

# HSGL Newsletter

Official Publication of the  
*Historical Society of Greater Lansing* **November 1995**

## 40th ANNIVERSARY OF HISTORICAL SOCIETY



The Historical Society of Greater Lansing has actively promoted Lansing's history since 1955. In that year, several people saw a need to begin to collect and discuss our past, in order to enlighten our future.

Within a few years, the Historical Society had accumulated a great deal of material and, under the able direction of Virginia Summers and then Jane McClary, a Local History Room was established at the Lansing Public Library to house the collection. The room was set up as a parlor, with furniture donated by the B.F. Davis family, the Barnes family, and others.

The collection is now quite extensive, increased by both library donations and purchases and donations to the Historical Society. You will find school year books, city directories, news clippings, realty cards, photographs, and much, much more. The Historical Society continues to seek donations of local historical materials, which will be made available to the public for viewing and research at the library. Contact us at 372-3385.

Our November program will highlight the treasures of the Local History Room. We will also hold a reception for our 40th Anniversary and recognize the past presidents of the Historical Society of Greater Lansing.

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.



**IN MEMORIAM,  
D. Richard Frazier  
1924-1995**

The death of Dick Frazier has left a space in many hearts that cannot be filled, and his writing and participation in many associations, including the Historical Society, have influenced the community for several decades. In his honor we include these excerpts from his obituary and from a column written by a colleague of Dick's at the *Lansing State Journal*.

On Sunday afternoon, July 2, 1995, after mowing lawn on his riding lawn mower and admiring his rose garden, Dick Frazier unexpectedly died on the porch of the house in which he had lived for 47 years. He was 70 years old, born November 11, 1924, in Adrian, Michigan. His name was known by many readers of the Lansing State Journal who became familiar with his byline "by Dick Frazier." He won awards for both his photography and reporting during his 44 years in the newspaper business....

Dick graduated from Adrian College and MSU, and he was past president of the local newspaper guild. He enjoyed both his fishing, a sport he shared with anyone willing to cast a line, and his membership in Lansing's oldest social club, U and I.

**Historical Society  
of Greater Lansing  
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Dick sat on the board of the Historical Society of Greater Lansing, and was a charter board member of the Eaton County Park Commission, serving for 36 years. He was also an Elder at the First Presbyterian Church, where he developed "The Hall of Christian Pioneers," did the research for the paintings, and enthusiastically taught classes.

His last gift to the community is a detailed history of the Ingham County Bar Association, soon to be published by MSU Press. The Eaton County Park board recently named a park after him.

We extend our deep sympathy to his wife, Jean, with whom he celebrated their 50th anniversary two weeks before his death, and to his entire family.

## NEWS FIRST

by John Schneider *LSJ* 7/6/95

Just because the man retired, that didn't mean his nose was broken.

After he checked out of the news-room permanently, Dick Frazier, a newshound to the end, became one of my regular telephone tipsters.

"Gotta good one for you to check out," he'd say, never wasting the time or breath to identify himself or say hello.

Some of the tips panned out; some didn't. Some of them were juicier than spitballs but didn't stand a snowball's chance of seeing the light of day... Frazier had to shake them a little – just for fun.

He had to tell *somebody*.

That's what stories were for.

For 45 years, Frazier chased and told stories. I mean that, wobbly legs and all, he was out there working the thickets until his last day on the job. Literally.

Frazier often said he chose not to become an editor because that would mean he could no longer ridicule editors. But the real reason was that he preferred life in lower places. On the ground – that's where the scent lay. That's where the fun was.

Returning from answering a squawk on the police radio, he'd say, "Gotta good one," chuckling to himself at the thrill of it. "C'mere – get a load of *this*."

The story would bubble out of him right there and then... Frazier couldn't wait long enough to get his coat off. He'd stand in the newsroom, his trademark bow tie askew, and deliver an oral rendition of what he would later commit to paper.

Ever since I heard of Frazier's death, I've thought about how he would have told the story, himself:

"Get this. Guy in Delta Township cuts his lawn, sniffs his roses, then drops dead on his porch. Boom. Ain't that something?"

**The Historical Society** seeks donations of local historical materials, such as papers or photos, especially of those related to our programs. All donations are made available to the public through the Local History Room at the Lansing Public Library. Please contact the Historical Society at 372-3385.

**Board Meetings** are held on the third Wednesdays of October, February, and April. Any business may be addressed to the Board before or at the meetings. All are invited.

**Who do you know** who should belong to the Historical Society? Send in your membership, and recruit a member.

## Lansing Public Library Local History Room Hours

### Tuesdays

12-3 p.m.

### Wednesdays

12-3 and 5-7 p.m.

### First Saturday of each month

9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

## Announcements

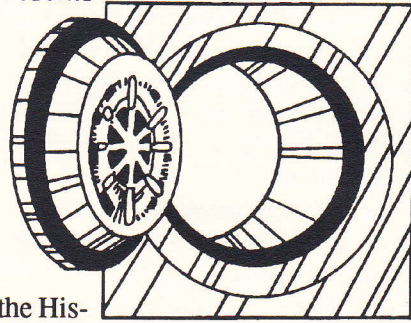
- Note cards of the **Chas. H. Mead Drawings** available for \$6.00 per box of eight, \$10.00 for two boxes. *Proceeds will help restore the drawings.*

- **1997 Sesquicentennial Project:** Recognition of families who have lived in the Lansing area for 150 years; also, certificates for 100 and 125 years. Application forms available from the Historical Society.

*The Historical Society of Greater Lansing*  
proudly presents

# *Treasures of Local History*

By JoAnne Jager,  
Local History Librarian



To celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Historical Society of Greater Lansing, JoAnne Jager, Local History Librarian, will showcase special items of Lansing history from the Local History collections. Reception will honor past presidents of the Society.

**7:00 P.M.**  
**Wednesday, November 15, 1995**

Lansing Public Library Galleries

Sponsored by Wolverine Development

*The Public Is Invited*

*Historical Society  
of Greater Lansing*  
P.O. Box 12095  
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