

Celebrating 35 Years at Sauder Village



The sound of children's laughter from a horse-drawn carriage. The smell of biscuits baking in a wood-fired stove. The ring of a hammer striking the anvil and the sight of families gathering together to have fun in the past.



These are the sights and sounds guests experienced in the early years of Sauder Village and the very same experiences our guests enjoy today! As we commemorate our 35th Anniversary this season, we're celebrating Erie's Dream... a dream that started so many years ago as he drew up plans for a museum on the back of a napkin. A dream that came to life as he moved buildings, hired employees and welcomed guests on that very first day back in 1976. A dream that continues today with many of those first employees and family members still involved at Sauder Village.

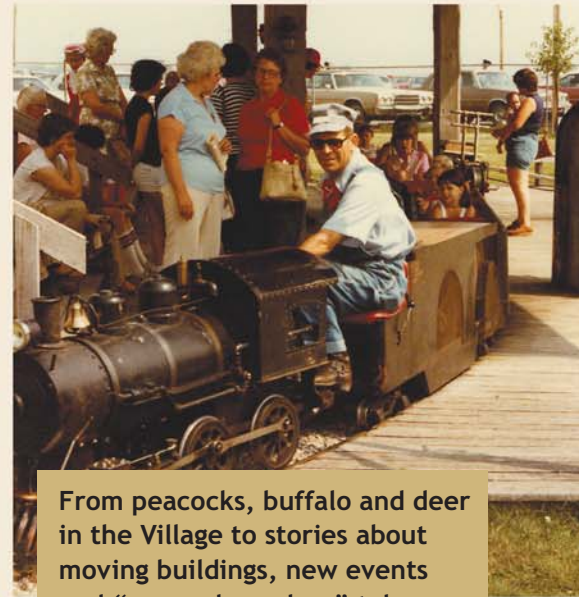
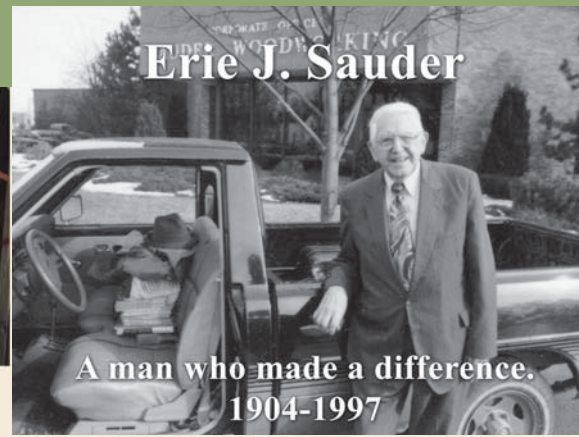


As we celebrate this special time in our history, we reflect on what makes Sauder Village such a remarkable destination... our continued commitment to history, hospitality, creativity and fun. While Erie may not have used those same words back in 1976, those thoughts were the cornerstone of his intention and vision for Sauder Village. Erie wanted to tell the history of the early settlers in this area so that future generations would never forget the struggles and determination of our ancestors. He wanted the Village to be easily accessible, comfortable and full-service, with each guest treated with the utmost in hospitality. He wanted visitors to be inspired by creativity and history in action and he wanted the experience to be friendly and fun for the whole family.

From the timeline on this page you will see how much we have grown through the years. We have added new buildings, new activities and new faces (and yet some faces have been here since opening day!) We've added events, expanded our educational outreach, created regional partnerships and positioned Sauder Village as one of the top living-history destinations in the state of Ohio.

1969	1971	1976	1986	1987	1988	1991	1994	1995	1997		
Erie bought 17 acres of land including a house & barns on State Route 2	Erie started moving buildings	Historic Village Opening Day	Die Alt Shire opens, now Barn Restaurant	New Entrance Building built	New General Store built	Founder's Hall built	Brush Creek Pottery Shop built	Campground established	Sauder Heritage Inn opens	Carolyn Sauder named Executive Director	Erie Sauder died





From peacocks, buffalo and deer in the Village to stories about moving buildings, new events and “remember when” tales of yesteryear... there are plenty of interesting stories and photos from the past 35 years at Sauder Village! We hope you'll visit the 35th Anniversary Celebration page on our website for interesting facts, stories and photos from the past. There's even a place for you to share your own memories! We'd love to hear from you!



“Years ago we would sit around the dinner table listening to Erie share his dreams and plans about a place where he'd bring history to life and I was inspired to get involved,” recalls Carolyn Sauder, board member and Executive Director Emeritus. “It has been an honor to be a part of the Sauder Village team since the beginning and so exciting to watch the Village develop through the years. From the Inn expansion, Little Pioneers Homestead, and Natives and Newcomers to Pioneer Settlement and new special events - each new idea brings vitality to the Village.”

And yet with all that is new and improved, the key to our success has been staying true to what Erie started so many years ago.

“We want our guests to know we're just so glad they came,” Debbie Sauder David, Executive Director, recalls her grandfather sharing. “That same sentiment rings true today at Sauder Village.”

With the creation of a long range master plan in 2001, Sauder Village now has a road map for the development of the complex. “Our master plan has been an invaluable tool as we plan for the future,” Debbie added.

As we celebrate our 35th Anniversary, we're pleased to realize how far we've come and yet how our mission has remained the same. Let's take a moment to celebrate the tremendous growth that has taken place and offer a sincere thank you to those involved in our success. It has taken everyone – paid staff, volunteers, members, community supporters, vendors, and guests – to make Sauder Village one of the premiere living-history destinations in the Midwest! We look forward to what the next 35 years will bring – stay tuned!

1998	2002	2003	2004	2006	2007	2009	2011
Blacksmith Shop built, Jr. Historian program launched	Debbie Sauder David becomes Executive Director - third generation. Carolyn Sauder continues to serve as board trustee and named Executive Director Emeritus	Natives & Newcomers	Little Pioneers Homestead	Sauder Heritage Inn Expansion	New Erie Express Train	Pioneer Settlement	35 th Anniversary Celebration!

