



the **CHRONICLE**

The Almost Monthly Publication of
the Ionia County Historical Society



The Model "T"

The members of the Ionia County Historical Society who arrived a bit early to the September meeting got a special treat: a ride in Ben Merchant's Model "T"!

The program preceded the business meeting to be sure Mr. Merchant could drive his old Ford back home before the sun went down. The presentation commenced with the showing of a History Channel special on Mr. Ford's unique enterprise, and arguably the greatest of his products.

Ben halted the video before the end as its subject moved on beyond the history of the Model T, and he pointed out that, although it was a well-produced program, there were some inaccuracies in the information. This, he said, was not at all unusual, due to the mistique surrounding Mr. Ford and all the legends that have come about surrounding the multi-million-selling car.

One of the hand-outs received by the members was a "top ten count-down of Model T Facts" which are all commonly believed, but all false:

1. All Model T's were black.
2. Model T's were cheap cars
3. Model T's were the first car built on an assembly line.
4. Model T's were a simple car
5. Model T's were all alike
6. Model T's were the first car.
7. Model T's were all built by Ford.
8. Ford invented the Model T and built it all by himself.
9. There were more Model T's built than any other car.
10. All Model T's have to be cranked to be started.

In addition to the real facts behind all these statements, Mr. Merchant handed out a two-page summary of the history of the "Tin Lizzie" which was published by the Henry Ford Heritage Association. As usual, the member shared stories of their personal experiences with Model T's and other early Fords.

Many thanks to Ben for his presentation (and the free rides)!



MINUTES of the September '09 Mtg.

The September 2, 2009 meeting of the Ionia County Historical Society was called to order by President Linda Ciangi at approximately 8:00 p.m. at the Blanchard House following the program. The Secretary's report was accepted by motion and vote, with one correction to a date in the calendar.

Diving directly into Old Business, Linda reported on the success of the Superstars Concert fund-raiser help in August. With the generous support of local sponsors and help by many members and friends, the event earned nearly \$3,000 for the ICHS. She prepared a large thank-you display ad for the press to express our thanks, not the least of which go to the Sentinel-Standard for their tremendous discounts on advertising for the event.

Linda is also organizing a clean-up schedule to prepare for the upcoming holiday season. Anyone interested should contact her. The major cleaning needs to be done before mid-November, when several local merchants will be decorating the main rooms of the Blanchard House for the season.

Summer Sundays were again a success, and thanks go out to the members who helped. President Ciangi has suggested that a hosting committee be formed to help schedule the staffing for next year, including the training of members who wish to conduct tours.

Henry Knoop then presented the Treasurer's Report, which was good news for the preceding month. Details, as always, are available for the asking. It was moved by Bob Nixon, supported by Mike Gallagher, and accepted by

vote of the members.

Henry also delivered the report of the Nominating Committee. Three seats are up for election on the Board this year; Gerry Perry will be stepping down, and both Stephanie Vander Molen and Linda Ciangi are up for re-election. The nominees also include Dave Cook and Chris Haskins. Hank asked for nominations from the floor. Hearing none, Bob Nixon moved to close the nominations, which was supported by Mike Gallagher and passed by the members.

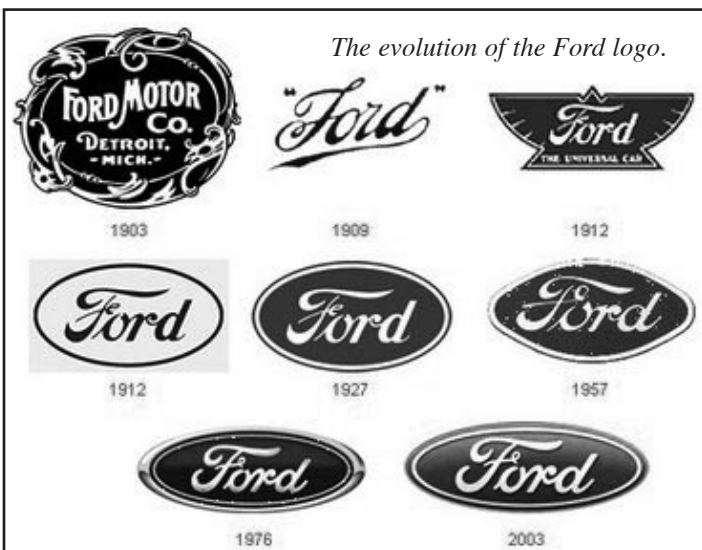
NOTE: ALL MEMBERS are reminded to pay their dues before the election, for an unpaid member is not a voting member!

Henry also conveyed thanks from the Catholic Teachers group for allowing them to meet at the Blanchard House in August.

The Accessions Committee, chaired by Kathleen Perrin, met at the Blanchard House to refine their inventory forms and procedures. A sign has been created which will be posted near the front door to describe basic procedure for persons wishing to make donations (rather than just leave them on our doorstep, as has been done on occasion). Calendars are being consulted to find a date to meet again. Interested members can contact Kathleen if they would like to help in this very important work.

President Ciangi then moved on to New Business, which began with Hank Knoop's report on the arrangements for the Duck Race, to be held at Bertha Brock Park on the 19th of September in conjunction with the annual Fall Festival. Hank reported that he could

Continues on page 2



still use some volunteers for the set-up, and acknowledged those who have already come forward. The race will begin at 3:00 p.m.

Linda C. noted that tickets are available for the Sept. 26 "Buckaroo Ball" at the Ionia Theatre - a fund raiser for the Theater at which are promised many fun activities. To kick off the ICHS promotion, names were drawn and Ben Merchant (our presenter for the evening) won a free ticket (a \$20 value).

Joan McCord reported that the October 3rd "Upstairs Downtown" event was on schedule and coming along nicely. Eight downtown business-district buildings are on the tour this year. (See advert. elsewhere in this issue.)

The Ionia County Memorial Hospital "Advocates" (formerly the "Auxiliary") is reorganizing, and will be meeting at the Blanchard House on October 8th. All are welcome as they recount the 56-year history of the organization, and address it's future.

On November 12, the ICHS will be hosting the Ionia Chamber "Business After Hours".

November 17th will find the Tri-River Museum Group meeting here as well.

Gerry Perry reported briefly on the Pewamo 150th Celebration, which will take place September 12th at that town. All are invited.

Dave Cook is seeking early photos of the Silver-Graff building in an effort to accurately restore the face of the building to it's original configuration.

David McCord asked that all members please be sure to include their e-mail addresses when they submit their membership dues this year. The hope is that our newsletter expenses can be cut significantly if members can receive their newsletters electronically each month. (Past issues are available on line now through the website.)

Stephanie VanderMolen reported that she is creating a flier to promote the rental of the Blanchard House.

The meeting was adjourned for refreshments and fellowship.

**Remember to
DO THE DUES!**

**Join the ICHS and cast
your vote this October!**



**Our community is counting
on us to preserve Ionia's
history and heritage. If you
are interested in serving
on the Board of Directors,
contact Hank Knoop today!**

MINUTES of the Sept. '09 Board Mtg.

The ICHS Board of Directors meeting was held at the Blanchard House on Wednesday, Sept. 16, at 7:10 p.m. Present were Linda Ciangi, Barb Ehlert, Stephanie Vander Molen, and David McCord.

President Ciangi reviewed the upcoming events, with a few specific notes:

1. Hank Knoop is still hoping for more help for the 10-to-1:00 shift at the Fall Festival on September 19th. Interested individuals can contact him. Barb E. will try to rearrange some of her other obligations to help as well.

2. Friday, Sept. 23 is a "Harvest Festival" event at the Nature Trail at Boyce Elementary. The Boyce PTG is seeking help to staff the event, and for organizations to become involved. Interested persons can contact Stephanie V.

3. The "Upstairs Downtown" event is coming up on October 3rd, and all are encouraged to support the event, which is a no-cost fund-raiser for the ICHS.

4. The next ICHS meeting, October 7, will be the Annual Meeting with elections and retrospections. David McCord will prepare the ballots for the election.

5. October 8, the Women's Auxilliary meets at the Blanchard House. President Ciangi suggested that they be approached to share in the Chili Cook-off event with the ICHS on Thursday, Oct. 22. Linda will also be getting in touch with Kitty at the diner to be sure that arrangements have been made for the special Health Dept permits this year.

6. Dates TBD in early November, the four local businesses will be decorating the Blanchard House for the holidays. Linda C. has this under control.

7. November 12, the Ionia Chamber Business After Hours at the Blanchard House. The Board is inviting all our "Business Buddies" to stop in and see the house and the holiday decorations. Linda asked if Annette McCord might bake a cake for the event, and she would like to do something special for refreshments. Barb E. will contact Cal Smith to see if he'll be interested in helping with this.

8. Barb, Linda and Doni will be putting together a "Tea" for the 17th of November when the Tir-River Group will be meeting at the House.

9. December 5th will be the annual Mrs. Clause Bazaar, and the ICHS will have a booth (free of charge). Linda hopes to have many of our his-

toric photos copied, matted, and framed by then. To that end, members may donate more used frames (and mattes, if possible) to the cause. She also looked into a kit for cutting our own mattes. David M. noted that he has a matte cutter he will

donate, and he will look into the cost of a vinyl cutting matte and straight-edge at Office Works. He may also have some matte material to donate.

10. Linda also reminded the Board that fund-raising efforts for next year will become critical due to the \$4,000 in roof work needed on the Carriage House. Any ideas are welcomed, especially if members are interested in chairing these efforts.

11. Linda asked about contacting Business Buddies via e-mail, and it was noted that we can distribute such messages to the Chamber e-Mail list because we are members. Stephanie will put together a missive for the purpose, and Linda will contact the Chamber.

12. Linda presented the Board with the idea that we might invite local organizations to be "guest hosts" at the house for the Summer Sundays next year. It would be a chance for local groups to support each other, and share the publicity (as well as the volunteer staff). When we get a chairperson for the Summer Sundays committee, this will be suggested to them.

13. Members are asked if they have TABLE CLOTHS that they can donate which would be suitable for use on our Card Tables when large groups use the house. (Good linen in subdued hues would be best!)

14. Holiday Open House dates were discussed for the Blanchard House, and planned dates will be November 29, December 6, 12, and 20. Staff will be needed; all interested members please contact the Board if you can help!

The meeting was adjourned at approx. 8:45 p.m.



Yes, the Model T came in many forms - some from the factory and some hand-built modifications!



**What's Up
There?**

The "Upstairs Downtown" tour in Ionia's historic business district will include nine second and third floor sites. You can see what wonders are generally hidden from the sidewalks, and learn some fascinating facts and personal stories about "What's up there."

Tickets are priced at a package deal for the entire tour \$10.00.

**Mark your calendar now!
Saturday, October 3
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

If you would like to volunteer to help with the tours, please call Joan McCord at 527-3369. This event benefits the Ionia County Historical Society.

**Find Out on
October 3rd...**





Upcoming Programs and Events

Thursday Evening Workshops at the Blanchard House.

This is a great way to get involved.

Stop in - 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 19, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00p.m.
Ionia County Fall Festival at
Bertha Brock Park — and ICHS DUCK RACE

Saturday, Sept 26, 7:00 p.m.
“BUCKAROO BALL” at the Ionia Theatre!

Saturday, October 3, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
UPSTAIRS DOWNTOWN TOURS
All over downtown Ionia!
(See ad on facing page)

Wednesday, October 7, 7:00 p.m.
ANNUAL MEETING and ELECTION
of officers — at the Blanchard House
(*Be sure your dues are paid so you can vote!*)

Wednesday, October 21, 7:00 p.m.
Board Meeting at the Blanchard House

Wednesday, November 4, 7:00 p.m.
VERY SPECIAL VISIT and presentation
by a descendant of the Blanchards!
Family memorabilia and stories to share.
at the Blanchard House

Thursday, November 12, 6:15 p.m.
The ICHS hosts the Ionia Chamber
BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

Wednesday, November 18, 7:00 p.m.
Board of Directors Meeting
at the Blanchard House.

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

To receive the Chronicle via the Internet,
please be sure that the Secretary,
David McCord, has your e-mail address!
This will save us money
each month, and you may get your
Chronicle quicker, too!



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 1776
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 1776, 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 3 – Gliders of Greenville in WWII

Sept. 10 – Beneath the Jungle (Guatemala)

Sept. 17 – The Presidents, “George to Abe”

September 24 – The Rockies by Rail

October 1 – Maui

October 8 – Lost Worlds

Oct. 15 – The Presidents “Andrew to Franklin”

October 22 – Versailles

October 29 – Hawaii

Ionia County Historical Society 2008-09 Board of Directors & Officers

Linda Ciangi, President — 527-4945
 Kathleen Perrin, Vice Pres. — 522-0018
 Gerry Perry, Director — 527-4572
 Stephanie VanderMolen — 616-755-0731
 Barb Ehlert, Director — 522-0844
 David McCord, Secretary — 527-3784
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