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Trevor Jones/Times Recorder



Written by **Hannah Sparling** Staff Writer

NORWICH -- The Ohio National Road Association made a stop in Norwich Thursday to unveil an interpretive sign in front of the Old Stone House on Main Street.

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Norwich's sign was No. 16 in the association's 60-sign campaign, said Cyndie Gerken, a board member and former president of the ONRA. It explains the history and architecture of the house.

The signs are funded through a \$200,000 federal grant, she said.

About 50 people showed up for the unveiling. Speakers shared stories about the history of Norwich and the Old Stone House, and there also was a reception afterward.

"It's a great opportunity to solidify some of the history of Norwich and Ohio and the National Highway as well," said Redge Wilde, Norwich Village Council President.

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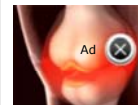
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From left, Ohio National Road Association President Dean Ringle, Norwich Mayor Lisa West and Old Stone House Nursery Owner Tom Taylor unveil the interpretive sign in front of the Old Stone House on Main Street in Norwich. / Trevor Jones/times recorder

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The Old Stone House is part of the Historic National Road, which stretches from Maryland to Illinois, crossing six states. When Ohio 40 was built in the 1920s, a lot of the smaller towns on the old National Road, including Norwich, were bypassed, Gerken said.

Officials wanted to make the road straighter and faster, she said, so the current National Road runs around the towns rather than through them.

The signs are a way to remember and educate people on the history, Gerken said. A lot of people drive through the towns, or even live in them, but know nothing of the history.

"So we're interpreting, we're explaining and educating people on the history," she said.

Tom Taylor, who owns the Old Stone House, said he was pleasantly surprised by the number of people who showed up for the unveiling.

Taylor runs the nursery and gift shop next to the house. No one actually lives in the house now, he said.

Taylor bought the house in 1978, right after he graduated from the Ohio State University, he said.

"As you get older, you tend to appreciate things a little more," he said. "It's just nice to see that the appreciation for these structures and this National Road is alive and well."

The Ohio National Road Association will make two stops in Zanesville before the end of its sign campaign, one to commemorate the historic downtown and another for the Y Bridge.

The signs already are made, Gerken said, but dates for the unveilings have not been set.

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