

BAY VILLAGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In Memory of Kay Laughlin

Eric Eakin



Kay Laughlin, Bay Village historian and long-time Westlake/Bay Village Observer columnist, has died.

She was born Feb. 21, 1937, and passed July 25, 2020.

She was the daughter of the late J. Ross and Alberta (Wurtz) Rothaermel, wife of Gerald Lee Laughlin (married 62 years), adoring sister of Barbara Walker and twin sister, Gay Menning (deceased), mother of Christopher (Connie), Kathy Ann and Thomas (Kelly), grandmother of Sara and Abigail.

Bay Village has lost its historian. No one knew more about Bay Village's history than Kay. She knew all the facts and people that she wove into stories. She had a remarkable memory that served her well all her life. Bay Village's history became her most enjoyable hobby. She lived in Bay Village all her life.

A 1955 Bay High graduate, she received a distinguished alumni award from Bay High School in 1978. Kay got her bachelor of science degree in education at The Ohio State University where she met her husband, Jerry. She was a member of the Alpha Delta Pi sorority.

Along with her sister, Gay, she wrote "Bay Village, A Way Of Life" in 1974, the first written history of the town. In 2007, Kay and Ginny Peterson compiled the picture book, Bay Village, collecting the pictures and writing the content. Kay joined the Bay Village Historical Society in 1968 and served as president for two years in 1976. She was part of the team that opened Rose Hill Museum in 1974. She was a docent for 20 years at Rose Hill Museum and became the society's historian. She was the manager of the historical society antique show, accessions chairman for 10 years, and one of the organizers at the Osborn Learning Center when the Reuben Osborn house was moved into Cahoon Memorial Park.

For years she presented slide shows of Bay Village history, starting with the lighted school house and the Reflections program at the Bay Middle School. Today Bay Village history is taught in the Bay Schools because of Kay and her sister. She was a past president of the Alpha Delta Pi West Cleveland Alumni Association, served on Normandy PTA for 10 years, and was the Bay United Methodist Church historian when they received an Ohio State historical marker.

Kay was a great cook. She set a beautiful table. She loved to read and listen to music. She would say being on the water was her favorite place. She and Jer loved their boat and Kay was a great perch fisherman many times catching the most fish. She was an avid Cleveland sports fan, loving her Brownies.

For 15 years she did tole painting and worked shows in the area. She took up watercolors, painting the family dogs, cats, and horses. She loved being outdoors and could name every flower and/or weed. She could tell you the artists and names of the songs her children played in the 70s. There wasn't anything she couldn't do. She was the organizer and family tour guide. Her family meant everything to her. She loved Christmas and Thanksgiving dinner was her favorite meal.

"Kay was an amazing asset to the historical society and a pleasure to work with," President Cathy Flament said. "We have all lost a loyal friend. She will truly be missed."

A celebration of life will be scheduled at a later date to ensure safety for all who would like to attend.

Fall 2020



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President's Message**Cathy Flament**

Kay Laughlin will always hold a special spot in my heart. Her loss will be felt profoundly for years to come by so many of us. Her knowledge about our local history and commitment to sharing her vast wealth of information will be hard to match. Losing her to COVID-19 was a wakeup call as to how devastating and wide-spread the implications of this pandemic have been.

After discussing with her family the best way to memorialize her dedication, we felt a fund for Kay would be an honorable way to keep her legacy going. We have set up the Kay Rothaermel Laughlin Fund for Preservation and Education that will help fund current and future projects. There will also be a bench dedicated in the Rose Garden at Cahoon Park, next to her sister Gay. Donations can be mailed to BVHS, P.O. Box 40187, Bay Village, OH. Please write a note on or with the check that it is for Kay's fund.

Thank you to those who have helped in the last couple of weeks with a wide variety of projects: Larry Bennett, Dean Brennan, Cynthia and Eric Eakin, Marj Elhardt, Paul Flament, Jack Hanley, Doris Gorgas, Herb Guild, Marge Gulley, Sue Jachnick (who has been helping two days a week!), Cindi Lindgren, Diane Pavan, Chuck McKee, Ed Neal, Bill O'Brien, Tom and Peg Phillips, Bill and Stephanie West. Hope I didn't miss anyone.

There are so many ways we can use your assistance, so please pitch in to help make the projects go a bit easier and faster. We have a long way to go to be ready to open in April and can use everyone's help. All of our volunteers on-site are required to wear masks and social distance. There are in almost all cases only two people working together at a time. Many others are working on projects by themselves and from home. We have two buildings, so it is easy to spread out. We have a family member who is high risk for COVID, so I am very sensitive to this issue.

The upstairs of Rose Hill is looking better all the time and hopefully we are ready to move back in soon. Check out our new railing behind the stairs on the south side of the museum. Rick Young from the city and his crew are doing an amazing job. It is evident they take pride in their work. I never realized how many cracks we had! Al, the city electrician, is working diligently to be sure the electrical is safe. Apparently, there were a number of issues that we weren't even aware of. It is a great feeling to have these issues addressed.

Stay safe

Current wish list:

Computer paper

Shop vac

Sheets

Simple metal library bookends

Osborn Learning Center

Tom Phillips and Dean Brennan

**Rebecca McFarland Presents
“The True Life Story of Eliot Ness”**

Sunday, September 13—2:00pm

In the Gazebo at Cahoon Park—303 Cahoon Road

Eliot Ness served as Cleveland’s Safety Director during the years of 1935 to 1942. In these few years, Eliot Ness made an impact on the city of Cleveland that has lasted for generations. He came at a time when our city was regarded as the most dangerous city in the country. Within a few short years, our city was awarded the “National Safety Award” thanks to Eliot Ness’s pursuit of justice and honesty. Eliot spent his last years in his home in Bay Village. He died in 1997.

Bring a lawn chair, mask and please maintain social distance.

Rain date—Sunday, September 20, 2:00pm.



Rebecca McFarland is internationally recognized as an expert on the life and times of Eliot Ness. Her research has been requested for magazines, books, movies, radio, and television. Formerly a resident of Bay Village, McFarland has served on several committees impacting the city of Cleveland. She coordinated a funeral for Eliot Ness in 1997, attended by international press.

Rebecca has graciously awaited a date to make this presentation for us, which has been rescheduled a couple times because of COVID 19. We are excited that she will finally be here to present this remarkable story.

**A special thank you to the following
individuals for their extra donations to
our society.**

Claire and Michael Boettler
Beth and Dave Conroy
Peter D’Angelo
Cynthia and Eric Eakin
Doris Gorgas
Gina Hamister
Sue and Herman Jachnick
Cindi and Ken Lindgren
Melissa Mellon
Terri and Ben Miyares
Diane and Denny Pavan
Gail and Bob Reid
Sandra Chrystal Taradash
Monica Thomas

Leave a Legacy

Do you want to leave a legacy, a little something to remember you by? Then please consider a charitable bequest to the Bay Village Historical Society.

A charitable bequest is simply a distribution from your estate to a charitable organization, such as the Bay Village Historical Society, through your last will and testament.

The society is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization as defined by the Internal Revenue Service and the State of Ohio, and all donations and bequests are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

If you care to make a bequest to the Bay Village Historical Society in your will, please consult your legal counsel. He or she can provide the specific language, usually just one paragraph, which should be included in your will.

Your bequest can be a donation of a specific amount, a donation for a specific purpose, or a percentage of your estate. Your legal counsel can assist you. You also might consider naming the Bay Village Historical Society as recipient of donations in lieu of flowers or other remembrances upon your passing.

Your continued support of the Bay Village Historical Society over the years, and into the future, is sincerely appreciated.