

HSGL Newsletter

Official Publication of the
Historical Society of Greater Lansing

March 1994

*Harriet A. Tenney,
State Librarian*

by Linda Peckham

Harriet Tenney will be nominated to the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame at the March 16, 1994 meeting of the Historical Society of Greater Lansing.

Harriet Edgerton Tenney (1834-1899) was appointed State Librarian in 1869 by Gov. Baldwin, probably the first woman in such a position in the country, a position she held for 22 years. Appointed to the same office by each governor in turn, her nomination was always confirmed unanimously by the Senate. During her tenure, with "her extensive



knowledge and learning displayed...in the selection of books," the library grew from 15,000 volumes to 60,000 volumes.

She supervised moving the library twice: from the 1847 Capitol to the State Office Building in 1871, and from there to the present Capitol in 1879.

Born in Vermont, she lived in Michigan 1839-1847, and again from her marriage to J. Eugene Tenney in 1854 until her death. They taught school in Marshall until 1859, at which time he was named State Librarian.

Mrs. Tenney succeeded her husband in this appointment, after assisting him for ten years. For 32 years, she was actively involved in establishing the nationally-recognized collection that is now the Library of Michigan.

Mrs. Tenney was active also in Lansing's social and intellectual scene. Among other associations, during the Civil War she was president of the Lansing Military Aid Society; and after the War,

Continued on Page 2

Historical Society of Greater Lansing EXECUTIVE BOARD

Officers

Linda Peckham
President
John Curry
Vice President
Diana Reedy
Secretary
Pat Heyden
Treasurer

Trustees

Dave Caterino
Richard Frazier
Hondon Hargrove
JoAnne Jager
Jim Lyons
Richard Racki
Philip Siebert
Michael Unsworth

Newsletter Editor
Craig Whitford

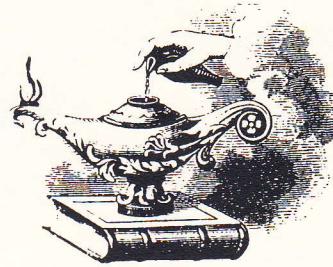
The *HSGL Newsletter* is published bimonthly from September through May.
Articles and news of historical interest may be sent to the
Historical Society of Greater Lansing, P.O. Box 12095, Lansing, MI 48901.
Linda Peckham, President. Tel: 517/372-3385.

Harriet Tenney – State Librarian, Cont.

of the Ladies' Soldiers Monument Association, which erected the soldiers' monument in Mt. Hope Cemetery.

In 1870, upon the organization of the Lansing Library and Literary Association, she became a board member and helped select and purchase books. In 1874, she was a founder and first president of the Lansing Woman's Club, a club devoted to literary and historical studies and scientific investigations, a club which continues to meet today.

Also in 1874, upon the organization of the Pioneer Society of the State of Michigan, Mrs. Tenney was elected Recording Secretary, a position she held for 25 years until her death. She assisted in the publication of the Pioneer and Historical Collections and had charge of all the papers, documents, books, and museum relics of the Society. This collection formed the base for the present State Archives and Museum.



We owe much applause to Harriet Edgerton Tenney. ^{HSGL}

JUST PUBLISHED . . .

Michigan Postal History, The Post Offices, 1805-1986, by David M. Ellis, HB, 552 pages, illus., 1993.

This work features detailed maps of each county with listings of the railroads and stations which operated within the county. The main focus of this work is the extensive listing of Post Offices, branches and sub-stations, by county, which operated at various times under various names. Each entry includes the date established, date of any change in the office and the past or current disposition of the Post Office. This opus is illustrated throughout by postal cards and postmarked envelopes. A must for the Michigan historian. Available for \$50.00 postpaid from Craig A. Whitford, P.O. Box 22026, Lansing, MI 48909. Tel: 517/394-4443.

Member Notice . . .

The HSGL Board has recently suggested some minor changes to our By-laws. Copies of the proposed changes will be available at our March meeting. A vote on the changes will take place at the May meeting.

Thank You . . .

This past month, our President, Linda Peckham donated a copy of **Youthful Thoughts, 1844-1848** to the Historical Society of Greater Lansing for placement in the Local History Room. The book contains children's essays compiled by their teacher Almira Ludlow during 1844 – 1848. The essays were discovered during the Fall of 1991 in an attic in East Lansing, New York. The essays were published in 1992 by the Lansing Historical Society of Lansing, New York.



ELECTION TIME

The Historical Society of Greater Lansing is currently seeking nominations for the position of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and (4) two-year term Trustees. If you are interested in serving in one of these positions or know of someone who is, please let us know at the March meeting. Election will be held during the annual dinner on May 18, 1994.

BLASTS From The Past

The following 'news' items have all been taken out of issues of the **Lansing Republican Weekly**, written in the style of the time.

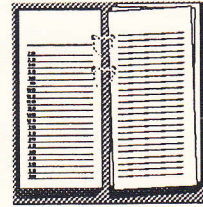
A little late for Valentine's Day but... The fat little Cupids, with port wine countenances, lagar beer abdomens, and bow legs, are appearing in the windows of the fancy stores, indicating the near approach of Valentine day. LRW 02/08/1882

Dearly beloved, isn't it about time to call a halt in the ceaseless march of progress while a patent is secured on some sort of an invention that will enable our wives and sweethearts to pass over a muddy crossing without plunging insanely forward on their heels and clawing the air convulsively with their hands in a hopeless, despairing way. LRW 05/14/1884

Mrs. House Fly is beginning to make calls. She leaves her visiting cards very freely, inscribed thus: '.....'. LRW 06/11/1879

A meteor weighing 200 pounds struck near Chicago recently. It must be a tough meteor that will tackle Chicago. LRW 11/28/1883

Organ Walk Sunday, April 17, 1994 3-5 P.M.



The American Guild of Organists, Lansing Chapter is sponsoring as a public service event an **ORGAN WALK - Sunday, April 17: 3-5 P.M.**

Mark your calendars now for Sunday afternoon, April 17th. Four of Lansing's historic downtown churches will be hosting an Organ Walk. If you have ever wondered about the organs in these churches, but have never had the chance to hear and enjoy them, this is your chance! We will start out at 3 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church for a demonstration of 2 organs, then move on to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Central United Methodist Church, and conclude at First Baptist Church. At each location, a brief summary of the history of the church and its organ will be provided along with a short recital (about 20 minutes) of music suited to each instrument. Afterwards there will be a reception held in the Parlor of First Baptist Church for all those attending the "Walk." This promises to be an exciting event so don't forget to mark your calendars.

For further information contact: William P. Holda, Organist, First Baptist Church and Chairperson - AGO Organ Walk at 483-1522.

Membership Application

Historical Society of Greater Lansing

P.O. Box 12095
Lansing, MI 48901

Annual membership in the Historical Society of Greater Lansing is due by October 1, 1993 for the 1993-1994 program year. Please clip and return this coupon with payment.

New Renewal

Enclosed: \$10 Individual \$15 Family \$150 Life Gift

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

The *Historical Society of Greater Lansing* is a non-profit corporation, and we appreciate your support.

Historical Society of Greater Lansing

proudly nominates

**Harriet Tenney
to the
Michigan Women's
Hall of Fame**



During Women's History Month, the Historical Society will nominate Harriet Tenney to the Michigan Woman's Hall of Fame. A Lansing resident for many years, in 1869 Tenney became the first female librarian for the State Library. There will also be a tour of the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame.

7:30 P.M.

Wednesday, March 16, 1994

Michigan Women's Historical Center

Michigan Women's Hall Of Fame

213 W. Main

The Public Is Invited

David Caterino
9879 Bismark Hwy.
Vermontville, MI

49096

*Historical Society
of Greater Lansing*
P.O. Box 12095
Lansing, MI 48901

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lansing, Mich.
Permit No. 636

**SIGN
UP
A
NEW
MEMBER
TODAY!**

