OAKLAND



GAZETT

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Dedicated to the history and heritage of Oakland County, Michigan

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THE OAKLAND COUNTY PIONEER AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

phone: (248) 338-6732

405 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue Pontiac, MI 48342 email: office@ocphs.org website: www.oaklandhistorycenter.org

SOCIETY LADIES AND THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

By Barbara Frye

From the early days of the Pioneer Society the ladies were deeply involved in bettering their community. These gentle citizens agitated for better learning, a library, and yes, the vote for women. They also pushed for the recognition of their ancestors who fought in the war to obtain freedom from King George of England. To that purpose they formed a chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, which they named for a Cival War hero, General Israel Bush Richardson, who succumbed to a mortal wound he received at the battle of Antietam. (He also happened to be the brother of one of the Chapter's Charter members.)

From the General Richardson DAR Chapter (now Stoney *Creek Chapter) archives:*

The chapter's 1st fundraising event was held on Feb. 9, 1900. Five hundred invitations were sent to an "entertainment" at the Stout Library in Pontiac. The Daughters were dressed in colonial costume, there was music and dancing (including a minuet and a cake walk,) an exhibition of old curiosities, Puritan maidens twirling the spinning wheel, a New England kitchen with strings of dried apples festooned around the walls, refreshments, coffee, doughnuts, pumpkin pie and popped corn. The event was deemed a success, having raised enough money to send a delegate to DAR Continental Congress in Washington D.C. This event came to be known as the "Colonial Ball" and was held annually until at least 1909. (photograph column 2)

Lillian Drake Avery was one of these intrepid ladies. She was born in a log cabin in Farmington in 1856. She taught school in Farmington for three years before she married. She was fascinated with history and became a celebrated Michigan and Oakland County historian. She served as various DAR officers for 20 years, including Vice Regent, Regent, Historian, and Registrar. She was one of the Charter Members of the General Richardson Chapter and served as Secretary of the Oakland County Pioneer Society for over 17 years. She was the first president of the Women's Literary Club, and a member of the Ladies' Library Board. She was also instrumental in organizing the Women's Week events for the 1916 Centenary of celebrating of Oakland County. Continued



Photograph from the Pioneer Album ~ Archives Oakland History Center Colonial Ball Reception Committee: left to right Marion Eliza L. TenEyck ~ Registrar Marcia Maria Richardson ~ Historian (back) Mabel Thorpe ~ Recording Secretary (front) Lillian Drake Avery ~ Vice Regent Ada Louise Leggett Smith ~ Regent

Mrs. Avery was the moving force behind discovering and recording the histories of the Revolutionary War veterans in our area. Her scrapbooks and records have proved a valuable resource for research to this day. Thank you, Lillian! Barbara Frye

OCPHS 150th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS

All members of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society are hereby invited to the 150th Annual Meeting of the Members on Saturday, May 18, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the County Commissioners Auditorium, 1200 N. Telegraph, Pontiac, Michigan.

Business will include the annual elections of Board

of Directors, a motion to modify the name of the Society, a motion to amend the bylaws to reflect that modification, and a presentation of the Annual Report.

For more information, including to confirm your membership status is current, please contact our office at (248) 338-6732. The Society was established in 1874



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Sara Kenward, Highland 1st Vice President: Dave Decker, Clarkston 2nd Vice President: Connor Newton, Waterford Secretary: Barbara Frye, Pontiac Treasurer: Joy Dockham, Pontiac

Board Members: Nancy Calendine, Pontiac Charlotte Cooper, Clarkston Bill Grandstaff, Romeo Dyann Hayes, Auburn Hills Gwen Markham, Novi Evan Monaghan, Pontiac (Staff) Linda Porter, Pontiac Rosie Richardson, Pontiac Rita Ski, Birmingham Rodger Zeller, Waterford

Executive Director: Mike McGuinness

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

John Paul Harang, Bloomfield Hills Fernando Hernandez, Bloomfield Hills Gloria Schneider, Lake Geneva, WA Evan Sweet, Ypsilanti Nancy Taylor, Pontiac Pamela Todoroff, Sylvan Lake

spe

The Oakland History Center sits on the traditional and ancestral lands and waters of the Anishinaabe people, also known as the Three Fires Confederacy ~ comprised of the Ojibwe, the Odawa, and the Potawatomi. From 1844 to 1863, it was home to Moses Wisner, including during his time as Governor of the State of Michigan. The Wisner family owned the property, now a National Historic Site, until 1945 when our Historical Society acquired it and have served as the caretakers since. To learn more:

visit www.OaklandHistoryCenter.org or make an in-person visit for a tour or attend our scheduled events.

Society Membership dues run from January to December of each year. Please consider OCPHS for your end of year tax deductable donations. Thank you.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS

The Annual Meeting of the Members is when the general membership elects Candidates to the OCPHS Board of Directors. The Directors running for an additional three year term are: Sara *Cote* Kenward ~ Highland Evan Monaghan ~ Pontiac Rosie Richardson ~ Pontiac A new Candidate for the Board of Directors is: Barbara Hofmann ~ Bloomfield Township (*Candidate particulars follow*)

CANDIDATES FOR OCPHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS: 2024 ~ 2027 TERM

Sara (Coté) Kenward

After my first visit, I fell instantly in love with this little-known place with the really long name. I became a member, then began volunteering as a docent in the mansion and had fun dressing in period clothing and sharing the fascinating history of the governor and his family. While taking a break from a 10-year career in the stressful world of real estate, I received an email about a part-time office job at the museum. I decided to apply and was thrilled to learn I had been chosen for the position. As the former office manager, I feel I was instrumental in increasing community awareness and involvement in one of Oakland County's 'best kept secrets'. As a board member, I hope to continue spreading the word about this important part of local history and promoting and preserving its mission for generations to come.

Evan Monaghan

I have been a member of the Historical Society and a member of the Board for almost 6 years. I am also a long-time resident of Oakland County, a chef and an entrepreneur. It is my hope to continue steeing this organization into the future, to expand our operations and collections, and to chart a stable and financially sustainable path for the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society. I think we have an incredible opportunity to make this a premier destination for local history and to, with any luck, keep it going for another 150 years!

Rosie Lance-Richardson

I am an educator that has spent over 30 years in social sciences, history, and language arts. I hold positions that are geared toward embracing inclusion of history related to all. I studied under Professor D. Dykes from Oakland University. I currently work with a team from the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan grant to research related to persons, places, and things that impact our lives. The studies, education, and resources will be used in the one room classroom to accomplish publications, and oral presentations to provide information to enhance diversity and provide a better insight of our history.

Barbara Hofmann

I love to teach genie seminars and volunteer with those interested in their family history. I love to help others to understand and appreciate that historical context is important in finding and understanding their ancestors. Teaching others how computer skills can enhance their search for their ancestors is a very important area. I have been a dedicated teacher, educating others in multiple areas for the past 50 years.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Thank you to our members and supporters who came out in full force for our 150th milestone celebration in January! It was a powerful celebration of our Historical Society -- both of what we've accomplished together through the generations, and what we can still accomplish through the generations to come. I'd also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my family, friends, colleagues, and acquaintances who donated to our Historical Society in honor of my 40th birthday. I'm feeling good at 40, but I'm feeling great that so many came together and helped us raise thousands of dollars in contributions to help our nonprofit Historical Society. I look forward to continuing our Historical Society's 150th celebrations at the Annual Meeting on May 18th and I hope to see you there (or at the Spring Auction or Dishes Past Dinner)! Happy reading of this latest Gazette edition, which also offers details on these coming events. Thank you and bless you,

Mike McGuinness



ma

We've had at least three official names and a few other unofficial ones over the last 150 years.

- •1874 Pioneer Society of Oakland County
- •1890 Oakland County Pioneer Society

•1945 - Oakland County Historical and Veterans Foundation

•1968 – Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society Which brings us to now, when a few factors have come together and made us actually Do Something About Our Legal and Official Name. The bottom line? The current name doesn't "fit" our philosophy or mission statement. We can do better for ourselves and the people that follow us by picking a new name that aligns better with who and what we celebrate in Oakland County's long history. More about our reasons for choosing a different name will be discussed at our annual meeting, when all of us will vote one way or the other.

At the 150th Annual Meeting of the Members to be held May 18, 2024, we will all vote to officially change the name of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society to... ???

Hello and Happy Spring!

Instead of hibernating this Winter, we have been very busy! I hope you were able to join us at one of our many exciting events. In January, we celebrated 150 years and had a wonderful gathering at the Crofoot Theater in downtown Pontiac. Thanks to our Executive Director Mike



McGuinness, pairing this with his 40th birthday, we were able to stir up a generous donation for the Society. Thank you to all who attended and donated. We also held several fascinating lectures including The Underground Railroad and Native American History in collaboration with our friends at other Historical Societies and Oakland University. For years, we have been making it a priority to collaborate with other local organizations and we hope to continue this tradition for years to come. If you or your organization have an idea for a collaboration, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

Our Office Manager, Evan Monahan, has also been busy behind the scenes applying for grant funds to ensure that our financial future is robust and healthy. A couple examples include funds to revamp and revitalize our docent program as well as general funds for operational support. Our Executive Board of Directors team has been working on both our short and long-term strategic plan. We have many varied opportunities for members who wish to help us shape our future path. If you have a desire to be involved, we would love to hear from you. We need your input and your talents. It takes a village, and we could not do this without you.

In closing, I would like to remind you of two upcoming events. Our Spring Auction will be held Sunday, April 7th from 4-6 pm at the Pontiac Little Art Theater (PLAT). Please plan to attend and if you have any curious or interesting items to donate, we will be much obliged. The next event, Dishes Past, will be held Friday, May 3rd at 7 pm on our campus. If you have not been to one of these delicious dinners yet, you won't want to miss it. Eat dinner with friends new and old in our historic one room schoolhouse. Get your tickets now as they sell out fast and seating is limited. Thank you as always for allowing me to serve as your President of the Board of Directors. I appreciate each one of you for your help and support in our mission to preserve local history.

Thank you and take care,

Sara Coté Kenward



AROUND THE HISTORY CENTER...

Photo Credits: Cynthia Jahn



Current OCPHS Board Members in attendance at the commemorative January 21st meeting held at the Crofoot ballroom in downtown Pontiac. This meeting was held 150 years from the day of the first meeting of the Pioneers of Oakland County. L-R: Evan Monaghan, Gwen Markham, Joy Dockham, virtually Barbara Frye, Dave Decker, Dyann Hayes, Connor Newton, Nancy Calendine, Rodger Zeller, Linda Porter, and Rita Ski.





Connor Newton reading John Southard's 1874 Poem honoring 150 years of the Pioneer Society



Gwen Markhan presenting the Resolution from the Oakland County Historical Commission honoring 150 years of the Pioneer Society



On January 21st 1874 the Hoary Headed citizens of the county met at the Court House to form the Pioneer Society of Oakland County. The society they formed, with the purpose of recording the names and histories of the early citizens has remained in operation, under several different titles, for 150 years. We gathered to celebrate that day, and that achievement of longevity, at the Crofoot Ballroom, as close to the original location as feasible. Congratulations Society Members for perservering and stewarding those records. Well met!



Our Historical Society's collaborative presentation on the Underground Railroad in Oakland County was a big success!

The Underground Railroad in Southfield and the Extraordinary Story of John Sella Martin. Presented by Leslie Pielack and Joy Young, at the Southfield Public Library. In partnership with Oakland County's Historical Society, Birmingham Musem, Southfield Historical Society, and Southfield Public Library. Part of the collaborative Underground Railroad in Oakland County Research Project, as well as our 150th Milestone Lecture Series.



JOHN SELLA MARTIN FREEDOM SEEKER. MINISTER. ABOLITIONIST.

COMING UP!

OAKLAND COUNTY'S HISTORICAL SOCIETY SPRING AUCTION SUNDAY, APRIL 7 4:00 TO 6:00 PM TICKETS \$20

HELD AT THE HISTORIC PONTIAC LITTLE ART THEATRE (PLAT) 47 N. SAGINAW, DOWNTOWN PONTIAC

A Guaranteed Fun Time for a Good Cause! Silent Auction & Live Auction - Cash Bar -Ticket Proceeds Benefit both our non-profit Historical Society & non-profit Pontiac's Little Art Theatre

Visit our Oakland History Center to purchase tickets or call (248) 338-6732 for tickets and info. Online tickets available at getlocalhop.com





Spring Cleaning Volunteer Days

Come join us April 20th & 21st and help to make our Campus shine! Come prepared to get dirty, bring your work gloves & garden tools!

STORIES BEHIND THE STARS

A new national nonprofit initiative aims to preserve the oral histories of fallen WWII soldiers in an accessible, digital location, bringing those stories to life for future generations. SBTS was initiated in February 2020 out of a desire to research and learn more about these men and women. The 312 names on the Wisner plaques, with their stories now in binders at OCPHS, are being added to the stories of the 15,000 fallen from Michigan.

The Michigan History magazine, March/April edition, carries a story regarding this endeavor, and has published a photo of 1st Lt. Donald Newcome, one of Pontiac's own.



The 'Stars' in the title refer to the gold stars sent to families of the fallen, displayed in their front windows, when one of their sons or daughters lost their lives in the War.

Note: They are always looking for volunteers to help research these stories. Let Pam Schmaltz know if you are interested at earth2pam@gmail.com

OCPHS BOARD MEMBERS SHARING WITH COMMUNITY

na

April 20th book of the second OCPHS Board Members Dave Decker, Barb Hofmann and Barbara Frye are featured speakers at the WGS Genealogy Seminar this year. An annual event, the Seminar (formerly called the Lock-in), is sponsored by the Waterford Genealogical Society and the Waterford Township Public Library.

Lectures help you find your family history. All are welcome.

Pre-registration is recommended for best class selections. Please visit the WGS website for fees and registration form. https://waterfordmigensoc.thatfamiliesdo.com

Family of Charlie Martinez Donates Lithics to OCPHS

By: Dave Decker Last month, Nancy and Michael Martinez, wife and son of the late Charlie Martinez, generously donated a set of ten display boards containing 405 lithics, all apparently collected from across Michigan. We are extremely grateful to Mike and Nancy for ensuring these objects were given to us for safekeeping.

Consisting of plywood boards wrapped in burlap with the lithics glued to the cloth, they are, according to Dr. Richard Stamps, "an interesting collection with items from different periods in Michigan history. Also has different raw material. I think it has the potential to be a good comparative collection. Thanks to Charlie for collecting it, and to Geoff for getting it into the collection."

The family says there isn't any documentation for the display boards or the lithics mounted on them, so we have no information about their origin. Based on a quick analysis, they were collected from around the state sometime before 1988, the year of the newspapers in which the boards are wrapped.

Many of the lithics have either counties or town names handwritten on them, all in Michigan. Some have numbers on them, suggesting they were classified at some previous point in time. Aside from the sparse information on the lithics themselves, all we can really do is ensure that these are made available for study by cultural and archaeological experts.

What will we do with this wonderful collection? Aside from taking on our custodial role, we will make them available for study by academic institutions, display them to the public, and take good care to ensure they're protected and kept for future generations to study and learn from.

And now, here's your "Sternly Worded Lecture" for today:

If you find what you think might be a stone tool or artifact while you're out in the woods or by rivers or lakes, **leave it alone, especially if there are other stone tools present. In many places, taking an artifact from a potentially sensitive context is against the law.** You may have not only found a stone tool: you may have found a culturally important *site*. It's really important to allow experts to take over from there.

Contact your local historical society, museum, university or other cultural institution and let them



Dave Decker & Geoff Brieger examining the Martinez windfall Photo Credit: Barbara Frye

know about your find and let them determine the best course of action. Take a photo of it with your phone so its GPS coordinates are recorded and leave the object there. If possible, mark the site with something (a flag, a stick, whatever) so it can be located later.

These display boards are on display in our Carriage House and are available for viewing, study and assessment. Photographs of the boards are available.

However, they're very new to us and we're still processing them into our collection. Until we've got them properly recorded and photographed, they're not available for loan or for display elsewhere. For now, please feel free to visit and enjoy them in person.

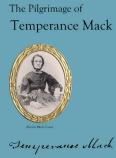
Dave Decker



In Memoriam of Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society Life Member Bette Jane *Beutler* Twyman May 30, 1955 ~ March 29, 2024

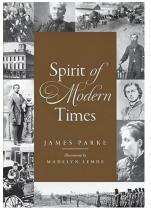
BOOK CORNER

As one of the activities of our Society's 150th anniversary, we are proud to announce the republishing of a little treasure, The Pilgrimage of *Temperance Mack* written by John and Audrey Cummings. The book has been out of print for several years, but Geoff Brieger was able to obtain the legal copyright to republish the book. The book itself is of general interest to people



By John & Audrey Cum

studying the early history of Pontiac. It has additional interest for members of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (previously called the Mormons) because it relates stories of several of early church members in the area. Most notably was the visit by the prophet Joseph Smith Jr. in 1834. **Richard Stamps** na



OCPHS member Jim Parke has just published a book about historic Pontiac that offers a fascinating read, with the title of Spirit of Modern Times. It is a fictional history that takes place in Pontiac in May of 1861, just as the Civil War is getting underway. All of the characters are actual people of record, including prominent families such as the McConnell's, the Thurber's, the Draper's, as well as Jim's ancestors the Parke's.

Many more characters are there to expand the story: a woman running her own dressmaking business; a newly

arrived runaway slave establishing a new and entirely different life in the north; a teenage girl graduating from high school and planning now for the crucial social season to come; a college boy returned for the summer and preparing to enlist in the army. All of these real people of Pontiac will lead the reader through a remarkable experience—a visit to our town as it was 160 years ago.

During his research for the book, Jim made a number of visits to Pine Grove and made extensive use of OCPHS materials and original photographs. The 400 page book he produced is replete with helpful maps, family charts, images, and newspaper advertisements to enhance the reader's understanding of the era. It is a particularly interesting period in Pontiac's history, focusing on a time when the early pioneering era was coming to an end, giving way to the modernization of the Industrial Revolution, and our town first incorporated itself as a true city.

Spirit of Modern Times is now available for internet purchase via Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and similar vendors, in hardcover and paperback format. Copies of the book are also available for sale at the Carriage House.

MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS REWARDS

Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society was

established in 1874 by the descendants of those early settlers who made the trek to Michigan Territory and settled in what we now know to be Oakland County. We are coming up to our 150th birthday in 2024. We want you to come celebrate with us the incredible history of our Society and all of Oakland County!

OCPHS is a non-profit, member-based, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of Oakland County. We are not affiliated with any governmental unit. Our work is supported by modest annual membership dues, program fees, corporate and grant support, and tax-deductible donations. Membership is open to everyone. Annual memberships run until December 31.

You can join on line at our website: http://www.ocphs.org/membership-and-benefits/

Student	\$10.00	
Individual	\$20.00	
Family	\$35.00	m
Non Profit	\$20.00	t
Patron	\$100.00	
Benefactor	\$200.00	Co
Friend of OCPHS	\$ \$500.00	ory
Corporate Sponsor \$500.00		01

We offer a embership level that suits your budget! ontact our Office visit our website.

Membership fees include a digital copy of our Quarterly Publication The Oakland Gazette.

2024 COMING EVENTS

Governor Wisner's Home Available for Tours *Tours Available by Appointment, Contact the Office*

Spring Auction - April 7th 4pm to 6pm at the PLAT ~ 47 N. Saginaw

Dishes Past: Pious Pontiac - May 3rd, 7pm to 10pm ~ Ticketed Event

Annual Meeting of the Members - May 18th County Commissioners Auditorium ~ 11am

Memorial Day at Oak Hill Cemetery Monday, May 27th, 1 pm

The Story of the Pontiac Asylum - TBD

Pontiac Transportation Museum Talk - TBD

All events held at OCPHS Campus unless otherwise noted 405 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue, Pontiac, Michigan

Jim Parke

THE OAKLAND COUNTY PIONEER AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY 405 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue

405 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue Pontiac, MI 48342

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arts.gov

We regularly send out email updates between Gazette editions, including local history stories and details about upcoming events.

If you don't receive these and would like to be added to our email list, contact us today to let us know!

email: office@ocphs.org phone: 248 338-6732

~ or message us on facebook ~



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ABOUT THE OAKLAND GAZETTE

Oakland Gazette is a publication of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society. Submissions, content suggestions, or comments are always welcomed.

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Editor: Barbara Frye

Gazette Crew: C. Cooper, D. Decker, P. Schmaltz, M. McGuinness Gazette email: gazette@pinegrovewisner.org