



*Drawing by Michael Klement*

# Impressions

NEWSLETTER WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Congratulations to the Preservationist of the Year!



**P**auline Walters is the 2013 "Preservationist of the Year". The award was presented by the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission in recognition of the lifetime of service she has given to the historical and preservation communities.

Pauline majored in history as a University of Michigan student. She built a successful career at the UM while raising a family. Pauline has worked on books documenting the history of the University of Michigan and the historic buildings in Ann Arbor. She has also served as a coordinator for the

Washtenaw County Historical Consortium, on the board of the Kempf House Museum and as a director of the Ann Arbor Historical Foundation. She shares her passion for genealogy by helping others with their family research. Since joining the WCHS board in 1987, Pauline has served as president and currently as corresponding secretary.

In 1991, the historic 1830s Kellogg-Warden house, had been moved from 1015 Wall Street to the corner lot at 500 N. Main. With the vision and financial support of this community, the Washtenaw County Historical Society had finally found a home. From the beginning, Pauline has maintained the viability and visibility of the Museum by being there daily since it opened in 1999. She has consistently volunteered her time, expertise, network and resources to run an efficient and welcoming office for the WCHS and the Museum. Thanks to Pauline's passion and love for history, this wonderful home also has a heart.

*Beverly Willis*

### 2013 Historic District Commission Awards

There were many highlights at the presentation of the 25th annual Historic District Commission (HDC) awards on Monday, June 3 at the Ann Arbor City Council meeting. The chamber was full of architects, builders, property owners and citizens who are friends of history and fans of preservation. Awards Committee chair Susan Wineberg along with Mayor John Heiftje presented 19 awards in six categories.

The HDC's mission is to "encourage the preservation of the heritage and built environment of the city for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations". The Rehabilitation awards recognize superior maintenance of a significant property to preserve its essential historical, cultural or architectural value.

*(Continued on the back cover)*

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### GET A WCHS CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION FOR YOUR GROUP

Do you or your group have a special anniversary approaching? A Washtenaw County Historical Society Certificate of Recognition recognizes an individual, family, organization, institution or business that has been part of the history of the County. We can send it to you electronically or print a hard copy for pick up or mail it to you. The certificates are 8.5"x11" and ready for framing. For more information call 734-662-9092 or email [wchs-500@ameritech.net](mailto:wchs-500@ameritech.net)

**Our mission is to educate and inspire our community to engage in the preservation and presentation of area history**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



*Tom Freeman's presentation at the Annual Meeting*

Our Society's annual members meeting and picnic held Sunday, May 19th at County Farm Park was a great success! With 53 people in attendance (more than double the attendance from last year's annual meeting), beautiful weather, great food and a great presentation by board member Tom Freeman about the history of County Farm Park. A good time was had by all.

Nearly a year earlier board members and staff spent a planning session at a board meeting revising our long standing format for annual meetings from a Wednesday evening meeting and potluck dinner to a Sunday afternoon meeting and presentation. Somewhat later, the idea of having a picnic was added which turned a meeting into an historically focused social event. This also reflects the theme of the current exhibit at Museum on Main Street, "Courting, Dating & Playing: Social Recreation in Washtenaw County Since 1830."

Board member, **Sally Silvennoinen**, presented the slate for the Nominating Committee. Members reelected the board Officers to another one year term. Directors **Tom Freeman**, **Jan Tripp** and **Joseph Cialdella** were reelected to three year terms. **James Davis** was elected to his first three year term as Director. James fills the board position of **Joanne Nesbit**. We thank Joanne for her many years of board service. She will continue to work closely with the Exhibits Committee and in other areas.

*Leslie Loomans, President*

### **Washtenaw County Historical Society**

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#### **Museum on Main Street**

500 N. Main St • Ann Arbor, MI 48104-1027

(at the corner of Beakes & E. Kingsley)

**HOURS** Saturday & Sunday, 12 Noon – 4:00 PM  
and by appointment Monday-Friday  
Groups are welcome, Call 734-662-9092

**Current Exhibit: Courting, Dating & Playing:  
Social Recreation in Washtenaw County  
Since 1830** (closes July 28)



Check us out on Facebook



[www.WashtenawHistory.org](http://www.WashtenawHistory.org)

## You are invited to a Birthday Party

Saturday July 20, 2013 – 11:00 AM-3:00 PM

Celebrate Henry Ford's 150th birthday! Enjoy an antique car show featuring some of Ford Motor Company's earliest treasures including Models T, A, B and early Ford V-8 cars and tractors. An Interactive and historical performance by Russell Dore at 1:00 PM. This family-friendly event will be at the Rentschler Farm Museum, 1265 Michigan Avenue in Saline. For more information call the Saline Area Historical Society, 734-994-0442 or visit [salineHistory.org](http://salineHistory.org)



### Thomas Edison and Henry Ford in Ypsilanti

Thomas Edison, with Henry Ford on the right, being greeted at the Michigan Central Railroad Depot in Ypsilanti by Aretas Bedell (1876-1968), lifelong resident of Ypsilanti and employed by the Michigan Central Railroad. This photograph was most likely taken in 1929 when Edison came for the dedication of his Menlo Park laboratories at Greenfield Village in Dearborn. (Ypsilanti Historical Society Photo Archives)

## Do You Remember Drake's Sandwich Shop?

Was your first date at Drake's? Or was a favorite spot to hangout with your friends? Or maybe you stopped by after a movie?

Whatever the memories are or if it is a desire to learn what the fascination is with places like this, stop by the Museum on Main Street! Check out the Michigan Theater section, J-Hop dancers, parlor fun, Lover's Lane(s) and canoeing on the Huron River. Be sure to sit in the authentic booth from Drake's and take a picture if you want to. See page 2 for exhibit hours.

## Summer Hike & Tours at Parker Mill

Sunday July 14 – 10:00 AM-11:30 AM



Hikers meet at the Mill at Parker Mill Park at 10 AM. It is located at 4650 Geddes Road, in Ann Arbor Township. As part of Huron River Day the Mill will also be open for tours

from 12 Noon - 4:00 PM with formal tours at 1:00 & 3:00 PM. [www.Ewashtenaw.org](http://www.Ewashtenaw.org)

## Huron River Day at Gallup Park

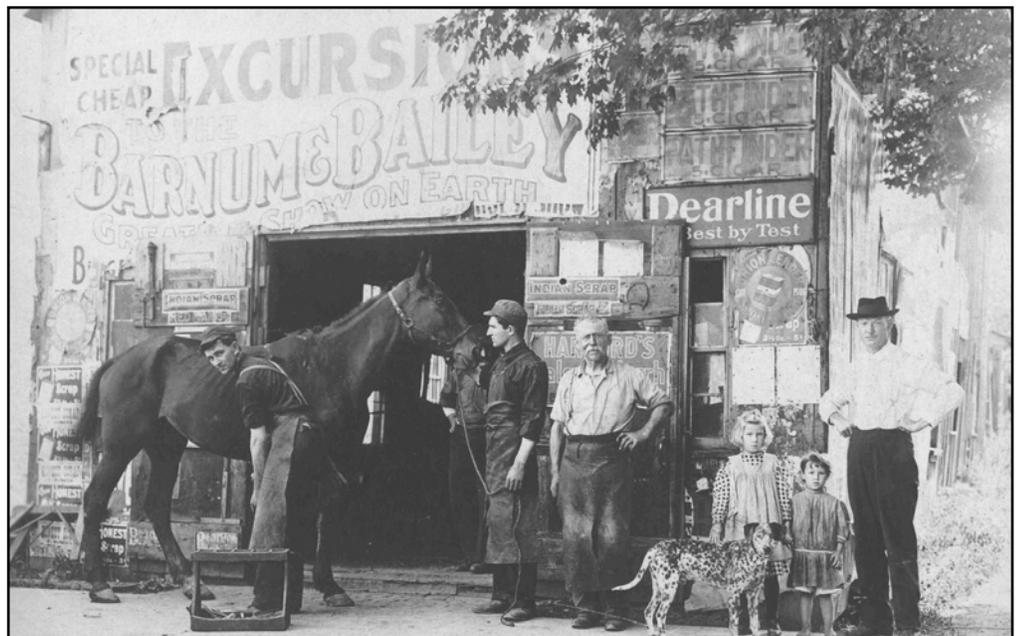
Sunday July 14 – 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Celebrate the Huron River and have fun while learning about water quality and river preservation at Gallup Park, 3000 Fuller Road, Ann Arbor. Free afternoon events include children's activity tent with art and science exploration, a live animal program, butterfly house and fun river exhibits. You can also see a classic small boat show and stand up paddleboard demonstrations. Enjoy great music, food and more. [www.A2gov.org](http://www.A2gov.org)

**We will miss Tom Dodd** who was a force of nature. He was energetic, funny, interested and interesting. Tom wrote and co-authored books about local history. People loved his articles in many area newsletters including *Cobblestone Farm*, *Ypsilanti Gleanings* and the *Depot Town Rag*. He was the force behind Depot Town in Ypsilanti. The rich legacy of his life's work is a great gift to Washtenaw County.

## Middle Street Business in Chelsea, 1900

**Louis Eisenman Blacksmith**, South side of W. Middle Street, early 1900. Man on the right is Louis Eisenman, little girl Mary Eisenman and her sister Dorothy. The dog is named spot. (Photo from the Eisenman family)



# The Garden

on Main Street at the corner where E. Kingsley meets Beakes Street



The 1830s Greek Revival style house that is the home of the Washtenaw County Historical Society's museum, is surrounded by gardens much like those that existed in the period of 1880-1900. The mixed borders include digitalis, hollyhock, clematis, roses, boxwood, dianthus, chrysanthemum, hosta, hydrangea, spirea, lilac, lobelia, nigella, lupin, peony, poppy, phlox, clove, current, iris, tulips, crocus, narcissus, aster, pansy and viola.

We know that one of the owners of the house in the 1890s, Charles Greiner, listed his occupation as 'gardener' in the city directory. The Greiner family of six daughters and their descendants lived

*"The greatest gift of the garden is the restoration of the five senses."* Hanna Rion

in this house for over 100 years. In addition to bringing along as many of the native plants surrounding the house when it was moved, we planted some others that were so popular at that time. These include Rose of Sharon, heliotrope, native ferns, wildflowers and oriental lilies such as the magnificent "Gold Band" lily. From the soapwort by the back door whose leaves make a soapy lather to the Gallica and Damask roses, there is a broad spectrum of period plantings to fulfill our goals of education and appreciation of the past.

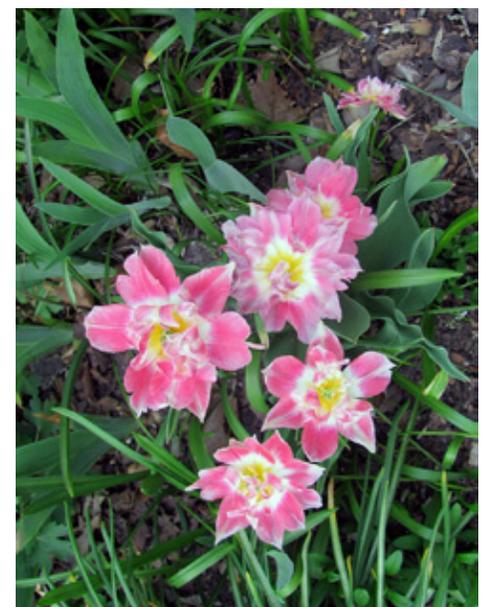
### **The Buffer Garden**

The buffer area uses plants that are somewhat larger and a bit more "coarse" than other materials used in the garden. The dominant plants are Tallhedge, Common and Persian Lilac, and Viburnum species with Mugo Pine, English Ivy and Daffodils as accents.



### **Living History in Bloom**

The house is an extremely rare example in Michigan of an unremodeled 1830s house and is our grandest artifact. Because of a generous gift from Pauline Walters along with her late sister Mary Marchand, the garden has been enriched with many new flowers that bloomed this Spring and a witch hazel tree. Three sub-areas, each with its own characteristics, are part of the Museum's gardens.



### The Kitchen Garden

The door to the kitchen faces south, and adjacent to it (especially on the larger original site) would have been the family's vegetable and cutting garden. A Flowering Crabapple, Dwarf Quince and herbs recall this past.

### The Display Garden

The remainder of the site, which includes the area at the base of and inside the period picket fence includes Vanhoutte Spirea, St. Johnswort, Dwarf Barberry, Kerria and Goldflower (Hypericum). Hostas and Daylilies line the fence, annuals and perennials are planted as accents. The planting bed at the base of the house is a border with Hosta, Lily-of-the-Valley and Hydrangea.

Historically, the carpet bed involved simple geometric figures or an intricate cutout design in the yard. Harmoniously arranged ribbons of flowers that bloomed all season filled the beds. Our carpet bed, under the flagpole, is in the shape of a shooting star. The display garden provides a setting for the house to interpret the County's heritage through its Museum on Main Street.

### How does it happen?

We count on volunteer gardeners led by Master Gardener, Lilly Ferguson, to do all of the planting, weeding and beautification. We count on our docent John Kilar to maintain the grass and many other details of the house. It is well-maintained and cared for by the Building and Grounds Committee. We count on your donations to the Endowment Fund to secure its future care.

The air has been full of the fragrance from the yellow quince and lavender lilacs by the doors. The peonies have bloomed and the scent of the roses is heavenly. The clematis is climbing up the trellis and the garden continues to unfold. If you would like to get your hands in the dirt and volunteer for an hour or two, call 734-662-9092.



The Ann Arbor Women Artists Plein Air Painters painted in the emerging spring garden at the museum in May. The AAWA was founded as a volunteer organization and study group called Ann Arbor Women Painters in 1951 by Sarah Bull, Elsie Bailey and Doris Porter Mclean. Today, AAWA is a non-profit organization of more than 300 women and men with connections to Ann Arbor, Michigan, ranging from beginning to professional artists.



# It was a Picnic in the Park

By Diana Mankowski

**T**HANK YOU to all of our members, guests and "Friends of History" who attended the Annual Meeting Picnic on Sunday, May 19 at County Farm Park, and to Satchel's BBQ for providing the main course. We were so pleased with the turnout and positive response for our reimagined Annual Meeting. The people who gathered that day enjoyed beautiful weather, delicious food, an informative talk on the history of County Farm Park given by WCHS board member Tom Freeman, and some important historical society business.

County Farm Park was bustling with families enjoying the warm and sunny afternoon as WCHS members gathered under the large pavilion. Lively conversation and laughter filled the pavilion as guests arrived. After some mingling and socializing, we chowed down on Satchel's pulled pork, pulled chicken, corn bread, and mac 'n' cheese. WCHS board members brought salads, beans, and desserts to pass. All the guests seemed to enjoy the food very much and continued catching up with each other before moving on to the Sunday program portion of the afternoon.

Tom Freeman spoke to the group about the many changes to County Farm Park since Claudius Britton purchased the 140 acres in 1836 for the purpose of establishing a County Poorhouse to serve the poor, orphaned and insane. The County erected a frame house in the summer of 1836, and the first paupers arrived the following year. The paupers and Keeper, later known as Poor Master, lived in a succession of different buildings on corner of what is now Platt and Washtenaw. In 1860, the facilities were renamed Washtenaw County Poor House and Insane Asylum and could accommodate up to 250 people.

The cost of keeping the residents, which amounted to an average number of 25 per week in 1849, 48 in 1900, was taken on by the township or village that referred them, and the land was used as fields to raise crops and animals to feed the residents. Theoretically, the occupants were to work the farm to earn their keep, but most of the residents were too old or otherwise unable to do so. The Poor Master and a hired laborer managed to work the farm well enough to produced much of its own food and an occasional surplus, especially in wool.

With the advent of the welfare system in the 1930s, County Farm changed from a place for the county's poor to a place for those who needed ongoing medical care but could not afford it. It became known as the County Infirmary, with a building constructed in 1917, and remained operational until 1971. In the meantime, 13 acres in the northwest corner of the property were leased to the City of Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation Department in 1966. The land was named Park Washtenaw with a nature trail, picnic shelter, and small parking lot constructed.

When the Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission (WCPARC) was established in 1973, a prolonged discussion began about the possibility of establishing a park on the County Farm property. Other ideas were also considered, including moving the center of county government to the site, but in 1976, development began to make County Farm a recreational space with the construction of the Parcours exercise trail.

*(Continued on page 7)*

Board president Les Loomans calls the Annual Meeting to order





Washtenaw County Poorhouse from the Combination Atlas Map of Washtenaw County, 1874 (Bentley Historical Library)

*(Annual Meeting continued from page 6)*

In 1979, the structures on the property were demolished, leaving the large barn, originally built in 1931 and since repainted a light tan, as the only structure remaining from the time when this land was the County Farm. County Farm Park was officially dedicated on October 29, 1983.

At the time of its initial purchase in 1836, County Farm was an isolated setting far from downtown. Since then, the community has grown, leaving this island of open space that continues to be a valuable resource for Washtenaw County residents and the WCPARC. Since 1972, County Farm Park has been the site of one of the largest Project Grow sites in Washtenaw County. The Park once housed the WCPARC administrative offices in the County Recreation Center.

Those offices have since moved to a new Administrative Building, but the newly named Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center remains an active and popular fitness space for residents. Also in County Farm Park are the Field Operations Building and a new farm themed playground constructed in 2006, which was filled with delighted children on the afternoon of our picnic.

After Freeman's talk, WCHS President Les Loomans directed the business portion of the meeting, which consisted mostly of the approval and welcoming of the new slate of officers and board directors.

WCHS thanks all its members for their continued support, and we look forward to another great year celebrating the history of Washtenaw County.



The county infirmary, the successor to the poorhouse, was for poor people who needed continual medical care. Pictured here in 1970, it was built in 1917, closed in 1971 and was torn down in 1979. (AADL.org)

**The Washtenaw Pioneer Meeting.**

The annual meeting of the Washtenaw County Pioneer Society was held in the Methodist church of this village on Wednesday, June 10th and was one of the most pleasant and successful in the history of the Society.

The session opened at 10:30 a. m., with prayer by Rev. M. H. McMahon. The session was devoted principally to the business of the Society and reading of the necrologist's report. At 12 o'clock came adjournment for dinner, which was a sumptuous repast, served in the church parlors and presided over by the ladies of the village.

The afternoon session was opened at 1:15 and was a very interesting and enjoyable meeting.

Secretary Sessions began the program by reading from the Societies' scrap book, which is a valuable compilation of historical matter that has been accumulated by the officers of the Society. It embraces sketches from almost every township in the county, and as it is all authentic, the volume is of almost incalculable value.

Following this came the principal paper of the day, by Judge Harriman, which was of the greatest interest. It touched upon the lives, characters and environments of the pioneers of Washtenaw, and upon the progress which had been made since the sturdy settlers first began to lay the foundation for the banner county of Michigan. Lack of space compels us to omit all save a passing notice. The paper was greatly enjoyed, and all were sorry when it came to a close.

C. M. Starks, of Webster followed with one of his characteristically interesting talks, which was greatly appreciated.

Dr. Holmes, of Chelsea, made a few well-chosen remarks which gave both young and old food for thought. Several other impromptu addresses completed the speech making.

John W. Williams, of Webster, a pioneer, sang two selections, which were greatly appreciated: "Forty Years Ago" and "The Railroad of Life."

Dr. Holmes, of Chelsea, was elected President of the Society, and J. Q. A. Sessions, of Ann Arbor, Secretary, for the ensuing year.

By request those present who settled in this county prior to 1830 arose, 17 answering to the call.

At 4 p. m. the meeting adjourned after extending a hearty vote of thanks to the Society, the ladies of Dexter, the choir, and all who assisted in making the meeting a success.

The next meeting will be held in Chelsea.—Dexter Leader.



Drawing by Michael Klement

(Continued from page 1) Preservation awards recognize substantial work that returned a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration, facilitating contemporary needs but respecting the features of the property that are significant to its historic and architectural values. Special Merit awards recognize exceptional projects, landscapes or other unique preservation projects, including lifetime achievements and centennial recognition.

#### REHABILITATION AWARDS

- 420 W. Huron (Ann Arbor School of Yoga/Ed Shaffran)

#### PRESERVATION AWARDS

- 120 Packard (Lottie Van Curler) accepted by Ray Detter
- 719 W. Washington (John Mouat and Lisa Mouat Snapp)
- 711 W. Washington (Jayne Haas and Marie Coppa)
- 212 Third Street (Susan Fisher)
- 222 N. Seventh (Tom Fricke and Christine Stier)
- 1550 Washtenaw Avenue (Zeta Tau Alpha)
- 1850 Washtenaw Avenue (Gregory and Margene Henry)
- 1115 Woodlawn (Christa and John Williams)
- 2505 Geddes (Eugene and Martha Burnstein)
- 1425 Pontiac (David and Bethany Steinberg)
- 3081 Glazier (Constance and David Osler)

#### SPECIAL MERIT AWARDS

- Kristi Gilbert-HDC volunteer
- Cobblestone Farm Association board
- 116 W. Huron - Ann Arbor Bus Depot sign (First Martin)
- 226 S. Main - Marquee Restoration, Lena (2mission design & development)

#### PRESERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

- Pauline Walters

#### CENTENNIAL AWARD

- Hill Auditorium (University of Michigan)

#### PROJECT OF THE YEAR

- 1331 Hill Street (Delta Upsilon Fraternity)

A reception for the award recipients was graciously hosted by the owners of the beautiful Judge Robert S. Wilson House following the ceremony at City Hall. The awards committee includes Ellen Ramsburgh, Patricia Austin, Grace Shackman, Frances Wright, Tom Stulberg, Ina Hanel-Gerdenich, Patrick McCauley and Louisa Pieper with support from historic preservation coordinator Jill Thacher. For more information, you can download the PDF with all of the winners and photos from our website at [www.WashtenawHistory.org](http://www.WashtenawHistory.org)

### What's New at the WCHS Gift Shop

*A Purse of Her Own* is a new book written by local historian Susan Nenadic. It is a well researched and organized book with a wide cast of characters that makes for a very interesting read. It's about women's work and employment in Washtenaw County, Michigan in the 1900s told through stories of women who endured the many challenges of a male dominated society.

### Thank You for Your Feedback

We truly love hearing from our readers. Your cards and letters are appreciated. We like it when you share ideas or suggestions for the newsletter. Email [wchs-1000@ameritech.net](mailto:wchs-1000@ameritech.net) or send to Impressions, PO Box 3336, Ann Arbor, MI 48106

### Have a Great Summer

*Impressions* is published 7 times a year. The next issue will arrive in September. There will be news about the University of Michigan Football exhibit at the Museum on Main Street as well as our Fall Educational Programs. Enjoy the river, parks and all of the historical attractions this region offers.



**Groomes Beach in Whitmore Lake.** Make sure to see the current exhibit at the Museum on Main Street for more scenes from this beach and other artifacts about social recreation in the county.