



History Explorer

Historical Society of Greater Lansing

www.LansingHistory.org

August 2011

Annual Meeting A Success!

On Thursday evening, June 16, sixty members and friends of the Historical Society of Greater Lansing participated in the society's annual meeting. We began the evening by touring four of Lansing's most historic downtown churches, including Christ Community Church (the old First Baptist), Central United Methodist Church, St. Mary's Catholic Cathedral, and St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Each church provided a host for the evening. These hosts taught HSGL members and friends about the significance of each congregation, how and when each church was established, the history of their present church buildings, and the ways in which the current congregations remain involved in the Lansing community of faith. A highlight of the tour was the chance for members to view the respective churches' stained glass windows.

Upon completion of the tour, society members enjoyed dinner by A Catered Affair in the Merrifield Room at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. As dinner concluded, outgoing HSGL Treasurer Bill Atkinson and HSGL President Valerie Marvin conducted a short business meeting, during which members unanimously approved the proposed changes to the bylaws, as well as the new board roster.

New HSGL Dues Policies

Members who attended the Annual Meeting on June 16, 2011 may remember the brief business meeting in which we elected officers and trustees for the coming year. In that meeting, the membership also approved minor changes to the Bylaws that included the provision, "Dues are paid on a rolling calendar." A transition is needed to switch from the old method where dues were considered to

cover a Society Program Year from October to October. What follows is an explanation of how this will work and how the transition for existing memberships will occur.

Effective July 1, 2011, annual dues are \$20 for an individual, \$30 for a family, and \$100 for organizations and businesses. The Executive Board of the Society approved an increase in dues, from the previous \$15 and \$25, in order to cover the rising cost of newsletter printing and postage.

Most members who are current will have their memberships expire on October 1, 2011. Members who have joined or renewed in the last three months will not have to pay again in October. Their memberships will be effective for one year from their date of payment. Members may continue to pay for two years at once, if they prefer.

For a new member, dues paid upon joining the Society confer a membership effective for one year from the date of payment. For example, Ms. Jones sends in her check for \$20 on September 10, 2011. She then becomes a member in good standing for one year, until September 9, 2012.

The 28 members with Life memberships will be recognized as members for life although no new Life memberships are being accepted.

Members who have not paid dues in more than a year are asked to pay dues immediately. Each member's status will be shown on the top line of the mailing label of each newsletter.

While a grace period is observed after a membership has expired, eventually our lists are purged so that active members are not carrying former members indefinitely. Prior to being purged, the label on a final newsletter will warn that it is the last issue if dues are not paid immediately.

HSGL Board Changes

The Historical Society of Greater Lansing would like to officially welcome two new board members to our number! The first of these is Mr. Adam Beckwith, who works for the State of Michigan on the Senate Democratic Staff. He has been volunteering at the Capitol Area District Library's Forest Park Archives for the last couple of years, during which he has befriended another of our board members, David Votta. Adam is excited to be joining the HSGL board, and will soon be managing the Historical Society's new photo blog.

HSGL's board is also pleased to announce that long-time society member Mr. Bill Castanier will be joining our board. Bill is a retired State of Michigan employee who now works as a literary journalist and publicist. Many of you probably know him from his literary reviews in the Lansing City Pulse, as well as the blog he co-authors with his son, www.mittenlit.com. Bill will be putting his experience in journalism and publicity to work for the society, as he will serve as HSGL's publicity man. We look forward to reaping the benefits of his expertise!

The Historical Society would also like to thank Mr. Bill Atkinson, a long-time board member and HSGL life member, for the services he has rendered to us throughout the past several years. Bill and his wife Judy have been HSGL members since 1998. Two years later Bill became a board trustee, and then the following year, in 2001, he took on the job of treasurer, a post he held through June. His faithful service to our organization has been much appreciated, and will be missed now that now is retiring from the board. As all friends of the Atkinsons know, Bill and Judy are snowbirds who make their winter home in Arizona, making it difficult for Bill to fulfill his obligations to the board year round. Though Bill's name is no longer on our board roster, he has promised to stay active with the society. We look forward to many more years of working with the Atkinsons!

St. Joseph Cemetery Tour

On Sunday, August 21 at 2:00 pm, the Historical Society of Greater Lansing invites you to attend our annual cemetery tour. This year's event will take place at St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery, located on the west side of Lansing at 2520 W. Willow Street. You'll need to enter the cemetery from Willow, and then turn left just before the large Shrine sculpture. To the left will be the large mausoleum, and behind the mausoleum, a large parking lot. Please park there.

The tour, which will last about an hour, will cover several interesting topics, including the establishment of St. Mary's Cemetery (which later became St. Joseph's), the history of Catholicism in Lansing, Catholic burial practices, and Catholic cemetery statuary and symbolism. Several prominent Lansing bishops and priests will be discussed during the walk, including priests who helped found and served at St. Gerard's, Immaculate Heart of Mary, St. Therese, St. Mary's, St. Casimir, and Church of the Resurrection parishes. Brief histories of the parishes will be shared during the tour.

At the conclusion of the tour, society members will have the opportunity to visit St. Joseph's mausoleum, which includes a small (air-conditioned!) chapel. Restroom facilities will be available in the mausoleum.

If you have any questions about the walk, please feel free to e-mail the Historical Society of Greater Lansing at info@lansinghistory.org. You can also call HSGL President Valerie Marvin with questions at 517-282-0671.

Please note that this is a free event open to the public.

Newsletter Options

Beginning in August, the Historical Society of Greater Lansing will offer members the option of receiving *The History Explorer* via e-mail. By e-mailing our newsletter instead of mailing it, the society will be able to save a considerable amount of money spent on postage and printing. If you would like to receive your newsletter via e-mail, please send an e-mail to info@lansinghistory.org. Thank you!

Historical Society of Greater Lansing

P.O. Box 12095 ~ Lansing, MI 48901
www.LansingHistory.org

Officers & Board Members

Valerie Marvin – President	Sarah Anthony – Trustee
Robert Hudson – Vice President	David Votta – Trustee
Richard Hathaway – Secretary	Bill Castanier - Trustee
Doug Johnson – Treasurer	Lille Foster - Trustee
Nathalie Winans - Trustee	Adam Beckwith - Trustee
Harry Emmons – Trustee	

Fall Fundraiser Donations Needed!

In order to make the event a success, the HSGL board is asking all of our members to consider making a donation to the silent auction. While a number of community businesses have already stepped forward and offered a wide variety of items for donation, very few HSGL members have chosen to participate thus far. While we are aware that not everyone is able to make a contribution, we sincerely ask those of you who are able to consider making a gift to the society in some way. If you are interested in donating but are not sure what to give, please feel free to talk to the members of our fundraising committee for suggestions.

When you consider making a gift to the fall fundraiser, remember that you are helping support HSGL's mission to found a museum devoted to Lansing area history. Many of you have recently voiced support and enthusiasm for this project. When you are considering whether or not to make a donation or attend the auction, please remember that *all* money raised at this event will go into a specific fund for such a museum.

Please feel free to get creative with those donations! Often donations of time and services are more popular than simple goods. Those of you who are talented genealogists might consider donating a voucher for beginning genealogy lessons. Those of you who are members of other area organizations might consider donating individual or family memberships to that group. If you love to bake, consider donating a gift certificate good for a set number of homemade baked goods. If you're a camera bug, donate a free photo session for a family. If you are a bibliophile, donate copies of your favorite books, either new or used. Perhaps you're a highly skilled woodworker or a hobbyist quilter – consider donating a piece of your handiwork! Or, perhaps you're a foodie who enjoys dining out. Maybe you could donate a gift card to your favorite area restaurant, or a bottle of your favorite wine. Those of you who own vacation retreats – cottages, condos, hunting cabins – might consider donating a week's stay at your property. Any and all donations, regardless of size and value, are welcome!

Another way to help the society out would be to agree to serve as a financial sponsor of the event. Sponsorships will be available at the following levels: \$5,000 Platinum, \$1,000 Gold, \$500 Silver, \$250 Bronze, \$100 Copper.

If you would like to donate an auction item or serve as an event sponsor, please fill out the enclosed form and

send it in to the Historical Society at P.O. Box 12095, Lansing MI 48901. Additional forms can be found on HSGL's website, www.lansinghistory.org, under the heading *Fall Fundraiser*. **Please note that all donations must be made by September 16, 2011.** If you have any questions about making a donation, or need your donation to be picked up, please call Valerie Marvin at 517-282-0671.

Fall Fundraiser

Please mark your calendars for HSGL's upcoming fall fundraiser. The event, a silent auction, will take place on Saturday, October 8th, from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. Lansing's downtown Comerica Bank, located on the corner of Washington Avenue and Michigan Avenue, has graciously offered to serve as a sponsor and host of the event. The evening will include a silent auction and light hors d'oeuvres.

The evening will culminate with a tour of the historic bank building, completed in 1933, during the Great Depression. Designed by local Lansing architects Lee and Kenneth Black, the building is an Art Deco icon in downtown Lansing. Dubbed "one of the most impressive [banks] in the state outside of Detroit", the building features the cool, crisp, and clean lines so popular in 1920s and 1930s architecture. The most iconic feature of the building's exterior is, of course, its elaborate archway and soars above the main entrance. At first glance the carvings seem to be purely of aesthetic quality, but a second look reveals a great deal of significance to the art.

In addition to analyzing the exterior of the building, we'll also discuss the bank's interior, including the brilliant mosaics found in the main lobby. The tour will also include a trip to the bank's basement level vault (which is now void of money, just in case you're wondering!) and an elevator ride to the top, where, on a clear day, the view extends all the way to Michigan State!

If you've never been in this grand old bank, or have never seen those behind the scenes spaces in it, now is your chance! To purchase tickets for the fundraiser, please fill out the enclosed ticket form and send to P.O. Box 12095, Lansing MI 48901. Tickets are \$15 individually, \$25 per couple. Additional copies of the ticket form can also be found on the society's webpage, www.lansinghistory.org, under the heading *Fall Fundraiser*.



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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Historical Society of Greater Lansing - Membership Application

Please accept my application for:

- New Membership
- Renewal Membership
- Gift Membership

in the Historical Society of Greater Lansing

I have enclosed:

- \$20 Individual Membership
- \$30 Family Membership
- \$100 Business Membership
- \$_____ Additional Gift to HSGL

Member Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email Address _____

Make Checks Payable to
Historical Society of Greater Lansing

*The Historical Society of Greater Lansing is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation.
Thank you for your support of our programs and activities.*