

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



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

Travelogues at the Ionia Theatre

Come travel with
us each Thursday
at 9:30 a.m. for a
FREE travel video,
sponsored by the
Ionia County
Historical Society.



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.

JOIN TODAY!

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.

Ionia County Historical Society CHRONICLE

The *Almost* Monthly Publication of the Ionia County Historical Society — January 2008

SNOW!



Thanks to Barb Sykes and ____ Emelander, members at the January 2nd meeting were entertained by a film of the Ionia County Road Commission and their efforts to keep the county's roads clear in the 1930s. The images sent a chill through the room as snow piled up nearly as fast as it could be plowed through. Dedicated Road Commission employees (with help from the residents along the roads) labored valiantly to keep the routes open,



sometimes coupling two and three trucks together for more power. "New" designs in plow blades were shown, and scenes in canyons of snow deeper than the trucks themselves. Brrrrrrrr... and thanks for the wonderful record of winter gone by and the informative narration, too. Happy sledding!



Minutes of the December Meeting

The January 2, 2008, meeting of the Ionia County Historical Society convened at the Ionia Theatre at 7:00. President Linda Ciangi welcomed guests and members, with special thanks to Dave Cook for allowing us to meet at the Theatre. This day was Dave Cook's last day as Manager of the Theatre, and the members assembled acknowledged his dedication and tireless efforts to make the Theatre a gem for our community.

The Secretary's report was accepted as published with two corrections: The Board Meetings would be held on January 15h and February 19th, instead of the days published.

The Treasurer's report was delivered by Hank Knoop - copies are available on request as usual.

Under the heading of "old business," the president reported that raffle tickets for the Garth Brooks portrait guitar are now on sale at the Balloon Shop on Main Street or from any ICHS Board Member. A packet of five tickets will be sent to each member as well so everyone can help with the selling. The drawing will be at the B-93 Birthday Bash on June.

Computer training will be scheduled for sometime in February for any interested parties. On the subject of computerization, David McCord reports that the website continues to be updated and new web addresses have been registered to help people find our website through "search engines" on the Internet.

Barb Ehler reported that work continues on the Home Tour, a high priority being to complete a roster of at least six homes for the tour. Publicity plans are coming together as well. Any volunteers will be heartily welcomed to help with the plans and the event, which will be May 17th, 2008.

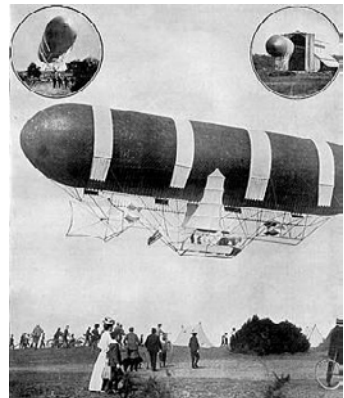
In the "new business" category, the Tri-River Group of museum will be meeting in Lowell on January 22. This group now includes 16 small museums in our area. Representatives from

(continues on page 2)

Welcome 2008!

Remembering 1907

Another year goes by, and we look forward to the tasks before us and all that we might accomplish in the months to come. A few generations ago, the same state of mind was prevalent in our community, and our nation. Just what was it like back then, I wondered. Here are a few highlights I hope you find interesting...



According to the caption in this British poster: "Our reply to Germany's balloon: The first flight of Britain's first military Air-ship, 14 September 1907." This dirigible never saw any practical use, and Britain remained far behind in the development of the airship. The first flight of a British rigid-framed airship was a disaster that only flew a few feet out of its hangar in 1911 and breaking apart in the wind.



Healthcare in 1907 was a time of experimentation. This is a view of a sanatorium for the treatment of Tuberculosis - still at this date a major scourge.

Celebrity took many forms: Here are the czar of Russia Nicholas II, the czarina Alexandra Fedorovna, the four grand duchesses, their daughters and the tsarevich Alexis, aboard one of their yachts.



A Few Fun Facts:

In 1907, a Hershey Bar cost 5¢, as did a loaf of bread. A gallon of milk was 31¢. These prices were high, since the average household income was \$897 a year. A house would cost a family \$4500, and an automobile around \$500. Only 8% of homes had electricity, and flush toilets... well! How "POSH!" — President Roosevelt welcomed Oklahoma as the 46th state, and Albert Einstein published his "E=mc²" paper. And New York City welcomed the New Year with an innovative "falling ball of light" for the first time!

July 20, 1907, Ionia Michigan—A train loaded with about 600 Pere Marquette shop employees and family/friends left Ionia Station on a free pass excursion to Detroit for the day. Just across the Washtenaw/Wayne County line in Northville Township there was a horrendous head-on collision with a local freight train. With 33 persons killed and over 100 injured it was and still is Michigan's worst passenger train accident.



The Panic of 1907. was a financial crisis in the United States. The stock market fell nearly 50% from its peak in 1906.



"School days, school days - Dear old golden rule days!" Music by Gus Edwards; Lyrics by Will D. Cobb, 1907

February 26, 1907... U.S. Congress voted to raised their own salaries to \$7,500!

March 5: The 1st radio broadcast of a musical composition was aired.

May 27: The Bubonic Plague breaks out in San Francisco.

July 29: Sir Robert Baden-Powell forms Boy Scouts in England

July 18: Florenz Ziegfeld's famous "Follies of 1907," premiered in New York City. He called the show an American equivalent of the Follies Bergères. He dreamed of a spectacular revue that would feature feminine beauty. It is said by some, that Anna Held had been the creative inspiration behind the first Ziegfeld Follies but it would be Ziegfeld's promotional genius that would make it a reality. He populated the show with, in his words, "the Anna Held girls, fifty of the most beautiful women ever gathered in one theater." However, in a bizarre twist of Ziegfeld logic, Anna Held was not one of the "Anna Held girls" who would perform. The show included plenty of daring costumes, comedy and burlesque routines and was reported in one New York review as "the best melange of mirth, music and pretty girls that has been seen here in many summers."

Minutes of the January Board Meeting

President Linda Ciangi slipped on the ice, and therefore could not attend the January 15th Board Meeting. Vice President Jerry Perry was also absent (doing his duty at the polls), so the meeting was conducted by Hank Knoop. Also present were Secretary David McCord, and Directors Stephanie VanderMolen, Doni Knoop, and Barb Ehlert.

The first order of business was the distribution of the Garth Brooks portrait guitar raffle tickets. Doni moved that packets of five be sent with the next newsletter to each member. This was supported by Barb and the motion carried. Additional packets of five will be available through Hank or Linda Ciangi.

January 22 at 7:30 a.m. will be a Chamber Breakfast.

Volunteers are needed for the booth at the March 8th Expo. The Expo will be held at the Royal Heritage Conference Center on M-21 east of Ionia.

The Home Tour report included discussion of advertising efforts, starting with a small ad for the County Register periodical. There are presently three homes, the Blanchard House, the Silver-Graff building, and probably the Ionia Theatre on the roster. More homeowners are being contacted, as well as realtors. The program for the tour will also serve as the tickets for the day, and ad space will be available in the program. D. McCord will contribute his research from previous home tours for the purpose of putting together a "drive-by" tour of the downtown area.

The website has recent-

ly been submitted to Travel Michigan to include us in their Internet tourism directory. Other such listings will be forthcoming.

The new phone and answering machine have not yet been purchased. The expense was approved by the Board in December.

Plans for the summer are under way, presenting the ICHS with many opportunities to be involved in the community. This includes the possibility of Main Street attractions for the June car show, farm power show, and the Birthday Bash. In July will be the Hog Rally and the Free Fair. A greater degree of participation in the Fair was discussed in regard to the "Antique Village" displays. Doni Knoop said she would take charge of that project. In August will be a 50s-60s event with concerts and contests organized by our president Linda C.

In a note from Joan McCord, there were several items in the house which required some repair. Someone will contact Gerry Perry about these needs.

Stephanie V. notes that all Historical Society fliers and such should include our website address, and she also presented the idea that the historical marker in the front lawn might benefit from lighting - particularly in the winter evenings.

She also noted that her mother, Sandy Heethuis, is available to help with computer work or cleaning around the Blanchard House. This suggestion met with support from the Board and Linda C. will be contacted about arranging this.

The meeting was then adjourned at approx. 8:00 p.m.

January 2008 Minutes

(continued from page 1)

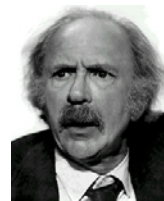
a recent addition - the Flying Falcons historical group in Greenville - joined us for our meeting.

In March, the ICHS will once again have a table-top display, to be shared with the Business & Professional Women's organization and the Women's Festival committee. Raffle tickets will be on sale, as well as other museum souvenirs.

The meeting was adjourned and entertainment was provided by the local trio "Three Husbands On The Loose." The trio - David McCord, Doug Trumble, and Bryan Kimble (Ionians all) presented a musical history with songs from the 1920s through today.

Next month's meeting will be convened at the Ionia County Courthouse, with informative tours conducted by Joe McCord.

BORN IN 1907: (Can you identify them all?)



Upcoming Programs and Events

Wednesday, February 6, 7:00 p.m.

Regular Membership Meeting

Ionia County Court House
with your tour guide, Joe McCord

Tuesday, February 19th, 7:00 p.m.

ICHS Board Meeting at Kitty's Café - Main St. Ionia

Wednesday, March 5, 7:00 p.m.

Regular Membership Meeting

at Dood's Jewelry, 223 West Main St.
(part of the "Tin Ceilings Tour")

Saturday, March 8th

Ionia Area Expo at Royal Heritage Hall, M-21 east of Ionia

Wednesday, April 2th, 7:00 p.m.

Regular Membership Meeting

at the Blanchard House

Saturday, May 3rd

"Spring Into The Past"

Museum Tours - the "Tri-River Group"

Wednesday, May 7th, 7:00 p.m.

Regular Membership Meeting

at the Blanchard House - FINAL PLANS for the
2008 Historic Homes Tour...

Saturday, May 17th

2008 Historic Homes Tour

VOLUNTEERS WELCOMED!!!