



## PONTIAC'S DAWSON FAMILY: A MEMORIAL

by Marion H. Roush

On August 6th the Dawson Memorial Conference Room will be dedicated at a ceremony prior to the Ice Cream Social. The thoughtful granddaughter of Pontiac pioneer Charles Dawson, Mary Elizabeth Dawson Brown and her husband Basil, entertained for many years a deep desire to establish a significant memorial to the Dawson Family in the City of Pontiac. The brothers, Richard, Robert and Charles arrived in the 1840's and later John in 1859 to establish their business ventures and homes. They raised large families who remained in the area and became outstanding citizens. Betty, it seems, is the one heir of this large clan, who had the compelling idea to provide the means to establish a permanent memorial to the Dawson Family and retain and recognize the contributions they made to the history of Pontiac.

Charles Dawson Sr., born in Clackmananshire, Scotland October 13, 1815, the youngest of five sons of John and Janet (Carmichael) Dawson, came to America with his mother at age 15. After coming to Pontiac in 1843, he married Elizabeth Beatty in 1846.

*(Continued on page 4)*



*Basil and Mary Elizabeth Dawson Brown, our benefactors, as they vacationed at the Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs, Colorado July, 1983.*



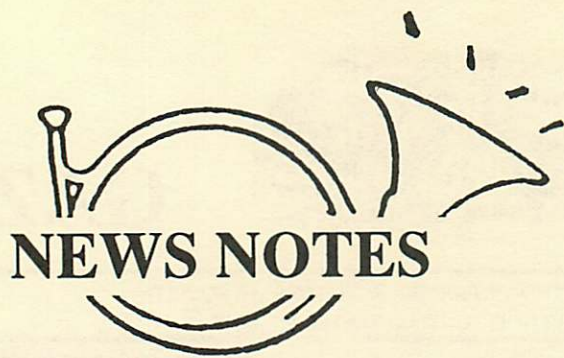
*Dawson Mill on East side of Orchard Lake Avenue across from the Mill Pond. Known first as the Cass Lake Mills, later Dawson Mill which was sold in 1894. Purchased later by Henry J. Elliott in 1905 and known as the Pontiac City Mills. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Garland Elliott of Howell who donated it to our library in 1978)*



*Dawson-Brown family home at 48 Mary Day, Pontiac, built by Betty Brown's father, Charles Dawson in 1906. Betty and Basil's wedding October 22, 1924 as well as the 50th anniversary of her parents, Charles and Louisa Sleman Dawson September 3, 1935, took place in this home.*



*The Dawson Mill Pond on the Clinton River, which flows under Orchard Lake Avenue in Pontiac and winds its way thru the city. Charles Dawson Sr. owned a great deal of property around this site when he established his flour mills in 1852.*



# NEWS NOTES

- The Cultural Council of Pontiac Plaza Jazz Festival will be held at the Phoenix Center Roof August 4, 5 and 6.
- Gretchen Adler announced that the Detroit Historical Museum is having an exhibit and seminars on antique automobiles and the automobile industry continues during the month of September.
- Rex Lamoreaux has asked for volunteers to come to Wisner on Monday mornings to help with the new set of identification cards which are being developed from the Accession ledgers.
- Further interest has been shown in more canning classes. Jack Moore has suggested those interested call the Wisner Office 338-6732.
- Our thanks for the funding for acid-free storage tissue and boxes for clothing and artifacts which has been provided by General Motors Corporation and the Cultural Council of Pontiac.
- Be aware that a new IRS Revenue Ruling 67-246 states that when a charitable organization

solicits payments which are in part a gift and in part their price of admission, separate amounts should be stated in any promotional materials, as well as on any tickets. Only that part which is a gift may be deductible.

- "Wonder Woman" Virginia D. Rodgers, OCPHS Board Member, was among six individual members honored on Friday, April 7, 1989 by The Womens Survival Center of Oakland County at their 8th Annual Wonder Woman party.
- John R. Jones, an attorney and member of the Society, was awarded the Volunteer of the Year Award at the Detroit Bar Association's 153rd Annual Meeting and Luncheon at Cobo Hall on April 25. Jack put in over 100 pro bono hours (gratuitous) on behalf of a woman in Detroit involved in a complex guardianship and property dispute. Over 300 attorneys were on hand to applaud his award. He, incidentally, is the identical twin brother of our executive secretary, Dick Jones, also a member of the Detroit Bar Association. Our hearty congratulations to Jack!

## Membership

We welcome the following new members and their support of our Society's objectives:

Mr. & Mrs. John M. Averill  
 Mr. & Mrs. Neal Cartwell  
 Mr. Ron Johnson  
 Mr. Arnold R. Jones  
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael A. Leonard  
 Mr. & Mrs. Elliott Plante  
 Mr. James Stephens  
 Ms. Dorothy L. Tallerday  
 Ms. Mary Jo Yates

We appreciate the up-grade of her Active Membership to Life Membership in support of the Endowment Fund by Mrs. Donald S. Brownlee.

Business Sustaining Memberships renewed: FOOD TOWN INC. and THE OAKLAND PRESS.

Organizational Membership renewed: TUESDAY MUSICALE.

### In Memoriam

Mrs. Frank Derbyshire  
 Mr. Clyde Haskill  
 Mrs. Charles Hudson  
 Mr. Merle Voss (Life Member)

## NEW DUES SCHEDULE

(Effective September 1, 1989)

Following the recommendation by the Membership Committee, who had also consulted with the Finance Committee, the Board of Directors approved a modest increase in our dues schedule at the April 19th Board Meeting to be effective September 1, 1989.

Individual Active Member	\$15.00
	(Couple \$30)
Individual Senior Member	10.00
	(Couple \$20)
Student Member	5.00
Patron Member	50.00
Life Member	200.00
Organization Member	50.00
Business Sustaining Member	150.00

With the exception of the Life Membership which is in support of the Endowment Fund, all dues are payable each year upon notice from the Membership Secretary. The Student and Patron are a new addition to the schedule. We trust we can count on your continued support as we maintain and promote the Pine Grove complex as a non-profit, educational asset to the Oakland County community.

## 115th Annual Dinner

Close to 100 members and friends of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society met at the Deer Lake Racquet Club in Clarkston on May 17th. We enjoyed good food, rustic surroundings, fellowship and the barbershop-type music as presented by the Bill Pascher Quartet.

Following dinner and the musical program by the Quartet, President Gretchen Adler introduced our guest speaker of the evening, Mr. Gene Kuthy of the Michigan Banking Commission. His remarks on the 100th anniversary of the Bureau of Banking were interesting and we were happy to learn that our Michigan banks have a solid foundation.

Our thanks to Rosamond Haerberle and her committee who had decorated the tables with fresh carnations, our traditional pine tree sendings, colorful bookmarks and program folder. The pleasant evening was further enhanced by mild temperatures and soft lake winds for which we were all grateful that evening.

## In Service to the Community

Clarke Kimball and Don Daggy and their Grounds and Maintenance Committee volunteers have the yard in shape and the flowers in place with a new vegetable garden included for the enjoyment of our visitors.

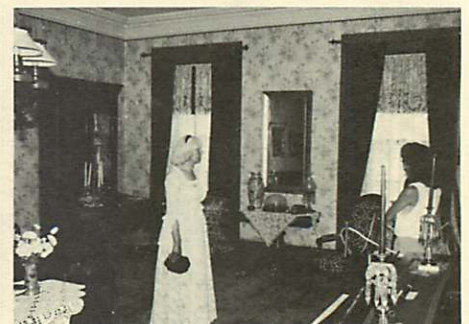
Lenna McIntyre has spent many hours with the volunteers guides making sure five guides are on hand for each tour. They have been busy! Since April 14th, 625 schoolchildren and 35 adults in 19 tours have been introduced to Oakland County history at Pine Grove complex.

Lillian Paull, librarian of our Research Library has also been very busy as she has helped not only 81 researchers as they came to us for information, but also provided the material for 16 out-of-state requests by mail.

We also thank the many volunteers that assisted in preparing the home at 48 Mary Day for sale with their contribution of over 750 hours.

Our special thank you to W.E.C. Huthwaite Esq. who has donated many hours as attorney for the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society in regard to the Mary Elizabeth Dawson Brown bequest.

Our Society members can be proud of our programs and service to this area. We encourage YOU to join this group of dedicated citizens.



Volunteer Guide, Jean Milton, in Wisner Parlor

## DO YOU KNOW THAT ... Ross Callaway

### Oakland County Galleria, Pontiac

- June 19 - July 14 - Paintings of Venezuelan artists, in an exchange with Hispanic/American artists from Michigan whose works will be exhibited in Venezuela at the same time.
- July 18 - August 31 - "American/Asian Artists' Exhibit"
- September 5 - October 13 - Multi-media show by the Palette & Brush Club
- October 16 - November 30 - Juried exhibit of Detroit Women Painters and Sculptors

No admission fee, Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM-5:00 PM at the County Galleria, Executive Office Building, 1200 N. Telegraph Rd., Pontiac. Call 858-0415 for further information.

### Oakland County Parks and Recreation

- July 22 - "Hot Air Balloon Festival", Springfield Oaks Activities Center, 12 Noon-11:00 PM. Games for children, pony rides, kite flying, car show, clowns, balloon flights. Two dollar parking fee, and then, pay-as-you-go. Call 858-4945 for further details.
- July 23 and August 27 - Antique Show, Springfield Oaks Activities Center, 10:00 AM-4:00 PM. Juried show featuring authentic antiques from 40 exhibitors. Call 625-8133 for further information.
- July 26 - Senior Citizen Picnic, Independence Oaks County Park. Sponsored by Oakland/Livingston Human Services Agency, for seniors in Oakland County. Call 858-5193 for more information.
- September 9 - Annual Corn Roast, Addison Oaks County Park. End-of-season Celebration. Call 693-2432 for further information.

### Detroit Institute of Art, Detroit

- August 6-October 15 - Thomas Hart Benton - A centennial exhibition of his easel paintings and murals. (Admission Charge)
- August 20-October 29 - Ansel Adams - His own selection of 75 photographs representing the best of his life's work.
- September 23-December 31 - National Geographic - The Art of Photography, from 1870's to Present, featuring 220 photos, and many vintage prints.

For further information call DIA, 833-7900.

### Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn

- Throughout August - Tsar Phoenix - The first vehicle to cross the U.S. using solar power, in the New Acquisition Exhibit, in the museum concourse.
- Throughout December - Susan McCord's Quilts: A Farmwife's Legacy. A selection of ten 19th century quilts never before seen as a body of work by this talented artist.

Regular admission charges apply. For more information call 271-1620.

### Greenfield Village, Dearborn

- July 22 & 23 - Fire Engine Muster. Two-centuries of firefighting equipment rush to the scene to compete in tests of skill and authenticity. Visitor-manned brigades, hand-pulled rigs, horse-drawn pumpers and gasoline-driven engines will demonstrate the development of firefighting.
- August 12 & 13 - Susquehanna Plantation Weekend. The hard reality and romanticism of tidewater Maryland in the 19th century are brought to life at the Susquehanna Plantation. Portrayals of the arduous house and field chores will be countered with demonstrations of African-American music and dance.
- September 9 & 10 - Old Car Festival. Over 250 Vintage cars will parade the streets, and compete with other pre-1930 vehicles in one of the nation's most popular and prestigious car meets. In keeping with the early auto era, old-fashioned bicycles, costumes and entertainment will be featured.
- September 29, 30 & October 1 - Firestone Farm is the center of a variety of harvesttime activities this fall at Greenfield Village. Cider-making, harvesting, corn shucking, and horse-drawn plowing are some of the chores on this American farm of one-hundred years ago to be demonstrated.

Regular admission charges apply. Call 271-1620 for further information.



## Annual Ice Cream Social

Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society ANNUAL ICE CREAM SOCIAL will be held at Pine Grove on Sunday, August 6, 1989 from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM. Dedication of the Dawson Memorial Conference Room will be held prior to the Ice Cream Social at 12 noon. Additional special Dawson Memorial displays will be in place for this event. Details to follow in special mailings.

### Editorial Staff

Ross Callaway, Pauline Harrison,  
Richard B. Jones, Marion Roush  
**Photography:** Ross Callaway,  
Marion Roush, OCPHS file

### OFFICERS

President: Gretchen Adler  
Vice President: Clarke Kimball  
Secretary: Marion Roush  
Treasurer: Kathryn Daggy

## Book Review F.Y.I.

(Wisner Library New Acquisition)

### America's Country Schools

By Andrew Gulliford

Because the author, Andrew Gulliford, is himself a teacher, this book reflects a great deal of interest and dedication to the subject of country schools. This makes for a book meaningful to the education community as well as to all those who have ever been a grade-school student, in or out of country schools.

Gulliford focuses on placing country schools in the larger social and historical framework of American education. He accomplishes this through scientifically oriented research processes which provides the reader with a fascinating visual concept of the impact schools have made upon our American society. The many photographs, along with the author's colorful descriptive writings, make it "live" for the reader.

Not only did country schools serve to educate, but to act as polling centers, township halls, church pulpits, funeral scenes, forts and shelters, hospitals, and today much of this still takes place. What we call Adult Education today, was called "Moonlight Schools" in the 20's which did and does do much to enrich our standards of living. The more isolated the school, the more significant the schoolhouse was to its surrounding community. Reading or even just perusing this book can well be described as a "precious" experience.

Pauline Harrison

## WISNER LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS

America's Country Schools - Andrew Gulliford

Vintage Clothing, 1880-1960 - Maryanne Dolan

Index of Revolutionary War Pension Applications (Revised & Enlarged)

Playthings Past - Betty Cadbury

Wonderful World of Toys - Games & Dolls - 1860-1930

Colored Patriots of the American Revolution

National Archives of the United States

Houses by Mail - A Guide to Houses from Sears Roebuck & Co.

Library - A Guide to the LDS Family History Library

Patron's Reference Directory from the 1908 Atlas of Oakland Co. Indexed

Cemetery & Death Records of Avon Twp., Oakland County

Cemetery & Death Records of West Bloomfield Twp., Oakland County

Death Records, Waterford Twp., Oakland County

# DAWSON MEMORIAL ACTIVITY ...

**SALE AT WEBSTER SCHOOL  
MARCH 29-31, 1989**

**SET-UP WISNER HOUSE  
APRIL 7, 1989**

*(Continued from page 1)*

From 1843 until his death in 1898, he was active in many areas of business that had a significant impact on the growth of Pontiac. First a merchant, then building the mills at the Dawson Mill Pond site, he also owned several farms. With banking interests he served as Vice-President, President and Cashier of the First National Bank of Pontiac for over 20 years. He was the Hon. Mayor of Pontiac 1880-1881. He had turned over the operation of the mills to his sons: George, Richard and Charles.

Following sale of the mills in 1894, Charles Jr., Betty's father, devoted many years to the Electric Interurban Lines, an industry just developing and he played an active part in building interurban lines in this part of the state.

Betty and Basil Brown were members of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society as are many other Dawson family descendants. Her mother, Louisa, was a dues paying member at the time of her death in 1964 at over 100 years of age. The Society was very important to this family.

As a friend, from a pioneer family interested in Pontiac history, the writer was called to Betty Brown's home at 48 Mary Day in January of 1987. Betty wanted to discuss plans for a Dawson memorial within the city and she felt the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society should be entrusted to assist her. Betty was very aware of the space limitations at our

headquarters and the beauty of the Wisner House as it had been restored and furnished, and our continued dedication to retain Oakland County artifacts and historical documents.

Betty was aware too, of the value of our Research Library and its limited facilities in the former Wisner kitchen area. As we continued our discussion about the Society's long-range plans to resolve this problem, the project caught her attention as a way she could honor her Dawson family as well as provide funding to the Society to help with their future plans for a new library.

Mary Elizabeth Dawson Brown honored her commitment to this endeavor by her Last Will and Testament bequest of "her home at 48 Mary Day Avenue, Pontiac and all its contents to the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society with the provision that the Society preserve and display such objects of personalty including antiques in a room or space dedicated to the Dawson family." Subsequent to the Board of Directors accepting this bequest on November 16, 1988, following her death October 19, 1988, it was determined that a temporary Dawson Memorial Conference Room would be established in the Wisner House until such time as library plans could be completed to include a permanent Dawson Memorial Conference Room in a new facility.

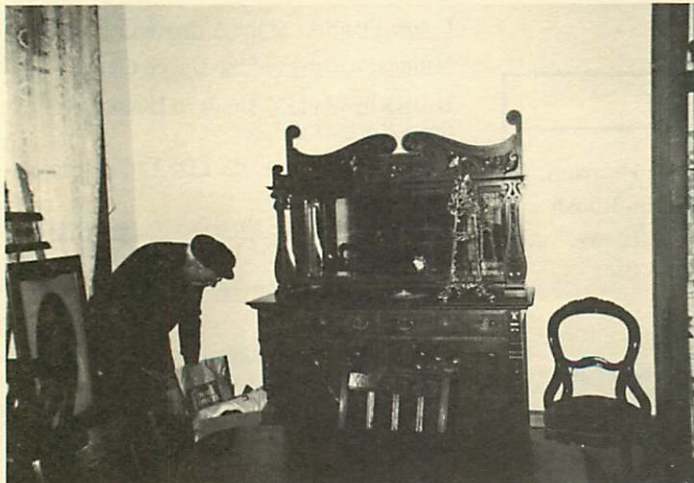
Many Society members have volunteered a great deal of time to the memorial plans. We are deeply indebted to Mary Elizabeth Dawson Brown for her generous bequest to our Society.



*Volunteers Ross Callaway and Rex Lamoreaux at racks and racks of clothing ...*



*Boxes and Boxes of Shoes 6-1/2 B's!*



*Rex Lamoreaux as furniture arrives for Memorial Conference Room ...*



*More Dawson-Brown antiques for Conference Room!*