



### PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Fred Liimatta



You call it a museum... I see a time machine! In the basement of our Carriage House is a wonderful assortment of artifacts that belonged to the movers and shakers of Oakland County, including hand tools for making everything from horseshoes to ice cubes. They all still work, too!

I'm constantly reminded of all the hard work required back in the "good old days." Folks were not afraid to dream and make every effort to realize those dreams. The objects on display represent an assortment of crazy ideas; imagine having ice in August without a refrigerator! Dreams made by hand are first created in the mind.

I am encouraged to see those dreamers are still at work here at Pine Grove. The handiwork of hundreds of dedicated members past and present is evident in things such as our satellite Pioneer Pop-Up Museum, veterans activities, tours, carriage restoration, grounds upkeep, club meetings, auctions, scout projects, Small Talks, yada, yada, yada. Hey...who put up the flag pole?!

Able hands and people with vision are the most valuable part of our collections. We can always use more willing souls to volunteer at events, maintain the grounds, keep writing checks, pray for our success and of course...keep those crazy ideas coming!

-Freddie

P.S. Auctions speak louder than words!

OCPHS presents...

### *A Grande Night To Remember II...*

### *Hats Off To History!*

*Wear your vintage hat or costume if you wish!*



**Saturday, October 3, 2015**

**6 – 10 pm \$25 per person**

*Lafayette Grande Banquet Facility  
1 Lafayette, Downtown Pontiac*



*\*Buffet Dinner/Cash Bar*

*\*Live and Silent Auctions of Quality Items*

*\*Proceeds benefit OCPHS/Pine Grove Museum*



**Advance reservations required; please RSVP by October 1<sup>st</sup>!**



*View a photo gallery of select auction items at  
**Facebook/Oakland County Pioneer and  
Historical Society***

**Tax-deductible sponsorships and donations of  
saleable items welcome!**

**To purchase tickets or donate, please call  
248-338-6732 or visit [www.ocphs.org](http://www.ocphs.org)**

## OUR 2015 SUMMER ICE CREAM SOCIAL

*Rodger Zeller (Planning Committee Chair)*

We are celebrating another successful Summer Social! Over 450 folks attended and we earned over \$6,000 in support of our society. The day officially began with a cannon volley fired by County Executive L. Brooks Patterson at 11 am. At our opening ceremony 30 minutes later, the Pontiac High School JROTC raised our country's flag and we introduced our distinguished guests - Brooks Patterson, local contractor Ed Lee and Pastor Doug Jones of Welcome Missionary Baptist Church; Mayor Deirdre Waterman joined us soon after. At 2 pm other important guests gave speeches on the mansion porch; we heard from Harriet Beecher Stowe, Frederick Douglass, Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln, and our gracious host Governor Moses Wisner.



The Pontiac High School JROTC assisted with the opening ceremony (courtesy Linda Zabik of Genisys Credit Union).

Many interesting activities took place throughout the day; our grounds boasted storytellers, a blacksmith, weavers, woodworkers and children's military drills.

There was a Civil War encampment, opportunities to talk with local authors and historical society representatives, and a presentation on Underground Railroad history in the schoolhouse. We had a tent with craft activities for the kids and a cook in the Summer Kitchen. Our Curiosity Sale and Gift

Shop kept guests busy hunting for bargains and treasures. Let's not forget the music! We were entertained by the Peace Jubilee Brass Band, the Men of Grace from Grace Centers of Hope in Pontiac, the Golden Griffon Stringtet and Jay Clark, a local musician. The crowning glory, of course, was the tours of the Wisner mansion and splendid garden patches around the estate.

Would you believe we had two Civil War-era cannons at Pine Grove this year?! If anyone lost their focus, the hourly firing of those cannons brought them back quickly! There were certainly times when they caused me to jump!



Board member/Wisner descendant Ann Johnson, Board member Linda Porter and Dwight Keith inside the mansion.

I heard many comments afterward from attendees who enjoyed themselves very much. As successful as this event was, we will work to ensure that our next Summer Social is even bigger and better. See you on July 30, 2016!



President Lincoln returned as one of the featured speakers (courtesy Colete Morlock, Troy Historic Village).

# Thank YOU!

**Our deepest gratitude to the sponsors whose generosity enabled us to put on a spectacular Summer Social!**

## **Business Sponsors**

Hodges Supply (Pontiac)  
Cool & Associates (Waterford)  
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Meijer (Rochester Hills)  
Take Away Trash (Pontiac)  
The Daily Diner (Waterford)  
Service Glass (Pontiac)  
Simply Natural Health Foods (Waterford)  
Crystal Treasures & More (Pontiac)  
Michigan Chiropractic Specialists of Waterford  
Quality Brake Specialists (Waterford)  
Real Estate One / Ron Newman (Clarkston)  
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## **Individual Sponsors**

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Ray Lucas  
Charlie Martinez

Linda Porter  
Charles & Marion Steeber  
Sally Jo Tewillager  
Mark A. Thomas  
Anonymous

## **In Fond Remembrance Of...**

Gale & Connie Scafe (by Joyce E. Scafe)  
Robert Nelson (by Roberta Lyons)  
Annalee Kennedy (by Anne Liimatta)  
Leonna LeDuff (by Anne Liimatta)  
Michael Willis (by Anne Liimatta)  
Donald & Jane Beutler (by Bette Twyman)  
The Brondige Family (by Susan K. Hickey)  
Stephen S. Cornell (by Catherine Jo Dixon)  
W.E.C. Huthwaite (by Motoko Huthwaite)  
Edward & Gladys Blackwell  
(by Christine Blackwell)



Board member Charlotte Cooper (right) poses with quilt raffle winner Janet Donovan. Raffle ticket sales earned \$275 for OCPHS!



We were thrilled to have County Executive L. Brooks Patterson (right) as our guest...and he was just as thrilled to fire the day's first cannon volley!

*Florence Wallace, granddaughter of Moses and Angeolina Wisner, gave the following talk at the Annual Meeting of the Oakland County Historical Foundation, held at the Wisner home on September 14, 1955. A transcription is printed here in commemoration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the talk.*

**\*Some liberties have been taken with grammar for ease of reading.**

M. Pres., Committee Members,  
Ladies & Gentlemen,

I have been asked to tell some of my recollections about this house.

Much is said about Mr. Wisner but where my mind reverts to the past I always think of my grandmother, the wife of Moses Wisner. If she had not loved every inch of these grounds and this house and made such an effort to have it kept as near as possible the same as when she and Mr. Wisner were living here we would not be having this meeting today and I would not have the happy memory of my happy childhood days spent here where I climbed trees and tore my dresses and Mother threatened to put me in blue jeans but Grandma always said, "Now Jessie, you did the same thing yourself." So I am going to tell you a little about Mrs. Wisner.

Angeolina Wisner was the daughter of C.C. Hascall. She was born in Auburn March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1828.

General Hascall came from Cayuga County, NY and settled in Pontiac in 1819. He bought a farm in Auburn, built a woolen mill, a store and in 1825 a hotel. He sat in the first town meeting in Pontiac which was held May 28<sup>th</sup>, 1827. He was town clerk in 1829-30. He moved to Flint in 1837 and was received of public monies under Polk & Van Buren. Mrs. Wisner was 9 years old when her family moved to Flint and she lived there until her marriage to Mr. Wisner. On one of her visits to Pontiac she met Mr. Wisner, a young widower with one child. She came to this house a bride in 1848.

After her eldest son Charles graduated and wanted to open a law office in Flint she closed this house and went to Flint and lived there for 10 years. During this time the house was broken into and since she had locked the doors between the rooms the intruder took a crowbar and broke some of the panels out of the doors. I think the marks are still visible on some of the doors.

This part of the house is practically the same as it was except that the kitchen was downstairs on the ground level. There was also a summer dining room and a wood shed where the washing was done!

One of the doors on the north side of the dining room led into a pantry and I can still see the cookie jar and fried cake jar and the row of mince pies all neatly wrapped ready to be baked. The remainder of what is now the kitchen was a small sewing room. After gas was put in on Oakland we turned the pantry and the small room into a kitchen.

My father's business was in Detroit and when I was old enough to go to school we moved to Detroit to live. Grandma spent the winters with us and we came here for the summers.

The big parlor as it was called was on the start two rooms but when Mr. Wisner was elected governor they had it made into the large room and many of the state functions were held here. The wallpaper and the carpet are the original ones.

I doubt if any of you here today remember where we had the pinery and so many trees in the yard that it looked like a forest. We could not see Oakland Ave. It was very attractive to the patients that escaped from the State Hospital, known in those days as the asylum and hardly a week passed that the attendants did not ask permission to search the grounds looking for someone who had gotten out.

During a very bad wind storm in 1910 we had 25 trees blow down in the yard between the street and the barn.

There used to be a large ice house and a smoke house in the backyard. Mr. Wisner raised Angus cattle. His stock barns were where the old Harger house stands on the west side of Oakland Ave about ¾ mile from here. The Wisner School stands on the land which was the orchard.

It was Grandmother's one request on her deathbed that we always keep the home as it was. I could not do that. It has meant a great deal to me to have this Society have the place and to know that it will be well preserved. I am glad that so many are interested in the restoration. An old house with its memories is like a dear old friend. Thank you.

**2015 "SMALL TALK" LECTURE SERIES  
WRAPS UP!**

It's been a terrific year of interesting and informative presentations; if you haven't yet joined us, there's still time! Take a peek at the lectures happening this fall...

**"World War II Letters"**

Sunday, September 27 @ 2:00 pm

Presented by Helen Jane Peters

*A member of the Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society and OCPHS, Helen will discuss Glenn Husted and his letters. Husted was a principal at Whitfield Elementary School and wrote many letters to soldiers from Sylvan Lake serving their country.*

**"Architecture of Death"**

Sunday, October 18 @ 2:00 pm

Presented by Ron Campbell

*Ron is Preservation Architect for Oakland County and an architectural historian. He will examine architecture from around the world as it relates to the traditions and symbolic meanings associated with burial customs and rituals.*

**"A Visual Tour of Modern Day Gettysburg"**

Sunday, November 8 @ 2:00 pm

Presented by Thomas Nelson

*A retiree and Adjunct Professor at Macomb Community College will offer a DVD presentation of his visit to the battlefields of Gettysburg. This visual tour includes Chambersburg, Little Round Top and Culp's Hill, and Pickett's Charge.*

**All presentations will take place in the Carriage House**

**\$5.00 admission cost per person includes light refreshments**

**IT'S TIME TO RENEW!**

Membership renewal letters are now in your mailbox! We cherish each and every one of our members and look forward to your renewal. New this year is a \$5 charge in addition to your normal dues if you wish to receive our *Gazette* via U.S. Mail; this will serve to offset costs of printing and postage. The *Gazette* is available in electronic PDF format to those who provide an email address.



*The Haunted Mansion  
at Pine Grove*

A Family friendly tour of  
19th Century customs sponsored by  
Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society  
405 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue - Pontiac, MI 48342

Weekends in October  
3 & 4, 10 & 11, 17 & 18, 24 & 25  
1 - 5pm each day

Children's Crafts and light refreshments  
served in the Schoolhouse after your tour.

\$5 per person - \$10 per family of 5  
Tickets sold in the Gift Shop

(248) 338-6732      [www.ocphs.org](http://www.ocphs.org)

**Seeking an alternative to all those gory and gruesome Halloween activities? Come visit the Governor's Mansion for a walk through 19<sup>th</sup> century customs pertaining to "crossing over."**



**Purchase tickets on-site the day of your visit, browse items for sale in the Gift Shop, tour the mansion, then visit our one-room schoolhouse for refreshments and children's crafts. No spooky surprises!!!**



**We are in need of guides and volunteers for this event. Please contact the office if interested!**

OCPHS is pleased to welcome the following new members who have joined since our last publication:

**Chisnell, Mathis (West Bloomfield)**  
**Davey, Katherine (Pontiac)**  
**Evans, Kelcey (Waterford)**  
**Gardiner, Reida (Bloomfield)**  
**Green, Ruth (Waterford)**  
**Lindsey, Juanita (Clarkston)**  
**Miller, Lori & Curt Snyder (Pontiac)**  
**Proxmire, Crystal / Oakland County 115 News Hub**  
**Ramsey-Levert, Beverly (Cleveland, OH)**  
**Schaefer, Mary Ann (Boulder, CO)**  
**Shelton, Butch & Priscilla (Pontiac)**

#### AROUND THE COUNTY

Can't get enough Oakland County history? Check out these upcoming events hosted by our partners in preservation...

#### **Saturday, September 26 -**

Greenwood Cemetery Tour (Birmingham)  
1:00 pm / Admission \$10 per person or \$20 for families  
More info: 248-530-1928

#### **Saturday, September 26 -**

"Women in the Stones: Mount Avon Cemetery Walking Tour"  
1:00 – 5:00 pm / Tickets \$15  
More info:  
[www.rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org)

#### **Saturday, October 10 -**

"Michigan Military Academy Morning"  
9:00 am – 12:00 pm / Tickets \$15  
*\*Featuring MMA uniform on loan from OCPHS' collection!*  
More info: [gwbhs.org](http://gwbhs.org)

#### **Saturday, October 10 -**

Mt. Hope Cemetery Tour (Pontiac)  
Tour times 3:00, 4:00, 5:00 pm  
Contact OCPHS office for more info

**Have an event that OCPHS can help you advertise? Please email details to [kari.robert.vaughan@gmail.com](mailto:kari.robert.vaughan@gmail.com) for inclusion in our next *Gazette* or to post on our bulletin board!**

## **Membership and Donation Form**

Name:

Address:

City/State/Zip:

Phone:

Email:

Send my *Gazette* via:  U.S. Mail  Email  
**(Please add \$5 to cover cost of printing and postage if sending via U.S. Mail)**

**Please Make Me a Member!** (indicate level):

- \$15 Student
- \$20 Individual
- \$20 Non-Profit Organization
- \$35 Family (two adults & minor children)
- \$100 Patron
- \$200 Benefactor
- \$500 Friends
- \$500 Corporate Sponsor
- \$Gift Membership (provide recipient's name & contact info):

**Please Accept My Donation!** (indicate preference):

- \$ Annual Giving (general operating costs)
- \$ Fill In the Gap (expanding hours & services)
- \$ Preservation (historic buildings & contents)
- \$ Where Needed or Other (specify):
- \$ In Memory of / Honor of (provide name):

**What Prompted Your Support?** (check all that apply):

- Interest in Oakland County History
- Invited/Introduced by Member/Friend
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- Attended Event or Tour
- Research Library / Archives
- Newspaper / Magazine Article
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Website / Facebook
- Other (specify):

Mail this form with check payable to OCPHS to:

**Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society**  
**405 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue**  
**Pontiac, MI 48342**

For your convenience you may also join or donate online at [www.ocphs.org](http://www.ocphs.org). Thank you for your support!

We are a 501(c)(3) organization  
Donations are tax deductible in accordance with applicable law

## FROM THE GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT TEAM

*Bill Clink (Co-Chair)*

Coming to you from the fair shire of Holly Grove is your latest update from the Growth & Development Team at OCPHS!

It's been a great summer of events and activities geared toward promoting history in our community and raising our profile throughout the region. Our fundraising endeavors have been trending forward...we're actually ahead of budget for the year. With luck and your enthusiastic support, we will be able to complete the year in the black.

Thanks to the careful coordination of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Mike West and support from myself and President Liimatta, we were able to host our first group of guest vehicles in our adjacent parking lot.

In cooperation with Lee Enterprises, we accommodated 152 cars resulting in a net gain of \$760 for the society.

Once again OCPHS was represented in downtown Pontiac at the Dream Cruise when we re-opened the Pioneer Pop-Up Museum. While attendance was lighter than last year, we still made new friends and advanced the cause of local history in a fun environment.

A highlight of the summer has been the dedicated efforts of "Guy's Gang" and their work to beautify the estate grounds. Many volunteers spent long hours weeding beds and caring for plants, resulting in our property looking the best it has in quite some time. We extend an invitation for those of you with a green thumb to join us for "Wisner Wednesdays" this fall from 6-9 pm as we continue to spruce up the grounds!

In the area of library and office support, I'm pleased to announce that members Terry Currin and Sherie Morgan will be joining us as part-time library volunteers on Thursdays to help with research and those requesting access to our archives. We are also happy to have intern Donna Frasure from Eastern Michigan University with us this fall; watch our Facebook page for a weekly "fun fact" on Oakland County history written by her!

(continued page 8...)

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

We look forward to seeing you at these upcoming events...

### **Sunday, September 27 -**

Small Talk - "World War II Letters"  
2:00 pm / Admission \$5

### **Saturday, October 3 -**

"A Grande Night To Remember II" Gala Auction & Dinner  
6:00 - 10:00 pm  
Tickets \$25

### **October 3 & 4, 10 & 11, 17 & 18, 24 & 25 -**

"The Haunted Mansion at Pine Grove"  
1:00 - 5:00 pm  
Admission \$5 per person / \$10 family of five

### **Sunday, October 18 -**

Small Talk - "Architecture of Death"  
2:00 pm / Admission: \$5

### **Sunday, November 8 -**

Small Talk - "A Visual Tour of Modern Day Gettysburg"  
2:00 pm / Admission \$5

### **Sunday, December 6 -**

2015 Victorian Open House  
(details coming in the near future!)

## ***OCPHS Officers and Board of Directors***

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Fred Liimatta

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(From the Growth & Development Team con't)

Last but by no means least...we're excited for our fall gala dinner and auction, "A Grande Night To Remember II: Hats Off To History" at the Lafayette Grande. If you haven't yet purchased your ticket, get it soon; invite a friend or two to join you at this terrific event. It's a great way for them to get acquainted with delightful historians in the neighborhood. I can't wait to see you there!



Welcome to the newest member of our team! At just 2 months old, team member Kari Vaughan's son Camden is a regular meeting attendee and is in training to be OCPHS's future president!



Team member Linda Porter recently received the distinguished "Cowbell Award" for her tireless efforts seeking sponsorships for our events!

Find us on Facebook.com/Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society 

 Follow us on Twitter  
*Twitter.com/OCPHS*

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Contributors: Bill Clink, Fred Liimatta, Kari Vaughan, Rodger Zeller

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