

President's Letter, May 2006

Hello! I am pleased to begin serving as OCPHS President, and to welcome the 2006/07 board members to their posts. We have several new and returning directors, bringing both fresh ideas and continuity to our governance. We would like to thank Michael Willis for serving as our President since 1999, and to wish him well as he enjoys some retirement leisure and continues to assist us as a director.

The new board will convene Wednesday, June 21 for a workshop meeting. We'll set overall goals for the coming year, appoint committee chairs, and establish specific tasks to tackle. As members, you are invited to attend board meetings—but be aware that an eager director may ask you to take on an assignment—we need and welcome volunteers!

Some of the major items we'll be working on this year include fundraising for our future comfort facilities, a program of planned giving, events and outreach, organizing and making our library and archival holdings more accessible, preservation needs, a review of our collection focus, and promoting Oakland County's history through various publications and presentations.

This and future issues of the *Gazette* will help you stay informed about Society news and county history. We hope you'll see steady progress over the coming months, and that you will be inspired to help us achieve our goals through volunteerism and continued support of the Society. We have 132 years as an organization under our belts, and with your help, our 133rd year can be a great success.

Sincerely,



SAVE SEPTEMBER 10, 2006 FOR OUR AUTUMN FESTIVAL...

Sunday, September 10, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. has been reserved for our fun and fund-raising event for the season. The Anachronists will be on hand to demonstrate crafts common to the era before electricity, such as candle-making, spinning, quilting, weaving, butter and cheese making; soap making, wood carvings, and more! There will be hotdogs and "spider" biscuits to eat and lemonade and apple cider to drink, and, maybe, ice cream sundaes for dessert. There will be home-made cookies to eat – and take home. There will be lessons in the schoolhouse and tours of the Wisner House. We may have games of horseshoes and other events for children. We ask our members to give us names and addresses of those to whom we should send flyers. Mark your calendars now, and bring the whole family.

Sponsorships will be available early in August.

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OCPHS ANNUAL MEETING....

The annual meeting of this society was held Saturday, May 20, 2006. Election of the Board of Directors was completed with 13 members elected to three-year terms of office. Bruce Annett presented a photographic program documenting the historic Pontiac of 1928, and how the area development was affected by the Great Depression and the wars that followed. It was the end of an era. Architect Chris Morgan also presented the details of our proposed building with cost estimates. Following the meeting refreshments were served. Immediately after, the board met to elect new officers. The complete listing of new board members and officers is printed below.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS...

Amy Annett, President
Keith Bennett, First Vice-President
Fran Wilson, Second Vice-President
Kathryn Daggy, Treasurer

Remaining Board members:

Sylvia Adams	Charles Martinez
Bruce Annett	Jean Milton
Janice Bell	Joan Pate
*Kimberly Bell	*C. Corydon Randall
*LaVon DeLisle	Constance Scafe
Guy Duffield	Gale Scafe
Gaylor Forman	*James Slezinski
Miriam Foxman	Richard Stamps
*Gil Haven	*Wallace Szumny
Judy Hudalla	Scott Tupper
Barbara Irwin	Michael Willis
Annalee Kennedy	Rodger Zeller
Rex Lamoreaux	

*indicates new to the Board of Directors

HONORS FOR OCPHS MEMBERS....

Our society member, **RICHARD STAMPS**, was recently honored as recipient of the Earl Bordon Leadership Award for 2006, in acknowledgement for his contributions for historic preservation. This honor was presented by the Rochester Hills Historic District. Dr. Stamps has been a member of the Historic Study Committee and the Rochester Hills District Commission. He is a full-time professor of Archaeology at Oakland University. He has been a member of the Board of Directors of Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society for several years and contributes his time and talents to the preservation of our historic buildings.

JEAN MILTON, another long-time member of this society and the Board of Directors was honored by Oakland County Board of Commissioners for years of outstanding service to the County's Personnel Appeal Board. Jean's ancestor, John Hersey, purchased land in the Rochester area in 1818.

IN MEMORIAM

Rosamond Haeberle

Rosamond joined this Society in 1975, and was a Life Member. She held the office of President 1992 – 1993. During her term of office, she continued the Annual Dinner, Ice Cream social and Victorian Open House and started the Sunday Lecture Series and walking tours of Pontiac's Historic Franklin Boulevard. Rosamond moved to Kansas a few years ago and died in Clearwater, Kansas May 8, 2006.

Thomas E. Metzdorf

Thomas was a Life Member of this Society, and resided in Auburn Hills. He spent 30 years in the Pontiac school system teaching English for 10 years and as a librarian for 20 years. Thomas died February 8, 2006 and is survived by his wife, Susan, two children, and five grandchildren.

Frederick James Poole

Fred Poole was a life-time resident of Pontiac; a third generation businessman with F.J. Poole Lumber and Hardware. He was active in many community organizations and a generous supporter of OCPHS. The original Poole desk is in the carriage house library of our society. Fred died June 5, 2006 and is survived by his wife Barbara, three daughters and two granddaughters.

LANDSCAPING UPDATE....

The last of the rosebushes to line the street-side of the Wisner property have been ordered and should be planted this spring. We underestimated the number we needed, so there are still roses waiting to be purchased at \$20.00 each. When all are planted and paid for, the purchasers will be acknowledged in the *The Gazette*.

Final decisions on the brick pavers for walkways to the main house, schoolhouse and potential new building cannot be made until we have an approved layout for the driveway, and appropriate paths to the buildings. We will take names from everyone who will be interested in the details for purchasing the memorial pavers. As soon as we have solid information, we will let everyone know.

The Lillian Paull Memorial Garden will be planted and cared for by the Pontiac Garden Club, as well as the gardens surrounding the summer kitchen.

The herb garden was recently weeded by Jan and Kim Bell, and they excavated the bricks surrounding the garden and added wood chips to the paths in the garden. The Pontiac Branch of the Women's National Farm and Garden has been caring for the charming herb garden and will continue do so this year.

We have other small gardens that need to be weeded, watered, and pampered throughout the summer (but not planted). If you are interested in adopting a garden, let us know.

CONSIDER A CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP...

Our Pine Grove complex is a destination of interest in Oakland County. The Gov. Moses Wisner home and grounds are important to the history of the city of Pontiac, county of Oakland and state of Michigan. We encourage businesses in Pontiac and the surrounding county to contribute to the care, upkeep and improvement of our buildings and grounds. As we are sure you know, older buildings require a great deal of work to keep in good repair, and the maintenance of gardens and grounds is constant and costly. We also maintain a large collection of county history in our research library and archives, which must be professionally preserved. **We invite your yearly sponsorship of \$500.00 to benefit the society's educational and preservation efforts. Each new sponsorship will have a business-size card announcement in the next issue of *The Gazette*, and a mention in each of the next three issues of the newsletter to be published. This totals one year of publicity for your business.** Please contact Tracy in our office for details. We do reserve the right to refuse unsuitable businesses.

HOUSE CLEANING...

Our closets are over-flowing! We have collected things by way of donations for many, many years. In reviewing our mission and goals, your Board of Directors has voted to clean house, and find another home for the many empty picture frames, typewriters that don't work, duplicates of old tools and farming and kitchen equipment, and an amazing assortment of other items that do not conform to our mission. Some things will be sold and some will be given to other historic communities.

We have found a framed composite picture of the members of the Oakland County Bar Association of 1960. It is not in keeping with our designated collection criteria; however, it will be of interest to some other organization or group. It is YOURS for an appropriate donation to our society.

PONTIAC GARDEN CLUB SUMMER TOUR TO INCLUDE PINE GROVE

The Pontiac Garden Club's annual tour will be Saturday, July 22, and again this year features the Wisner House and grounds. The tour of 9 – 10 Pontiac gardens will start at 9:30 in front of the Pontiac Public Library, where tickets will be sold that day. There are many beautiful and creative home gardens in the city, and the tour is a good way to find ideas of what you can do with a city lot.

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HISTORICAL SOCIETIES MEET IN THE DRAYTON PLAINS SCHOOLHOUSE



In February of this year a call went out from Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society, Orion Historical Society, and Farmington Historical Society to the 33 or more historical societies in Oakland County to come to a meeting at Pine Grove on April 29, to discuss our common problems and possible solutions of same. Representatives from Farmington, White Lake, Rochester Hills, Waterford, Highland, Franklin, Bloomfield, Pontiac Area Historical Society, Orion, Oakland Township and OCPHS attended. Other societies expressed interest, but will send representatives later.

Brian Golden from Farmington and the Oakland County Historical Commission led the round-table type discussion of the common problems historical societies face. Some of the items discussed were membership, funding, public relations, volunteerism, image problems, and preservation, all of which are things societies have to deal with.

Making better use of technology, sharing speakers and programs, attending each other's meetings and events, sharing of surplus items, using graduate students, high school volunteers, and community service as helpers, all were suggested as ways to improve societies' images and help with collections.

It was decided to hold 3 – 4 meetings per year, taking turns at hosting and furnishing refreshments. The next meeting will be at Waterford on Saturday, August 5, from 10-12. Letters will go out to the various historical groups informing and reminding them of the time and date. Holding a workshop, possibly through the Michigan Historical Society, was suggested for either a fall or spring program.

A letter of support for the gathering and offering the assistance of the Historical Society of Michigan was read by Larry Wagenaar, director of the society.

The meeting was closed and a tour of the Wisner House and Farm Museum was available to participants.

*Fran Wilson
OCPHS representative*

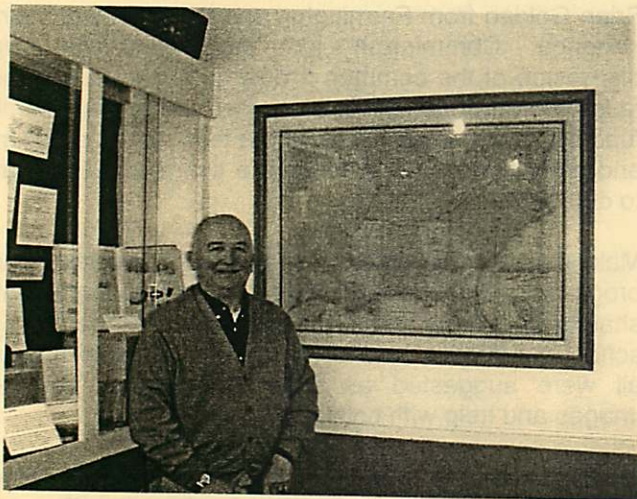
DONER'S CORNER...

Every year spring fever seems to elevate thoughts of donating family or company historical items to the society. Here, Greg Pischea, retired Grosse Pointe history teacher, proudly stands next to one of his Civil War era gifts. The donation is entitled "Map of the Seat of War to Accompany The American Conflict." This suggests its original owner could follow developments in the struggle as the map pinpoints battlefields, forts, railroads, state capitals, towns, etc. It was engraved by Oliver J. Stuart and published in 1865 by O.D. Case & Co., of Hartford, Connecticut.

Other recent donations by Mr. Pischea are: Two framed Confederate bank notes and The Book of the Presidents with Biographical Sketches. The latter is illustrated with beautiful engravings and authored in 1901 by Charles H. Grosvenor, Civil War hero and politician. The doner was introduced to our Society by members Rosemary Gallardo and Jeffery C. Clark.

Please note: The society has an established accession policy with certain restrictions on the nature and size of such gifts along with the time period they represent. We welcome all appropriate gifts but please contact us by phone, fax, or e-mail before bringing over an item to donate.

Charles Martinez



Greg Pischea

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED...

All committees can use members and we need more guides for tour groups. We invite you to join us in making the Pine Grove complex the best in the county. Call Tracy, in our office, to volunteer.

PONTIAC GARDEN CLUB TOUR (continued)

The Garden club has a membership of 45, four of whom are Master Gardeners. The club began in 2001, and their initial project was planting and maintaining the concrete planters in downtown Pontiac, which they continued to do for four years. Proceeds from the tour will be used for a Sensory Garden for the Pontiac Public Library and OCPHS gardens.

Tickets are \$9.00 for seniors and \$12.00 for other adults. Discount adult tickets are \$10.00 in advance, and can be purchased at the Pine Grove Carriage House on Tuesday through Thursday, from 11 – 4.

For additional information call 248-745-3710 (Judy).

We can use volunteers to help serve lemonade and cookies under a tent near the Capital School bell, on our grounds, on Saturday, July 22 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

TOURS AVAILABLE...

Tours are available for Wisner House, farm museum, schoolhouse and out-buildings. Guided tours for school groups have started; and there are openings for additional school classes. Adults may visit our complex as well. Consider your church fellowship gathering, senior center groups, genealogy and historical societies, and your bridge partners or lunch friends. Guided tours are available by appointment and usually last 1 ½ hours. The charge is \$5.00 per adult. The schoolhouse can be reserved for meetings for \$25.00 for 2 hours, and picnic lunches may be eaten in the schoolhouse. We recommend groups size be 10 or more. The schoolhouse and carriage house are barrier-free, but the Wisner Mansion and Pioneer farm museum are not. Call our office for available dates.

NEW MEMBERS....

Shannon Bradley, Pontiac
Jeffery Clark, Troy
Ray Henry, Rochester
H & E Homes, LLC, Ortonville
Smith & Smith Associates, Pontiac
Stephen Austin, Gig Harbor, WA
Jeffrey Schaffner, Stoneham, MA
Gregory Pischea, Grosse Pointe
Robert Davis, Pontiac
Temple Beth El, Bloomfield Hills

Welcome !!

FROM THE NEWSPAPERS...

Pontiac Gazette Oct. 23, 1891:

A large farm house with the entire contents, belonging to Wellington Young, of Waterford, was totally destroyed by fire last Friday night. Mr. Young and family were in Pontiac in attendance upon the Ben Hur entertainment. The house and contents were insured in the Oakland Monitor.

Miss Agnes Johnson, of this city, is the assistant Secretary of the Oakland County Sunday School Association, and desires the names and addresses of all the Sunday School Superintendents of the county, to whom she desires to mail some documents. Members of Sunday Schools who read this notice will confer a favor upon the worthy secretary, if they will lend their assistance in the premises.

Pontiac Daily Press July 9, 1901:

Divers continued to explore the bottom of Orchard Lake Monday until darkness set in, in search of the body of Reuben Whitesell, the unfortunate man who was drowned Saturday afternoon, but without results. For many rods around spot where Whitesell is supposed to have gone down every inch of the bottom has been covered. Nine dives, some of them lasting as long as forty-five minutes were made by the divers. Searching parties are still at work, but up to noon today nothing had been found. The opinion of the divers is that if Whitesell could not be found Monday it would be necessary to wait until the body comes to the surface and becomes a floater. This plan will probably be followed and in the meantime a constant watch will be kept upon the lake in the hope of discovering his body as soon or shortly after he comes to the surface.

Pontiac Gazette October 11, 1889:

Jottings:

Miss Florence Earl is spending a few weeks in Detroit with her sister, Mrs. McLaughlin.

Thomas Highland, who lived near South Lyon, died Oct. 2, aged about 82 years.

Married at the bride's parents, Holly, October 2, by C.G. Admans, Esq., John E. Weinrich and Miss Minnie Stiggow.

Charles Dawson and Robert Stanlake, in the putting of new fronts in their store, have made one of the finest improvements on Saginaw street for several years. It is now a nice block.

Married at Denver, Colorado, October 2d, by the Rev. J. I. Harris, A.A. Moler, of Oxford and Miss Flora McVean, of Pontiac, Michigan.

Joseph Baker, brakeman on the P.O. & P.A. last Friday got his second finger on his right hand badly mashed while coupling cars.

Judge Moore last Wednesday imposed the following sentences to the Ionia prison: James Farrington for pocket picking one year; Frank Barbo larceny, 90 days.

The Ladies of the W.C.T.U. will give a literary entertainment at the home of Mrs. Moses Hill on Tuesday evening Oct. 15th. Refreshments served, all for ten cents. Everyone cordially invited. By order of Pres.

Pontiac Gazette March 6, 1891:

South Lyon:

Joseph Clapp has sold his farm, two miles east of town, to Mr. Oliver, of Pleasant Valley; considerations \$4,000.

Mrs. William Calkins has been troubled for about a year with what is called creeping paralysis. Last week she received her second stroke, and has been unable to articulate only in monosyllables since.

The ice company made good the loss of Charles Rane's horses which he lost through the ice at Whitmore Lake.

On Monday Wilford Yanson's little two-year-old baby boy helped himself to a bottle of Hall's cough syrup, poured it into a cup as he had seen his mamma do, and proceeded to drink it, but succeeded in spilling a part of it. He got enough, however, to put him to sleep immediately. They drove rapidly into town and placed him under Dr. Millmon's care, who administered an antidote and ordered him to keep moving. At last reports he was all right.

Our city fathers are trying to frame a new charter for our village. Everyone wants to attach an amendment to it.

Ball Mountain:

The family of Mrs. Looney congregated at her residence on her sixty-eighth birthday February 22nd. It was a complete surprise to her. She received a very nice chair, an elegant plush photograph album and other presents.

Miss Mary Looney is visiting relatives in Detroit.

J.B. Young lost a horse last week.

Annual Meeting of the Oakland County Pioneer Society February 21, 1891:

Judge Baldwin promised, as President, to do his best to have prepared an interesting programme (sic) for the next annual meeting, to consist of sectional historical papers, urging a cooperative effort on the part of the members.



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*PRESERVATION OF THE PAST
FOR THE ENRICHMENT OF
FUTURE GENERATIONS*

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

**OAKLAND COUNTY PIONEER AND HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

Name _____

Street _____ Apt No. _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

- Check here if gift membership
- from _____

MEMBERSHIPS ARE FOR ONE YEAR

- Student.....\$15.
- Senior (65 & over)..... \$15.
- Individual..... \$20.
- Couple..... \$35.
- Family (Parents & Children)..... \$50.
- Non-Profit Organization.....\$20.
- Patron..... \$75.
- Benefactor.....\$150.
- Corporate Sponsor..... \$500.

Check desired category and enclose this application with check or money order made payable to: Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society and send to 405 Cesar Chavez Avenue, Pontiac, MI 48342

MUSEUM AND LIBRARY HOURS

**TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY
11 AM – 4 PM**

Please call before coming in

**WISNER HOUSE TOURS
by appointment**

**GROUP WELCOME
Call for information
248-338-6732**