



The only publication dedicated to the history and heritage of Oakland County  
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405 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue, Pontiac, Michigan 48342

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Friends –

Another year is almost over, and how the time flies! This year is almost finished and we haven't completed the projects we so carefully planned last January. You, too? We did finalize some improvements to the carriage house and the Wisner Home. Our intern, Emilie Hurley, along with Charles Martinez, are working on a detailed inventory of the furnishings, china and artifacts in every room of the Wisner Home. We had more school tours than usual this year as well as some other successful events.

My personal thanks to all the members of the Board of Directors for their time and ideas which keep Pine Grove Center as a viable historic site in the community. Thanks, too, to the other volunteers whose interest and dedication help us along the way: Fran Wilson, head librarian; Joan Hayes, library research; Geoff Brieger, chairman of accessions committee; Bob Nelson and Scott Tupper for repair work and odd jobs; Mary Connell for handling publicity; and all those people who assist with events and especially those who give so much of their time to help us at Arts, Beats and Eats in September.

Be sure to read the information about our upcoming events for this holiday season and the *Small Talks* scheduled in January, February, and March.

*May the road rise to meet you  
May the wind be always at your back  
May the warm rays of sun fall upon your home  
And may the hand of a friend always be near.*

My best holiday wishes to all of you and your families.

Mike Willis



### CALENDARS STILL AVAILABLE

The 2009 calendar published by this society is still available for sale. The historic photographs are in black and white and the back cover is in full color. It is priced at \$10.00 per copy from our office. Each day has space for notes and appointment times. How about sending them to friends who no longer live in the Oakland County area? Pick up your copy before they are all gone. They will also be available at the holiday events: Hanging of the Greens, Victorian Open House and De-hanging of Greens. The calendar can also be ordered from our website for an additional \$2 to cover postage. Website orders may be paid by credit card or Pay Pal for convenience.

### HOLIDAY HOURS AT OCPHS

Our office will be **closed** to visitors and researchers the week of November 23 - 30 for the Thanksgiving holiday. We will also be closed from December 19, 2008 through January 5, 2009.

Regular office and library hours, which are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 11:00 – 4:00, resume on Tuesday, January 6, 2009.

Group tours may be arranged by appointment.

### IN THIS ISSUE

<i>President's Letter</i>	1
<i>2009 Calendars</i>	1
<i>Holiday Hours at OCPHS</i>	1
<i>Victorian Open House Events</i>	2
<i>Small Talks – Jan, Feb, Mar 2009</i>	2
<i>Donation of Burial Sites at Perry Mount Park</i>	2
<i>Website History Challenge</i>	2
<i>Theft of Historic School Bell</i>	3
<i>New Members</i>	3
<i>Friends of OCPHS</i>	3
<i>Patrons</i>	3
<i>Benefactors</i>	3
<i>Board Members</i>	3
<i>Christmas Trivia</i>	3

## **VICTORIAN OPEN HOUSE EVENTS**

Join us in celebrating our Victorian Open House this year. We'll have a **Hanging of the Greens on December 2 at 9 a.m.** All the rooms in the Wisner House need decorating, and the large tree in the parlor needs several people to set it up and unwrap and hang ornaments. The schoolhouse needs its trimming and the carriage house must have decorations, too. A lunch of chili will be available to go with your coffee and tea from late morning or until everything is in order for the holidays. We need elves to help. Come and join in the fun.

**Teas of Yore is the theme of Victorian Open House scheduled for December 14 from 12 – 4 p.m.** We will have some beautiful antique "tea boxes" on display for this event. They are part of the treasures in our attic that come out from time to time to share with our visitors. Every room in the Wisner House will be decorated for your pleasure. Following your tour, tea and cookies will be served in the Carriage House. Our docents will be in costumes and will guide you around. We can use more helpers – not only for the Wisner House, but with serving refreshments in the Carriage House. Gather a few friends and make this a part of your holiday celebration this year.

**There will be no charge for the Victorian Open House event; however, donations are accepted. Sponsorships are also available for those who would like to make a more generous contribution.**

**De-hanging of the Greens December 18 at 10 a.m.** will mark the end of events for our Society for this calendar year. Everything that was put up must be taken down, wrapped, and stored until next year. We can use your help. We want you to feel a part of this organization, and getting involved for a few hours in this festive time of year would be most welcome.

**You may arrange private tours for groups of six or more between December 3 and 18.** This is a great option if you can't make our Open House. Or teachers, this would be a special treat for a group of school-age youngsters. Call our office for details.

## **SMALL TALKS**

*Three Small Talks are scheduled for the first three months of 2009. Beginning at 2 p.m., the programs will run about an hour, followed by cookies and coffee. There is no charge, but donations are accepted. As space is limited, reservations are recommended but not required.*

**Sunday, January 18, 2009:** Dale Kutchev, Waterford teacher, will share items and stories from his extensive collection of military artifacts, including books, photographs, weapons, uniforms and hats, covering military history from the War of 1812 through the early twentieth century.

**Saturday, February 14, 2009:** Archaeologist Richard Stamps will present an *Update on the Oliver Williams Project*. Oliver Williams was a pioneer of Waterford, and the search is on to find his original farmstead.

**Sunday, March 15, 2009:** Bruce Annett's program, *Small Wheels, Big Fun*, looks at the popular hobby of automotive model collecting, with examples, factors in determining value, and considerations for starting or expanding a collection of your own.

## **BURIAL SITES DONATED FOR RESALE**

Colonel George F. McGregor, who recently contributed to our Endowment in memory of his sister, Jean Milton, and other family members, has given the Society six burial sites and space for an above-ground monument at Pontiac's Perry Mount Park Cemetery. The monument space, valued by the cemetery at \$325, and burial sites, valued at \$1,000 each, are located in the oldest section of the Perry Street cemetery. We invite those interested in purchasing one or more of the sites to contact us for further information. All reasonable offers will be considered. This important decision could not only help our members or friends with their final arrangements, but support the Society financially as well.

## **WEBSITE HISTORY CHALLENGE COMING SOON**

Like history? Of course, or you wouldn't be reading this newsletter! But we'd like you to read our website, too, and test your knowledge of history at the same time! Beginning in January, we'll post a short trivia challenge about some facet of county history on our website, [www.ocphs.org](http://www.ocphs.org). Print out the quiz, mail it in with your answers, and you'll be eligible to compete against your fellow history buffs for a chance to win a fabulous (or pretty nice, anyway) prize: a year's extended membership to OCPHS, a gift membership for someone you know, or even a membership in another local historical society! This is a way to educate, entertain, and encourage interest in history and in the local groups who promote it. The program is part of the community outreach grant we were awarded earlier this year from the Lula C. Wilson Trust. Check out our website in January to try your hand at history!

## ISN'T ANYTHING SAFE?

One of our prized possessions has been the Central Schoolhouse bell, manufactured in 1893 and on display on our grounds since 1983. It is big. It is heavy. It was bolted to a concrete slab. It has been stolen. Following a board meeting on Saturday, November 15, it was discovered that the bell was not there. The local police are aware of the theft, and we hope that local metal dealers will be on the alert to return it to our Society if someone tries to sell it. There is a reward for its return to the Society, intact.

## NEW MEMBERS

Susan Hickey – Ann Arbor  
Dorothy Yancey – Bloomfield Hills

## FRIENDS OF OCPHS

Nancy & Guy Duffield  
Florine Isgrigg Galbraith  
Jo & Larry Pate

## BENEFACTORS

Miriam Foxman  
Byron Stout III

## PATRONS

Beatrice Catherino  
Ann & Richard Irwin  
Bob & Leigh Sowles  
Mr. & Mrs. Fritz Troff  
Pontiac Regional Chamber  
Corydon & Marian Randall  
Jeffery C. Clark  
Vivian Eddy  
Nancy Scott

## OCPHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Amy Annett – Waterford (Treasurer)  
Bruce Annett – Waterford  
Kimberly Bell – Macomb  
Kathryn Daggy – Auburn Hills (Secretary)  
Guy Duffield – Waterford (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President)  
Gaylor Forman – Bloomfield Hills  
Miriam Foxman – Keego Harbor  
Brian Golden – Farmington  
Judith Hudalla – Waterford  
Annalee Kennedy – Sylvan Lake  
Charles Martinez – West Bloomfield  
Joan Pate – Bloomfield Hills  
Corydon Randall – Bloomfield Hills  
James Slezinski – Lake Orion  
Richard Stamps – Rochester  
Michael West – Bloomfield Hills (1<sup>st</sup> Vice President)  
Michael Willis – Pontiac (President)  
Rodger K. Zeller - Waterford

## CHRISTMAS TRIVIA...

#1: What popular children's cracker today was introduced in 1901 as a Christmas ornament?

#2: What popular Christmas candy had its debut and was given out by a choirmaster in 1670 to quiet the noisy children?

#3: What best selling Christmas song did Gene Autry record in 1951?

#4: To determine who opens the first Christmas gift, what kind of glass Christmas ornament has to be found first on the Christmas tree?

#5: "Crying up the lum" is how some Scottish children tell Santa Claus their Christmas gift wishes. What is "crying up the lum"?

#6: What are the names of Santa's eight reindeer as given in Clement Moore's poem "The Night Before Christmas"?

#7: In 1939 Robert May created this Christmas figure as a Christmas promotion for Montgomery Ward department store in Chicago.

#8: In the 1920s what world-wide beverage company adopted the Santa Claus figure for a winter advertising promotion?

### Answers:

#1 The Barnum's Animal Cracker and box was introduced by the National Biscuit Company. The box, as it does today, had a string designed so that the box could be hung as a Christmas ornament.

#2 The candy cane.

#3 Frosty the Snowman

#4 The glass pickle ornament. The pickle ornament is a legend from Germany that says parents started hiding a pickle in the holiday tree to reward the most observant child in the family. The first one to spot the pickle got an extra present from St. Nicholas on Christmas morning. A lovely story except for small details: St. Nicholas traditionally visits German children on the fifth or sixth of December, and children usually opened their presents on Christmas Eve. Also, most Germans had never heard of the pickle ornament.

#5 The children simply stick their heads up the chimney and shout out their Christmas desires.

#6 Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donder, and Blitzen. Rudolph did not make his first appearance until later in 1939.

#7 Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer.

#8 The Coca-Cola company used Santa Claus to promote the idea that a soft drink was a winter beverage as well as a summer beverage.

**OAKLAND COUNTY PIONEER &  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. No \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if gift membership from: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIPS ARE FOR ONE YEAR, FROM JULY 1  
TO JULY 1 OF EACH YEAR.**

- Student.....\$15.00
- Individual.....\$20.00
- Family (children under 18).....\$35.00
- Non-Profit organizations..... \$20.00
- Patron..... \$100.00
- Benefactor..... \$200.00
- Friends of OCPHS..... \$500.00
- Corporate Sponsor..... \$500.00

Check desired membership category and enclose with this application and check or money order made payable to Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society and mail to above address.

