

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 — March 2007



WION-der-land Radio!

WION's owner and on-air personality, along with program Director Jim Aren, welcomed the members of the ICHS to the radio station studio on March 7, 2007.

Jim began his narrative by explaining the broadcasting equipment in the studio where the meeting had taken place. The station utilizes a host of digital gadgetry to broadcast both live and pre-recorded audio. He points out that all this technology allows the station to broadcast "in color." The daytime broadcasts are in real-time, including Gary Osborn (who broadcasts from his home!), whereas the evening and nighttime programming is entirely automated.

Many anecdotes and personal experiences were related by the members regarding their memories of the radio station. Started in 1953 by Monroe MacPherson, the station rapidly became a prominent part of the community. Jim recently found the "first day" logs for the station and hopes to frame these for the station walls in the near future. He also spoke about the evolution of the station's technology, and noted that plans are under way to improve the



broadcasting power and clarity over the next few months.

ICHS members asked about the programming at the station, such as the Twilight Zone shows, and shows of the past such as Tiger Baseball games. Jim pointed out that broadcasting these shows costs a lot of money, and it's just not practical for small stations these days, especially with competition from digital radio.

The members were then invited to wander about the station to see Jim's fascinating collection of radios and memorabilia, asking questions and sharing stories as they went. The visit was very enjoyable, and we thank Jim and Jim - and Tom Millard, the station's salesman - for their hospitality.



1430
WION RADIO

The Music You Know. The Information You Need.



Coat of arms of Monroe MacPherson, founder of WION radio in 1953.

Minutes of the March Meeting.

The March 7, 2007, meeting of the Ionia County Historical Society was called to order by President Linda Ciangi at 7:05 at the WION radio station. The Secretary's report was accepted as published, and the Treasurer, Hank Knoop, passed around his report on, which also was accepted into the record. Mr. Knoop noted several discounts and "Business Buddies" on the report for this month.

Under old business, the Ionia Expo is coming on March 10, and the ICHS will be sharing a booth with the BPW again. The display includes a beautiful quilt made by Joan Nixon (from some of Bob's old neckties) to be raffled off at the event.

The Appraisal Road Show is scheduled for March 21 at the Commission on Aging.

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Minutes of the March Meeting

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That same day, the ICHS Board of Directors will be meeting at the Daily Grind at 10:00 a.m.

A Home Tour update was offered by Barb Ehlert and Doni Knoop, and Chairman Bob Nixon noted that the next committee meeting will be Thursday the 8th at noon. It was also noted that Lowe's may contribute in some way to the event (still to be determined).

The Tri-River "Spring Into The Past" Museum Tours are scheduled for May 5 and 6.

The next "Indoor Yard Sale" is scheduled for June 2nd, to coincide with an Antique Auto Show in Ionia. The sale will be at the Commission on Aging, and questions should be directed to chairperson Gene Werdehoff.

Under new business, President Ciangi noted the passing of Doug Clark, Ionia Free Fair director. And, in regards to the Free Fair, a call was received from Amy Smith to ask if the Historical Society would be sponsoring the usual awards for the Art Department, and the judges as well. It was moved by Gerry Perry and supported by Joan McCord to do so, and the motion carried. David McCord, Stephanie VanderMolen, and Gerry Perry will serve as judges, scheduled for July 21st. Stephanie also suggested offering the artists the opportunity to hang their winning pieces in the Blanchard House for a time.

A letter was received from the Genealogy Society inviting people to register as "first families" - being a roster of families who settled in the county prior to 1880.

A group from the Voigt House museum in Grand Rapids will be visiting the Blanchard House on March 31, and the visit will be hosted by the McCords.

Dave Cook asked for loans of travel videos for a series he is presenting at the Ionia Theatre on Thursday mornings. Contact him at the Theatre office.

The Ionia Community Dinner will be at the High School on March 27th, and a new vote on the new Library building is coming up on May 8th.

The April meeting will be at the Blanchard House, with refreshments by Joan Nixon and Mary Metzen, and the program will be about "Prehistoric Settlers" of Ionia County.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Minutes of the March Board Meeting

The March 21 meeting of the ICHS Board of Directors was called to order by President Linda Ciangi at the Daily Grind at 10:00 a.m. Also present were Doni and Henry Knopp, Barb and Dennis Ehlert, and Joan McCord.

A favorable bid was received from Allan Fockler for doing the lawn at the Blanchard House again this year. The bid was accepted by the Board. Dave Cook has offered to mow the lawn if needed.

A second proof of Home Tour materials was supplied by David McCord, and a few additional changes were marked up for a final round of edits.

Members have been invited to the First Methodist Church on July 15th for their celebration of the 75th anniversary of their sanctuary. Church service will be

at 10:15 a.m., a dedication service at 3:15 pm, and at 7:00 p.m. an outdoor concert is planned.

Word was received that "booties" will be furnished by the Ionia Hospital for the Home Tour if they are needed.

It was suggested by Doni Knoop that the Historical Society join in the fun of the Chili Cook-Off in downtown Ionia this coming fall.

The weekend of May 5 and 6 is the "Spring Into The Past" museum tours, including 14 small museums in the area. Henry and Doni Knoop and Barb Ehlert will do the tours on Saturday; Phyllis Lobdell, Joan and Joe McCord will do the tours on Sunday. If anyone else would like to help on those days, please contact one of these persons.

The Tri-River Group's next project will be Friday, July 6. Barbara Steele, an appraiser, will do a portrayal of an 1880's lady and, after a pot-luck lunch, she will discuss appraising buttons, jewelry, glassware, and china. The event will be held at Belding's Bellrocton from 11:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. - tickets are \$10 each.

Tuesday, April 17th, the Tri River Group will meet at the Blanchard House at 10:00 a.m.

Post-Board-Meeting note: The Appraisal Roadshow, held later in the day on the 21st, was a wonderful success. Guests came from as far away as Macinaw City, and appraiser Glen Rairigh did a fantastic job. Profit for the ICHS was over \$600. A \$50 check will be sent to the Commission on Aging for the use of the hall.

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

Spring into the Past....with a Tour of West Michigan's Small Museums



**May 5 & 6, 2007
11:00am—5:00pm**

- Averill Historical Museum of Ada
- Belding Museum / Belrocton
- Bowne Twp. historical Museum
- Boston-Saranac Depot Museum
- Fallsburg Historical Village
- Flat River Historical Museum
- Fighting Falcon Museum
- Freeport Historical Society
- Ionia County Historical Society
- Blanchard House and Museum
- Lowell Area Historical Museum
- Oakfield Pioneer Heritage Museum
- Lake Odessa historical Museum
- Portland Historical Museum
- Lyons-Muit Historical Museum

WOW!

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

SATURDAY, MAY 19

Eight historic Ionia homes on tour!

Ionia Dial-A-Ride Transportation Available for the Tour

At the Blanchard House:
"Tea Room" refreshments • Habitat for Humanity Display
Train Display by Bill Davis in the Carriage House.

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

St. John Lutheran Church Celebrates of 150 Years with a
\$5.00 Luncheon

Five-K Walk for the March of Dimes

Visit the Ionia Theatre and Hall-Fowler Memorial Library.

**Tour begins at the Blanchard House,
251 East Main St. in Ionia at 10:00 a.m.
The cost is \$10.00 for adults
and \$5.00 for students under 18.**



Upcoming Programs and Events

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.

Wednesday, June 6, 6:30 p.m.

Regular Meeting at the Blanchard House

RIGHT: Raffle Prizes offered at the 2007 Ionia Expo by the Historical Society include: FIRST PRIZE: Quilt made by Joan Nixon, won by Martin Anderson; Stained-Glass Panel by Genevieve Werdehoff, won by Gail Bowerman, and Sketch of the Ionia Courthouse by Meredyth "Spud" Jones, won by Sally Wilcox.

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.

Mark your calendars for the next ICHS "Indoor Yard Sale"

It'll be held Saturday, June 2nd at the Ionia Commission on Aging
for the benefit of the Ionia County Historical Society.
Bring in you donations the evening before the sale, then come back on
Saturday and buy someone else's stuff. Works pretty good!