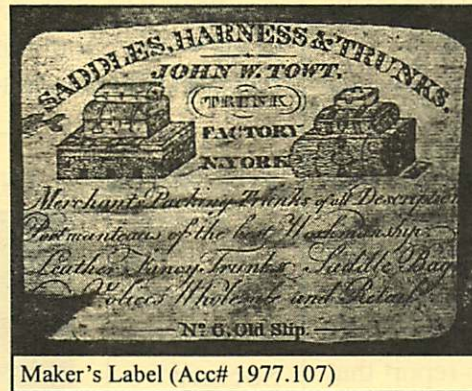




From Our Collections: The Cole Wedding Trunk

By Leslie S. Edwards

The history of this trunk began when volunteer member, **Marge Edwards**, asked for my assistance with the quilt inventory. The quilts had been stored in various trunks in the artifacts storage area of the Carriage House. This particular trunk caught my attention due to the fact that there was a note inside it that read: "The wedding trunk used by Wm Mason Cole married to Mary Simpson at Aurora NY Jan 15th 1840." Further inspection of the trunk revealed a maker's label inside the lid and some stenciling on the bottom of the trunk. These clues were the perfect fodder for a research project!



Maker's Label (Acc# 1977.107)

Research on the internet and in text sources revealed that this type of trunk is known as a "stagecoach trunk", and was made from 1770-1840. It is hide-covered, with hair on the hide, and is also decorated with brass tacks. It has a wrought-iron lock and iron handles on each end.

The maker's label on the inside of the lid revealed that the trunk was made by the John W. Towt Trunk Factory, No. 6 Old Slip, New York City. The trunk also has stenciled letters on the bottom: "E.B. & H. Morgan, Aurora, NY." I decided to write a letter to the New York Historical Society to see if I could gather any more information about John Towt or the Morgans. The following information was provided by the research librarian there.

John W. Towt was first listed in the 1829-1830 New York City Directory as a "Saddler &c." at 6 Old Slip. His business remained at the same address throughout the 1830s and into the 1840s, the time of the Cole marriage. According to *The Leading Citizens of Cayuga County* (published in 1894), the Morgan family had established a mercantile house in Aurora, New York in 1801. "E.B. and H." Morgan were Edwin B. and Henry who ran the family business from 1831-1838.

Thus, we can surmise that Towt made the Cole trunk sometime between 1829 and 1838, and the Morgans purchased the trunk from his shop between 1831 and 1838 and put their mark on the bottom. Then, by January 1840, the trunk was in the hands of William and Mary Cole. But how did the trunk get from Aurora, New York to Oakland County? Further research by member **Karen Krugman** and myself turned up the following facts.

William Mason Cole was born 13 Feb 1817 in New York. Correspondence in the donor files relates the family tradition that William was

Letter From the President

That time of year is fast approaching us again, where we must begin to plan again for our Victorian Christmas. We are in need of volunteers to chair and develop this year's Christmas program. It never ceases to amaze me how we all pull together in a time of need as we did for the Arts, Beats and Eats Festival. I would like to thank the many volunteers for their donation of time to work this event, and just to let you know the end results will bring in about \$2500.00 for our society.

The one thing that was very noticeable is the fact that we must get some younger volunteers to work some of these events. I hate to admit the fact that we are all getting older but it is very evident in this case. We are again about to embark on recruiting members for the board and also enlist officers for next year. An election committee is now being formed to conduct those duties on behalf of the society. If you have any names to

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Society News & Notes

VOLUNTEER NEWS

Long time member and volunteer Manuscripts Chairperson **Virginia Clohset** received a Community Service Award from the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution on May 14, 2002. The purpose of the NSDAR Community Service Award is to recognize worthy, local people for outstanding achievement in educational, humanitarian, patriotic, historical or citizenship endeavors, or environmental conservation. Virginia has been a volunteer at OCPHS for 30 years and has served as a board member for the past 20. Congratulations Virginia!

SECOND SATURDAY TOURS

Please spread the word! The Second Saturday tour program will run through November. Our tour guides are working hard and wait patiently for visitors on each Second Saturday. Please tell your friends and neighbors about the program. Second Saturday tours early in the summer had a low attendance, however, we are very happy to report that the August and September Second Saturday tours were much more successful. There were over 40 guests who took tours in August and the September Second Saturday tour brought 11 guests to the Wisner Mansion!

GROUNDS

If you will be purchasing fall bulbs, mums or flowers, please considering ordering or purchasing a few extra plants for the grounds at Pine Grove. Our flower beds are in desperate need of color. The Grounds Committee could also use some extra hands. If you or your family is interested in adopting a flower bed or assisting the grounds committee for the fall, please call 248.338.6732.

The fence running along Oakland Ave. has been primed and is ready to be painted. Thank you to **Doris Smith** for her help supervising the WAM group who applied the primer.

Calling all Green Thumbs! Adopt a Flower Bed at Pine Grove!

Our flower beds need you! Please help us keep up with all the beautiful plants Clark Kimball has cared for over the years. Please consider donating a few hours a week to water, weed and plant at Pine Grove. Families, groups and individuals are invited to adopt a flower bed to care for. Grab some friends and enjoy some time outside - If you are interested, please contact the office.

VICTORIAN OPEN HOUSE

It's time to start making preparations for our annual Victorian Open House which will take place in December. If you are interested in assisting with the planning, please contact the office.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY RESULTS

The membership survey which was sent out in May resulted in only 18 returned surveys. Those that were returned contained many helpful suggestions on how to best serve the membership and community. The survey results will be shared with the Board of Directors in hopes of actualizing some of the insightful suggestions we have received. Thank you to all who participated!

FUNDRAISING AND DONATIONS

In July, Sam's Club of Waterford awarded the Society a \$500.00 matching funds grant. Leslie Edwards applied for the grant earlier this summer. Sam's Club matched the



Vice President Charles Martinez accepts the matching funds grant from Sam's Club.

grant to funds we raised through our school tours this spring. Thank you Sam's Club!

The Pontiac Area Federation Women's Club made a very generous contribution of \$761.51 to the Society in appreciation of the work we do. Thank you Pontiac Area Federation Women's Club!

The White Elephant and Pre-Christmas sale was a success! The white elephant sale raised \$555.50, not including the \$221.20 brought in by the gift shop and Second Saturday tours that day. Thanks to members **Sylvia Adams, Miriam Foxman, Pauline Harrison, Connie Scafe, Katheryn Daggy and Ann Irwin** who worked very hard pricing and sorting the items for the sale. **Jim Bowie, Gaylor Forman, Jerry Lauinger, Russ Licavoli, Gale Scafe, and Ted Spehar** helped with set up and/or take down on the day of the sale. **Bruce Annett and Donald Schwartz** helped with parking. The following individuals helped staff the checkouts and assisted with packing up: **Jo Pate, Fran Wilson, Amy**

Annett, Annalee Kennedy, and Lauren and Maureen Tossey. Thank you to Russ Licavoli for taking the leftover goods to the Salvation Army. The sale could not have happened without the help of the Society's membership and friends.

OCPHS was given the opportunity to take part in this year's Arts Beats & Eats festival held in downtown Pontiac over Labor Day weekend. Arts Beats & Eats allows non-profit organizations to staff beverage booths to raise funds for their organizations. A percentage of sales goes directly to the organization staffing the booth. More than thirty members and friends donated time over the holiday weekend to work at the Society's booth. A very special "Thanks!" to all who volunteered their time!

WHITTEMORE - MACK FAMILY REUNION

On August 17, approximately 45 members of the Whittemore, Mack and Starkweather families attended their family reunion, held at Pine Grove. Visitors toured the Wisner Mansion and ate lunch on the grounds. They also visited the library, where materials related to their family history were on display. Several family members donated research materials to the Society.

MEMBERSHIP

Our membership is growing! There is a long list of new members in this issue of the *Gazette*, a very good sign for our organization. If you know anyone interested in becoming a member of the Society, please pass along the membership application included in every *Gazette*. New members are always welcome - encourage your friends and family to join!

We were saddened to hear of the deaths of Rita Anne Gragory, Mary Rondello and Jerome Midtgard, three individuals who had been members of the Society. Our condolences go out to their families and friends.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

As you know, volunteers are the heart of our organization. Without our dedicated volunteers, the society would not function. We are always looking for individuals who would like to assist in the preservation and interpretation of Oakland County history. Positions are available in a variety of areas. Volunteering is fun and provides an opportunity to develop new and marketable skills. Volunteering also provides a way to meet new people with similar interests. If you would like to volunteer, regularly or on an as needed basis, please call the office.

From the Director

Dear Membership,

I would like to thank everyone for the warmth and excitement which has greeted me since I've taken the position of Administrative Director. This summer has been very exciting - the White Elephant Sale and Arts Beats & Eats were successful fundraisers, the Second Saturday Tours seem to be drawing more interest and the Pioneer Museum renovation is well under way. Soon school tours will be visiting Pine Grove and the grounds will be blanketed in the golden colors of autumn. Victorian Open House will be here before we know it, bringing with it the smell of hot cider brewing in the Carriage House and the joy of seeing the Wisner Mansion decorated for the holidays. I hope all of you are as excited as I am!

Victorian Open House is an important part of our year here at Pine Grove. OCPHS looks forward to providing our membership a time to come together and celebrate the holiday season. The Wisner Mansion comes alive each year with decorations, music and visitors. Our President mentioned in his letter to the membership that at this time, there is no planning committee in place and no chairperson assigned. With Victorian Open House approaching rapidly, I would like to ask you to consider becoming involved with this very special event. Volunteers are needed in many areas, including cleaning and preparing the house and decorations, scheduling performances and assembling tickets and press releases. If you are able to donate your time to help with Victorian Open House, please contact me by phone or e-mail.

Jamie Karl

NOTICE:

Object to be Deaccessioned

The Society is deaccessioning a cast iron parlor stove patented 1861. The stove, which sits at the entrance to the Carriage House, is starting to deteriorate. Since we do not have an appropriate place to display the stove, the Board

of Directors has decided to offer it to local historical museums. The stove measures approximately 36" tall, 20" deep and 30-36" wide. Any museum interested in adding the stove to their permanent collection is asked to contact **Jamie Karl** at (248) 338.6732.



Feature Article: Hoyt House Becomes Sibley-Hoyt House

By Ron Gay

Part one of a three part story.

In the spring of this year the Hoyt House, located at 146 W. Lawrence St., Pontiac, within the Franklin Boulevard Historic District, became the Sibley-Hoyt House after my submission to the state department of history, reflecting its history and origins, was accepted for the record. This is the first time any kind of real research, hence history, about this house has been submitted for official filing with the state history office and the National Trust. The information submitted on the Hoyt House at the time of the Franklin Boulevard Historic District nomination was insignificant and sketchy. The name change will also extend to the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Franklin Boulevard Historic District.

In December of 1986 I purchased this house that had recently been improved by its owners, the Liljeblads. Georgia Hoyt had sold her home in 1974. Ms. Hoyt was born in this humble house and when she sold it in 1974, in failing health, she had lived in it the better part of one hundred years.

After I purchased the Hoyt House I was puzzled by the conflicting information given me by the previous owners regarding its age. It was soon after I took possession that I began my research into the property's history. One contradiction came from a friend of mine who believed the house was built in the 1830s or 40s versus the 1860s, as told to me by the owner. A few years later when a facade study was done of the Franklin Boulevard Historic District, an independent architectural survey dated the structure to the earlier period as well.

Once I began researching this crooked old place there was no turning back. It



Sibley-Hoyt house, owned by OCPHS member Ron Gay. Photograph courtesy of Ron Gay.

became a passion, obsession, fun project, and in many ways, I felt it was my duty to get at the truth of this house's origins and place in Pontiac's history.

About two years ago I decided to take what I had learned, research I had done since 1987, and create a new nomination for the National Register of Historic Places, nominating the home as an individual property aside from its listing as part of the Franklin District. I hired an expert to help me confirm my theory about the early origins of the building. After that new nomination was prepared, by myself and the person I hired, it was submitted to the state for review. The state sent it back with many criticisms including the fact that much supporting data and photos was missing from the nomination. Upon having the consultant re-write the nomination, I reviewed it before submitting it again to Lansing. I then realized that I was the only one that could do the thorough job necessary to submit, what I considered, a worthy nomination. I started over re-writing everything and then including copies of all of my documents, deeds, letters,

maps, photos, drawings, floor plans, etc. with my nomination. A little while after submitting this to Lansing I received a phone call from Bob Christensen, the department's director. He told me, that to his chagrin, a property could not be nominated individually if it was already part of a historic district. But immediately I realized that this was neither important nor my real intended goal. What happened next was that the file I submitted, reflecting one hundred and eighty some years of history on this property was reviewed and accepted as the recorded history about this house and land. As a result of this new material being accepted the name has been changed to reflect this, that tells the story of the first owner of this property, Solomon and Sarah Sibley and the longest owner and occupant of this home, the Hoyt family.

Because the information regarding the Sibley-Hoyt House is so lengthy and very significant to this area's history, especially Pontiac's, I have decided to submit this story in three parts. The first part introducing the property and its origins. The second part detailing its origins, early owners and purpose for

being built. The third and final part will tell of the Hoyt Family ownership and the evolutionary changes to the structure during this period including the contribution of the Hoyt family to this community as instructors of music and dance for over one hundred years.

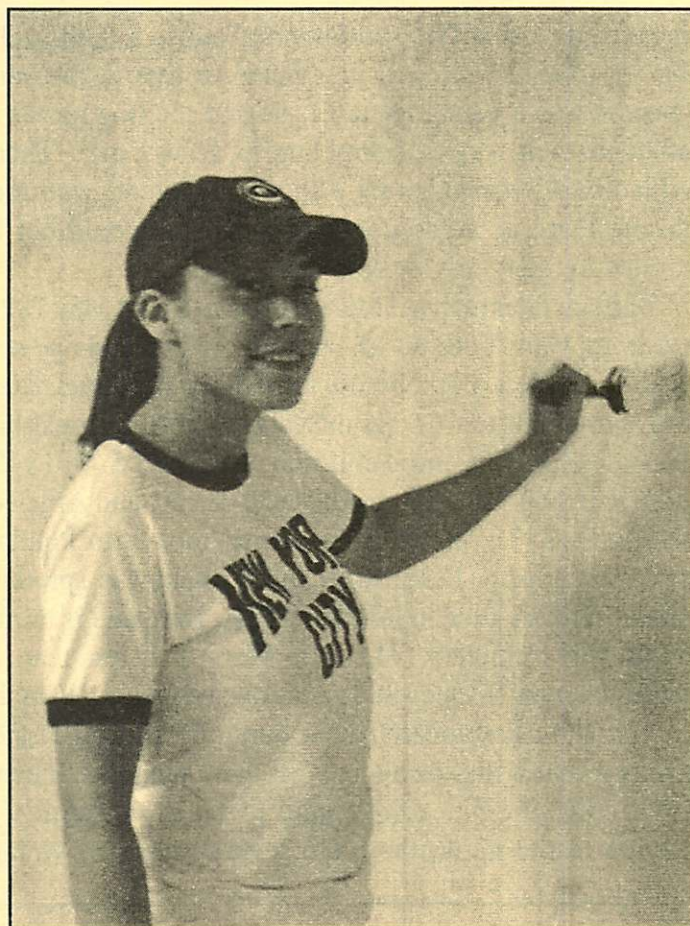
A very unexpected result of my fifteen years of research into this place is the significant information I came across regarding the founding of Pontiac. The role of Solomon and Sarah Sibley in this town's founding has been largely overlooked, or ignored, in every tome I have come across. The documents I found in the Detroit Public Library, Burton Historical Collection, introduce new information about how this town was founded and who kept it going until it could stand on its own.

Some of the most revealing discoveries about this structure's beginnings came just prior to my final submission to the state. What will be disclosed in the following parts of this story is how a two-room cabin, dating to the founding of Pontiac, evolved into the house that you now see.

Stay tuned.....

Museum Renovation Underway

The Pioneer Museum is currently undergoing a renovation! **Megan Callewaert**, student intern from Oakland University, has spent 500 hours researching the artifacts and drawing up plans for the new displays. Megan has been working closely with the Administrative Director, **Jamie Karl**, to design the exhibit space. The plans call for a series of raised platforms and display cases, as well as panels to display object labels and educational text. The new object labels and displays will help to make the Pioneer Museum a more



Student Intern, Megan Callewaert, works on the renovation

educational environment for the students and visitors who tour the museum. The Pioneer Museum will reopen later this fall. ***Volunteers are needed to help build the new displays. If you have basic carpentry skills and can donate a few hours of your time, please contact Jamie Karl at 248.338.6732.***

Ron Gay has been a member of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society since 1987. We are very happy to have Ron as a contributing author in the Gazette and would like to thank him for sharing his story. The tale of the Sibley-Hoyt House will be continued in the next two Gazettes.



Clarkston School Postcard dated July 12, 1912. Hinkley Photo. (Acc# 1987.029)

From Our Collections

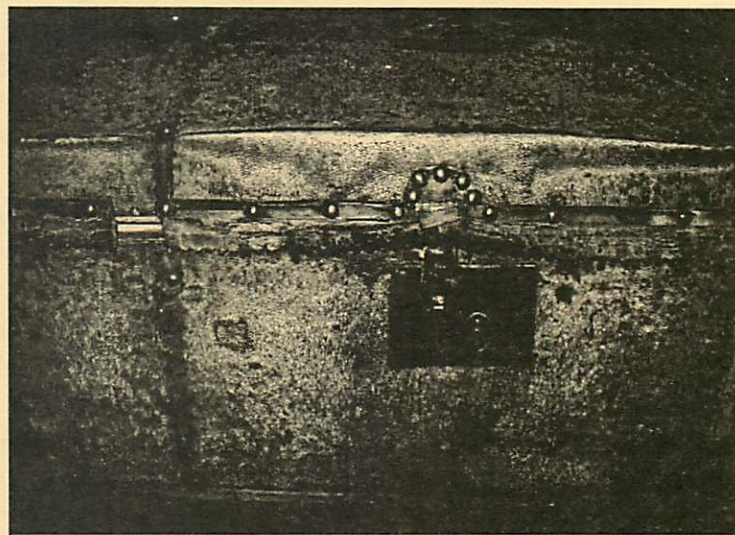
Continued from page 1

orphaned as a small boy and bonded out to a family. He was not treated well, and was made to live in the barn. When he was a young teenager, he and the dog ran away and made their way to Lake Ontario, New York. There, William was befriended by a ship's carpenter, who took him on board as an apprentice so that he would not be returned to the family he was bonded to.

William later married Mary Simpson (b. 24 May 1820) in Aurora, New York on 15 Jan 1840. They had one son, Elijah C., in New York, before moving to Michigan in late 1841 and settling on 76 acres in Section 9 of Avon township. The Coles had four more children: Jeremiah S. (b 1845), Ludovic R. (b 1847), Sylvester (1850-1919), and Athaleen Eudora (b 1853). In 1861, the family moved to Pontiac, where they lived on Perry Street and William was a produce dealer. William died in Pontiac 22 Jan 1888 and is buried in Oak Hill Cemetery. His wife Mary died less than 11 months later on 18 Dec 1888 and is buried next to William.

A little further research in the donor files and accession records revealed that the Society has quite a number of items in our collection once belonging to the Cole family. In addition to the trunk, there are several items of vintage

clothing, a substantial collection of woodworking tools, and manuscript and photograph collections relating primarily to William's son, Sylvester, and his wife, Ellen (Hundley). Most of these items have been cataloged, and are now linked as items related to one family. It never ceases to amaze me what a little curiosity can uncover when researching a single artifact in our collection.



Front of trunk (Acc# 1977.107)

In May of 2002 children from Roberts Elementary School in Shelby Township visited Pine Grove. The children who visited Pine Grove toured the Wisner Mansion and Pioneer Museum. They also spent part of the day with their teachers in the Drayton Plains one-room schoolhouse. Each child sent a thank you note following their visit. Thank you to all of the children from Roberts Elementary who were so thoughtful.

Dear People at Pine Grove,
I really enjoyed visiting Pine Grove. I liked Governor Winsor's house. It was huge! It was ~~so~~ very old fashioned. (which I like) I never knew people had a summer kitchen and a normal kitchen. It was a very interesting trip! Thank you for letting me come!
Rachael Cini

Dear Ms. Fossey
Thank you for showing me the cellar and the inside of the house. The best room inside the house is when he showed off and they new he had a lot of money. I never knew real gold could be in wallpaper. I also ~~like~~ liked the part when we were in the Cellar because it was like their refrigerator. Thank you for every thing Ms. Fossey
Fossey by Michael B

Dear Pine Grove Staff,
I'm sure you can't imagine how grateful I am that you presented these buildings so I could see them. My favorite thing was the school house. Thank you so much.

Sincerely yours,

Emma Greenwell



Welcome New Members!

Frances Annett, Beverly Hills
Edith Assaff, Berkley
William and Ella Barnett, Pontiac
Derek Blount, Royal Oak
Lavern and Carolyn Boge, Waterford
Shannon Bradley, Pontiac
Kenneth Burch, Sr., Pontiac
Michael Fraser, Pontiac
Linda Hipol, Madison Heights
Russell Lewis, Oakland County Media
and Communications, Pontiac
Raymond Lucas, Auburn Hills
Dan Marshall, Troy

Carolyn Martin, Pontiac
Kate Moore, Dearborn
Betty Shepard, Traverse City
Martin and Phyllis White, Pontiac
Mary Anne Wheeler, Birmingham

Oakland County Media and
Communications
Ortonville Community Historical Society
Royal Oak Historical Society

From the President

Continued

submit for either a board member, or some one to serve as an officer, please get those names in to Jamie Karl, our Administrative Director.

This has been another wonderful year and I have enjoyed serving as your President, and wish to thank all of the members for their dedication and hard work. Without you and the dedication, your love of history, and total knowledge the society would flounder. God bless and warmest wishes to all in the upcoming holiday season.

Michael E. Willis

Calendar of Events

Saturday, October 12	Second Saturday	10 am - 1 pm
Saturday, October 19	Board Meeting	9:30 am
Saturday, November 9	Second Saturday	10 am - 1 pm
Wednesday, November 20	Board Meeting	9:30 am

NOTE: "Second Saturdays" the Wisner Mansion is open to the public for walk-in tours. No charge for members who show their membership cards. All others: \$5 for adults/\$3 children under 12. The Gift Shoppe will be open on these days.

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!

Name _____
Street _____ Apt. No. _____
City/State _____ Zip _____
Telephone _____
Email _____
☐ Check here if gift membership from _____

Memberships are for one year.

<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$15.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Senior (65 & Over)	\$15.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Couple	\$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family (Parents & Children)	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit Organization	\$20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$75.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$150.00
<input type="checkbox"/> 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 resotation 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.

Historic Community News

The *Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm* will be hosting the 2nd Annual Stone Wall Pumpkin Festival on Saturday, October 12 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. to coincide with the opening of their new exhibit "A Lively Town: The History of the Greater Rochester Area 1817-1952." For more information about the festival or the exhibit, visit their website at www.rochesterhills.org/museum.htm.

The *Troy Public Library* has announced a Fall 2002 schedule of events which includes "Finding Your Ancestors On-line," "Genealogy, Why & How," and "I'm just a leaf on the family tree: Where do I begin? Whom do I ask? Where do I go?" Visit www.libcoop.net/troy or call Kay McFarland at 248.680.7290 for more information.

The *Waterford Township Public Library* and *Waterford Genealogy Study Group* are hosting a Genealogy Lock-In on October 25th, 2002. They also have several other activities planned for the month of October. Contact the Waterford Township Public Library at 248.618.7681 for more information.

Rochester-Avon Historical Society is hosting a Genealogy Workshop Saturday, November 2, 2002. The workshop will discuss the land and property record resources available in the Rochester, Oakland County and Michigan area, including the internet. For further information, contact Gail Kemler at 248.651.0907 or Ed Barlow at 248.651.7658.

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