

## BETTE LOU HIGGINS

E-mail: <http://www.edenvalleyenterprises.org/blhrc/contactbl.htm>

LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/bettelouhiggins>

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### PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT • EDUCATOR • RESEARCH / WRITER

Results-oriented individual with a background of success in combining education, technology, presentation and program development. Proven expertise in computer application education. Demonstrated achievements in innovative and dynamic teaching methods and experience in trade and educational publishing.

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#### EDUCATION:

- Cleveland State University; M.Ed. -- Curriculum and Instruction – Technology Strand
  - Baldwin-Wallace College; B.A. -- Theatre Arts Major
  - Additional Course Work:
    - Theatre Arts: Education through Creative Drama
    - Computer Science: WordPerfect, Microsoft Office, Dreamweaver, Fireworks, Implementing and Supporting Windows XP Professional,
    - Miscellaneous: Independent Consulting; Inbound Marketing Certification (Inbound Marketing University, HubSpot: <http://inboundmarketing.com/>)
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#### TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

- Cuyahoga Community College Encore Program (“World War II Through Story, Character and Drama”; “Great Lakes History”, “From Sea To Shining Sea - America’s Story” and “Ohio’s Own History”)
- Mature Services (Computer Instruction; Job Club Supervision)
- Bryant & Stratton College (Oral Communications)
- Center For Lifelong Learning, Lorain County Community College (storytelling class, “I Thought I Saw A Ghost” and “College Days” orientation program, “College as Entertainment: Stories From The Past”)
- Lorain County Joint Vocational School (Instructor: Introduction to Computers, Basic Computer Skills, Windows XP, Excel, Internet/E-mail. Job Link Employment Specialist)
- The University of Akron, Akron, Ohio (master’s class in “The Uses of Computers In The Non-profits”)
- The Steamship *William G. Mather* Museum Docent Classes, Cleveland, Ohio (General introduction to computers and the Internet, presentation skills and guest relations)
- Western Reserve Historical Society Docent Classes, Cleveland, Ohio (presentation techniques and character interpretation)
- Kent Sate University/Cuyahoga Special Education Service Center, Maple Hts., Ohio (Presentation Techniques for Teachers)
- Creative Dramatics and Theatre at: Garfield Hts. Youth Theatre, Garfield Hts, Ohio; Vermilion Board Of Education, Vermilion, Ohio; Beck Center (Lakewood Little Theatre), Lakewood, Ohio; Clague Playhouse, Westlake, Ohio; Maple Leaf Elementary School, Garfield Hts., Ohio; and Black River High School in Sullivan, Ohio

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## CAREER HISTORY:

### EDEN VALLEY ENTERPRISES (PART TIME)

**Artistic Director/Production Manager/Researcher/Writer** 1981-present

**Production Manager** 1977-1981

- A founding member of Eden Valley Enterprises as an educational/cultural organization that started with one project for the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation and currently averages 12 programs per year. Serving as President of the Board of Trustees and as Artistic Director with direct control of budget, research and program development.
- Developed Living History programs at a time when this type of programming was virtually unknown. Programs range from full scale productions to one-person character programs.
- Eden Valley has developed more than 40 original productions for organizations across the state. Of these shows, 14 are based on Ohio History and 11 are based on Great Lakes History (organizations include: The Steamship *W.G. Mather*, Western Reserve Historical Society, The Cuyahoga Valley National Park, and Roscoe Village Foundation)
- Editor/Writer *EVE Notes*, Eden Valley's Newsletter; Companion booklets and Educational/Curriculum materials.
- Other duties include research, writing, directing, and performing.

### LORAIN COUNTY PIONEER THEATRE

**Executive Coordinator** Summer Season, 2007

- General administration of this thirty year old children's theatre camp serving approximately 60 students ranging from K-12.
- Supervision of staff of seven theatre professionals.

### MUSEUMCROFT (PART TIME)

**Museum Consultant** 2001-present

- Associate providing assistance in museum programming through this consortium of twenty museum professionals.

### OPERA CLEVELAND (Formerly Cleveland Opera) (PART TIME)

**Systems Manager/Administrative Assistant** 2004-2007

**Systems Manager** 2004-2006

**Box Office/Systems Manager** 1992-2004

**Box Office Manager** 1976-1992

- Developed/upgraded the Box Office from approximately \$20,000 in sales to receipts approaching one million dollars. Developed box office accounting systems, supervision/training of staff, technology upgrades/maintenance.
- Assisted in the development and maintenance the Opera's Web Site through 2005.
- Maintained/oversaw the Novell system for a network of 24 computers. Provided support/training for the staff for company software systems.
- Provided support for Finance/Administration Department in Accounts Payable & Receivable, Purchasing, and Data Entry.

## GREAT LAKES HISTORICAL SOCIETY (PART TIME)

### Education Director

1995-2002

- Developed 10 original productions; two curriculum guides based on programs for grades 4-6 and one resource guide for the general public. Our production of Rise At Sunrise, Rest By Midnight toured to Sandusky for a presentation to approximately 100 students as well as a special production for a conference of Middle School teachers in Columbus, Ohio.
- Other duties included redoing label copy text and design throughout the museum.

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## COMPUTER SKILLS AND TECHNICAL PUBLICATIONS

additional technical information and samples available at:

[www.edenvalleyenterprises.org/blhrc/index.html](http://www.edenvalleyenterprises.org/blhrc/index.html)

- WordPerfect Suite, Microsoft Office, MS Publisher, Dreamweaver, Fireworks, Endnote, Maximizer, Peachtree, FundMaster, ArtSoft, DOS.
- Computer consultation for Foglietti & Associates, Steamship *W.G. Mather*, Cleveland Ballet, Hoppy's Scooters and Medical Supplies
- Docent Manual for the Steamship *W.G. Mather* (CD-ROM/Website version). Harbor Heritage Society. 2003.
- Your Computer Can't Sing Without You (Or Do Anything Else, For That Matter). Computer Manual. Cleveland Opera. 1990.
- Don't Shoot The Computer! He's Going As Fast As He Can! and Around The World With The World Wide Web. Computer Manuals. Mature Services. 2008 - 2011.

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## BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

*Professional life has been spent combining theatrical skills and knowledge of history to transmit the excitement of Ohio history. This unusual combination has been most evident through work as a founder and Artistic Director of Eden Valley Enterprises and as Educational Program Coordinator for The Great Lakes Historical Society where the "Ohio Gospel" has been spread through an assortment of living history programs. These programs are designed to make the history of Ohio and the Great Lakes meaningful and alive for adults and children of all ages.*

• **RESEARCH COORDINATOR/PRODUCTION MANAGER:** In JOHNNYCAKE VILLAGE an entire community was re-created in the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area. Dressed as pioneers along the route of the "projected" Ohio-Erie Canal, professional actors debated with each other and with the audience (who functioned as visitors to the community rather than audience) the great issues of the day: Should a canal be built? What would its impact be? What should be done about slavery?

• **DIRECTOR/RESEARCHER:** The MEET THE PEOPLE series was designed to permit the techniques of Johnnycake Village to be used in virtually any setting. Topics have ranged from Governor Ethan A. Brown stumping the state urging construction of the Ohio Canal to "the medicine men", the con artists who preyed upon the pioneers, to Antony Van Leeuwenhoek. These programs of historical re-creations, creatively combining professional actors with audience participation, have been performed throughout Ohio from The Western Reserve Historical Society to Roscoe Village.

• **THEATRE CREDITS:** productions with Clague Playhouse, Dover Playhouse, You Are Cabaret Dinner Theatre, Baldwin-Wallace College, Berea Summer Theatre, and the director of the NASA/Lewis Children's Christmas Program.

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## **EDEN VALLEY HIGHLIGHTS:**

Since it's founding in 1977, Eden Valley has produced over 30 original programs from Living History events to murder mysteries and musical programs.

- Directed programs for a number of local organizations including The Cleveland Metroparks, The Lorain County Metro Parks, The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, The Metroparks of Toledo, Lake Metroparks, The Cleveland Children's Museum.

- Directed and researched a new one-act play, **THE DONAHEYS: ARTISTS AND POLITICIANS**, for the Tuscarawas County Historical Society and Public Library as part of their Bicentennial Celebration in 2007 which premiered to more than 200 people at the Kent State University Tuscarawas Campus.

- Wrote and directed **CLEVELAND SWINGS!** for the Western Reserve Historical Society (now called **SALUTE TO SWING**). This program featured narration and music from W.W.II spotlighting events in Cleveland during that time. A joint project of Eden Valley Enterprises and Cleveland Opera On Tour, it was described as one of the "most beloved programs" produced at the Historical Society by Ms. Paula Reed, Director of Education.

- Program supervisor for **LEGENDS OF THE LAKE**, eight seasons, at the Steamship *William G. Mather*. This program features stories and folklore of Great Lakes presented as a progressive storytelling event during an evening tour of the boat.

- Directed "A Pioneer Holiday" for The Lorain County Metro Parks which re-created an 1862 Christmas of the Bacon family and their friends in the Brownhelm Station area in Lorain County. Metro Park volunteers were trained in first person interpretation to present this unique program at the Benjamin Bacon Museum.

- Directed and wrote a reader's theatre production, **ASHES TO ASHES** for the Western Reserve Historical Society. Based on the real-life murder of Cleveland Doctor Harry Chapin the program premiered in October, 1993 and was encored in March of 1994.

- Program supervisor and director for **YOU CAN'T PLAY BALL IN A SKIRT!** This Ohio Bicentennial program about Alta Weiss from Ragersville, Ohio was produced as a joint project of The Tuscarawas Historical Society, The Tuscarawas County Public Library, Ritter Public Library (Vermilion), Norwalk Public Library, and the Holmes County Public Library. More than 1000 people have seen the program at various venues since its premier.

- Directed **MEET THE PEOPLE: *The Canal Builders*** for Roscoe Village which was presented in the Village from June through August, 1992 and featured songs and canal tall tales as well as some creative "fund-raising" tactics of two out-of-work canalers. Roscoe Village also sponsored a production of **CANAL SONGS AND STORIES**, a program written for the Clinton, Ohio Canal Festival by Ms. Higgins and Lissy Gulick featuring stories and songs from Ohio's canal era.

- Co-wrote and directed a new production for Cleveland's North Coast Harbor, **THE LADY OF THE LAKE**. Geared for school children who were brought down to Cleveland's Inner Harbor during July and August, this program was the "hands down favorite" of the summer activities for the groups that visited the Inner Harbor, according to North Coast Representative, Ms. Diane Hanson. It has since been done at such locations as Put-In-Bay, the Cleveland Metroparks and the Steamship *William G. Mather*. A new version of the program was put together for Ritter Library in Vermilion. This version is more appropriate for an adult and audience and included additional history of the Lake Erie Islands. A companion booklet was

produced by EVE and a Curriculum Guide based on this program was written as a joint project of Eden Valley and the Great Lakes Historical Society.

- Co-wrote and directed OHIO GHOST STORIES and STORIES FROM A CHRISTMAS PAST for the Western Reserve Historical Society which featured stories from Ohio's past. Presented as a storytelling programs at the museum, companion books were created for these programs.

- Wrote and narrated CLEVELAND SINGS! (originally called "From Cleveland, With Love") for the Western Reserve Historical Society. This program featured stories and music of Cleveland area writers and composers and was produced for the museum by Eden Valley Enterprises and Cleveland Opera On Tour. Ms. Holly Holcombe, Associate Curator of Education at the Historical Society, said that the show "...surpassed expectations with respect to quality of performance and writing."

- Eden Valley and the Great Lakes Historical Society worked together to produce two programs, a resource guide and a curriculum guide on the Underground Railroad in Ohio and across the Great Lakes. A one-act play, RISE AT SUNRISE, REST BY MIDNIGHT, which follows the escape of a fictional runaway through Ohio to freedom in Canada and NEXT STOP, FREEDOM!, a storytelling program and first-person character program of historical accounts of Ohio's Underground Railroad have become two very popular EVE offerings. A resource guide which includes the script for NEXT STOP, FREEDOM! along with special resource notes and a complete bibliography from both programs has since been put together and is offered for sale. A curriculum guide for RISE AT SUNRISE, REST BY MIDNIGHT has also been put together for use in classroom studies.

- Wrote WHOSE IDEA WAS THAT? for the University of Akron's Dance Department's touring group. This unusual program about the lives of Ohio inventor's weaves fact and dance to create a high-spirited historical program that has toured to middle school students in the Akron area -- twenty five performances with an attendance of approximately 4900.

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## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:

Higgins, Bette Lou. "Old Towne Hall Theatre Celebrates 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary." *Spotlight Ohio*. September, 2004.

Higgins, Bette Lou and Shelley Pearsall. "Great Lakes Ladies". *Inland Seas*. Great Lakes Historical Society. Volume 56. Number 4. Spring, 2000. (Article based on storytelling program script.)

Higgins, Bette Lou. "American Slavery: A Composite Autobiography" Website Review. *Inland Seas*. Great Lakes Historical Society. Volume 57. Number 1. Spring, 2001.

Grabowski, John J. and David D. Van Tassel, Ed. The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History. Indiana University Press. Bloomington and Indianapolis. 1987. Articles by Bette Lou Higgins: *Aquarama*, Cleveland Air Show, Cleveland Opera, Cleveland Opera Company, Cleveland Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Columbia Theatre (E 9th St.), Cuyahoga County Fair, Embassy Theatre, Festival of Freedom, Garden Center, Gordon Bennett Balloon Race, Dan R. Hanna, Jr., H.R. Jacobs/Cleveland Theatre, Edward S. Jordan, Jordan Motor Car Co., Alfred Kelley, Irad Kelley, Lakewood Little Theatre, Lyceum/Park Theatre, Dayton Miller, National Air Races, O'Mic, Ohio Theatre, Pilgerruh, State Theatre, Van Sweringen Brothers, *Walk-In-The-Water*.

Grabowski, John J. and David D. Van Tassel, Ed. The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History Second Edition. Indiana University Press. Bloomington and Indianapolis. 1996. Essay: "Restaurants" by Bette Lou Higgins available at: <http://ech.cwru.edu/ech/cgi/article.pl?id=r3>

“The Underground Railroad In Erie County, Ohio”. Informational tour booklet for the Sandusky/Erie County Visitors & Convention Bureau. 1999. Produced by the Visitors Bureau and Eden Valley Enterprises with research and text development by Susan Brewer, Rosemary Kubera Goodburn and Bette Lou Higgins.

Eden Valley Enterprises Publications: Booklets and Educational Materials written and/or edited by Bette Lou Higgins: Remarkable Ohioans, Lady of the Lake (booklet and curriculum guide), Classic Clevelanders, Tales of the Western Reserve, You Can’t Play Ball In A Skirt!, Ohio Ghost Stories, Stories Of A Christmas Past, My Favorite Monsters, Next Stop, Freedom! (resource guide), Rise At Sunrise, Rest By Midnight, (curriculum guide). *For a complete list see: <http://www.edenvalleyenterprises.org/books.html>*

Higgins, Bette Lou. Docent Manual for the Steamship *W.G. Mather* (CD-ROM/Website version). Harbor Heritage Society. 2003. [Http://wgmather.nhlink.net/ed/docent](http://wgmather.nhlink.net/ed/docent)

Higgins, Bette Lou. Your Computer Can’t Sing Without You. Computer manual for Cleveland Opera.

Higgins, Bette Lou. Contributor: Word Of Mouth Blog. “In Defense of Imagination (and Writing Non-Fiction). February 11, 2007.

#### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS:**

- [Lorain County Pioneer Children’s Theatre](#) (Board Member)
- [National Storytelling Network](#)
- [Lorain County Historical Society](#)
- St. Mary's School Board, Vermilion, Ohio (1983-1988)