



An Invitation To The 104th ANNUAL DINNER OF THE OAKLAND COUNTY PIONEER & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Springtime at Pine Grove

Instrumental Group Will Give Concert

The Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society will present, as the main feature of the Annual Dinner, a Spring concert in the ballroom of the Kingsley Inn.

A love of music drew a lawyer, a school administrator, a director of a bilingual and bicultural program, and two high school students together. Their interest developed into an instrumental group with an extensive repertoire.

Headed by James Renfrew, pianist, the group includes his wife, Alicia and Neil Schell, guitarists, and Lewis Crew and his music student, Lizanne Cooper, flutists. Their program, which covers a wide range of composers, will be announced at the dinner.

James Renfrew, kept busy with a law practice and his duties on the OCPHS Board of Directors, is not only an accomplished musician but is also an historian.

His "Dan Judd's Way West", an intriguing account of a westward trek in 1847 - and back again - was given as an address at the Ninetieth Annual Dinner.

It has been printed in booklet form and several copies are on the library shelves at Pine Grove.

104th Annual Dinner

The Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society will hold the 104th Annual Dinner on Thursday, May 12, in the ballroom of the Kingsley Inn, 1475 Woodward Avenue, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

Fruit punch will be served at the 5:30 Social Hour. The practice of serving a punch bowl was initiated at last year's dinner and proved so popular it is being featured this year. There will also be a cash bar.

Plan to come out for the Social Hour. It's a good time to renew acquaintances and meet our new members.

A delicious dinner will begin with the invocation given by H. Malcolm Kahn Board member of OCPHS. Mrs. Robert (Fran) Anderson, will serve as Mistress of Ceremony.

Marion Hodges Roush will be in charge of reservations and new memberships. All those attending will pick up their name tags from Mrs. Richard Wright and Mrs. James Burke at the entrance to the ballroom.

Mrs. Robert Anderson is chairperson for the dinner, aided by Calvin Patterson, Mary Nephler and H. Malcolm Kahn.

DINNER RESERVATION — mail before May 5

Mail in enclosed envelope to:

Mrs. Charles Roush, 468 S. Fox Hills, Apt. 2, Bloomfield Hills, Mich. 48013

Enclosed please find \$_____ for _____ dinner reservations at \$7.00 per person, for the annual Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society to be held at Kingsley Inn, 1475 Woodward Ave. Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

Fun and Funds at the Charity Bazaar

Ruth Priestley

Fun and funds for our Historical Society await all who participate in the annual Charity Bazaar to be held at the Meadowbrook Village Mall, Rochester, April 28, 29, 30 and May 1, 1977.

Prizes of \$75.00, \$50.00 and \$25.00 will be awarded to the organization whose booth best depicts the Charity Bazaar theme of "Christmas comes but twice a year at Meadowbrook Village." Margaret Ann Jackson has designed a booth for us that we hope will be among one of the winners.

Our pre-assigned area at Meadowbrook Village Mall must be claimed and our booth set up and decorated at the Mall closing time of 9:00 P.M. on Wednesday evening, April 27th. Lots of willing hands, the more the merrier, will be needed at that time so that everything will be in order for the sale beginning Thursday morning, April 28th at 10:00 A.M. Here is a chance to really get into the spirit of Christmas, have an evening of fun and not have to worry about getting stuck in a snowdrift.

More Christmas type baked goods, cakes, fruit pies,

cookies, homemade bread and rolls and candy as well as handicraft items are needed to insure that we have a plentiful supply of saleable items throughout the four days of the bazaar. Items may be brought to the Historical Society office or taken directly to the booth at Meadowbrook Village Mall.

Tickets will also be on sale for the quilt that will be given away at the Victorian Open House at Pine Grove, Sunday, December 4, 1977.

Salesmen, particularly during the evening hours from 4-9 P.M. are badly needed. We suggest that couples might like to work during this time period. All persons working in the booth must be in costume of the Victorian period to carry out our booth theme.

Anyone who would like to contribute in any way to this fun-fund-raising event call Ruth Priestley 682-6553 or the Historical Society office 338-6732.

Remember the place and dates - Meadowbrook Village Mall - April 28, 29, 30 and May 1, 1977. We need your help.

Progress at the Carriage House

Gretchen Adler

In spite of the worst winter weather in this century, work on the Carriage House is proceeding well. The structure *was enclosed in February* when the sub roof was put on.

Hartford Roofing is presently busy nailing the authentic looking shingles into place.

The NEOVEC students are in the process of installing the

windows and putting up the exterior siding.

The next time you are driving on Elizabeth Lake Road near the Clinton Valley hospital, look across in the direction of the Wisner House. *You will be able to see a new addition to the skyline.*



Like the original, the new Carriage House will have three levels.



NEOVEC students worked on in spite of the weather.

BITS OF HISTORY

FARMINGTON

Connie Lektzian

In early 1874, a group of men who were counted among the early settlers met to organize the Oakland County Pioneer Society. It was decided "That a recollection of the events which characterized the early settlement of the county and the name and fame of the pioneers of old Oakland may be gathered up and transmitted to our successors."

It was these accounts, printed and pasted into old ledgers that made our first local history books.

It took a lot of hope and hard work for these pioneers to succeed, and in the case of Joshua Simmons, a sense of humor helped. Years later, he was able to find much to chuckle over.

Joshua Simmons first came to Michigan in 1824. He found land that suited him at the boundary of Oakland County, near Livonia. The farm he carved from this wilderness became his lifetime home.

It took two years of hard work back in New York to raise the necessary money, but in the fall of 1826 he returned to Michigan. This time, however, he was not alone. He brought Hannah, his bride of seven months, his brother and a cousin along with the cousin's wife.

"In Detroit, he was met by a relative of his named Richmond T. Simmons, who had come to Michigan a few years before and was returning to New York. Taking young Joshua to one side, he asked him confidentially if he had money enough to carry him through; he Joshua, with a few twinges of doubt, thought that he had, with a tight squeeze."

"But", continued the old man, "you won't have enough to buy a ceow? Joshua had to admit that for the present ceows would be likely to be rather a scarce article on his farm. Thereupon, the old gentleman kindly but firmly pressed upon him the loan of \$20.00 to be paid back at his convenience."

Never afterwards did any sum of money look as large to Joshua as that \$20.00.

The young people finally reached their destination in the midst of almost unbroken wilderness. It was evening when they arrived and the wives, scarcely more than girls, were left at the nearest neighbors. The men were determined to spend the first night on their own ground. They promised their wives that if all went well, they would fire off their hunting rifle



Hannah and Joshua Simmons

in the morning. That gunshot marked the start of their pioneer days.

Years later, in March of 1837, Joshua started for Ionia, where the land office was located at that time. The party was to include Hiram Wilmarth and Leland Green. However, this was the panic year, so Leland was sent to Detroit with their paper money to have it changed to gold. In the meantime, the other two went 'looking land'.

They wandered too far in the unmarked forests and had been two days without food when they arrived at the junction of the Cedar and Grand Rivers. Wilmarth was near collapse when Joshua noticed smoke about a half mile away. They discovered the smoke was coming from the camp of an old Indian whose squaw was cooking dinner.

Hiram Wilmarth spoke the Indian dialect and asked for food for the two of them. The old Indian brave kindly agreed, and plunging a sharp stick into the stewing kettle, he brought out -a bear's foot!

Hiram, too weak from hunger to refuse, dined with the couple. Joshua, looking at the fur and mud still clinging to the paw,

declined. The Indians appeared offended and Hiram hastily excused his friend on grounds of illness.

Whereupon the Indian went to work preparing a dish that in his opinion any sick man could eat. It was little meal cakes patted together with his hands. Joshua had noticed that the brave had recently been skinning a racoon and again he refused the food. Disgusted, the Indian offered nothing more and Joshua waited to eat until he and Hiram later stumbled upon another camp. The incident took place in the center of what is now Lansing.

Joshua's fortune went far beyond that day when his uncle took pity on him with a loan to buy a ceow. He and Hannah enjoyed not only the comforts of life but many of the luxuries. They were able to give each of their children a fine farm and at one point, spent nearly a \$1000.00 on portraits of themselves to give the family. That gunshot had started them on a good race.

Excerpts - Vol. I
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Clippings 1873-1876

The 5th Michigan Regiment Band Coming May 28, 1977

History and pageantry from the Civil War period and from across the last 200 years will be coming to Pine Knob on May 28, 1977 at 7:30 PM, a program of approximately 2 1/2 hours.

It was through the efforts of the Clarkston Rotary and Band Boosters that the 5th Michigan Regiment Band is being brought to us. They will be hosted by Clarkston Rotary and Band Boosters during their stay here.

It was during the fall of 1973, under the auspices of the Howell Bicentennial Committee, that the 5th Michigan Regiment Band was organized.

Dressed in Civil War Infantry, Artillery and Naval uniforms, this famous unit will be bringing its full regimental band, regimental and historical color parties, landing party of regimental dancers, and the regimental fifes and drums.

Noted for its close attention to historic detail, both in uniforming and performance, the unit recreates the band of the 5th Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment which served with the Army of the Potomac from 1861 through 1865.

Tickets to this May 28th event are available now at the office at Pine Grove, headquarters of the Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society. They may also be obtained at the Annual Dinner May 12. The price is \$2.00 per person or \$6.00 per family car load.

Our Historical Society will receive one half of all the money for the tickets that are sold through our efforts.

History and Civil War Buffs - stand up and be counted! This is another fun fundraiser.

Call Pine Grove office at 338-6732 - we have tickets on hand.



Farmington Townhall



OCPHS Photo File

In 1924, Farmington Celebrated the Centenary of the founding of their town by Arthur Power, an event described by some as the March of the Quakers. The old town hall served for conferences and meetings as descendants of the early settlers and old time residents came 'home' for the celebration.

The many dormered hotel on the right was for long years known as the Owens House. It was at the first village council, held May 9, 1867, that the citizens petitioned for the badly needed plank sidewalks on both the north and south sides of Grand River.

Grand River road itself had been planked in 1852, making possible the operation of stage coaches between Detroit and Lansing.

The stage lines, carrying both passengers and mail, flourished until the opening of the Detroit, Lansing and Northern Railroad.

CHALLENGE GRANT MAY BE POSSIBLE

The National Endowment for the humanities is offering to historical societies and museums such as Pine Grove a rare opportunity. It is known as the Challenge Grant.

As far as is known, it is the only grant that can be used for basic operating support.

Up until now, Endowment aid has been limited to specific projects. A Challenge Grant, however, may be spent for utilities and general administration. It can be used for the maintenance and conservation of collections - i.e. cleaning costumes and purchasing storage or display cases for them. It can also go toward the acquisition of equipment such as a riding lawn mower that Pine Grove's three acres needs. And it can be used for a number of planning and development programs.

As with most grants, this requires matching funds. The matching funds for this purpose must come from non-

traditional sources.

Therefore, funds raised from memberships, Ice Cream Social, tours or the Victorian Open House could not be used.

However, the Charity Bazaar is a new function, and your support not only in donations for the booth but also in purchases will help the grant fund grow.

Money from ticket sales to the 5th Michigan Regimental Band concert can be used for match money to the Challenge Grant. Plan to attend these gala affairs and encourage your friends to do the same.

Businesses, individuals, corporations, professional and civic groups, labor unions, or state and local governments may make cash gifts to this fund. Such a gift, is of course, tax deductible.

It's a worthy cause - helping protect our own heritage.