



WASHTENAW IMPRESSIONS

President's Message

FOUR SUNDAY MEETINGS PLANNED FOR WCHS'S 125TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR, PLEASE JOIN US

Greetings to the members!

I look forward with enthusiasm as we begin the 1982-83 meetings of the Washtenaw County Historical Society. We have many new things happening and I shall need your help and support.

The most important change that you should note is the time and day of our general meetings. By approval of the Board of Directors our meetings will now be held on Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

The meetings are scheduled Sunday, September 12, 1982; Sunday, November 14, 1982; Sunday, February 13, 1983; and Sunday, April 10, 1983. The annual meeting will be on Thursday, May 19, 1983 at 8 p.m. Johanna Wiese has some very special programs planned for this coming year, and I hope that you will mark your calendars and plan to be with us.

In November, the Washtenaw County Historical Society will be celebrating its 125th birthday, and we are planning a BIG birthday party. Chairman of the event is Esther Warzynski; co-chairman, Carol Freeman.

I met with Robin Franklin, chairman, history department, Pioneer High School, to discuss the possibility of history students attending our meetings. Robin was most receptive to the idea, and we are working to promote the Historical Society to the students.

We are also planning to circulate through the elementary schools a "hands-on" display of items from the past that would be of interest to the students. This will be introduced at Angell School by one of the teachers, Mrs. Norma Wonnacott.

We need to attract new members to the Society if we are to keep it alive and viable, and you will be hearing more about the membership drive as plans progress

from Kathleen Sherzer, chairman, and Patricia Dufek, co-chairman.

We have a new curator of our collections, Bradley Taylor, who is hard at work on a re-organizational plan with the assistance of Mary Blaske.

I am committed to the Society, its work and programs. Won't you join me?

See you September 12!

Patricia Austin



MEETING DATES:

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1982-83

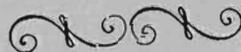
Sunday, September 12, 1982	2:30 p.m.
Sunday, November 14, 1982	2:30 p.m.
Sunday, February 13, 1983	2:30 p.m.
Sunday, April 10, 1983	2:30 p.m.

ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, May 19, 1983 8:00 p.m.

ANNUAL TOUR

Saturday, June 11, 1983



ART FAIR PARKING NETS WCHS \$933

WCHS took in \$933.75 from parking cars after business hours at Great Lakes Federal Savings during the Ann Arbor Art Fair in July.

Thanks are due to GLFS for allowing use of their lot, to Elizabeth Dusseau, chairman, and to helpers Patricia and Bill Austin, Hugh Gaston, Peter and Janet Rocco, Brad Taylor, Esther and Ray Warzynski and Alice and Lawrence Ziegler.

'HARDTACK AND COFFEE,' CIVIL WAR PROGRAM, PLANNED SEPTEMBER 12

A uniformed "Livingston County Civil War soldier" and a costumed "Detroit housewife of the 1860's" will tell what their life was like in a program called "Hardtack and Coffee" at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, September 12, in the Henderson Room, Michigan League, 227 South Ingalls Street, Ann Arbor.

It is free BUT reservations are required by Thursday, September 9, to 662-2634 or 668-8620.

A couple from the Detroit Historical Society assume the roles and bring authentic artifacts used in daily life of the 1860's.

"Mrs. Jane Allen" will show typical clothing, a footwarmer, washboard, irons, carpet bag, patent medicines, school slates and textbooks and read from letters she received from friends in the Army.

Infantry Private John Caldwell was born in 1838 on a small farm near Deerfield in Livingston County. He had saved up money to attend the Ypsilanti Normal College but was drafted. He trained at Fort Wayne in Detroit and served at Gettysburg.

"He" will tell about his training and demonstrate field equipment.

GERMAN ROOTS? GSWC PLANS WORKSHOP FOR YOU

An all-day workshop on "Researching Ancestors in Germany" will be held October 23 at the Holiday Inn West, 2900 Jackson Road, Ann Arbor, sponsored by the Genealogical Society of Washtenaw County.

Dr. Robert E. Ward of Cleveland, a practicing attorney and professor of German language and literature as well as a genealogical researcher, will speak.

Information about reservations is available from Mrs. Gwen Bourn, registrar, of Whitmore Lake, at (313) 231-1957.

Please return to [unclear]

Massachusetts Sea Captain Founded Dixboro

Captain Dix's dream of 1824 didn't come true, and there are people here today who are glad it didn't.

They are the residents of Dixboro, the quiet hamlet he founded a few miles northeast of Ann Arbor, who like it as it is — an unincorporated community in Washtenaw County's Superior township rather than the thriving city he hoped it would become.

The WCHS 1982 annual tour to "Historic Dixboro and Beyond" visited several old homes in and near Dixboro which are 100 to nearly 150 years old. Tourgoers also visited the old store and garage, now both antique shops, saw the old red brick one-room school on the village green, the new Glen Freeman Elementary School on Dixboro Lane and lunched at the 1858 Dixboro Methodist Church.

Captain John Dix, born in 1796 in Littleton, Massachusetts, had gone to sea at age sixteen, served on a privateer in the War of 1812 and been shipwrecked off New Zealand.

"We can only speculate why he chose to emigrate to the Territory of Michigan in 1824," Carol Freeman writes in her 1979 history, *Of Dixboro: Lest We Forget*. "Perhaps it was that he had met and courted a girl from 'a good Massachusetts family,' wanted to make a name for himself and prepare to support a wife."

In any case he rode into the "western wilds" here in April 1824, only two months after Allen and Rumsey located Ann Arbor and chose the location for a village.

He built his house that summer and next spring traveled back East to be married. He returned with his bride and some friends, "built a barn, opened a store and post office in part of his home, and planned the layout of Dixboro."

But nine years later, "lots having moved rather slowly, Captain Dix sold his property to James P. Clements and departed for Texas," Mrs. Freeman wrote in the tour brochure. She also served as tour



DIXBORO METHODIST CHURCH, CIRCA 1940

Courtesy of Carol Freeman

guide.

She thinks Captain Dix's house must have stood on the site of the Dixboro branch of the National Bank of Ypsilanti at 5300 Plymouth Road, and his barn across the road. She has not been able to find out when his house disappeared.

"In 1845 Dixboro experienced considerable publicity through the murder of Martha Mulholland by her brother-in-law, who coveted her property. The house in which the murdered woman lived, and where her ghost appeared nine times, was located in the field in back of the Fred Schmid residence at 5164 Plymouth Road," she said.

The village grew slowly, "with the businesses being mostly taverns or stage stops, blacksmith shops and saw and grist mills. At one time there were three active blacksmith shops.

"Many buildings have disappeared over the years, as have the mills on Fleming Creek; also most of the businesses that flourished through the early 1900's. The village had a general store, a steam operated saw mill and crate factory, an apple cider mill, a chair factory, a washing machine factory, two creameries, a cooper shop, a threshing machine rig, and two doctors.

The original schoolhouse was probably built in the early 1830's and was replaced by a new school in 1888 — the present little red brick building on the public square set aside by Captain Dix for a church and school in 1826.

The one-room school, now owned by the church, was built during the summer of 1888 and was all ready for school in September, Mrs. Freeman notes. "Remember there was no water, electricity, furnace, plumbing or carpeting to be installed.

"A pump in the schoolyard, a stove in the center of the room, kerosene lamps for evening entertainments, blackboards and a wooden box of chalk, a granite-ware wash basin and a roller towel, a water pail and dipper, outside toilets, and a broom and dust pan were amply sufficient for the needs of a country school."

The Dixboro United Methodist Church was not built until 1858 and not on the square but back of it at what is now 5221 Church Street.

"In January 1858, trustees resolved that 'we build a church 35 feet wide by 55 feet long with 20 foot posts and including a vestibule nine feet wide with gallery directly over.'"

Abraham Cooper of Ypsilanti

was paid \$15 for drawing the plans and E.W. Ford of Saline submitted the lowest bid. Trustees resolved it should not cost more than \$2,500 and it was completed for \$2,241.

A basement was dug out under the church around 1920 to accommodate a furnace and later more Sunday School rooms. An electric organ has now replaced the old reed organ and electric lights the kerosene lamps. Over the years many a chicken dinner used to be served in the basement after University of Michigan football games. The original price was 75 cents for adults, 50 cents for children.

Two more additions to the church now provide offices, Sunday School rooms and a dining room-social hall. The tourgoers enjoyed a hearty luncheon there topped off with strawberry shortcake.

Among the homes visited was the house built in 1839 by James Clements, who had bought Captain Dix's property in 1833, and went back to New York to be married in 1839. He operated the post office and a store in the upright (two-story) section of the house.

"Indians traveling through Dixboro on their way to Fort Malden, Canada, to collect their bounties, were allowed to roll up in their blankets and sleep overnight on the dirt floor of the Clements cellar. I wonder how relaxed Mrs. Clements slept.

"In 1960 the house was sold to Raymond Shrope, who restored it inside and out. It is now owned by his daughter, Linda Shrope Barnes."

The store was originally only half its present size and the early storekeepers lived upstairs with their families. Emmett Gibb doubled the size of the building and added a dance hall upstairs in 1924. That was the year Plymouth Road was paved using convict labor. A post office was located in the store 1861-63 and 1890-1905.

The house beside the store occupies the same lot and later storekeepers lived there including the Gibbs's for 50 years. House and store, recently sold, were owned by



Courtesy of Suzanne Galpin Smith

GALPIN-SMITH HOME, 1837, has housed eight generations of the same family.

David Ahearn at the time of the tour. The house was built before 1881 — perhaps a portion as early as 1840 as the lot had a building on it when John Mulholland bought the property.

The year after Plymouth Road was paved, the Dixboro garage was built. When it was closed a few years ago, John and Evelyn Gibbons bought it, remodeled and re-decorated it and moved their antique business there from the former Dixboro store on Plymouth Road at Cherry Hill Road.

There is a story of a peddler who disappeared from a tavern one night, and it was believed his body was thrown down a well on the opposite corner of Plymouth and Cherry Hill, then Main and Mill Streets, but the body was never found. Frains Lake was also searched, Mrs. Freeman relates.

The Schmid-Trotter house was built around 1865 with a "barn frame with oak beams. The studs were cut unevenly so that the siding 'weaved in and out,' the panes in the kitchen window were merely tacked in, the floor was rough and the kitchen extremely cold" when the Gottlob Schmid moved there in 1912, soon after they were married.

Mrs. Schmid had lived in Geddes (Dixboro Road at the Huron River) as a child where her brother was a telegrapher and stationmaster for the Michigan Central Railroad.

(The railroad following a route along the river rather than via Dixboro is probably one reason Dixboro remained a quiet village near Fleming Creek.)

The Schmid home is now owned by their daughter Nancy and her husband, Darrell Trotter. The Trotters have remodeled and re-decorated the house.

The Shuart-Pierce house was built by 1858 or before. The John Warner Shuart family moved there in 1858 and some of the family lived there for ninety years. The original one-story part of the house is believed to have been one of the early taverns.

Handmade local bricks were used to make two of the homes visited — the 1836 Pray-Burmeister house and the 1837 Galpin-Smith Centennial farmhouse.

Those in the Pray house were made out of clay "from the wet area across the road" while those in the Galpin house were made in kilns on the Matteson farm on Dixboro Road, now part of the U-M Botanical Gardens.

Esek Pray brought his family from New York to Superior township in 1825 and lived in a log cabin until 1836 when he applied for and received a license from the township board to open a tavern in his new brick house.

The house is described as, "two-story Federal Greek Revival with classical details."

Esek was appointed Justice of the Peace by Governor Cass and his office was in his house "located on a main thoroughfare between Ann Arbor and Plymouth and strategically located for a court of the Justice of the Peace." In 1838 he served as a representative in the state legislature, and was on the agricultural, manufacturing, Indian affairs and unfinished business committees.

Esek's daughter, Mary J., married Watson Geer and the place was long known as the Geer place. The present owners are William and Cynthia Burmeister. The Prays gave land for the Pray Cemetery. One of Esek's daughters married Freeman P. Galpin.

Philo Galpin built the brick house in 1837 which has been occupied by eight generations of his family down to the present day. Suzanne Galpin Smith and her husband, Garvin, are the present owners and occupants of the centennial farmhouse.

Stones were gathered from the fields for the foundation. J. Pray helped Philo build the house for 50 cents a day — good wages for those days — and a workday was from sunrise to sunset.

The east portion of the house is one-story, the west two-story. "In the early days grandparents willingly moved to the smaller one-story quarters when one of the children married and started a family of their own," Mrs. Freeman explained.

A family room and garage have been added at the back. In the original part of the house most of the inside doors have latches rather than knobs, and heavy wooden pegs are used instead of nails. The house originally had eight fireplaces.

The Lay-Hagler house, built in 1833, was moved in 1966 to Superior township from Michigan Avenue east of Ypsilanti and restored by the Haglers.

It was built by Ezra D. Lay who came from near Rochester, New York, with his wife in 1832 and bought 160 acres of land along the old Chicago road. The following



Courtesy of Carol Freeman

CLEMENTS-BARNES HOUSE

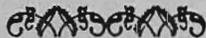
year he built his house in a style reminiscent of those he left behind in New York.

The late professor Emil Lorch, former head of the U-M College of Architecture, considered the Lay house one of the finest examples of New York state Revival architecture in the midwest.

Until recently, Katherine Hagler was curator of fine furniture at Greenfield Village. Both she and her husband, Charles, worked patiently and long to authentically restore the house. They each showed part of the group through the house which features their many collections of various items as well as antique furnishings.

The McCormick-Hibbard house was to have been on the tour but planned redecorating was not completed as soon as anticipated, so it was passed by. Part of that house is believed to have been built in or before 1833 by John McCormick. Prior to this the McCormicks lived in a double log cabin on the site. It was in that cabin that the first meeting of the township of Panama (later separated into Salem and Superior townships) was held in 1828.

The Arthur Coverts (Mrs. Covert was a daughter of Philo Galpin), the Freeman Coverts, the John Staffords and the John Wein-harts lived there before the Hibbards.



CO-PRESIDENTS CHOSEN

Alice Byrne and Wendy Blackie will serve as co-presidents of Saline Historical Society.

Joanne Merrell is secretary, Paul Meyer, treasurer and Ben Upton and Connie Paul are board members.

GRADUATE STUDENT SEEKS ROOM IN HISTORIC HOUSE

A young woman who is a professional architectural historian who will be moving to Ann Arbor in January for a year of graduate study has appealed to WCHS readers to help her find a room or small apartment in an historic house close to campus.

She is Linda Jasperse, a native of Dearborn, who for the past two years has been in Fayetteville, North Carolina, in Fair Oaks, an 1850 Greek Revival plantation house.

She will be studying librarianship and administration of archives and manuscript collections at the U-M and is willing to housesit for a WCHS member who might be vacationing or on leave.

If interested, please call the editor at 663-8826 after September 15 for Miss Jasperse's address and phone number. She offers "impeccable references."

WEST SIDE HOUSE TOUR PLANNED SEPTEMBER 19

The annual Old West Side homes tour will be from 1-6 p.m. Sunday, September 19.

Six houses are included along with the South Main Market, a group of food and wine shops at 637 South Main Street behind Raupp Campfitters.

Advance tickets are on sale at several businesses including Washenaw Dairy for \$3.50. Tickets that day at St. Paul's Lutheran Church are \$4.50.

CAN YOU DATE THIS?

Quoted from a local newspaper:

"The truth is that very few women work from anything but necessity. Here and there is one that loves independence, works for it, deserves it, and here and there is another who would rather work than forego certain luxuries and she earns them, but the majority of women work because they have responsibilities, and as a class, they are our most reliable, sober, economical workers, for no woman with a family of little children gambles away their bread and butter." Answer in November.

PATRICIA K. AUSTIN ELECTED PRESIDENT OF WCHS; PEWTER PLATE PRESENTED TO RETIRING PRESIDENT

Patricia K. Austin, a medical assistant to Dr. Robert Goldsmith, was elected president of WCHS for 1982-83 at the annual meeting May 27.

She succeeds Mary Steffek Blaske who was presented an engraved pewter plate in appreciation of her services.

Johanna Wiese was elected vice-president and Elizabeth Dusseau, treasurer. Ethelyn Morton was re-elected corresponding secretary and Alice Ziegler, recording secretary.

Elected to three-year terms on the board of directors were Patricia Dufek, Carol Freeman, Arthur French and Esther Warzynski. Mrs. Blaske and Kathleen Sherzer will fill terms expiring in 1983 and Frances Couch and Bradley Taylor, retiring vice-president and treasurer, respectively, terms expiring in 1984.

Outgoing treasurer Taylor reported Society income totaling \$9,192.30 for 1981-82 and expenses of \$6,107.61 making liabilities and capital on April 30, 1982, \$18,807.90 or \$3,084.69 more than the same date in 1981.

The Barton Powerhouse account had \$1,790.39 interest in-

WCHS RECEIVES VARIED GIFTS, THANKS DONORS

WCHS received a varied group of gifts in recent months for which it thanks the donors.

Mrs. Paul Makanowitzky gave a generous gift of jewelery valued at \$1,000 for WCHS to auction or sell — a pair of fire opal earrings and a necklace. She and her husband, who was at the U-M Music School, recently returned to Europe.

Frances Martindale gave a leather coach trunk with brass nails.

Andy Beierwaltes gave three Washtenaw County milk bottles ranging from 1900-1940.

Eunice Brake gave an art deco purse made of tin and beads by an Ann Arborite named Cole, and some circa 1920 ladies lingerie, a teddy.

come and \$88.08 expense (electricity). Liabilities and capital increased from \$14,678.16 in April 1981 to \$16,380.47 on April 30, 1982.

The new president previously served as treasurer, director and on several committees including collections of which she was chairman.

Taylor cautioned that WCHS lost two major fund raising projects this past year — the home show auction and Art Fair booth income — and will need to seek out other means of fund raising.

DEXTER WOMAN HEADS COUNTY GENEALOGISTS

Trudy Potter of Dexter was elected president of the Genealogical Society of Washtenaw County.

Other officers are Lydia Muncy, vice-president; Thada Liskow, treasurer; Betty Brandt, recording secretary; Bobby Snow, librarian; and board members-at-large, Polly Bender, Mark Liskow, Bob Lutz and Ed Sayer.

The organization has almost doubled in size in the past two years outgoing President Alvin Josiyn reported.



COBBLESTONE PLANS FALL FESTIVAL SEPTEMBER 26

Cobblestone Farm's eighth annual fall festival will be from 1-5 p.m. Sunday, September 26, at the farm, 2781 Packard Road, Ann Arbor, with wagon rides, refreshments and demonstrations of old time arts and crafts.

There will also be tours of the city-owned 1844 Classic Revival style farmhouse (free but donations requested for restoration), display of antique dolls and dancing by the Cobblestone Farm Country Dancers.

Crafts will include lace-knitting, butter churning, spinning and weaving in wool by the "Spinner's Flock" group and rug weaving on the farm's own loom. Refreshments will include "Cobblestone Farm Sugar Cookies," cider, lemonade, hotdogs and popcorn.

APPRAISERS EVALUATE EVERYTHING FROM DISHES TO CLOCKS TO BROADAXES

Members and guests brought everything from carefully wrapped vases and china to a broad axe for hewing barn timbers to be appraised at the free appraisal night following the WCHS annual meeting May 27.

Iver Schmidt of Schmidt's Antiques and Julie Caldwell and Mike Anderson of Materials Unlimited volunteered their services as appraisers. Both businesses are in Ypsilanti.

Most everyone learned something more about their antique. Some found them older or more valuable than they had guessed. In other cases the item might not have been as old as thought. For example, it might date from a revival.

A cameo glass vase was estimated to be worth \$800-\$1200. Most cameo glass was made in Europe up to the 1920's its owner was told.

A regency clock in rosewood case which its owner said keeps good time was told it was made after 1850 and one appraiser or one market might value it at \$500-\$600 while another might value it at \$800-\$900.

It was noted that all periods of English furniture are named for the reigning monarch of the time such as Victorian, Queen Anne or Edwardian.

The broad axe, in good condition, was estimated to be worth \$125-\$150.

BLACK GENEALOGY TOPIC OF GSWC MEETING 26TH

Dr. DeWitt Dyke will speak on Black genealogy to the Genealogy Society of Washtenaw County at the 2:30 p.m. meeting, Sunday, September 26, at Washtenaw Community College. At 1:00 p.m., beginning genealogy class taught by Polly Bender and Mary Liskow.

The GSWC October meeting will be the 24th at the Dexter Museum to see their records and library, time to be announced. Questions? Call 663-3761 or 426-3550.

HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

RE: ART TRAIN, 1833 HOME, LAKE HOUSE, WATERLOO, WEBSTER FESTIVAL

Dexter Historical Society — 8 p.m. first Thursday at museum, 3443 Inverness.

Hazel Kaufman was elected recording secretary to fill a vacancy. Other officers are continuing two-year terms, President Anne Nuttle said.

The Art Train is to be in Dexter October 28-November 3. In conjunction with its visit, the museum plans special displays October 30-November 3, plus demonstration of a different craft each day in the meeting room.

Manchester Historical Society — 8 p.m. Monday, September 20 at the blacksmith shop, 324 East Main Street. Annual meeting, election.

The Society had a collectible sale August 14 at which they also sold memberships and tee shirts for the museum.

Milan Historical Society — 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, September 15, at Hack House, 775 County Street. Mr. and Mrs. Charles V. Hagler will show slides about the restoration of their 1833 Greek Revival home.

He is a member of the Michigan Historical Commission and President of the Detroit Commission. She recently retired as curator of fine furniture at Greenfield Village.

Northfield Historical Society — 7:30 p.m. September 20 in St. Patrick's Community Building. Election of officers, and program to be announced.

Board meeting, open to public, 7 p.m. October 26, place to be announced.

The sites committee is busily trying to get more information from owners about buildings in the township from before 1940.

Member Nancy Johns of Whitmore Lake drew three historic buildings for notepaper the Society is selling. The Lake House Hotel of Whitmore Lake, the Sutton house and St. Patrick's Church are pictured. The notes come 12 in a box, four of each design for \$3.50. For more information about notes, meetings, call Nancy Liddell, 449-8219.

Salem Historical Society — 7 p.m., second Thursday of month at South Salem Stone School in warm months, otherwise Salem School Library.

Saline Historical Society — Visit Waterloo Farm Museum Sunday, September 26, arriving at 3 p.m. Readers welcome to join them there or go with the caravan from Saline. Questions? Call Wendy Blackie, 429-9710 or Alice Byrne, 429-7661.

Webster Historical Society — Big fall festival, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, September 18, and 1-4 p.m. Sunday, September 19, at Webster Church and Farrell Roads.

Saturday — pioneer arts and crafts demonstrations, petting zoo, country store, noon parade, hayrides, entertainment through day,

luncheon (11 a.m.-2 p.m., fee), pig roast dinner (4-7 p.m., \$4.50 adults, \$2 children) square and contra dance, 7-10 p.m. in Community Hall.

Sunday — house tour, five houses, church and township hall, \$4; ice cream social, quilt drawing. Houses include Cottonwood Farm, 1840, two new houses with antiques, a 1920 bungalow and an 1880's house.

Regular meeting, 7:45 p.m. Monday, October 4, at Community House. President Jim Parker will show his collection of World's Fair memorabilia, some of it 100 years old, following tour of blacksmith shop they hope to move. For more information about events call 426-5115.

Ypsilanti Historical Society — Museum, 220 North Huron, open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays 2-4 p.m. June bride exhibit continues into September, to be followed by "How People Kept Warm In The 1860's." The same mannequins will exchange bridal gowns for wooly coats, capes, muffs, etc.

An annual October dinner and speaker will be announced. For information call HU2-4990 mornings.

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Next issue in November.

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WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETING

2:30 P.M. SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 12, 1982

Henderson Room,
Michigan League

227 South Ingalls,
(between Washington and North University)
Ann Arbor, Michigan



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