

# HSGL Newsletter

Official Publication of the  
*Historical Society of Greater Lansing*

May 1994

## Love Springs Eternal . . . .

"They Didn't Believe Me." "Blue Moon." "The Lady Is A Tramp." We all know these love songs, and the titles pull the music into our minds.

Simple, often sentimental *romantic ballads* have been popular in England and Scotland since the 12th C. These songs were handed down orally for generations, and 300 known before the 16th C. are extant. New romantic ballads, primarily from various types of stage shows, have gained increasing popularity in this country since the 1850's. Several of the composers deserve notice for their lasting love songs.

Stephen Foster was an early American writer of love songs. He grew up on the Pennsylvania frontier without formal music education, but with recognized talent. He first wrote for minstrel shows, and much of his work is trite, but he gained respect with "My Old Kentucky Home" (1853) and "Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair" (1854).

In contrast, Victor Herbert was an Irish-American cellist classically trained at the Stuttgart Conservatory. He came to this country to join the Metropolitan Opera orchestra in 1886, and later was conductor for the Pittsburg Symphony Orchestra. He wrote two operas, but became popular through such operettas as *Babes in Toyland* (1903) and *Sweethearts* (1913).

Sigmund Romberg, a well-known Hungarian-American composer educated in Vienna, came to the U.S. in 1910. He wrote more than 70 operettas, including *The Student Prince* (1924) and later wrote scores for several films.

One of the best-known American composers

*Continued on Page 2*

### Historical Society of Greater Lansing EXECUTIVE BOARD

#### Officers

Linda Peckham  
*President*  
John Curry  
*Vice President*  
Diana Reedy  
*Secretary*  
Pat Heyden  
*Treasurer*

#### Trustees

Dave Caterino  
Richard Frazier  
Hondon Hargrove  
JoAnne Jager  
Jim Lyons  
Richard Racki  
Philip Siebert  
Michael Unsworth

Newsletter Editor  
Craig Whitford

The HSGL Newsletter is published bimonthly from September through May.  
Articles and news of historical interest may be sent to the  
**Historical Society of Greater Lansing, P.O. Box 12095, Lansing, MI 48901.**  
Linda Peckham, President. Tel: 517/372-3385.

is George Gershwin, who trained in Tin Pan Alley playing piano for music publishers. In addition to the scores for such musicals as *O, Kay!* (1926), *Funny Face* (1927), and *Girl Crazy* (1930), he also wrote, with George S. Kaufman, *Of Thee I Sing*, which won the Pulitzer Prize (1931). Gershwin is also known for his more serious compositions: "Rhapsody in Blue" (1922), "An American in Paris" (1928), and "Porgy and Bess" (1935).

At the same time in New York City, Richard Rodgers was collaborating with Lorenz Hart on *The Girlfriend and Connecticut Yankee*, and later, *The Boys from Syracuse* and *Pal Joey*. After Hart's death, Rodgers teamed with an American lyricist and librettist named Oscar Hammerstein, 2nd. Hammerstein had already seen success with Romberg on two musicals, and with Jerome Kern on a major work, *Show Boat* (1927).

Rodgers and Hammerstein gave us



The Board and Membership of the Historical Society of Greater Lansing wishes to extend their appreciation to **David Caterino** and **Michael Unsworth** for their dedication and service to the Society as Trustees.

musicals of a new kind, musicals known for the integration of music, dance, and drama. In an eight-year period they brought to the stage *Oklahoma!* (1943), *Carousel* (1945), *South Pacific* (1949), and *The King and I* (1951). *Oklahoma!* and *South Pacific* both won Pulitzer Prizes, and two songs won Academy Awards: "The Last Time I Saw Paris" and "It Might As Well Be Spring."

It might as well be spring, because love springs eternal – and makes love songs ever popular.

-Linda Peckham



## ELECTION TIME

The membership of the Historical Society of Greater Lansing is currently seeking nominations for the position of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and (4) two-year term Trustees. The individuals listed below have been nominated for the 1994-95 season. This election will be held during the annual dinner on May 18, 1994. At this time we will also vote on changes to our Society Bylaws.

### Officers

Linda Peckham  
*President*  
John Curry  
*Vice President*  
Diana Reedy  
*Secretary*  
Pat Heyden  
*Treasurer*

### Trustees

Hondon Hargrove  
Joseph Maguire  
Philip Siebert  
Dave Thomas

# BLASTS From The Past

The following 'news' items have all been taken out of issues of the **Lansing Republican Weekly**, written in the style of the time.

The man who can walk down our beautifully shaded avenues just at this season of the year and not fall in love with the capital city is plunging rapidly downward into the yawning abyss of total depravity. LRW 5/28/1884.

Look out for the woman with the dreamy, liquid eye and limber sun-bonnet who will soon stand out in the front yard with the nozzle of a garden hose clasped in her little white hands, for in a moment ye wot not of she will cover you with confusion and rainwater. As the season advances, you will learn to shun her as you would a pestilence or a sun agent. A woman with a garden hose and a sun-bonnet that flops down over her eyes is a terrible engine of destruction, and when the great ebbing tide of humanity beholds her it ceases to ebb right away and gets behind the fence for safety. LRW 5/7/1884.

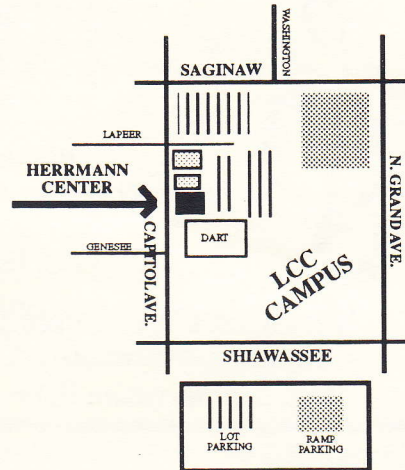
Listen, dear one, to the cheery, musical, liquid trill of joy that wells up from the throat of the oriole. It is a harbinger of the languorous, golden summer days to come, when the paper collar wilteth and hangs down on your shirt front as dejected as a greenback politician. LRW 4/23/1884.

The street sprinklers are assessing the stores 50 cents each per week this season and are evidently premeditating a trip to Europe later on. LRW 4/30/1884.

# Annual Dinner Historical Society of Greater Lansing

Herrmann Conference Center  
Lansing Community College  
(See Map Below)

Wednesday,  
May 18, 1994  
6:00 P.M.



## Annual Dinner Reservation Form

*Historical Society  
of Greater Lansing*

P.O. Box 12095  
Lansing, MI 48901

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places for dinner. I am enclosing \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(\$12.50 per person). Please make your check payable to:  
*Historical Society of Greater Lansing.*

**Please Send in Reservations by: Thursday, May 12, 1994**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

The *Historical Society of Greater Lansing* is a non-profit corporation,  
and we appreciate your support.

*Historical Society of Greater Lansing*  
**Annual Dinner & Election**  
**6:00 P.M.**

**Wednesday, May 18, 1994**

*Dinner Served at 6:30 P.M.*

*Join Us for an Evening of...*

**"Historic  
Show  
Tunes"**



*Performed By*  
**Mary Monaghan & Paul Ziegenhagen**  
*with accompanist*  
**Leah Jane Tuttle**

**Herrman Conference Center  
Lansing Community College**  
*(Map & Reservation Form Inside)*



Lansing Public Library  
401 S. Capitol Avenue  
Lansing, MI 48933

*Historical Society  
of Greater Lansing*  
P.O. Box 12095  
Lansing, MI 48901

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Lansing, Mich.  
Permit No. 636

**SIGN  
UP  
A  
NEW  
MEMBER  
TODAY!**

