



## "Proper" Mourning Dress Of the Victorian Lady

From way back in time women have had a thing about appropriate dress at the appropriate time. The polite Victorian lady mourner was expected to follow a rigorous system of rules governing proper mourning dress and etiquette. To be "in mourning" was a matter not simply of inner feeling but of outward conduct as well. The mourner was to dress from head to foot in black. Women in "full" or "deep" mourning usually wore dresses of black bombazine, a silk and wool mixture with sooty, lusterless look. Collars, sleeves, cuffs, and bonnets were all made of black crepe - a silk treated to assume a dull matte surface - and mourning bonnets were covered with a plain, thick, black crepe veil. Here at the Wisner House we have some good examples in our Society's vintage clothing collection which includes the dresses, bonnets and mourning jewelry from the Wisner family.

Mourning gloves were of plain black cotton or chammy leather along with handkerchiefs of sheer cambric with black borders that grew narrower throughout the mourning period. The woman mourner could wear jet jewelry with a gold setting. Popular was an oval broach containing a lock of hair from the deceased.

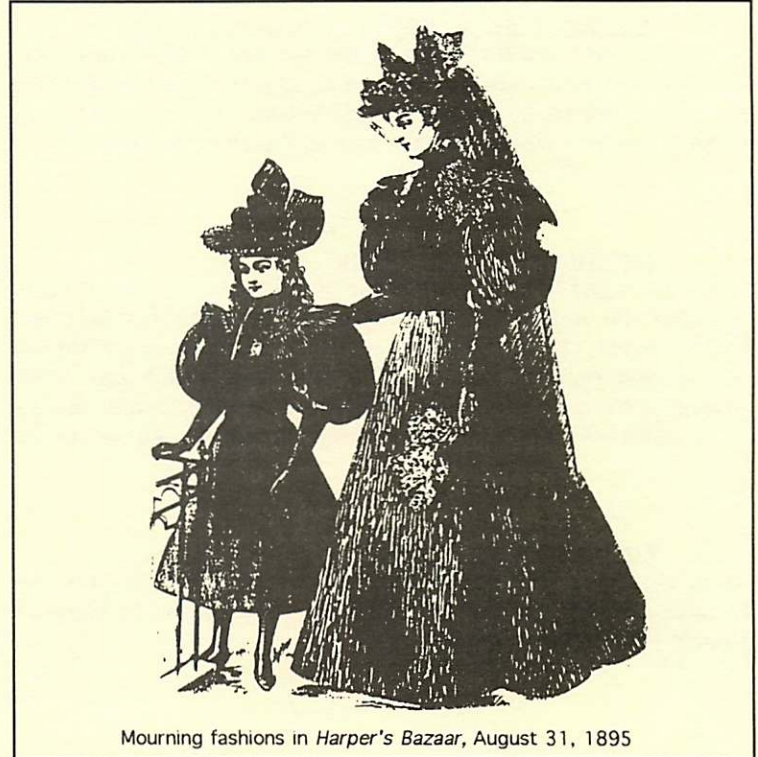
American Victorian culture was deeply sentimental and it placed great value on the cultivation and expression of feelings. This belief in polite mourning raised a serious problem of over-ambitious men and women affecting grief they did not feel so as to become more socially "significant". This was brought out in a scene in "Gone With The Wind" when Scarlett O'Hara, dressed in deep mourning for her first and unloved husband. She stood in a booth at a Confederate fund-raiser, watching the brilliantly dressed dancers whirl, tapping her toes in time to the music, while dressed in "correct" mourning attire. She then accepted Rhett Butler's invitation to dance to the shock and dismay of proper Southerners around her. This well depicted the problem of hypocrisy in Victorian mourning.

In 1825, the Reverend Orville Dewey stated it simply: "The truth is, these trappings of grief seem to me indifferent and childish where there is real grief; and where there is not, they are mockery."

While the ability to mourn is deemed a necessary step in the adapting-to-losses process, we have come a long way from the "Victorian fascination with bereavement.

- Pauline Harrison Clothing Chairperson

(This article is based on information by author Karen Holttunen Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.)



Mourning fashions in *Harper's Bazaar*, August 31, 1895

--Quoteable--

"Climb up the hill at sunrise. Everybody needs perspective once in a while, and you'll find it there."

-Robb Sagendorph from *The Education of a Yankee*.  
Harper & Row.

### Memorial

Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society Board member, Anna Baker Lane, died December 16, 1993. Mrs. Baker graduated from Pontiac High School and received an Associate Degree in Library Science from OCC.

She was always active in community affairs and offered much to our Society. She leaves a daughter, Karen Anne Wilson and grandson, David L. Wilson.

# HIGHLIGHTS



## From 1993 Roundup of Reports & Activities

### Master Plan & Policy, Gretchen Adler

-- Codification and updating of the Manual were completed. The Manual will include By-Laws, Master Plan, Fiduciary Responsibility of Board Members, listing of current Society committees and will be supplied to all Board members.

### Treasurer, Kitty Daggu

-- We managed to keep within our Annual Budget, but utilities ran over the budget by \$850 and office maintenance by \$950. The old Xerox machine was a constant expense so we finally succumbed to the leasing of a new one which has been affording us more effective, expansive service. Many thanks to our members who gave to our new "Annual Giving" program.

### Finance, Jack Moore

-- It was recommended that a close relationship by the Finance Committee and Treasurer be maintained to support shared financial accountability.

### Property Records & Locations

-- One of the five goals for 1994 is to, "continue to take stock of geographical items placement/storage, room by room and shelf by shelf; and to document the same into special loose leaf binder in Society office which also contains all floor plans of Pine Grove buildings. This project is intended to provide a method of keeping track of what we have, and where they may be found for the convenience of active Society members who may seek relevant information, and also for insurance purposes."

### Wisner Library, Lillian Paul

-- Library additions: 27 books, 35 pamphlets, Pontiac and Detroit vintage newspapers. Six scrapbooks were revised and indexed. Researchers numbered 151.

### Accessions, Gil Haven & Rex Lamoreau

-- There were 42 donors who gave one or multiple offerings. Among these were: 220 prehistoric stone items from the Adams farm, framed Olivet College photo of 1923 class, glass negatives, early hand tools, coins, silver, and spoons. Because of storage limitations, some offerings had to be turned down.

### Potpourri Gift Shoppe, Margaret Greer

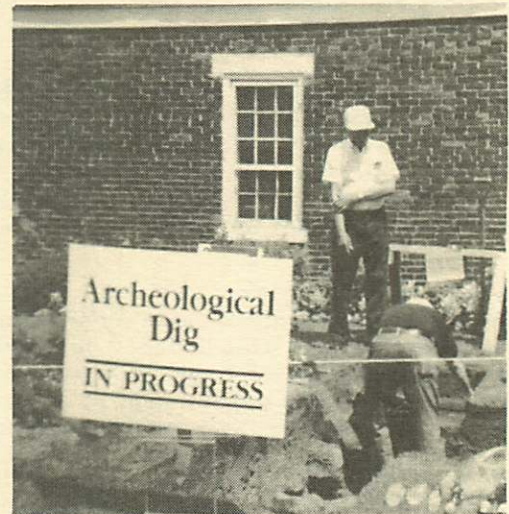
-- Total sales for the year 1993, \$1,260.44

### Manuscripts, Virginia Clohset

-- The past year has been spent surveying unpublished holdings of the Society. Discrepancies have been noted. The Pioneer Society of Oakland County's Register was filmed by Oakland Microfilm Corporation of Royal Oak.

### Vintage Clothing, Pauline Harrison

-- Work has begun on surveying total collection to evaluate for possible deaccessioning related to clothing condition and/or multi-duplications so as to facilitate better storage space and pursue quality of historical collections.



Archeological activity, Summer, 1993

### Operations Manager, Charlie Martinez

-- With the elimination of the GM Jobs Bank program which afforded us help in the areas of grounds, maintenance, house cleaning, clerical, and tour guides, the slack fell mostly on the shoulders of our volunteer members. Society members, Judy Hudalla and Linda Morgan have been able to assist in times of office emergencies.

Seventeen news releases issued by this office resulted in 548 column inches of newspaper space. Deeply appreciated was the special help from members Ross and Mary Lou Calaway who write the column "Senior Voices" for THE OAKLAND PRESS. Wisner grounds archeological projects were also completed.

**Victorian Christmas Open House, Ruth Priestley**

-- New things were tried this year. Ruth suggests further that we might consider two weekends for the next holiday period, using the intervening week for scheduled tours. It would be a way of better utilizing the intense efforts which go into holiday preparation.



**Crafts, Lavon DeLisle**

-- A record income of \$1,000+ reported.

**Education, Irma McMillen**

-- Students and teachers touring Pine Grove actively participated in writing essays on the topic "My Day at Pine Grove" which are kept on display at the Schoolhouse.

**Exhibits, Priscilla Gayton**

-- The former Gift Shoppe in the house has been made into a display area and houses military uniforms and artifacts. It has proved an area of great interest. Future display suggestions for this area are most welcome. Plans are being made for re-arrangements in the summer kitchen.

**New Library, Gretchen Adler**

-- The Dawson Memorial Fund which was to be the seed money for a new office/library facility is still in place and in spite of low interest rates, has increased considerably.

**History Lady, Miriam Foxman**

-- This outreach program serviced five different schools, with a total of 419 students, teachers and other adults.

**Schoolhouse, Muriel Crossman**--

The Schoolhouse exceeded attendance of previous year. Visits of 1289 students, 66 chaperons plus several community groups. The Schoolhouse is ready for groups, both students and adults to enjoy the past.

**Publicity & Publishing, Pauline Harrison**

-- Three Gazettes were published for the membership at large, along with several flyers and invitations. Publicity was handled by Charlie Martinez with added impact from Ross Calaway and Ruth Priestly. Publishing costs have been reduced in half by change of printing company. Important too, was the use of the new Xerox equipment.

**Membership, Rosamond Haerberle/Yvonne DeLisle**

-- The year 1993 saw 60 new members and a total income of \$4,000+.

**Maintenance and Grounds, Don Daquy**

-- As always, it has been a busy year for our "Honey-Doers"!

**The Society's Lecture Series Attracted A Record Attendance**



Guide, Ruth Wall, (1) and past president, Rosamond Haerberle attending Lecture #1 in Carriage House at Pine Grove.



At Lecture #1, "Car Coming!", Speaker/Author, John Conde (1) and Board member, Rex Lamoreaux.

# ROCHESTER COMMUNITY HOUSE

Facts about the scene of our forthcoming Annual Spring Dinner on May 8th...

## HOW IT CAME TO BE

The issue of a community house was raised in 1967 when a high school student wrote to a local newspaper and complained there was nothing for teenagers to do in town. As a result the Rochester Junior Women's Club organized two drop-in centers for teenagers, but were not successful. They decided a center to serve the whole community was needed. Several service agencies and the City of Rochester became involved and the result eight years later was to become the ROCHESTER COMMUNITY HOUSE.

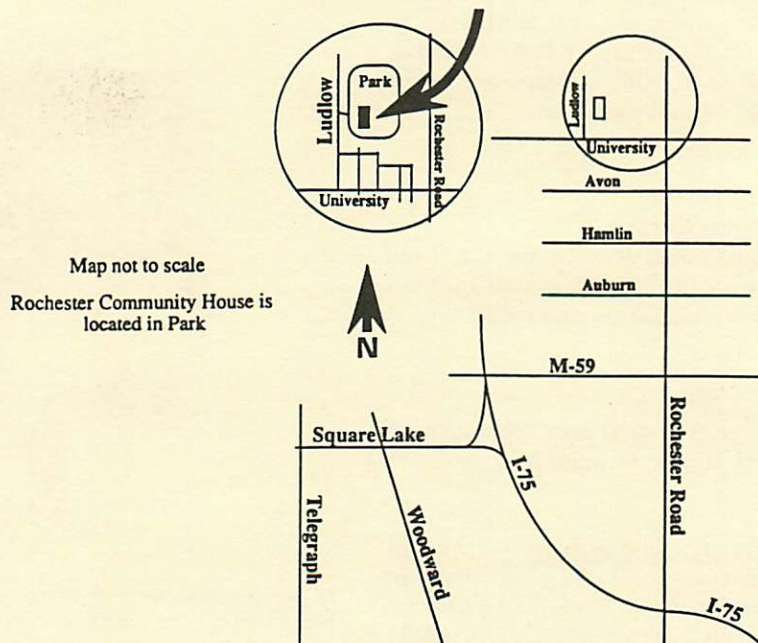
This center is a blend of the old with the new, composed partly of the Avon Pavilion, a log cabin structure dating back to the Great Depression years and the modern addition completed in 1975. The Avon Pavilion was converted into a center with offices, a crafts area, meeting rooms and a kitchen.

A Board of Directors from Oakland Township and the cities of Rochester and Rochester Hills serves the Rochester Community House, and it receives revenues from donations, classes, and rentals.

The three main rooms inside the 6,100 square-foot structure are available for weddings, birthdays, anniversaries and other parties for as many as 200 people. Inquiries are handled by a full-time staff and may be reached at (810) 651-0622. All of this is situated in "beautiful downtown Rochester" in the lush natural setting of the Rochester Municipal Park, complete with streams, ducks, and greenery.

*(Based on an article from, ROCHESTER TODAY, 1990)*

## AND HOW TO GET THERE...



THE OAKLAND COUNTY PIONEER & HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
 PRESENTS . . . "SPRING - DINNER - DAY"

In The Park

Sunday, May 8, 1994 1:30 to 4:00 pm

In the lovely olde-world park  
 at the middle of downtown Rochester  
 in The Rochester Community House.



. . . Enjoy visions and sounds of, ". . . While strolling thru the park one day, in the merry merry month of May . . ." reminding us of the time when small towns maintained parks in the town's center where the town folks, wearing their Sunday best, strolled around; some on bicycles, others with babes in strollers, many with their four-legged pets.

*May 8th happens to be Mothers' Day, so some of you could consider it a way to celebrate with those close to you and avoid the crowded restaurants. We all deserve this beautiful Spring setting after the long hard winter we have just endured.*

*Enjoy an olde fashioned Pot-Luck Dinner with an appetizing entrè of Honey Baked Ham along with the variety of "Pot-Lucks".*

- PROGRAM -

WHAT STYLE IS IT?  
 "HISTORIC HOUSE STYLES IN PONTIAC"

Narrated by "Home Preservationists"  
 Ron Gay and  
 Louis DiForte

Please cut out and mail attached reservation coupon (before May 3rd.)  
 to OCPHS, 405 Oakland Ave. Pontiac, MI 48342 (810) 338-6732

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADULTS: \$10.00 No. of Reservations  Or \$50.00 FOR TABLE OF EIGHT   
 SIXTEEN YRS. & UNDER: \$5.00 No. of Reservations

For those who would like to favor us  
 with their favorite dish: WILL DONATE -

To those of you who are bringing dishes  
 for the Potluck, we would be most appreci-  
 ative if you could arrive a bit early,  
 say One O'clockish.

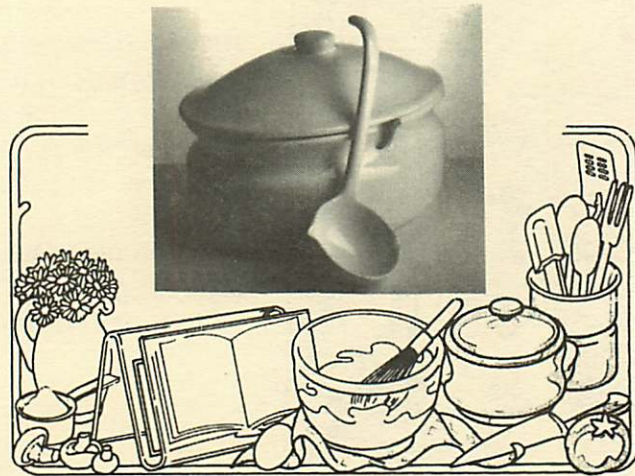
Thank you!

Salad, Type \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dessert, Type \_\_\_\_\_  
 Casserole, Type \_\_\_\_\_



All proceeds go to our Society to help with  
 Operational Funding.

COME SHARE THE



POTLUCK!

## MANY THANKS TO OUR DONORS

In December of 1993 an "Annual Giving Program" was initiated asking that each year, in addition to the usual dues, you consider making a contribution to the Society's General Operating fund.

We are both pleased and grateful to report our donors as follows:

Adams, Betty  
Adams, Elizabeth S.  
Adler, Gretchen  
Annett, Bruce

Balmer, Richard  
Benter, Bruce  
Berry, Andrew H., D.O.  
Breitdenbraugh, Barry E.  
Brownlee, Floydene

Callaway, Ross R.  
Carhart, Esther  
Carman, Kenneth S.  
Cheal, Gladys R.  
Clohset, Virginia  
Coulter, Ralph G.  
Crawford, Mable J.

Daggy, Don & Kity  
Dalrymple, Florence  
Donelson, Faye M.  
Doyon, Reginald  
Duffield, Guy  
Duncan, Dorthy M.

Eddy, Dorothy C.  
Ekelund, Katherine E.  
Ellsworth, Tamara  
Emmert, Betty Jane  
Ewalt, Cornelia K.

Fishwild, Graham A.  
Forget, Joan  
Fox, Jean  
Foxman, Miriam

Gregory, Mararet  
Griffin, Doris M.  
Grogan, Richard F.  
Gustafson, Alice

Haerberle, Rosamond P.  
Hall, Barbara Jean  
Hardy, Vivian G.  
Harrison, Pauline  
Haven, Gilbert G.  
Hazen, Jane E.  
Heathman, Jennie  
Hempton, Doyle O.  
Hoard, Edna Q.  
Hudalla, Judith

Irwin, Ann  
Johns, Edith  
Johnson, Florence  
Kasari, Karen  
Lamoreaux, Rex  
Maybee, Charlotte

McCurry, Eleanore  
McMeans, Gladys  
McMillan, Irma  
Moore, Jeanette E.  
Murphy, Daniel T.

Nissley, Lynne J.  
O'Dell, Iva  
Omelianoff, George

Paschke, Myrtle  
Paull, Lillian  
Plympton, Thelma L.  
Poole, Frederick  
Powell, Robert B.

Renfrew, James  
Reynnells, Robert V.  
Rockwell, Frances W.  
Roush, Edna  
Roush, Marion H.

Scafe, Gale  
Scafe, Joyce  
Sibley, Forbes S.  
Spehar, Theodore  
Stark, Isabel M. & Donald  
Steeber, Charles  
Steward, Margaret H.

Tedder, Dora M.  
Telisky, Dolores J.  
Tiffen, Edna M.  
Todd, Norman W.  
Tuyman, Bette Jane

Voss, Orpha (Merle) R.  
Wall, Ruth  
Ward, Cecelia  
Wideman, Carmen  
Williams, Orpha



### **OTHER VALUABLE DONATIONS**

Nancy Schermerhorn - "Non-designated" donation

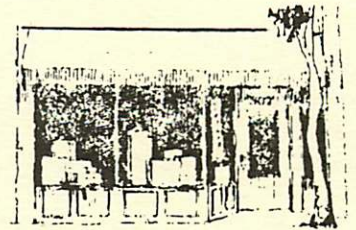
Marion Roush - Moneys towards micro-film reader

Mrs. Clarke Adams - Moneys for microfilm reels

Mary Aris - Hand knit baby seaters for our Gift Shoppe

Judy Hudalla - A book, "Lake Michigan" by Quaipe

Gaylor Forman - Acid-free paper and film to photograph flags



### **NEW FEATURE!**

#### *THE COUNTY STORE*

We are initiating a Classified Ad Column in the GAZETTE. If you have items or services of a historic nature that you wish to advertise please consider the OAKLAND GAZETTE as a marketing tool, with its county-wide 600 circulation

As a special introductory offer, fees will be a low \$1.00 for Society members and \$3.00 for non-members per ad. Ads should be in by March 1st, June 1st, and October 1st for each respective issue.

### **HELP WANTED**

Oakland County Historical Society is seeking a volunteer to assist with general office work. Benefits include: variable hours in beautiful historic setting with an indulgent boss. Call 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Mon, - Fri, at 338-6732.

**PIONEERING MICHIGAN**, a 249 page book about early Michigan settlers (before statehood) by Eric Freedman may be obtained from Huron-Superior-Michigan Press, P.O. BOX 776, E. Lansing, MI 48826, (517) 337-0296. Paper Cover - 18.95

## Profiles...of Our Members

**Profiled Member:** Mildred Carmichael  
**Birthplace:** Ann Arbor, MI  
**Present Home:** 168 Ottawa Drive, Pontiac MI  
**Career:** Retired Social Worker  
**Meaningful Experience:** Helping people through the practice of social work.  
**Favorite Book:** - The Handmaid's Tale  
**Movie:** - Nuts (with Streisand)  
**TV:** - I'll Fly Away, Northern Exposure, L.A. Law  
**Hobby:** Weaving and reading.  
 Feeding the birds and squirrels.  
**Most Satisfying Aspect of OCPHS:**  
 When I took my loom and demonstrated weaving at the Ice Cream Social. like the Ice Cream Socials and the Newsletters.  
**Historical Interests:** Buttons, old clothing, furniture, china and linens  
**Meaningful Philosophy:**  
 I am a humanist, a feminist, and believe in equality for all - to live and let live, and discourage intolerance!



**BOOK REVIEW**  
 (From the Wisner Library)

**Hammering Out the Past: Prehistoric Stone Artifacts Found in Oakland County**

By Charles A. Martinez

(Pontiac, MI: Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society, 1991. 42 pp. Illus. Paper, \$5, plus shipping and handling.)

*Hammering Out the Past* introduces the reader to the prehistoric presence of Native Americans in the region of Oakland County in southeastern Michigan. Through artifacts of these people -- such as projectile points and stone tools -- found in the region, this work tells how archaeologists interpret their place in the archaeological past of Michigan. Order from the publisher, 405 Oakland Avenue, Pontiac, MI 48342

Letter

December, 1993

Dear Pauline & members of Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and all your committee members who worked so hard toward the success of the 2nd Annual Franklin Blvd. Historic Homes Tour. Turn out for the tour was lighter this year as is often the case in a tour of this type, however all our participants enjoyed their visit to Pontiac. The exhibit you set up gave the participants a reminder that it is more than buildings that are history of an area - it is the people who lived there.

Your assistance, as well as the refreshments were also appreciated. Its nice to know that we can offer the tour goers something to munch on and a warm drink, without the worry of problems . Thank you all once again for your help.

Elaine Robinson  
 Historic Districts Liaison  
 Metropolitan Detroit  
 Preservation League

(Others involved Society members were: Bob Reynnells, Jean Milton, Jean Giddings, Annalee Kennedy, and Muriel Crossman.)

## History of Pontiac & Franklin Boulevard

The Franklin Blvd. Historic District is on of three districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was developed in stages as the population of Pontiac moved West, away from the downtown area. Henry Clay Ward, who owned the house at 295 W. Huron, platted the final section of the neighborhood, Franklin Blvd. in 1886. Henry Clay named the newly platted streets after himself, his wife Mary Day, and his eldest son Franklin.

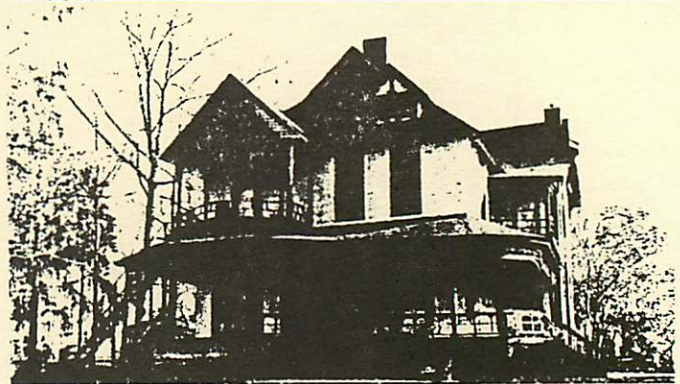
Buildings in the Franklin Blvd. subdivision were required to be used for "...residences only, no saloon, store or other manufactory" and "thousand dollars shall be erected." The neighborhood boasted the residents were among the most influential families of Pontiac which included, lawyers, bankers, doctors, industrialists and newspaper publishers.

The Franklin Blvd. neighborhood was more than an interesting collection of buildings. It was known as the Boulevard of Roses. Henry Clay Ward spent a large sum of money in the beautification of the neighborhood. In 1892, the Detroit publication described the area as, "The Boulevard of Roses is an avenue of which every resident of Pontiac feels a personal pride...Located on the West side of the Clinton River in one of the highest parts of the city, it is 1,500 feet in length, 100 feet wide, and lined on both sides with trees and shrubbery, predominately roses. Gas mains, water and sewer pipes are ready for connection and the street is lit by electricity. Double rows of Maples and Elms line both sides of the Boulevard."

Today Boulevard residents are returning to the area, and once again, to a place in which every Pontiac resident can feel pride.

*This information was taken from an article written as part of the "Second Annual Franklin Blvd. Tour" brochure, dated November 21, 1993 by the METROPOLITAN DETROIT PRESERVATION LEAGUE. Details were researched by their staff member, Elaine Robinson. (See accompanying letter, lower left)*

The Frank G. Jacobs House



99 Franklin Boulevard  
 Queen Anne Style with Eastlake Decorative Elements, 1886

**OFFICERS - 1994**

President.....Gretchen Adler	Secretary.....Miriam Foxman
1st V.P.....Clarke Kimball	Treasurer.....Dan Carmichael
2nd V.P.....Jack Moore	Resident Agent.....Ed Adler

**EDITORIAL STAFF**

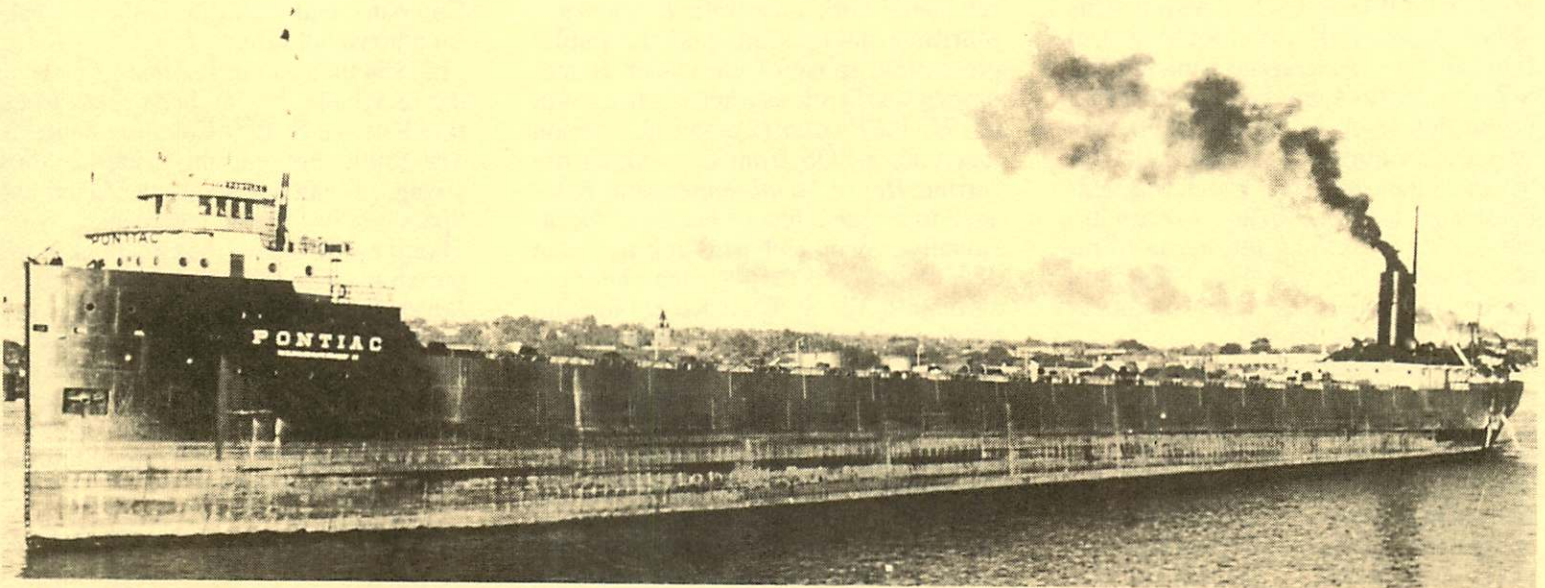
Pauline Harrison, Editor	Ross Callaway, Assoc. Editor
Charles Martinez, Assoc. Editor	



# GREAT SHIPS OF THE GREAT LAKES

## Pontiac's Name Preserved in Great Lakes Shipping, Part 2

By: Charles H. Martinez



Str. *Pontiac* (2), pride of the Cleveland-Cliffs fleet, served under the company flag as a bulk carrier for some 67 years on the Great Lakes.

*Photo courtesy of the Moore Museum, Mooretown, Ontario.*

Like the christening of an infant, the naming of a ship is a formal event; less religious perhaps, but certainly filled with the same great hopes and expectations that warm the hearts of the newborn's parents. So it probably was with the launching of the bulk carrier *Pontiac* (2) for the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company in 1917. She was planned as the worthy successor to *Pontiac* (1) that had been sold the previous year to the Crescent Transportation Company of Cleveland, Ohio, and renamed the *Goudreau*.

Following maritime custom Great Lakes ships are referred to as "she," but usually given male names after historical figures or celebrated industry leaders. Cleveland-Cliffs followed this tradition and christened their vessels with such names as *Joliet* for the French explorer who reconnoitered the upper reaches of the Mississippi River in 1673; *Frontenac*, who in 1672 was appointed governor of all French possessions in North America; *William G. Mather* and *Edward B. Greene* who gave long and distinguished service as presidents of the parent company. The name *Pontiac*, however, was accorded special recognition on two Cleveland-Cliffs vessels that faithfully plied the lakes for a combined total of 95 years. In the annals of Great Lakes shipping few vessels were so honored with the name of a native American Indian chief.

The first *Pontiac* was a Leviathan of its day, steel hulled, 300 feet in length, of 2298 gross tons, and built at a cost of some \$400,000. The company considered her and her sister, the *Frontenac*, profitable carriers whose speed and cargo capacity would help master the volatile lake freight market. This *Pontiac* (1) did for nearly 28 years before as the newly baptized *Goudreau* she came to grief in a howling blizzard off the east shore of Lake Huron in November of 1917.

*Pontiac* (2), manufactured by the Great Lakes Engineering Works of Ecorse, Michigan, was nearly twice the length of her predecessor and had a capacity of 13,000 tons. She was quite fast for a bulk carrier of her day, capable of reaching 16 miles per hour. *Pontiac* (2) regularly made the run across Lake Superior from Duluth to the Soo locks in a little over 27 hours.

Unlike her earlier namesake whose hull was dark red, *Pontiac* (2) had a black hull, part of the company color scheme adopted in 1912. Along her sides in 1950 the name "CLEVELAND CLIFFS" was added. The cabins were painted a dark olive drab with white trim. But the most distinctive touch was the black stack with a big orange-red "C" which readily identified her as a member of the company fleet.

There were only two exceptions to this Cleveland-Cliffs vessel color code. They were the ore carriers *Andaste* and

*Choctaw*, both acquired when Lake Superior Iron Company eliminated its marine division near the turn of the century. The pair suffered from unloading problems that left their black, sloping hulls chipped and stained by iron ore. So, Cleveland-Cliffs sacrificed its rule of appearance in these two cases and painted their hulls a rusty red to disguise the predicament.

It was through flexibility and innovation that Cleveland-Cliffs became a giant in the field of ore extraction and product shipment. The company learned early on the importance of forging a strong link between its mines in the Upper Peninsula and the steel mills at the southern end of the Great Lakes. Five years after its founding as the Cleveland Iron Mining Company, the firm chartered a two masted brig named *Columbia* to carry 120 tons of iron ore through the Soo locks, the first such cargo shipped in this fashion. In 1867 the Cleveland Iron Mining Company bought half-interest in the barque *George Sherman* for \$14,000. This was followed a few years later with the addition of four steamers and four schooners to help transport its growing cargo tonnage. In 1889, a year before its merger with Iron Cliffs to become the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company, the firm took possession of its first steel fabricated vessel, *Pontiac* (1).

During the decade of the 1880s steel had begun to replace iron in ship construc-

tion. In fact, the first steel freighter, *Spo-kane*, had just been constructed in 1886 for use on the lakes. Iron never won wide acceptance here and was particularly disliked by insurance investigators. In their estimation an iron hull was a definite liability after five years' service. They urged the use of a composite construction — iron bottoms clad with wood. But steel, stronger and lighter than iron, soon prevailed. Of course, steel also had its problems. When the 300-foot long steel freighter, *Western Reserve*, sank in Lake Superior due to a cracked hull in 1892, the brittleness of the metal was blamed. As a result, future shipbuilding called for the use of tempered steel which was flexible enough to "work" in heavy seas without cracking. Welding too began to replace rivets on lake vessels in 1938. Both improvements became critical factors as bulk carriers grew larger.

Whether it was devising a new type of ore dock (1859), participating in a ship-board waste water treatment program (1972), or testing a fuel oil made from heavy shale (1975), Cleveland-Cliffs specialized in problem solving. Another such opportunity came in 1950 when the company, in the midst of the Korean War shipbuilding program, found itself frustrated with a proposed delivery date for a new bulk carrier. Since a two-year wait was unacceptable, Cleveland-Cliffs purchased a surplus World War II cargo ship from the U.S. Maritime Commission for modification. Rechristened *Cliffs Victory* in 1951, the vessel presented an odd silhouette with one cargo hold situated aft of its engine room. Nonetheless, as the first World War II maritime conversion she served her owners well. In 1957 the *Cliffs Victory* was lengthened for a second time. At 716 feet she was the longest on the lakes until the ill-fated, 729 foot *Edmund Fitzgerald* was launched the following year.

It was an earlier World War that hastened the completion of *Pontiac* (2). World War I pushed iron ore extraction from Michigan mines to record heights. In 1916, the year she was under construction, shipments from the mines totalled 18,812,000 tons, a figure that would be unequalled for decades. The following year *Pontiac* (2) began service as a member of a distinguished class of Great Lakes bulk carriers dubbed the "standard 600-footers." This length was an approximate dimension; some vessels being slightly longer or shorter. The 600-footer became the workhorse of the industry transporting enormous quantities of iron ore, coal, stone, or grain across the lakes. The last representative of this class was built at the beginning of the Depression. Some served faithfully into the 1980s when they were dwarfed by the 1000-footers which carried up to

60,000 tons of iron ore or 1,700,000 bushels of grain.

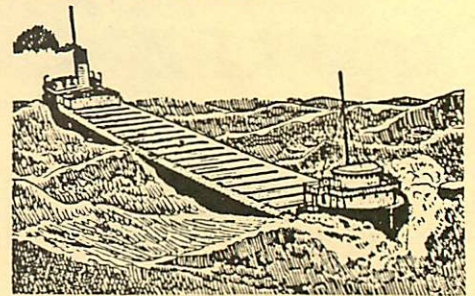
During her lifetime *Pontiac* (2) received much attention. In 1950 Harlan Hatcher, historian and past president of the University of Michigan, devoted the opening chapter of his book, *A Century of Iron and Men*, to the steamer. Ten years later Alida Malkus wrote of *Pontiac* (2) as representing the epitome of carriers in her celebrated work, *Blue Water Boundary*.... Maritime publications and the public press often spoke of the vessel. Sometimes it was heroic as when in a bad storm in 1953 the *Pontiac* (2) came about upon receiving a SOS from the sinking ore carrier, *Henry Steinbrenner*, and managed to rescue a few of her crew. Occasionally it was embarrassing as when downbound and cargo laden she went aground in the St. Clair River blocking the channel in May of 1977. In other situations it was quite dangerous as when *Pontiac* (2) barely escaped an explosion and fire that ravaged the Pillsbury Company flour mill along the Buffalo Ship Canal on Jan. 2, 1972. A year later in the early autumn she paid a surprise visit to Detroit. Dense fog had brought river traffic to a standstill during the morning hours of October 9. When the fog began to lift near noon, Detroiters including this writer, were startled to see *Pontiac* (2) anchored just off the foot of Woodward Avenue.

The collapse of the American steel industry in the 1980s severely impacted ore

carrier business on the lakes. Cleveland-Cliffs, so successful a decade before with 15 ships in service and a rich contract from Republic Steel in hand, saw its maritime empire crumble. With little demand for domestic ore, many fleets were docked and the few ships that sailed faced fierce competition for cargoes. Cleveland-Cliffs lost its major contract with Republic Steel to rival Interlake Steamship Company, and with it went the rationale for a household fleet.

In 1984 the veteran *Pontiac* (2) awaited the inevitable, having been sold to Marine Salvage of Port Colborne, Ontario. The following year she made her final voyage, a long one across the Atlantic to Spain where she was scrapped.

For those who love the Great Lakes and the ships that sail them, the *Willis B. Boyer*, once a fleet mate of *Pontiac* (2), has been faithfully restored as a museum ship after 69 years of service. She is docked on the Maumee River in Toledo and is available for tours from May through September 12 by appointment. Phone 1-419-698-8252.



#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to thank Ms. Laurie Fournie, Curator of Moore Museum in Mooretown, Ontario, for providing a photo of the freighter *Pontiac* (2) to illustrate this article. My appreciation also goes to The Great Lakes Historical Society of Vermilion, Ohio for furnishing key background information on the fate of *Pontiac* (1). The staff of the Dossin Great Lakes Museum on Belle Isle was very helpful in supplying an early photo of the first *Pontiac* and digging into its files for pertinent information on both vessels. To my longtime friend, Mike O'Brien of Ryder Hobbies in Royal Oak, Michigan, many thanks for sharing your knowledge of Great Lakes ships.

#### Select Bibliography — Books

- Barry, James P. *Ships of the Great Lakes, 300 Years of Navigation*. Berkeley, California: Howell-North Books, 1970.
- Bowen, Dana Thomas. *Memories of the Lakes*. Cleveland, Ohio: Freshwater Press, 1946.
- Boyer, Dwight. *Ghost Ships of the Great Lakes*. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1968.
- Dunbar, Willis Frederick. *Michigan Through the Centuries, Vol. I*. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1955.
- Fuller, George N. *Michigan, A Centennial History of the State and Its People, Vol. I*. Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1939.
- Hatcher, Harlan. *A Century of Iron and Men*. Indianapolis - New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1950.
- Havighurst, Walter. *The Long Ships Passing*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc. 1975.
- Hoerr, John P. *And the Wolf Finally Came*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988.
- International Ship Masters' Association, (publisher). *1962 Ship Masters' Association Directory*. 1962.
- Malkus, Alida. *Blue-Water Boundary: Epic Highways of the Great Lakes and the Saint Lawrence*. New York: Hastings House, 1960.
- Manse, Thomas J. and Roger Le Lievre. *Know Your Ships*. Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan: Marine Publishing Co., 1993.
- Parker, Jack D. *Shipwrecks of Lake Huron — The Great Sweetwater Sea... Au Train*, Michigan: Avery Color Studios, 1986.
- Swayze, David D. *Shipwreck! A Comprehensive Directory of Over 3,700 Shipwrecks on the Great Lakes*. Boyne City, Michigan: Harbor House Publishers, Inc., 1992.
- Thompson, Mark L. *Steamboats & Sailors of the Great Lakes*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991.

#### Articles

Also consulted were a number of articles from various journals, magazines, and publications for the years 1950 through 1985. Among these were: *The Detroit Marine Historian*, *Inland Seas*, and *Telescope*. All were available at the Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.