



History Explorer

Historical Society of Greater Lansing

www.LansingHistory.org

January 2016

At the Crossroads of Fear & Freedom

By Robert L Green

Tuesday, January 19 - 7:00 pm

Downtown CADL

401 South Capitol Ave.

Join HSGL for an evening with Robert L. Green, a friend and colleague of Martin Luther King Jr., who served as education director for King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference during a crucial period in Civil Rights history. Green was also the head of MSU's Urban Studies Program in the turbulent 1960s where he was at the forefront of issues involving faculty and students including open housing and anti-war demonstrations.

Mr. Green will lecture about his new memoir, which relates the untold stories about major Civil Rights campaigns that helped put an end to voting rights violations and Jim Crow education; explains how Green has helped urban school districts improve academic achievement levels; and explains why this history should inform our choices as we attempt to improve American education. His work on education began with the Kennedy Administration and has continued with him serving as one of the participants at an Obama administration summit on a current academic crisis.

Green's memoir, *At the Crossroads of Fear and Freedom: The Fight for Social and Educational Justice*, reminds us that educational equity has always been a central objective of the Civil Right movement.

Life in Greater Lansing 100 Years Ago

By Valerie Marvin

Thursday, January 28 - 7:00 pm

Lansing City Hall

124 W. Michigan Ave.

Step back 100 years to a time when Lansing residents marveled at the speed with which their world was changing. The early 20th century marked a period of unprecedented growth in the entire Lansing area due to the combined forces of the ever-expanding auto industry, a broadening state government, and an expanding educational system that offered local and state students the opportunity to earn both their high school and college diplomas. Learn who the movers and shakers were in Lansing and East Lansing in 1916, what the changing city demographics looked like, what neighborhoods were being built, what opportunities existed for workers at REO, and peak into student life at the Michigan Agricultural College.

Upcoming February Programming

The Underground Railroad in the Detroit River Borderland

By Roy Finkenbine, Director of the Black Abolitionist Archive

Thursday, February 11 - 6:30 pm

Downtown CADL

401 S. Capitol Ave.

Lansing Has Fun! Exhibit Opening

Thursday, January 28, 2016, 6:00 p.m.

Lansing City Hall
124 W. Michigan Ave.

This winter HSGL will be opening our next exhibit, Lansing Has Fun! in Lansing City Hall. The exhibit will examine and celebrate the leisure time activities that Lansing area residents have enjoyed since our city's founding.

Unlike HSGL's past exhibits, which had hard and fast opening dates, Lansing Has Fun! will change and grow on a rolling calendar. The exhibit themes, including New Year's Day, Romance, Clubs & Hobbies, Sports, Favorite Local Destinations, At the Lake, Fun on Campus, etc. will each be linked to a specific month in the calendar year. HSGL's goal is to launch a new case (or cases) of exhibit material each month in conjunction with that month's theme. Thus the exhibit will grow steadily throughout the calendar year, with new offerings appearing regularly. We'll be kicking off the exhibit with a quick look at New Year's Day and Prohibition in Lansing.

January - *New Year's Day and Prohibition*

New Year's Day has long been a holiday when neighbors and friends have raised a glass to prosperity and success. Yet for many years, Lansing area residents couldn't legally do that! Explore a short history of the rise and fall of local prohibition, when one kind of fun went underground.

HSGL is hard at work digging for objects, themes, and personal stories that reflect your favorite kinds of fun. Please tell us your story, and share you artifacts!

You can reach us at 517-282-0671 or
info@ansinghistory.org.

Historical Society of Greater Lansing

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

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No Wonder We're All Tired! (Or a 2015 HSGL Recap)

by Valerie Marvin, HSGL President

As 2016 dawns and HSGL prepares for another year of programs, exhibits, and walking tours, it seems like the proper time to relive some of our best moments in 2015, and thank you all, dear members, for your ongoing support of Lansing history. Over the past year HSGL has hosted, and you've attended, over three dozen events, we've put another \$11,000 in the bank, our membership has continued to grow, and we are consistently attracting new faces and new community partners. Good stuff!

One of the events that brought me the most pride, personally, was the Civil War series that HSGL hosted during the month of April. When HSGL started talking, months and months before, about commemorating the 150th anniversary of the end of the Civil War, and celebrating the life of Luther Baker, the man who captured John Wilkes Booth, we had big ideas and dreams. Often, though, such big ideas are often met by harsh reality, and the dreams become a little more manageable, if a little less spectacular. When it came to our April Civil War, series, though, those big ideas and dreams stayed big. In one month--actually, within the course of 17 days--HSGL sponsored or co-sponsored 10 events. And you turned out in a big way. The lecture on Dr. Mudd at the East Lansing Public Library brought in over 100 people. We heard a series of love letters, written by a Civil War soldier from Michigan. We got hungry listening to Dr. Helen Veit talk about Civil War era foods, and we stood at rapt attention as descendants of the Baker family shared their personal stories of Luther Baker and Buckskin. Thank you to the Baker family, and to all of our partners--the Library of Michigan, Save the Flags, the Capital Area District Library, the East Lansing Public Library, and to all of our presenters. Thank you very much!

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HSGL also had another great year of exhibits. We opened the year with *Lansing Goes to War*, in which we honored the service of men and women, at home and abroad, from the Lansing area. This exhibit provided us with the opportunity to hear firsthand the very personal and moving stories of four area Vietnam veterans who reminded us that war is complex. To those four gentlemen--thank you for opening up and allowing us to see the war through your eyes. Thank you also to all of the collectors who loaned amazing artifacts to us, including Craig Whitford, Scott Shattuck, Carl Kentner, Tim Barron, Ron Springer, Jacob McCormick, Jana Nicol, Phil Siebert, and Bill Murphy.

Our second exhibit, *From Sepia to Selfies: 150 Years of Lansing Photography*, was the brainchild of Bill Castanier, who, as a journalist, has a great eye for the story in every image. Once again, a bevy of generous local collectors and photographers opened up their albums, their flash drives, and their acid free boxes to us and let us showcase some of the most iconic and quirky photos ever taken in Lansing. A big thanks to Craig Whitford, Dave Olds, Jacob McCormick, Kim Kauffman, Doug Price, Gregory McDonald, the Granger family, the family of Ginger Sharp, and Kurt Wanamaker for their generosity!

HSGL also hosted another great year of walking tours. This summer we debuted eight new walking tours in Lansing, East Lansing, Charlotte, and Mason. You walked--and listened--about 16 hours with HSGL over the course of four months. Thank you to everyone who gave tours--Gary Koelsch, Cathy Babcock, John Folkers, Craig Whitford, Jim MacLean, Julie Kimmer, Jesse LaSorda, Jo Trumble, Nancy Logan, and Stephen Terry-- for guiding us down historical paths! Also, thanks to Timothy Bowman for the hours he spends researching many of the walking tour stops!

Perhaps what makes me the most proud of HSGL, though, is that we are forming and nurturing what I hope will be longstanding community partnerships with many areas partners. We are so very grateful to the Library of Michigan and State Librarian Randy Riley, and Lansing City Hall and Mayor Virg Benero for their willingness to host our exhibits! These Lansing institutions have allowed HSGL to do more and be more than we could ever accomplish on our own. The Capital Area District Library, the East Lansing Public Library, the Archives of Michigan, the MSU Archives, the MSU Museum, the R.E. Olds Transportation Museum, the MSU Alumni Association, and the Lansing School District have allowed us access to their collections, the use of their facilities, and their aid with publicity for our events. Thank you very much! Thanks to their kind support, thousands of people have learned more about the history of greater Lansing.

I want to personally thank our hardworking board and volunteers. In the last few months I've asked our board to step up and take on more responsibilities. As always, they've responded enthusiastically. Thank you to all of you - Bill, Ron, Tim, Zig, Anne, Roni, Erik, Harry, Joan, Bob, and Jesse for all of your efforts on behalf of HSGL.

Also, thanks to the many volunteers who write for the newsletter, who answer my pleas for exhibit building help, who loan their objects for exhibits, who staffed the auction, who donated auction items, and who offer historical tidbits on facebook and twitter. You are an important part of HSGL's success!

And lastly, thank YOU! Your interest in history and your support for HSGL makes the Lansing area a richer community.





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

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