



the **CHRONICLE**

The Almost Monthly Publication of
the Ionia County Historical Society



MINUTES of the July 21, 2010 Business Meeting

The July 21 monthly Business Meeting of the ICBS was called to order by president Linda Ciangi at 7:00 p.m. at the Blanchard House. The Board of Directors were present.

Linda reported that Dick Tipton has a loom he would like to donate if we are interested. Since we already have one in the collection, the consensus is "thanks but no thanks." David will contact him (989-637-4451).

The Berlin Center Grange building (ca. 1874) is being torn down. Dodie Denman (616-642-6687) would like to save the building if possible, and is seeking support for her cause.

The Board voted to attend the Mrs. Claus Bazaar again this year - same location, same "no charge" arrangement. It will be December 4th at the Middle School.

The Terry Lee Goffee show is getting closer, and poster/fliers are available for anyone who can circulate them. Several members will be handing them out on the street during the Free Fair Parade. Steph will be sure to Facebook the information. Bruce Roetman and the Community Theatre will be helping organize the volunteers. Concern was expressed that the billboard recently put up for the Theatre does not promote the show; Linda is looking into it. Discussion is under way regarding offers of \$5.00 discounts during Fair Week - more to come on this.

Hank & Doni Knoop report that the arrangements for the Antique Village at the Fair are progressing, including the ICBS display of military memorabilia and more. Additional volunteers are welcomed to help with this public opportunity!

Donations have come in for the Carriage House Roof Fund, totaling over \$3,000 towards the goal of \$4,000. Hank will be sending out donation forms to the membership next month for a final plea for the fund. The new roof will hopefully be up "before the snow flies."

On a related topic, David McCord reported that the artwork for the Carriage House Sketch had been sent to Mary at Office Works so she could run some souvenir postcards for the ICBS to sell.

Hank reported that BEES were living in the Blanchard House. The Reisbig family has now taken care of the infestation for us.

Linda C. noted that she has new information from the Ionia County Foundation - a resource to be considered next time we have a major project needing funds.

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TRAINS IN MICHIGAN

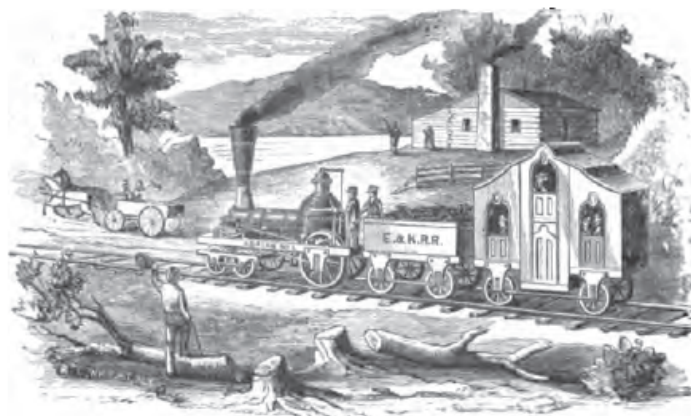
One of our frequent visitors, Bill Davis, addressed the membership on Wednesday, August 4th of this year on the subject of Railroads and stories of early railroading. Bill has been a railroad history enthusiast for many years, has visited many historic railroad sites, and collected stories of the road and of the people who worked for them and road on them.

The stories of Railroads in Michigan go back to the earliest days of steam power in America. In 1832, the territorial government of Michigan authorized a railroad to be built from Port Lawrence, Michigan, which is now Toledo, Ohio, to the mouth of the Kalamazoo River at Lake Michigan. The name of the railroad was to be the Erie and Kalamazoo Railroad, since, once completed, the line would essentially connect



Lake Erie with the Kalamazoo River. Construction began in 1835, and in late 1836, the first portion of the line, thirty-three miles in length, opened. This first segment connected Toledo with Adrian, Michigan. Initially, horses pulled freight and passenger cars on the line, but in 1837, the first steam engine began service.

Bill related tales of Ephraim Shay - one of Michigan's most famous railroad inventors.



Engraving of the first steam locomotive west of the Alleghenies - the Erie & Kalamazoo RR, in service in 1837.

In 1861, Shay moved from his home in Ohio to Muir, Michigan, and shortly thereafter enlisted in Company D, 8th Missouri Volunteer Infantry. He served in the Western Theatre of the war, under General William Tecumseh Sherman, and was honorably discharged in 1864. He returned to Ohio and married Jane Henderson on July 26 of that year.

He and his wife then moved to Ionia County, Michigan, to be near other family members in Portland, Lyons, Muir, and Sebawa. In 1870 they moved to Sunfield, Michigan, where Ephraim operated a steam Sawmill. There, they had their son, Lette, on January 26, 1870.

Sometime after 1873, they moved to Haring, Michigan, where Shay established a general store and sawmill. In 1876 or 1877, Ephraim had an idea to use a locomotive to haul logs. With maple strips on pine rails,

Continues on page 3

NEXT MONTH: September 1st Program is ...WHAT?

July 2010 Meeting Minutes
continued from Page 1

103 people attended the TriRiver gathering in Belding this month, which included a good time, good food, and a good program. Thanks to Joan McCord for her work to make this event succeed!

The house will be ready for the annual Queen's Reception before the IFF Parade on the 24th. Some concern has been expressed regarding attendance due to the re-routing of the parade staging on Lafayette Street, but the doors will be open. Thanks again to Joan McCord for organizing this reception.

The Board reminds all that the October meeting will be elections, and that anyone interested in serving on the board needs to declare their candidacy by the September 1st meeting. A nominating committee will be formed. Two seats are up for election this year.

There is a list of maintenance issues to be addressed around the Blanchard House, and interested volunteers are invited to join the members at the Thursday evening work sessions.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

MINUTES of the August 4 Meeting

The August 4 meeting of the Ionia County Historical Society was called to order a bit later than usual by President Linda Ciangi at the Blanchard House. (Later than usual to be explained later.)

The first item on the agenda was an expression of thanks to Joan and Joe McCord for organizing and hosting the Blanchard House Summer Sundays programs this year. "It's reassuring knowing that the Sunday tours are in good hands." The schedule was shared for the upcoming Sunday programs.

The August 14 Johnny Cash Tribute by Terry Goffee is coming soon - a limited number of tickets are available for \$15.00. Volunteers are still needed for ushering during the event. The Ionia Community Theater group has generously become involved to help with the organization of the event.

The monthly Business meeting is set for August 18th at 7:00 p.m. at the Blanchard House. As always, any interested members are invited to attend.

Thanks to Hank & Doni Knoop for setting up and staffing the ICHS Antique Village at the Free Fair this year - and to the other members and friends who helped out as well.

Members are reminded that the October meeting is our annual meeting at which the PAID members will be electing two Directors to the Board. Three members are needed to act as the nominating committee to recruit the candidates for these two positions by the September 1 meeting. (The terms of Barb Ehlert and Kathleen Larock are ending this year.)

The members were addressed by Bonnie Matsen, representing the Ionia County Genealogy Society with news of their latest fund raiser: the creation of a deck of commemorative playing cards which will depict scenes of historically significant people and places. Images on the cards are being offered for sale, then

(once the cards are printed) the decks will be available. Interested parties can contact the Genealogists.

Hank Knoop delivered his "brief" treasurer's report, and an update on the progress of the funding efforts for the new Carriage House roof. The roof project is a bit over 75% of the way to the \$4,000 goal thanks to a few very generous members. He also noted that the annual Duck Race will again be held at the Fall Festival in Bertha Brock Park on September 18th. Volunteers will be welcomed, and will have fun (he guarantees).

And now, our guest speaker for the evening, Bill Davis, arrived late, having mistakenly thought that his presentation was supposed to be on Thursday evening! Bits of his presentation are recounted on Page 1.

MINUTES of the August 18, 2010 Business Meeting

The August Business Meeting of the ICHS was called to order by President Linda Ciangi at 7:00 p.m. at the Blanchard House. Present were Directors Barb Ehlert, Stephanie VanderMolen, Kathleen Larock, and Kris Haskins, plus Secretary David McCord and Treasurer Hank Knoop, and Doni Knoop as well.

Linda C. reported on the Terry Goffee / Johnny Cash show, which unfortunately did NOT make money. The final tally is not yet in, but it appears that it was nearly \$2500 short of a break-even.

The Nominating Committee consists of Hank Knoop, Stephanie VanderMolen, and Kathleen Larock. Between now and the September membership meeting, they must round up at least two candidates for the two expiring Directors terms. Any interested members, please contact a member of this committee.

Joan McCord shared a written report on the Summer Sundays past and future. Overall, the season has been a great success, and Joan will be asked if she's interested in taking the position again for next year. ("She is awesome.")

Stephanie reported that letters and information were sent to the area funeral homes promoting the Blanchard House for funeral receptions/wakes.

Kathleen will round up the notes from past Board Meetings regarding the choices of flowers for the front gardens and get that information to the Garden Club for future action. Speaking of plants, there is some concern about the tree by Main Street which has an abundance of fungus growing from a large crack in the main trunk. Joe McCord has contact the city, and we expect more information soon on what might be done about it.

Fall projects include work on the conservatory windows and replacement of light bulbs throughout the house that are burned out. Kris noted that he would like to organize some major work days this fall around the house and grounds to get some of the "have to" jobs done before the end of the season. Kris plans

to tap Penny Beaman's volunteer list, as well as ICHS members.

Kris also reports that his Christmas in Ionia show is scheduled for December 18th. Seasonal entertainment will be provided, with donations of money and non-perishables collected for area food pantries.

\$65 was approved by Board Members via phone vote last week to cover a display ad in the Shopper's Guide on a special community events insert. This ad will promote events and rental of the Blanchard House.

Linda said she felt that there was potential to host photography showings at the Blanchard House, based on her experience with the photo department at the Free Fair. This will be discussed further at a future meeting.

Hank Knoop is collecting ideas for the schedule of programs for next year. The list has been started, and several months are still open. A complete list will be published after a number of the programs have been confirmed (or not).

Upstairs-Downtown Tours are approaching, October 2. Joan McCord has said that there has been a great response again this year, and there will be some new sites on the tour. Volunteers (as usual) are welcomed to host sites and conduct tours. Even if for only an hour, it lightens the load for others and is greatly appreciated!

The annual Chilidog Challenge will be a new challenge for the ICHS without Kitty's Café in our corner. As information becomes available, members will need to decide how the ICHS will participate in the event this year.

September 18th will be the Fall Festival in Bertha Brock Park again this year, and Hank is prepared to manage the Duck Race again, with help from ICHS members and Boy Scout Troop 85 (in the water).

Looking far forward, the Board acknowledged that the June Yard Sale may well become a major fund raiser for us, and look forward to expanded plans for next year.

Barb Hogan, who has helped very much in sorting books and other artifacts for the ICHS, has sold four books from the Society's collection on eBay, raising \$64.68. (These books were evaluated by the Accessions Committee before they were sold and found to be irrelevant to our mission.)

The Mrs. Claus Bazaar was briefly discussed, the Directors agreeing to participate in the same way as years past: set up a table of information and souvenirs. This event is on December 4th at the Middle School.

The ICHS will be hosting the November meeting of the Trio-River Museums group on the 9th with a luncheon. The food arrangements were discussed, and a suggestion made to sell tickets ahead of time to help manage the luncheon. A few dishes were discussed, but no decisions reached at this time.

At the August Program, our guest Bill Davis beseeched the members to promote our rich railroad heritage. He mentioned a major display in conjunction with next year's IFF "Antique Village" installation, as well as something of

a permanent display in the Blanchard House basement/museum. This fits in well with the IFF Parade Float idea that has been discussed (depicting a train station platform scene). More to come on this exciting topic. Interested members, please contact the Board!

Regarding the Free Fair, Linda noted the \$30 in prizes that the ICHS had donated, and stated that 400 votes were collected from Fair visitors in support of the art department and offering suggestions for next year. These will be brought up to the Fair Board at an upcoming meeting.

The Board voted to have 500 more Blanchard House brochures printed, as they are proving to be very popular. Hank Knoop pointed out that the address needs to be changed on them, as well as elsewhere, to be clear that our P.O. Box is #176. (In the past, the USPS allowed us to use "1776" - but policy does not allow that any more.)

The Blanchard House will be decorated for the holidays by Ionia area businesses again this year, and the rooms have already been spoken for. For more information, contact Linda Ciangi.

The Ionia "Buckaroo Ball" is scheduled for February 12 of 2011. This would conflict with the Board's earlier discussion of a repeat of last year's Valentines Desert Party. Other opportunities will be sought for fund raising events.

Stephanie VanderMolen moved that \$50 be expended to renew the ICHS membership in the Michigan Historical Society. This was supported by Barb E. and passed.

Hank reported that a mailing will be going out to all ICHS members to finish up the Carriage House Roof Funding program. Hopefully this final round of solicitations will bring in the additional \$1000 that's needed to get the job done before winter. (The expense had been approved by the Board at a previous meeting.)

The Board approved the use of the Blanchard House by the SS Peter & Paul Catechism Class for a meeting on August 31.

David McCord presented the Board with a proposal offering copies of the book "The Journey of the Dexter Colony: 1833" authored by himself and his wife Annette. An order could be placed for 25 books at a cost of \$239.38. Selling at the cover price of \$12 each, the ICHS could profit \$60.62. (Several of the books have already been spoken for.)

Kris moved that the order be placed, which was supported by Kathleen and passed. Treasurer Hank K. passed along a check to David M. to cover the order, which will be delivered in a matter of weeks. On a related subject, the sketch drawn by David M. of the Carriage House has been set up to print postcards at Ionia Office Works. The order simply needs to be placed, once the purchase is approved by the Board.

On a final note, Hank reminded David M. that a prominent notice needs to be included in the next Chronicle to remind members that dues are due before the October meeting. The meeting was then adjourned at about 9:10 p.m.

TRAINS

continued from Page 1

the origins of the Shay locomotive were put to use. Ephraim started working with Lima Machine Works (later Lima Locomotive Works) in Lima, Ohio, and in 1880, the first Shay Locomotive was shipped to a customer in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In 1881, Shay started filing patents. Lima built 4 Shay locomotives in 1881, and were up to 37 Shays in 1883. In 1884, Lima had a 34 page catalog, with 5 different models of Shay Locomotives. By the late 1890s, Shay Locomotives were shipped all over the world.

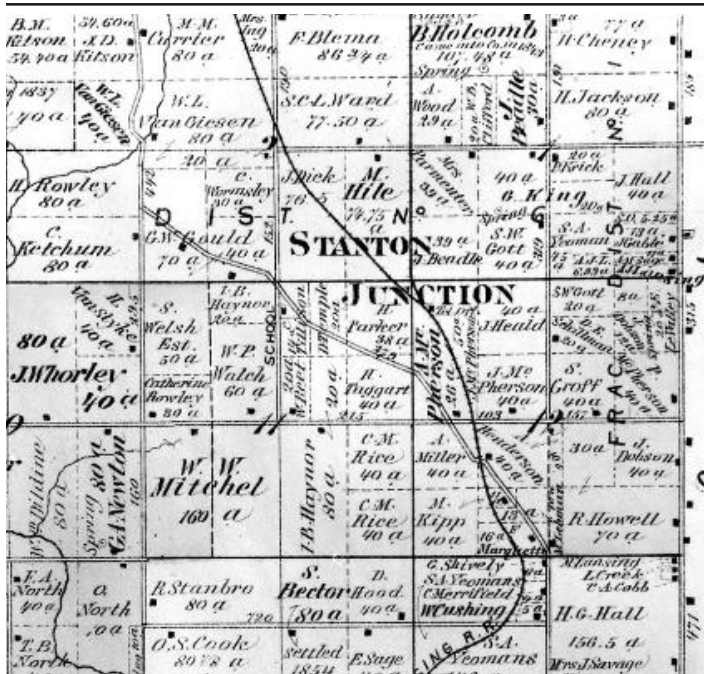
In 1888, Shay moved to Harbor Springs, Michigan. There, he designed and built a hexagonal shaped house with six wings opening off the central core with a tower on top, still in existence today. The walls, inside and out, were stamped steel. In 1891, Shay built an all steel boat that was 40 feet long and a beam of 6 feet, named the Aha. What's left of the Aha is now back in Harbor Springs. Shay also

designed and operated a private water works for Harbor Springs.

Shay started his own railroad, the Harbor Springs Railway (nicknamed the “Hemlock Central”), which was chartered in 1902 and dissolved in 1912. Three locomotives to Shay’s own design were the only motive power. The road predominantly hauled lumber, but was also used for sightseeing at 25 cents a head. Shay also made sleds with clear Maple runners as Christmas gifts for the children in town, over 400 made over the years.

In 1912, Ephraim's wife Jane died on July 24. Ephraim died on April 19, 1916. The Harbor Springs Area Historical Society sponsors the "Shay Days" festival, on a weekend close to his birthday each year at the hexagon house.

Bill encouraged the members to share some of their own railroad stories, which they did, and good conversation was had by all. Bill also challenged the ICHS to work on exhibits and artifacts to represent Ionia's great railroad heritage. *Thanks, Bill for your enthusiasm!*



1875 Easton TWP map showing Stanton Jct where the Ionia & Stanton Railroad branched off of the Ionia & Lansing Railroad. This junction later became known as Haynor.

Upcoming Programs and Events

Thursday Evening Workshops at the Blanchard House. 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, September 1st, 7:00 p.m.

Monthly Program Meeting

SURPRISE PROGRAM?????

PUBLIC WELCOME!

Nominations due for Board Elections!

Wednesday, September 15th, 7:00 p.m.
 ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House

Saturday, September 18th

FALL FESTIVAL at Bertha Brock Park
including the annual **ICHS DUCK RACE!**

Come and join in the fun!

Saturday, October 2, 2010

UPSTAIRS / DOWNTOWN TOURS

A fascinating look at downtown Ionia from the second and third floors above our historic Main Street. Learn the stories in the upper stories!

Wednesday, October 6th, 7:00 p.m.

Annual Meeting & Elections

Members, please be sure your dues are paid!

Wednesday, October 20th, 7:00 p.m.
 ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House

BE SURE TO CHECK THE SCHEDULE OF
Thursday Morning Travelogs at the
Historic Ionia Theatre!

— and —

For other upcoming events - visit the ICHS website at *ioniahistory.org*.

ATTENTION ALL ICHS MEMBERS!

Be sure to get your dues paid well in advance of the Annual Meeting in October so that you can vote for our next two Directors. AND, if you are interested in serving on the Board, please contact the Nominating Committee Chairman, Hank Knoop at 616-527-3130.



John C. Blanchard House Historic Carriage House

www.ioniahistory.org

Support the Roof Project

Our carriage house at the John C. Blanchard Estate is in desperate need of a new roof. The "Support the Roof Project" will help raise the money needed to preserve this important piece of Ionia History. Construction on the carriage house will begin by November 2010. Become a sponsor and help preserve history.

I want to help preserve the Historic John C. Blanchard Carriage House.

Name: _____ Contact: _____

Sponsorship Levels:

Quantity

Dollars

Shingle Sponsor at \$40. per row

Board Sponsor at \$100. per 4' X 8' sheet

Other donation amount: _____

Total Dollars _____

Please make checks payable to the ICHS.

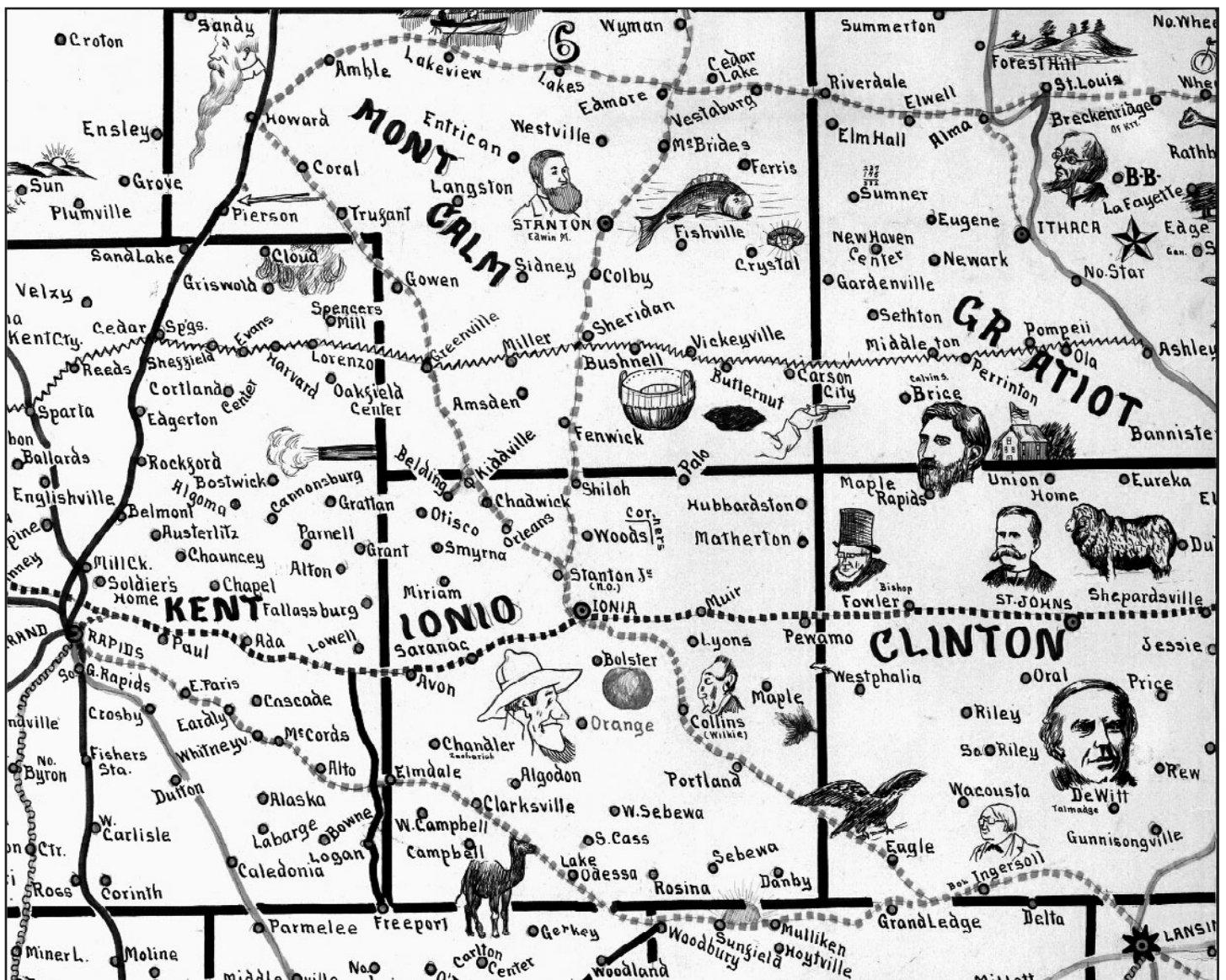
Please mail completed form to: ICHS Treasurer, PO Box 176, Ionia, MI 48846

Thank you for your support, you are making the difference.

Donations may be tax deductible Tax Id# 23-7423779

Contact Hank Knoop with questions 616-527-3130





ABOVE: Detail from an interesting Michigan Railroad Map designed and published by an enterprising Chicago railway mail clerk, Frank H. Galbraith in 1897. These maps were devised to serve as memory aids for employees of the Railway Mail Service and the U.S. Post Office Department in quickly locating counties, routes, and post offices in the several states. The maps were not published but were rented, on a fee basis, to practicing or prospective postal workers. ("Ionio?")

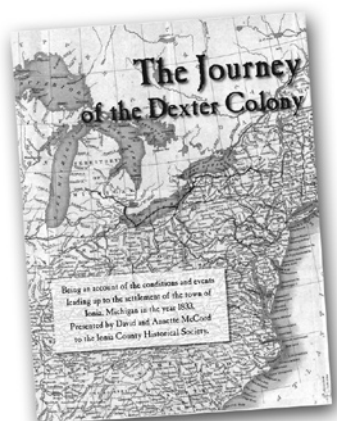
— OCTOBER 2 — UPSTAIRS / DOWNTOWN!

Mark your calendars now for this wonderful event. See the upper floors of downtown Ionia - businesses, meeting halls, apartments, attics, and more! Watch for more information in the Chronicle and all your usual resources for Ionia area events and activities.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Joan McCord, Event Chair, at 616-527-3369.

THE BOOK that documents the presentation given to the ICHS in May of 2010, IS READY!

David & Annette McCord have now published this carefully researched story of the settling of Ionia, lavishly illustrated with historic photos, maps, and engravings. It includes details from many historic documents, books and artifacts, and now CAN BE IN YOUR LIBRARY!



FOR ONLY \$12.00 EACH
and a portion of each sale will benefit the Historical Society. **GET YOURS NOW!**

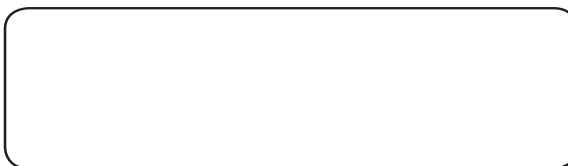


the CHRONICLE

www.ioniahistory.org

The Chronicle is the official publication of the Ionia County Historical Society. It is written, edited, and published by David McCord, Secretary. Any comments, corrections (of course), or contributions should be directed to the editor c/o the ICBS at P.O. Box 1776, Ionia, MI, 48846 or via www.ioniahistory.org.

Ionia County Historical Society
P.O. Box 176
Ionia, MI 48846



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 ICBS Treasurer, care of Box 176, Ionia, MI 48846.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, St., Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please Check Your Membership Type:

- ☐ Regular = \$20
- ☐ Sustaining = \$35
- ☐ Business Buddy = \$40
- ☐ Corporate = \$250
- ☐ Life = \$1000
- ☐ Free to Students under 18
- ☐ Gift = \$ _____

Please Share a Little Information:

- ☐ Renewing Member
- ☐ New Member

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

Thanks!

Join Us at the Ionia Theatre at 9:30 a.m. every Thursday for FREE ICBS Travelogues!

September 2 — Ireland

September 9 — Alaskan Winter Wonder

September 16 — Scotland

September 23 — Mount Vernon

September 30 — Navaho Code Talkers of WWII

October 7 — Building the Mackinac Bridge

October 14 — Jamestown

October 21 — Hershey, PA

Ionia County Historical Society 2009-10 Board of Directors & Officers

Linda Ciangi, President — 527-4945
Kathleen Larock, Vice Pres. — 616-675-4618
Kris Haskins, Director — 989-855-3685
Stephanie VanderMolen, Director — 616-755-0731
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