



Governor Moses Wisner Mansion (ca. 1845)

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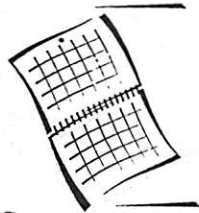
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Winter 2003

Second Saturday Tours begin in March!

March 8th will be the first Second Saturday Tour for 2003! Tours of the Wisner Mansion will be available from 10 am to 2 pm and are free for members with their membership cards. Admission for non-members: \$5.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children under 12. Second Saturday Tours will be available the second Saturday of each month March through November. The gift shop will also be open tour days. Mark your calendars!



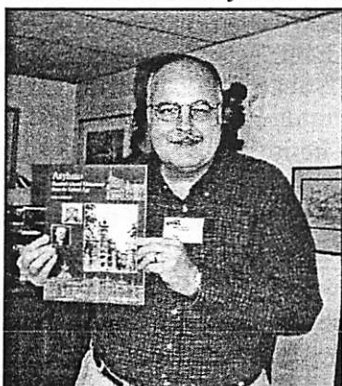
Have you always wanted to work in a small country store? Do you love to interact with people of all ages? How about volunteering to work in the Society's gift shop during our Second Saturday Tours? We are looking for enthusiastic individuals to help in this area. If you are interested, please contact Jamie Karl at 248-338-6732.

An Invitation to our Members

Members of OCPHS are encouraged to attend our monthly Board meetings. If you have something you would like to share with the Board of Directors, please call the office to have your name added to the agenda prior to the scheduled meeting. Meetings are held in the research library and the meeting dates are posted in the calendar of events in each issue of the *Gazette*. We welcome each member's ideas and suggestions!

ASYLUM NOW AVAILABLE!

Asylum: Pontiac's Grand Monument from the Gilded Age, written by Society member Bruce J. Annett, Jr., is now available! The state hospital, most recently known as Clinton Valley Center, was 19th century Pontiac's first "economic engine." *Asylum: Pontiac's Grand Monument from the Gilded Age* recounts the hospital's 1870's construction and highlights its 122-year presence in the city. The book includes a remarkable number of historical images and makes a lovely gift. *Asylum: Pontiac's Grand Monument from the Gilded Age* is available in both the museum gift shop and library for \$24.95 + tax. Our congratulations to Bruce on a job very well done!



Bruce Annett, Jr. signed copies of *Asylum* at Victorian Open House.

A Message from the Treasurer...

This year, our Society faces perhaps the greatest financial challenge in its long history. Oakland County, traditionally our largest single source of income, eliminated our funding due to its own budgetary woes. Our second greatest revenue source, investment income, will fall to its lowest level in years, as older investments mature and are reinvested at much lower prevailing rates. Expenses, already trimmed to the bone, can't be cut further without drastically reducing our accessibility to our membership and to the community.

How can we raise the funds we need? The answer is multi-faceted. Members, already interested in our mission and aware of our resources, can continue to provide financial support, which is important and appreciated. But we must also aggressively seek new funding sources; we must publicize our too little-known gems: Pine Grove, the Drayton Plains one-room schoolhouse, and our research library's vast archives; and we must offer programs, services, and events that compel interest and thus bring financial returns.

To do this, we need you. Your dollars, if you so choose, but also your time and talent. We have many ways for you to assist with programming, with raising funds, with developing promotional materials, with lending a hand around the property, with serving visitors, and with helping the Society to thrive. Whether your volunteer service is as short as an afternoon or as long as a lifetime, it will help us survive this fiscal storm and emerge stronger than before. Please call the society today at 248-338-6732 to help.

Amy Annett, Treasurer

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Society News & Notes

VICTORIAN OPEN HOUSE WAS A SUCCESS!

The 2002 Victorian Open House was a success, thanks to generous members and friends and dedicated staff and volunteers. The one day event brought in over \$5000! Thanks to the following individuals who worked on planning the event and preparing the grounds and buildings: **Rosemary Gallardo, Renee Greer Alvarez, Guy Duffield, Marge Edwards and Lauren and Maureen Tossey.** Special thanks to our tour guides, who brought the Wisner home alive and bridged the gap between history and present day for our visitors. The **McAlpine Family** was once again busy in the summer kitchen, demonstrating "home-spun" activities for visitors who toured Pine Grove. We would also like to thank all of the volunteers who worked on the day of the event and those that helped with the mailing.



The McAlpine Family brought the summer kitchen to life once again.

Volunteers were so plentiful we could not list each of their names in this publication of the *Gazette*, however, we extend our sincere thanks to each and every volunteer who donated their time.

Letter From the President

Welcome back to all the members of the Board of Directors who were re-elected and to the new elected members, also it is a pleasure to have our officers re-elected. This shows a vote of confidence in the leadership from all of our members. We will have a monumental task in the next year attempting to raise funds for the society, but it is not one that we can't do. There are many ideas on the drawing board of a way to have fund raising events. We are also looking for more ideas for the membership. However, to be a success it still takes one key element, which is volunteer commitment to do the work. Also, we need to clear the air on committee structures; you do not have to be on the board to either work on or chair a committee, all you have to do is be willing to volunteer your time. Every effort should be made by all of the membership to recruit new members and each one of knows at least one person we could contact. Also remember to be a board member is always very good, but to be a productive board member you must be there and participate. As members you are always welcome to attend the monthly board meeting and share with us your thoughts when we conduct the new business portion of the agenda. May you be blessed and remain in good health.

Michael E. Willis

The following reports have been taken from the 2002 Annual Report, which was distributed at the Annual Meeting held January 25, 2003. If you would like a complete copy of the 2002 Annual Report, please contact the office.

RESEARCH LIBRARY

Research Librarians **Jo Pate** and **Fran Wilson** have made an effort to reorganize the library to accommodate the researchers who use our facilities. This past year the library serviced 134 e-mail, telephone, and mail requests. In addition to this, 447 persons came to the premises to do their own research. Questions ranged from obituaries, to early settlers, to research on present homes or property, and information about area businesses both in Pontiac itself and in other areas of Oakland County.

To accommodate researchers better, the obituaries are being located in the main research area, and we hope to complete our master index of those obituaries in our old newspapers as well as in our scrapbooks and notebooks. In addition, notebooks for Oakland County townships have been reorganized and are being continually added to as staff time permits.

We are in the process of updating our microfilm collection and obtaining additional film and readers. This will make research easier and save the wear and tear on our valuable and fragile collections.

Manuscripts Chairperson **Virginia Clohset** kept the vertical file up to date. The vertical file consists of manuscripts material not large enough to be put in a manuscripts box as well as research materials. Virginia also continued work on the balance of the Betty Adams Collection, which consists of 14 additional boxes and she is now on box 12.

OUTREACH AND PUBLICITY

Outreach and networking continues to be an important aspect of our Society. Board Member **Rosemary Gallardo** has brought several visitors to the museum, including representatives from General Motors and St. Joseph Mercy. Our involvement with the **Greater Pontiac Chamber of Commerce** has also helped build new relationships.

In September, Pine Grove was a stop on the Motor Cities-Automobile National Heritage Area's Woodward Ave. Poker Run. Participation in this event provided exposure for the Society and highlighted what our research library has to offer relating to automobile history in Oakland County.

Vice-president **Charles Martinez** spoke on behalf of the Society several times in 2002. Charles spoke on various topics to the Novi Historical Society, Ford Genealogical Society and Farmington Historical Society.

In-house publicity includes continual updating of our web pages, particularly regarding our Society events. This year, we produced three issues of the *Oakland Gazette*. We will be back on track in 2003 with all four issues being published. All members of the Society are encouraged to contribute articles relative to Oakland County's history for inclusion in the newsletter and member Ron Gay has been active in this area.

Continued on page 7

Honor Roll of Donors 2002

We have tried to acknowledge all those who have made financial contributions to the Society in the past year. Please call us at 248-338-6732 with any corrections. Thank you for your support.

CORPORATE, FOUNDATION, AND CIVIC SUPPORT

Gifts of \$10,000 or more
Oakland County Office of Art, Culture,
& Film
Lula C. Wilson Trust

Gifts of \$2500 or more
Arts, Beats, & Eats

Gifts of \$750 or more
Pontiac Area Federation Women's Clubs

Gifts of \$500 or more
Greater Pontiac Area Chamber of
Commerce
Kopy Corporation- Ron & Karen Prater
Sam's Club Foundation

Gifts of \$250 or more
Rotary Club of Pontiac

Gifts of \$100 or more
Catholic Central High School
TFD Lawn & Landscaping

Gifts of \$50 to \$99
Farmington Historical Society

In-Kind Contributions
Oakland County WAM Program -
grounds workers
Greater Pontiac Chamber of Commerce -
publicity
The Henk Studio - flowers
The Home Depot - supplies for Pioneer
Museum
Office Depot - gift basket for Victorian
Open House
Pontiac Plywood Company - plywood
St. Joseph Mercy, Pontiac - printing
Stock Building Supply - building materials
Zonta Club- beverages for Victorian
Open House

Individual Donors:

Gifts of \$500 or more
Adler, Ed & Gretchen
Forman, Gaylor
Lamoreaux, Rex
Pate, Jo

Gifts of \$250 to \$499
Annett, Bruce & Amy
Bennett, Keith & Barbara
Gallardo, Joseph & Rosemary
Kimball, David & Barbara
White, Martin & Phyllis
Willis, Mike & Gayle
Wilson, Thomas & Fran

Gifts of \$100 to \$249
Adams, Donald & Elizabeth
Balmer, Richard
Callaway, Ross
Cheal, Gladys
Daggy, Kathryn
Dey, Theda
Duffield, Guy & Nancy
Eddy, Vivian
Foxman, Miriam
Gosik, Pamela
Hatley, Robert & Joe Ann
Haven, Gil
Owens, Connie
Poole, Fred & Barbara
Walker, Diane

Gifts of \$50 to \$99
Berry, Andrew
Coon, Audrey
Coulter, Ralph
DeLisle, La Von
Gregory, Margaret
Griffin, Glenn
Harrison, Pauline
Hickey, Joel & Susan
Huthwaite, W.E.C.
Irwin, John & Barbara
Jones, Clayton J.
Kath, Vernon & June
Kimball, Clark & Marion
Kroger, William
McMillen, Irma
Pike, Wallace
Plymton, Thelma
Prater, Karen
Reynnells, Robert & Ellen
Riley, John

Gifts of \$50 to \$99 cont.
Rodgers, Virginia
Sharp, Jean Whittemore
Sibley, Forbes
Steeber, Charles & Marion
Stockwell, Isabel
Wall, Ruth
Wessels, Isabel
Williams, Charles & Ernestine
Williams, Merrick
Zeller, Rodger
Zehnder, Mike & Ellen

Gifts of \$1 to \$49
Bell, Janice
Bell, Kimberly
Brokenshaw, Glen
Burn, Frank & Doreen
Carlson, Clarence
Clohset, Virginia
Crawford, Mable J.
Emerson, Jane
Hassen, Bruce & Sandra
Hipol, Linda
Howard, William
Johnson, Florence M.
Lance, Lois
Larsen, Cathryn
Lawrence
Randall, Cory
Scafe, Gale & Constance
Smith, Bruce & Doris
Tewilliager, Sally
Wideman, Carmen E.
Wright, Thelma

In-Kind Contributions
Adler, Gretchen- flowers for VOH
Annett, Bruce- 100 copies of his book,
"Asylum: Pontiac's Grand
Monument from the Gilded Age"
Annett, Bruce & Amy- VOH
Schoolhouse tree
Duffield, Guy- maintenance supplies
Greer-Alvarez, Renee- VOH children's
gifts
Kath, Vernon- paint for fence
Kimball, David & Barbara- afghan for
VOH
Wilson, Fran- Santa suit and wreaths
for VOH
Zehnder, Mike & Ellen- VOH
photographs with Santa

Feature Article: Hoyt House Becomes Sibley-Hoyt House

By Ron Gay

Part two of a three part story.

SIBLEY'S CABIN

The story of the Sibley-Hoyt House begins with the settlement of Pontiac in 1818. Prior to researching this house, to try and figure out its age and who built it, I knew the story of how Stephen Mack founded Pontiac. I began hearing that story when I was in third grade, my 1963-64 school year at Daniel Whitfield School in Pontiac. Along with studying the history of Pontiac that year the third grade class took a field trip around the Pontiac area. We piled in the big yellow busses and were carried to places like Oak Hill Cemetery, the old log cabin on the Pontiac State Hospital Grounds, the David Ward Homestead on Orchard Lake and the site of the old Hodges House Hotel. Our trip culminated with a tour of the Wisner House. During that school year and tour we were taught about Stephen Mack settling the village of Pontiac.

Twenty-some years later, in 1986 when I bought the Hoyt House, my education of Pontiac's history resumed. Like before, every book I opened and every passage I read told of Pontiac's founder Stephen Mack. This time I sought out the details regarding the Pontiac Company and a trading company called Mack, Conant & Sibley that were both at the core of Pontiac's birth, referenced in The History of Oakland County, 1817-1877. The research into my house's history led me down this path and into the lives of Solomon and Sarah (Sproat) Sibley. They were the first owners of the property here at 146 W.

Lawrence Street, where my trail of deeds stopped. I first learned of their importance in *Detroit's* history after discovering a voluminous file on them in the Detroit Public Library's Burton Historical Collection. It was in this file as well as files on Stephen

"There was a wagon in Detroit, the property of Judge Sibley, which was lent to those who needed it".

Detroit Public Library, Burton Historical Collection, Solomon Sibley Manuscript File.



Solomon Sibley, *Burton Historical Collection*

Mack, Shubael Conant, The Pontiac Company and the trading company Mack, Conant & Sibley that I came across several key documents relating to Pontiac's settlement that I had not seen referenced in any of the books I had read on Pontiac's founding and history. These documents are so significant and clear that they tell us much more about how Pontiac began.

Research into the Sibley-Hoyt House's origins is twofold. One part of the research deals with people, deeds and ownership. The other part of the research is the observation and study of the structure and all of its features. It is the second part of the research that reveals an early cabin here, before a larger edifice was moved to the site and connected to it. It was like peeling an artichoke. Once years of additions and changes were, figuratively, peeled away, the heart of the structure, and 18x20' cabin, revealed itself to me. When I combined the cabin with the documents I found the puzzle came together completely. This unassuming little house, that at times had little hope of sur-viving, once again had an identity.

Solomon and Sarah Sibley were early settlers in Detroit. Solomon came before eighteen hundred. With the exception of a British-occupied Detroit during the war of 1812, and later when Solomon served

time in Washington, the Sibley's called Detroit home until the end of their lives. Solomon was an influential man in Detroit from the earliest days. As an early attorney there he was Detroit's first mayor in 1806 and responsible for drafting its first city charter. He was also chairman of a committee that was given the task of determining how to divide and sell land to veterans and settlers after the war of 1812 and the Louisiana Purchase. He served in that war. Solomon Sibley's role on this committee provided great opportunity for him to choose a prime location for a new settlement in which he would invest not only large amounts of his and Sarah's savings but more than ten years of their energy and emotions, not to mention their good name.

Many of the first settlers in Pontiac were veterans of the war of 1812. Early street names like Lawrence, Clinton and Perry reflect heroes and prominent figures from that time in our history. The federal government wanted land disbursements to assist these veterans. Solomon Sibley connected with Stephen Mack and Shubael Conant, who had a mercantile partnership in Detroit, to form the company of Mack, Conant and Sibley. The formation of this company was to carry out the business of building a new town that included keeping it supplied with goods, attracting settlers and getting buildings erected. The group of men,



Sarah Sproat Sibley, *Burton Historical Collection*

some with families, known as The Pontiac Company was the land company that facilitated buying a large parcel of land from the government that was divided among the members. This purchase was the original village of Pontiac. Stephen Mack was the agent of this company but he was so at the behest of Solomon Sibley and the other members. Sibley was a man of means and far reaching intellect and influence. During the years that Pontiac was settled Sibley became a U.S. Territorial Congressman and a U.S. Territorial Judge. But his heart was devoted to Pontiac and he was determined to see it succeed.

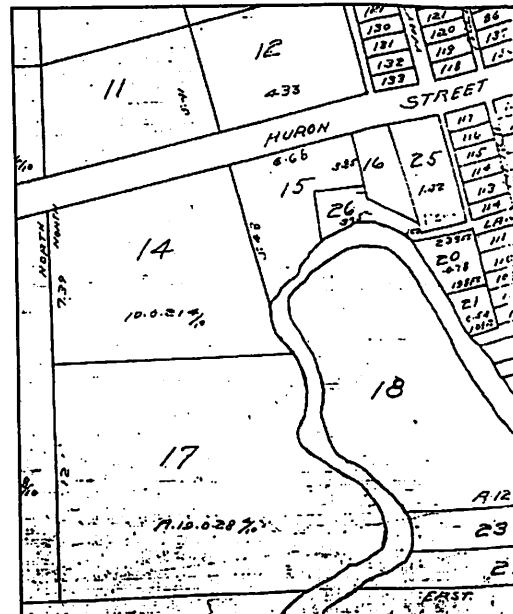
There are two documents I have come across that contain the most information about the Sibley's involvement in Pontiac and one of them relates directly to the Sibley-Hoyt House. The cabin, most assuredly built by Sibley, was constructed on a piece of land about ten acres in size. This was "outlot fourteen" of the original plat map of the Village of Pontiac. This ten-acre parcel is what connects the founding of Pontiac to a cabin that still exists within the walls of the Sibley-Hoyt House. In a document, deed, called "The Mill Privilege", dated March 8, 1819, Solomon and Sarah Sibley are purchaser's, at auction and therefore grantees, of the water rights to the Huron River at St. Clair, later renamed Clinton River, along with land totaling thirty acres around the mill pond and inclusive of a ten-acre parcel, outlot 14. Also in this deed were the mill buildings and related dwellings initially constructed by the first settlers. This deed is a formal conveyance of property to Sibley in exchange for \$1640.00. This amount may represent monies that the Sibley's had already invested to build these structures. The fact that it was auctioned may have been to give someone else the opportunity to step in and invest in the new village. The second document is the dissolution of partnership between Shubael Conant and Mack with Sibley, dated November 8, 1822. In this agreement it shows that Mack and Conant both are still beholden to Solomon Sibley for monies loaned or equity not repaid. These two documents

are what show Solomon Sibley as the financier of Pontiac's settlement. The Sibley's were held in high regard in Detroit and no doubt were influential in attracting many prominent citizens to settle in Pontiac. This is not to diminish the stature of Stephen Mack and Shubael Conant who were successful and influential in their own right. Between the three of them the company of Mack, Conant and Sibley contained the qualities necessary for a successful venture. Solomon Sibley was a major supporter of Pontiac encouraging people to settle here while he and his wife Sarah provided all kinds of support through very difficult times of illness, long winters and many other challenges.

In 1825 a parcel of land in Pontiac was sold to a woman of color, Elizabeth Denison Forth. The decision to make this transaction was that of Solomon and Sarah Sibley. Elizabeth Forth had worked for the Sibleys in their household. It was at their direction that Stephen Mack signed the deed, as agent for the Pontiac Company, giving Forth ownership. In 1826 when Mack died, deeply in debt, it was the Sibleys who saw to it that a new agent was appointed to the Pontiac Company. The Sibleys maintained their involvement in the fledgling town through about 1830 when it seemed nothing could stop its success. Growth was greatly enhanced by the completion of the Erie Canal, in the mid 1820s, enabling easy migration from the east.

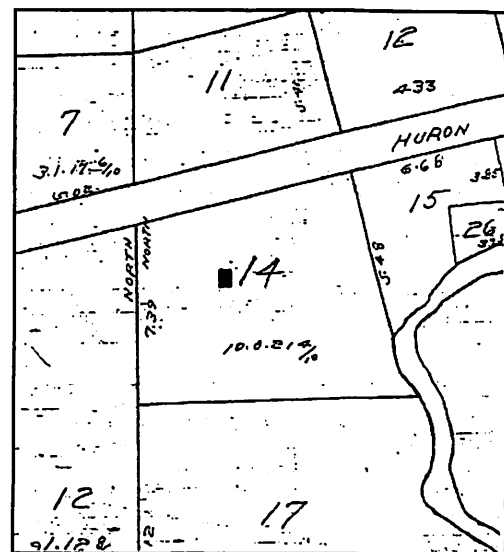
Solomon and Sarah Sibley never lived in Pontiac. Solomon paid visits, how regular is not known. In a letter from Sarah to him of February 2, 1824, while he was in Washington, his concern for Pontiac's progress is well documented. In a letter from Mack and Conant to Sibley of February 8, 1821, they ask for funds to pay for rations and goods stating that urgency is most necessary and state that the saw and grist mills are running night and day.

Sibley financed the building of Pontiac's first mills, the trading goods house and the first dwellings near the mill pond, though they were done so to the benefit of Mack, Conant and Sibley. The importance of him building a cabin on

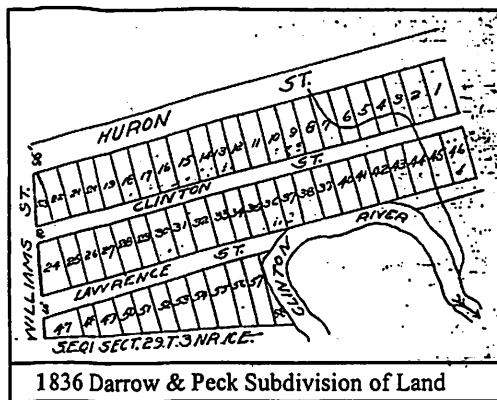


Copy of original plat map. Copy of map obtained from the Pontiac Assessors Office.

the ten acre outlot can not be underestimated. Its location was directly west of the mill pond, a very short walk straight out Lawrence Street, and also had frontage on the river that ran through town. This cabin would have been built as soon as lumber was available in 1819 or 20 to achieve its full benefit. It was after all, constructed of wood from the owner's own mill. The need for a cabin early on goes without saying. It was likely used for several purposes. Itinerant workers working at the mills or building structures needed housing. Sibley needed a place to stay on visits over many years. By having a cabin on this land, with a cellar, it provided a place for settlers to live while getting the resources to build



Placement of cabin on outlot 14. The front of the cabin faces east. Copy of map obtained from the Pontiac Assessors Office.



their own place. The cellar was extremely important, it may have been the first one or at the least one of a very few. This cabin would have been the only early structure on high ground from the river, were it to flood. A cellar located here would not flood. It provided a place to keep dairy goods, vegetables and other staples needed to sustain long winters and during the warm summer months. There may even have been a need to hide out from intruders at times. The cabin was near the crest of this ten acre plot facing town that was a large enough tract for farming. It had a brick chimney in the center that served a stove of some type. It was two rooms with a trap door to the cellar. That door is still in place at the north end. I just discovered some of these features in the past year. Just prior to sending off my submission to the state history department I was walking around the cellar very slowly observing every floor board above. It was then that I realized that the flooring ran in two directions and the change occurred in the center of the cabin right at the chimney. I also discovered the cellar trap door. Prior to this I assumed a stone chimney once existed on an exterior wall.

The cabin's gables are at the ends with eaves to front and back. The structure is made of 4x4s and 2x4s intermittent in the walls with 4x4 ceiling joists. Rafters and floor joists are approximate 2x8" in size. The roof and floor boards are about 1" thick by 17-18" wide with bark still on the roof board's edges. The roof of the cabin has been built over entirely by another roof structure but is plainly visible in the attic, just as the floor boards are visible from the cellar. The greater house has multiple layers of flooring and joists through many of the rooms obscuring all of the cabin's early flooring from above. This cabin

however small and simple it was had a certain amount of sophistication in the way it was constructed. The timbers, with the exception of the mud sills, are all mill sawn. The fact it had a brick chimney means that it was built from the earliest bricks in this part of the state. The stove for heating and cooking would've been brought in by boat from Mt. Clemens or by wagon from Detroit.

There appear to be two very early additions to the cabin. They consist of a shed kitchen off the north end, and a small room off the northwest corner behind the cabin. This was likely sleeping quarters. A bulkhead entrance to the cellar, once used at the northeast corner, may also have been added early.

Outlot fourteen was sold in 1827 to the Thompsons who owned adjoining outlots. The Thompsons, who were original settlers and members of the Pontiac Company, sold all of this adjoining property, which contained their homestead, to Francis Darrow and Abel Peck, of Darrow & Peck, in 1836. At the time Darrow & Peck purchased this property they subdivided it creating Pontiac's second subdivision, Darrow & Peck's Subdivision. How Darrow and Peck divided up lots between themselves is uncertain but the Darrows built a large homestead on land adjacent to the east side of the Sibley-Hoyt site. The Darrows retained ownership of the cabin, which now sat on lot number twenty-eight, until 1861 when they sold it to Richard Elliott. Elliott is shown in Pontiac's City Directory as residing on Lawrence Street below Williams in that year. Abel Peck Moved to Milford and built a large Greek Revival homestead by the mid 1840s.

Richard Elliott appears to have gotten married soon after buying the Sibley-Hoyt House because in 1863, when he sold the house, the deed is conveyed by Richard and Laura Elliott of Detroit. It was sold during a default on the mortgage. In this year the house was sold to George Hoyt, a music teacher from New York state, who came to Michigan in the 1840s when Charles Palmer hired him to teach music at his Romeo Academy in Romeo, Michigan. Palmer and Hoyt later came to Pontiac together in 1850. Hoyt's purchase of

this house would begin a one hundred and eleven year occupancy by the Hoyt family. It was during these years that major changes took place that transformed what was more than likely a hovel, when George bought it, into a comfortably-sized home with a dignified facade. The Hoyts made many contributions to the community during their presence and part three of this story will begin with their lives in Pontiac.

This new history of the Sibley-Hoyt House, formerly the Hoyt House, reveals two significant findings: the Sibleys' role in Pontiac's settlement and the existence of an early cabin within the greater house. Sibley's reasons for building a cabin here, at an early date, are not to be questioned though no document exists with a date and reference to such a structure. The subsequent two owners, William Thompson and Francis Darrow, would not have had the incentive to build a tenant cabin like Sibley had. These men were both prominent well to do citizens with noble homesteads close by. Could they have built a tenant cabin on their land? Surely they could have. But Sibley had everything invested in Pontiac and for him not to have built a cabin would have been a dereliction of his duty here. The fact that outlot 14 was inclusive of the "Mill Privilege" is the one document that shows its importance and relevance to Pontiac's ambitious start.

The goal of this story is not to diminish in any way the important role Stephen and Temperance Mack played in Pontiac's settlement, but to add to that story so that we know how Pontiac was established and what the ingredients were which helped it succeed. It is worth noting the inclusion of Solomon and Sarah Sibley as leading figures in Pontiac's founding so that our history can fairly reflect the facts.

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 third and final part of the story will appear in the next Gazette.

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT

Collections management continues to be a crucial issue for the Society. Our software program, Past Perfect Museum Software, allows us to keep very detailed records on our collections. This year, we were fortunate to have an intern from Oakland University, **Megan Callewaert**, catalog the artifacts on display in the Pioneer Museum. To date, we have catalogued 491 objects, 91 archival or manuscript materials, 420 photographs and 66 library books. Megan also spent time working on the photograph collection through the grant we received from the Lula C. Wilson Trust. The photograph collection will be very useful when it has been thoroughly researched and documented. We will continue the photograph project in 2003.

MEMBERSHIP

As of January 25, total membership in the Society stands at 277. The Society gained 45 new members in 2002. Currently, there are 74 life and 4 life couple memberships remaining. The Society no longer offers life memberships.

In August 2002, the membership committee began to use Past Perfect Museum Software to keep membership records. This has eliminated the need for card files which were previously being used. The new system has allowed the committee to keep more accurate records and to reduce paperwork. It has also led to a reduction in past due memberships. We now send out reminder letters, 30 day past due letters, 60 day past due letters and membership cancellation letters with ease. In addition, we have begun to list membership expiration dates on the Gazette mailing labels. This has proven very efficient and has been an effective way to notify our members of their membership status.

The membership committee feels it is time to initiate a membership drive. Our membership is down 56 from 2001, however, we are only carrying 17 past due members. We hope to increase membership in 2003 through a membership drive and through outreach programs.

2002 Donors *Continued*

Acquisition of Historical Materials

The Society maintains an ongoing acquisition program. It would be impossible to list individually all of the donations we received in the past year - suffice it to say that the Society is extremely grateful for your continued support. We are continually working to add to our collections in order to share these materials with the public. It is our desire to continue to build upon the foundation that our predecessors began 128 years ago - that of preserving the history and heritage of all of Oakland County.

Thank you to the following donors for their contributions to our collections in 2001:

Karen Allen	Keith and Barbara Bennett
Stuart Allen	Bruce Benter
Bruce Annett	Brian Bohnett
Russell C. Bell	Shannon Bradley

GUIDE COMMITTEE AND TOURS

Members of the Guide Committee served 306 children and 31 adults on ten different school tours. Ten regular member guides served and ten special guides were recruited by **Lauren** and **Maureen Tossey** for the Victorian Open House. The first Second Saturday Tour season was successful because patrons came and were guided by ten regular OCPHS docents. The dedicated tour guides are a wonderful asset to our organization.

EXHIBITS

In the year 2002, we were able to continue to install new exhibits at Pine Grove. The highlight of the year has been the renovation of the Pioneer Museum, which is now very near completion. The renovation included researching the artifacts and cataloging each one individually. **Megan Callewaert** has spent over 700 hours working on the museum renovation project. We have been very fortunate to have members **Keith Bennett** and **Guy Duffield** assisting with the project also. Keith has very generously contributed over 165 hours to the project. The renovation included painting the walls and floor, building platforms to raise the artifacts up off the floor, building display panels and rehabilitating the existing display cases. Additional lighting will also be installed. The creative new displays will offer greater visibility and will create a secure environment for the artifacts on display. The research will lead to more educational interpretive labels and a clear presentation for our visitors.

Two new displays were installed in the Wisner Mansion in 2002. The exhibit room now houses a display of quilts from our collection. This exhibit was made possible in part through the work of member **Marge Edwards** who inventoried the quilt collection earlier in the year with the assistance of the museum interns. Also on display in the Wisner Mansion is the Centennial Farms Photograph Exhibit. This exhibit was donated to the Society by the **Oakland County Historical Commission** and is on display in the upstairs exhibit area.

In 2002, there were also several small exhibits on display in the Library. Items from our collection, including hats, a bearskin coat and irons were on display for our visitors to enjoy.

John Cohassey
Estate of Janet Courtney
Joe and Rosemary Gallardo
Ron Gay
Richard Green
David Hackett
Margaret Jackson
Richard Johnson
Jack. D. King
Jean Kroger
Robert Lake
Rex Lamoreaux
Kevin F. Lyons
Carolyn Martin
Phyllis McMillen

Martha E. McNamara
Joan Pate
Susan Sadowski
Doris Smith
Ted Spehar
Susan M. Todd
Phyllis Wilkinson
Ernestine Williams
Tom and Fran Wilson

Oakland County Genealogical
Society
Oakland County Historical
Commission

We're Coming Over *By Charles H. Martinez*

On a raw January morning in Pontiac recently, a detachment of the 1775th Military police, stood tall and proud, executing a rite of passage every warrior has performed since the dawn of organized warfare. These men and women in their camouflage uniforms said "goodbye for a while" to their loved ones before going in harm's way to defend this nation in time of peril. The Company has been attached to the Pontiac National Guard Armory at Johnson and Elizabeth Lake roads for several years.

The destination of the 1775th was Fort McCoy in Wisconsin for further training and then possible deployment in the Middle East. There "Citizen Soldiers" of the Army National Guard have joined 17 other Guard and reserve units from Michigan and some 94,700 nationwide in the largest mobilization move since September 11, 2001.

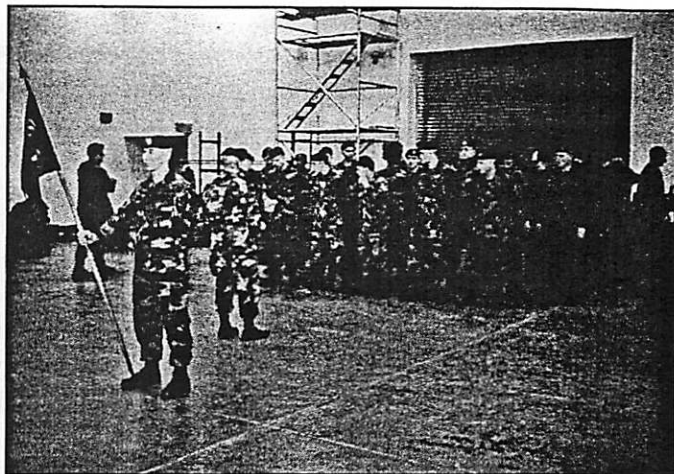
Along with proud family and friends the 1775th received a special send-off from a contingent of Oakland County veterans organized for the occasion by Jack Bressler, President of the Oakland County Veterans Group.

For more than a century and a half, Pontiac and other towns across the County have participated in the process of separation marked by tearful farewells. One of the earliest events occurred April 20, 1847 after the onset of hostilities with Mexico. On that date amid the cheers and well wishes of Pontiac residents forty-two volunteers marched away to join Company A, 15th Regiment, U.S. Infantry. Half of this company was composed of men from Oakland County who were recruited by Lieut. Samuel E. Beach, former County treasurer. Beach would become a local war hero, being promoted for meritorious conduct under fire at Contreras and Churubusco, Mexico.

One of the most protracted military send-offs to involve the County seat took place during the Civil War. In that conflict Oakland County men served in some 50 Northern units but most rallied to the banner of the 22nd Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment. This body was commanded by Col. Moses Wisner, former Michigan Governor, and Pontiac resident. To train the enlistees a camp was established in late July 1862 at the "Fairgrounds" on the northern outskirts of town. For some thirty-seven days raw recruits drilled at Camp Richardson under the watchful eyes of Col. Wisner and his staff. Meanwhile along the bivouac's perimeter, a curious crowd gawked at the maneuvers and waved occasionally to their young sons, brothers, or friends perspiring in prickly woolen uniforms.

On September 4, 1862 relatives of recruits descended on Pontiac from around the County and even more distant points to see the men off. A picnic was held first, next a presentation of a new silk regimental flag by young ladies of the city, followed by the obligatory speeches. The troops, one thousand strong, finally marched a mile south down Saginaw Street to the Pontiac train depot. There they were cheered repeatedly and given baskets of pies, cakes, and fruit before departing for Detroit and eventually Covington, Kentucky.

Echoes of these sad partings were heard again in World War I and II, perhaps amplified by the fear of greater suffering and death from more advanced methods of destruction.



A detachment of the 1775th Military Police Company receives final orders before departing the Pontiac National Guard Armory.

In 1945 as the boys came marching home, this organization with the help of a companion non-profit corporation, the "Oakland County Pioneer and Veterans Historical Foundation," was able to purchase and repair the former home of Governor Wisner. Over time the Society's research library here has amassed considerable information on Oakland County's participation in this nation's conflicts. Collection of this material is ongoing. On January 30, 2003 I asked a sergeant with the 1775th Military Police if his company had published a unit history. "No," he replied, "but if things get any worse overseas we'll be writing one real soon!"



Members of the Oakland County Veterans Group assemble to offer best wishes to the 1775th Military Police Company, which has been mobilized for overseas duty.

This is intended as the first in a series of articles devoted to telling the stories of the Oakland County veterans in the midst of battle. We can never repay them for preserving our liberty, but we must try.

MEMBERSHIP FORMS NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE!

If you haven't visited our website lately, now is the time. The website has been updated with new information and photographs of our latest exhibits. Beautiful new photographs of the Wisner Mansion and Research Library have been added as well. We have expanded the website to include a membership page where visitors can fill out a membership application, print a copy and mail it in with their dues payment. The OCPHS website can be found at <http://wwnet.net/~ocphs/index.html>.



NEWS AND EVENTS INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE VIA E-MAIL

If you would like to receive notices about Society events via e-mail, please send a message from your e-mail account to ocphs@wwnet.net. Sending notices via e-mail can help reduce postage costs and save paper. OCPHS will not sell your e-mail address to any outside companies or organizations. Only mail from OCPHS will be sent to your e-mail account.

Board of Directors 2003

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Fran Wilson, Bloomfield

Rodger Zeller, Waterford

OCPHS Wish List

The Society is always in need of the following items:

- Lawn bags for recycling yard waste
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Copy machine paper

We are also looking for the following items:

- Wooden card catalog files - like those used in libraries
- Microfilm reader - to make our collection of microfilm available to researchers
- Laser printer
- CD burner - to backup our computer files

If you have access to these items, or know of an organization that may be willing to donate them to us, please contact Jamie Karl at 248-338-6732.

Thank you!

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.

- 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

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.

Welcome New Members!

Kathleen Abbey, Sanford, FL
Florence Anderson, Waterford
Robert Bailey, Auburn Hills
Audrey Coon, Pontiac
Susanne Elmy, West Bloomfield
Leslie Haight, Clarkston
Jay Hickey, Ann Arbor
Dan & Carol Kadish, Vernon, NJ
Marilyn Kalfian, Timonium, MD
Donna Mallonen, Pontiac

Norman Mallory, Ortonville
John Marshall, Bloomfield Hills
Madelene Neaves, Waterford
Colleen Olin, Rochester
Judy Shore, Oxford
Donald Siegla, Clarkston
Susan Todd, Clinton Twp.
Maureen Tossey, Pontiac

Independence Twp. Library

Historic Community News

The *Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm* will be hosting a workshop focusing on Past Perfect Museum Software on Saturday, April 26, 2003. For more information, please contact Pat McKay at 248-656-4663.

Calendar of Events

Saturday, March 8	<i>Second Saturday Tour</i> 10 am to 2 pm
Saturday, March 15	<i>Board Meeting</i> 9:30 am
Saturday, April 12	<i>Second Saturday Tour</i> 10 am to 2 pm
Wednesday, April 16	<i>Board Meeting</i> 9:30 am
Friday, April 18	<i>Closed, Good Friday</i>
Saturday, May 10	<i>Second Saturday Tour</i> 10 am to 2 pm
Saturday, May 17	<i>Board Meeting</i> 9:30 am



St. Nicholas paid Pine Grove a special visit during Victorian Open House.



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(248) 338-6731 Fax

ocphs@wwnet.net

*Preservation of the
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of Future Generations*

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