



VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS

This year Sunday, December 9th is the date. 1-4 p.m. is the time – for old songs, old friends, an old, old story, and Christmas at Wisner House. Feel a part of Christmases past and enjoy the warm and nostalgic feelings of this holiday. The Carl Sandberg School of Waterford will decorate the Schoolhouse at Pine Grove on December 5th.

The inserted invitation has further details. Join with your friends and do make Victorian Christmas at Pine Grove a part of your celebration.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

PROFILE: CLARKE KIMBALL

BIRTHPLACE: Detroit, 1907

PRESENT HOME: Pontiac

FAMILY: Wife Marion, three sons, one daughter living in California, Chicago, Texas and New Jersey

CAREER: Manager of Good Housekeeping Shop on West Huron Street, Pontiac, now retired

MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES:

Waking up every morning

EMBARRASSING MOMENT: Don't remember

FAVORITE BOOK: Lincoln by Gore Vidal

HOBBY: Gardening at the Wisner House

FAVORITE TV PROGRAM: 60 Minutes

MOST SATISFYING ASPECT OF OCPHS: Beauty of the flowering garden and how others enjoy it. Seven years ago he and his wife attended their first Pine Grove Ice Cream Social. He observed the weed covered gardens, mentioned this to Gretchen Adler. Result was, immediate placement as "head weeder" of gardens.

HISTORICAL INTERESTS: Displays of historical artifacts such as in the Pine Grove Farm Museum. Likes to visit various historical grounds, and will go out of his way during travels to see them. He uses many ideas from this for Pine Grove grounds – his message to others, "Bring a shovel and join the group."

BEFORE THE DAY OF GENERAL MOTORS

by *Connie Scafe*

Gathering oral history is one of the on-going programs at Wisner House. These reminiscences give a picture of Oakland County as it was. And in 1900, it was a changing picture. There were still buggy factories in town, but there were many who knew the auto was not just a rich man's toy.

Max Miller, a long time resident, was interviewed in 1977. A youthful eighty-one, he gave a vivid account of those days of change when the tempo of the times began to speed up. This is a small portion of his interview.

Near the turn of the century, the Pontiac Buggy and the L.L. Dunlap Buggy companies were turning out phaetons and speedy little two seaters. Howland Manufacturing was making horse driven bobsleds and there were steam plants in Pontiac for bending and shaping the wood for these vehicles. Many of these small companies were to make the transition to building auto parts.

In 1900, John Miller, Max's father, lived in Milford. A manager for the Mariah

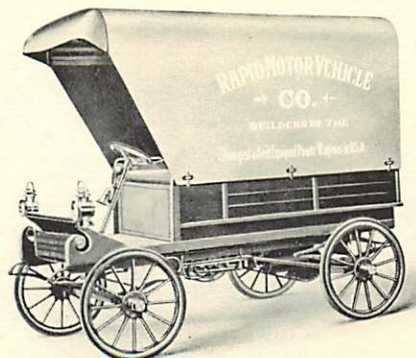


"The Welch Car" beautiful, well built

Moore farm, he was also a talented blacksmith. It was the smithing knowledge that led to a job with the Wells Corporation. They made cultivators, which like all farm equipment, used man and horse power. When Bert Wells moved his company to Pontiac, the Miller's went along Central and Baldwin schools gave Max a solid eighth grade education. But he did not go on to high school. At the age of fourteen, he attended Pontiac Business College.

The college at that time was above the Howland Theatre on West Pike Street. Here

(Continued on page 2)



"The Rapid Truck" considered one of the best of its time



"The Carter Car" pride of its manufacturers

(Continued from page 1)

he took a business course and penmanship – lots of penmanship. In those computerless days, accounting and bookkeeping relied on good handwriting.

In March of 1911, Max took his first job. It was at the Rapid Motor Vehicle Company. Owned by Max Grabowski, the plant had moved from Detroit in 1905. It was located just off Saginaw, on a street that bore the same name as the company.

This was a large, bustling concern. The buildings, yards and storage barns ran back to Franklin Road. They built only trucks and while there was no assembly line as it is known today, there was a power plant that served up the energy to run the machines. There was also a central tool crib, and Max's job was to get the tools to the men as they were needed.

Meanwhile, John Miller's working career had undergone some changes. Ephraim Howland, whose foundry and machine shop were on West Pike near his home, bought out Bert Wells. John stayed on but about the time his son went to Rapid Motor, he began working at Pontiac Buggy. These were the times when the drayage business was shared by autos that sometimes broke down and vehicles drawn by horses that often ran away. It was debated which method of transportation would survive.

One year later, Max was working at the Flanders Motors, located at Saginaw and South Blvd. They made electric cars, Max delivered mail, dashing from the office to the heat treat plant to the foundry.

Big changes came next. Companies were merged to form what became General Motors. Max still delivered mail and messages but between companies. These were Oakland Motor on Oakland Avenue near Howard and Clark streets, Flanders Company, Welch Motor Car, conveniently opposite Flanders, and Carter Car, located off Saginaw on Franklin Road near the railroad. However, Max's employers didn't expect him to walk. For this job, he was given a bicycle.

For a short while after the merger, these companies did continue to make their own cars. This may have been to complete jobs already begun but eventually they came under one umbrella.

Max Miller served in WWI repairing planes. During WWII, he worked for civil service for the signal corps. He remembers when Pontiac was a Saturday town, when people flocked to town to shop, to crowd the theatres for the vaudeville shows or to attend the musicals at the Opera House. And he saw all the early changes in the automotive business when young men turned their backs on farm life for the wages in the factories – and they never went back.

Thanks to Harriet Robinson for transcription of the Oral History tape and to Lillian Paull, who searched out the pictures from our Research Library files.



"1913 Oakland" the pride of William Noble, father of former Pontiac resident Harry Noble.

THE DAWSON'S CAME TO CALL

As promised at the time of the memorial for Mary Elizabeth Dawson Brown, John and Pat Dawson of Boulder City, Nevada promised to come and see the Dawson Memorial Room. They arrived July 23rd with video in hand and really enjoyed a tour of all the buildings on their first visit. They were very happy to see the Dawson items being kept and enjoyed luncheon at Pike Street Inn with Marion Roush. They hope to come back again once our Library is in place.



Pat and John Dawson, Betty Brown's nephew from Boulder City, Nevada.

Special

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING HOURS AT OUR POTPOURRI SHOPPE

The Crafters Group at Pine Grove have been busily and productively engaged in fashioning for all who are interested, a variety of "original" handmade items for your pleasure; candy (edible) wreaths, handmade country necklaces, stuffed dolls, and animals, handknit baby sweaters in aqua, yellow, pink and white; Christmas magnates, Christmas stockings, old world driftwood art, Santa Clauses that are both old-world and new-world in design, and Victorian ornaments with faces.

These are but a few of the items that are available, and the prices are, well you might say "priceless"! Come and visit the Shoppe which is in Pine Grove's Carriage House Monday-Friday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and tell them that we, "The Gazette" sent you. Crafters are there every Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., and they would like you to visit them.

– Pauline Harrison

Guides Dressing Room – "Light & Bright"

Our society's Tour-Guide Ladies are now enjoying a beautiful decor which has been provided through the dedicated labors of OCPHS members, Elliott Plante and his wife Jan. The walls are "adorned" by a delicate floral wallpaper on a neutral ground with painted woodwork to match. White sheer curtains on the windows add to the soft glow of the room, and the clearing away of "superfluous articles" has been removed to add length and breadth to this well-used dressing room.

Our hearty thanks to Elliott and Jan for this accomplishment! We hope this improvement may serve to inspire more ladies to take part in our busy Tour-Guide program. Please call the Wisner House if you would like to join this group. Phone: 338-6732.

– Pauline Harrison

In Memoriam

Mrs. Dora Bruestle
Mr. Maxwell H. Doerr
Mrs. Virginia Ward Golding
Mrs. Helen Pickering

Membership

Welcome to our new members. Also appreciate the new Business membership and the up-date to Life Membership in support of our Endowment Fund.

Ms. Mary Zandra Baker	Up-Grade - Life:
Ms. Nola M. Debrabant	Ms. Margaret Vaverek
Mrs. Edward Gruber	Mrs. Alvin DeLisle
Mr. William Heaton	JR. MEMBER
Ms. Audrey L. Hunt	Mr. Paul Greer
Ms. Patricia A. Jackson	BUSINESS
Ms. Mary K. Johnson	Huttenlocher, Kerns Norvel
Mr. Al Olsen	Inc./James Huttenlocher
Mrs. Harold Powell	
Mr. Glenn Ruggles	
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry H. Steward	
Mr. E. R. Upcott	

ICE CREAM SOCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

One would never guess from the good pictures Harry Harrison took on August 7th, that the rain came down in torrents. The Franklin Village Band had to close up shop as their music, done in ink, was getting wet and blurring, however, we did enjoy their music for a time at the beginning of the afternoon. The magician held court in the Schoolhouse to the delight of many children. The house and grounds had been well groomed for everyone to enjoy and the cake and ice cream, as usual, was delicious and plentiful.

Although we know the rain kept some away, the crowd continued to arrive as it stopped and, really, our Ice Cream Social this year was as successful as ever. Thank you to all the volunteers that contributed their time and talents for this event.



Elsie Patterson and Rex Lamoreaux sell tickets



Franklin Village Band



Potpourri Shop with Connie Owens and Margaret Greet



Edna Burke and Thelma Wright at White Elephant Sale



Don Daggy, Joe Carollo, Dr. Barry Briedenbaugh and Sharon Naftaly doing a brisk business in hot dogs



Ice Cream Booth



Cake of your choice

ACCESSIONS

Thank you to the following persons for their additions to our collection of Oakland County artifacts.

Beverly Moss - Miscellaneous handmade, embroidered linen items including scarfs and doilies

Marion Roush - Men and ladies hats circa 1920 - wood hat stretchers and feather trims

Margaret Gregory - Opera glasses, fitted suitcase, linens, leather gloves and stretcher, and miscellaneous laces.

WISNER LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS

American Indian Axes & Related stone Artifacts by Lar Hothem

When Detroit Was Young - Clarence Monroe Burton

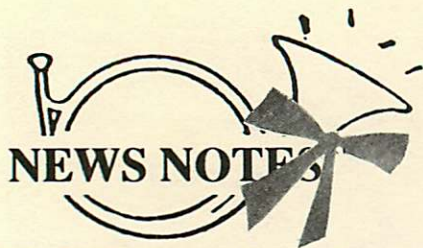
Historical & Genealogical Record of Michigan 1976-1988 - Daughters of the American Revolution

Farmington & Farmington Hills Cemeteries

Birmingham and West Bloomfield Cemeteries

The Civil War and After the Civil War - by John S. Blay

We wish to thank the following persons for additions to our library: Mrs. Charles Hamilton, Mrs. David Rosenberger, Mrs. Sam Harrison, Mrs. Virginia Clohset.



DICK JONES LEAVES WISNER

After several years of dedicated service to the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society, Dick has returned to his law practice. He recently underwent eye surgery, but is on the mend. We wish him well as he continues his career and thank him for his many efforts in our behalf.

Candidates for the office Dick held are now being considered by the Executive Board. We are looking for a person who works well with the volunteers as well as promotes our many projects.

THANK YOU to the Forestry Department, City of Pontiac, for removal of two large trees in the grove which were needing attention.

WELCOME to our newest GM Job Bank employee: Gregory Gilbert. Jim Rudd, director, had been most helpful this year in providing wonderful workers to assist us in our clerical, housekeeping and maintenance work.

ZIP CODE - DO WE HAVE YOUR CORRECT ZIP CODE NUMBER? We have spent a great deal of time trying to redo our Avery labels and our membership list for mailings. This puzzle is not easy to solve and we need your help. If we still do not have your correct zip code, please call the office. The Post Office agreed to forward for a year, but we are not sure this is happening.

MEMORIAL FUNDS - We appreciate the recent donation to the Memorial Fund by Mrs. Kenneth Stecker in memory of Floyd H. Roush. Also, we thank the Pontiac Branch, Women's National Farm and Garden Association for the funding of a tree to be selected and planted at Pine Grove in memory of Virginia Ward Golding.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED - Faye Donelson has been collecting and adding Death Notices to our Obituary File for a number of years. She needs a few hours a week assistance in others collecting these notices from Oakland County and Wayne County newspapers - the later pertaining to Oakland County residents. Please contact Faye if you can help and she will outline what is to be done (phone 673-7128).

AUTHORS and INFORMANTS SOUGHT to help make the *Gazette* a more interesting publication for our Society. If you have an idea for a feature, let our Editor, Pauline Harrison know about it - she can follow the details. Short articles, poems, news items of your area are always most welcome. We want to cover the Oakland County history as it is happening.

New LOOK IN THE FARM MUSEUM Jack Moore and Robert Norberg have completed a seeds and grain display in the Farm Museum.

Also, new lights and display area have been added by Bob Reynnells and Sid Olson. They report their slide presentation is now complete for the Farm Museum Program. This has become a very popular presentation upon request by various groups. Contact Wisner office if you would like to schedule this for your group.



Don Daggy, Clarke Kimball and Jack Moore can be found at Wisner House most every day of the week as they continue to maintain our buildings and grounds.

Waterford Kettering National Honor Society members provided a community service to our Society, Sunday, November 4 as they came to rake and bag leaves at Pine Grove. Cider and doughnuts were served by our Board Members. Last year they raked and bagged 270 BAGS!!! We thank these students for their participation in this project - it is a great help to us.

HOLIDAY CALENDAR

November 22	Thanksgiving Day
December 5	Hanging of the Greens
December 9	Victorian Christmas at Pine Grove
December 10-15	Special tours available
December 17	Dehanging of Greens
January 16	Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society Annual Meeting and election of new Board Members



George Ruge, our very helpful OLSHA employee.

OFFICERS - 1990

President	Marion H. Roush
First Vice President	Clarke Kimball
Second Vice President	Rosamond Haerberle
Secretary	Miriam Foxman
Treasurer	Kathryn Daggy

Editorial Staff

Ross Callaway, Pauline Harrison, Marion Roush, Connie Scafe

Photography: Harry Harrison