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HISTORICAL SOCIETY of GREATER LANSING

P. O. Box 515, Lansing, Michigan

November, 1964

"AUTOMOTIVE HERITAGE" PROGRAM BIG HIT

The October meeting of the Historical Society of Greater Lansing was held at the Michigan Historical Commission Archives on Wednesday, October 14.

John Lorenz of the Veteran Motor Car Club of America told of the classification of Old Cars: Pioneer, Acetylene, Vintage, etc. Events which antique cars have participated in are the Brighton Tour, England; Glidden Tour, a national United States tour; and the Wagon Wheel Tour, held in Michigan. The Wagon Wheel Tour derives its name from the fact that the cars meet centrally and go on tour, different directions on different days.

Mr. Lorenz told of taking antique autos to the Michigan School for the Blind and letting the children "see" them. A tape was made and now descriptions in braille are available to students.

The official national publication of this organization is The Bulb Horn; our regional publication, Gauntlets and Goggles.

Describing the restoration of a car, Mr. Lorenz said, "You can drive out the family car, park the old car in the garage, and tell your wife not to bother you for three years; you can send it to a professional restorer, wait a year or two, write a large check, and drive it home."

Following his speech, Mr. Lorenz showed a movie of the French Lick, Indiana Meet in 1962.

Mr. Ken McDowell of the Capital City Old Car Club (a junior organization) said, "You have to be a little 'nutty' to go through all we have to in restoring a car." This club was organized in June, 1963 and now has 37 members. They sponsored the R. E. Olds Centennial Parade and Car Show. Mr. McDowell then showed slides of this event. Commenting on the slides, he said, "Most members are interested in anything that has wheels on it." The original condition of the car that Bob Wyburn restored was an excellent example of what club members do. A display of old car appointments included an explosion whistle, hub caps, radiator caps, license plates and watch fobs, as well as early pictures which are most valuable in restoration.

Our thanks to Geneva Kebler for letting us use the Archives' facilities for our October meeting, and to both Geneva and Helen Wallin for the refreshments and the beautiful antique serving dishes which were so much in keeping with our theme. Our thanks, too, to Alice Franks for presiding at the refreshment table.

COIN, STAMPS, AND HISTORY

The November meeting of the Greater Lansing Historical Society will be held in the auditorium of the Michigan State University Museum, November 11 at 8 P.M.

Learning history through coins and stamps is the theme of the program, which will feature John Atanasoff from the Lansing Coin Club and Bill Aten of the Lansing Philatelic Society. They will discuss the history of their organizations as well as their goals, objectives, and programs. Members of both organizations have been invited to attend, and a special invitation is being extended to you. At last month's meeting, members of both the Veteran Motor Car Club and the Capital City Old Car Club showed up en masse and outnumbered our own membership! Let's see if we can have a standing room only audience at this month's meeting.

Marvin Cain is chairman for this program and he has promised us an interesting and enjoyable evening topped off with refreshments - courtesy of the MSU Museum. Hope we can count on you being there!

FRUEHAUF EXHIBIT

The Detroit Historical Society has announced an exhibit commemorating the Golden Anniversary of the Fruehauf Corporation. Articles on display at the Detroit Historical Museum include a set of documents penned by the company's founder, August Fruehauf, and 50 photographs showing the company's growth and the evolution of the semi-trailer. Many of these pictures were taken shortly after the turn of the century and were developed from fragile glass plate negatives. Tools used in the first Fruehauf blacksmith shop are on display in contrast to a series of photo enlargements and scale models of the firm's recent developments in trailer, container, and military transporter design.

BUSY SCHEDULE FOR MUSEUM DIRECTOR

After serving as a commentator during the Local Historical Society session at the recent Local History Conference in Detroit, Solan Weeks, Director of the Michigan Historical Commission Museum traveled to Benton Harbor on Monday, October, 19. He spoke to a group of about 60 members of the Womens Federation about the development of their club building, the historic Morton House, into a community museum. To make the members aware of what other communities were accomplishing in this field, a series of slides were shown illustrating local museums in over 60 Michigan communities.

The following evening a group of about 75 interested citizens of Benton Harbor met to form the Fort Miami Historical Society for the purpose of developing the Morton House into a community museum.

On Wednesday, Weeks journeyed to Hastings and addressed the local Kiwanis Club. About 50 members were present to hear him discuss the tremendous potential that exists for the development of a top tourist attraction at Charleton Park. Again slides were utilized to compare Charleton Park with other community museums in order to impress the members with the need for community action. The program was part of a community wide "Heritage Days" celebration featuring window displays and special programs, etc., which developed around the Historymobile's visit to Hastings. As a result of this stimulated community interest nearly 4000 citizens including many school groups from Hastings and the surrounding communities visited the unit during its two day showing.

Thursday evening, Weeks appeared in Charlotte and spoke to the Eaton County Historical Society about the procedure involved in developing a community museum. Development of an adequate record keeping system and the use of colorful attractive story telling exhibits was stressed. The program ended with a slide tour of Michigan's museum resources in Southeastern Michigan. The remainder of the tour will be presented to society members at a later date.

Weeks will be addressing the Dearborn Historical Society on November 5.

A special exhibit of Decorative Arts of the Old Northwest is now being held at the Greenfield Village Museum. Ask Geneva Kebler for date at next meeting November 11.

The Lansing YWCA recently sponsored a course in family history. The course was so enthusiastically received plans are being made to have it again this winter.

Fresh Out of the Attic, by Harold D. Burpee. This is a book of articles of the actual comical experiences of the author and others, published in The Hastings Banner during the last three years. The 102 page book contains twenty-nine old pictures of old stores, the C.K. & S. Railroad, old apple dryers, old landmarks and prominent places of the past. One of the interesting incidents of pioneer life is shown by an excerpt from Alex McBain's diary of 1865. On April 14 he wrote, "Friday, April 14. Ploughed in the orchard. John worked, \$1.00. President Lincoln shot in the evening." Copies of this book are available from H.D. Burpee, 122 Mill St., Delton, Michigan 49046 at \$3.75.

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