

History Explorer

Historical Society of Greater Lansing

www.LansingHistory.org

October 2013

HSGL Upcoming Events

History of Hospitals and Healthcare in Lansing

By Mary Jane Wilson and Karen Douglas

Thursday, October 17, 2013 - 7:00 pm

Downtown Library, 401 South Capitol Avenue, Lansing

Health Care in 1844 Lansing was limited to home remedies, a few ‘doctors’ and one hospital, the Ingham County Poor Farm, where nobody wanted to go. It was not until 1889 that Lansing would see its first city hospital. Though short lived, this hospital paved the way for the beginnings of the Sparrow Hospital we know today, founded in 1896 by a group of dedicated, community-minded, and capable women of the city.

While Sparrow Hospital was one of the first major hospitals to be established in Lansing, it was preceded by another healthcare institution in the late 1880s known as ‘The Pest House,’ a building for those afflicted with a communicable disease such as smallpox. Within a few years, the Ingham County Tuberculosis Sanatorium was born, followed by St. Lawrence Hospital, Neller Hospital, McLaughlin Osteopathic Hospital, Lansing General Osteopathic Hospital and, most recently, McLaren Greater Lansing. Karen and Mary Jane will unravel Lansing’s complicated medical history, charting a course from the mid 19th century to the turn of the 21st century. Please plan to join us!

Lansing Postcards Panel

Thursday, November 21, 2013 - 7:00 pm

Turner Dodge Home, 100 E. North Street, Lansing

Most of us own at least a few historic postcards, yet few of us really understand the historical significance these seemingly common items have. Once the cheapest form of easy long distance communication, the penny postcard was and is a glimpse into Lansing’s history. Join a panel of local experts for a look at the secrets postcards reveal. Topics to be discussed include identifying the era of postcards, deciphering the messages on them, popular categories of postcards, postcards as tourism memorabilia, and more. A large variety of Lansing area and MSC/MSU postcards will be shown during the presentation. Then, after the talk we’ll decorate an HSGL tree with postcards for the Friends of Turner Dodge Festival of Trees event.

Annual Silent Auction

Saturday, October 5th 4:00 – 6:30 pm
John Dye Water Plant - 148 South Cedar Street

Please support HSGL’s efforts to establish a Lansing area historical museum by attending our annual auction! Proceeds from past auctions have made it possible to expand and properly house our growing historical collection, as well as mounting three pop-up exhibits. Your support is very much appreciated! At present HSGL’s museum fund contains over \$23,000 and continues to grow, thanks to your support. The auction is being hosted by the Lansing Board of Water and Light at the John Dye Water Conditioning Plant at 148 S. Cedar St. Valet parking will be available. The night will include a silent auction, a live auction, hors d’oeuvres, and a tour of the BWL plant, including a short talk about the WPA murals. Tickets may be purchased by calling 517-282-0671, through our website, www.lansinghistory.org, or at the door.

*Thank you to all of the generous sponsors for this year’s
 HSGL Fall Museum Auction*

Platinum - \$5,000

Lansing Board of Water and Light – Our Hosts

Gold - \$1,000

Jack & Sue Davis

Two Men and a Truck – Donation of Moving Services

Silver - \$500

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Bronze - \$250

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Copper - \$100

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Early Preview Of Auction Items

This year HSGL's Fall Museum Fundraiser will consist of two types of auctions – both our traditional silent auction, featuring 100 items, and a live auction, with 10 items available for bidding. Here's a basic list of some of the things will be available for bidding. For a complete numerical list of auction items, with more information and values, visit www.lansinghistory.org.

Live Auction

- ★ English Inn Ultimate Getaway Package
- ★ Charter Fishing Trip for Two
- ★ Mid-Century Style Atomic Ball Clock
- ★ Ride in a 1975 Fury Michigan State Police Cruiser
- ★ Old Town Summer Festivals Package
- ★ Glen Arbor Fall Weekend Luxury Condo Stay
- ★ House Portrait by Leisa Collins
- ★ Dinner for Eight at Lansing's Historic Harper House
- ★ Mackinac Island Getaway for Two
- ★ Tour of Lansing in a 1916 REO

Silent Auction

- ★ **Unique Lansing Items**
 - ◆ 1948 Jim's Tiffany photo signed by Ange Vlahakis
 - ◆ Custom Lansing Neon Poster
 - ◆ Lansing Masonic Temple China Plates
 - ◆ WKAR's Things Not Here Anymore DVDs
 - ◆ Michigan 150 Commemorative Collection

★ Unique Items

- ◆ Mid-century Modern Cocktail Set
- ◆ Bohnet Lamp
- ◆ Vintage Snack Sets
- ◆ Colonial Style 1950s Dessert Plate Set
- ◆ Antique Mantel Clock
- ◆ State of Michigan Flag Flown Over Capitol
- ◆ Victorian Folk Wooden Chair
- ◆ Vintage Cameras

★ Packages

- ◆ Spa packages
- ◆ MSU Football

Historical Society of Greater Lansing

P.O. Box 12095 ~ Lansing, MI 48901
www.LansingHistory.org

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- ◆ MSU Sports
- ◆ Children's Games
- ◆ Common Ground 2014 Tickets
- ◆ Lugnuts Game Box
- ◆ Lansing Tourist Package
- ◆ Kid's Day Out Package
- ◆ Michigan Records
- ◆ Bicyclists Package
- ◆ Slumber Party Package
- ◆ Car Care Package
- ◆ House TLC Package
- ◆ Coffee Package
- ◆ Jam & Jelly Packages
- ◆ Art Basket
- ◆ Landscaping Package

★ Book Packages

- ◆ Cookbooks
- ◆ Mystery/Thrillers
- ◆ Children's Book
- ◆ Children's Chapter Books (signed Ellie McDoodle novels)
- ◆ Political History
- ◆ Michigan History
- ◆ Michael Moore, Elmore Leonard, Gwen Frostic
- ◆ World War II
- ◆ Memoirs & Biographies
- ◆ Contemporary Fiction
- ◆ Historical Fiction

★ Overnight Stays

- ◆ English Inn
- ◆ Cozy Koi Bed and Breakfast
- ◆ Spring Hill Suites (West Lansing)
- ◆ Hampton Inn (Okemos)

★ Museum Admission

- ◆ Meadow Brook
- ◆ Edsel & Eleanor Ford Museum
- ◆ Sloan Museum
- ◆ Ypsilanti Fire Museum
- ◆ Gilmore Car Museum
- ◆ Henry Ford Museum

★ Unique Experiences/Tours

- ◆ Walking Tour of WPA Art and Architecture at MSU
- ◆ Tim Barron 92.9 Radio Show Taping
- ◆ Coffee and Conversation with Jack Robbins
- ◆ Friedland Recycling Tour
- ◆ Grand Rapids Home Tour
- ◆ Off the Record with Tim Skubick Taping

Going with the Flow...The Lansing Board of Water and Light's John Dye Water Conditioning Plant

By Mr. Steve Bohnet, Partner, Bohnet Electric Co.

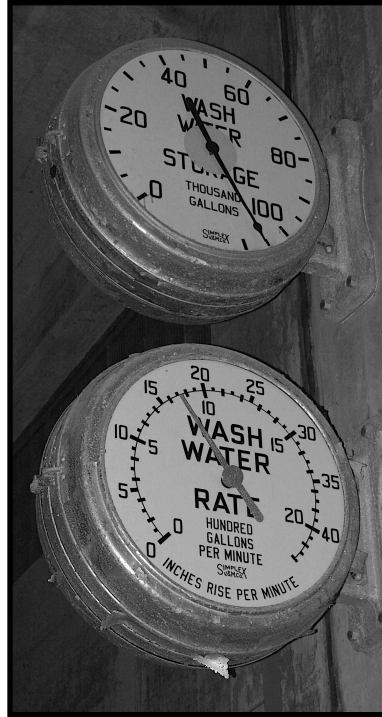
When it comes to vital resources, water rates a very close second to the air that we breathe. The value of excellent quality water is virtually priceless. No one knows and appreciates this more than the staff of the Lansing Board of Water and Light's John Dye Water Conditioning Plant located at 148 S. Cedar St. in Lansing, Michigan. The water treatment plant is named after John Dye, a chemist for the LBWL. The plant was designed by architect Kenneth and Lee Black. Its construction began in 1938 as a WPA (Works Progress Administration) project, and was completed and opened in 1939. In keeping with the edicts of the WPA, a 32 foot tall sculpture the Greek water bearer, "Aquarius", created by Samuel Cashwan, head of the WPA Sculpture Section in Michigan, extends out of the edifice over the copper double doors. It was intended to symbolize the distribution of conditioned water by the chemical retort on the right shoulder through the pump in the left hand to the populace at the feet of Aquarius.



The doors open to a beautifully appointed staircase that surrounds a ceramic blue fountain, "Water Nymphs," sculpted by Clivia Calder, Ceramic Supervisor for the WPA in Michigan. The lower walls are flanked by artificial stone wall panels made of lime and shale called 'Rostone.' Invented in 1927, this material was toured at the 1933



Chicago World's Fair. The upper portion of the lobby walls are wrapped in outstanding color murals that were painted by Frank Cassara, Supervisor of Easel Painting for the WPA in Michigan. The murals on the north side of the building depict flooding and the destructive forces of water. The murals on the south side of the lobby depict the benefits of water: health, cleanliness, and recreation. Cassara, at age 75, returned after 50 years, in 1989 to 'touch up' and restore color to his murals. A third mural on the back wall was painted by Charles Pollack, the Supervisor for Mural Painting and Graphic Arts for the WPA in Michigan. This mural painted in 1941 depicts Man's control over nature and the importance of water as Hydro-Electric Power. Dramatic backlighting bidden at the edge of the trayed ceiling gives an ethereal glow to this breathtaking space. The incredibly interesting aspect of all of this artistry is that it was created all for the workers, not the public. The WPA's mission was to create beauty in the workplace to inspire pride and a good work ethic among the workers.



After climbing to the top of the grand staircase a look to the left through the double glass doors reveals the Filter Gallery. As you enter the cool, humid hall, a long expanse of polished terrazzo floor stretches out for what seems to be forever. Your eye is drawn upward along the concrete columns to miles of glass block capped by a coffered, cast concrete, vaulted ceiling. Nine polished aluminum Art Deco light fixtures illuminate this water cathedral. Surrounding this hall are giant square water filter tanks. Although now the filter process is computerized, the gallery still features all the original aluminum and bakelite consoles. These consoles were designed to replicate the look of the grill of the 1937 Oldsmobile two-door touring sedan. In the event of a computer failure the consoles can still be used to operate this gallery. The control handles are actual door handles from Oldsmobiles of that era.





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P.O. Box 12095
Lansing, MI 48901

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Historical Society of Greater Lansing - Membership Application

Please accept my application for:

- New Membership
- Renewal Membership
- Gift Membership

in the Historical Society of Greater Lansing

I have enclosed:

- \$20 Individual Membership
- \$30 Family Membership
- \$100 Business Membership
- \$_____ Additional Gift to HSGL

Member Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email Address _____

- Please Send The Newsletter
Via Email

Make Checks Payable to
Historical Society of Greater Lansing

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