



the **CHRONICLE**  
 The Almost Monthly Publication of  
 the Ionia County Historical Society



# Annual Meeting and Presentation of "Spirits of Ionia" Characters

## Minutes of the Annual Meeting

The meeting was called to order by president Kathleen Cook at 7:05 p.m. on Wednesday, October 5th, 2016. Linda Ciangi moved to forego the reading of the role call, past annual meeting minutes, and September general meeting minutes. The motion was supported by Mike Gallagher and passed. The president noted that public notice of the meeting had been published according to the ICHS Bylaws, then announced the three candidates for the openings on the Board of Directors: Dave White, Goose Elliott, and Ally Cook (incumbent). Mike Gallagher moved to cast a unanimous vote for the three candidates due to their being only three openings on the Board. The motion was supported by Bryan Kimble, and passed. Linda Ciangi then moved to adjourn the annual meeting, which was supported by Mike Gallagher and passed. The meeting was adjourned by president Cook, asking that the new Board and officers please assemble after the general meeting for a brief Board Meeting. The annual meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

## Minutes of the October 5th General Meeting

The meeting was opened by president Kathleen Cook with a report on the recent Fall Festival and Cemetery Tour. Both events were considered successful, although Fall Fest was sparsely attended due to a combination of threatening rain and competing events. In contrast, the weather for the "Spirits of Ionia's Past" was near perfect, with a very good attendance. Between the two over \$650 was brought in for the ICHS general fund.

The Michigan-1 Credit Union has contacted the ICHS about their employees volunteering in the community. They would like to help out at the Blanchard

House, and Kathleen will follow up to see what can be arranged.

A bus tour group is visiting us on the 13th. It's a large group with very little time to spend, so volunteers will be appreciated.

Once again, the McCords (David and Annette) will host Trick-or-Treat at the Blanchard House this Halloween - rain or shine. If anyone would like to contribute candies, please do. (Laws dictate that only store-bought pre-wrapped candy can be handed out.)

Plans are in place for the October 18th library program at the Blanchard House (see story on page one for details). The Tri-River Museum Group will be returning to the Blanchard House for their November meeting on the 18th as well (10:00 a.m.). The November general meeting will be a program about "The Lost Car Companies of Detroit," also at the Blanchard House.

*Continued on page 2*



**The ICHS Board of Directors and Officers**

*Photo courtesy of Shawna Hoekstra.*

Further along on the calendar, the Blanchard House Bazaar will be held on November 27, and the Mrs. Claus Bazaar at the Middle School on December 4th.

Linda Ciangi reported that the City of Ionia would install a sign to acknowledge our “adoption” of the Cornell Alley. The City Council is also in support of the proposal to adorn some of the large brick walls of buildings in the business district with history-centric murals. Several owners have expressed interest, and the city will recruit local artists to do the work. In addition, plans for the Governor Green / Ypsi-Reed monument is progressing as well, hoping to identify grants to help fund the project. Portland sculptor Derek Rainey will be contacted to bid on the statue of the former Governor.

The Treasurer’s report was brief and optimistic due to the recent influx of funds from various events, as well as membership fees and donations. The full report is available on request.

Kathleen closed the meeting with a thank-you to Gordon Wright and Patty Simpson-Gokee for their service to the Historical Society as members of the Board of Directors, and expressed the hope that they are always welcomed to be involved in the future in whatever capacity they’d like.

The general meeting was adjourned at 7:35.

### **Minutes of the Board Meeting of October 5th**

The ICHS Board of Directors met at 7:54 p.m. Present were Directors Kathleen Cook, Linda Ciangi, Ally Cook, Dave White and Goose Elliot, plus Secretary David McCord and Treasurer Annette McCord. Ally Cook moved that the election of officers be postponed until the regular Board Meeting on the 19th, which was supported by Goose Elliott and passed. Information had been received via the website regarding possible advertising for the ICHS which requires further research. The Tri-River Group bus trip is coming soon (will be attended by Goose Elliot and David & Annette McCord), which brought up the discussion of the ICHS arranging a bus trip to Greenfield Village at some point. Ally Cook is looking into the possibility. Linda Ciangi reported that Linda Curtis of the DDA had an inquiry from a photographer who would like to take pictures at the Upstairs-Downtown Tour in 2017, and also that she is trying to arrange a committee meeting for next year’s Oz Festival. With that, Dave White moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was supported by Ally Cook and passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

### **Minutes - Oct 19 Board Meeting**

The Board meeting of Oct. 19 was called to order by president Kathleen Cook at approx. 7:10 p.m. Also present were Directors Ally Cook, Linda Ciangi, Goose Elliott, and Dave White, plus former director Gordon Wright, rental chair Barb Ehlert, Treasurer Annette McCord, Secretary David McCord, and Accessions Committee member Shawna Hoekstra. (We also had a brief visit from Patty Simpson-Gokee!) Gordon turned in his key (#13) to the Board, but after he left the meeting it was noted that he was listed as the emergency phone number with the alarm company. In that role, he would need the key. Kathleen said she would talk to him to see if he was still willing to serve in that capacity.

The agenda opened with a brief Treasurer’s report: there is approximately \$16,000 in the checking account. Funds were received at this meeting for the sale of souvenirs and some tour donations. More memberships are in but not yet counted. (Later in the meeting a question arose regarding a credit at Pro Print which will be investigated anon.)

The toilet at the Blanchard House had a problem which was fixed by Wilson’s - charges yet to be billed.

The recent tour group of 50 persons was fun, but the Board agreed in discussion that we should make it clear that more time is needed to give people a reasonable tour, especially with that large a crowd.

Shawna Hoekstra and Mary Kimble have met with Barb Hogan, and the three of them will constitute the formal Accessions Committee moving forward. They are in the process of developing an accessions plan, catalog system, and inventory for the ICHS collections. More will be reported as plans unfold.

The old Ionia County Jail is being torn down to make room for a new office building. There are some artifacts which may be of historical interest, and Kathleen has gathered some of it in the Carriage House. There is more coming (the Accessions Committee’s first big challenge.) A trailer will be needed to get the next wave of stuff, to be taken to our storage space at the back of S&K Printing. Dave White may be able to help with that, depending on the timing.

The Chamber of Commerce has informed the ICHS that they will not be able to participate in the Chili Dog Challenge. Technically, we should not have been participating in past years either, at least on our own behalf. The event is for the benefit of Big Brother / Big

# About Michigan Curiosities

On Tuesday, October 18, the Ionia Community Library hosted a program at the Blanchard House by author Ron

Radamacher. He has authored half a dozen books on travel throughout Michigan, and delivers such presentations far and wide. The title of our program was “Oddities and Rarities of Michigan—Mysteries and Legends in Small Michigan Towns.”

Mr. Radamacher showed photos of exotic locations and weird artifacts spanning thousands of years. His books are filled with such tidbits, as well as picturesque and historic destinations.

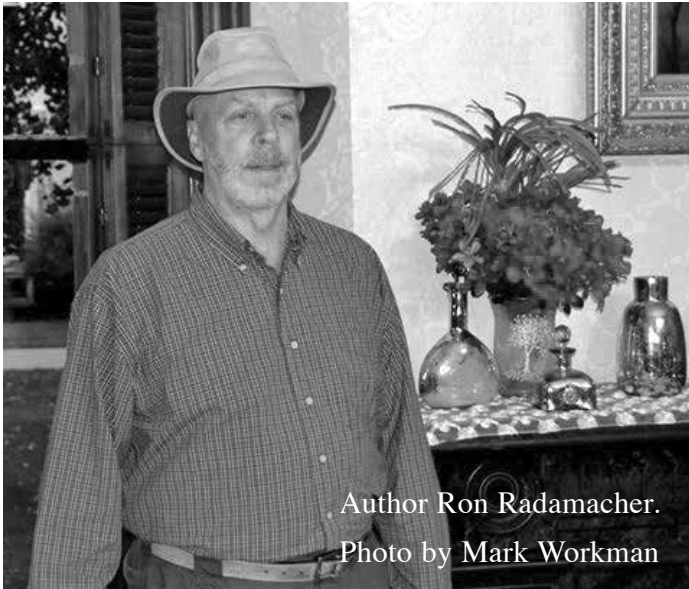
Thanks again to the Library for bringing this fascinating program to our parlor!



Presented by the

**Ionia**

Community Library



Author Ron Radamacher.

Photo by Mark Workman

## Upcoming Programs and Events

**Wednesday, November 2, 7:00 p.m.**

Presentation at the Blanchard House  
by author Allen Naldrett on

***“Lost Car Companies of Detroit”***

**Wednesday, November 16, 7:00 p.m.**

Business Meeting at the Blanchard House  
Open to all interested parties.

**Sunday, November 27, 1 to 4 p.m.**

Annual Blanchard House Gift Gala  
with gifts for sale by ICHS members.

Open to the public!

The **Holiday Decorations** at the Blanchard House will be on display for interested visitors.

**Sunday, December 4, 11, and 18, 2016.**

Come on by and enjoy a touch  
of Victorian holiday splendor!

**Wednesday, December 7, 2016**

**Annual Holiday Pot-Luck  
at the Blanchard House.**

Bring along your tales of seasons past!

**Don't forget to visit us online  
for more information.**



Check [www.ioniahistory.org](http://www.ioniahistory.org) and

**LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!**



We are attempting to update the mailing list. With the recent memberships coming in, and responses from the USPS over the past couple of months, we hope to have an accurate list very soon. Our apologies if you receive this in error, or not at all! — The Ed.

## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Help is desperately needed with **Summer Sundays** (greeters and tour guides), **maintenance projects**, **inventory**, **publicity**, and **general help!** Please contact the Board of Directors, a friend who is a member of the Historical Society, or visit a monthly meeting to ask what you can do to help keep the Historical Society ALIVE!

Also available in the ICHS Gift Shop:  
**Rosette: A Novel of Pioneer Michigan**  
 by Cindy Rinaman Marsch.



This wonderful novel is based on the journals of Rosette Cordelia Ramsdell who lived near Lyons, Michigan in the 1850s. In the voices of Rosette and her family, the novel traces how we both choose and suffer our destiny. It brings us enduring themes of friends and family as they make the most of the harsh American pioneer life.



## The Holidays are just around the corner!

Looking for a special something for a friend or family member? Why not pass along a bit of local history this year? Our gift shop has a wide variety of gifts - more than just what's on this page. Stop in on a Sunday afternoon in December and see! All proceeds go to support the Historical Society.

# SOUVENIRS

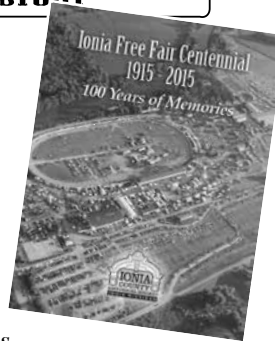
MEMORIES & MOMENTOS IONIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY HERITAGE & HISTORY

The newest addition to our collection of Ionia County memorabilia, the masterwork for 2016:

## Ionia Free Fair Centennial 1915-2015

### 100 Years of Memories

Compiled by David McCord with the help of many contributors, this 8.5 x 11 inch book contains 328 pages of history and over 1,000 photos and graphics. Softcover: \$29.95 / Hardcover: \$44.95 (add \$5 for postage)



## Historic DVD Videos

'Sno Wonder DVD – 1936 Ionia County Road Commission + 1940 Bertha Brock Snow Festival Short films that show us a glimpse of the challenges and the fun of Winters in Ionia County a generation ago.

1939 “We’re In The Movies” A promotional film produced by Ionia businesses and organizations. It’s a wonderful look into our town over 70 years ago.

1950s Home Show and Free Fair Movies

1976 U.S. Bicentennial in Ionia

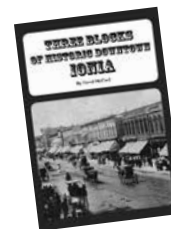
1937 Ionia Airport Inaugural plus Bertha Brock Park’s 1940 “Winter Festival”

1973 Ionia Centennial Documentary

“Ionia’s First 150 Years” and “Ionia - A Look Back” - Films by Monroe MacPherson

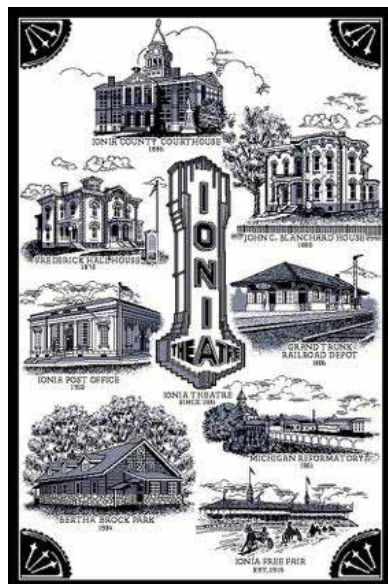
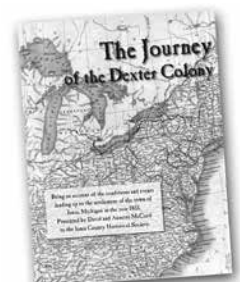
**DVDs are available for \$10 each!**

A History of Bertha Brock Park on its 80th “Birthday” by David McCord. \$6 each



Walking Tour of Historic Downtown Ionia - 40-pages of history by David McCord. \$5 each

The Journey of the Dexter Colony, 1833, by David and Annette McCord. A detailed history of the settling of Ionia, fully illustrated. \$12 each (\$15 with postage)



Do you have your souvenir Ionia History blanket yet? This attractive heavy throw is large, warm, and looks great in anyone’s home. Available in shades of gray or burgundy. \$75 for this beautiful souvenir of Ionia. (\$65 for ICHS Members).

DVD Video on the history of Ionia’s major employer for nearly 100 years, produced by students at Ferris State University and shown on public television throughout the country. Only \$10 for the former factory employee in YOUR family!



### ALSO AVAILABLE: Reproductions of historic Ionia publications –

- 1887 “Headlight Flashes” Special Ionia Edition
- 1907 Ionia Souvenir Book
- 1973 Ionia City Centennial Program Book
- Antique Ionia Postcards

*Continued from page 2*

Sisters, and we could participate if we gave proceeds over to them. The Board chose not to take part in the event this year.

Dan Balice has rented the Blanchard House for a retirement party on December 16th. He has asked the Board to approve the presence of beer and wine for the gathering, and the Board accented to that request.

Kathleen and Ally will attend the next Chamber Breakfast to represent the ICHS. A discussion ensued about official representation at meetings of the City Council and County Board. The Board concluded that “official representation” was a difficult role, and that Board members who attend such meetings are only there to collect and report information. Said members should also make it clear that IF they comment, it is (for the record) only on their own behalf and not that of the ICHS. It was suggested that a “boilerplate” for a general resolution be written that could be presented if and when topics of historical interest come up. Something that could convey the feelings and position of the ICHS on a case-by-case basis, for the record. Specific action was not taken by the Board at this time.

The Tri-River Group meets at the Blanchard House on Tuesday, November 15th, at 10:00 a.m. Joan McCord has offered to furnish refreshments for the meeting.

The revised “Docents Guide” for the Blanchard House is available for any folks interested in helping with tours. In that document, it notes the use of the upstairs parlor (the “tea room”) as a work area. The Board agrees that there is no choice, but that it needs to be kept in good order and at least the door open to tours. The work area is to be roped off. David McCord can loan two large work tables and stands for a “velvet rope” for the area. This will also serve as the first stop for the Accessions Committee when new donations come in (unless impractical).

The house will soon be getting ready for the holiday decorations. Any interested parties can volunteer to help with that by contacting a Board member. It was suggested that the Michigan-1 Credit Union volunteers may be able to help with that. In addition, a 10-foot pop-up display has been donated by M-1 C.U. for our use.

Goose said that he’d heard some comments about the Oct 5th meeting running way too late. This was an exception, being a reading of the Cemetery Tour scripts and not a normal presentation. The Board discussed the issue, noting that the program does sometimes run late, and the bit of business conducted before the scheduled

program can sometimes run long as well. The Board decided to reorganize the meeting and review business after the program to see if that worked better for those who need to leave earlier. They will also make it clear to presenters that they should try to limit their presentation to an hour.

Linda Ciangi passed around a letter of support she’d written for Joshua Pardon, the producer of the documentary on “The Factory” in Ionia. The film is being shown now on over 60 PBS stations around the country. In appreciation, she asked the Board if they would sign the letter to support Mr. Pardon seeking a promotion at Ferris State U. The Board agreed to do so, and Linda will formalize the letter accordingly.

Larry Listerman, Ionia Township Supervisor, suggested that the ICHS publish a public thank-you to the Township for the use of the Highland Park Cemetery for our tours. The Board agreed that it would be a good diplomatic move, but would not approve funds for an ad without knowing the cost first. Linda would investigate and report back to the Board.

Laura Listerman has informed Linda C. that the stained-glass windows in the Friend of the Court building may be made available to the ICHS in the event that the building is torn down.

Tim Marshall, local horse owner, has acquired a new carriage. Linda asked if the Board would like to reserve the carriage for next year’s Free Fair Parade (if it’s available). The Board said she should check on it, and keep it in mind for other events.

The Methodist Church is hosting a bazaar on November 12 and has invited the ICHS to take part if we’d like to. The opportunity will be brought to the general membership to see if we can staff a table to sell souvenirs. More information to come.

The final item on the Board’s agenda was the election of officers for the coming year. (For the record, Ally C. and Dave W. declined any nomination to an office before the nominations were presented.) Kathleen nominated David McCord to continue as Secretary and Annette McCord to continue as Treasurer. Linda C. supported the nomination, and the Board voted “yea” unanimously. Linda also moved that the President (Kathleen C) and Vice President (Linda C) be retained as well. Dave White supported that motion, and the Board voted again unanimously to do so.

Dave W. moved to adjourn the meeting, which was supported by Ally and passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.



# the [www.ioniahistory.org](http://www.ioniahistory.org) **CHRONICLE**

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 ICHS at P.O. Box 176, Ionia, MI, 48846 or via [www.ioniahistory.org](http://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 ICHS 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!

## Have you got something to donate?

The Historical Society accepts most donations of antique and vintage photos, documents, or larger artifacts IF they are relevant to Ionia's history in some way. Please contact a board member for more information, and be sure to get a receipt for your donation—it may be tax-deductible! (We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.)

### Ionia County Historical Society 2017 Board of Directors & Officers

Kathleen Cook, President — 616-527-2626  
 Linda Ciangi, Vice President — 616-527-4945  
 Ally Cook, Director — 616-821-1406  
 Dave White, Director — 989-855-2350  
 Goose Elliott, Director — 616-755-2486  
 David McCord, Secretary — 616-527-3784  
 Annette McCord, Treasurer — 616-527-3784  
 Barb Ehlert, House Rentals — 616-522-0844

For information on your long-lost relatives in Ionia, please contact the Ionia County Genealogy Society.  
<http://ionia.migenweb.net/ICGS/icgshome.htm>