



Town Crier

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY of GREATER LANSING

P. O. Box 515, Lansing, Michigan

January, 1966

JANUARY MEETING

The Historical Society of Greater Lansing will hold its first meeting of the new year on January 12 at 8 o'clock at the Lansing Public Library. Bart Thoman, whose family dates back to early pioneering days in Lansing, will tell of early milling days in Lansing, especially as it relates to the Thoman Milling Company, one of the oldest in the city. Many no doubt remember the Thoman Mill which stood at the corner of Grand and Ottawa until recent years. As saw mills and grist mills were two of the first industries established in the Lansing area we shall be privileged with a real glimpse of a pioneer industry. With the retirement of Mr. Thoman the mill was closed down and later torn down to make way for the present parking lot.

BOOKS FOR INGHAM COUNTY JAIL

Noting the lack of good books in the library of Ingham County jail, when the Society met there last October 13, four of our Society's members vowed to do something about it with the result that approximately 275 books of current interest were collected and donated by Charles Leneweaver, Rajee Tobia, Doyle Fitzpatrick and Ford Caesar. They are continuing their interest in this project and will welcome any donations which members of the Society may wish to contribute. Books of fiction, recent scientific materials, travel, the arts, nature, wildlife, do-it-yourself items are a few subjects most needed. Recent magazines such as Fortune and National Geographic are very acceptable.

LOCAL HISTORY RESEARCH

Starting January 13, a six-week course in local history research will be given each Thursday evening from 7-9 at the Lansing Public Library. One SIS credit will be granted.

MARBLE COMMUNITY

At the December meeting of Daughters of American Colonists Mrs. Coggan submitted data material and drawing to commemorate the Pioneer Marble Community at the corner of Hagadorn and Burcham, East Lansing. This site will be dedicated, hopefully, sometime this coming spring.

SPRING IS PREFERABLE

Mr. Ford Caesar reports that this year, for the first time, the Lansing History Course was offered in the fall of the year. Only eleven students availed themselves of the opportunity and completed the course. Because of the shorter daylight period in December the class was not able to take the historical tour trip around Lansing. Thus it does seem that the spring term is the better time to schedule this class in the future.

SPECIAL REQUEST

The Coureur du Bois, a committee of which Blanch Coggan is a member, is making an attempt to locate all previously marked historical sites within a 25 mile radius of Lansing. The group plans to photograph these sites, write a short narrative about each and bring this material out in pamphlet form to be used as a guide for tourists and interested local people who wish to become better acquainted with historical sites in the area. Mrs. Coggan requests the aid of the Historical Society's members in making known to her and the committee any known sites in their own vicinity. Twenty-six sites have already been located.

GROWTH

The interest in Negro history is growing. By the November meeting at Josephine Wharton's, the membership had doubled and at the next meeting the group hopes to establish a regular meeting date and rename the committee, as its members wish to broaden their activities. The committee wishes to include all three races: Negro, Indian and Caucasian. They also want to record contemporary events, the source of tomorrow's history.

MEMBERSHIP POSSIBILITIES

In recent years the Provisional Class of Lansing's Junior League has held one meeting each year at the Lansing Public Library and arranged for a talk on Lansing History. Many have evidenced an enthusiastic response to the program. Wouldn't it be nice if we could channel some of this enthusiasm toward our society? Any ideas?

FOR THE COLLECTOR'S BOOKSHELF

"Peninsular Country" will be of special interest to our readers. This charming book of essays by R. D. Burroughs, long time member of this Society, has just been released by Eerdmans Publishing Company of Grand Rapids. It collects over eighty essays, each illustrated with line drawings. Members miss the warm humor and friendliness of Mr. Burroughs. Since his retirement from the Department of Conservation in July, 1965, he has taken a teaching position at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon.

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Military Buttons; Long-lost Heralds of Fort Mackinac's Past by Colonel J. Duncan Campbell is reviewed as valuable not only for its detailed photographs but also for its history of the industry which supplied military buttons to the Army in the early days of the last century. It is available for 15 cents, plus 15 cents to cover postage and handling charges, from the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, Historic Projects Division, Mackinac Island, Michigan.

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An original letter written to Blair Moody from John F. Kennedy in March, 1942, is reproduced in the October, 1965 issue of American Heritage. The original was located by staff of the Michigan Historical Collections of the University of Michigan, where it was deposited by Senator Moody's widow after his death in 1954. Copies of "A Dreamer Wide Awake" are available on request to the Collections, Rackham Building, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

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The Bulletin Series published by the Michigan Historical Collections provides useful and attractive monographs contributing to local history. Their latest, Number 14, published in September, 1965, is titled Michigan's Polar Bears; The American Expedition to North Russia, 1918-1919 by Richard M. Doolen. Mr. Doolen has used contemporary personal writings, illustrated the account carefully and added a bibliographic note of source materials and some biographical information about the men whose letters and diaries he read. Copies are available on request.

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The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, 535 North Clippert, Lansing, Michigan, has recently combined historical notes on the Tri-County Region into one publication entitled History of the Tri-County Region. This informative report is available upon request.

FOR THE FAMILY HISTORY ENTHUSIAST....

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