

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: \_\_\_\_\_

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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 — March 2008



## GOLDSMITH!

The March meeting of the ICHS was hosted by Dood's Jewelry on Main Street in Ionia. Jen and Jim Dood (pronounced "doad") had rescued the tin ceilings in the building when they established their store last year. A speciality of the store is Jen's goldsmithing expertise, applied to the creation of new custom gold jewelry as well as the care and restoration of existing pieces.

Jen shared with us all a fascinating history of the trade, explaining and demonstrating many of the tools she uses in the trade. This included tools that have been virtually unchanged in many thousands of years, as well as more modern technologies. She has made some of her own very specialized tools as well.

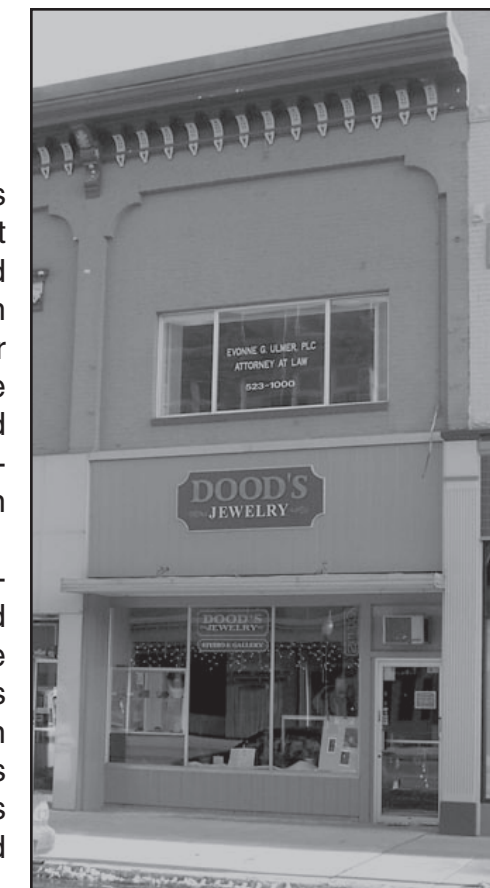
She also shared some of her inspiration as regards jewels and semi-precious stones. Her grandfather was an amateur gemologist and lapidary. Her interest in the field began as a young girl, and her sights are set on becoming a Master Goldsmith someday.

Jen also has a great understanding of the history of the profession from ancient times, and uses the image of the Tara Broach, an ancient Celtic work of the jeweler's art.



Reproduction of the ancient Tara Broach

Our thanks to the Dood's for their hospitality, their care and restoration of the old tin ceiling in the store, for the fascinating presentation, and for their support of our community. (Oh, and thanks to the Dood daughters for their impromptu entertainment!)



### Minutes of the March Meeting

The Meeting of the ICHS was called to order by Vice President Gerry Perry at Dood's Jewelry at 7:00 p.m. March 5th, 2008. President Linda C. was unable to attend and gave Gerry some notes for the meeting's agenda. Bob Nixon suggested that we send a get-well card to Linda, which was supported by the members present.

The first order of business is the Community Expo for March 8th. There are 10 historical calendars left to sell, plus raffle tickets as well. There are many bits of literature to be on display at the Expo, as well as the Garth Brooks guitar.

Regarding the raffle, nearly \$350 has been raised thus far from ticket sales and additional donations, notably \$100 from the Carr Agency and \$25 from the Dedazzio family. Suggestions were made to offer the raffle tickets at the Ionia Theatre Bluegrass Concerts, the Commission on Aging, and Jen Dood offered to sell the tickets at the jewelry store as well.

Bob Nixon suggested that we invite the Ionia Hospital CEO as a program for the ICHS in the coming months to bring us up to date on plans for the institution.

The upcoming board meeting on March 18 will be at the Blanchard House and include a Home Tour Committee meeting. The results will be reported at the April 5th membership meeting.

April 24 & 25 will be a Community Yard Sale at the Armory. The ICHS will have a table to sell donated items and raise some money. The table costs \$12, approved by the Board.

St. Johns Lutheran will be having their luncheon on May 17th (same weekend as the Home Tour) but they will not be officially part of the tour, and will be responsible for their own publicity.

May 3 & 4 will be the "Spring Into The Past" Tri-River Museums Tour from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Volunteers are needed to host the Blanchard House &

(continues on page 2)

### Minutes of the February Meeting

The February meeting of the ICHS was to be held at the Ionia County Courthouse, but the weather prevented the meeting from occurring. There was one correction submitted to the editor: The date of the 2008 Expo at the High School is to be March 8, and May 1 will be the Women's Festival "Girls Night Out" at the Royal Heritage Hall. The meeting was not rescheduled.

**March 2008 Minutes**

*(continued from page 1)*

Museum.

July 15 will be the Tri-River Group pot-luck at the Belcrocton in Belding, the \$10 admission includes a program.

March 27th will be the Community Dinner at the High School.

April 5 will be our next Appraisal Road Show with Glen Rairigh.

Stephanie VanderMolen's mother has begun to help out at the Blanchard House to do some community service, including cleaning and record-keeping between now and September.

Barb Ehlert reported that 5 locations are now committed for the Home Tour, and plans continue to be refined. All volunteers and suggestions are welcomed.

The meeting was adjourned to a quick tour of the Johnson Building's 3rd floor tin ceiling, hosted by Kaye Weaver of Independent Bank, and a short break for refreshments before a presentation by Jen Dood on the art and craft of goldsmithing and jewelry.

**Minutes of the February Board Meeting**

The February 19 Board Meeting of the ICHS was held at the Knoop's home. President Linda Ciangi brought the meeting to order at approx. 7:00 p.m. joined by Stephanie VanderMolen, Gerry Perry, Doni and Hank Knoop, Joe & Joan McCord and Secretary David McCord.

Looking at the calendar, the next meeting of the ICHS will be held at Dood's Jewelry on Main St. in Ionia - part of the "tin ceilings" series. The Johnson Building will also be open for a quick tour of the third floor ballroom and the ceiling restored by Independent Bank.

On March 8 is the Community Expo at the High School. The ICHS will be sharing a booth with the Women's Festival Committee and the BPW. Set up will be Friday the 7th from 6 to 9 p.m., and the Expo runs from 9 to 3 on Saturday. J.J. McCord will bring table displays and handouts, the Garth Brooks guitar will be on display and raffle tickets will be sold as well.

April 5 from 1 to 5 p.m. will be the next Appraisal Road Show for the ICHS, to be held at the Commission on Aging with our favorite appraiser, Glen Rairigh, returning. To make the event official, Doni Knoop made the motion, and it was generally

supported and passed by the Board.

May 3 and 4 will be the annual "Spring Into The Past" area museum tours for the Tri-River Museums Group. Volunteers will be needed to staff the Blanchard House again. (That groups next meeting - now comprising 20 small museums - is March 18.)

The 2008 Historic Home Tour is getting ready for May 17th. Chairman Barb Ehlert was not present, but the Board noted that they were finding it too late to ask for home to be ready for public viewing by May. Several folks asked have said they might be interested for the 2009 tour. Being the 150th Anniversary of the Armory and City Hall, those buildings will be included in the tour this year. A quilt show and open houses for realtors was discussed as well. The suggestion was made that the event be called a Historical Buildings Tour due to the small number of residences on the bill. The Lutheran Church will have their luncheon again the day of the tour, but it will not be part of the tour itself. There is a dog show scheduled for Kidd Street the same day as well. Bill David and Gerry Perry have the Indian displays coming along, and ads have been published in the Country Register and AAA Magazine. The possibility of hosting a church tour was mentioned at a future date - perhaps an autumn event.

Aside from Summer Sundays at the Blanchard House, the next event will be the July 15th Tri-River Pot Luck.

The guitar raffle has begun, and tickets will be included in the next mailing to our members. Prompted by a suggestion from Joan McCord, two tickets will be sent. And, because of other circumstances, there will not be a Chronicle for the month of February. Therefore, a letter will be sent, and the tickets included in the envelope.

Valerie at the Balloon Store has been offering our raffle tickets, but the store is closing soon. Linda will ask at the Keeper of the Crows, and other options will be discussed.

Linda C. made a motion to invest in "forever stamps" to try saving postage in the future, but the Board decided that the savings would not be significant enough.

New acquisitions for the ICHS included a Quilt and Bedspread (see article elsewhere) and a motion was made by Doni K. to give the donor, Jane Charles, a one-year complimentary membership to the ICHS. The motion was passed. We also

received a book by Nellie Meyers about early life in Sebewa Township - one of only 15 copies produced.

The keys to the Blanchard House need to be accounted for. Board Members and certain officers and committee persons have been issued keys, but there is not a list of who has which that has been kept up to date. Joe McCord said he would try to track them down, and Gerry Perry moved that more keys be made as necessary and approved by the Board. Doni K. supported this motion, and it passed.

A thank-you note was received from Sharon Vosovic whose family had rented the Blanchard House recently. The note included a \$50 donation nation to heat the house.

A note was received from the Chamber of Commerce (of which the ICHS is a member) that accounted from July through December of 21 Internet and 34 phone referrals to the ICHS.

The McCords are working on the transfer of the ICHS historic videos from VHS tape to DVD.

The un-decorating of the Blanchard House from Christmas will take place after the Travelogues at the Theatre on Thursday the 21st.

The meeting was adjourned.

**Minutes of the March Board Meeting**

The Board of the ICHS met at the Blanchard House on March 18 at 7:00 p.m., presided by Linda Ciangi and attended by Stephanie VanderMolen, Gerry Perry, Doni Knoop, Barb Ehlert, and Secy. David McCord.

The first item on the agenda was the Home Tour. Chairman Barb had met with Linda C. and Sara J. on Monday the 17th to discuss some arrangements, including some of the following topics. There will be a sale on May 17 at the Commission on Aging and a sidewalk sale on Main St. Barb is contacting Dial-A-Ride to shuttle visitors to the Theodore (Sibley) house. Thursday the 20th, Barb will start selling "page sponsorships" and ads for the program to help pay for the printing. David McCord will get a quote for the production of the programs upon which to base the cost of ad space. David McCord will provide the layout and maps for the Tour again as soon as the content becomes available. McCords will also provide additional pre-event brochures, fliers and posters. Specialized guest books will be needed - but with more pages this time! Last year's were provided by Joan McCord, who will be contacted.

Sara J. is asking the City to provide hosts for the City Hall and Armory, and Barb is hoping to host the other buildings with either volunteers from the families who own the homes or from the ICHS membership, as well as the Chamber Ambassadors.

The guitar raffle has begun well, with nearly 100 tickets sold to date. With the closing of the Balloon Store on Main St., the owners have donated the display they made for the promotion of the raffle to us for use elsewhere. The tickets will be offered at the Eclectic during the upcoming car show on Main St., Jen Dood will offer them at the Jewelry Store (Linda will meet with her on Thursday), they'll be offered at Chamber meetings, Women's Festival, local Bluegrass sessions, and the Armory Yard Sale. David McCord will add a picture of the guitar on the ICHS web site with details - Doni Knoop offered to publish her phone number as a contact for on-line sales (527-3130).

Plans for the April 5th Appraisal Road Show are in place and ready.

Thursday, May 1, is the Women's Festival "Girl's Night Out." The ICHS table will include all the usual publicity, raffle tickets, and a door prize drawing. Doni Knoop suggested giving away a Home Tour Ticket, and Linda C. will donate a DVD as well.

Stephanie V. will research the cost of paper fans and water bottles with ICHS information on them as souvenirs and handouts, depending on the situation. These items can have a lot of uses for upcoming events, so the Board is interested in pursuing the ideas.

The last Tuesday of each month, the Ionia Chamber is hosting an After Hours gathering at Skoog's. Since the ICHS is a member, Linda C. encouraged members to attend, and suggested that the ICHS look for an opportunity to host the event at least once during the year. Picking an appropriate date for this will be discussed anon. The hosts are allowed ten minutes to present to the assembled guests.

Regarding the Yard Sale at the Armory, the Board had voted to pay \$12 for a table, but Linda C. suggested that we spring for a bigger presence there; \$32 buys three tables. Doni moved that we invest in this, and it was supported by Linda and passed.

There is a need for a new arrangement to take care of yard work at the Blanchard House. The Board will check into a new source for the service, and report their findings at or before the next meeting.

Linda C. noted that there

is a Brother Combination Printer-Scanner-FAX available from Ionia OfficeWorks for \$99, and wondered if it would be compatible with the ICHS computer and prove to be useful to the ICHS. The Board discussed this and decided it would be a good investment in many ways. Moved by Barb, and supported by Linda, the Board passed the motion to purchase the machine. This will facilitate scanning of the Postcard Collection, various photos and documents, printing of documents and images, and copies on-demand. Case in point: Linda C. is working on an article about the Christian Service Center and has a scrapbook of items dating back to 1958 which could be scanned and kept in the ICHS digital archives.

David McCord noted that the transfer of VHS tapes to DVDs is being done. Also that the Greenview Point committee has voted to spend \$300 on window stickers for park supporters, and that the bill would be coming to the ICHS to dispense the money from the Greenview Point account. Also, the proposal to the Free Fair Committee for the Antique Village display is still to be written.



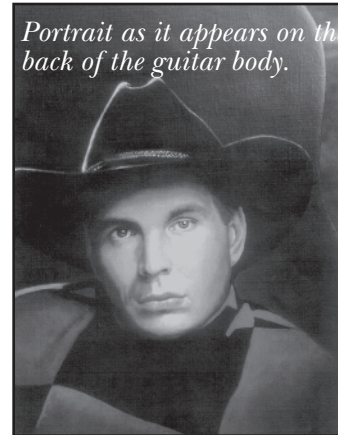
Garth Brooks Portrait

**GUITAR RAFFLE!**

Get your tickets now! Only \$5.00 each from an ICHS member & available

where you see the signs!

*A genuine collector's item, signed by the donating artist, Roy Bills.*



*Portrait as it appears on the back of the guitar body.*

**New Donations to the ICHS**

*-Contributed Article from Hank Knoop*

A quilt has been donated the ICHS which was made in the 1890s by Jane Charles. It is a crazy quilt & used many different pieces of material, including lots of silk from the Belding silk mills. [The quilt was dedicated to the McKinley Society - spin-off of the Literary Club - as a fund raiser in the 1880s presidential campaign. This is clearly embroidered on one of the panels of the quilt. - ed.]

A hand-crocheted bed spread was also donated which was made by Emma Burtram Charles in about the same period.

Both items were donated by Deanna Gierman Puplin, currently of Port Townsend, Washington. Emma Burtram Charles is the great-aunt of Deanna; Jane Charles was Emma's sister-in-law. Dianna is from Ionia, and her father is Wilfred Gierman, a former Ionia County Commissioner. Her mother is Vera (Sessions) Gierman.

Deanne is very interested in history and has recently written a book about her grandmother, Nellie Meyers Gierman, and her life growing up in Sebewa Township. Deanna also contributed one of these rare books (only 15 copies made) to the ICHS. The book is very interesting in that it is based on actual writings of Nellie.

A wonderful thanks to Deanna for her generosity. These items will be included in the Blanchard House and rotated on display. The book will be added to our Resource Room.

**Upcoming Programs and Events**

**Wednesday, April 2nd, 7:00 p.m.**  
*Regular Membership Meeting*  
at the Blanchard House  
Special Request: **WEAR A HAT** to the meeting!!!

**Saturday, April 5th**  
**Appraisal Road Show**  
at the Commission on Aging - 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
\$5.00 per item — Appraiser Glen Rairigh

**Tuesday, April 15th, 7:00 p.m.**  
**ICHS Board 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!!!

