



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



MINUTES of the September 1, 2010 Business Meeting

The Program Meeting of the ICHS commenced at 7:00 p.m. at the Blanchard House on Wednesday, September 1. There was a good crowd in attendance, including several guests and new members.

The meeting began with a recap of Summer Sundays success, with thanks to Joan McCord for her efforts at arranging special programs for most of those Sunday afternoon. \$181 was collected from donations.

The Carriage House Roof project enjoyed great support from members and friends, totaling 30 individual donations and reaching the goal of \$4,000 for the job. Amongst the special guests in attendance were Ron and Margaret Story, with Jim McCarty, representing the Ionia County Foundation. McCarty and Story presented the ICHS with a \$500 grant toward the roof project. Work will be starting very soon. Jim McCarty also noted that a "Ron & Margaret Story Legacy Society" has been formed for the benefit of the community.

The August 14th Johnny Cash Tribute concert by Terry Goffee was not a profitable venture, though it did not cost the ICHS any expense other than time. The concert was excellent and enjoyed by the folk who did attend.

The Nominating Committee, consisting of Hank Knoop, Stephanie VanderMolen, and Kathleen Larock, reported that three candidates have been nominated for the two Board seats in the upcoming elections. They are Carol Gallagher, Patty Simpson, and Jessica Roche. In accordance with the ByLaws, all nominations needed to be in by this meeting. It was moved by Bob Nixon and supported by Mike Gallagher to close the nominations, and this motion carried.

September 18th will be the Fall Festival at Bertha Brock Park, and the annual ICHS Duck Race. Race Chairman Hank Knoop reports that all plans are in place, but no volunteers will be turned away. Tickets are available now (\$1 each or six for \$5). Thanks in advance for help from Scout Troop 85 for herding ducks.

The Upstairs-Downtown Tour is set for October 2, and chairperson Joan McCord (not in attendance at this meeting) has provided an informational flier for all interested parties with details for the event. There will be nine sites on the tour this year, several for the first time, and some special displays for the day.

Volunteers are being sought to help

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There Was No Program for September!

...but we extend a special thank-you to Jim McCarty, chairman of the Ionia County Foundation, for presenting their grant of \$500 toward the Carriage House Roof Repair Project, and to Ron and Margaret Story, for their continuing support of the Ionia County Historical Society!

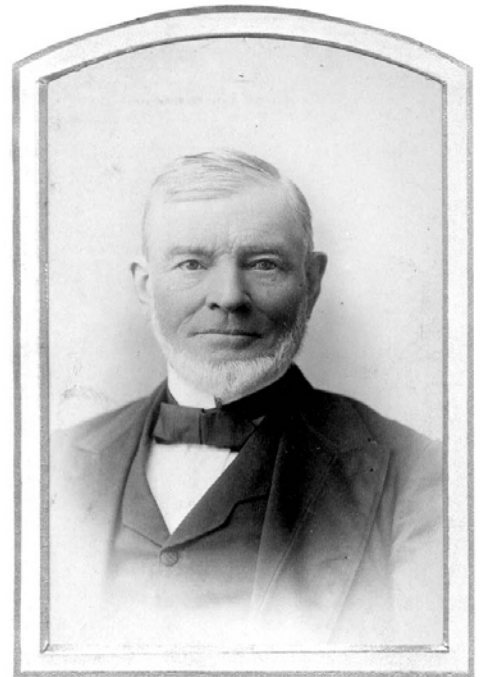
A Letter...

...from John C. Blanchard to the Ada Pioneer Association, as published in their minutes in the year 1910, and shared with us by outgoing Board member, Kathleen Larock:*

Thank you for your kind invitation to address your Pioneer Association. If it were possible I would deem it one of the happiest events of my life to meet the remaining pioneers of your section of the Grand River Valley.

My mind now goes back to 1838, 68 years ago, when a poor boy I carried the U.S. Mail on the back of an Indian pony, fording the Flat and Grand Rivers, from Lyons to Saranac, Lowell and Grand Rapids. I can see Cyprian S. Hooker, Postmaster for Saranac, Rodney Robinson, Postmaster at Lowell, Uncle Withey, Postmaster at Ada, Darius Winsor at Grand Rapids, and Joel Gibbs - noble men, as were all the early pioneers of the Grand River Valley. At that time there were but four settlers on the River Road between Lowell and Ada, and not one save Uncle Rix Robinson and Edward, grand old men from Ada, to Louis Campau's place on the hill near John Boles house as you go down into Grand Rapids, a panoramic view of the road, and all the early settles along from Lyons, or Genereauville Post, Saranac, Lowell, Ada to Grand Rapids, is passing before my eyes. How I wish I could be with you and talk of those days that are passed and gone, and of the noble men and women who constituted the early settlers of the Grand River Valley, and also of the famous Dexter Party off 63 who cut the road from Pontiac through Clinton County to Ionia Center, known afterwards as the Dexter Trail.

** NOTE: Mr. Blanchard died in 1905... the letter was PRINTED in 1910.*



**NEXT MONTH: October 6th - Annual Meeting and Election of
Two New Directors to the Board. Be sure your dues are PAID!**

*July 2010 Meeting Minutes
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with the Mrs. Claus Bazaar on December 4 at the Middle School. Please contact Linda Ciangi if you can help.

The book "The Journey of the Dexter Colony, 1833" by David and Annette McCord, is now available for purchase from the ICHS. There are 25 copies in the inventory now, and the cover price is \$12 each. (The book is also available through Amazon.com — simply search for "The Dexter Colony.")

Kris Haskins reported on the ongoing task of cleaning out the storage room (furnace room) in the basement of the Blanchard House. Cleaning, sorting, and prepping items for cataloging continues, and any interested members can contact Kris to help, or come by for the weekly Thursday evening work sessions. Upon finding many, many photographs, the idea has come up to do a display on Ionia photographers studios, for which we have many examples. Regarding the identification of some of the subject, Seymour VanDerske suggested that the Sentinel-Standard may be able to help identify some. Barb Hogan continues to spend many an hour sorting through and cataloging items in the collection as well.

The schedule for 2011's programs is being put together now, and anyone with suggestions or program requests is invited to share that with the Board. It was noted that the Presbyterian Church will be celebrating 100 years next year, and will be the 150th for SS Peter & Paul Church in 2011.

The meeting was adjourned to refreshments and fellowship at 8:15 p.m.

MINUTES of the Sept 15th, 2010 Business Meeting

The Business Meeting was called to order by President Linda Ciangi at 7:08 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept 15, at the Blanchard House. Present were Directors Stephanie VanderMolen, Barb Ehlert, Kathleen Larock and Kris Haskins. Also in attendance were Secretary David McCord, Treasurer Hank Knoop, and guest Doni Knoop.

Pres. Ciangi began with a note about establishing a file for long-term records, past business and event information, separate from current info to better use our storage and make it easier to find things. She also noted that she has acquired a larger -format film scanner for non-35mm negatives. This unit scans to a "flash" card, which can then be transferred to the computer.

Linda also noted that Alice Whorley has been managing the refreshments for our meetings this year, and has agreed to continue in that role for next year also.

Regarding the minutes published last month, one correction was noted: It was Seidelmans, not Reisbigs, that took care of the bees in the Blanchard House! Secretary McCord also shared a few more details about the "hit reports" for

the ICHS website, and plans to improve the photo gallery features of the site when time permits.

Hank Knoop reported that the Carriage House Roof Project has now been completed (with the exception of some clean-up). Many thanks to all those who contributed to that project! He also noted that there was found a short in the security system, and this has also been repaired (for only \$6.00!) as well.

Hank also noted that the Michigan-1 Credit Union will be hosting the November 10 Chamber After Hours, and is inviting area non-profits to showcase their activities at this event. Linda will follow up to get more details on how the ICHS can participate.

A visitor to the Blanchard House recently asked about a book that had been donated by her family, but it could not be readily found during her visit. This will be looked into as soon as possible.

Thanks to Trier's Jewelry for their generous help in chemical polishing for our silver collections, one piece at a time, and to Joan McCord for facilitating that process. Recommendations have been noted about storing the silver to avoid tarnishing in the future and will be discussed further.

Rich at the Lamplight Grill has offered to do a fund-raiser program for the ICHS, and will be contacted when the next opportunity arises. (Heat-the-House funds, maybe?)

Weaver Music has offered a log cabin-style doll house for \$100 if the Historical Society would like to raffle it. Weaver would donate a doll as well. The Board is considering the offer, but probably not until spring or summer.

Barb Ehlert and Sue Garrison are going to be working on restoration and repair to the conservatory windows. Discussion ensued regarding the other woodwork in the conservatory - baseboards and floor, specifically. Sanding and refinishing versus clean and polish were the plans considered, but no decision was reached. Concern about preserving the character of the room is of highest regard, and the topic will be discussed again.

Work progresses in the basement, sorting artifacts and documents found in the "storage room" including many photographs. With Barb Hogan's help, these are being sorted into appropriate categories, including some fine photos of Ionia Railroad subjects recently discussed for development of a display on the subject.

The center support on the iron railing on the front steps of the Blanchard House has completely rusted through. Stephanie's husband has a plan for fixing it, and the Board voted to have him go ahead and make the repairs. Chuck Booth is also planning to help with finishing and protecting the wood trim on the front porch.

Also under "old business" was a discussion of our programs for the next year, which are beginning to come together. There are several ideas being pursued now, and a full schedule of programs should be available very soon.

As always, any offers or suggestions are welcomed!

Plans are also in place for the annual Duck Race at the Fall Festival, Bertha Brock Park on Sept 18th.

The schedule for October begins with the Upstairs-Downtown tours on Saturday, October 2. Joan McCord reports that volunteers are needed for staffing the Ionia Theatre, but that most of the site owners are planning their own hosting. Volunteers are still welcomed for miscellaneous tasks, and should contact Joan M. if interested in helping out the day of the event. (See more details elsewhere in this issue.) Bill Davis has asked if he could use the Asylum Train Model from the ICHS collections as part of the display he is putting together for the event, and the Board voted "yes."

The Oct. 6th Annual Meeting, where elections will be held to fill two spots on the board. Candidates are Carol Gallagher, Patty Simpson, and Jessica Roche. Members must be reminded to get their dues paid before this meeting if they want to participate in the vote. David McCord will be printing the ballots again this year for that meeting.

October 16th will be a Work Day on the Blanchard House grounds, doing general autumnal clean-up. Anyone interested in helping out, please contact Kris Haskins.

The October 20 Business Meeting will be held at the Blanchard House under the newly elected officers. As usual, all interested members and the general public are invited.

The Chili Dog Challenge will be October 28, and the ICHS would like to participate in some way, still to be determined. Linda C. will contact Donna at Eldon's Café about possible collaboration.

November 3rd will be the Monthly Program meeting at the Blanchard House, presenting "Markers in the Mitten" - a presentation about historic markers in Michigan.

November 6th will be another work day on the grounds. Again, Kris Haskins is the contact for this effort.

The ICHS has offered to host the November 16th meeting of the Tri-River Museum Group with a luncheon and presentation. The Board proposed a

\$7.50 per person ticket for that meeting, and the Tri-River organization has yet to make a final decision on the subject. [NOTE: The Tri-River voted at their Sept 21 meeting to accept the proposal. — D.M.]

On November 13th, the ICHS will be hosting a "Mind, Body, Soul Expo" with 20 vendors displaying their wares in the house for the visiting public. Chel Lea is organizing this event, and the ICHS will receive monies from vendor fees as well as 10% to 15% of profits.

The Literary Club will be holding a luncheon at the Blanchard House on November 20.

Decoration of the Blanchard House for the Christmas season will be done by area businesses again in late November.

The Ionia Community Foundation has expressed interest in renting the Blanchard House for a holiday event - details still to come.

The Blanchard House will be open to the public again for December Sundays from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. — volunteer hosts & hostesses are needed. Please see a Board member to sign up for December 5, 12, and 19.

December 4, the ICHS will participate again with a table at the Mrs. Claus Bazaar - gift bags have been donated by Doni Knoop. Items for sale will include our usual souvenirs and framed copies of historic Ionia photos and postcards.

On December 16, the Ionia Theatre will be the site of a Christmas Concert featuring various Ionia County performers. Admission is FREE, and a popcorn bucket will be passed for donations to aid area food pantries during the holidays.

The Blanchard House will be rented to Chel Lea on December 19th for a "Spiritual Gallery" event. And again on Dec 23 for a Christmas gathering for Patty Simpson.

There was some discussion about Valentine's Day event, or other public dessert buffet opportunity in the spring. Nothing was decided.

Celia Jackson has suggested a Barn-and-Quilt program to promote tourism. More to come.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

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. Please attend and show your support on October 6th.

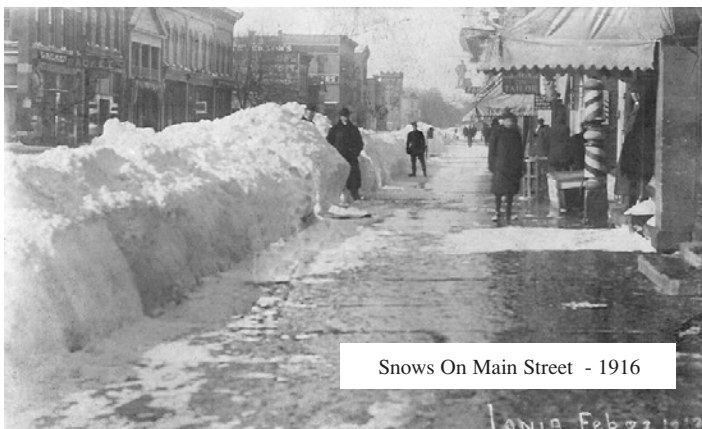
— OCTOBER 2 — UPSTAIRS / DOWNTOWN!

■ 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.



Flood On Main Street - 1909



Snows On Main Street - 1916



Train Wreck on the Ionia Line - 1920

Upcoming Programs and Events

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

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

Wednesday, November 3, 7:00 p.m.

“Markers in the Mitten”

A presentation on Michigan’s Historical Markers.
at the Blanchard House.

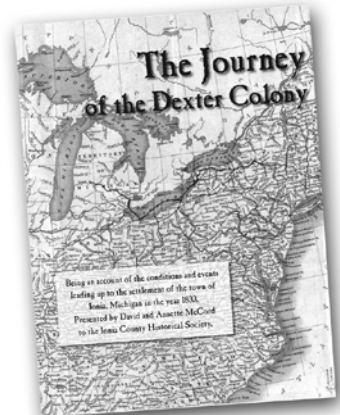
BE SURE TO CHECK THE SCHEDULE OF Thursday Morning Travelogs at the Historic Ionia Theatre!

— and —

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

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 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 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 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!

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

September 30 — Navaho Code Talkers of WWII

October 7 — Building the Mackinac Bridge

October 14 — Jamestown

October 21 — Hershey, PA

October 28 — Discovering the Titanic

November 4 — Iceland

November 11 — National Geographic Specials

November 18 — Thanksgiving Special

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

Barb Ehlert, Director — 522-0844

David McCord, Secretary — 527-3784

Hank Knoop, Treasurer — 527-3130