

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



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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.

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please Check Your Membership Type:

Regular = \$20

Sustaining = \$35

Corporate = \$250

Life = \$1000

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Free Honorary Membership for Students under 18

Please Share a Little Information:

Renewing Member

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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,**  
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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

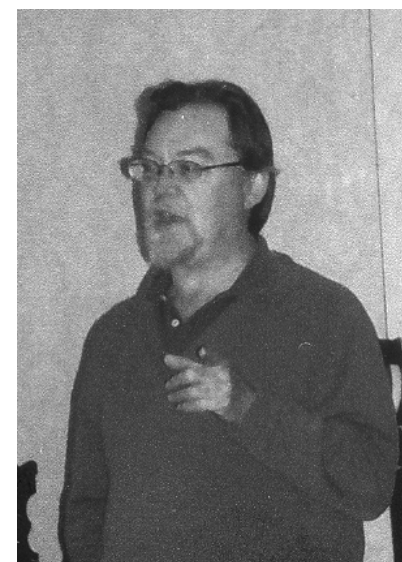


The *Almost* Monthly Publication of the Ionia County Historical Society — May 2007

(Two month's worth this time - and quite a variety, too! — D.M.)

## The Arthurberg Hill Mystery?

At the April 2nd meeting of the ICHS, we were addressed by Gary Schlueter, of the staff at the Ionia Sentinel-Standard. Local history buffs have probably heard some legends about the Arthurberg Hill - that landmark geological feature along the Grand River near Muir. Mr. Schlueter, who resides in Portland, first came across the issue while researching



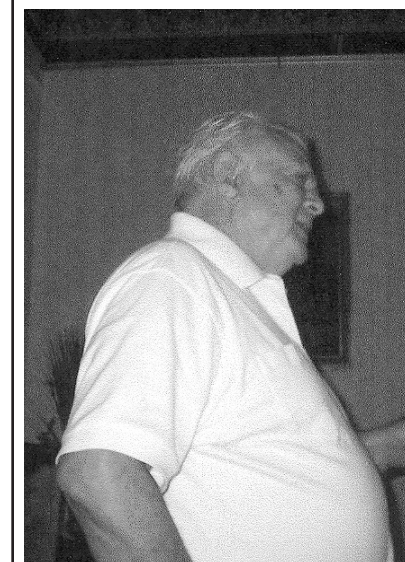
local Indians at the Library. There he met Bill Davis (who has presented several programs at the Historical Society). Bill being a font of knowledge about the Grand River valley began to share some tales with Gary, one of which was the story of Arthurberg Hill - at least, his preferred version of the history. As Gary pointed out, there are no clear facts about the landmark, especially the further back one reaches into the past.

One of the more popular theories states that the earthworks now described as a hill were originally constructed as a fortress during many native battles through the centuries. The tales of the hilltop also include its being the stronghold of a band of cannibals, defeated finally by a coalition of other tribes in the area.

But Gary's theory is a bit different. Noting that the popular stories are difficult to prove, he began his own thesis with the ancient Anishnabe natives who lived in the Great Lakes / St. Lawrence River area. 15,000 years ago the roots of this race migrated to the area from Europe - unlike most early Americans who came here from Asia.

The famous "copper culture" in the upper great  
*continues on page 2*

## The Nuremberg War Trials.



Our guest for the May 2nd meeting was Farrel Beech - originally from the Reed City area, but lately living in Muir. In 1948, Mr. Beech joined the Army hoping to be a member of a tank crew.

Instead, the military sent him to an intense "full immersion" language school where he learned German and Russian. "Full immersion" being 32 weeks of school in which the soldier/students would be punished if they spoke a word of English. Mr. Beech bought German & Russian newspapers to practice, and read books as well. They learned.

Mr. Beech was stationed near the Czech border, and in 1952 was assigned to a team which toured the various German prison camps in search of records - evidence to be used in the War courts. This tour included all the major camps around Poland, Germany, and Czechoslovakia - all the familiar names. This included a hitch as a guard at the centuries-old Spandau prison.

He said the camps had been "cleaned up" - but the filth and refuse of the aftermath was still a gut-wrenching experience. By this time, the big personalities in the war trials had been convicted, and the trials he was involved in were primarily dealing with corporate entities. These corporations were part of the Nazi war machine, and still involved a lot of "horrific" evidence. And the sources of evidence was wide-spread, from Finland to Greece to North Africa.

Mr. Beech noted that he was "much too young"  
*continues on page 2*



### Minutes of the April '07 Meeting

President Linda Ciangi called the meeting to order at the Blanchard House at approximately 7:00 p.m. She noted that a representative from WalMart was supposed to stop in, and that when this persons showed up we would interrupt the meeting briefly for a presentation. (This person did not show. — D.M.)

The Secretary's Report – minutes and notes as published in the Chronicle – were accepted with a few corrections in dates and times, most notably regarding the scheduled home tour committee meeting.

The Treasurer's report was passed around by Hank Knoop, and after a brief review the report was accepted into the record.

Under "old business" —

The Home Tour plans are coming along nicely, with 2 tickets sold, spotlight articles in the DDA Newsletter, and continuing support from WION and others. Joan McCord had some magnetic signs printed with info about the Home Tour available to interested parties. The signs can be stuck to a vehicle (without damage) to promote the event. Also, photos are due from the staff at Dexter magazine for the program, and the Sentinel-Standard is asking for information as well. Doni Knoop and Barb Ehlert will continue to prepare the Blanchard House for this and other spring events. The next Home Tour meeting will be on Wednesday the 12th at noon.

Joan McCord reported that 14 docents from the Voight House in Grand Rapids visited the Blanchard House on March 31, as well as taking a tour of the Ionia Theatre and Hall-Fowler Library. The visitors donated \$114, and said they looked forward to a return visit someday.

The contract was signed for the lawn care for the season, and work has already begun.

May 5th and 6th is the weekend for the "Spring Into The Past" museum tours organized by the Tri-River Museums group. The Blanchard House will be open both days, and volunteers are always welcome to greet visitors and conduct tours of the house.

June 2 will be another "Indoor Yard Sale" at the Commission on Aging to benefit the Historical Society. This is coordinated with the downtown Antique Auto Show. If anyone has items to donate to the sale, please contact Gene Werdehoff for details. (President Ciangi mentioned the value of coordinating our activities with others to draw in more people and benefit from the additional publicity.)

It was noted that the roof railing has not been re-installed after last fall's roof repair; Hank Knoop will check with the roofer and report.

Under "new business" —

Jim Carlyle at WION is broadcasting for pledges to help the Historical Society with on-going expenses. Thanks again to Jim and his support.

President Ciangi noted that the recent issue of Michigan History Magazine has some good stories regarding the late President Ford.

The Saranac Depot will be celebrating its 100th birthday this year, and the City of Belding its 150th as well.

Joe McCord donated a large wooden screw (prob-

ably from some kind of press or large clamp) to the museum, and Colon & Eleanor Williams donated a painting of downtown Ionia ca. 1934 (based on a popular postcard of the period).

The next Board Meeting will be at the Daily Grind at 9:00 a.m. on April 18th. The May meeting will be on the 2nd at the Blanchard House.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 with the introduction of guest speaker Gary Schleuter and his presentation about "pre-historic inhabitants" in the Ionia area.

### Minutes of the May '07 Meeting

The April 2nd meeting of the ICHS was called to order by President Linda Ciangi at 7:00 p.m. at the Blanchard House. After welcoming members and guests, she called upon the Secretary David McCord, who handed out copies of the minutes of last month's meeting. It was moved by Bob Nixon and supported by Henry Knoop to accept the minutes as written, and the motion passed. Treasurer Knoop shared his report with the members as well, including his review of the month's income and expenses. Gerry Perry moved to accept the report, supported by Joe McCord and passed.

President Ciangi then called upon Kelly Blizzard representing the Wal-Mart company. Ms. Blizzard presented the Historical Society with a \$1,000 donation, which was heartily applauded.

The president then opened the meeting f new business, which included the following:

The 2007 Home Tour is fast approaching, and pre-event ticket sales are slow. Thursday, May 3 at noon will be a Home Tour committee meeting to discuss final arrangements for the May 19th event. Joan McCord was thanked for her work on special displays set up in store windows on Main Street. Hosts are still needed for the homes on the tour, Joan Nixon needs cookies for the tea room, and volunteers are welcomed for many aspects of the event.

A dinner is being planned for volunteers and homeowners after the Tour, on May 23rd at the Commission on Aging.

"Spring Into The Past" - the multiple-museum tour day sponsored by the Tri-River Museum Group - will be held on May 5th from 10:00 to 5:00. Volunteers are needed to staff the house during this tour event also.

June 2nd will be the next "Indoor Yard Sale" at the Commission on Aging, chaired again by Gene Werdehoff. Members with items to donate to the sale should bring them to the Commission on Aging on the Friday evening before. That day will also be the day of an Antique Auto Show on Main Street.

Under new business:

It's time to think about Summer Sundays again, and hosts will be needed for the Blanchard House from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Sundays between Memorial Day and Labor Day. All members are asked to check their calendars for times they can help.

The Ionia Garden Club has been at the House and with the help o two inmates from the jail, they have things "spruced up and looking like Spring." The Metzens were thanked for thei help in

### Arthurberg Hill Theory...

(continued from page one)

lakes was t the north end of a great trading network all across middle America. This created a network of highways (usually following water routes - or connections between water routes). Many of these trails intersected in what is now the Lyons-Muir area, a cross-roads of native travel more many thousands of years.

And the cultures of the period - the Adina, Hopewell, and so on - were the famed "Mound Builders." These mounds were built for many reasons, but generally upon local "power centers", determined by the native's shamans to be spritually significant. Temples, burial grounds, tributes and monuments - seen throughout the midwest river regions.

So Gary's theory is that the Aurtherberg Hill is a very, very ancient sacred mound, not a fortress, and uch, much older than the Potawatomi, Saulk, Ojibway, Oddawa, and Miami and others more recently struggling for life and supremacy in the middle of our beautiful Penninsula. This is a theory which parallels very closely the cultural histories elsewhere in the midwest, long abandoned by the shamans who supervised the building and maintenance of the sacred hill along the Owashtonong (the native name for the Grand River).

History is speculation - some "facts" more provable and popular than other. And the further back in time one may reach, the more history is open to speculation, and mystery.

Our thanks to Gary Schlueter for his enlightening presentation!

### Adventures at Nuremberg...

(continued from page one)

(at 19) or this type of assignment, seeing much of the worst of the atrocities of the war, including the testimony of people who had experienced the events first hand - on both sides of the conflict. And the victims of the war crimes were not just Jews or foreign nationals - many non-Jewish Germans - financiers, labor leaders, masons, gypsies - were considered enemies of the state and were "officially hated" within the Third Reich.

The German attorneys were very good - the German people very fine folks - and somehow, still, all this history was being brought out under the severest scrutiny. And Mr. Beech (along with similar interpreters from Britain, France, and Russia) were intently busy recording the proceedings literally with both hands - one hand transcribing English and the other German.

The trials in the courtroom, and the personal trials as well, shaped much of Mr. Beech's world view, as they set many precedents in the world of "international justice."

The members asked questions and shared some sto-

### Upcoming Programs and Events

**Saturday, June 2, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**  
**"Indoor Yard Sale"**

at the Ionia Commission on Aging, to benefit the Historical Society  
*Bring your donations the evening before, please!*

**Sunday, 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, 7:00 p.m.**

Regular Meeting at the Blanchard House

**Sunday, June 10th, 1 to 4 p.m.**

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

**Sunday, June 17th, 1 to 4 p.m.**

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

**Sunday, June 24th, 1 to 4 p.m.**

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

**Sunday, July 1st, 1 to 4 p.m.**

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

**Wednesday, July 4, 7:00 p.m.**

Annual Independence Day Put-luck at the Blanchard House???

**Sunday, July 8th, 1 to 4 p.m.**

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

**Sunday, July 15th, 1 to 4 p.m.**

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

**Sunday, July 22th, 1 to 4 p.m.**

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

ries of the times, inviting some comparisons between the past and present. One of the questions from the audience asked about his post-military use of the German language; he said it's been a great experience to use it on the HAM radio - but he has almost never used his "second language" in daily life since that time.

Many thanks to Mr. Beech for sharing his story with us, and reminding us of the fragility of social justice and the importance of conscientious diligence.

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 Hiistorical Society.  
Bring in you donations the evening before the sale, then come back on Saturday and buy someone else's stuff. Works pretty good!



May '07 Meeting

(continued from page two)

financing the flowers.

Gerry Perry has brought in a register from the Sherman House hotel in Pewamo. This is a prelude to the upcoming program for our June 6th meeting on the history of Pewamo. Volunteers are needed for refreshments.

Karen Merchant from the Free Fair's "Antique Village" exhibit was on hand to describe the event to the members and to announce that display space will be made available for the Historical Society if we want it. More details will be forthcoming, and they are also seeking volunteers to help staff the display during the fair.

Ann Rademaker of the Portland Historical society invited ICBS members to visit the "old red mill" in Portland on the last Saturday of each month when they open the facility to the public with demonstrations and exhibits.

There will be a wedding at the Blanchard House on Friday, May 7th, and a pre-Prom Dinner for several families on Saturday the 9th. David McCord asked the members permission to use the house for an S.C.A. meeting on Sunday the 11th from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. (granted).

Thanks were expressed to Barb Ehlert and Linda Ciangi for the refreshments for the meeting, and the meeting was adjourned. Henry Knoop was then asked to introduce our guest speaker for the evening (see story on Page 1).

Minutes of the April Board Meeting

Board Meeting of the Ionia County Historical Society was called to order by President Ciangi at 10 amat the Blanchard House

Present were Board Members: Doni Knoop, Barb

Ehlert, Gerry Perry, Jim Metzen and Treasurer Hank Knoop and acting Secretary Joan McCord.

Special Guest: Don Jandernoa and Ron Story.

Other Members:: Larry Tiejema, our CPA, Mary Metzen, Joe McCord and Bob Nixon. Joe McCord shared some old newspapers and instructional manual for being a Bell Telephone Operator

that was given to the Society by Jim and Audrey Stencel. Joan McCord shared a phone that she received from a decendent of Eurastus Yeomans. We hope to meet him soon and introduce him to some ofhis Ionia family.

1. Representatives of Greenview Point Committee have requested an opportunity to address the Board.

Report on the progress at Greenview was shared by Don Jandernoa. An explanation of the Society's possession was delivered by Larry Tiejema. Ron Story explained his position and Linda Ciangi graciously explained the feelings of the Society. The Board will meet and discuss the information received and will present this to the Membership at large for a final decision.

2. Final plans on the Home Tour will be discussed at the final Tour meeting on Thursday, May 17th at the noon meeting at the Commission on Aging.

3. It was discussed and decided to have a "same day" raffle at the Inside Yard Sale on June 2nd at the Commission on Aging. Anyone who has items to donate may bring them to the C of A on Friday afternoon.

4. Carpet care was discussed. Some carpets were cleaned Monday May 14th.

5. The outside door to the basement and the back door on the house were discussed.

6. Dave Cook has asked the Society if we were like to partner with the Theatre to have a "Duck Sale" It would be a fund raiser and

the Society would obtain the license for a raffle for the event.

7. President Linda brought up the subject about getting printed T-Shirts to sell for a fund raiser.

8. Discussion on planning a Fabulous Fifties Celebration in cooperation with the Ionia Theatre was introduced to the Board by President Linda. This would be in August. Sounds like great fun!

Fred's Food Centre and Marsha Twaites have donated some beautiful pots of panses for a nice addition to the porch and yard of the Blanchard House. Be sure and thank them when you stop in for your groceries! The Ionia Garden Club has worked hard on the flower gardens and front porch urn. Hank Knoop has the Carriage House readied for the Model Train Display by Bill Davis.

The most awesome sight for everyone to enjoy is in the Carriage House. ICBS member Dennis Ehlert used his expertise to replace the panes in the large window on the south side of the carriage house. He put in lexan instead of glass for safety and longevity. And now there is light! Thank you so much, Dennis.

During the 2007 Home Tour, Visitors to the Blanchard House enjoyed seeing the disc pictures done by Judy Fedewa on the Computer in the office which was given to us by Michigan One Credit Union.

Thank you, Judy Fedewa and Tim Hemenway.

Minutes of the May Board Mini-Meeting

Following the May 2nd meeting, the Board of Directors briefly convened to discuss a proposal from Millards to clean all the carpets in the Blanchard House. Present were Linda Ciangi, Barb Ehlert, Doni Knoop, Gerry Perry, and Jim Metzen. The cleanin crew (Barb, Doni, and Linda) had received an estimate of \$500 - a heavily discount-

WWII ALBUMS

- by Joan McCord.

At the home of the Ionia County Historical Society, the Blanchard House, is a great collection of albums with the published pictures of World War II veterans. Our motto of the Society states that we are preservers of the past for the future, and it is so great that generations before us had the same motto. The Ionia County Star Mothers was a group with that foresight.

Each day the Ionia Sentinel-Standard published a picture of a serviceman serving his country. Some days the space contained 2, 3, or 4 serving from one family. The Moms of the group kept scrapbooks of these pictures. They were discovered in the archives of the Historical Society in very bad condition. You

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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

ed amount, including the moving of furniture off and on the carpets, as well as the special handling of the vintage carpets, and a verbal agreement to honor this estimate a year from now as well. It was moved by Jim and supported by Gerry to accept the bid, and the motion carried. It wasalso noted that Jim Stencil would be rollin the lawn before the Home Tour to smooth out the mole hills. The meeting was adjourned within 15 minutes.

ALBUMS

(continued from page three)

know how brittle paper can get with age. Well, these were untouchable. We couldn't let anyone look at them and enjoy seeing their relatives' pictures and information.

The Ionia County Historical Society and the Ionia High School Alumni Association partnered to save this irreplaceable record. We have ten books that are now just waiting for the families to come to the Blanchard House to see them. We hope to complete an alphabetical list soon so that it will be easier for you to find your loved one. Please come and enjoy the articles about the heroes that Ionia County had serving our country. They are astonishing to read.

I wonder how many families still have the flags that were hung in the windows of the families of the servicemen. There was a 2-star flag in our window at home and a 1-star flag was in the window of my husband's home. We still have the 1-star flag, but I never knew what happened to the one at my home. When I think about how many tin cans I stomped on as a kid for the war effort... and how we couldn't buy certain items without the proper token or stamp. Our neighbor was the neighborhood Air-Raid Warden. We had to have heavy dark green pull-down shades in every window and they had to be pulled down at dusk when light came on in homes in Ionia and everywhere. The Air-Raid Warden had to patrol the area to make sure that no light was showing outside. Patriotism was at an

all-time high everywhere. The amazing thing about war today is the communication. Families can sit down at a computer and e-mail their loved ones no matter where they are stationed. In WWII, we couldn't even know where our loved ones were fighting. All letters were censored before they could be airtailed to the family. In order to get any visual news, we had to go to the theater - and then the news was old news. It was a different war in a very different time.

The Ionia County Genealogical Society is now preparing to publish a book in honor of the veterans of World War II. Citizens have sent in their veteran's information and volunteers have patiently put all of this information together. Another wonderful way to keep the record for future generations. I already have my copy ordered! If you are interested in a copy of this book, I am sure the Genealogical Society would love to hear from you.

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 ICBS at P.O. Box 1776, Ionia, MI, 48846 or via www.ioniahistory.org.

HOME TOUR REPORT:



Bob Nixon's idea to revive the Historic Home Tour paid off. Over 200 tickets were sold for the 2007 Home Tour held on May 19th. Thank you to Cathy Hoppough of Coldwell Banker for the \$1,000 donation.

Bill Davis and his son Justin set up a model railroad display, complete with smoke and whistles, in the Carriage House. Norma Fitzpatrick and Jessica Roche sold tour tickets

in the booth on loan from the Ionia Free Fair. The local Garden Club had out flowerbeds looking beautiful.

Allan Fockler is mowing the yard this season (you can call him at 616-558-6208 if you need lawn care).

Fred's Food Centre and Marsha Thwaites Olsen filled the front porch of the Blanchard House with pots of pansies, and everyone enjoyed riding the Dial-A-Ride Trolley with John Stowell at the wheel.

Inside the Blanchard House, Russell's and Millard's had cleaned the newer carpets, and we appreciate their care and expertise.

Jim and Mary Metzen greeted our guests and Hank Knoop and Gerry Perry gave tours of the house, charming our visitors with stories and history lessons. Joan Nixon's "tea room" was fit for a queen, and a big "thank you" is sent to Joan and her committee. Thanks to everyone who donated the tasty variety of cookies.

David and Annette McCord were splendid in their made-by-hand Victorian outfits (pictured here in the parlor), and David played guitar and sang old-time favorite songs for us (like "Casey Would Waltz with the Strawberry Blonde" and "Daisy").

Doan the street from us, the Ionia Garden Club had a successful plant sale and Friends of the Library held a used book sale on the Library Lawn; they made over \$200 (that's a lot of quarters!). They will hold another sale on June 2nd and July 7th.

And of course, many thanks to all the homeowners who shared their Historic Homes with us and our guests, to the hosts and hostesses, to the Ionia Ford dealership for the use of the car for shuttle service, and all the members and friends who helped to make the Home Tour a success!

- Linda Ciangi, ICBS President.