



The only publication dedicated to the history and heritage of Oakland County
 Vol. 42, No.1 Published by THE OAKLAND COUNTY PIONEER & HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 405 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue, Pontiac, Michigan 48342

March 2009

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Happy New Year to all. Now that the holidays are over it is time to get back to work planning for this year's business and events. During the recent weeks we have lost another long time member, Pauline Harrison, who served as our clothing committee chair. Our sympathy goes out to her family.

Also, at the end of November, the society had a theft of our beloved Central Elementary School bell that dated back to about 1883. The estimated value of this bell was \$12,000, but it cannot be replaced. It was a priceless piece of history. The shame of it all is that the person that stole it smashed it up and sold it to a scrap dealer for 35 cents a pound. Thanks to the scrap dealer who alerted us that he bought it, as he assisted in making an identification of the suspect. We have begun the prosecution of that suspect. The Board of Directors and I feel that we are here to preserve and protect history and our artifacts, and we will push for maximum prosecution.

On a positive note, the Victorian Open House was a great success, with over 100 people attending. Thank you to all the volunteers that gave of their time to put together and man the event. We have had two of our *Small Talks* events, and the January and February programs went very well, with standing room only. The March talk promises to be interesting as well, so contact the office for reservations and attend with the rest of us.

We will look forward to seeing everyone this year as you join in and volunteer your time. Remember, the success of the society is only as good as its volunteers.

Mike Willis

All Oakland County historical and genealogical organizations are encouraged to announce their programs and events in this *Oakland Gazette*. The next issue will be in June. Send details to editor, Jo Pate, bipate30@aol.com. Subject line: Gazette.

COMING EVENTS

Saturday, March 15, 2009 – Small Talk
Small Wheels, Big Fun - Bruce Annett, Jr. will bring his scale models of various automobiles to share with his talk. Fun for all ages. 2 P.M. – Carriage House or Schoolhouse. Call for reservations. No admission charge but donations accepted. Refreshments after program.

Saturday, March 21 – Board of Directors meeting.
 9:30 A.M. – Carriage House

Wednesday, April 15 – Board of Directors meeting.
 9:30 A.M. – Carriage House

Saturday, April 18 – **Spring Fling**
 Presentation by Goldner Walsh Nurseries horticulturist Joel Miller on Victorian gardening followed by tour of the greenhouses at the nursery.
 11 A.M. at Goldner Walsh facilities.

Saturday, May 16 – Annual meeting of OCPHS

Wednesday, June 17 – Pot-luck luncheon with OCPHS Board members. Meeting at 9:30 A.M., luncheon to follow.

(All members are welcome to attend the Board of Directors meetings.)

MICHIGAN IN PERSPECTIVE: THE LOCAL HISTORY CONFERENCE

April 17 – 18, 2009 at the McGregor Conference Center on the Wayne State University campus. Visit <http://www.hsmichigan.org/> for more details, registration, conference schedule and session descriptions. You may also call 517.324.1828.

WATERFORD TOWNSHIP'S LOG CABIN DAYS

June 27 – 28. Details from Sally Strait – e-mail: Sstrait649@comcast.net

OAKLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Saturday, April 25 – 8 A.M. – 12 Noon – Teaching History in the Classroom. Covert Center, Waterford.

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE

The first Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society website challenge is up and running! A short trivia quiz is posted and visitors may either take the quiz just for fun, or send in their answers for a chance to win a membership in our society or another local historical society of their choosing. Go directly to the Challenge by clicking on this link:

<http://www.ocphs.org/drupal-6.1?q=node/101>

Thanks, and good luck!

We are sorry to announce the death of two former members of our Board of Directors.

Pauline Schwartz Harrison had been a board member for several years, and served as chair of the Clothing Committee. She died January 5, 2009 at Ypsilanti. Our condolences to her four children: Betty Ann Wright, Susan Shields, Donald Schwartz, and Melanie Schwartz.

Frank Edwards was a board member of OCPHS for three years; he died November 1, 2008 in Davison, after a yearlong illness. He was a founder of the Pontiac Restoration Society, supporting the restoration of historical buildings in the Pontiac community.



(Dale Kutchey's Small Talk – January 18, 2009)



(Richard Stamps' Small Talk – February 14, 2009)

JUST TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT

The City of Pontiac is putting in a new "gateway" sign at the Woodward Avenue city limits that reads: "City of Pontiac – Founded 1861". While it is true that Pontiac was incorporated as a city in 1861, the community was "founded" and named in 1818, when Stephen Mack and his associates settled on the banks of what is now known as the Clinton River. Pontiac was named as the Oakland County seat in January 1819.

(thanks to Bruce Annett, Jr. for the clarification)

CALL FOR CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

There are several openings for the Board of Directors for OCPHS. The bylaws require that all members of the board attend at least four of the 11 meetings a year; have their membership paid in full for the year; be aware that they are expected to chair a committee whenever possible, serve as an active member of one or more committees; and participate in programs and events during the year. The term of office is three years. Those interested in being considered for such a position should submit a letter of interest by March 31. Address to Nomination Chairman, OCPHS, 405 Cesar E. Chavez Drive, Pontiac, MI 48342.

NEW MEMBERS:

Maurine Payne
Gary Pike
Sue Grifor

The society gained 17 new memberships in 2008.

FRIENDS OF OCPHS

Florine Isgrigg Galbraith
Guy & Nancy Duffield
Tom & Fran Wilson

Jo & Larry Pate
Gaylor Forman

BENEFACTORS

Miriam Foxman
Mike & Helen West

Byron Stout

PATRONS

Bea Catherino
Vivian Eddy
Richard & Ann Irwin
Pontiac Regional Chamber
Douglas & Judith Roesser

Jeff Clark
Neil Munro
Bob & Leigh Sowles
Cory & Marion Randall

FINAL EXAM

Remember when our grandparents, great-grandparents, and such stated that they only had an 8th grade education? Well, check this out. This is the eighth-grade final exam from 1895 in Salina, Kansas. It was taken from the original document on file at the Smokey Valley Genealogical Society and Library in Salina, and reprinted by the Saline Journal. It was picked up on the internet and well worth reading.

GRAMMAR (Time, one hour)

1. Give the nine rules for the use of Capital Letters.
2. Name the Parts of Speech and define those that have no Modifications.
3. Define Verse, Stanza and Paragraph.
4. What are the Principal Parts of a verb? Give Principal Parts of lie, lay and run.
5. Define Case. Illustrate each case.
6. What is Punctuation? Give rules for principal marks of Punctuation.
7. Write a composition of about 150 words and show therein that you understand the practical use of the rules of grammar.

ARITHMETIC (Time, 1.25 hours)

1. Name and define the fundamental Rules of Arithmetic.
2. A wagon box is 2 ft. deep, 10 ft. long, and 3 ft. wide. How many bushels of wheat will it hold?
3. If a load of wheat weighs 3942 lbs., what is it worth at 50 cents/bushel, deducting 1050 lbs. for tare?
4. District No. 33 has a valuation of \$35,000. What is the necessary levy to carry on a school seven months at \$50 per month, and have \$104 for incidentals?
5. Find cost of 6720 lb. coal at \$6 per ton.
6. Find the interest of \$512.50 for 8 months and 18 days at 7 percent.
7. What is the cost of 40 boards 12 inches wide and 16 ft. long at \$20 per meter?
8. Find bank discount on \$300 for 90 days (no grace) at 10%.
9. What is the cost of a square farm at \$15 per acre, the distance around which is 640 rods?
10. Write a Bank Check, a Promissory Note, and a Receipt.

U.S. HISTORY (Time, 45 minutes)

1. Give the epochs into which U.S. History is divided.
2. Give an account of the discovery of America by Columbus.
3. Relate the causes and results of the Revolutionary War.
4. Show the territorial growth of the United States.
5. Tell what you can of the history of Kansas.
6. Describe three of the most prominent battles of the Rebellion.
7. Who were the following: Morse, Whitney, Fulton, Bell, Lincoln, Penn, and Howe?

8. Name events connected with the following dates: 1607, 1620, 1800, 1849, 1865.

ORTHOGRAPHY (Time, 1 hour)

1. What is meant by the following: Alphabet, phonetic, orthography, etymology, syllabication?
2. What are elementary sounds? How classified?
3. What are the following, and give examples of each: Trigraph, sub vocals, diphthong, cognate letters, linguals?
4. Give four substitutes for caret 'u'.
5. Give two rules for spelling words with final 'e'. Name two exceptions under each rule.
6. Give two uses of silent letters in spelling. Illustrate each.
7. Define the following prefixes and use in connection with a word: bi, dis, mis, pre, semi, post, non, inter, mono, sup.
8. Mark diacritically and divide into syllables the following, and name the sign that indicates the sound: card, ball, mercy, sir, odd, cell, rise, blood, fare, last.
9. Use the following correctly in sentences: cite, site, sight, fane, fain, feign, vane, vain, vein, raze, raise, rays.
10. Write 10 words frequently mispronounced and indicate pronunciation by use of diacritical marks and by syllabication.

GEOGRAPHY (Time, one hour)

1. What is climate? Upon what does climate depend?
2. How do you account for the extremes of climate in Kansas?
3. Of what use are rivers? Of what use is the ocean?
4. Name and describe the following: Monrovia, Odessa, Denver, Manitoba, Hecla, Yukon, St. Helena, Juan Fernandez, Aspinwall & Orinoco.
5. Name and locate the principal trade centers of the U.S.
6. Name all the republics of Europe and give the capitals of each.
7. Why is the Atlantic Coast colder than the Pacific in the same latitude?
8. Describe the process by which the water of the ocean returns to the sources of rivers.
9. Describe the movements of the earth. Give the inclination of the earth.

Notice that the exam took five hours to complete.

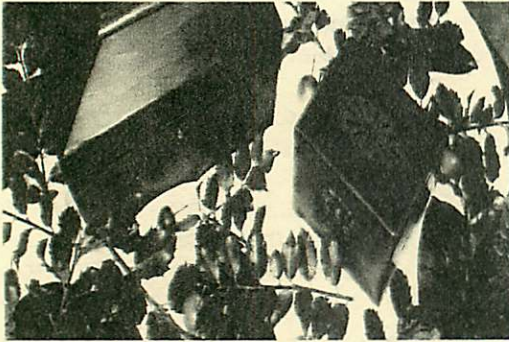
Gives the saying "she/he only had an 8th grade education" a whole new meaning, doesn't it?

This was when the children were expected to listen and be respectful and the teachers were expected to teach.

THE MYSTERY OF THE COLONEL'S TEA BOXES

By Emilie Hurley

Tucked away in a dark cupboard of the dining room inside the Wisner mansion hides a pair of wooden boxes, long since forgotten by everyone. Both have a note written in inkwell pen on age worn card stock, describing them in neat detail. Each has an accession number, meaning that some society member thought them important. But for many years now, these little boxes have been keeping their secrets well, stashed away in the Wisner dining room.



While going through and identifying the objects in the mansion, I happened to stumble across these simplistically beautiful boxes. Being curious as I am, I examined them inside and out, thinking that they didn't quite fit with the grand Victorian style of just about everything else. As I turned the larger box over, I found the neat little note which read, 'Box for holding sugar and cream pitcher. It was used when traveling by Col. Petrie, a British officer who fought in the war of Spanish Succession. Brought to White Lake by Mrs. Grossett [Grassett?], an early pioneer. Presented by Mrs. Katherine Cuthbert Hathaway.' The smaller box also had a note inside saying, 'Teabox used by Col. Petrie, presented by Mrs. Hathaway.' Wondering, I went back to the library and asked Charlie Martinez when the war of Spanish Succession occurred, since it didn't ring any important bells in my head. We looked it up, and realized that the war began in 1702 and lasted until 1713, meaning that these boxes were definitely not Victorian, but much earlier. Since the boxes had been used during the war of Spanish Succession, it meant that they were most likely the oldest historical artifacts belonging to the Society.

Since my area of interest is 18th century Britain, I thought it might be a fun "pet" project to discover more information on the boxes, their owner, and the other players in our delicious mystery. Unfortunately, nothing of interest came up in the society's records, nor in any books on the shelves in the library. We worked for several days, trying to find even a mention of anyone connected to the tea boxes, but still nothing. Deciding to start at the source, I did some digging and found that a book had been published over 100 years before, containing lists of soldiers in the British army at the time. Finally, a possible break! Being pretty savvy with library resource material, I requested a copy of the book from the Michigan State University library to be sent to me at my own local library. After a few days of waiting it arrived, and I flipped through the index, to find only one Petrie (or Petry) serving in the British army at that time. I found his page, and realized that here was the record of a Lieutenant Colonel John Petrie, serving with the 6th Dragoon Guards.

Since I was more than a little excited, I shared my success with everyone I could come across. I had found the owner of the boxes! I just needed to find Mrs. Grossett and Mrs. Hathaway, and we would have the answer to this particular puzzle. Then one day I happened to tell Gayle Willis, who took the information home, and being the genealogist extraordinaire that she is, she shortly found Mrs. Hathaway! All it took was someone who had a genealogist's train of thought, instead of a historian's. Mrs. Hathaway was a resident of Holly and was buried in Olive Branch Cemetery, having passed away in 1972.

At this point in our adventure, we had found the original owner and the woman who donated the boxes, but still nothing about Mrs. Grossett. Our search is not over, just at a road block, but still open to any and all information that may cross our path about all the players. As in all mysteries, the best part about it is the journey, the discovery of new information, learning all that we can about the past and its population. In the end, it's all about the ride.



Emilie Hurley has been an intern with Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society for about a year. She was born in Toronto, Canada and moved to Romeo when she was 10. She graduated from Romeo High School and moved to Clinton Township. After two years at Macomb Community College, she transferred to Michigan State University and received her BA in history. She has applied to graduate school to continue her studies in history and expects to have a career as a research historian and author. Her mother, Lois Jackman is with the Macomb Community College Lorenzo Cultural Center, and borrowed artifacts from this society's farm museum for an exhibit at the Cultural Center. Her mother's contacts with Charlie Martinez and Mike Willis brought Emilie to us. She is an excellent historian, and she and Charlie have uncovered and identified several items in the society's collections that have been hidden for many years. The discovery of the

tea boxes in the back of a cupboard led to the article in this issue as well as being the theme for the Victorian Open House in December 2008. No telling what she will find next to share with our readers. Thank you, Emilie for all your hard work.

RESEARCH REMINDERS

The library at OCPHS is a goldmine of opportunity for researchers. For those researching automobiles from the Pontiac area, come in on Thursday and talk with Guy Duffield. He is an expert on the many resources on the history of cars.

Those researching families with backgrounds in and around Oakland County, should check out the collection of microfilm that include some film that are rarely used.

All the following are Oakland County:

1850 – 1860 – 1870 – 1880 Agricultural Census
(1870 also has Monroe and Ottawa counties)
1850 Industrial Census

Tax Rolls 1855 – 1856, 1865 – 1866, part of 1865,
part of 1888

Non-resident Tax Rolls 1836 – 1848

Delinquent Tax Rolls 1842 – 1847

1890 Civil War Veterans Census for Genesee, Tuscola, Sanilac, St. Clair, Huron, Lapeer, Saginaw, Oakland and Macomb counties. This film is useful to cover some of the families that would have been in the 1890 Federal Census.

If you are searching for people in the 1920s and 1930s, ask to see the scrapbooks. There are several and they are filled with newspaper clippings about marriages, deaths and social events in those eras.

SPRING AND SUMMER TOURS

We are taking reservations for spring and summer tours of the Wisner House, schoolhouse, outbuildings, farm museum. Tours are not limited to school children; adult groups are welcome. Social societies, clubs, church fellowship groups, service organizations are invited to enjoy our facilities. The schoolhouse can be reserved for meetings. Consider scheduling OCPHS for a program this coming year. We have excellent guides to explain all aspects of our facilities while you are here.

Reservations are essential. 248.338.6732

With our expected increase in number of tour groups, we need more guides. Training classes will be held in the spring, the dates will be announced soon. We have costumes for you to wear, in various styles and sizes. You are not held to a schedule as a guide, but would be called when needed.

This organization, as with so many others, is dependent on our volunteers. Besides guides, we need people to assist with our events: manning tables, giving directions, directing parking, serving food, preparing mailings, helping in the library.

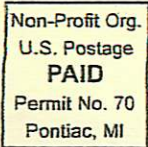
A special need is someone who can spend some time with our Oral History project, transcribing tapes to paper copies.

ALL SORTS OF OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE FOR YOU – COME AND SEE US

OAKLAND COUNTY PIONEER &
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

405 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue
Pontiac Michigan 48342

Phone: 248.338.6732
Fax: 248.338.6731
E-mail: office@ocphs.org



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.

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