

September 1996

The  
**Historical Society**  
of  
**Greater Lansing**

P.O. Box 12095 Lansing MI 48901

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Officers**

President ..... Linda Peckham  
Vice-Pres ..... John Curry  
Secretary ..... Diana Reedy  
Treasurer ..... Irene Dean

**Trustees**

Harry Blanchard                      Joe Maguire  
Mark Ducker                            Richard Racki  
JoAnne Jager                            Philip Siebert  
Fr. Geo. C. Michalek                  Donna Wynant

**Newsletter Editor**  
Craig Whitford

Board Meetings of the Historical Society are held on the third Wednesdays of October, February, and April, and several times during the summer. Ideas and people are especially welcome as we move into our Sesquicentennial Year. Let us hear from you.

<∞>

The  
**Historical Society**  
of **Greater Lansing**

is celebrating the

**Sesquicentennial of Lansing**  
**1847-1997**

**The Historical Society of Greater Lansing** sponsors a variety of programs of local historic interest:

- Walking tours in Downtown Lansing, in North Lansing, in the cemetery . . .
- Speakers on such topics as stained glass in Downtown churches, R.E. and Metta Olds, Charles H. Mead, the Woman's Hospital Association, Trinity AME Church, the Polish pioneers . . .
- Special events: Lansing History Day. . .
- Sesquicentennial Project: Family History

**Publications:**

- Note Cards                            \$6.00 or 2/\$10.00  
  1870's Drawings by Chas. H. Mead
- Mudge's 1878 City Directory       \$15.00  
  Cross-referenced by David Caterino

We welcome donations of local historical materials, especially of papers or photos related to our programs. These materials will be made available to the public for viewing and research in the Local History Room at the Lansing Public Library.

- You can become a member for \$10.00 •

For more information:

**Historical Society: 517-372-3385**  
P.O. Box 12095 Lansing MI 48901

Local History Room: 517-325-6400  
Historic Dist. Commission: 517-483-4075

<∞>



# THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY of GREATER LANSING

---

## 1996-1997 PROGRAMS

**Walking Tour on the Riverwalk . . . . . Sunday, September 22, 1996**

A walking tour of historic sites from the Riverwalk, showing Lansing's development as a river town. The tour will feature the earliest settlements and industries along the river from 1843-1860 and the boom growth from 1860-1880, the seeds of present-day occupancy, from the North Lansing dam to south of Michigan Ave. Tour conducted by Robert J. Morris, President of City Visions, Inc., a restoration and design company in Lansing. Start on Riverwalk at Oakland St . . . 2:00 p.m.

**Centennial of the Automobile Industry . . . . . Wednesday, November 20, 1996**

The beginning of the American automobile industry, in 1896, was not quiet: companies staged major public relations events to promote the new transportation. Our program, presented by Prof. Richard Scharchburg, author of *Carriages Without Horses*, will cover races, stunts, and cross-country drives, as well as a peek at the personalities of Duryea and Durant, and their Lansing connections. Lansing Public Library, Auditorium . . . 7:00 p.m.

**The Olds Family and 100 Years of Oldsmobile . . . . . Wednesday, January 15, 1997**

In 1897, R.E. Olds started the Olds Motor Vehicle Co. Designer of the curved-dash Olds, he was a principal founder of the automotive industry. R.E. and Metta Olds, philanthropists who supported their town and their employees worldwide, lived in Lansing for 70 years. Program by Pat Heyden, author of *Metta and R.E. Olds*, and Helen Early of the Oldsmobile History Center, co-author with Jim Walkinshaw of *Setting the Pace*. Lansing Public Library, Auditorium . . . 7:00 p.m.

**Sesquicentennial Celebration . . . . . March 1997**

In March of 1847, the Michigan Legislature, located in Detroit, chose Lansing Township as the site for the second capital of Michigan. Some were not happy: "Shall we ... stick [the capitol] down in the woods and mud ... amid choking miasma ... the howl of the wolves and the hissing of the massasaugas...?" But \$10,000 was appropriated for buildings in the new capital city, Michigan, Michigan, and the new Capitol Building was dedicated on January 1, 1848. To be announced

**Special Programs for the Sesquicentennial**, planned by the Sesquicentennial Commission through the auspices of Mayor Hollister and Gov. Engler, will be announced in the late Fall. We will make these events known in the newsletter.

**Annual Dinner . . . . . Wednesday, May 21, 1997**

Annual Dinner with Business Meeting and Elections. Recognition of Sesquicentennial Families. Herrmann Conference Center, LCC . . . 6:00 p.m.

---

Shouldn't you belong to the Historical Society in Michigan's Capital City?  
You will receive advance program information, special discounts, and a newsletter of Lansing history.  
*Send in your membership. Recruit a friend.*



**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, 1996*  
for the 1996-1997 program year. Please clip and return this panel with payment.

New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

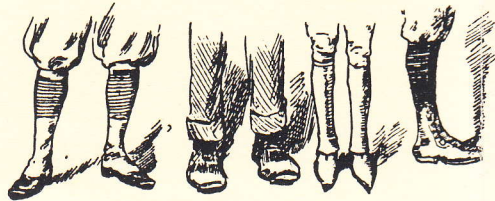
Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_ \$10.00 Individual \_\_\_\_\_ \$15.00 Family \_\_\_\_\_ \$150 Life \_\_\_\_\_ Gift

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

<∞>

The Historical Society of Greater Lansing

## Walking Tour



*On the Riverwalk*

September 22, 1996

Sunday 2:00 p.m.

### Lansing's Development as a River Town

Early Settlements • Early Industries • Early Government  
19th C. Seeds of Growth

Conducted by Robert J. Morris

*The Public Is Invited*

### Start on the Riverwalk at Oakland Street Bridge

Tour moves south on Riverwalk to Michigan Ave.  
Parking at Lansing City Market, Cedar at Shiawassee

• Sponsored by Spartan Oil and Bay Petroleum •

<∞>

### **The Historical Society of Greater Lansing**

will begin to celebrate the Sesquicentennial of Lansing in this program year with our first event, a walking tour of the sites of Lansing's earliest development.

A few settlers had farmed near this area since 1836, and land speculators had bought property at this ideal site along the Grand River, one of Michigan's major rivers. In 1843, John Burchard built a dam at a rapids on the river (now North Lansing), but he drowned the next spring and the site was abandoned. Others came to rebuild the dam and a sawmill for J. Seymour about 1845.

In March of 1847, after a heated debate, the Legislature voted to move the capital from Detroit to Lansing Township. Settlers soon established households, stores, and mills all along the river from Franklin Street (Grand River Ave.) to the junction of the Grand and the Cedar Rivers (south of Main Street).

The new town was named Michigan, Michigan (changed to Lansing a year later), the beginnings of a town that grew rapidly.

The Walking Tour on the Riverwalk will focus on Lansing as a river town, showing the seeds of today's development begun between 1845 and 1880. Other Historical Society programs, projects, and publications also will offer rare information about Lansing's history.

To celebrate Lansing's 150 years, Mayor Hollister and Gov. Engler have appointed 20 people to a Sesquicentennial Commission. Plans are forthcoming. Look for announcements from this group.

Become a member of the  
**Historical Society of Greater Lansing**  
P.O. Box 12095    Lansing MI 48901