

Here's the latest issue of the...

Ionia County Historical Society CHRONICLE

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

www.ioniahistory.org



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

Sustaining = \$35

Corporate = \$250

Life = \$1000

Gift = \$ _____

Free Honorary Membership for Students under 18

Please Share a Little Information:

Renewing Member

New Member

If you're a new member, how did you hear about us?

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

AVAILABLE AT THE BLANCHARD HOUSE "GIFT SHOP"

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

Meredyth Jones Lithograph,
"Ionia County Court House"...\$15

VHS Videos of Ionia Historical Subjects...\$10

Headlight Flashes 1896 (a publication of the
Detroit, Lansing and Northern Railroad featuring
28 pages of Ionia information)...\$10

Ionia, 1907 Souvenir Book reprints...\$10

City of Ionia Centennial booklet...\$5

3 Blocks of Historic Downtown Ionia...\$3

History of Ionia...\$3.00

... and more souvenirs and information!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST AND SUPPORT!

Ionia County Historical Society CHRONICLE



The *Almost* Monthly Publication of the Ionia County Historical Society — February 2007

The War Between The States Was Seldom Civil!

Our presenter for the February meeting was ICHS Treasurer Hank Knoop. Prior to the meeting he had filled two large tables with period weapons, ammunition, documents and other memorabilia for the members to peruse.

Hank noted that past vacations with his family were likely to focus on historic places, and a visit to Gettysburg would especially inspire the teacher in him to provide his family with plenty of stories of the great battle.

He started then by presenting a Springfield muzzle loader, representative of the common weapon of the early war years. Mostly in jest, he pointed out that it required at least three teeth to operate. Really.

It's because the pre-measured powder for each shot

was contained in a paper cartridge that would be opened with the soldier's teeth then poured into the muzzle of the gun. With Linda Ciangi as his example, he demonstrated the relative size and weight of the firearm, and added the bayonet to the end as well. Because of the time it took to load and fire, the best use of the gun was to fire in volleys - lines of soldiers firing simultaneously. Once a volley had been fired, if there was no more time to reload and fire again, the gun became a stabbing weapon, and quite often a club.

As the war went on (far longer than most thought it would), "breech-loading" guns were introduced. The pre-measured powder and bullet, encased in a copper cartridge, could be loaded from the back (breech) of



JACKSON STANDING LIKE A STONE WALL.

the gun, making the cycle much quicker. In fact, as much as 14 times as fast as the muzzleloader. Hank showed examples of two such weapons - the Spencer and Sharps. He related the story that some in the U.S. government were reluctant to introduce these weapons to the troops because they were afraid they would waste too much ammunition. But the advantages on the battlefield won over, and the new firearms became a decisive factor in the war.

Hank also showed several kinds of bullets, a cavalry saber, and some handguns. One of the handguns - from the early 19th century - was a "flint lock." Although some were used in the Civil War, they were antiquated by that time. Each shot of a flintlock gun needed to be "primed" with loose powder, which made them fail more often. These were replaced generally by a "percussion cap" by the 1860s. Also, the earlier guns were made one at a time by hand, whereas later guns were mass-produced with interchangeable parts.

Minutes of the February Meeting.

President Linda Ciangi called the February 7 meeting of the Ionia County Historical Society to order at 7:05 p.m. in the meeting room at the Ionia Area Commission on Aging. She welcomed members and guests, asking all present to introduce themselves in turn.

The Secretary's report was accepted as published, and Treasurer Henry Knoop and Accountant Larry Tiejema both delivered various aspects of the ICHS treasury.

Diving directly into "Old Business," there was a brief report on the status of Home Tour plans, which are coming together nicely. As always, more volunteers are welcomed and there will be some way for everyone to get involved the day of May 19th.

Secretary David McCord reported that the website (ioniahistory.org) has been updated with new calendar entries and information



ON TO BULL RUN—FROM THE NORTH.

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Minutes of the February Meeting

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about the home tour.

The next Appraisal Fair is on for March 21st at the Commission on Aging (see more information elsewhere in this issue).

Under New Business:

The Chamber of Commerce Expo is set for March 10. President Ciangi asked the members present if they wished to have a display table at the event again this year, and an affirmative response was given. Volunteers will be needed to staff the table that day.

Another "Indoor Yard Sale" is being considered for June 2nd, a date coordinated with a city event.

The March meeting will be held at the WION Radio Studio (1150 Haynor Road) with host Jim Carlyle. David McCord has volunteered to supply some refreshments.

The ICHS Board of Directors were reminded that a special meeting will be called directly following the evening's presentation.

The meeting was adjourned and our presenter introduced (see story, page one), after which the members enjoyed refreshments provided by Joe & Joan McCord.

Minutes of the February Board Meeting #1

After the membership meeting on February 7, the Board of Directors met briefly to discuss a recent situation regarding a grant that had been awarded to the Historical Society by the Ionia County Foundation. The problem was that the grant had been granted in the name of the Ionia County Historical Society but without the Board's knowledge or approval by the Greenview Point Restoration Committee. In addition,

the grant thus awarded caused another grant to be passed over which had been approved by the ICHS Board (submitted by Robert Nixon for the purpose of funding to preserve artifacts of clothing in the ICHS collection).

President Linda Ciangi began the meeting by explaining that she had signed a document "in support of the Greenview Point project," but did not realize that this would in any way indicate that the Ionia County Historical Society was involved in the process. She said she was "as surprised as anyone" when the grant was awarded to the ICHS for a non-ICHS project.

The documentation for the administration of the grant has been received by President Ciangi. According to the wording of the Grant Administration documents, the ICHS is responsible for the execution of the grant and all its related terms and conditions. The Board was brought together to discuss what should next be done, both about the present situation and the possibility of similar occurrences in the future.

The Greenview Point Restoration Committee funds have been held by the Historical Society for some time, under the auspices of the ICHS 501(c)(3) status. Bob Nixon suggested that we should begin in earnest to phase the ICHS out of this role and encourage the Greenview Point organization to seek other solutions.

After some discussion of various options, it was agreed by the Board that Linda Ciangi should talk to Ron Story, Chairman of the Ionia County Foundation, to review the situation and make clear the position of the Historical Society in this situation. The Board then adjourned the meeting, tabling the subject until the next scheduled Board meeting on February 22.

Duly submitted by David McCord, Secretary.

Civil War Weaponry *(continued from page one)*

which made them cheaper and easier to repair.

Mr. Knoop also spoke about the role of cannon in the war - particularly at Gettysburg - and how prolific clouds of foul-smelling smoke would fill the air when batteries of cannon fired. Cannon balls were used, but in some battle situations, "grape shot" (so named because it consisted of balls of metal the size of large grapes) could send dozens of deadly projectiles into enemy forces at ones. In fact, one shot could bring down many soldiers with much force, sometimes a single ball piercing several bodies.

Among the artifacts Hank brought along was an authentic war bond, issued by the Confederacy to raise money for the war effort, and reproductions of some recruiting posters. The early armies were made up of volunteers, but later on conscription was introduced (the draft). Persons so drafted could, however, pay others to enlist in their place.

Many other interesting tales and fascinating facts were shared by Hank and by the members. We were reminded of Ionia's role in the war, including our own Gen. James Kidd who served under Gen. G.A. Custer at Gettysburg. Ionia was also the site of Camp Siegel, (located near Prairie Creek east of town) where many units were trained. Ionia County held the record as the Michigan County with the highest percentage of its population to volunteer for the Union Army during the war. Joan McCord passed around a notebook containing some letters that had been written by her grandfather while he served in the Union Army, and other members noted ancestors who had served as well.

Many thanks to Hank for his presentation, and his enthusiasm for the subject so central to the history of our nation!

**IONIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
2007 HISTORIC
HOMES TOUR**

SATURDAY, MAY 19

Eight Historic Ionia homes on tour!

"Tea Room" refreshments at the Blanchard House

Quilt Show at the Commission on Aging,
115 Hudson St. by the Ionia Thimble Club

St. John Lutheran Church Celebrates 150 Years
with a Bread, Salad, & Dessert Smorgasbord

Habitat for Humanity Display

Ionia Dial-A-Ride Available for the Tour

Train Display by Bill Davis in the Carriage House.

Five-Mile Walk for the March of Dimes

And visit the Ionia Theatre and
Hall-Fowler Memorial Library, too!

Tour begins at the Blanchard House,
251 East Main St. in Ionia at 10:00 a.m.

The cost is only \$10.00 for adults
and \$5.00 for students under 18.

Thanks

from Katie Lincoln —

"...to my sons and friends for my 90th birthday party.
Also for the food, gifts, and the many beautiful cards."

Minutes of February Board Meeting #2

The Board of Directors of the Ionia County Historical Society met at 10:00 a.m. at the Ionia Burger King; present were Doni & Hank Knoop, Gerry Perry, Jim Metzen, and Joe & Joan McCord.

Doni Knoop reported that Judy Fedewa has completed photographing 49 quilts and 42 pieces of linen at the Blanchard House, and has done descriptions of the quilt patterns. These photos will be available to the Society on a DVD. The Board agreed to present Ms. Fedewa with a complimentary membership in the ICHS for her efforts.

Plans were discussed for the ICHS booth at the Ionia Chamber Expo on March 10. Joan McCord is in charge of this effort. Displays are being planned and the booth will be shared with the Ionia Business & Professional Women's group (as was last year). A raffle will be set up for the event (\$1 per ticket or 6 for \$5). Set-up will be at 7:00 a.m. and tables need to be arranged.

The Greenview Point grant situation was discussed. It was moved by Gerry Perry and supported by Doni Knoop that President Ciangi write a letter to Don Jandernoa to state the ICHS position on the subject, and to encourage them to seek their own 501(c)3 status. The motion was carried, and the documentation was turned over to Larry Tiejema for further

review and advice.

To help support the busy ICHS schedule this Spring, a list of upcoming events and activities will be published in the Chronicle to help solicit volunteers. This will be presented as a form that can be submitted to express a member's intentions to help.

The 2007 Home Tour plans are progressing, including the establishment of two shifts for Hosts at each house on the tour. Doni Knoop and Barb Ehlert are working with Sue Lehman who is charge of hosts. Hank Knoop, Treasurer, will send thank you letters to the appropriate people, and these contributors should be recognized in our Home Tour program. Money will be forwarded to Joan Nixon to fund a "Tea Room" set-up at the Blanchard House for the Home Tour.

A motion was made by Doni Knoop, supported by Gerry Perry, to allow wine at the Blanchard House for an upcoming wedding. The motion was carried, and Linda Ciangi will be at the event.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

If ever you have some interesting tidbit, story, or photograph that you think Chronicle readers would enjoy — particularly as it pertains to Ionia's colorful past, please don't hesitate to let me know. I will be glad to publish it in the Chronicle!

— D. McCord, Editor

The Chronicle is the official publication of the Ionia County Historical Society. It is written, edited, and published by David McCord, Secretary. 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.

Upcoming Programs and Events

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

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

Thursday, March 8, at noon

Home Tour Committee meets at the Commission on Aging

Saturday, March 10, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

IONIA EXPO at the Ionia High School (The Historical Society will be at booth #2!)

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

THE APPRAISAL ROADSHOW comes to Ionia again at the Commission on Aging!

Thursday, March 22, at noon

Home Tour Committee meets at the Commission on Aging

Wednesday, April 4, 6:30 p.m.

Regular Meeting at the Blanchard House "Prehistoric Settlers of this Area" by Gary Schlueter.

Thursdays, April 5 and 19, at noon

Home Tour Committee meets at the Commission on Aging

Saturday, April 28, 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

12th Annual Women's Festival of Ionia County at the Ionia Education Center (the High School)

Wednesday, May 2, 6:30 p.m.

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

Thursday, May 3, at noon

Home Tour Committee meets at the Commission on Aging

Saturday, May 5, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday, May 6, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"Tri-River" Museum Tour Weekend

A celebration of local history in the mid-Michigan area!

Saturday, May 19, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

2007 IONIA HISTORIC HOMES TOUR

Watch for more details coming soon, or visit the Historical Society website at www.ioniahistory.org!

Saturday, June 2, 6:30 p.m.

"Indoor Yard Sale"

to benefit the Historical Society

Sundays beginning June 3rd, 1 to 4 p.m.

The Blanchard House will be open to the public for "Summer Sunday" tours and displays.