



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER LANSING

# TOWN CRIER

Box 515, Lansing, MI 48903  
VOLUME 16, NO. 3 FALL, 1974

and Bicentennial Forum

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*Mid - Michigan  
Plans For The  
Bicentennial*

## A Dedication

The bright fall flowers are gone, the flags rolled up, the shock of gunfire and drum beats which pleased the crowd are only a memory. Snow has transformed the words into bas relief; but the official State marker honoring Joshua Simmons II, Continental soldier in the American War for Independence, will remind each one who reads the text that the heritage we enjoy was given life by men who disagreed, struggled for their beliefs, and dared to leave comfort for a rough frontier.

The marker in honor of Joshua Simmons, only known soldier of the American Revolution buried in the Greater Lansing area, was dedicated Oct. 5 at the North Eagle Cemetery. The dedication was sponsored by the Historical Society of Greater Lansing.

On the program was the 1st Foot Guards—Grenadiers from the Detroit area, a regiment recreated according to the 1768 Clothing Warrant. The original battalion, composed of drafts from each of the three Guards regiments, was formed Feb. 13, 1776, and two months later left for America under Col. William Mather of the Coldstream Guards.

For the ceremony, the Foot Guards drilled to the 18th Century military muster. Their muskets were copies of the original Brown Bess long land and short land pattern, referred to today as the 1st and 2nd model Brown Bess.

Peter Fletcher, highway commissioner, was master of ceremonies. He spoke with volubility *nulli secundus* in the difficult verbal maneuvers of tongue twisting words with tongue in cheek.

Principal speaker for the dedication was James Brickley, lieutenant governor of Michigan and chairman of the State Bicentennial Commission. Others who spoke were Geneva Wiskemann, presi-



Lt. Gov. James Brickley at the unveiling of the marker honoring Joshua Simmons II. — photo by Jack Thompson

dent of the Society; Garry Brown, congressman; and Russell Howe, Eagle Township supervisor.

The ladies of the North Eagle Cemetery Society reported that they served over 200 wind-refreshed and hungry people who accepted the invitation of the Society to a country style lunch at the Eagle town hall following the dedication.

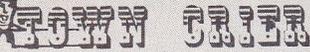
Several letters of thanks have been received from members of the Simmons family. Local newspapers reported the events of the day in detail to their readers.

The Historical Society of Greater Lansing has added a new membership category, a junior membership for those of high school age or younger. The cost of membership is one half that of the regular membership, or \$2.50.

Any young person interested in belonging to the Society may send their \$2.50 to The Historical Society of Greater Lansing, Box 515, Lansing, MI 48903.



the historical society of  
greater lansing



and Bicentennial Forum

Box 515, Lansing, Mi. 48903

VOLUME 16

NO. 3

FALL 1974

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A limited number of copies of "Pulpit and Prayer in Earliest Lansing," a 28 page monograph by Joseph L. Druse, published by the Historical Society of Greater Lansing as its contribution to the observance of the Centennial Sabbath, Feb. 15, 1959, are still available. Get your free copy by writing the Society, Box 515, Lansing, MI 48913.

# History and The Media

We mighty few who have had an active interest in history are finding ourselves these days joined by the mightier majority—with vicarious nostalgia, the reviviscence of handiwork, Laura Ingles Wilder in the wilderness, Scott Joplin, the Bicentennial. A mark-

er dedication becomes front page stuff; history, it seems, now has news value.

In his book, *The Image*, Daniel Boorstin describes what he calls "pseudo-events," unspontaneous, self-fulfilling happenings, usually created for the purpose of being communicated through the reporting media.

The Historical Society of Greater Lansing has produced a number of events lately, although there has been nothing "pseudo" about them. They have been planned, but planned for the enjoyment and interest of the attending audience.

There is also an unattending audience, those reached through the media. Because of the increased regard for history by the public, the coverage of history-related occurrences also has increased. What once were considered non-events have now become human interest. The unveiling of a marker with only the unveilers and the photographer present was solely for the benefit of the camera. A pseudo-event. But when more than 200 people show up for a marker dedication, as they did Oct. 5 at North Eagle Cemetery, that is something else. Or when more than 300 attend a historical convention, as they did June 22 at Wiskemann Farm, the reporter can report a real event, not be press agent for a pseudo-event.

From our position, the media seems to have done an outstanding job. We must mention in particular:

Betty Jones of the *Grand Ledge Independent*. She, of course, covered both the convention and the dedication with an understanding of what they were about and reported the feeling of both days. But she always does.

Mary Flood, a student with the *MSU State News*. After reading her story of the convention, one can only say: she was certainly there. She reported it as if it were a three ring circus, with each ring occupied. Which it was.

John Teare, staff writer with the *State Journal*. He reported the marker dedication with the right touch of humor. There are those who thought it would have been a staid occasion, reported with solemnity. But that is not the style of the Historical Society of Greater Lansing, nor it seems, of John Teare. If it had been solemn, probably no one would have shown up. Including me.

— Jack Thompson

## Bicentennial

Medals



One of the major statewide efforts to raise funds for the Michigan Bicentennial will be the sale of a series of official Bicentennial medals. The 1974 medallion, produced by the Lincoln Mint, was designed by a Michigan high school student.

Both sterling silver and bronze editions are now available from more than 1400 banks in the State. The major portion of the proceeds will go to the Michigan Bicentennial Commission ultimately to eliminate any burden on the taxpayers in funding this organization.



The 1st Foot Guards—Grenadiers, a recreated regiment of Red Coats, show modern day Khaki Coats how it was done 200 years ago. The event was the dedication of the Joshua Simmons marker, Oct. 5, sponsored by the Historical Society of Greater Lansing.  
— photo by Jack Thompson

Historical Society of Greater Lansing  
Programs At The  
Main Library, Lansing

Jan. 15 The Circus  
Feb. 19 Quilts  
Mar. 19 History for the Young  
Reader  
Apr. 16 Packaging

The 1975 season begins with the circus when Harland Kline presents a slide program, Jan. 15, called "Rolling Wheels." It is about the circus museum in Baraboo, Wisc. He will also bring some of his scale models of circus equipment. His extensive and detailed models are well known in this area, having been on display at the shopping malls a number of times. His entire family is involved in this work.

On Feb. 19, the featured speaker will be threadcrafter, Maria Thompson. Her topic will be the art of quilting in America. Of Mexican heritage, she has an interest in English and American needlework. She is vice president of the Greater Lansing Weavers Guild and secretary of the Mid-Michigan Chapter of the Embroiderers Guild of America. She was the first needlepoint teacher and a partner in the first needlepoint shop for this area. She teaches needlepoint and quilting at Beverly Baten's East Lansing craft shop and with the Haslett evening school program and has been judge of the Middle School quilt show the past two years. She was an award winner at this year's Ascension Lutheran religious art show. Her husband, Jack Thompson, is a trustee of the Historical Society.

On March 19, Virginia Burns will give a talk entitled "Writing History for the Young Reader." Mrs. Burns, under the byline of Virginia Ritchie, began her writing career about 15 years ago when living in Presque Isle County. She wrote a weekly story-picture feature which the *State Journal* used to run on Sundays. From there she went to outdoor and photographic stories for magazines. Lately she had done humorous and general interest articles. Her latest effort is a juvenile biography, her first full-length novel. She is the wife of Society trustee, Richard "Buck" Burns.

Bob Bouck will tell the story of "Packaging the Product: Past and Present," April 16. He started collecting antique containers about five years ago and is a member of the Tin Containers Association, a national group of about 600 people. He was born and raised and

## Do You Want to Know More About Antiques?

The Greater Lansing area offers a variety of classes from which to learn—with enjoyment.

The Lansing School District will have two classes for the first time this winter term. Functioning under the Adult Enrichment Program, Peg Dickman has taught the course in antiques since 1967. The class varies from 25 to 35 students and relies heavily on resource speakers.

"Antiques: Their Collection and Use" may include quilts, jewelry, prints, books, dolls—the entire field of Americana. The course is highlighted by several field trips to area museums and private homes opened to the class by their collector-owners.

Ruth Grier has been teaching a course in antiques almost as long as she has been working in Special Services for the Eaton Intermediate School District. Her experiences as a teacher in rural and urban schools and as a principal in the Charlotte Public School system have contributed to effective sessions. The

district includes Charlotte, Grand Ledge, Potterville, Eaton Rapids and Maple Valley. For the past five years students from these communities have attended the classes. The terms run for six weeks. The forthcoming winter term will feature an introduction to antiques.

Morris Apple, a member of the Clinton County Historical Society, has just concluded a seven week class, "Appreciating Your Antiques and Heritage." The class was limited to 15 students. Money from the fees benefited the projects of the Historical Society.

The program began with a tour of the Hicks House in St. Johns, moved to private homes exhibiting various types of art glass, Depression glass, toys, early Americana dolls and concluded with a show-and-tell session which delighted both the students and the instructor. Answers are still being sought to certain "whatsit" items. This course may be offered again next fall.

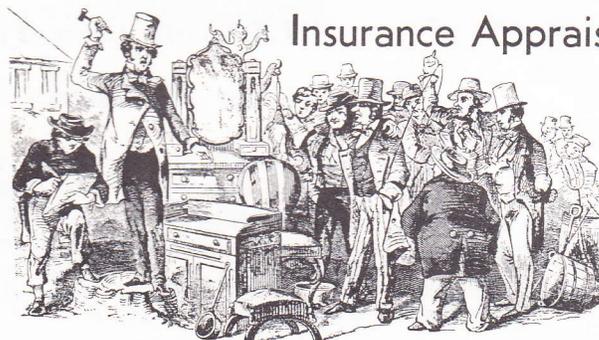
Watch your local newspapers for announcements of these or similar classes.

## Antiques

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still lives in Grand Ledge. After being graduated from Grand Ledge High School, he attended Lansing Community College where he received his associate's degree. He received his B.A. and M.A., both in marketing education, from Michigan State University. Before taking his present position as administrative assistant at LCC he taught marketing and distribution there. He is on the coordinating committee of the Tri-County Bicentennial Forum and is Bicentennial coordinator for LCC.

"The Age of Victoria: Decorative Preference in Michigan" opened at the Michigan Historical Museum, 505 N. Washington Ave., Lansing, Nov. 22. The exhibit continues through mid-February.

Also of interest is the "Governors' Choice" featuring china, decorative arts and other things used by Michigan' chief executives Mason through Milliken.

# The Octagon is Round in Clinton County

*The School-house is the first cornerstone of our nation's greatness, the next being the ballot-box; but the former underlying and guarding the latter.*

These words introduce "The Octagon Form and Gravel-Wall Applied to School-houses and Churches" in O.S. Fowler's *A Home for All or the Gravel Wall and Octagon Mode of Building*, New York, 1854.

The author presents this case for the advantages of octagon design:

"To gather around a spherical and elliptical table, occasions more harmony and agreeable sensations than around a square one. The advantages of sight, sound, light, ventilation, space, and efficient heating are included in this treatise prepared to apply the laws of progress to house-building."

On Aug. 6, several members of local

The original clapboard siding with a drip at the bottom shows considerable weathering and may have been covered by the present exterior about 50 years ago. The cut nails and other features offer evidence of age.

The men examining the structure, although impressed with the extreme decay as well as the probable cost of restoration, left the school, still with hope. It is unique in construction, one

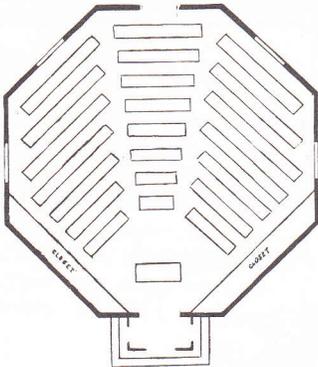
of the few octagonal buildings in this part of the State and one of the more important architectural remains extant in Clinton County.

The Clinton County Historical Society is considering whether the desire to save, to contribute money and physical energy for the restoration, and perhaps the relocation of the structure, is great enough to make the Round School live again as a demonstration classroom.



The Round School near Fowler, circa 1950

— Ruth Oliver collection



Octagon school house diagram, from Fowler's book on octagon buildings.

historical societies, including Ford Caesar, Jud Bancroft and George Wiske-mann, were in Clinton County examining a one-room wooden structure commonly referred to as the "Round School." Actually, it is octagonal.

Today, the wooden school, approximately 30 feet in diameter rests on a cracked stone foundation. Windows are covered with boards and the unsecured door, once thrust open by the quick hands of boisterous children, now moves only with the wind.

The layout of the building echoes Fowler's recommendations for octagonal construction. The removal of the brick chimney from the center to the north wall and the use of a closet for the furnace are obvious later day changes.

## Clinton Society In Business

The newly formed Clinton County Historical Society is gaining in membership and program depth each month. Douglas Carpenter, president, reported that the museum and library committee is searching out sites for museum development.

A survey of homes, schools and business buildings is now in progress county wide. It is hoped that results of this survey will lead to home tours, town trails and other history related projects to be sponsored by the Clinton society.

Publicity about a contest for outstanding family histories is just off the press. Anyone with beginnings in the County who now resides in Michigan is eligible to submit the results of genealogical research. Prizes, donated by businessmen in the Greater Lansing area, will be awarded for family histories produced by children up to 12 years of age, youths 12-18, and others 18 and over.

## Shiawassee Auction Successful

The Shiawassee County Historical Society held an auction, Sunday afternoon, Oct. 27, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Getman. All proceeds went towards cleaning and restoring the oil paintings of Curwood Castle in the city of Owosso. The Castle, built by the author, James Oliver Curwood, as a studio, is now owned by the city.

Any excess funds over the amount needed for the restorations will be used for display cases in the Curwood room, the top turret room of the building.

All items for the auction were donated by various members and friends of the Society. Mr. and Mrs. John Potts had a refreshment stand serving coffee, cider and donuts. After expenses for the refreshments and advertising were paid, there was a profit of \$1,000.30.

# Surveying History

The geodesic center of Michigan is located at the southern border of Ingham County where the meridian and base lines cross. The county border is along the base line, the meridian runs through the country, forming the division between Clinton and Gratiot Counties to the north. All surveying measurements of townships and sections begin at this geodesic center or "initial point."

The Clinton County Historical Society is offering a reprint of the 1880 *History of Shiawassee and Clinton Counties, Michigan*, by the Singer Press.

Every page of the original, including illustrations of local homes and farms and their owners, biographies of citizens, and all other material will be included in the reprint. There are about 500 pages of illustrations and histories of the two counties as well as each of the townships and villages.

The original edition had only a table of contents. The Society has added a comprehensive index which will be bound in the reproduction, making the book even more useful as a source book.

The book will be bound in a long-lasting library type buckram and will be spine titled in gold.

The price is \$25.50. Copies are available from the Clinton County Historical Society, 105 S. Swegles Street, St. Johns, MI 48879.

ham County where the meridian and base lines cross. The county border is along the base line, the meridian runs through the country, forming the division between Clinton and Gratiot Counties to the north. All surveying measurements of townships and sections begin at this geodesic center or "initial point."

Actually, there are two initial points. The base line from the east and the one from the west miss each other by a few yards. A monument to indicate the two points is now being planned for a park under development at this location.

A campaign for the monument was started in 1961 by Tex Evans, Ingham County engineer, Carl Williams, a former Sheridan Township supervisor, Talbert Abrams, Lansing pioneer aerial cartographer, and Clyde Stephens, a past president of the Michigan Society of Registered Land Surveyors. A gift from Mr. and Mrs. Abrams provided funds for the acquisition of the park site.

The Michigan Museum of Surveying is being built within the park. It will have an auditorium, a permanent exhibit area and an observation patio.

## The Train Never Stopped There

Charles "Chip" Rogers, a member and former vice president of the Historical Society of Greater Lansing, got half a page in the *Lansing State Journal*, Nov. 19. There was a story of his work as a railroad historian and his great collection of railroad artifacts. There was also a story of his research into the old Michigan United interurban—North Central Michigan railroad "station" on Grand River Ave. in North Lansing.

But, as we heard from his report before the Society in September, the only kind of station it ever claimed to be was a comfort station. It had, he explained, no connection with the railroad.

The Community Design Center has a lease on the building and plans to use it as an office and workshop.

## Jewish History of Area Presented

Daniel Jacobson could make the most uninteresting subject meaningful. But when he has an interesting topic to talk about, the presentation becomes outstanding, as was shown by his discussion before the Historical Society of Greater Lansing, Nov. 20.

Dr. Jacobson spoke about the beginnings of the Jewish community in this area. He explained how the early Jews to establish in this country came from the Iberian Peninsula and clustered along the Atlantic seaboard. The second group of Jewish immigrants, he said, were from Germany and tended to settle farther inland and to spread out more. These were the first Jews that came into Southern Michigan and to the Lansing area.

Dr. Jacobson has studied how the Jewish families were established in Lansing, and later, in the suburbs. He showed on maps of the city where the first families settled and where consequent families lived.

Dr. Jacobson has the background and expertise for such projects. A professor of geography and of education, he holds the position of director of the Social Science Teaching Institute at Michigan State University.

## Do You Have Your Great-Grandmother Hanging in Your Attic?

Or any other painting by a Michigan artist? Or by someone who may have been a Michigan artist?

Dr. Sadayoshi Omoto, professor of art history at Michigan State University, is compiling an inventory of pre-1914 paintings by Michigan artists. He said that the paintings do not have to be by recognized artists, that much of the material will probably be in the folk-primitive art category.

"This is a non-discriminatory kind of inventory," Dr. Omoto explained. "We are looking for anything without passing judgment."

Those who know of paintings that should be on such an inventory are asked to contact Dr. Omoto at 102 Kresge Art Center, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824 (355-7633). A follow-up letter will be sent asking for basic information—physical size, medium, name of artist (if known), etc. Dr. Omoto would also

like a photograph of the painting if one is available. If not, he will have one taken. The local Junior League is working with him on this.

"If the artist is not known," Dr. Omoto said, "we may be able to assist the owner in nailing the artist down." For example, he said that he may get works of similar style from scattered areas which may have been painted by the same person.

His survey is part of a listing by the Smithsonian's National Collection of Fine Arts Survey, started in 1971. The National office sent inquiries to museums throughout the U. S. for information on their paintings, but the response was poor.

Dr. Omoto envisions putting on an exhibit within the next several months. The collecting, he said, will continue through 1976 and probably beyond.

# North Lansing Against The World

Drive past 106 E. North Street in North Lansing and you will likely see groups of people—architects, tradesmen, city employees, historians, concerned citizens—studying the Turner-Dodge House. This important historic structure was recently acquired by the City of Lansing.

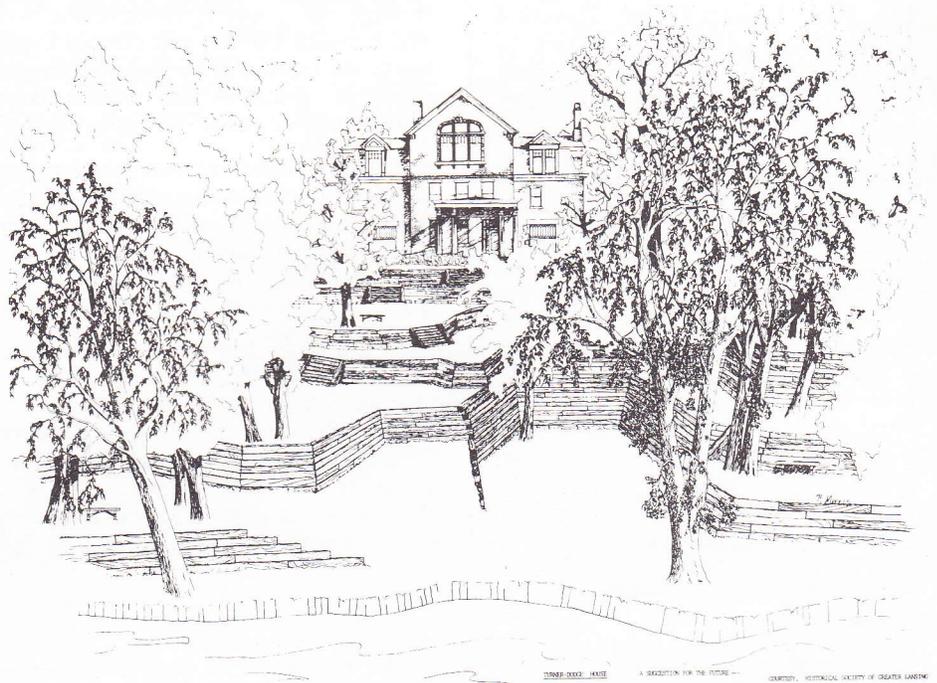
The city has contracted the Community Design Center, a Model Cities agency, for maintenance of the building through the winter and preservation work which hopefully will follow. The first group of contracts for the repair work have been negotiated. These include carpentry work on the pillars and outside wooden structures, and basic repair of the roof, windows, doors and masonry.

Early in the fall, Richard Burns photographed the house and its environs to create a slide program for the Historical Society of Greater Lansing. The purpose of the slides was to inform viewers about the architectural detail and significance of the structure, the trees and natural growth along the river bank, and the building's place in local history. The program was first viewed at the Society's September meeting. The Society is indebted to Major Burns for this gift.

The Society asked Robert Morris, Lansing artist-illustrator, to sketch the house from the front, or river side, as it may appear developed for recreational and social services sometime in the future.

The Turner-Dodge House and North Lansing have figured prominently in what Geneva Wiskemann, president of the Society, has called an "olio show" of the Society's meetings. Each meeting seems to have had a number of attractions in addition to the featured talk.

At the first meeting, besides Chip



— architectural portraiture by Robert Morris

Rogers' talk on the North Lansing comfort station, Arthur Alberts of the Michigan Archeology Society informed the group about the work his association was doing in literally digging up the past life of urban areas, such as that of the Turner-Dodge House.

Pat Smith, architect with the Community Design Center, gave a slide presentation on North Lansing, with ideas of how it could be revitalized, and Frank Dodge McLean, who grew up in the Turner-Dodge house, was introduced.

The featured speaker for the October meeting was Michael Hodges, assistant professor of landscape architecture at

MSU. His subject was town trails and urban interpretive centers. In his very interesting talk, he explained that town trails, which are like nature trails only in urban areas, are useful for understanding the city environment. Interpretive centers are combination meeting halls, information booths and miniature museums.

At the November meeting, four of Prof. Hodges' students, Tom Page, Kent Anderson, Jim Cook and Mike Ratajski, showed examples of their work with historical town trail maps of downtown and North Lansing, one a walking trail, the other a bicycle route.

## Community Development Project

City wide hearings on the Community Development Act of 1974 were held in four Lansing high school auditoriums during November. On Nov. 14 members of the city's planning office, home owners, businessmen, preservationists and friends of history met at the Lansing city hall to discuss the North Lansing residents' interest in a number of objectives. Among these were maintaining valuable historic sites in North Lansing,

preserving and expanding housing quality and improving the structural condition of houses and other buildings, strengthening the community's economy and reducing the isolation of income groups, upgrading community services, working on the prevention of fire, crime and accidents, and achieving a better use of land and natural resources.

Lansing mayor, Gerald Graves, had asked for citizen recommendations for

community development projects. In reply, a group named the North Lansing Women for Action Committee, called for an "old town" development project for the Grand River Ave. Turner Street area.

Toward this project, the committee suggested such things as reconstructed businesses, including a grist mill, smithy, ice cream shop and old time saloon, drug store and barber shop. Also envisioned were a locomotive and passenger car to run to and from downtown, improvement of the Grand River so pleasure

# What — Another Emergency?

Tucked away among the 120 pages of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 is a provision authorizing "acquisition of real property that is . . . appropriate for the preservation or restoration of historic sites; the beautification of urban land; the conservation of open spaces, natural resources and scenic areas." To carry out this and other community development objectives Congress has set a figure of \$11.9 billion.

Yet it has been, and still is, a wearying struggle merely to bring to the attention of state and local officials the importance of these goals. To accomplish the task, last March a small group formed the Emergency Historic Preservation Committee of Michigan.

Members have thus far engaged in two major activities, one relative to State legislation, the other regarding a proposed zoning change in Lansing. The initial effort, the reason for forming the committee, had to do with Michigan Senate Bill 1152 which provides for the establishment of a downtown development authority and gives communities extensive powers to implement construction of downtown facilities. But there is scant protection for what already exists.

It has taken memos, appearances at lengthy hearings, telephone calls, and conferences to get into the bill even the most meager safeguards for historic places. There is still time to amend the bill. Write to William Fitzgerald, chairman, Committee on Economic Development, Capitol Building, Lansing, MI 48903. Urge him to see to it that wording relating to historic preservation suggested by the Emergency Historic Preservation Committee of Michigan is included in the bill.

boats might navigate it, and the development of the Turner-Dodge grounds into a Victorian park.

The committee said that the project should be functional, not "just a display and museum."

Lansing will receive \$29 million for community development. A cohesive plan of utilization must be produced in the next three months. If you are interested in North Lansing and community development, contact the Historical Society of Greater Lansing, Box 515, Lansing MI 48913.

The second committee activity relates both to historic preservation and to beautification of urban land since it involves property near Lansing's Grand River, about one fourth mile from the Turner-Dodge property.

Appropriate river development and restoration of the residence were both threatened recently when the Lansing City Planning Board approved rezoning from light to heavy industrial use a small parcel of land located at 1301 N. Turner St., within an area designated as a possible historic district. Purpose of the rezoning proposal was to permit construction of a welding equipment operation. Members of the Emergency Committee, along with other groups, actively opposed the rezoning which required final approval by the City Council. The matter was resolved when the petitioners withdrew their request because the potential buyer had decided to locate elsewhere.

What is the underlying problem making it necessary to form emergency committees for the protection of that which public policy has already decreed should be protected? Perhaps it is a simple disagreement about what constitutes the public interest and perhaps conflict is inevitable.

Meanwhile there are many indications that those who care about saving rivers and saving historic buildings are learning how to operate in a political setting.

They are discovering that their simple pleasures and interests have political significance. They are finding that they do have some friends—in Congress, in the state houses of the Nation and among their local governmental officials. They are learning how to extract facts from local agencies. They are learning how to elect candidates who support their views. They are learning that preservation is economically feasible—and they are beginning to convince the business world.

But we have a long way to go. Meanwhile important buildings are tumbling down and important open spaces are being desecrated. If you want to help with the hard work that has to be done—too often on an emergency basis—just give us a call.

—BETTE DOWNS, chairman  
Emergency Historic Preservation  
Committee of Michigan  
(517) 351-5752  
1200 Prescott Drive  
East Lansing, MI 48823

## New Magazine

Watch for *Circadia*, a magazine of Greater Lansing which made its debut in October. It has articles of entertainment, the arts and things of historical significance. The magazine is published monthly by Circadia Inc. of East Lansing. Copies are available from the newsstands or by subscription for \$6.50 a year. The address is 2900 Northwind Drive, East Lansing 48823.

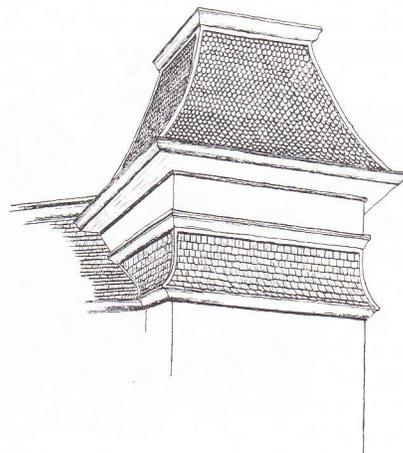
## Robert Morris — Artist

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## Save a Bridge



Residents of Windsor Township, Eaton County, are receiving endorsements from many individuals, Bicentennial organizations, history related groups, the U. S. Corps of Engineers and the State Historical Commission for a campaign to save the Bailey Road Bridge across the Grand River near Dimondale.

Efforts to restore the abandoned bridge to a safe condition are underway. It may be used as an on-site exhibit showing the type of metal construction fast disappearing in Michigan.

Robert Rood, a Windsor Township resident has been researching the pedigree of the bridge. — courtesy Mich. Dept. of Transportation

## Firemen on Parade

"Visiting firemen" was not just a phrase the first week of October in Eaton Rapids as the city celebrated the 100th birthday of its fire department. Engines from 16 area fire departments were on parade, Saturday Oct. 13, through the downtown area. Featured were antique rigs from Greenfield Vil-

lage, polished and beautiful and looking like fire engines are supposed to look.

In a congratulatory letter from Gerald Ford, the president said, "The members of the Eaton Rapids Fire Department have great reason to look with pride on the organization's one hundredth year of useful public service."

## Mineral Wells Of Eaton Rapids

In 1873, George E. Walton, M.D., published *The Mineral Springs of the United States and Canada* in which he wrote:

"Within the past three years, a number of artesian wells have been bored in Michigan, which are claimed by proprietors to be magnetic, that is, the water is supposed to be impregnated with magnetism. A careful investigation of the question, however, reveals the fact that there is no fixed magnetism in the water, but that the iron tubing of the well is highly magnetic. It is probable, however, that iron placed in a perpendicular position becomes more readily magnetic in Michigan than in many other portions of the earth, and the fact is worthy of investigation."

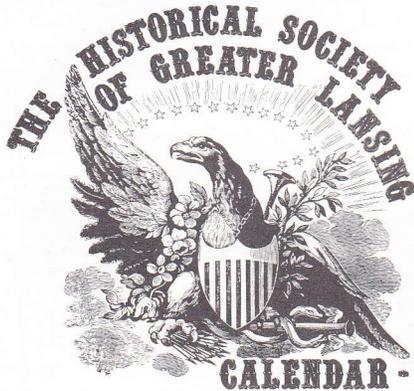
A committee of the State Medical Society composed of Dr. H. O. Hitchcock, Prof. S. C. Duffield and Prof. R. C. Kedzie prepared a report on the mineral springs of Michigan. Dr. Kedzie investigated the magnetism of the wells and reached the conclusion that the magnetism of Michigan wells was confined to iron tubing. He wrote:

"The phenomena of magnetism observed at the wells are entirely due to induction, caused by the highly magnetic condition of the tube; and the magnetism of the tube is only a usual result of terrestrial magnetism.

"These conditions should not, however, detract from the actual value of the wells of Michigan. Many of the waters are strongly impregnated with active medicinal salts, and are exceedingly valuable therapeutic agents."

At this time Eaton Rapids was described under "calcic waters" as a "town pleasantly situated on the Grand River, and, since the discovery of the wells in 1869-70, has grown rapidly." The report said that every facility for baths in every form could be found in Eaton Rapids with several wells directly connected with the hotels.

Nearly a century later the Eaton Rapids City Council has authorized the purchase of an official State marker honoring the Anderson House, one of the famous hotel and mineral bath facilities. This will be a wall mounted marker on the present American Bank and Trust building. It is scheduled for dedication July 5, 1975.

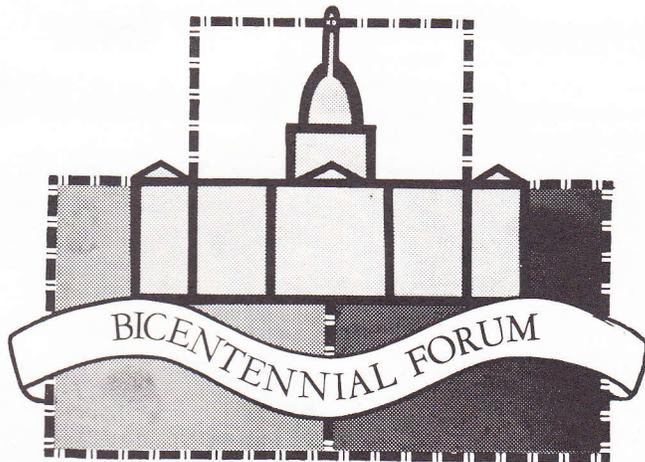


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The proceedings of the first Tri-County Historical Convention, held June 22, have been published by the Ingham County Board of Commissioners' Special Committee on County History and distributed to the 300 participants.

The illustrated 10 page report included comment on activities since June and urged the formation of a Bicentennial council or forum to facilitate the interrelations of the various historical and Bicentennial groups throughout the area. Primary needs mentioned were the establishment of communications, coordination of group efforts, sharing of expertise, and communication with the public.

On Oct. 23 a meeting was held in Lansing Community College's Old Central Building, hosted by Philip Gannon, LCC president, and Bob Bouck, Bicentennial coordinator.

Mr. Gannon reported on plans that will include a park from Shiawassee to Saginaw Streets along the river.

## Bicentennial Plans of Clinton County

Dyle Henning, chairman of the Clinton County Bicentennial Committee, will soon be announcing another meeting of the committee, composed of Duane Chamberlain, Virginia Zeeb, Richard Hawks, and Alta Reed, commissioners, and Betty Minsky, Hilda Bross, Warren Dobson, Gerald Shepherd and Nancy Cheny, citizens at large.

The committee functions as a steering committee. Contacts will be made with the schools, churches, service clubs, PTAs, youth groups and other governmental units.

Under the direction of Hilda Bross and Betty Minsky, a Clinton County history has been updated and soon will be on sale.

"For the first time in 100 years you will be able to see and walk along the river," he said.

Representatives from area communities and organizations reported briefly on their committees for the celebration, plans for projects, and needs. Representatives from DeWitt, Eaton Rapids, the Historical Society of Greater Lansing and Ingham County reported accomplished beginnings.

Others at the meeting were representatives from the East Lansing Bicentennial Committee, the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Lansing Waterfront Development Board, Bellevue, Eaton County, the Portland Area Historical Society, the Ionia County Board of Commissioners, the North Lansing Historical Project, Delhi Township, Dimondale, Michigan State University, the Lansing Fine Arts Council, Meridian Township, and the Lansing Bicentennial Committee.

The meeting concluded approving the use of LCC's computer facilities for

Warren Dobson has written a Bicentennial song for the county, to the music of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." The three verses represent the three themes of the Bicentennial—Heritage '76 (the past), Festivals USA (the present) and Horizons '76 (the future).

Duane Chamberlain has suggested a contest to find the largest tree of each species in Clinton County.

Other projects discussed have been parks, river cleanup, wooden nickels, historical trails and a museum.

The committee is working closely with the newly formed Clinton County Historical Society.

— Alta Reed

automated mailing labels to be made available to cooperating groups and the production of a calendar of Bicentennial and history related events in mid-Michigan. The group plans to meet again in 1975.

Meanwhile, a coordinating committee has, among other things, started work in collecting mailing lists and preparing them for the computer. Members of the committee are Bob Bouck, Jack Thompson, Gil Wanger and Geneva Wisemann. The *Town Crier* is now being mailed according to this computerized list.



Few communities in this area can match DeWitt for its enthusiastic response to the challenges of the Bicentennial. New parks, tennis courts and signs welcoming highway travelers are only the beginning, Faye Hanson, chairwoman of the Bicentennial Committee, said.

The next project will be replacing the monument honoring DeWitt as the first white settlement in Clinton County. The marker was first placed by the Clinton Pioneer Society in 1913. There are also plans to renovate the old Shavey House, a DeWitt landmark.

On your calendar, circle next May 11 for a two hour program (3-5 p.m.) featuring the 5th Michigan Regiment Band from Howell. This group, recipients of a Michigan Arts Council grant, will include a marching band, a banjo corps, a fife and drum unit and specialty dance units. The event, in the high school stadium, will be sponsored by the Bicentennial Commission. There is room for 4500.

## Delta Commission Formed

A Bicentennial Commission, appointed by the Delta Township Board of Trustees, consists of volunteers representing a cross section of the township. Its primary function is to coordinate local projects developed to commemorate the Bicentennial. Functioning under by-laws approved by the trustees, it will meet at 7:30 p.m. on the fourth Monday of the month in the Township administration building, 7710 W. Saginaw.

The chairman is Clifford Marcus, 523 Woodhaven Drive, Lansing; vice chairman is Kern Slucter, 1426 Boynton Drive, Lansing; and secretary is Milvet Strickler, 4220 Mary's Way, Lansing. A finance chairperson is still needed.

Chairman of the Heritage '76 Committee is Jeffrey Klenk, naturalist at Woldumar. The focus of this committee is to preserve things that have been accomplished and to take note of their significance—the restoration of an old building, erecting a historical marker, or simply giving recognition to past events of local significance.

Festivals USA is concerned with promoting tourism, publicizing local attractions, or initiating special events which will bring visitors to the community. Chairwoman of this committee is Ruth Martins.

## Bicentennial Song

Telling the story of our country in song has been a popular and effective pathway to music, history and personal enjoyment through the years. Encouraged by the Bicentennial era and challenged by members of her family, Lois Ann Downing of Lansing wrote the words and music of such a story. It was arranged for piano by Karen Domanski.

"I wanted to do something particularly for young people," Mrs. Downing explained. This is not surprising. She has long had an interest in music for young people, having initiated a music program for retarded children in the Lansing area in 1958.

Last year her Bicentennial song, "Happy Birthday, America," was sung and recorded by the third grade class of Marj Cranson in Grand Ledge.

Mrs. Downing said that she will send free copies of the song to any school teacher interested in using it with young people. Copies are available from Lois Ann Downing, 4100 Devonshire, Lansing 48910.

Herbert Sturdevant is chairman of the Horizons '76 Committee. The Horizons theme seeks to leave some residual benefit from the Bicentennial for the future. There may be a local project for the construction of bicycle paths or nature trails, a facility at a Township park, or some other tangible civic improvement.

Two other committees are Youth Activities, chaired by Joetta Hamelin, a Waverly High student, and Senior Citizens. A chairperson is still needed for the Senior Citizens Committee. The committee names do not mean that membership is restricted only to young or old.

The Commission asks that anyone wanting to serve to call one of the officers.

## Lockwood House To Be Museum

The Leon Lockwood house in the city of Ionia is slated to be a history museum for Ionia County. The County Historical Society has an option on its purchase and it has been approved as a national landmark for historic preservation.

The house, constructed of sandstone from a local quarry, was built in 1880 by John Blanchard who had an interest in the quarry. On the grounds there is also a brick carriage house. The grounds are about one acre in area and extend from East Main Street to East Adams Street.

Many of the artifacts scheduled to be displayed in the museum are now in the Hall-Fowler Library.

Lynn Morris, society president, said the building could also be used as a meeting place for the society and for other activities.

## Gun Show Coming

The annual winter antique gun show of the Michigan Antique Arms Collectors, will be held Jan. 25 and 26 at the Detroit Fairgrounds Community Arts Building. Shows will also be held May 17 and 18 in Detroit and Sept. 27 and 28 in Lansing.

## Ionia Bicentennial Work

The Ionia County Board of Commissioners established a Bicentennial Committee, Oct. 24, 1973. Marge Smith of Portland and Monroe MacPherson of Ionia are co-chairpersons.

Leaders of sub-committees include Yvonne Smith, Russell Gregory, and Beverly Healy Cusack, all of Ionia, and Eugene Cook of Lyons.

Initial plans are to coordinate activities with a county calendar, allowing each community to fit its celebrations into events already functioning. These include such things as the Ionia Free Fair and rodeo days.

Following incorporation and adoption of bylaws, the committee turned its attention to various possible projects. One is the selection of a county seal. It is also considering such facets of local history as the recognition of Lyons as the alleged "overnight" capital of the State, the Grand River, the Dexter and Clinton trails and White's Covered Bridge near Smyrna.

## Ingham Takes Advantages Of New Law

Recent legislation by the State allows counties to form historical commissions. This is by way of an amendment to an existing law for cities and villages. The Ingham County Board of Commissioners have adopted its Special Committee on County History, established in 1971, as the first such legal county historical commission in Michigan.

David Hollister chairs the nine member board, with members serving staggered terms of three years. This ongoing commission sets an example of high standards and service.

A new history of the county by Ford Ceasar is on schedule and should be published sometime next year, Al Wardowski, the former chairman, said. A grant has been filed for production of a film to augment the book.

Other projects under study are the designing of a county flag and the placing of markers identifying historic sites.



The Vermontville Bicentennial Commission meets at 10 a.m. the first Saturday of every month for work devoted to the restoration of the opera house, beautification of the town square and production of a pageant.

\* \* \*

In Stockbridge, the Bicentennial Committee has purchased a barn which they anticipate will be moved to the Waterloo Farm Museum area and restored by 1976. It is a two cow barn, typical of those on early farms. It has hand-hewn beams and vertical siding.

Also, a doctoral student is currently researching the community.

\* \* \*

Welcome to the *Plank Road*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Nov., 1974, featuring Bicentennial news from throughout Eaton County. This publication is made possible by Olivet College.

\* \* \*

Phillip Gannon, president of Lansing Community College, has been appointed chairman of the Lansing Bicentennial Committee. Lynda Egbert is the Bicentennial coordinator for the city.

\* \* \*

Sue Lowes, a junior in the Eaton Rapids High School, is an active, voting member of the city's Bicentennial Committee of fifteen. Congratulations to Eaton Rapids for including young Michiganders.

\* \* \*

Two members of the East Lansing Schools staff have plans to convert an

old school bus into a historical museum. Yvonne Pretzer, librarian, and John Buttner, audio-visual coordinator, are asking for suggestions or display items concerning the city's past.

East Lansing received its Bicentennial flag in October. A short ceremony was held at city hall on the occasion.

\* \* \*

The Delhi Charter Township Committee met in mid-November for organization and appointment of committees, Billie L. Dowell, chairperson, said.

Alida Chapman is co-chairperson. Her column, "Looking Back," with reminiscences into history, is familiar to readers of the *Ingham County News*.

\* \* \*

The Boy Scouts are laying plans for their scout fair, June 7 and 8, at the Marshall Street armory in Lansing. The theme will be "Serving America."

Scouts through this area are selling facsimile copies of four historical documents: the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Gettysburg Address.

\* \* \*

The American Legion of Michigan has embarked on a project, suggested by the Charlotte post, of planting 76 trees in each local post community. According to the State commander, Milo Newer, Jr., the project will enable even the smallest post to participate.

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## **The Young Are Involved**

The Michigan State University Extension Service annual conference, Nov. 1, began plans for Michigan's 155,000 4-H boys and girls Bicentennial activities.

Arden Peterson, Bicentennial coordinator, said that a distinguished committee was at work formulating plans to assist 450 extension staff members in

carrying the Bicentennial to 25,000 4-H leaders.

Dolores Wharton, vice chairperson, and Howard Lancour, director of the Michigan Bicentennial Commission, spoke at the conference. Following the viewing of a specially created color film each participant received a kit of suggestions and guidelines from Federal, State and county extension service sources.

## **Much Activity At MSU**

The Michigan State University Bicentennial Coordinating Committee was formed Oct. 10. Robert Perrin, vice president for University relations, is its chairman. Others include Rollin Baker, director of the Museum; William Combs, director of archives; Madison Kuhn, professor of history; Kenneth Beachler, director of Lecture-Concert Series; Richard Chapin, director of libraries; Milton Muelder, vice president for Research Development; Donald Pash, program associate, WKAR-TV; Arden Peterson, program leader, 4-H; Richard Sullivan, dean, College of Arts & Letters; Carey Balaban, history student and Marsha MacDowell-Dewhurst, art student. Susan Hughes is the staff person.

The committee will fund no projects but will direct those seeking funds to available sources. The main outside source of funds, according to Mr. Perrin, will be the Michigan Bicentennial Commission. The project itself must be able to supply matching funds, he said.

The MSU Lecture Concert Series will sponsor programs as part of the Bicentennial observance. The programs will have a general theme of Americana.

Richard Snider, curator of education of the MSU Museum, is working with the College of Education on a series of exhibits showing Michigan history over the past 300 years.

On the national scene, Dolores Wharton, wife of MSU president, Clifton Wharton, is on the National Endowment for the Arts Bicentennial Committee. Mrs. Wharton has had a long time interest and expertise in the arts. She is also a vice chairwoman of the Michigan Bicentennial Commission.

Lyle Thorburn, assistant vice president for Housing and Food Services, is on the national Bicentennial Food Service Federation. The group met in New York in November and included such well-known people as Col. Harlan Sanders and Win Schuler. Mr. Thorburn, a nationally recognized expert in higher education housing, is a native of the Holt-Mason area.

# Bicentennial in Eaton County

The Eaton County Bicentennial Commission was started through the County Historical Society by a request from the County Board of Commissioners.

The first project was the adoption of bylaws establishing the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. as the official meeting night. The meetings are held in the commissioners room, downstairs from the sheriff's office in Charlotte.

Elected to the Executive Committee were Phil Dorland (Delta Township), chairman; Marilyn Frankenstein (Bellevue), vice chairman; Hildred Peabody (Vermontville), secretary; and Robert Gierman (Sunfield), treasurer.

The objectives adopted by the commission are to promote and coordinate activities commemorating the historic events associated with American Independence for all Eaton County citizens. The commission will suggest to the Board of Commissioners projects with realistic goals which the commission feels it can implement and which will have a lasting and meaningful impact on the citizens.

To accomplish these goals the commission has established five committees to help every community bring forth

their ideas. The committees are for Heritage '76, Festivals USA, Horizons '76, finance and communications. The committees will establish guidelines for working with Bicentennial projects and will develop a line of action for the County Bicentennial celebration. The information, participation and accomplishments of these committees will be the Bicentennial for Eaton County. With input from committee participants, the people residing in the communities now and in the future will have an opportunity to appreciate their heritage, learn more about it, preserve some of it and apply their experience for providing a better tomorrow.

The commission asks assistance in spreading the Bicentennial spirit by helping Ed Morey, 110 E. Clinton Trail, Charlotte 48813, with Heritage '76; Edith Berg, Sunfield 48890, with Festival USA; Richard Larson, 224 Pleasant St., Charlotte 48813, with Horizons '76; Ken Burt, 106 Jefferson, Dimondale 48821, with communications; and Chuck Rabey, 120 S. Clinton, Charlotte 48813, with finances. The commission said that your assistance with one of these committees will bring the Bicentennial celebration closer to you and your friends.

## Meridian News

As with many other communities, in Meridian Township the Bicentennial Committee and the historical society (called the Friends of Meridian) have a certain congruity of membership and purpose.

Both support the Haslett Middle School Log Cabin Living class, a program of pioneer living. The class recently acquired a mold for making pewter spoons, a new craft for the students. The Middle School's quilt show, held in November, was a success for the second year in a row. A number of quilts of all ages were brought in for display.

The restoration of the old Proctor Toll House in the Historic Village project is nearly complete. The village is located behind the township hall.

A survey for the identification of township structures as to their architectural and historical significance is a continuous project. Reports have been accumulated in the planning office for possible publication.

J. Wesley Olds an Okemos artist, has created a series of pen and ink drawings of old homes and other buildings of the area. The drawings have been reproduced as prints and note paper and are on sale at various places including the Lansing Art Gallery, the Sparrows Nest and 1849 House in Okemos or from any member of the Friends. The notes, packed with two each of five pictures, sell for \$1.50. The prints are \$2.50 or hand water colored for \$5.

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## Old Film Series

Ingmar Bergman's film, "Wild Strawberries," a cinematic landmark, was viewed by an enthusiastic audience at the Ledges Playhouse, Nov. 16. This was the first in a forthcoming series of rarely seen films planned for showing during the spring at the Playhouse on River Street in Grand Ledge.

Several local citizens, including Bill Davis, Bill Blanchard, members of the Michigan Folk Art Company and

others, have joined with the Playhouse directors, John Peakes and Richard Thompson, to bring this mini film festival to local viewers.

Admissions are nominal. Theatergoers are welcome at the Icebox Restaurant for refreshments and discussions of the films.

For information, call Bill Davis at 647-7603, or stop by the Michigan Folk Art Company, 212 N. Bridge Street.

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