

May 2000

# The Historical Society of Greater Lansing

Michigan's Capital City Since 1847

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## MEAD SCRAPBOOK

Phyllis Gloden and Carrie Wales recently gave the Historical Society a scrapbook full of pasted articles, photos, and other items about world events, cleaning water closets, and an early merchant family in Lansing. The scrapbook was kept by someone in the James I. Mead family from the 1870s until 1905.

James (1817-1888) and Louisa Mead came to Lansing in 1852 and opened a drygoods store in North Lansing. In 1865, he built Mead's Hall on Washington near Ottawa Street, a public hall where Mark Twain appeared in 1871. In 1875, he built a grist mill along the Grand River.

James Mead was Superintendent of the Poor, on the Board of the Reform School, and an elected alderman. He was an active populist in the Midwest, a greenbacker, and an advocate for women's suffrage and temperance.

In 1870, Mead built a very large Italianate house on Cedar Street at Shiawassee. Many years later, the house became the city hospital, and later still, Lansing Parks and Recreation.

The scrapbook also reveals ties to the pioneer Humphrey family and to the Ingersoll family (of Dollar Watch fame). But most important for us, the scrapbook focuses on the Meads' oldest son, Charles (1843-1912), who became an artist and photographer.

As a partner in Mead and Jennings, Charles photographed many people in town, including the State Legislators of 1878-79.

In the early 1870s, Charles Mead made about 40 drawings of the town, our best record of early Lansing. He sketched houses, bridges, shops, churches, the 1847 Capitol, and the Female College.

For many years, Charles Mead also prepared ads for stores - with great skill in his drawings and humor in his text. The scrapbook holds several of his ads and handbills, signed with "CHM," pieces which were previously unknown.

And where has the scrapbook been?



At some point, either Charles or his son, Deak Mead, put the scrapbook in storage with a company on E. Ottawa St. "Mead Storage and Cartage" was owned by Charles Mead 1906-1912. By 1914 the business was "Hurry-Up Delivery," which in 1921 was bought by Floyd and Clifford Lewis.

Deak Mead died in 1932 without retrieving the scrapbook.

The scrapbook was "kept around" by the daughters of Clifford Lewis, Phyllis Gloden and Carrie Wales, who donated this wonderful record of Lansing history.

— L. Peckham

**Annual Dinner**

The Annual Dinner, the last program of the fiscal year, will be held May 17. See Details on opposite page.

**Nominations**

The following people have been nominated as officers: H. Rick Cantwell, President; Harry Emmons, Vice President; David Rumohr, Secretary, Ron Turner, Treasurer.

Five people have volunteered for the four two-year terms as trustees: Irene Dean, Jerry Lawler, Joe McGuire, Eugene (Gil) Wanger and Stephanie Whitbeck. The election will be held at the Annual Dinner on May 17.

**Local History Room**

The Edmonds photo collection scanning process is complete and a progress report will be sent to the Community Foundation, along with our thanks.

**Programs**

During the March Program, a very respectable turnout visited the Oldsmobile Heritage Center. The tour included the main floor, the meeting rooms, board rooms, working office space, and the basement level.

At the Antiquarian Book Sale, twelve new people signed up to receive our newsletter and we sold \$167.00 worth of publications.

Also, we encourage our members to submit suggestions to the Society about programs they would like us to present. We will spend the summer developing programs which will begin again in the Fall.

**Treasurers Report**

Our treasury stands at \$5,542.13.

**Seeking Information**

Jerry Wise is seeking information on the "Railroad Hotel" whose proprietor's name was VanHeusen, and on the Me and Pa Cigar Co. owned by Police Chief Henry Behrendt prior to 1910.

# The Historical Society of Greater Lansing

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The Historical Society of Greater Lansing sponsors a variety of programs, projects, and publications of local historic interest:

**Sample Programs and Projects:**

- < Walking tours of Downtown Lansing, North Lansing, Mount Hope Cemetery ...
- < Speakers on such topics as stained glass in Downtown churches, R.E. and Metta Olds, Pioneer Women, the Women's Hospital Association, Trinity AME Church, the Polish pioneers . . .
- < Special events: Lansing History Day . . .
- < Pioneer Family History Project

**Publications available**

- < Note Cards, 1870s Drawings by C.H. Mead
- < Mudge's 1878 City Directory
- < Historic Architectural Scavenger Hunt
- < Brochures on Pioneers
- < Significant People Buried in Mt. Hope Cemetery
- < Rare Maps
- < Lansing Through the Years, photo book

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We welcome donations of local historical materials, which will be made available for viewing and research in the Local History Room at the Lansing Public Library.

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**Become a Member for \$15**

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For more information, contact the Historical Society at 517-372-3385  
PO Box 12095 Lansing, MI 48901

Historical Society of Greater Lansing  
cordially invites you to its



# Annual Dinner and Election

May 17, 2000

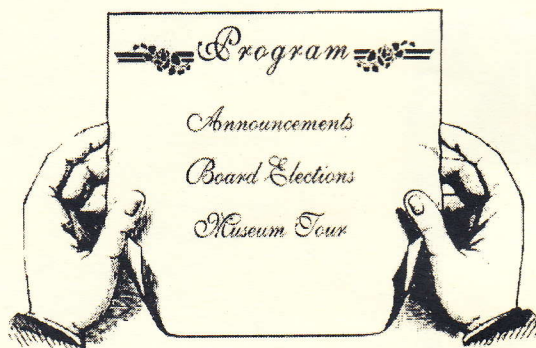
6:00 PM Reception

6:30 PM Dinner

Michigan Historical Museum

717 West Allegan

(Enter through the south door closest to parking lot.)



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## Annual Dinner Reservation

Please send reservations to: Historical Society of Greater Lansing  
P. O. Box 12095  
Lansing, MI 48901



Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places for dinner. Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$18.00 per person).

Please make checks payable to: Historical Society of Greater Lansing

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Dinner choice (please indicate for each person attending):  
 Honey Glazed Chicken     Vegetarian  
 Roast Round with Bordelaise Sauce

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of Greater Lansing**

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**Board Members 1999-2000**

- Pres. Rick Cantwell
- V-Pres. Harry Emmons
- Sec. David Rumohr
- Treas. Irene Dean
- Jerry Lawler
- Joe Maguire
- Fr. Geo. Michalek
- Gertrude Mitchell
- Linda Peckham
- Ron Turner
- Penny Zago

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