

ANNUAL MEETING MAY 22, 2010

The 136th Annual Meeting and Election of Officers of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society was held in the schoolhouse on Saturday May 22. The program was a special one – we celebrated our stars, those special people who have worked so diligently to keep our society alive and well. Special tributes were given to Michael Willis and Kathryn Daggy, long-time President and Secretary who are retiring from their offices after many year of devoted service. Also honored were our Life Members and Emeritus Directors.

LIFE MEMBERS OF OCPHS

Ed & Gretchen Adler	Harold Balmer
Francile Anderson	Janice Bell
Bruce & Amy Annett	Bruce Benter
Roger Benter	Lawrence Blascyk
Mr. & Mrs. Clark Cameron	
Esther Carhart	Rosemary Clark
Kathryn Daggy	LaVon DeLisle
George Ellenwood	Mrs. Mark Elliott
Gaylor Forman	Priscilla Gayton
Marion Hackett	John Harris
Robert Hatley	Mary Hatt
Harry Horton	James Howlett
Motoko Huthwaite	Judy Huttenlocher
Hutenlocher Insurance Group	
Margaret Jackson	Michael Kamlay
Jane Kamlay	John Kimball
Nancy Krohn	Carolyn Lukeer
Charles Martinez	Patricia Maurer
Charlotte Maybee	Jan McAlpine
Fran McEvoy	Susan Metzdorf
Connie Owens	L. Brooks Patterson
Richard Poole	Ruth Priestley
Geraldine Rathburg	James Renfrew
Beth Richards	Lary Sampson
Louis & Mary Schimmel	Richard Selvala
Mark Thomas	Bette Twyman
Margaret Vaverek	Robert Warrington
Ernestine Williams	Gregory Zemenick

EMERITUS DIRECTORS are those members having left the board after completing at least 10 years of service as a director.

Gretchen Adler	Janice Bell
LaVon DeLisle	Miriam Foxman
Priscilla Gayton	Jane Kamlay
Annalee Kennedy	Susan Metzdorf
Ruth Priestley	Gale Scafe

NEW MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mary Connell, Anne Liimatta, Fred Liimatta, Ray Henry

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY 2010 – 2011:

President: Michael West
1st Vice President: Bob Nelson
2nd Vice President: Guy Duffield
Secretary: Mary Connell
Treasurer: Amy Annett



Amy Annett – Mary Connell – Guy Duffield
Bob Nelson – Mike West

Copies of the Annual Report are available at the carriage house. If you would like one mailed, please include a \$2 donation with your request, to cover mailing costs.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Carolyn L. Coulter died April 12, 2010 at her residence in Flint, Genesee County. She and her husband, Ralph, have been members of OCPHS for many years and were active in the society until their move to Flint. Carolyn was born and married in Pontiac, and was descended from Oakland County pioneers. Services were private and she is buried in Oak Hill Cemetery.

We offer our condolences to her family.

NEW MEMBERS

Leah Meyer – Clarkston
Jenifer Janczarek – Waterford
Nichole Rinehart – Clarkston
Steven Graves – Durand
Jamie E. Brown – Clarkston
Carol St. Dennis – Waterford
Kris Hamzey – Rochester
Maria Zwiernik – Clarkston
Bruce Hawkins – Rochester Hills
Dawn Stankus – Waterford
Linda Pike – White Lake
Suzy Crawford – Waterford
Sue Case – Davisburg
Angela Stewart – Commerce
Cheri Nugent – Clarkston
Brittany vonBehren – West Bloomfield
Drieka G. Degraff
Reida B. Gardiner – Bloomfield
Birmingham Historical District Study Committee
Phyllis Hanna – Waldport, Oregon
Tom Holleman – Pontiac
Frank & Libby Liimatta – Waterford
Meredith Long – Oak Park
Madelyn Rzadkowskiski – Oxford

ICE HOUSE ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG HAS BEGUN!

The archaeological dig for the Wisner Ice House started on May 4 when Dr. Richard Stamps and his team of students mapped out the possible perimeter of the building and dug preliminary holes, which immediately yielded several artifacts: a glass cylinder, two small hammerheads, and a small medicine bottle.

Visit our website for pictures of the excavation site.
www.ocphs.org.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Marion Grace Goellner Kimball, of Pontiac, and an integral part of the Pontiac community for many years, died peacefully Monday, April 20, 2010. She and her late husband, Clarke were members of this Society for many years – Clarke serving as Vice-President of the Board of Directors for an extended period of time. She is survived by her four children, Joyce Lemaux, David (Barbara), John (Lori), and Bill (Sue), eight grandchildren and ten great grandchildren. There was a celebration of her life in the schoolhouse at Pine Grove on Saturday, June 12, 2010 at 1 P.M.

We extend our sympathies to her family.

2011 CALENDAR AVAILABLE SOON

This calendar, **REMEMBERING THE CIVIL WAR**, will feature photographs of interesting people and rare artifacts from the Civil War era. It will be back from the printer by the middle of June, so reserve your copy now. The price is \$12.00 - \$14.00 if it is to be mailed.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

The enclosed payment envelope is for your convenience in renewing your membership, which is due July 1. Of course, if your membership was issued after March 2010, you are covered until July 1, 2011. Also, Life Members do not pay dues. If you are a new member or Life Member, perhaps you know of someone who would like to join this society, so pass your membership envelope along. As you know, we run our entire organization on the income from our memberships, so your generosity is very much appreciated.

If you have any change in your address, phone numbers or email, please let us know.

You can pay for your membership through our website, using Pay Pal, or enclose a check in the renewal envelope.

OCPHS phone: 248.338.6732
Email: office@ocphs.org
Website: www.ocphs.org

PROGRAMMING NOTES

Our **Small Talks** for 2009 and 2010 have been very well received, so we are scheduling several more for later this year, through the winter months and into next spring. Check our website – often – so you don't miss the latest programs. Of course, all confirmed programs will be announced in the next issue of *Oakland Gazette* which will be out in September

Our **Ice Cream Social** is scheduled for July 31 (with August 1 as a rain-date). The enclosed flyer will give you the details. Save the flyer as a reminder to be here!

We want to keep you informed of all upcoming activities, and your membership renewal will insure that you will be on the mailing lists.

COMPLIMENTS!

We are pleased to share some of the compliments we have received for our last two Small Talks! Thank you to all who have attended – our rooms have been filled to overflowing...

Jack Mason program on General Richardson – February 7, 2010

"Excellent mixture of personal information"
"An excellent program – Jack Mason really brought the subject to life."

Bill Powers program on Stone Structures – April 18, 2010

"Personable, interesting – liked the subject"
"Knows his subject well"
"I have a greater appreciation of stone work!"

REMINDER

Our library is open for research only on Wednesdays and Thursdays. There may be cars in the parking lot and people around, but there will be no librarian to assist you. Please save yourself time and disappointment by only coming on the stated days or by making special arrangements with our librarian, Fran Wilson

DOCENTS WANTED!

We need volunteers to guide our tour groups through the Wisner House and other venues in our Pine Grove complex. You are not committed to specific days or a set number of hours – your only commitment is to an understanding of the buildings and contents and a desire to impart that information to the groups of people that tour our grounds. We are expanding our focus groups to include adult organizations as well as other school districts in Oakland County. We will be contacting service groups, senior centers, retirement clubs, history buffs, genealogical societies, and others.

Training is scheduled for tour guides on Wednesdays in July: 7, 14, 21, and 28 from 4 – 6 P.M. Anyone interested may join this group and will experience the knowledge and expertise of our magnificent Kathryn Daggy. Please call and let us know if you can join us.

This is one of the most important volunteer positions in this organization, and we urge you to join this dedicated group of docents. Oh, yes, we have some great costumes for you to wear - for both men and women!!

Please call: 248.338.6732

A FEW SMILES TO BRIGHTEN YOUR DAY—

A rubber band pistol was confiscated from algebra class because it was a weapon of math disruption.

If Webster wrote the first dictionary, where did he find the words?

If a word is misspelled in the dictionary, how would we ever know?

A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.

A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.

Why do "tug" boats push their barges?

Why is "phonics" not spelled the way it sounds?

This continues the stories of the Pontiac elementary schools as written by the 3rd graders in 1960.

ALCOTT SCHOOL

The name of our school is Alcott. The fifth and sixth grade girls and boys chose the name Louisa Mae Alcott in 1957. They liked the name because Miss Alcott wrote many interesting stories for children.

The Louisa Mae Alcott School is on West Kennett Road. The ten and one half acres of land was purchased by the Pontiac Board of Education in 1954 from Oakland County for \$5,550.00. Our Alcott School cost \$470,383.00. It was completed in October 1957. When Alcott School was completed it had ten classrooms, a library and a multi-purpose room. In 1958 our school cafeteria was opened.

We have about 239 children attending Alcott. Our principal is Mrs. Lorena Adams

Sincerely yours,
Alcott's Third Grade

BAGLEY SCHOOL

We, the third grade boys and girls of Bagley School, would like to have our school included in the group of *Pontiac's oldest schools*.

Our Principal, Mr. Perdue, entrusted to us an old treasured scrapbook which has newspaper articles and momentos that date as far back as the year 1895. After doing some research work, this is what we learned.

The Old Bagley School was located on the corner of Bagley Street and Wessen Street. The land for this site was purchased between the years 1895 and 1919. The cost of the 9.7 acreage was \$15,669.80.

The original name of this school was the First Ward School. Mary Herrington, the second principal, changed the name to Bagley because it was felt that it could be more easily located. Thus the street and the school were named after John J. Bagley, a Michigan governor during the years 1873 to 1876.

Land, in a total of 7.43 acres, was purchased for \$11,235.00 from the Wilson brothers. Its location is at the corner of Bagley Street and Diston Street. On this site the New Bagley School was built in 1926. It's (sic) cost was approximately \$225,000.00. There were sixteen rooms including a library. The kindergarten was the first one in Pontiac to have (?)glass windows.

The Old Bagley school was donated by the Board of Education for a community house.

Four additional rooms to our school were built in 1953. Four more were added in 1954. We now have a total of twenty-four rooms. A new stage was built in 1959 to replace our portable stage.

The north hall of our school is called the Bagley Hall of Honor. Here you will see names and pictures of honor students and other outstanding accomplishments.

Bagley has had five principals: Alice Smith, Mary Herrington, Nina Doty, Mabel Roy, Golda Holacheck and John F. Perdue.

Sincerely yours,
The Third Graders of Bagley School

BAILEY SCHOOL

Our school is one of the oldest ones in Pontiac. The land for our school was bought in 1889. On this land they built a two room school which was called the Florence Avenue School. Two years later two more rooms were added to the first building. The Florence Avenue School cost around \$24,000. The school could take care of 160 pupils.

In 1927 the principal, Cora C. Bailey died. The Board of Education changed the name of our school in memory of Cora C. Bailey.

Cora C. Bailey School was the first school in Pontiac to start a Mother's Club. The kindergarten teachers organized this club in 1902. Only six attended the first meeting but by the end of the year the average attendance had grown to 50 or 60 and included mothers of pupils from all grades. In 1921 the Mother's Club joined the Michigan Parent Teacher Association.

The next principal was Miss Isabel Goodson. She was principal for 20 years and retired in 1948. Mrs. Agnes Cox became principal of Wisner School and Cora C. Bailey School until her death June 1957.

Something very important happened to our school May 1956. The Pontiac Board of Education decided to replace the old building at Bailey with four new experimental units of individual class rooms. The new buildings included kindergarten, first, second, and third grades.

The cost of the four buildings was \$71,000. Each building is a self-contained class room. The school office is in the kindergarten. The school library is in the third grade room. Each building has its own covered patio. Our playground is all enclosed with a

fence. Our windows go from the ceiling to the floor and we have pull drapes.

In September of 1957 Mr. Horton Southworth, who was already principal of Crofoot, became principal of Cora C. Bailey, too. In July 1959, Mr. Southworth resigned to join the Michigan State University staff.

In August 1959 Mr. Lewis A. Crew was appointed principal intern. In 1960, Mr. Crew became full principal of Crofoot and Bailey schools.

The third grade has 7 safety squad boys and 4 service squad girls to protect our Cora C. Bailey children.

We have 135 student and 125 members in our P.T.A. Our staff included our principal, 4 teachers, secretary and two maintenance men.

We hope this help you to know our school and do come to visit us sometime.

Your friends,
Bailey School

CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Central Elementary School is Pontiac's oldest school. It stands on the corner of Union Street and Pike Street, opposite Mack Square. The first public school in Pontiac began in 1849. At that time Central School was called "Old Union".

The first graduation exercises were held in Fireman's Hall in 1853. Fireman's Hall stands at the corner of Pike Street and Perry Street.

At one time a cyclone blew the school house over to the edge of a farm which is now Pike Street and Mack Square. There have been three buildings on the Central School site.

The present red brick building was built in 1893. This building was built to hold 400 children.

There is a plaque on the building telling about it. The plaque says:

August 12, 1916

The Public School Children of Pontiac Mark This Site of the "Old Union". The First Free School Union District No. 2. Organized 1849

The site cost \$638.18. The bell which hangs in the belfry cost \$200.00 and was used in the very first building.

Your friends,
Central Elementary Third Graders

Principals: Arthur Benson, Edna E. Grimes, Kate Brown, Alice Prentice (Harris), Minerva Russell, Lulu Greer (Fall), Jessie Brewer, Alice M. Burke, Violet Crawford, Ann Galbraith, Marion Hinkley.

Notables: Arthur Pound – Diplomat and Author
Harry McBride – Diplomat
Dr. John Monroe
Alverdo Corwin – important position in Navy. Retired then called back.

Anecdotes:

Cider mill (was) where Slaters (is) now located. In the fall, wagons loaded with apples on way to the cider mill would pass Central School. Children would swarm over the wagon and almost clean it out before it would reach the mill.

Miss Kate Brown taught eighth grade in a room on first floor on west side of building. One day Miss Brown was out of the room and the students were taking advantage of her absence by standing on desks, etc. They saw Mr. James Harris, the superintendent, coming across the bridge over the Clinton River on his bicycle. They immediately settled down to work and Miss Brown was complimented on her excellent discipline which carried over even when she was out of the room.

Miss Wagner, one of the teachers, rode a bicycle. She trundled it up the steps and left it in the lower hall during school. When children were sent out of the room for punishment they would ride the bicycle around the hall.

When there was an eighth grade in the building, graduation exercises patterned after those in the high school were held in the lower hall. Once the sixth grade had a patriotic program in the attic.

While the addition to the school was being built some of the classes were held in stores on East Pike Street.

Jessie S. Axford

Miss Ella Green, who contributed the following information, attended the little school across from where Central School now stands. Miss Ella Gaylord was the teacher.

The old Union School was a grade school and high school. The superintendent was Mr. Corbin who had only one arm.

An early pupil of the Union School was Joseph Ripley. He became one of the chief engineers who helped build the Panama Canal.

Mrs. O.A. Slater gave this information:

Central School was built by Mr. Hubert Heitch, Contractor. Some of the carpenters who worked for Mr. Heitch on building were Mr. Ploof, Mr. H.H. Montrose and Mr. Meinie Borer. Cannot remember mason who did the outside work.

There were wooden side walks and dirt roads. School was kept in the building on corner E. Pike and N. Parke Streets, while the new school was being built.

Some of the teachers who taught there were Miss Flora Walters, Miss Eva Hossler, Miss Mary McGinnis, Miss Krouk, Miss Urem and Miss Grimes. I think Mr. Hagle was principal.

Mr. Little was janitor and always kept the bell ringing if he saw some youngsters were trying to get there, but if they were loitering, the bell stopped and they were called late and stayed after school. There were outside toilets and no running water.

West of the school was the Pontiac Knitting Works, the old mill pond where all the young people went skating in the winter time, the old dam and the Knitting Company ware house. On Huron Street, over the river was a cider mill run by Mr. VanKleck and on Union Street, south of the school, was a creamery where they used to go with a pail and get whipping cream by the quart.

Emma Meiser

WHITFIELD SCHOOL

The first school built on the site of the present Whitfield School was a small white frame building with a drab interior. It was built on one-half acre of the Daniel Whitfield property. The cost of the building was not to exceed three hundred dollars.

May 22, 1852 was the first day of school for pupils of this school. The teacher was Samuel Rod who was hired for a salary of \$18 a months for a term of four months. School was to be in session 24 days per months. Mr. Rod had a choice of teaching the pupils every Saturday morning or every other Saturday.

This first school building sold for \$13.00, after a new building was erected in 1894. The new school was a large one room frame building on a cement foundation. It had two front entries. None of the equipment except the bell was brought from the first school. This building was considered one of the most modern and best equipped schools in the state at that time.

The first teacher in this school was Miss Bradon. She received a salary of \$20.00 a month for ten months.

Later the building was stuccoed and enlarged in the rear. Soon it became necessary to add two rooms at the side.

In September 1920 the name of the school was changed from Hammond School to Daniel Whitfield School.

In 1927 the main part of the present building was completed. It is a one floor brick building with seven classrooms, an office and a clinic.

Two years later in 1929 the library, music room, gym and cafeteria were added.

There were approximately 180 pupils enrolled in 1947 when Whitfield was annexed to the School District of the City of Pontiac. Prior to July 1, 1947 the school was in the Sixth Fractional District, Bloomfield Township. Until annexation the school consisted of kindergarten through eighth grade. When it became part of the School District of the City of Pontiac, it changed to kindergarten through sixth grade.

The enrollment has increased rapidly during the fifties. In 1952 the library had to be used as a second grade classroom and the music room as a first grade classroom. In January of 1953 the stage was used for a fourth and fifth composite group.

In September 1953 a two-floor addition was built which has six classrooms. An enrollment of 417 the next year made it necessary to use the music room again for a classroom. In 1954 it became a second grade room. The Primary Building was ready for use in September 1955. This building has two kindergartens and five regular classrooms. However, in 1957 the music room had to be used for a sixth grade classroom.

In June 1959 the enrollment was 715. The Washington Irving School was built to relieve overcrowded classrooms. In September 1959, 115 of our pupils enrolled in the Irving School. During the school year 1959-60, the enrollment has continued to increase. In June 1960 the enrollment was 624.

Sincerely,

Whitfield School Third Graders

BETHUNE SCHOOL

Bethune was one of the first of the modern schools. It stands on Lake Street. It now has twenty classrooms. The front of our school is very beautiful. We like Bethune because the engineer keeps our lawn nice and clean. The grass is so green! We have a beautiful closed in patio with lovely flowers all around. We would like to send you a flower but we can't.

We have so many nice things at Bethune. There is a library, a student council, a garden club and an art class. There is a big gym, where we have recreation after school. We have a good basket ball team.

We have 660 children in our school, but our playground is a big one.

The Bethune School was named for Mary McLeod Bethune. She was a negro teacher. She taught in Daytona Beach, Florida.

Mrs. Killian, our principal is proud of the boys and girls.

Your friends,
The Bethune Third Grade

WEVER SCHOOL

The Wever School was built in 1927. It opened in the fall of 1928. The land was purchased in 1920. It was part of the George Hoyt Farm. It was named after Fred A. Wever. Mr. Wever was an adjoining farmer. He was 78 years of age but he realized the necessity of an education for his grand-children and neighbors. He has two daughters living today. They are Mrs. Henry Sabell and Mrs. Frank Harp. He has three grandchildren also. They are Floyd Harp, Mrs. Donald Blackwell and Kenneth Sabell. Mrs. Sabell's home is on West Walton Boulevard, and is well known and admired for its beautiful flower garden.

Wever School has served its purpose satisfactorily for 32 years with very little building or enlarging. There has been a cafeteria added in 1953.

In April 1953 the 25th anniversary of Wever School was celebrated.

In 1953 it was converted to a junior high school. Elementary children were transferred to Hawthorne School. In February 1956 the Wever Junior High School students were transferred to Madison Junior High School.

Wever School now has an enrollment of about 400 children.

Two people who deserve honorable mention in regard to Wever School are Mrs. Martha Larsen, a teacher and Edna Schear Miller. Martha Larsen, a teacher, taught parents and children the basics of education and the traits of good character.

Edna Miller, Secretary, should be remembered for a long time. Her loyalty, capability and cooperative spirit just can't be surpassed. She is still our secretary at Wever.

We could mention many other names of worthy people who have helped to make Wever School a lasting memory to those who have been associated with it.

Sincerely,
Wever Third Graders

VARIOUS PRINCIPALS OF WEVER SCHOOL

1928 - '29	Mr. J. C. Covert
1929 - '40	Eskil C. Carlson (deceased)
1940 - '46	Mrs. Gertrude I. Beach
1946 - '53	Mr. Lester R. Stanley
1955 - '56	Mr. Philip Wargelin (Wever Junior High 7 th Grade)
1956 - '57	Mr. Lester R. Stanley & Mr. Arthur Bell, Intern
1957 - '60	Mr. Arthur Bell

OWEN SCHOOL

The first five-room permanent school building at the Owen School site was built in 1927.

About three weeks before the children and teachers moved into the new building the area around Owen School became a part of the city of Pontiac.

The school was named for Mr. Henry J. Owen who was a member of the school board at the time.

Only children of Kindergarten through third grades were enrolled most of the time from 1930 to 1950 with an occasional fourth grade.

In 1951 a new addition was added to take care of later elementary children in the area. The new addition had seven classrooms, multipurpose room, kitchen, teacher's lounge and nurses room.

The Principal of Owen School in 1960 is Dan Abbott. Owen School has an enrollment of 578.

Yours sincerely,
Owen Third Graders

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

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