



Members and Friends are Cordially Invited to the 106th Annual Dinner of the Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society

106th Annual Dinner to be Held Thursday, May 17 at Main Event

On Thursday, May 17, the Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society will hold their 106th Annual Dinner. This will take place in the Main Event banquet room at Pontiac's Silverdome.

Fran Anderson is our very capable chairman of the event aided by her committee members Malcolm Kahn, Mary Nephler, Eunice Hewitt, Margaret Ann Jackson, Dick Hendershott, Lottie Hudson, Helen Pickering and Jack Harris.

Mrs. James Burke and Mrs. Richard Wright will be present to give out name tags - don't forget to pick **yours** up. Marion Hodges Roush will handle dinner tickets - and take new memberships - at the door of the banquet room.

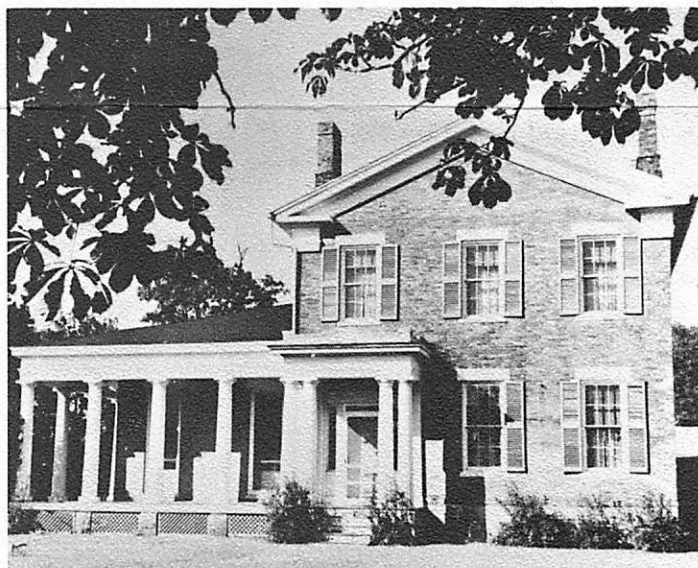
At 5:30 p.m. we teetotalers will line up at the punch bowl to kick off the Social Hour. The cash bar opens at the same time. A delicious dinner follows at 6:30.

The invocation will be given by Mrs. Orpha Williams and Anna Baker Lane is our mistress of ceremonies. Musical selections will be by our talented Jim Renfrew.

Our president, Faye Donelson, will give her President's Report at the end of the dinner. Good things have been happening and she has interesting news to tell. Speaker of the evening will be Professor William Miles.

In spite of inflation, we have not raised our membership dues for three years. And we have held to the same admission fees into Pine Grove for even longer. However, the price of our Annual Dinner has increased a little, but a wonderful evening will be worth it.

Please use the Featherstone entrance to the Silverdome. There is no charge for restaurant parking.



Springtime: Annual Dinner Time

Joining us for dinner will be the speaker of the evening, William Miles and his wife. Professor Miles is from the Clarke Historical Library and has published numerous articles and books highlighting tales of Michigan history.

Mr. Miles has a BA and an MA from Wayne University in English Literature as well as a Masters degree in Library Science from the University of Michigan.

He will show a slide presentation entitled "Leave Us Free From Care: Michigan Newspaper Carriers' Addresses," a humorous slant on a corner of history we seldom hear about.

Sounds like a great program for our Annual Dinner - hope you can join us.

DINNER RESERVATION — mail before May 14

Mail enclosed envelope to:

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

Enclosed please find \$ _____ for _____ dinner reservations at \$10.00 per person, for the annual Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society to be held at Pontiac Silverdome, Featherstone Road, Pontiac, Mich.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

Commerce Lake House



William Wix, wife Melinda, daughters Mary and Kathie.

Guide Training Meeting Held in Milford

Saturday, April 28, Janet McAlpine, Guide Co-chairman, graciously opened her Highland home for the monthly meeting of the Guide Committee.

Connie Lektzian gave a slide presentation showing Wisner house as it was in 1945 and the changes necessary in turning a private home into a house museum. Different methods of touring were discussed. An effort is going to be made to have adult tours in the early evening to allow for the participation of more guides.

In the afternoon of April 28, Milford Historical Society hosted a delightful tour of their museum.

The next guide training meeting is May 21 at 6:15 p.m. at the Wisner House. Please call the office for further details. The number is 338-6732.

Our Thanks To . . .

At our recent Board meeting of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society, the members gave an ovation to James Renfrew and Richard Hewitt. This was in recognition of their unflagging patience in applying their time and legal expertise to various matters that have arisen this past year. They have very successfully dealt with several problems.

In the reconstruction of the Carriage House, and the restoration of the school house, our president Faye Donelson and vice-president, Gretchen Adler, deserve a special recognition. These projects have entailed finding materials, obtaining permits - and variances on permits - checking pictures and blueprints, and trying to juggle yesterday's look with today's codes. and **waiting** - for all this to be done.

The Quilt of '79 is Underway

The new 1979 quilt has been started. Edna Bondurant, Chairman of the Guild, chose the pattern Star Spangled Banner. There will be 56 blocks, red and white patchwork alternating with a plain block containing quilting in the shape of an eagle. A true heirloom containing hundreds of hours of work.

Tickets will be on sale for this quilt at the Annual Dinner. The drawing will take place at the 1979 Victorian Christmas Open House. Tickets sell for \$1.00 each.

Maurice Cole Manuscript in Society Library

The late Maurice Cole served on the Board of Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society for a number of years. He was a meticulous researcher, tireless in his efforts to track down old pictures and information on Oakland County's history.

Maurice Cole wrote a number of books and articles, some of which were in our library prior to his death.

His manuscript, *Inns and Hotels in Oakland County*, complete with a great array of pictures, ads and invitations, has been given to the Society.

The very clear and rather charming picture of the Commerce Lake House was part of an article giving the history of the hotel business in that area.

It tells us that one of the first tavern keepers in Commerce was Richard Burt, as early as 1834. Later we learn that Joseph G. Farr "kept tavern in a frame house in 1836, which was conducted for a number of years subsequently by Thaddeus A. Smith, Esq., and was destroyed by fire in March 1866 while under his management and ownership."

'The Commerce Lake House was rebuilt soon after the fire at the northwest corner of Huron and Broadway . . .'

The hotel was not only the scene of dances and dinners, but the hotel hall served as a setting for theatrical troupes who presented such favorites as "East Lynne" and "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

The owner in 1884 was William Wix, a store keeper in Commerce. He became rather well known for his popular New Year's Dances. He continued the operation until 1900. Judson Vail was the final owner.

'But the last days of the Commerce Lake Hotel were much like the last days of many of the fine old buildings in Michigan, . . . on the morning of June 20, 1920, the old Commerce Lake Hotel . . . was gone, and all that remained were the smoldering ruins of this once popular hostelry.'

Contributions to Endowment Fund Continue

What do we have to offer here at Pine Grove?

Questions similar to this are frequently asked.

As a growing, vital County Historical Society, we have a great deal to give.

History of our county has been preserved here at Wisner in the form of third dimensional items - furniture, tools and portraits.

History stands on the shelves of our library. There are journals, account books and scrapbooks.

History is cosseted in the files of our archives. There are research papers, maps, land grants and old bound newspapers.

All of this calls for such things as furniture oil, acid free folders, file cases and library shelving. And this care and its related costs, will always go on.

That is why the endowment fund was set up - to ensure that there will always be money to maintain Pine Grove and our early history. Contributions may be made in the form of life memberships, memorials or direct donations. We thank the following people:

Contributions:

Mrs. Anna Baker Lane

Mr. & Mrs. Allan Priestley

Life Membership:

John W. Bell

Lawrence Blascyk



Ice Cream Social To Be Held Sunday, August 5

Pine Grove is being readied for the annual Ice Cream Social of the Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society. It will be held on Sunday, August 5, from 1 to 4 p.m. at 405 Oakland Avenue in Pontiac.

Mary Rachwal is the chairman of this festival and a great day has been planned.

The Michigan Ban-Jos have performed before at Pine Grove and were so popular that Mary invited them back for this event. You won't want to miss hearing them.

Come and spend the afternoon on August 5. Stroll among the tents that will be scattered throughout the Pine Grove acres. Delicious ice cream and cake will be served up in one tent. In another will be found the Quilting Guild, busy on the 1979 Star Spangled Banner quilt.

Tickets for this quilt are now on sale at the Wisner House. They will be available at the Social and until the Victorian Open House when the drawing will be held.

The Attic Treasure booth will share a tent with the Book Nook. The Attic Treasures will have several items for closed bids as well as a wide assortment of jewels and junque. You can take home an armload of interesting books for just a small sum of money at the Book Nook.

Fred Gibson will have his model train and trolley display set up in the Carriage House. This has grown into one of our traditions here at Pine Grove. Boys and girls from eight to eighty watch in fascination at this display.

AND - tours at Pine Grove will go on all afternoon. Costumed guides will be in each room to interpret. Even if you have seen the place before, thee have been some changes and it is well worth viewing again.

Our spinners will share the tent with the quilters. These pioneer crafts seem to belong together.

PLEASE - bring your entire ticket with you on August 5. The ticket is needed for admission, refreshments, and entry into the buildings. The ticket will be punched at all these places. We find we must do this as a number of people have been coming to our festivities without purchasing a ticket.

Having enough cakes is essential to the success of our Social. Please donate at least one homemade cake. Any left over by 4 p.m. on August 5 will be sold.



How many generations of schoolchildren walked thru these entrances?

In restoring the old Drayton Plains schoolhouse that stands at Pine Grove, much preliminary studying was done. President Faye Donelson and Francis Lohff, our master carpenter, pored over the oldest pictures we have of the school. Letters were written asking questions of former schoolteachers and pupils.

From a picture dated about 1868, it was determined that the schoolhouse had steps across the front of the building. This is just discernible in the faded old photo.

The picture also showed two front doors and a center window. Sure enough, when Mr. Lohff removed some of the clapboards, there were the old door frames. Shorter and narrower than today's entrances, they became an important part of the restoration program.

There are a few things that were added to satisfy today's building codes, or to accommodate our tours.

There will be a railing around the porch and at the sides of the steps. A back door has been put in and will have a ramp to make the building barrier free.

(Continued on back)

TICKETS

Enclosed with this Gazette, please find 5 tickets for you and your friends. Please return any money or unsold tickets to the Wisner House, 405 Oakland Avenue, Pontiac, Michigan 48058 before August 1. Make checks payable to Edna Bondurant, Treasurer.

ICE CREAM SOCIAL — Tear off and mail to Wisner House, 405 Oakland Avenue, Pontiac, Michigan 48058 in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible.

I will serve -	Tickets	12:45 to 2:00	2:00 to 3:00	3:00 to 4:15
	Attic Treasures	12:45 to 2:00	2:00 to 3:00	3:00 to 4:15
	Sales (Pot Pourri Shoppe)	12:45 to 2:00	2:00 to 3:00	3:00 to 4:15

I will bring cake(s) Sunday forenoon or Saturday between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.

Any questions, please call the office: 338-6732

Name _____ Phone _____

The Days of a Slower Pace



We Have a Photo Collection

The collection of photos here at Pine Grove is made up of daguerrotypes and ambrotypes, tintypes and the more recent studio photos as well as snapshots.

It is considered fortunate that our collection includes a number of interiors. Most of these were taken before the turn of the century by amateur photographers challenged by the new fangled cameras of that day.

Judges, farmers, children and housewives, all posed for posterity. Most of these photos, even the century old ones, show sharp detail.

However, there are few good amateur photos taken after the 1920's. People were either very careless about posing the subjects or it simply wasn't considered very important. In any event, little will ever be learned about life style of those times from the photos that survived.

Colored film makes great pictures for our scrapbooks. Costumes and decorations show up in beautiful detail.

BUT - the life of a colored snapshot is said to be about 50 years. **Today** is not being well preserved for our files.

We need someone whose camera is loaded with black and white film to take a few careful pictures of the interior and exterior of the Wisner House, our officers and some of our festivities.

There is a very strong feeling that the Society's slide presentations and publications should have first use of our photo collection. It is our effort and money that goes into the preservation of them.

To guarantee the proper usage of these pictures Charles Martinez has worked out the following photo loan procedure:

1. Client must use a photographer of our choice to do photo copy work.
2. \$25.00 usage fee required for each photo to be used for publications, or in any display other than that of the Society's.
3. Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society receives the negative from any photo processing.
4. Photos used in any way must bear a credit line of our Society.

Keep in mind most museums are even more stringent with their rules. Rules for the media are a bit different since they give us publicity.

Media

1. Must give credit line.
2. Must give duplicate print or negative.
3. Return within two weeks.

You Must Have an Appointment

Researchers, 'rooties' or historians, all must have an appointment to come to the Pine Grove library. We lack the staff and the space to take care of more than a few at a time.

Until further notice, the following rules must be followed:

Library Usage

Researchers must have an appointment

Thursday - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

In addition to Thursdays, Tuesday mornings 10 a.m. to noon are available to members and media.

Assistance is required for book usage. The staff will remove and reshelve all books.

Books cannot be checked out.

Use pencil only for note taking.

If these rules seem a bit stringent, remember our library consists mainly of one of a kind books. Our manuscript files and our scrapbook collection are the result of hours of hard, sometimes tedious labor, and the use of expensive acid free materials.

Endowment Fund Grows

The endowment fund grows with each contribution. It forms a hedge against lean years, and helps insure the fiscal health of our Society. Contributions can be in the form of memorials, direct donations or life memberships.

Since April the following contributions have come in:

Memorial received from Mr. & Mrs. A. Glenn Wilson for Richard Wright

Direct Donation received from James Renfrew

Ice Cream Social

(Continued from front)

Future plans to be carried out this summer include re-finishing the floor and painting. It might be possible to have schoolhouse open in time for the Ice Cream Social. If not, take time to stroll around the outside of the old Drayton Plains school and look at the progress that has been made. Francis Lohff has done meticulous work and the building should be good for another hundred years.

Parking at the Ice Cream Social will be in the Wisner School lot next door. There is a gate in the fence near the old wagon at the back of the property. It will be open and people walk in here. There will also be parking at the Oakland Avenue Presbyterian Church across the street.