Issue 6

February 2026

Northeast Ohio Civil War Roundtable

The Courier

President Dale H. Fellows

Quality, Education, Fellowship

February Dinner Program #249

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Nancy Fellows, Marian King, Debbie Weinkamer

"First Ladies - Love is Eternal"

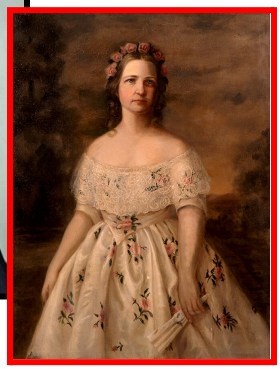
Martha Dandridge Custis Washington
#1 - First Lady
April 30, 1789 - March 4, 1797





Mary Todd Lincoln
#16 - First Lady
March 4, 1861 - April 15, 1865









Lucretia Rudolph Garfield
#20 - First Lady
March 4, 1881 - September 19, 1881

Evening Schedule

Doors open - 5:45 p.m.

Social - 6:00 p.m. Dinner - 6:35 p.m. Program - 7:30 p.m.

Dinner & Program

Members - $30.00 Non Members - $40.00

Guests Welcome

RSVP is Required by Friday, February 6, 2026

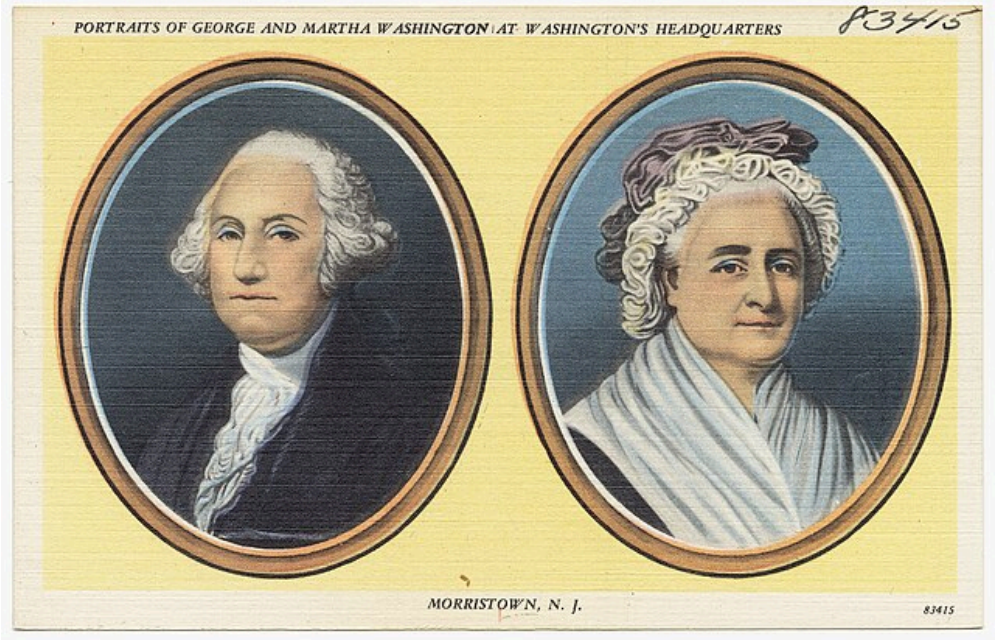
RSVP Contact - Event Coordinator, Franco

(440) 567-2414 Email: francomichael2414@yahoo.com



Our Venue

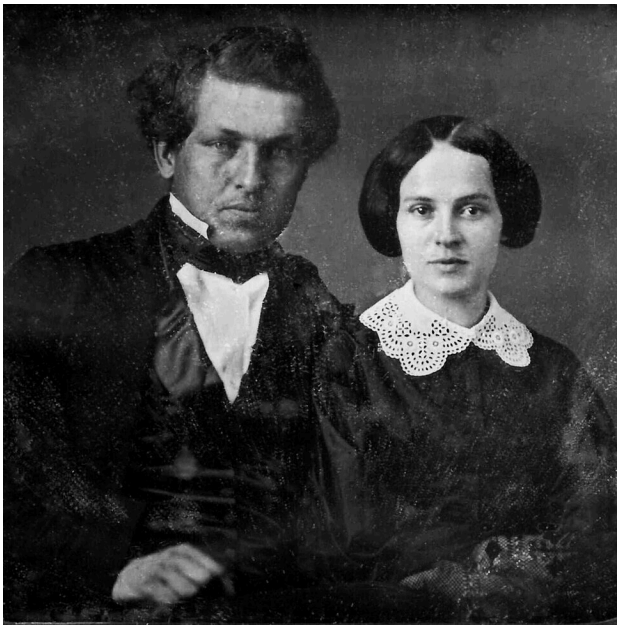
Pine Ridge Country Club
30601 Pine Ridge Rd.
Wickliffe, OH



Portraits of George and Martha Washington at Washington's headquarters, Morristown, N. J.
Date issued: 1930 - 1945
Collection: The Tichnor Brothers Collection,Boston Public Library, Print Department
Rights: No known restrictions



Abe and Mary Todd Lincoln ("Mr. & Mrs. Lincoln") by Edward Percy Moran



James Garfield and Lucretia Rudolph around the time of their engagement. They married on November 11, 1858. Western Reserve Historical Society

President Dale Fellows
February 2026



Greetings from cold and snowy Northeast Ohio.

I hope you are all staying warm and safe.

Our January program presented by Judge William Vodrey, was amazing and left everyone wanting to hear more about William B. Cushing … a true hero of the Civil War.

As we move into February and our celebration of President's Day, we will have a very special program with 3 of our First Ladies, Martha Washington, Mary Todd Lincoln, and our own Lucretia Garfield. You won't want to miss this!

Please make your reservation as soon as you can.





Martha Dandridge Custis Washington

Nancy Fellows





Contemporary painting depicting the Washington Family at Mount Vernon Artist Edward Savage



Nancy Fellows began portraying Martha Washington by accompanying her husband Dale, a re-enactor of President George Washington for the past 14 years.

Nancy & Dale have been frequent visitors to Colonial Williamsburg for more than 25 years, as well as Mount Vernon, learning an enormous amount about our Founding Fathers and the people of 18th century America.

Nancy is passionate about the accuracy of the information and portrayal of Martha Washington. She is currently working on a series of new programs she hopes to begin presenting in 2026, our country's semi-quincentennial.





Marian and John King
as the 16th President & First Lady



Mary Lincoln
official 1925 White House portrait
by Katherine Helm





Mary Lincoln
1864 - she was age 45
Artist Daniel Huntington
this original painting is in the
front parlor of the
Mary Todd Lincoln House
Lexington, KY

Marian King started as a historical re-enactor in 2011, portraying Mary Todd Lincoln with her husband John, who portrays Abraham Lincoln. She enjoys telling Mary's story in first-person to schools, retirement centers, senior centers, church groups, libraries, book clubs, historical societies, and others. Her mission is to correct the misconceptions about a First Lady who has been maligned in newspapers and books, and was very much ahead of her time.

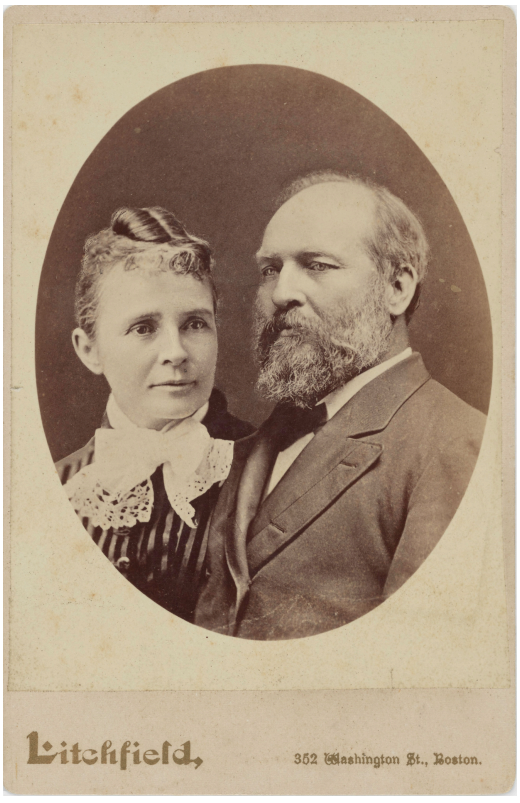
Marian was a teacher, a library clerk, camp cook and registrar, and realtor. She enjoys genealogy, reading, sewing, quilting, rubber stamping, crafts, cooking, and traveling. You'll often find her at her daughter's quilt shop – teaching, as well as working on her own projects.

Marian has been married for 60 years, and has 3 grown daughters, 12 grandchildren, and several great-grandchildren.











Debbie has been involved with the Garfield family story since 1998 and has been portraying Lucretia Garfield since 2001. Having an Associate in Arts degree and a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education, she strives to make her presentations engaging, meaningful, and educational – for audiences of all ages.

She is the Lead Volunteer at James A. Garfield National Historic Site in Mentor, where she guides public tours, creates and presents programs and exhibits, assists in training new VIPs (Volunteers in Parks), and works with school groups. In 2018, the Site presented the President's Lifetime Achievement Award to Debbie for volunteering 4,000+ hours in keeping the Garfield story alive in her community. She recently retired after 15 years as a seasonal docent at President James A. Garfield's Birthplace in Moreland Hills. She is honored to be personal friends with the Cleveland-area descendants of James A. and Lucretia Garfield.

Debbie is married to her high school sweetheart (a history enthusiast), and has two married sons, two grandsons, and a granddaughter.

There are no constitutional requirements, but traditionally a President's First Lady is his spouse. History has shown that not all spouses would be the first lady of the land as several had passed away before their husband became president. A couple Presidents were bachelors and depending on the circumstance the hostess or acting First Lady role could be filled by a family member or even during one presidency by the vivacious and respected former First Lady Dolley Madison.



Martha Wayles Skelton Jefferson
October 19, 1748 - September 6, 1782
married Thomas Jefferson - January 1, 1772
A modern painting by artist John Hutton
as there are no paintings of her during her lifetime.

Her marriage to the future president was her second after the death of first husband, Bathurst Skelton and also their son John. Numerous pregnancies during her second marriage would take a toll on her health with the final pregnancy contributing to her death at age 33. Daughter Martha "Patsy" Jefferson would serve as her father's hostess.



Martha "Patsy" Jefferson Randolph
1836 portrait by artist Thomas Sully

September 27, 1772 - October 10, 1836
Thomas Jefferson's eldest daughter
Married Thomas Mann Randolph, Jr.
February 23, 1790
The Randolphs had 12 children (11 would reach adulthood) with #8 a son, James, born January 17, 1806 in the White House.



Mary Arthur McElroy
1885
July 5, 1841 January 8, 1917
Married John Edward McElroy June 13, 1861
White House hostess for her older widower brother President Chester Arthur. She was close to his young daughter, Nellie and would become her guardian after Chester Arthur died in 1886. Naturally shy, Mary proved to be a popular hostess establishing the White House tradition of serving tea after receptions.



Harriet Lane Johnston
May 9, 1830 - July 3, 1903
married Baltimore banker Henry Johnston - January 11, 1866 at Wheatland - they would tragically lose their 2 teenage sons to rheumatic fever. White House hostess for favorite uncle James Buchanan her guardian after she was orphaned at the age of eleven.



Hannah Hoes Van Buren

March 8, 1783-February 5, 1819

Wife of our bilingual (Dutch and English) 8th President, Martin Van Buren. Hannah is one of our forgotten first ladies. She and Martin were of Dutch descent spending their childhood in the predominately Dutch town of Kinderhook, NY. She was related to Martin Van Buren, Elizabeth Monroe and the Roosevelts through her mother, Maria Quackenbush Hoes. Hannah and Martin wed February 21, 1807 after the future President established his law practice. Jannetje, Dutch for Hannah, as Martin called his wife, would never see her husband (Maarten) Martin Van Buren take the oath of office on March 4, 1837. She died from consumption (tuberculosis) at age 35, 18 years earlier and her husband would never remarry.

Angelica Singleton Van Buren
February 13, 1818 - December 29, 1877
Married the President's private secretary and oldest son
Abraham Van Buren - November 2, 1838
Artist Henry Inman
The 1842 portrait also includes a white marble bust of her father-in-law President Martin Van Buren.
Angelica's relative former First Lady Dolley Madison played matchmaker introducing the Singleton sisters to the Van Buren sons.
Angelica would serve successfully as the official "First Lady" for the President starting in 1839. Angelica's and former First Lady Dolley Madison's portraits hang in the Red Room of the White House.
Wikipedia



The Jackson First Ladies



Rachel Donelson Jackson
Born around 1767 - died December 22, 1828
Rachel's family became one of Nashville's first settlers
Eloped with Andrew Jackson - while technically still married to first husband Lewis Robards
The chaos of the marriage and ultimate divorce would have Andrew and Rachel remarrying January 18, 1794.
They would have no biological children but adopted son, Lyncoya who was found on a Creek War battlefield and Andrew Jackson, Jr. the son of Rachel's brother.
Their marriage was filled with love, turmoil, and political mudslinging. Rachel's words to a friend were she would "rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God than to live in that palace at Washington."
Rachel's death at age 61 from a sudden illness would never have her being First Lady.



Sarah Yorke Jackson
July 18, 1803 - August 23, 1887
Married Andrew Jackson, Jr. - November 24, 1831
Daughter-in-law of President Jackson she would be the mistress of The Hermitage and remain close to her father-in-law until his death. She left for Mississippi before the Civil War and returned to ive at The Hermitage remaining even when it was bought by the state of Tennessee. She died there at the age of 84 and is buried on the property in the Jackson Family Cemetery.



Emily Tennessee Donelson
June 1, 1807 - December 19, 1836
Married cousin, Andrew J. Donelson - September 16, 1824
The niece of President Andrew Jackson she served as acting First Lady 1829-1834 as Jackson's wife Rachel Donelson Jackson died before his inauguration.
Three of Emily and Andrew J's four children were born at the White House.
The infamous Petticoat Affair involving Margaret "Peggy" Eaton would create tumult and fractions between the Donelson's and the President.
Hostess Mary Ann Lewis, an Eaton defender, served when Emily was not living at the White during this time.
After Emily returned to the White House, President Jackson's daughter-in-law Sarah Yorke would become hostess when Emily's health continued to fail after the 1834 birth of her fourth child. She returned to her Poplar Grove home next to the Hermitage. An influential woman of her times, she would die at the young age of 29 in 1836.

Fall 2025 - Spring 2026 Speaker Schedule

President, Dale H. Fellows

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February 10, 2026
First Ladies
Martha Washington - Nancy Fellows
Mary Lincoln - Marian King
Lucretia Garfield - Debbie Weinkamer

March 10, 2026
Speaker - Phillip M. Seyfrit
Curator for the Battle of Richmond
Visitors Center
"Battle of Richmond"

April 14, 2026
Kit (Chris) Whipple
Cleveland Historian
"Civil War - Camp Cleveland"

May 12, 2026
Brian Kowell
Member - Cleveland Civil War Roundtable
"Horses of the Civil War"

June 9, 2026
American 250 Celebration
and
Christopher Long - Roosevelt's D-Day Prayer

Executive Board 2025-2026

Founders - Joseph Tirpak, Norton London
President - Dale H. Fellows
Vice President - Cherie Godnavec
Secretary - Mike Driscoll
Treasurer - George Maier
Past Presidents -
Darrell Schneider, Tena Kegg, Scott Hagara
Event Coordinator - Franco Sperrazzo
Sergeant at Arms -
Mike Driscoll, John Kegg
Courier Editor, Publicity - Tena Kegg
Membership Chairman - Kenny Godnavec
Members at Large -
Dave Lintern, Bob Tribby

1998 Charters
Joe Abazzio, Dale Fellows, Ted Karle
Bill Meissner, John Sandy, Franco Sperrazzo

Presidents 1998 - 2026

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1998 - Joe Tirpak (1)
1999 - Rob Bayless (2)
2000 - Norty London (3)
2001 - Bob Baucher (4)
2002 - Bob Battisti (5)
2003 - Frank Yannucci (6)
2004 - Ted Karle (7)
2005 - John Sandy (8)
2006 - Brent Morgan (9)
2007 - Mike Sears (10)
2008 - Bill Meissner (11)
2009 - Arlan Byrne (12)
2010 - Terry Reynolds (13)
2011 - Franco Sperrazzo (14)
2012 - Steve Abbey (15)
2013 - Tom Horvath (16)
2014 - Carl Dodaro (17)
2015 - Bernie Taub (18)
2016 - Bill Wilson (19)
2017 - Hudson Fowler (20)
2018 - David Lintern (21)
2019 - Kenny Godnavec (22)
2020 - 2021 - Tom Horvath, Jr. (23)
2021 - 2022 - Scott Hagara (24)
2022 - 2023 - Paul Siedel (25)
2023 - 2024 - Tena Kegg (26)
2024 - 2025 - Darrell Schneider (27)
2025 - 2026 - Dale H. Fellows (28)



February Birthdays

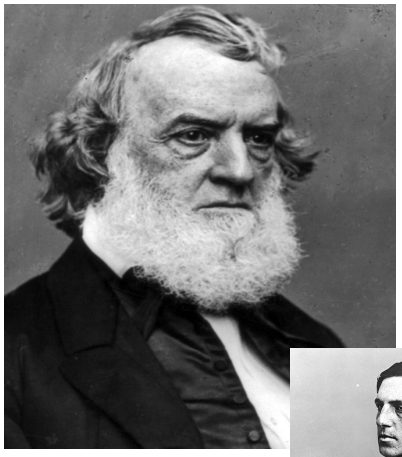
February 11 - Bernie Taub
February 19 - Joe Tirpak
February 25 - Tim Garfield
February 25 - Norty London
February 28 - Carla Garfield

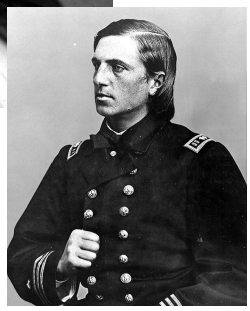
Keeping You Informed

1. ***NEOCWRT Debonne wine sales began at our December dinner program evening and will continue until sold out. Bring your $10.00 and see Kenny Godnavec to purchase your vino favorite.***
2. ***Linda O'Brien's passion was evidenced at the January 13, 2026 dinner program as she spoke about the renewal of the neglected Smith Cemetery on Chardon Road (Rt. 6). When a top hat was passed, $380.00 was generously donated to help in the purchase of a new marker for Civil War soldier, Ransom William White. His marker has been ordered and there will be a dedication ceremony this upcoming June 2026. Look for more information as the summer approaches.***

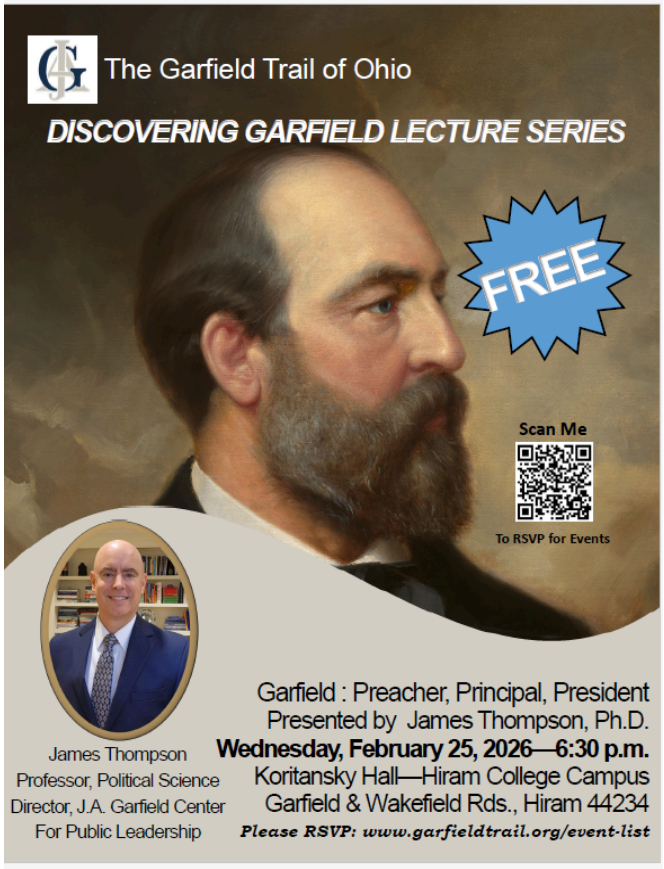


Thank you Michelle Day
for baking and spoiling us
with cookies as we sprinkled
powdered sugar around the room





Gideon Welles
1807 - 1878
24th Secretary of the US Navy
remarked following
Lt. William B. Cushing's
sinking of the CSS Albemarle,
he provided "some of the brightest pages in our naval history"
Wikipedia photos



Courier Editor, Tena Kegg
February 2026

FINAL CALL - REGISTER ASAP
Northeast Ohio Civil War Roundtable





Celebrate Our Nation's

250th Semiquincentennial

Birthday

Colonial Williamsburg

Yorktown, Jamestown

March 26 - 30, 2026





Williamsburg Lodge
310 South England St. Williamsburg, VA 23185
1 - (757) 220 - 7976
location in walking/shuttle bus distance to
Colonial Williamsburg's Historic District
room group rate remains: $149.00 + tax + an additional $20.00 resort fee
includes breakfast + (2) complimentary historic area tickets per room



Mentor Library

Tuesday, March 3, 2026
6:30pm – 8:00pm
Main Branch - Village Room

Author visit with Jeannie Emser Schultz
(As the Stage Turned: A Front Row Theatre Memoir)

Cleveland Landmarks Press' newest release, *As the Stage Turned: A Front Row Theatre Memoir,* captures the dynamic energy that sprung from one of the most unique entertainment venues in the country – a theater-in-the-round located in the sleepy suburb of Highland Heights, just outside of Cleveland.

Jeannie Emser Schultz, the venue's longtime former director of marketing and publicity, has written a memoir capturing the star power and draw of the Front Row. It's an homage to seemingly everything related to show business and the cultural significance of that famed theater that drew the biggest and brightest stars of its day.

For instance, where else would you learn that several days into Sammy Davis's opening run at the Front Row in 1974, he received a phone call threatening his life? Or that the only way Frank Sinatra would agree to perform there was if he and his entire entourage could rent out the Shaker Heights home of Larry Dolin, the founder and president of the Front Row? Or that comedian Bob Newhart always kept a nude picture on his dressing room table of Anthony Newley looking backwards through his legs (Newhart told Emser Schultz it was one of the funniest pictures he ever saw)?

Emser Schultz's narrative takes readers on a detailed and behind-the-scenes firsthand journey of the almost 20-year history of what was considered one of America's most significant entertainment venues. Revisit your own fond memories of a lost Cleveland classic.

<u>Space is limited. Registration is required and begins February 17</u>