members and Prospective Members,

I would like to invite you to join, or renew your annual membership in, the Early Settlers Association of the Western Reserve. Your membership helps sustain all aspects of the Early Settlers' activities and programming. Below please find our 2025 Upcoming Events and our membership form.



The Early Settlers Association of the Western Reserve is one of the oldest civic organizations in the area once known as the Connecticut Lands of the Western Reserve (Northeast Ohio). Its mission is to inspire greater interest in the history of Cleveland and the Western Reserve, to honor important historical events with appropriate commemorations, to mark historical places with enduring monuments and markers, to further the best interests of Cleveland and the Western Reserve by cooperation with other organizations for the achievement of worthy historical, civic, and cultural goals.

Please join us for another great year of programs and activities. Your membership is what enables us to continue our informative celebrations, support History Day and the Cleveland Landmarks Commission, and preserve Moses Cleaveland Heritage Trees, among other activities.

Wishing all of you an enjoyable summer. Feel free to drop me a line, I can be reached at this address and look forward to hearing from you:

artinoja@gmail.com Thank you and we look forward to seeing you in 2025!

REGION 3
OHIO
HISTORY DAY

**ESA Rewards Students
for Local History Work**

REGION 3
OHIO
HISTORY DAY

*by John Vacha, ESA 1st Vice President and
Historian*



Students from five area middle and senior high schools received a total of \$1,125 as winners of ESA's Gilbert True Western Reserve History awards in Ohio District 3 History Day at the Cleveland History Center on March 1.

Under the 2025 theme of "Rights and Responsibilities in History," winning local history topics included "Joishua Giddings and the Fight Against Slavery," "The Western Reserve College Slavery Crisis," "The Rights of John Demjanjuk," "Larry Doby: Knocking Racism Out of the Park," and "The Shaker Plan: Integration Through Busing."

Schools that placed in the winners' circle were Lutheran West Middle School, Birchwood School at Hawken, Western Reserve Academy, Shaker Heights High School, and Lutheran West High School.

Judging for the ESA awards was done by a team consisting of Mary Artino, Sarah True, Andrew Mellinger, Dirk Hermance, Bill Barrow, John Bourne, Mary Louise Daley, and John Vacha.

This year's contest marked the 51st anniversary of National History Day, founded in 1974 at Case Western Reserve University by the late David Van Tassel. Though the contest quickly spread to all fifty states, Ohio District 3 can claim primacy as "The Birthplace of History Day."



GIL TRUE FINISHES STORIED LIFE OF 91 YEARS

Early Settlers lost a long and valued member with the passing of Gil True. Ironically, Gil's death on February 11, 2025, came only a fortnight before the awarding of the recently renamed Gilbert True Western Reserve History prizes at History Day 2025 on March 1.

Gil had been fixture at past History Days, organizing the Early Settlers judging teams and later presenting the prizes at the awards programs. Before announcing the winners he would always give students a pep talk on the importance and value of local history.

Gilbert Marston True, born on August 6, 1933, was raised in Shaker Heights and attended University School. He earned a bachelor's degree in political science at Williams College, a master's in geography at Western Reserve University, and a doctorate in education at Kent State University. He later taught at Lake Erie College, Cuyahoga Community College, and Notre Dame College.

He met his future wife, Anna Wiecher, on shipboard returning from Germany, where he had been stationed while serving a two-year stint in the U.S. Army. They traveled extensively together, from Ecuador to Australia, with Kenya, China, and Russia in between. He and his family—Anna, daughters

Sarah and Lavinia, and son-in-law Khalil—also went camping and canoeing together.

Besides ESA, Gil was a member of Sons of the American Revolution, the New England Society, the Rowfant Club, and the Professional Men's Club of Cleveland.

And as ESA members can attest, Gil was also a great story teller. He will be missed.

Visit www.earlysettlers.org for the latest information on upcoming ESA events.



JOIN US!

***Cleveland's 229th
Birthday Celebration
&
Herrick Memorial
Award Presentation***

Tuesday, July 22, 2025 @ 11:00 am at Public Square

Please join us on Tuesday, July 22, 2025 at 11:00 am on Public Square as ESA celebrates Cleveland's 229th Birthday! All are welcome!

We will present this year's Herrick Memorial Award to Tony Sias, President and CEO of Karamu House.

Tony Sias

President and CEO of Karamu House, Inc.
America's Oldest Black Producing Theatre

Under Sias, since 2015, Karamu stabilized finances and raised over \$10 million for restoration and increased attendance. Prior to his tenure at Karamu, Sias served in several progressive roles for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) including Director of Arts Education and Artistic Director of Cleveland School of the Arts.



As a creative, Sias has produced, directed, and performed in over 100 productions. He most recently received critical acclaim for directing Karamu's production of Freedom on Juneteenth and in October 2021 Sias performed narration with The Cleveland Orchestra in Sinfonia No. 5 "Visions" by George Walker. His work has been highlighted nationally in The New York Times, American Theatre Magazine, on NBC's Today Show with Al Roker, and more.

Sias served as a delegate from the U.S. Department of State in Istanbul,

Turkey, representing the Council of International Programs in the Youth Arts for Peace Project. In 2018, he was inducted into The HistoryMakers, the largest African American oral history archive collection in the U.S. In 2019, Sias was named the Cleveland Arts Prize, Barbara S. Robinson award winner. In 2021, Sias received the Community Leader Award from Cleveland Magazine. He is a Fellow of the National Arts Strategies Chief Executive Program through Harvard Business School.

Sias serves as a National Board member for the League of Historic American Theatres. He is a Boards member of the Cleveland School of the Arts and the Assembly for the Arts. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in dramatic art from Jackson State University and a Master of Fine Arts in acting from The Ohio University.

ESA Website Updates

In case you haven't visited the ESA web site lately, we wanted to make you aware of some updated content:

- [language from the award plaques of the Herrick winners since 1994 now shows why they were selected](#)
- [latitude/longitude coordinated for our four markers](#) near the corners of the Western Reserve have been added
- [links to many of our Annals](#) and back issues of The Pioneer

Please visit us online at www.earlysettlers.org.

CALL FOR SERVICE

THE CLEVELAND LANDMARKS COMMISSION

The Early Settlers Association of the Western Reserve is actively seeking volunteers to fill openings on the Cleveland Landmarks Commission. If you or anyone you know are interested, please contact 216-631-0557 or e-mail bill.barrow@yahoo.com. In the Landmarks Ordinance of 1971, the Early Settlers Association, along with two other organizations, is charged with producing a list of suitable nominees to the Mayor for his consideration of appointment.

The Landmarks Commission is responsible for determining whether buildings, sites or historic districts are eligible for designation as landmarks. The Commission follows established criteria listed in the Cleveland Landmarks Ordinance and uses the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation to review proposed changes. The Commission conducts a continuing survey of historic properties within the City for the purposes of designation as a Cleveland Landmark and/or listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Landmarks Commission is an eleven-member board of preservation-minded individuals consisting of architects, historians, property owners, attorneys, Cleveland City Council representatives, the Director of City Planning, and the Commissioner of Architecture.”

Requirements for members of the Landmarks Commission:

1. The nominees must have, to the highest extent practicable, a known interest in landmarks preservation. We would like to see the nominees be free of pre-existing conflicts of interest for which she/he would need to recuse him or herself from voting on contentious questions.
2. Members must attend two meetings per month, Thursday mornings at 9 a.m. at City Hall. Meetings last two to three hours on average.
3. Members may reside anywhere within Cleveland, Ohio.
4. On occasion, Commissioners are asked to make site visits to buildings being reviewed for demolition.

Full terms are served for four years, and there is a small stipend.

ESA Upcoming Events

TUESDAY, JULY 22nd

CITY OF CLEVELAND'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Presentation of the Colors, Wreath Laying and
Historical Perspective at the Moses Cleaveland Statue
Presentation of the Herrick Memorial Award and Entertainment
Public Square -- 11:00 a.m.
Luncheon -- 12:00 noon

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH

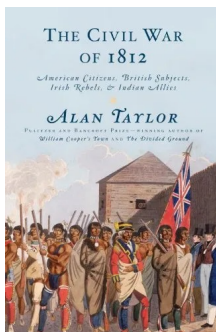
"BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE" VICTORY COMMEMORATION

Presentation of the Colors, Wreath Laying and
Historical Perspective at the Oliver Hazard Perry Statue
Fort Huntington Park -- 10:45 a.m.
Annual Meeting and Luncheon with Speaker -- 12:00 noon

DATE & TIME TBD

MOSES CLEAVELAND HERITAGE TREES WITH ROY LARICK

Local Geologist, Archeologist, and Historian



Review of: The Civil War of 1812: American Citizens, British Subjects, Irish Rebels, & Indian Allies by Alan Taylor

Republished from the [Regarp Book Blog](#) with permission of the author.

Some years back, I set out to rediscover American history through the best single books I could find to cover each era. I was stymied when I reached the "War of 1812," where the historiography was pregnant with works that primarily put emphasis upon the military contests with little context on the greater issues on both sides of the Atlantic that provoked the conflict. Noted historian Alan Taylor has done much to redress this gap with his masterful contribution, *The Civil War of 1812: American Citizens, British Subjects, Irish Rebels, & Indian Allies*, which offers not only a fresh but

strikingly new perspective to the saga. A brilliant and widely acclaimed historian – I consider his *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* to be one of the finest works ever written in American history – Taylor once again brings a macro lens to the wider arena of a topic and then narrows that focus with great acumen to restore complexity and nuance to that which has long been neglected in both popular and scholarly literature.

Most Americans know very little about the “War of 1812” – it does not even qualify for a real name but has come to be called after the year of its inception. Both its causes and its conclusion remain murky; United States forces lost most of the military engagements – with the exception of the much ballyhooed Jackson victory at New Orleans that occurred once the war was essentially over – and after the termination of hostilities in 1814 in what can best be called a stalemate it came to be largely overlooked. Most students of American history view it as little more than a punctuation mark between the period of the early republic and the Age of Jacksonian Democracy. Taylor artfully resurrects the war, positions it properly in its milieu and reveals why the outcome was in fact quite significant for the future of both Canada and the United States, as well as to a lesser extent Great Britain herself. [Click here for full review.](#)



2025 ESA Membership Dues Notice

[Download the 2025 ESA Membership Application / Renewal Form.](#) If you are already a lifetime member, no dues are required.

The Early Settlers Association membership is open to all who wish to preserve the history and traditions of the Western Reserve. While our foundation is in the past, our spirit is in the future -- we work to preserve the past for the future.

For just a few tax-deductible dollars annually, we can each help preserve the important heritage of the Western Reserve, a rich legacy for our children and grandchildren.

ESA Volunteers Welcome

Do you have a few hours to spare, a couple of times a year? The Early Settlers Association is looking for volunteers interested to help us maintain the Erie Street Cemetery, Memorial Plaza. Contact Bill Barrow at bill.barrow@yahoo.com for more information.

Become a Member

We are citizens dedicated to preserving the ideals and principles of the brave pioneers who blazed the trails of the Western Reserve. While our roots are in the past, our spirit is in the future, and we need you to help us continue this rich legacy. [Download our membership form to join](#) or [visit our website to learn how you can get involved.](#)

The Pioneer is produced by
The Early Settlers Association of
the Western Reserve

Richard Brhel - Editor

Contributors:
Mary Artino
Bill Barrow
Stan Prager
John Vacha

2024-2025 Officers
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Secretary – Carter Ellison
Historian – John Vacha
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John Cimperman, Bill Barrow

The Early Settlers Association of the Western Reserve Constitution

Inspire greater understanding and interest in the history of Cleveland and the Western Reserve; to preserve the traditions of the Western Reserve; to organize, observe and celebrate the anniversaries of important historical events; to mark places with enduring signs; to further the best interest of Cleveland and the Western Reserve by cooperation with other organizations for the achievement of worthy historical, civic, educational and cultural goals. The Early Settlers Association of the Western Reserve is a registered 501(c)3 organization founded in 1879.



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The Early Settlers Association of the Western Reserve | P.O. Box 39291 | Solon, OH 44139 US

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