



Vol. 49, No. 3

Dedicated to the history and heritage of Oakland County, Michigan
THE OAKLAND COUNTY PIONEER AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 405 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue Pontiac, Michigan 48342

September 2016

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Fred Liimatta



My family has had a problem with immigrants ever since they came to this country...a good problem! I will always remember the odd assortment of visitors and relatives from the "Old Country" staying in our home. There was always room for one more; we just added another potato to the pot! Unfortunately, the welcome mat outside the front door has not always been so friendly to newcomers seen as threats to the status quo. Finland, like many other countries in the early 1900's, was suffering from a series of unfortunate events...war, famine, poverty, government upheaval and diseases like polio and scurvy. Leaving for a place with the promise of endless opportunity and freedom was a dream only the brave dared to entertain.

They didn't have much to lose, so they packed up what little belongings they had, along with letters from relatives who had gone ahead, a bit of money and a lot of courage. They were going to America to make a better life for themselves and their children. I've heard many stories of the hardships my ancestors endured, but even more so, of lessons learned along the way, especially to be thankful for what your toils produce. We get some of our most popular sayings from those hard-working pioneers:

"10 cents is a lot of money if you're flat broke."

"Finish your food, there are people starving in China."

"Always save for a rainy day."

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OCPHS presents...

A GRANDE NIGHT TO REMEMBER III

Characters in Time

Come dressed as your favorite historical figure if you'd like!



Saturday, October 1, 2016
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 tickets required: Please RSVP by September 27

For tickets or to donate, call 248-338-6732 or visit www.ocphs.org



Photo gallery of select auction items at Facebook/Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society

Tax-deductible sponsorships and donations of saleable items welcome!

Ultimately, it seems the key to their success was a combination of hard work, faith, humor, community, endurance, and a dream that was bigger than the hardships. That spirit is alive and well here at Pine Grove. Hard work, commitment to mutual goals and, thankfully, no small amount of humor is our story. There will always be obstacles to overcome. Working together, the solutions are not often easy, but are always within our grasp!

- Freddie

P.S. Considering where we come from, we have some pretty big shoes to fill.



(Immigrant copper miners at the Quincy Mine in Hancock, MI. Fred Liimatta's grandfather may be among them. Photo edited by Barbara Frye)

"SOUP TO NUTS": HELP CREATE OCPHS' NEW COOKBOOK!

Once again, we are asking for your help to create a new love-filled cookbook. We are asking our members to submit your favorite recipes, along with any fun stories or anecdotes about your recipes to share with everyone. The cookbook is going to be called "Soup To Nuts" and we appreciate your help compiling this book with love and laughs! Recipes may be emailed to office@ocphs.org or mailed to 405 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue, Pontiac, MI 48342.



2016 "SMALL TALK" LECTURE SERIES COMES TO A CLOSE!

Just a couple presentations left in this year's "Small Talk" series...don't miss out!!!

Sunday, October 16 - Victorian Burial/Cemetery & Impact of the Civil War

Presented by William Grandstaff

A man of many talents, Bill is an OCPHS board member, president of the Israel B. Richardson Civil War Roundtable, and portrays Loren Andrus at the Octagon House in Washington Township. Come explore the beliefs and traditions associated with death in the Victorian period, along with the rituals and customs related to cemeteries during the Civil War.

Sunday, November 6 - Lighthouses Along the Rivers of Steel: Michigan Destination Depots

Presented by Ron Campbell and Jackie Hoist

Ron is the Preservation Architect for Oakland County. Jackie is a Historic Architect and partner with H2A Architects in Davison. This dynamic duo will take a look at the importance of train depots as centers of commerce, transportation and communication. They will focus on the early function of depots in the 1850s and architectural styles into the 20th century.

All presentations start at 2:00 pm in the Carriage House. \$5 admission includes light refreshments. For further info, please contact the office and ask for Small Talk chairwoman Kathy Davis.

IN REMEMBRANCE



OCPHS extends our deepest sympathies to the family of Margaret Wilmot, who passed away on June 24th at the age of 87. Margaret was a teacher in the Pontiac School District for 34 years and a founding member of the Central United Methodist Church. In addition to OCPHS, she was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution Lydia Barnes Chapter, Phi Delta Kappa and the Waterford Historical Society. (*Photo courtesy of The Oakland Press*)

Our condolences to Diane Clark and family on the passing of her husband, Bart Clark, on September 5th at the age of 72. Diane and Bart were married 34 years. Bart served with the U.S. Navy for 26 years in the nuclear submarine force and was subsequently employed with the Ford Motor Company for 11



years. Bart was the great-great-great grandson of Clarkston founder Jeremiah Clark and served as Superintendent of Independence Township. In addition to OCPHS, Bart was a member of the Clarkston Rotary Club and Clarkston Historical Society. (*Photo courtesy of The Oakland Press*)

ATTENTION KROGER SHOPPERS!



Did you know that you can support OCPHS simply by doing your weekly grocery shopping? Kroger Plus Card holders can enroll in Kroger's Community Rewards Program and select a worthy

community organization to receive a portion of the proceeds from their purchases. Simply visit Kroger's website and follow the steps to enroll; our organization number is 91934. Not tech-savvy? Give our office a call and we can help enroll you!

PHOTOS NEEDED FOR UPCOMING EXHIBIT

Barbara Frye (Board member)

100 years goes by so quickly! Seems like yesterday that we sent our boys off to a "War To End All Wars!" 1917 marks the start of the United States' involvement in World War I. To commemorate that anniversary, we are planning an exhibit in the School House with pictures of the brave lads from Oakland County who marched off to fight that great fight. Some of them never came home, but they did send photos of themselves in the uniforms they proudly wore. Was your grandparent or great-grandparent one of these men? Do you have and cherish those photographs? We would very much like to scan them and include them in our 2017 display. No photos will be harmed in the scanning process. If you have a photo to contribute, please contact Barb via email at frye_photo@att.net or through the OCPHS office. Thank you for your support!

PART-TIME OFFICE ASSISTANT POSITION AVAILABLE

We are seeking an enthusiastic office assistant to work 11 am – 4 pm Tuesdays through Thursdays at the OCPHS Carriage House, with occasional extra hours for meetings, special events or projects.

This paid position requires organized office skills, computer proficiency including email, internet and word processing, good oral and written communication, a friendly personality to greet visitors on the phone and in person, and a willingness to learn new skills and pitch in where needed to help with Society activities. The candidate will assist in protecting our collection and support rules and guidelines set forth by OCPHS' board of directors.

Duties are varied but a typical day might involve working with volunteers of different ages and backgrounds, answering phone and email inquiries, preparing mailings, recording cash receipts, tidying up the kitchen, or explaining to visitors how to become a member or use the research library.

Those interested should send a cover letter and resume with "Office Assistant" in the subject line or on the envelope. Email office@ocphs.org or mail to 405 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue, Pontiac, MI 48342.

We look forward to filling this opening soon!

- The OCPHS Staff Search Committee

2016 OLD-FASHIONED SUMMER ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Rodger Zeller (*Planning Committee Chair*)

It was a very dry summer. Unfortunately, Mother Nature chose that day (July 30th) to rain on our parade.

In spite of that adversity, we had a successful ice cream social. Even though our attendance was down due to the weather, we cleared \$4,000, which matched

last year's profit. This was due to an increase in sponsorships and gift shop sales and a decrease in our expenses.



(Reenactors stand at attention during the opening ceremony. Courtesy of Jane Karaguleff)

There were some changes that had to be made on the fly because of the rain. The Porch Talks ended up in the School House. The a cappella singing group Men of Grace shared space with the kids in the craft tent and both groups benefited!



Our event officially kicked off with an opening ceremony; the Pontiac Junior ROTC raised our nation's flag while the Peace Jubilee Brass Band played the national anthem. There was a constant flow of guests touring the Wisner Mansion. Many enjoyed a visit with President Lincoln in the School House. Later that afternoon, John Gibney

informed us about the many flags of the Civil War.

Visitors had a great time chatting with various craftspeople, and shopped till they dropped at the Curiosities Sale and Ann Johnson's farm market. (*At left: Ray Frase's wood-turning demonstrations were a hit with the kids! Courtesy of Jane Karaguleff*)



(Guests peruse the unique offerings at the Curiosities Sale. Courtesy of Amy Annett)

All in all, we had a good time going back in time!

Our Summer Social would not be possible without the support, both financial and in-kind, of our terrific sponsors. OCPHS extends a heartfelt "THANK YOU!!!" to these businesses and individuals...



Gaylor Forman
Charlotte Cooper
Rodger Zeller
Nik & Jane Karaguleff
Bruce & Amy Annett
Dave & Barb Hendershot
Bruce T. Henderson, M.D.
Patricia Kaltwasser
Charlie Martinez
Linda Porter
Reida Gardiner
Ray Lucas
Charles & Marion Steeber
Skip Upcott
Kari & Robert Vaughan
Chef Traver Lucas
Anonymous

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(Summer Social sponsors continued...)

In loving memory of..

Gale & Connie Scafe – by Joyce E. Scafe

Opal Clark – by Fred & Anne Liimatta

Rex Lamoreaux – by Fred & Anne Liimatta

Evelyn LeDuff – by Fred & Anne Liimatta

Robert Nelson – by Fred & Anne Liimatta

Janine Saputo – by Colleen Barkham

John H. Glassbrook – by Catherine Jo Dixon

Beatrice & Richard H. Frye – by Barbara Frye

Gladys Rose (Class of '42 PCH) –

by Shawn & Adell Hughes

W.E.C. Huthwaite – by Motoko Huthwaite

Bruce & Doris Smith – by Mark Thomas

Miriam Foxman – by Susan Williams

**OLD BUILDING STRUCTURE FOUND AT
PINE GROVE**

Ray Lucas (Library Volunteer)

Last year, I found what looked like a retaining wall next to the west fence line while I was clearing weeds; it was south of the red storage shed between two very large black walnut trees. This wall was about twenty feet long and appeared to have a corner on the south end near the south walnut tree (retaining walls should not have corners).

This year, I was trying to get rid of pokeweeds about two to three feet from the fence, in about the center of the wall. I hit something very solid, which turned out to be an old concrete circle about three feet in size. I cleared the soil from this circle and about one foot below was flat cement, like a floor. To see how big this floor was, I shoveled away the soil towards the wall; the floor was still there.

Next I shoveled the soil all the way to the south corner; more floor! Then I shoveled east following the south wall eleven feet, and north almost to the north walnut tree. From there I shoveled east about ten feet and the floor was still there. So, there was the floor of a structure at least twenty feet by ten feet (200 square feet). After I unearthed its basic shape, I started to clear more and more soil

from the interior of the building floor. This part of Pine Grove's lawn is made up of dark, sandy soil that is two to three feet deep; as one goes east from the fence, the ground rises to where the lawn starts. At present, over half of the surface has been cleared (130 to 140 square feet).

So what could this building have been? When was it built? When was it last used? When was it covered up? The structure does not have a center post (at least as far as has been cleared). The edge wall is made of very poor quality cement blocks with two holes in each block, so it is unlikely to have been built before 1900, as this style of cement blocks were not made before then. The basic design suggests it would not have been used for the storage of crops or farm animals.

I am looking for someone with knowledge about early 20th century construction, especially farm buildings. I have some ideas of what this building could have been, but I am not an expert. I also have lots of glass shards that a student or specialist may wish to study.

Strange things can happen when you are just trying to get rid of weeds.



(Ray Lucas at the dig site. Courtesy of Amy Annett)

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

Baldwin, Catherine (Pontiac)
Donovan, Patrick (Shelby Township)
Jackson, Robin (Pontiac)
Moshier, Sue (Clarkston)
Radcliff Jr., Harry (Clarkston)
Rogers, Jim (Clarkston)

Adell Hughes of Pontiac should have been listed as a new member in the June issue.

We regret the error.

AROUND THE COUNTY

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

Orion Area Church Tours

Saturday, September 24 starting at 1:00 pm
Offered by the Lake Orion Historical Society
More info and a downloadable flyer:
www.orionhistoricalsociety.org

"Kit Homes" in Michigan

Wednesday, September 28
7:00 pm / West Bloomfield Public Library
(main meeting room)
Offered by the Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society
More info on this event and all 2016 fall events:
www.gwbhs.org

"Genealogy: It's All Relative" Class Series

Every Saturday October 1 – November 5
10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Offered by the Brandon Township Public Library
More info and to reserve your spot:
www.brandonlibrary.org

Got an upcoming event we can help you advertise? Please email info to office@ocphs.org for inclusion in this newsletter (publication schedule permitting)!

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
- Received Copy of *Gazette*
- 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. 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)

We welcome back those returning from summer adventures to the inviting halls of history at Wisner! This summer has gone quickly as the economy has kept many of us busy catching up on work deferred during the recent lean years. In my own life, increased opportunities for work has caused me to spend less time than I would like at Pine Grove. The challenge of balancing personal lives and the needs of this organization is an ongoing process! That being said, your involvement is the glue that keeps us together as we pursue worthwhile historical deeds.

Compliments have been made about the ongoing improvements to our landscaping. We missed some of our regular gardeners who were forced to reduce their involvement due to health challenges. However, we were able to work miracles on Thursday evenings with our dedicated gang and some new faces from Micah 6 Community and the unstoppable Rob Gregory from West Bloomfield. We even addressed several building repair projects!

You may not be aware that our office manager, Breanna Koehler, has accepted a full-time position working as a child development counselor. We are actively seeking to fill her shoes with another delightful soul who will carry on the tradition of "service with a smile."

We now have a team in place to coordinate the physical care of our collections and support the efforts of our dedicated library volunteers. Charlotte Cooper and Barb Frye have stepped forward to champion order and organized progress in the maintenance of our resources. In addition, Terry Curran is working to standardize computer records of our diverse holdings.

We have maintained our connections with friends in the community, particularly growing our relationship with Genisys Credit Union, the lead sponsor of our Summer Social.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

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

Saturday, October 1 -

"A Grande Night to Remember III"

(Fall Auction Fundraiser)

6:00 – 10:00 pm

\$25 per person

Sunday, October 16 -

Small Talk - "Victorian Burial/Cemetery & The Impact of the Civil War"

2:00 pm / Admission \$5

Sunday, November 6 -

Small Talk - "Lighthouses Along the Rivers of Steel: Michigan Destination Depots"

2:00 pm / Admission \$5

SAVE THE DATE!

Sunday, December 4-

Victorian Open House

Details TBA

OCPHS Officers and Board of Directors

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1st Vice President

Rodger Zeller

2nd Vice President

Mike West

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Kathy Davis

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Bill Grandstaff

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Anne Liimatta

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Linda Porter

Kari Vaughan

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Pontiac, MI 48342

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From the Growth & Development Team
continued...

We were present with displays at the Dream Cruise, Log Cabin Days, Grizz Day at Oakland University and Grizz Night in downtown Pontiac. One of our ongoing objectives is to engage the next generation of historians to carry the torch into the future!

Speaking of the future...in just a couple weeks we will once again host our annual gala and auction at the Lafayette Grande in Pontiac. We want your help! Send us some treasures to sell, buy a ticket to attend (better yet, invite some friends to join you), and save up some funds to support enthusiastic bidding. This is a major part of our operational budget, so your support and participation makes all the difference!

Keep growing and developing!
- Bill



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

Follow us on Twitter
Twitter.com/OCPHS

Oakland Gazette is a publication of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society. Submissions, content suggestions or comments are welcome.

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Editor: Kari Vaughan

Contributors: Bill Clink, Barbara Frye, Fred Liimatta, Ray Lucas, Kari Vaughan, Rodger Zeller

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