Minutes of the January Meeting.

President Linda Ciangi called the meeting to order at the Blanchard House at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 3rd, 2007 with a "Happy New Year."

Secretary David McCard apologized for the lack of a December Chronicle, but noted that (thanks to stand-in note-takers) the minutes of recent meetings could be copied if anyone requested them. Hank Knoop delivered a Treasurer's report, most significantly that $200 was collected as donation through December visits to the Blanchard House, and $8600 was generated from the "Indoor Yard Sale."

With thanks to Bob Nixon's grant-writing and membership drives, and various committee persons, he reported that income from fundraisers, memberships, and interest have kept the organization "solvent."

President Ciangi commented on the recent passing and funeral of Gerald R. Ford, and members shared a few stories of the former President. (At least 6 local Eagle Scouts participated in the ceremony, including ICHS Vice President Gerry Perry. See story on page 2.)

Thanks to all who helped out with the Christmas open house, decorations and so on. The decorations will come down on January 8 at 10:00 a.m. and everyone is invited to help.

A Home Tour meeting is planned for January 11 at noon at the Commission on Aging. Bring a sack lunch and your ideas for the event. (See story on page 3.)

Under "new business," due to the success of the recent "Indoor Yard Sale," dates for another are being considered, probably in the spring. Member suggestions are always welcome.

The Board is committed to recording of gifts to the Society, and of careful consideration of artifacts offered. That is - not to accept items into the collection which we are not prepared to take care of. Case in point is the crystal collection, for which we have not yet prepared a suitable display.

Bob Nixon reported that he expects progress soon with the grant he's applied for to help purchase materials for the preservation of clothes in the house.

It was also noted that a computer will soon be donated to the Society capable of many tasks, and that Jerry Adams of Grand Rapids has promised to donate some software for cataloging the Historical Society collections, etc.

Finally, it was announced that Barb Ehliert will be assuming a position on the Board vacated by Hank Knoop, who wishes to dedicate his time solely to the Treasurer's office.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:45, with thanks to the Knoop's for their contribution of refreshments for the evening.

Here's the latest issue of the...

Ionia County Historical Society
P.O. Box 1776
Ionia, MI 48846

Ionia County Historical Society
www.ioniahistory.org

It’s The Law Hereabouts

The guest at the January 2007 meeting was Patrick Duff, Attorney at Law. (Introduced by ICHS Treasurer Hank Knoop as a fellow distance runner. Mr. Duff noted that he was always challenged to keep up with Hank.)

Our guest began with a memorial tale about the recently departed Gerald R. Ford, his fellow alumnus from U of M. It seems Mr. Ford was commencement speaker at Mr. Duff's graduation ceremony - but Mr. Duff opted not to attend.

Mr. Duff was a teacher for some years before pursuing his law career. Some time ago he opened an office in Portland, and most recently merged his practices with long-time Ionia lawyers McNamara, O'Keefe and Chadwick.

From his many friends in the local law business, he collected some stories to share, and (stemming from his class experience) he came well supplied with hand-outs for everyone. These hand-outs included a reproduction of a tableau of portraits and signatures of the members of the "Ionia Bar - 1874." Many familiar names were seen there, not the least of which was John C. Blanchard.

Pat also related some information about Allan B. Morse, local attorney from Ionia, once Michigan Supreme Court Justice and U.S. Ambassador to Scotland in the 1890s. He also had a list of all the Circuit Court Judges that served the Ionia County area beginning in 1833 - the year Ionia was first settled by the Dexter party - and Probate Judges from 1837. To this he added a definition of each Court's role in the judgement of legal cases.

Mr. Duff received many stories and anecdotes for his presentation, and noted that it was difficult to pare them down to a select few. He did succeed in sharing stories from John MacNamara and Rex O'Connor. He said that he had a very good story from Bill Davis, but he somehow misplaced it.

Our thanks to Mr. Duff for his lighthearted story telling and historical accounts!

CHRONICLE
The Almost Monthly Publication of the Ionia County Historical Society — January 2007

Ionia County Court House - seat of local justice since 1885.


AVAILABLE AT THE BLANCHARD HOUSE "GIFT SHOP"

A FEW OF THE ITEMS ON SALE
and suggested donation for each:

History of Ionia and Montcalm Counties by John S. Schenck, 1881 (over 500 pages) $82

Meredith Jones Lithograph, "Ionia County Court House" $10

Headlight Flashes 1896 in publication of the Detroit, Lansing and Northern Railroad featuring 26 pages of Ionia information $10

Ionia, 1907 Souvenir Book reprints $10

City of Ionia Centennial booklet $5

3 Blocks of Historic Downtown Ionia $3

The NEW Family Histories of Ionia County $58.30

... and more souvenirs and information!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST AND SUPPORT!

BECOME A MEMBER!

If you’d like to help us preserve the area’s heritage, please fill in the form below and send it, with check or money order, to the ICHS Treasurer, care of Box 1776, Ionia, MI 48846.

Name: ________________________
Address: ________________________
City, St, Zip: ________________________
Phone: ________________________
E-mail: ________________________

Please Check Your Membership Type: [ ] Regular = $20 [ ] New Member
[ ] Sustaining = $35 [ ] Corporate = $250
[ ] Life = $1000 [ ] Gift = $_________

Please Share a Little Information:

[ ] If you’re a new member, how did you hear about us?

Free Honorary Membership for Students under 18

If you are already a member (thank you!), please pass this membership form on to a friend.

The CHRONICLE!
Minutes of the January Board Meeting.

The January Board Meeting was held at Ionia Burger King on January 18 at 10:00 a.m.

President Linda Ciangi reported that the Blanchard House had been undecorated and decorations taken care of inside the house. There was a report of plans for next Christmas decorating. The Committee took great advantage of the sale at Hobby Lobby in Grand Rapids for some new things. The theme for 2007 Christmas will be Santa Claus. We are hoping to have a Christmas Tea in 2007. Tentative date for the Tea is December 8th.

We did experience some vandalism in the yard at the Blanchard House. Someone turned the flag upside down, turned over the sleigh, and tried to remove the fence garlands. There was slight damage to the sleigh. Dennis Ehler and Hank Knoop took care of putting things right.

Joe McCord called the City Police for some extra watch on the grounds.

Our sidewalks have been taken care of during the storms by the Sheriff’s Office. We did experience some vandalism along the streets.

We shared a booth with BPW High School on March 10th.

The Appraisal for March 16. There is still much to be done. There are now eight homes and half a dozen public sites signed on for the 2007 Home Tour, to take place May 19th, reported Committee Chairman Bob Nixon. But there is still much to be done. Any interested persons or organizations are invited to help with ideas, labor, activities - and money. Publicity efforts have begun, and fliers will be available soon for ICHS members to distribute wherever they travel over the next few months.

The plans for the renewed event promise a grand time for visitors and volunteers alike! Come by the next meeting, February 8, to find out how you can join in!

ICH S Chronicle - January 2007

Gerald R. Ford, U.S. President and Eagle Scout. 1913-2006

Left are fellow Eagle Scouts from the Ionia area, Joe McCord and Joe Bignell, at the DeVos Center for Scouting the day of the Funeral.

Ionia Historical Society Vice President Gerard Perry was there, standing proudly with over 400 other Eagle Scouts to honor one of their comrades. Gerry Perry, a “Scouter” since the 1930s, summed up the day with one word: “Awesome.” He recounted the day’s activities for the ICHS members at the January 3rd meeting. “They really wanted me there,” he said. “So after three calls, I conceded...and I’m glad I did.” The Scouts assembled at the DeVos Center for Scouting in Walker, and were bussed to downtown Grand Rapids. As the funeral procession approached, they lined the Pearl Street entrance to the G.R. Ford Museum to salute the passing motorcade. The Eagles were the first allowed to view the casket at the museum, and each one was greeted with a handshake from Steven Ford, the former President’s son. “It was cold and windy,” Gerry continued, “and a few folks lost their hats. But it was a great experience.” There were at least eight Ionia area Eagle Scouts there to pay their respects.

The Ionia County Historical Society is sponsoring an Appraisal Road Show on Wednesday, March 21, 2007 at Commission on Aging,

115 Hudson St. Ionia, MI
5 p.m. to 9 p.m.
with Glen Rainright of Americana Auctions

Donation of $500 per item valuations will be paid only - no written appraisals
Please refrain from bringing jewelry, coins or stamps
Prepaid the Ionia County Historical Society Commission on Aging 2007 will not be responsible for lost or damaged items. Contact ICHS for more information 616-579-0700

The Chronicle is the official publication of the Ionia County Historical Society. It is written, edited, and published by David McCord. Any comments, suggestions, or contributions should be directed to the editor care of the ICHS at P.O. Box 1776, Ionia, MI 48846 or via www.ioniahistory.org.

Regular Meeting will be held at the Blanchard House
Program: “Civil War Weapons & Tactics” presented by Henry Knoop.

Regular Meeting will be held at the WION Radio Station (Haynor Road)

Upcoming Programs and Events

Wednesday, February 7, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 7, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 21, 5 to 9 p.m.

The APPRAISAL ROADSHOW comes to Ionia again at the Commission on Aging! (See ad, this page, for details)

Regular Meeting at the Blanchard House Program: Farell Beach speaks on his experiences as interpreter at the Nuremberg War Trials.

Cub Scouts from Pack 3185 toured the Blanchard House this past month, guided through the mansion by Joan McCord in this photo. Scouts are often welcomed guests of the ICHS!

2007 Home Tour Plans Progress!

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