



**2010 CALENDAR** will be available in September. This issue will feature a variety of photographs from our collection. We expect the price to be \$10; add \$2.00 if it is to be mailed. This would make a good Christmas gift for an out-of-state relative or friend. Call our office to reserve your copies.

### UP-COMING EVENTS FOR OCPHS

Our *Small Talk* series have been such a success, we have scheduled two more for 2009. All programs will be held in the carriage house and begin at 2 PM. Refreshments will be served following the program. There is no charge for the programs, but donations are always welcome.

Sunday, October 11, 2009, Charles Martinez will present a *Small Talk*: **CHIEF PONTIAC: OTTAWA INDIAN WHO CHALLENGED AN EMPIRE.** This historic figure is always of interest, and Charlie brings his special touch to this program.

Sunday, November 8, 2009, Ann Pettersson will have a *Small Talk* entitled **VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS.** Ann will be dressed in Victorian attire and will present an entertaining and informative program.

Saturday, December 12 will be **HANGING OF THE GREENS**, the day when holiday decorations are brought from storage and the Wisner Home is decorated for the Christmas season. You are invited to join us to help decorate at 9:30 AM and to share a light lunch afterward. Call the office to sign up or to receive further information.

The annual **VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE** will be Saturday, December 19 from 12 noon to 4 PM. Details will follow.

### LIBRARY PROJECT NEEDS YOUR HELP

We would like to complete our library collection of Quivers, the yearbook from the Pontiac High Schools. We need the following years: 1902 – 1903 – 1904 – 1971 – 1973 – 1975 – 1981 – 1982 – 1983 – 1986 – 1987 – 1988 – 1990 – 1991 – 1995 – 1996 – 1998 – 1999 – 2000 – 2003.

If you have any of these among your "treasures", we would be very pleased to have them donated to our collection. Contact our office.

Our research library also needs more volunteers to staff the library. Ideally, we would have 2 people each day, but we currently we have only 1 person each day, and with vacation time and family commitments, we have had to close our library to walk-in researchers. Until further notice, in-house researching will be by appointment only.

### MEMORIES OF THE CENTRAL SCHOOL BELL

You have read all the stories in the local newspapers about the theft of the brass school bell that had been displayed on our grounds for many years, bolted onto a slab of concrete. You read the piece in this newsletter about the history of the bell. (The bell was cast by the Meneely Bell Foundry in Troy, New York on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1895 and weighed 619 pounds.) Perhaps you did not know that the thief has been found and is being prosecuted for the destruction of an historic artifact. The bell had been cut into many pieces that have been returned to this society. Now, the problem is what to do with these pieces. One of the larger pieces will be the centerpiece of a display that will be put together and exhibited either in the schoolhouse or the carriage house. The remaining pieces are of varying sizes – we don't want to throw them away, but we have no storage place for them. The Board of Directors has decided to share a bit of Pontiac's history with our readers.

We are offering the pieces of the Central School Bell for sale. The largest pieces will be available for \$100. each, and the various smaller sizes for \$5. to \$50. With each purchase we will include a photo of the bell and a brief history. If you are interested, please call our office to arrange an appointment to see the remains of the bell.

### CALL THE OFFICE

I am sure you have noticed that we asking our readers to call before coming to our carriage house for research and appointments for tours and reservations for events. We simply don't have enough volunteers to keep our doors open throughout the week. We will try to return your calls on a timely basis, and to assist you as soon as possible.

PHONE; 248.338.6732

EMAIL: [OFFICE@OCPHS.ORG](mailto:OFFICE@OCPHS.ORG)

## MEMBERSHIPS

### NEW MEMBERS:

Sue Fox  
Konrad Kohn

Sue Grifor  
Sylvia Babcock

### FRIENDS OF OCPHS:

Nancy & Guy Duffield

Jo & Larry Pate

### BENEFACTORS:

Florine Isgrigg Galbraith

### PATRONS:

Beatrice Catherino  
Ann & Richard Irwin  
C. Corydon & Marian Randall  
Doug & Judy Roeser  
Robert Nelson  
Mary & Fritz Troff

Miriam Foxman  
Chuck Marz  
Barbara Irwin  
Konrad Kohn  
Robert Stepan

Thank you, all, for your generous support!



Ryan Johnson

**A DAY AT PINE GROVE,** held July 25, was a success. Although the weather threatened, it held off for the afternoon, and visitors enjoyed seeing the historic cars, the music by the Church Street Singers, barbershop quartet, Celebration, and, new this year, the Drum and Fife Corps. Emilie Hurley, our intern, is part of this group and she arranged for their appearance. The house

was open for visitors along with other important out-buildings, such as summer kitchen, root cellar, farm museum, and the privy. We had some of our extra treasures for sale and many now have new homes. The hot dogs were plentiful and the cakes and ice cream were devoured. A new addition to this event was the demonstration of Victorian toys. The younger people were trying to roll the hoop; play jacks, graces, quoits, whirl-i-gig, whip top, marbles and other games. Mike West, with his grandchildren, Madeline, Camille and Kathryn organized this part of the day's events. Ann Johnson, a descendant of the Wisner family, and her son Ryan joined us, and Ryan was outfitted in a Civil War uniform.

Thank you to all the members and guests who volunteered cakes and hot dogs, time, and money. Our volunteers included Rodger Zeller, Kitty Daggy, Mike & Gayle Willis, Fran & Tom Wilson, Ann & Fred Liimatta, Jo & Larry Pate, Helen & Mike West, Mary & Tom Connell, Judy Huddula, Scott Tupper, Geoff Breiger, Richard Stamps, Charlie Martinez, Bob Nelson, Nancy & Guy Duffield, Gaylor Forman, Amy & Bruce Annett.

## GIFT RECEIVED

A long-time member of OCPHS died a short time ago, and left a generous bequest to the society to be used for restoration and maintenance of the Wisner House. We are so pleased that **Isabel Stockwell** honored us in her will. She was a lovely lady and is well-remembered by many of our members.

## PLANNING AHEAD...

Out office will be closed for the holiday season from December 20, 2009 through January 4, 2010. We have started planning for next year and have several programs and events on the schedule. We hope you will be interested in all of them and plan on assisting with arrangements and attending them all. January we will have a Small Talk on **One Room Schoolhouses** (the date is not secured). February we will have a hilarious Small Talk on **Outhouses** presented by David Bridges. It is a treat to listen to this storyteller.

## THIS IS WHAT WE LIKE TO HEAR...

This past summer Mary Connell, our guide and outstanding volunteer received this note: *"Our family just completed a tour with Mary Connell along with others from the Pontiac Homeschoolers. Thank you so very much. Mary was a delightful tour guide. She was so attentive to my "slow-to-warm-up" children and also very informative and fun to tour with."*

Thank you to Michelle McCoy and all five little McCoys!



Two of the classic cars at Pine Grove event

## EMILIE IS MOVING ON

Emilie Hurley, our intern for the past year is leaving us. She and Charlie Martinez have inventoried every inch and every item in the Wisner House – a huge undertaking, but long overdue. She has helped us all, with computer problems, programming and any number of projects. She will be attending University of Chicago to earn her masters degree in History. Good luck, Emilie, we will miss you!

*This is the second in a series of the history of elementary schools in Pontiac written by third-graders in 1960 as part of a local history program. Thanks to Annalee Kennedy for sharing this material.*

## **LONGFELLOW SCHOOL**

The Longfellow School stands on a part of a big 220 acre farm where wheat, oats, hay, potatoes, tomatoes and many other vegetables grew. The Williams family who owned the farm lived at 44 E. Blvd, where the Thomas Mitchells now live.

The Board of Education purchased 6.5 acres of the land for \$10,006 on May 11, 1928. Construction of the school began in October 1926 and was completed July 15, 1929. (The dates are not correct.) The architect was Mr. F.A. Childs of Chicago, who used Tudor style of architecture.

The building was 70' by 1200' and cost \$250,000. The exterior walls were of red face brick. All ceilings were constructed of concrete beams. There were five classrooms, an auditorium and a gymnasium on the first floor, and twelve classrooms and a small library on the second floor.

The kindergarten room was English in design with a fireplace, fish pond and sand box. One first grade room was patterned after the Japanese style, while another one was finished in Spanish design. These three rooms had play balconies.

Through the central corridor on the first and second floors are a series of colored tiles, made in Spain, depicting the story of Don Quixote.

The school district included the Florence School district, and a portion of the McConnell and Central School districts.

In September 1929 the Longfellow School family consisting of 14 teachers and 560 children moved in. Miss Jesse M. Brewer was principal, who served until June 1949 when she retired. Miss Adeline Hook became principal in September 1949.

The name "Longfellow" was chosen for the building by Mr. Coe C. Tillson, a member of the Board of Education.

In 1952 four classrooms, a custodial and a supply room were added. The same style of architecture was used in the front of the exterior, but the west side was contemporary with glass block windows.

Yours sincerely, The Longfellow Third Grade

## **MARK TWAIN SCHOOL**

Mark Twain School was named for Samuel Clemens who used Mark Twain as his pen name. Mark Twain wrote many stories for girls and boys such as Tom Sawyer. Mark Twain School was completed in 1956. The Pontiac Board of Education bought the 9.344 acres from several people who owned these lots.

The school has 15 rooms and about 450 children.

Mr. William Wright became Mark Twain's first principal, a position he held until 1959. Miss Wilma Pyle became principal intern in the fall of that year. In 1960 Mr. Richard Dempsey became principal.

In the spring an addition to the school was begun. This included a multi-purpose room, library and four classrooms.

Sincerely yours,  
Mark Twain Third Graders

## **BALDWIN SCHOOL**

Baldwin School was built in 1901. The school was named for Judge Baldwin because he gave the land for the school.

Before the school was built the land was part of the fairgrounds. A race track was once the land that is now the school grounds. The entrance to the fairgrounds was on the corner of Fairgrove and Saginaw Street. Now there is a stone at this corner, marking the site.

It was here that the Civil War recruits of Colonel Moses Wisner were stationed while Colonel Wisner trained them for active duty.

The Fairground at Fairgrove was really an annex to another fairground in Pontiac. So it was called the Oakland County Agricultural Society Annex. Besides the race track it had a dining hall, a fruit and vegetable building and a flower hall.

The first principal of Baldwin School was Miss Alice Shattock. The principal is now Mrs. Irene Albright.

Baldwin School had eight rooms when it was first built. More were added as they were needed. It now has a gymnasium, a library, twenty classrooms and office.

Oakland County Pioneer  
and Historical Society  
405 Cesar E. Chavez Ave.  
Pontiac, MI 48342

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 70  
Pontiac, MI

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**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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