# OAKLAND



# GAZETTE

Governor Moses Wisner Mansion (ca. 1845)

ISSN# 1534-8849

Vol. 34, No. 4

The only publication dedicated to the history and heritage of Oakland County. Published by THE OAKLAND COUNTY PIONEER & HISTORICAL SOCIETY 405 OAKLAND AVENUE, PONTIAC, MICHIGAN 48342

Fall 2001

# From Our Collections: "A Flag With A History"

By Leslie S. Edwards

Tuesday, September 11, 2001 is a day none of us will ever forget, and our country is now in a battle to fight for the same values expressed over 139 years ago. The following is a story of the "Stars and Stripes", our national banner and symbol of American freedom. Much of it is told through the eloquent words that were expressed by writers of the day, and was found in the collections of the OCPHS.

On Thursday September 4, 1862 the citizens of Oakland County gathered in Pontiac to say goodbye to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Michigan Infantry, a regiment of gallant soldiers readying to march off to "do battle for the endangered liberties of our Nation. From early in the morning till the departure of the regiment, which was about four o'clock in the afternoon, Camp Richardson and the streets of the city were thronged with living, moving masses of people, most of them friends and relatives of the noble officers and men of the regiment, who had come to bid adieu to those who were sacrificing the comforts of home for the rigorous duties in camp, and who were about risking their own lives that the Republic might be held intact". Around noon, a picnic was given for the soldiers, followed by a program which included the presentation of two flags to the regiment. The first flag was blue silk and bore the emblem of an eagle with 32 stars representing the number of states in 1862, and the words "22nd Michigan Infantry" upon it. This regimental flag was given to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Michigan by the State of Michigan. The second flag was presented to the regiment by a patriotic group of young Pontiac women.

The "Young Ladies' Soldiers Aid Society" was formed on August 12, 1862, by twenty-two young ladies from Pontiac who met "in the basement of the Pontiac Baptist Church." Julia E. Comstock was elected President, Gertrude L. Hovey

> Vice President, Mollie Gustin Secretary and Louisa Bowman Treasurer. The society had an initiation fee of 25 cents, and held two meetings each week - on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If one of the young

ladies missed a meeting, she was fined 5 cents. The first objective of the society was to purchase a flag for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Michigan Infantry, under the command of Colonel Moses Wisner. Secretary Gustin was asked to compose a letter to F. Buhl & Co. of Detroit to request that a sample flag be sent to assist the Society in determining the style of flag they wished to purchase. A committee of three, Fannie Wisner, Emma Adams and Sarah Thurber. were selected to assist Treasurer Bowman in soliciting subscriptions to raise funds for the purchase of

Continued on page 3



Top row, from left to right: Mollie Bacon, Libbie Hixson, Ella Draper, Fannie Matthews, Fannie Pittman. Middle row, from left to right: Emma Adams, Julia Comstock, Carrie Holley, Sarah Thurber Seated in center: Mary Pittman Emma Howard Collection (Acc#1968.003.0199)

Letter From the

President

The time of the year is soon to be on us when the frost will be on the pumpkin, the leaves will be on the ground, and the snow will fill the skies. Just think, we leave the yard work behind us, and what do we face when we think that the time for a little rest is here, it is time to get out the snow shovel. Well, it's a never ending cycle as we all know. This has been another fine year for your historical society and many things have been completed with a lot of hard work. I would like thank all of the volunteers for their hard work and dedication, the many sacrifices that you made. and the teamwork that was displayed even if we didn't agree on all of the changes that had to be made. We have made so much progress over the last three years it is amazing!

I am looking forward to the Victorian Christmas program this year - our chairperson this year tells me that she has added a new twist to the program. Thank you Ms. Johnson for stepping forward to chair the program. Everyone, please remember to attend the event this year and bring a few of your friends, also encourage them to become a member - this is the thing that strengthens our society.

This is the time to think of elections. Ballots will be mailed out to the membership

Continued on page 2

#### In this Issue

From Our Collections: "A Flag	
With A History" 1	
Letter From the President 1	
Society News and Views	
Feature Article: Officer of	
the Day4	
Internship at the Oakland County	
Pioneer and Historical Society 6	
From our Collections7	
Membership Application7	
Calendar of Events10	

# Society News & Views

Continued from page 1

#### Events

The fall season at Pine Grove is always a busy one. On September 28th, we had our potluck picnic for the membership. It was a chilly day, so instead of being held outdoors, members gathered in the schoolhouse to share good food and stories. President Mike Willis presented certificates to two volunteers who have given outstanding service to the Ruth Wall, former Guide Society. Committee Chairperson, was recognized for her long-standing service as a tour guide and chairperson. The second certificate went to Marguerite Johnson who has done a fantastic job this past year as the House Committee Chairperson.

Plans are underway for the Victorian Christmas Open House, to be held on Saturday, December 8th from 12-4pm. As usual, the house and schoolhouse will be decorated in Victorian style. The McAlpine family has agreed to do their presentation in the Summer Kitchen, and the schoolhouse will once again be decorated by Kathy Gifford's class from Sandburg Elementary in Waterford. A new feature this year in the schoolhouse will be the presence of The Winter Spirit who will be sharing stories of Christmas giving and the history of St. Nicholas. The parlor will be the setting for holiday music - featuring sisters Maxine Carlisle and Christine Bullard on their dulcimers. In addition, this year, a group of students from Lake Orion will



be playing a recital on Angeolina's piano. The library reading room will again be the site of our holiday "tea" with coffee, cider and homemade cookies. By now you will have received a flyer and a sign-up sheet so hopefully, you will be able to help make this a successful fund raiser!

In late November, members will also be receiving election ballots. We have several open positions on the Board of Directors, and of course, it is time to elect Officers for the upcoming year. Ballots and voting procedures will be mailed out to all members in good standing. This means that your membership dues must be paid up-to-date. If you look on the label on this issue of your newsletter, you will see the expiration date of your current membership. Thanks to all of you who responded so quickly to the dues reminders that were sent out in the last newsletter! If you have any questions about your membership, please call the office at 248-338-6732.

Also in the planning stages is the Annual Meeting, to be held on Wednesday, January 16<sup>th</sup> from 1-3pm. This year, the meeting will be held in the Green Room of the Bloomfield Township Public Library. This is a very important meeting - not only will election results be announced, but all members will be asked to vote on amendments to the Society's by-laws. You will be receiving information on the meeting and a copy of the amendments to look over in the near future.

### Hours of Operation

The research library and office hours continue to be Tuesday through Saturday from 9am-4pm. If you call after hours, you may leave a message on the answering machine. Or, you can always send an email to <a href="mailto:ocphs@wwnet.net">ocphs@wwnet.net</a>. The Gift Shoppe is open on Wednesdays from 9am-12pm, and feature some new handmade graft items. This is the time to do some early Christmas shopping!

The Pine Grove Historical Museum will once again be open for walk-in tours! Beginning in March 2002, the Wisner mansion will be open the <u>first Saturday of every month from 10am-1pm</u>. There is no charge for members, but all guests will be asked to pay the tour fee of \$5 for adults and \$3 for children under 12. The Pioneer Museum, located in the Carriage House, is open all hours that the library is

open. The Society does close for the holidays, and all buildings and services will be closed from Saturday, December 15<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday, January 1<sup>st</sup>. We will reopen for business on Wednesday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2002.

#### Maintenance

The Society has undertaken several repairs this summer and fall. handyman, Guy Duffield, has repaired broken light fixtures and electrical outlets, replaced furnace filters, and put the storms on all of the doors and windows in the Mansion and Summer Kitchen. In addition, the Board of Directors approved the purchase of digital thermostats for all of the buildings, which will help maintain constant temperature controls to assist in preservation of our artifacts. money from the Society's Preservation Fund, Guy installed the thermostats. Future plans include the addition of air conditioning to the Wisner mansion for temperature control in the summer months. The three biggest detriments to museum and archival collections are light. heat and humidity. One of the most important steps that a museum can take in preserving its artifacts is to ensure proper temperature and environmental controls.

Continued on page 8

# From the President

Continued

during the month of November for voting and must be returned by December 15th for counting. The election results will be announced at the annual meeting in January. Remember the future and growth of our society depends on how much each individual is willing to give of themselves, and how well we work as a team. Once again, I would like to thank all of you, and the wonderful group of officers that I have worked with this past year, for the success of our society. May God bless all of you and bring happiness and peace during the upcoming holiday seasons.

Malet E. Willis

# From Our Collections

Continued from page 1

the flag. In addition, each week a social was held at one of the member's homes, and a charge of 10 cents for admittance was required, although all soldiers were admitted free. By August 26<sup>th</sup>, the Treasurer reported that from membership, socials and collections, the Society had a balance of \$164.74, more than

enough to purchase the flag.

The flag, "Old Glory", which was made of heavy silk, cost \$125. The stripes were fringed with gold "bullion", stars were in the field, and the words "22<sup>nd</sup> Michigan Infantry" were embroidered in gold silk. The Young Ladies' Soldiers Aid Society invited James S. Dewey, principal of the Pontiac schools, to make the presentation speech. The regiment stood in formation on the field and the young ladies, headed by flag-bearers Julia Comstock and Emma Adams, formed a semicircle at the head of the line. Dewey made a short patriotic speech to Colonel Wisner, closing with

"In the name of these beautiful young ladies, I offer, and ask you to accept and protect this flag; in honor of danger let it be your rallying point, and in conclusion may we not exact one promise from you: That the fold of that beautiful flag shall never, never be polluted by the touch of traitorous hands". In the name of the regiment, Colonel Wisner thanked Dewey and the young ladies, adding, "May we be found worthy to carry it upon the field of battle.' Turning to the regiment and presenting it to color-bearer Morris, he continued: 'Soldiers and Officers of the 22nd Regiment: Look upon that flag! Behold its beautiful stars! Look at the eagle which surmounts it, and swear that that flag of our Union shall never go down in disgrace."

Shortly following the program, and only twenty-three days after the formation of the young ladies' society, the order was given for the regiment to break camp. Amidst "cheers and tears", the 22<sup>nd</sup> Michigan Infantry, with its flags proudly flying, marched out of Camp Richardson, four deep. Arriving at the train depot, the regiment boarded the train and it pulled out of the station at 3:45 p.m., headed for Detroit. Stopping first in Royal Oak, the regiment received another enthusiastic reception, arriving a little past five in Detroit. There, they stood in formation on Brush Street, and "after marching about the streets for some time, returned to the depot" where the citizens of Detroit had kindly prepared refreshments. The regiment then boarded the steamer "Morning Star" which left the dock at 8:30pm bound for Cleveland.

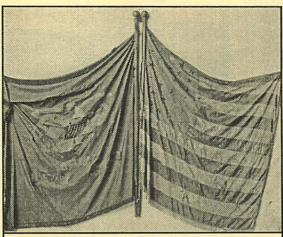
The flag presented that day was with the regiment "in the camp, on the field and in its marches through Kentucky, Tennessee and Georgia, which aggregated 890 miles. It was proudly borne aloft wherever duty called the regiment".6

Unfortunately, at the Battle of Chickamauga, the flag was lost to the Confederate Army. For 32 years, survivors of the 22<sup>nd</sup> continually searched for their "dear old flag".

At the 26<sup>th</sup> regimental reunion held in 1893, a letter was read

At the 26<sup>th</sup> regimental reunion held in 1893, a letter was read from Comrade James Greacen of Company I. In this letter, he stated that "while in Washington in Sept. 1892, he accidentally found the flags of the 22d Mich. Infantry, which were captured by the enemy." The "flags were found in the custody of the War

Department, stored with other flags retaken at Richmond, Va, by the Union forces when that city fell in 1865".8 Immediately, unanimous decision determined that a flag committee be formed to act on behalf of the regiment and try to restore the flags to their rightful owners. Those chosen were Henry S. Dean, Seth C. Randall and L.C. Mead. In August 1894, the 22nd Michigan Infantry held their 27th reunion in Pontiac. A huge crowd of 5,000 had assembled and many speeches and tributes were made to the brave and departed soldiers. The flag committee presented the following



On the left, the Regimental Flag, ont he right "Old Glory" Emma Howard Collection 1968.003.0190.3b)

report:

On September 20, 1863, the regimental colors were carried proudly in battle at Chickamauga, Georgia, where the regiment captured and held the position at the high ground near the Snodgrass House. On this terrible day, the flag was carried first by Color Sergeant Philo B. Durkee of Company A. While bearing the colors aloft, Durkee was "struck in the breast by a grape shot, and fell forward clasping it [the flag] to his heart, placing the seal of his devotion upon its folds". Corporal Richard A. Stansell of Company H picked up the colors and bore them forward, and was also shot down. Corporal Pearl L. Mitchell of Company A picked up the flag "in a very rain of shot which in a few moments carried away his right arm", when Corporal Jonathan A. Vincent of Company C raised the colors

and "waved them defiantly in the face of the enemy". He, too, fell severely wounded. Sergeant Oscar Kendall of Company C then threw away his rifle, took the flags and carried them until the day was done.

"At the disastrous battle of Chickamauga, Sept. 20, 1863, the flags were captured, and 372 members of the regiment were reported captured, killed, wounded and missing, while seven out of nine color guards had been killed or wounded." For more than 30 years, since the day the flags were



Continued on page 5



A dress parade in the "Area" of the Michigan Military Academy campus (circa 1895).

Michigan Military Academy: views of the Academy and its Surroundings, 1904 Rogers & Smith Co., Chicago; (Acc # A-803).

Chosen from a roster of commissioned officers, the Officer of the Day was the eyes and ears of the commandant of cadets. Article XII, Section 18 of the school's regulations book described the position: "The Officer of the Day is the representative of the Commandant, and as such, takes rank above any other Cadet in the corps."

He was to be present at all roll-calls and parades, and was responsible for keeping cadets in an orderly manner while marching to and from classes and mess. At times the commandant would call upon him to do surprise inspections on the cadets' barracks.

His office, appropriately called the Officer of the Day's Building, was located at the center of the "Area." By searching through photo archives, it can be determined that the O.D. building was built sometime around or before 1888. The chosen cadet and his assistant was to remain at, or near, his office—which was just large enough to offer shelter from the elements and provide a small working area inside—at all times, except when absent on official business. It is not known when the building was torn down or removed from the campus, but early

seminary photos show the building still lying in the center of the campus.

Being selected as Officer of the Day, or being promoted in rank, was a privilege. MMA alumni and later Mayor of Detroit, John C. Lodge, describes the experience:

"Being chosen captain of a company was as important to them as being elected Mayor of Detroit. The captain,



The Officer of the Day's Building (ca. 1920) Fifty Years at Orchard Lake: 1909-1959, 1959, Orchard Lake Schools. (Author's Collection)

lieutenants, and sergeants kept the rest of the boys in line. It was considered wonderful to have boys taken out of ranks and made sergeants. Then everyone thought he would be next. It was analogous to being coach on a football team."<sup>2</sup>

Article XII, Section 12 of the regulations book reads: "He shall be vigilant in the discharge of his duty, and shall require the utmost respect to be shown him by all Cadets." Of course there were those individuals that resented taking orders from other cadets.

According to a news report from June of 1885,<sup>3</sup> a shooting incident occurred at the academy, resulting from a small number of cadets who took offense at taking orders from a young cadet named W. B. Vanderlip, Jr. While on duty as Officer of the Day, Vanderlip angered the cadets, and after he completed his "tour of duty," the cadets jumped him. The young man drew his revolver and in the scuffle that ensued, one of the cadets was shot in the shoulder.

In another incident, recorded in a January 30, 1880 letter of reply to a young

cadet named James Turrill Vincent, a friend writes:

"I received a letter from Neva last week and she says that her school is very dull. I hope you will not allow your school to become dull. You certainly



Photo of MMA cadet, James Turrill Vincent, ca. 1879. (Author's Collection)

will not if you make a few more scholars stand on the floor and keep them after school and they have some nice young fellow to throw you out of the window."<sup>4</sup>

Humorous? Perhaps, but probably not for the cadet involved.

- 1 "Regulations for the Government of the Michigan Military Academy," 1898, John Bornman & Son, Detroit (Author's collection). 2 "I Remember Detroit," by John C. Lodge; 1949, Wayne University Press, Detroit (Author's collection).
- 3 "The Michigan Military Academy at Orchard Lake: Eighth Annual Historical Symposium," 1959, Friends of the Seminary, Orchard Lake (Author's collection).
- 4 January 30, 1880 letter from Neva McK. to cadet James Turrill Vincent (Author's collection).

A member of the Greater West Bloomfield

and Oakland County
Pioneer & Historical
Societies, Brian J.
Bohnett is the author
of THEM WAS THE
DAYS! Edgar Rice
Burroughs and the
History of the Michigan
Military Academy.
For more information,
contact the Oakland



County Pioneer and Historical Society.

# From Our Collections

Continued from page 3

captured, they remained lost to the regiment. "From the moment they were discovered in Washington, every effort was made to secure the flags and return them to the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Finally, Senator James McMillan introduced a resolution 'restoring the flags to their rightful custodians'."<sup>13</sup>

On August 30, 1894, the flags were finally returned to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Michigan Infantry. Julia Comstock Howard and Emma Adams Utley were on hand to receive the flag they had so generously bestowed upon the regiment over 30 years before. The flag committee returned the flags with the following words:

"Ladies of Pontiac: After thirtytwo years, we bring back the flag you gave to the 22d Michigan Infantry. It has been guarded and defended with the same spirit of patriotic devotion which prompted you to give it. It is torn by bullets, and bears the seal of courage and fidelity stamped upon its folds in the blood of those who died in its defense. Upon its stripes and stars no taint of dishonor rest. It is the glorified flag of our beloved country, baptized in the blood of its defenders, worthy of the love of the noble women whose prayers followed it into the fierce storm of war through which it passed."14

It is not known at this time what the ladies did with the flag that was returned to them. In November 1927, Julia Comstock Howard, the last surviving member of group of women that was the Young Ladies' Soldiers Aid Society, passed away at the home of her daughter. She had recently received "the unique distinction of being elected "daughter of the regiment" by members of the Twenty-second Michigan Infantry, in recognition of her devotion to the old group of warriors."15 At the time of her death, it was noted that the flag stood in the G.A.R. headquarters in the court house "as a reminder of the old gallant deeds that followed its leadership."16 In September 1928, the Dick Richardson Post 147 of the G.A.R. had been so reduced in numbers that it was unable to carry on. Without making plans for dispersal of the Post's artifacts, by law, all records would revert to the state. Consequently, the Post drew up a document to convey all moneys, guns, books, flags and other articles of property (which were then located in the basement of the court house in Pontiac) to the Womans Relief Corps No. 102. The stipulation was that the Corps would then "keep up the organization of the said Dick Richardson Post No. 147". 17

Several questions remain unanswered about "Old Glory". Was it a part of the collection that was turned over the W.R.C. in 1928? If so, what happened to it after that? The W.R.C. was located in the Odd Fellows Temple, 29-31 E. Lawrence St. in Pontiac as late as 1939, but by 1941, it appears that they, too, ceased to exist. What happened to the W.R.C. and their records, but more importantly, what happened to the "dear old flag" of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Michigan Infantry? If anyone has any information to shed light on this mystery, please contact OCPHS at 248-338-6732.

- 1. "The 22d Regiment", News clipping, Aug. 24, 1894, in *Daniels Collection, Folder III*
- 2. "Auto Ride Ends Reunion of the Historic 22nd", Sept 5, 1912, in *Pioneer Society Scrapbook No.4*, p. 77.
- 3. "The 22d Regiment".
- 4. "A Flag With a History", Acc# A-866.
- 5. "The 22d Regiment".
- 6. "Those Battle Flags", newsclipping, Aug. 30, 1894, in *Daniels Collection, Folder I.*
- 7. "A Flag With a History".
- 8. Ibid.
- 9. Ibid.
- 10. "Four Color Bearers of 22nd Were Shot Down at Chickamauga", Aug 19, 1912, in *Pioneer Society Scrapbook No. 4*, p. 79.
- 11. "A Flag With a History".
- 12. "The 22d Regiment".
- 13. Ibid.
- 14. "A Flag With a History".
- 15. Obituary of Julia Comstock Howard, Nov. 7, 1927, in *Pioneer Society Scrapbook: Historical Clippings No. 3*, p.67.
- 16. Ibid.
- 17. "Taps Sounds For Pontiac G.A.R. Post", Oct. 1, 1928, in *Howard Collection, Folder I.*

# Society News & Views

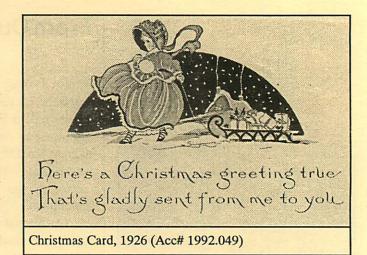
Continued from page 3

#### Tours/Meetings

On Monday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, the *Wixom Historical Society* held their meeting in the schoolhouse, and then took a tour of the Wisner mansion. The group thoroughly enjoyed their tour given by **Charles Martinez** and **Gaylor Forman**. In December, two additional groups will be doing the same, the *Oakland Township Historical Society* and the *Sashabaw Plains DAR*. The Wayne State University Student Chapter of the *Society of American Archivists* is also planning to visit our archives/library in November. If you know of any groups that would like to hold their meetings in the schoolhouse, followed by a tour, please have them contact the office.

#### Outreach/Publicity

Early in October, President Mike Willis spoke about our Society and Museum to the State Retired Employees Association. On October 18th, Administrative Director, Leslie S. Edwards was on the televised program "United Homeowners Panel Meeting" of Bloomfield Township cable TV. A reporter from *The Spinal Column* newspaper also interviewed Leslie about the Society and the article was published. In addition, the Society received publicity in the *Oakland Lakefront* in an article about Ice Harvesting in Oakland County.



#### Interns

One of our interns, Birgit Meyer, returned to her home in Germany at the end of the summer. Birgit was involved in a variety of projects during her internship, including cataloging artifacts and manuscript materials, researching and designing an exhibit on early education for the one-room schoolhouse, and a variety of other museum tasks. The following is her assessment of her experience at OCPHS.

# Internship at the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society February-September 2001

When I started working in the library as an intern, I was astonished and amazed how many lay people do research, especially genealogical research. In Germany where I come from, trying to find out as much about your ancestors as possible is not so widespread. One reason might be that the history of the United States is comparably young and it is interesting to find out from which country your ancestors emigrated.

Being a History and English major I was always more interested in national than local history. The work at the museum helped me to appreciate and find interest in local history as you can easily get "hooked up" while reading (e.g. the diaries of Oliver Beardslee and having Leslie to remind me that there are other things to do as well).

I mainly catalogued archives, such as diaries and ledgers, which only became frustrating when I could not find out enough information about the author. I think it is important to catalogue as much as possible of the collections in the computer so that it is more organized and easy to find information. The major benefit of cataloguing might be that people doing research will have access to it.

I mostly enjoyed designing the schoolhouse exhibit. Since I want to



become a teacher, doing research about the history of old schoolbooks fell into my field of study. I was allowed to work independently which I was a little bit afraid of in the beginning as I had never done an exhibit before. I have to thank Terry for her help designing the exhibit The collection of schoolbooks is very numerous and could be used for workshops designed for history teachers. Schoolbooks offer a great opportunity to study "mentality history", i.e. to study values, morals, and character of a certain period.

In my opinion it would be good to open the house and the other buildings at least a couple of hours per week, maybe on Saturdays so that it is open to the public not only twice a year. Another important task for the future is to attract new young members who can continue the work that has been done so far. This might be possible by holding lectures and workshops, or trying to get history majors involved.

I really enjoyed working here because I liked the work I had to do, and other people will probably make use of what I have done. I want to thank Leslie for all her patience, support and help, especially when she had to correct what I had written!

Birgit Huger

# From Our Collections

The following was found in the Manuscript Collection: The Sawyer Family (Acc# 1984.027). The author and date of writing is unknown.

### Christmas in the Past in Pontiac

Houses were different. Not appartments. [sic] Perhaps a "double house" occasionally or a wing. But mostly rambling two story places with porches and grounds. This in small towns like Pontiac then. (Built up squares in New York and Condon).

Entrance halls were mostly sizeable reception rooms dominated by stairways (with railings) which might be very long and straight, or spiral, or winding with one or two landings. (Giving this because it has a bearing on Christmas decorations.)

Another feature was archways between ground floor rooms which closed with sliding doors. At Christmas time - (left open) - these were often hung with greens which were cut in the open



Caption on back of photo: Xmas time, as you drove up to the Stop Sign before signal lights. Presents were left for the Officers. (Acc# 1969.018.0020)

woods or yards and made up by hand adding heavily berried holly sprays bought in the market - Sometimes a sprig of mistletoe directly overhead.

The local greens - Plentiful and quite freely accessible, since trees and hedges needed pruning, were even woven into long ropes and draped on stair rails and around doorways and fireplaces. Each ground floor room might have a fireplace. Some on second floor too perhaps.

Of course Santa Claus came down the main chimney and always found an assortment of stockings - one for each member of the family . All sizes, as each hung his own - not a fancy Christmas one. One could count on an orange - a real treat in those days - and nuts in their shells and anything else that might fit. But there was apt to be a tree as well and small gifts were gaily wrapped and hung on the branches as an important part of the decorations. Another feature was long strings of popcorn and cranberries. This not only helped to make up for lack of some of today's manufactured decorations but gave children a larger share in trimming the tree.

Christmas was not as commercialized as it has become to-day. There were no decorations during Advent. They all appeared on Christmas Eve and remained at least until Epiphany and sometimes until Septuagesima.

While the school vacation between Christmas and New Years was naturally a time for parties - including high school fraternity and sorority dances - Christmas itself was a family affair. A time when children and grandchildren returned to the home town and gathered around their own tree with perhaps an uncle in the costumed role as Santa Claus.

Must have been around the turn of the century before we stopped lighting trees with live candles as I don't think we had electricity in Pontiac much if any before that. They still did it in Condon in 1924.

#### **Board of Directors**

President
Michael E. Willis
1st Vice President
Charles Martinez
2nd Vice President
Clarke Kimball
Treasurer
Kathryn Daggy
Secretary
Rosamond Hacberle

#### Staff

Administrative Director/Editor
Leslie S. Edwards
Manuscripts Librarian
Virginia Clohset
Research Librarians
Pat Fisher
Jo Pate
Fran Wilson

# **MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society

405 Oakland Avenue • Pontiac, Michigan 48342 • (248) 338-6732

Yes, I'd/We'd like to join OCPHS!

Memberships are for one year.

 □ Student
 \$15.00

 □ Senior (65 & Over)
 \$15.00

 □ Individual
 \$20.00

 □ Couple
 \$35.00

 □ Family (Parents & Children)
 \$50.00

 □ Non-Profit Organization
 \$20.00

 □ Patron
 \$75.00

 □ Benefactor
 \$150.00

 □ Corporate Sponsor
 \$500.00

Check desired membership category and enclose this application with check or money order made payable to:

#### Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society

(Send to the above address)

Contributions and bequests to the Society, including memorials, assure the continuing resotration of Society properties and promotion of Oakland County's irreplaceable historical heritage. As charitable donations, such contributions allow the donor to take income tax deductions.

# Our Flag.

Its stripes of red, eternal dyed with heart streams of all lands:

Its white, the snow-capped hills that hide in storm their upraised hands;

Its blue, the ocean waves that beat around Freedomes circled shore:

Its stars, the print of angel's feet that burn forever more.
-James Whitcomb Ricey.

Pontiac Daily Gazette, May 17, 1895, p. 1

# Calendar of Events

Wednesday, November 21	Board Meeting 9:30 am
Friday, November 30	Hanging of the Greens 9 - 2 pm
Saturday, December 8	Victorian Christmas 12 - 4 pm
Friday, December 14	Dehanging of the Greens 9 - 2 pm
Wednesday, January 2	Office/Library reopens 9:00 am
	Annual Meeting 1 - 3 pm
Saturday, February 16	Board Meeting
Wednesday, January 2 Wednesday, January 16 Saturday, February 16	Annual Meeting1 - 3

NOTE: For convenience, all Board Meetings will now be held at 9:30am.





405 Oakland Avenue Pontiac, MI 48342 (248) 338-6732 (248) 338-6731 Fax

ocphs@wwnet.net

Preservation of the Past for the Enrichment of Future Generations

Internet address: http://wwnet.net/~ocphs/index.html

U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 70
Pontiac, MI
Non-Profit Org.