



Town Crier

HEAR
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Volume 11, No. 2

HISTORICAL SOCIETY of GREATER LANSING
P. O. Box 515, Lansing, Michigan

April, 1969

LOCAL HISTORY ROOM OF LANSING PUBLIC LIBRARY TO OPEN APRIL 20th

The opening of the Local History Room of the Lansing Public Library, 401 South Capitol Avenue, Sunday, the twentieth day of April, nineteen hundred and sixty-nine is a long-awaited reality for area residents, and especially for our members.

In the September, 1960, issue of the Town-Crier, we reported members of the Local History Committee of the Lansing Board of Education's Citizen's Committee on Libraries were at work studying facilities, and preparing reports on the needs for an expanded Local History section in the proposed library. Your society was represented by its president, Geneva Kebler, Mr. and Mrs. Robert K. Clark, Miss Marion McClench, Miss Virginia Summers, John Brisbin, Birt Darling and Theodore G. Foster.

It was not until October 1965 that we reported that plans for the building were completed and contracts prepared. The bids of the early 1960s were higher than funds allowed at that time, and it was decided to wait and bid the room separately later.

In the meantime plans were revised, calls for donations of furnishings and money were sent, and the local history collection waited for suitable housing. In 1968 progress on the completion of a room was marked by the appointment of a citizens committee to acquire furnishings to create a Victorian parlor atmosphere of 1850-75.

During the months of waiting the Society voted to place its collections under the control and care of the Library, and items were transferred from temporary storage to the Library.

The collections of the society are small in quantity, but form a nucleus for more extensive holdings to come. These include the photographs, printed ephemera, pamphlets, and like items accumulated by the late James P. Edmonds of this city. Mr. Edmonds' daughter, Mrs. Amy E. Van Noppen, thoughtfully provided for the preservation of his materials until the Lansing Historical Society or its successor should provide a safe and suitable

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THE SOCIETY PROUDLY PRESENTS:

Philip P. Mason

Archivist, author, scholar - and one of the founders of the Society

Dr. Mason has chosen to talk about stagecoach and tavern days in the Great Lakes area, and the narratives of early travelers.

Bring your friends. The date is

Tuesday, April 22, 1969

7:30 pm, Parlor C

Lansing Public Library

LOCAL HISTORY CONFERENCE; Michigan in Perspective, PROGRAM ANNOUNCED

The twelfth annual Local History Conference will be held April 11, 12, at the McGregor Memorial Conference Center, Wayne State University. The Friday sessions will feature Willis F. Dunbar, Professor of History, Western Michigan University, talking on "A New Look at Lewis Cass", and John Cumming, Director of the Clarke Collection, Central Michigan University, who will speak on "Collecting the Materials of History." The 6:30 pm dinner session welcomes a former Detroit, Miner Wine Thomas, Assistant Director of the New York Historical Association. His topic is "Preservation of Craft Techniques." Concurrent sessions on Saturday present Arthur L. Johnson, Assistant Superintendent, Detroit Board of Education discussing "Teaching Negro History in the Public Schools;" Rev. Peter Vander Linden reviewing, "Great Lakes Shipping, Past and Present;" and Ken Stryker-Rodda, Editor, The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record, talking on "Digging for Ancestors in the Garden State."

The Archaeology Section features Dr. Marian E. White, Dept. of Anthropology, State University of New York. The Saturday noon awards luncheon brings Charles H. Wesley, Executive Director, Association for Negro Life and History to discuss "Writing Negro History."

LOCAL HISTORY ROOM continued
place for continued preservation and display.

More photographs, scrapbooks, and programs were donated by Theodore G. Foster in 1957 and 1959. Business records of the Pioneer Grocery Store of Martin A. Sweet in Macon, Cl870s, were contributed by Mrs. A. D. Courtright in 1956. Business records, social ephemera, Whitely family history, scrapbooks and photographs were received from the estate of Mrs. Nellie Zimmerman that same year.

The Society has not solicited like materials relating to the history of the Greater Lansing area because it lacked proper facilities for storage and service. The collection, preservation and servicing of primary sources for researchers of the future is an established and accepted responsibility of most all historical agencies and societies. We urge members to contribute to the continued success of the Library's service by donation of materials, money and time.

The completed room is a memorial to the late Forest Parke, long an appreciative patron, and donor of funds.

FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES OUT OF MICHIGAN

The New York State Historical Association has announced that its Seminars on American Culture will be held June 29-July 12 in Cooperstown, New York. The curriculum will include courses in history, folk culture, art, technology, museum techniques, and a workshop in early American spinning techniques. For information write to Seminars on American Culture, Cooperstown, New York 13326.

A Conference on the History of the Territories of the United States will be sponsored by the National Archives and Records Service in the fall of 1969. Address John Porter Bloom, Editor, Territorial Papers of the U.S., National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration, Washington, D.C., 20408.

The 75th anniversary of the Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Inc., will be marked by a Diamond Jubilee Conference--World Conference on Records and Seminar on Genealogy, August 5-8, 1969, at Salt Lake City, Utah.

The spring meeting of the Early American Industries Association, will be held May 23, 24, and 25, at Old Saugus Iron Works, Saugus, Massachusetts. The March issue of THE CHRONICLE offers program details.

HANDBOOK FOR HISTORIC SITE SURVEY
TO AID IN COLLECTION OF DATA

Michigan's historical agencies, State departments, and interested citizens have begun to collect information for the inventory of all sites of historical significance within the state. This is a counterpart of the nationwide effort to expand the list of properties in the National Register, maintained by the Secretary of the Interior. Less than one thousand are included in this compilation of all districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant to American history.

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 aimed for an expanded National Register, protection for sites of historical significance, and coordination of state activities relevant to the new law. Early in 1968, Governor Romney appointed the Director of the Natural Resources Department as liaison officer. An interagency task force was formed to coordinate activities of the state departments concerned and work on the Michigan Historical Commissions site survey was accelerated. Since 1955 the Commission has maintained a register of properties of historical significance found within the state.

Publication of the results of the statewide survey will enable state and local planners to become aware of significant sites and to provide for them in developing highways, urban renewal programs and zoning ordinances. Assembled data may prove of value to future students of the American scene.

The Michigan Historic Site Survey... Survey Handbook was issued as Information Bulletin number 7 by the Michigan Office of Planning Coordination, Bureau of Planning and Program Development, Executive Office of the Governor, in December, 1968.

THE MAILBAG

To our member reporting the old photograph on glass:

The decline of the daguerreotype began in the summer of 1854 after Cutting and Rehn invented the ambrotype. This process produced a photographic negative on glass which gave a positive image when backed by something black--wax, paint, paper, cloth.

Ambrotypes were made in the same sizes as daguerreotypes and were made with the same type of mats, cases, etc. They were simpler and cheaper than the fleeting image of the daguerreotype and soon gained great popularity.

We suggest The American Museum of Photography's Collector's Guide to American Photograph by Louis W. Siple for more information.

RANDOLPH ROGERS' ZACHARIAH CHANDLER IN THE MSU ART COLLECTION

A marble bust, in Neo-Classic style, of the prominent nineteenth-century Michigan politician, Zachariah Chandler, was acquired by the Kresge Art Center, Michigan State University, in 1968. The bust signed: Randolph Rogers, Roma, is the subject of a research study by Janet Elizabeth Balla in the Kresge Art Center Bulletin, April, 1969 (Volume II, No. 7).

Henry Ford Museum Antiques Lectures Attracts Greater Lansing Collectors

The Henry Ford Museum Antiques Lectures during the past sixteen years has brought to Michigan nearly a hundred authorities in various fields of American studies. The Series is known as the foremost program of its type in the midwest.

Forthcoming programs feature Herbert Schiffer, author and collector from West Chester, Pennsylvania, on April 11, 1969, talking on "The Quakers." Charles M. Stotz, architect from Pittsburgh, Penn. will speak May 16, 1969 on "The Rappites at Old Economy, Ambridge, Penn. All programs Friday evening, 8:30 pm, Museum Theater.

Seminar for Historical Agencies and Museums at Salt Lake City, Fall, 1969.

The American Association for State and Local History with associates in Utah and with the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities announces a Seminar on the Administration of Historical Agencies and Museums, September 4-19, 1969, in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The sixteen-day course will include lectures, field trips, and informal discussion. Fellowships covering transportation and \$225 for lodgings and meals are available for a maximum of twenty persons professionally employed in a historical society, agency, or museum. Deadline for receipt of applications is May 15. Further information is available from the Association, 132 Ninth Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee, 37203.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES INITIATES NEW MICROFILM PUBLICATION

The National Archives and Records Service announces the microfilm publication of Revolutionary War pension and bounty land application files. These filmed records will be available to genealogical and research libraries. The project is expected to take four years to complete. Resulting publications are a part of the National Archives contribution to the forthcoming bicentennial of the Revolutionary War.

NOTES FROM NEIGHBORING SOCIETIES

The April 16, 1969 meeting of the Vermontville Historical Society at Maplewood School will feature Douglas Meyers, MSU graduate student, who will talk on "Initial Occupance Imprint as Evident in the Present Cultural Landscape of Vermontville." Photographs and maps will be displayed. A potluck supper precedes the program at 7 pm.

The Shiawassee County Historical Society reports progress in moving the cabin so familiar to Owosso visitors and residents to a site near the "Curwood Castle." Society researchers believe the site on the river is very near the original local of the cabin. Plans are also in progress for a centennial celebration in Corunna. The Society is currently searching for information about Andrew Parsons, lieutenant governor of Michigan, 1853-1854; regent of the University of Michigan, 1852-1854; acting-governor, 1853-4; and representative from Shiawassee County, 1855. The Society hopes to place a historical marker in Corunna where he is buried. Governor Parsons came to office when Governor McClelland was appointed Secretary of the Interior in March, 1853.

Our best wishes for success to the newly formed Bay County Genealogical Society. Mrs. Kenneth Barnt, R#1, Essexville, Michigan, 48732, serves as secretary.

The Mid-Michigan Genealogical Society offers Death and Marriage Items Reported in the Lansing State Republican, 1855-1860, compiled by Dr. Joseph Druse. All publications of the Society are free to members and available to non-members for \$2.

President Russell Warner announces that Poll List for 1879, Walsingham Township, Norfolk County, Ontario, compiled by Mrs. K. J. Harvey, will be ready soon.

IN PRINT

Mrs. Helen Wallin's revised and edited version of "Maple River or My Mother's Family" by Carrie Purdy Cook appears in Michigan Heritage, Vol. X, No. 2 (Winter, 1968).

RECENT ADDITIONS TO RESEARCH SOURCES FOR THE HISTORIAN

The Labor History Archives of Wayne State University announces the acquisition of the files of the Civil Rights Congress of Michigan, 1935-1954; files from affiliates of the American Federation of Teachers and the Nation Education Association; papers of Arthur Elder, vice-president of the American Federation of Teachers and president of the Michigan and Detroit federations; and files of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, Detroit Chapter.

HELP NEEDED TO COMPLETE CEMETERY SURVEY

For the past year the State Cemetery Commission has attempted to identify and classify all the cemeteries in the state of Michigan. This has been accomplished through correspondence with township clerks. Upon further investigation we have discovered that many of the township clerks neglected to inform us of abandoned, historical or non-operating cemeteries. We would appreciate any information that you could supply us with as to the identity, location, and giving us brief backgrounds on these cemeteries that are no longer used. Please address any information to the State Cemetery Commission, 5th floor Mason Building, Lansing, Michigan 48926.

SOAP

"In the city, I believe, it is better to exchange ashes and grease for soap; but in the county, I am certain, it is good economy to make one's own soap. If you burn wood, you can make your own lye; but the ashes of coal is not worth much. Bore small holes in the bottom of a barrel, place four bricks around, and fill the barrel with ashes. Wet the ashes well, but not enough to drop; let it soak thus three or four days; then pour a gallon of water in every hour or two, for a day or more, and let it drop into a pail or tub beneath. Keep it dripping till the color of the lye shows the strength is exhausted. If your lye is not strong enough, you must fill your barrel with fresh ashes, and let the lye run through it. Some people take a barrel without any bottom, and lay sticks and straw across to prevent the ashes from falling through. To make a barrel of soap, it will require about five or six bushels of ashes, with at least four quarts of unslacked stone lime; if slacked double the quantity.

...Three pounds of grease should be put into a pailful of lye. The great difficulty in making soap 'come' originates in want of judgment about the strength of the lye. One rule may be safely trusted-- If your lye will bear up an egg, or a potato, so that you can see a piece of the surface as big as ninepence, it is just strong enough. ...When the soap becomes thick and ropy, carry it down dellar in pails and empty it into a barrel."

-The American Frugal Housewife Dedicated to Those Who Are Not Ashamed of Economy. By Mrs. Child. Boston: Garter, Hendee, and Co., 1834.

FROM THE COLLECTOR'S CORNER

The library of one of our members includes selected newspapers from this area. A brief look alerts the reader to a journalistic style no longer read and advertising which is more humor than selling.

Among the items seen this evening is the Clinton Express, published in DeWitt, in Sept. 1853. The quote beneath the banner is "Where liberty dwells, there is my country." "A live paper makes a live town" according to the lead of an issue of the Clinton and Shiawassee Union published in Ovid, in 1885. And it cost two cents! A few more issues of the Ingham Herald published at Mason in 1845 offered little local news except for advertisements.

The Ingham Democrat was published every Monday morning at Mason. The 1847 issues are particularly of interest since that is the year the Capitol was established in what was to become Lansing. Here we share a few notes for your enjoyment:

"People wishing locations or work at Michigan, may call upon J.H. Kilborn and Geo. W. Peck, agents respectively of the proprietors of Lower and Upper Villages."

J. W. Phelps, "Sec'y of Ing. Co. Med'l. Soc'y," announced a meeting in forthcoming June due to "material alterations"... "made in the statues in relation to medical societies and medical practice,"....

"There will be a Donation Party at the house of Rev. Wm. Fox, in the village of Mason, on Thursday, the 13th day of May next. All citizens who feel friendly are respectfully invited to attend."

LANDS IN THE TOWN OF LANSING FOR SALE !!

The subscriber offers for sale the following LANDS, in the town of LANSING, now Michigan:

The Capitol of the State, viz; North East Quarter of Sec'n 22, 160 acres North Half of Sec. 24, and East Frac'n of N.E. Qr. and S.E. 610½ " Qr. and S. Fr. S. W.Q. Sec.13

These Lands are all within three miles of the centre of town, and Seymour's mill. The terms will be 20 per cent down, and the balance on a credit of one, two, three, four, and five years. Enquire of the Subscriber at Detroit, Detroit, March 18, 1847. Geo. C. Bates

COPIES OF VITAL RECORDS COST MORE

Copy of official records available from the Department of Public Health, Lansing, now cost \$2. The Department reminds that recent legislation boosted the fee from \$1. to \$2.

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A N N U A L M E E T I N G

May 21 , 1969

Parlor B, Lansing Public Library, 7:30 pm

ADDRESS: "Literary Societies in Early Lansing" by President Hathaway

The Nominating Committee respectfully submit the following

individuals for election to serve during 1969-1970:

President: Jack C. Crosby, Sr.
VicePresident: Mrs. George F. Wiskemann
Secretary-Treasurer: Miss Mary McNeely

Trustees (to serve two years) :
Mrs. Harley Franks
Richard Hathaway
Mrs. Helen Wallin
Eugene Wanger

-C. L. Leneweaver, Chrm.

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P.O. Box 515, Lansing, Michigan

MEMBERS AND FRIENDS: You are invited to an old-fashioned picnic, Saturday, June 21 (rain date June 28) starting at 4 pm, at the Wiskemann farm, 5580 State Road, Lansing.

PLANS FOR THE DAY

4 pm - Meet for visit, cards, ball, etc.

6 pm - Supper. Bring service and dish to pass.
Beverages furnished.

7 pm - Auction. Bring any items, old and new, big or small. All proceeds donated to the Society.

Items to be sold should be at the farm by 5:30.
Need help? Call IV 4-0607.

Later - Show of fashions from the past by members.

Let's have a good time!

