



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



Monthly Programs —

We had scheduled a presentation for the April 5 meeting at the Blanchard House, but Goose Elliott had to cancel. Perhaps we'll get to see his "Route 66" slide show some other time.

Instead, the topic of the evening was a sort of Show-and-Tell of recent acquisitions at the Historical Society and discussion of upcoming events. Members and guests couldn't help but notice the gigantic photos in the parlor which came from Meijer's in Ionia. These photos of the old Store #3 at the corner of Lincoln and Dexter had hung at the "Thrifty Acres" south of town for many years. They are of local historic value, a nice addition to our collections. Thanks to Meijer staff for passing them along.

In addition, a small bench, tools, and spare parts have been donated by the folks at Trier Jewelers (now out of business) which had been used at the store over it's 100-year history on Main Street.

Members also discussed some of the artifacts that have recently been uncovered by the Accessions Committee — family bibles that contain fascinating documents, photos of rare scenes, and much more.

Thanks to the Lamplight Grill for some of the refreshments on April 5th, too!

Tuesday, April 18, the Blanchard House will host a



presentation by author Tracy Groot who will talk about her book, "Sentinels of Andersonville" - a work of historical fiction set at the notorious Civil War prison camp.

The program in May will be "A Century of Song" presented by Three Husbands on the Loose - and one daughter. Famous songs of the past century and the stories behind them!

ICHS News —

There is a full schedule of rentals at the Blanchard House over the next few months. Thanks to Barb Ehlert and the rental crew for all the work they do. If anyone would like to help, please contact Barb!

Two rental requests for June 15 prompted discussion of policies for discounts and security deposits. Goose moved and Ally supported not to offer any discounts, other than membership discounts already established.

Events —

The annual Ionia Expo on March 4 was a success, with \$140 income from the drawing and souvenir sales. ICHS member Chuck Renn won the door prize.

Our annual Appraisal Roadshow was a also success on March 25, with special thanks to Glen Rairigh for his generous donation. Funds from this year's event (about \$370) have been earmarked for repair of the back door and other improvements in the house. (See maintenance committee notes, below.)

On Sunday, April 30, at 1:00p.m. there will be a training session for volunteers who would like to help give tours of the Blanchard House for Summer Sundays. The house is open from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday afternoons, and also available by appointment. The more people we have that can (confidently) guide folks through the house, the better we can fulfill our mission statement to share our history with the public.

May 5 & 6 is the annual "Sprint into the Past" event for the Tri-River Museum Network. This annual event marks the beginning of the museum season. All 28 member museums of the group will be open all weekend for free. Check their Facebook page for more information, and see <http://www.ioniahistory.org/tri-river-museums-network> for a list of the member museums. (There is a wedding at the Blanchard House on the evening of the 5th as well. A busy weekend for us!)

Upstairs/Downtown is scheduled for May 20th in downtown Ionia. (Don't miss it this year!) Cathy Hoppough has offered to sponsor the event in exchange for some advertising. Kathleen will contact her to determine what her expectations are. Discussion ensued regarding future sponsorship opportunities. Volunteers are still needed to staff the buildings on the tour and other tasks. Please attend the next business meeting on April 19th if you would like to help!

Committees and Projects —

Many of these notes are paraphrased from the minutes of the March 22 meeting of the Board, attended by Kathleen Cook, Goose Elliott, Dave White, Ally Cook, David McCord, Linda Ciangi, Barb Ehlert, Lyle Joslyn, Shawna Hoekstra, Bryan and Mary Kimble, and Marilyn Nash. These business meetings (and the minutes) are open to any interested members and friends.

The Accessions Committee presented the Board with a report and their first batch of cataloged artifacts in the file. They discussed the need for storage, and for a strictly enforced procedure for acquisitions, conservation, and withdrawal of items from storage/archives for display, research, or off-site work. Of the items cataloged thus far,

two books (two military handbooks from the 1940s) had no apparent relevance according to the approved Accessions filters. Goose moved to keep all but these two books from the items reviewed, and to hold a Board decision on those until the April meeting. The motion was supported by the Board.

A meeting was held to hear a proposal from Michael Hoekstra of Phoenix I.T. regarding an upgrade for the ICHS computer network, plus the potential of setting up software and "cloud" storage for the accessions database. This plan is being considered by the committee and will be presented to the Board at a later date.

Accessions also asked about packing up some of the china and silver in the dining room closet for storage, leaving a representative setting of each set for display, and opening the shelf space up for additional displays. The Board supported this plan. They also noted that they will be needing storage and archival supplies very soon, and are preparing a need list.

Much discussion has taken place regarding storage options for the Historical Society's collections. The Board has been comparing pros and cons and discussing long-term commitments and how to fund some of the options. Presently, these range from modest storage space at the rear of the S&K printshop to \$400 per month for a large space within the Sentinel-Standard building. Marilyn Nash noted that the general public is not aware of the desperate situation, and making them aware would help funding and other challenges in the future.

Linda Ciangi has several ideas for special funding for the storage costs, but (as always) the Board is concerned about staffing additional fund-raising events. Linda also suggested utilizing the Didazio fund (\$5000) tagged for museum use to help pay for a solution, since the storage is for museum inventory and conservation efforts. No written agreements were available for consideration at this meeting, and the Board decided to consider these and other options in the near future, as storage is an urgent need.

Cornell Alley will soon be sporting a plaque to publicize that the ICHS is taking on the task of keeping that alleyway clean. We have a "Cigarette Receptacle" (donated by the Theatre) that needs to be installed to help keep the butts where they belong. Members hope to give the alley a good clean-up on Earth Day, April 22. Contact Linda C. if you'd like to help.

Linda C. is going to put together a small display to commemorate our Ionia Chamber Ambassadors in the museum area.

Maintenance issues include outstanding roof, wall, and ceiling repairs - now that the weather is warming, these projects can get under way. In particular, the east chimney is in need of repair and Denny Craycroft will be inspecting the situation and giving us an estimate for the job.

THE WAYBACK MACHINE...

200 years ago : 1817

The American School for the Deaf (ASD) is the oldest permanent school for the deaf in the United States. It was founded April 15, 1817, in Hartford, Connecticut, by Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, Dr. Mason Cogswell, and Laurent Clerc and became a state-supported school later that year.

In 1817, Monroe became a county through a proclamation by then Governor of the Michigan Territory, Lewis Cass. At that time it included all of Lenawee and a portion of Wayne and Washtenaw counties. Monroe was the second county to be established within the territory, Wayne County being the first.

The steamer Ontario became the first to ply the waters of the Great Lakes in April of 1817. She was built under a grant from the heirs of Robert Fulton. Previous to her construction steam navigation had been confined to rivers, and the mere weight of the paddle wheels and shaft was relied on as sufficient to keep them in place on their bearings. However, on her first trip she encountered rough waves that lifted her paddle wheels off their bearings, causing the revolving wheels to tear away their wooden coverings. The Ontario was taken back into port disabled, but the repairs included a proper device for securely holding the shaft in its place. Thereafter, the Ontario, under Capt. Francis Mallaby, was employed in regular service, mostly in Lake Erie, until 1832 (seldom exceeding 5 miles per hour).



SOURCE: Google Maps
MARTHA THIERRY/DETROIT FREE PRESS

The matter of Great Lakes navies was given some serious attention. In 1816, British gunboats began to stop, board, and search United States merchant vessels near the mouth of the Detroit River before they were allowed to proceed up the channel between Boblo Island and Amherstburg. Governmental authority over Boblo Island (which, at the time was called “Bois Blanc Island”) was contested. Protests over such incidents eventually reached Sir Charles Bagot, British minister to the

United States. Through correspondence with Richard Rush, acting U.S. secretary of state, they composed an agreement, signed in April 1817, that strictly limited the number and size of warships on the Great Lakes and Lake Champlain. Two vessels of no more than 100 tons and armed with a single 18-pounder gun were allowed for each power on the upper lakes (above Niagara Falls), while the warships constructed during the war at such cost and labor were sold, dismantled, or intentionally sunk in the cold, fresh water to preserve them for reactivation in the event of a future conflict. The Rush-Bagot Agreement remains in effect today, and even influences visits to the lakes by modern warships.

In the month of April, 1817, General Cass was selected by the President to ascertain, by a personal interview with the chiefs and head men of the several tribes claiming lands within the limits of Ohio, whether it was then practicable to extinguish their title. Discretionary powers were conferred upon him: — if he should find it impolitic or impracticable to obtain all the country claimed, he was directed to learn whether there would be any reasonable prospect of obtaining the relinquishment of a portion. He immediately proceeded to Lower Sandusky, and was satisfied that the Indians might be induced to consent to cede their rights to a part, if not all, of the desired land. So he reported to the War Department; and the following May he was commissioned, in conjunction with General McArthur, to enter upon negotiations at his earliest convenience. The Commissioners received no definite instructions in reference to the provisions of the treaty which they might make, excepting that they should keep in view the policy of the government, to effect, ultimately, the peaceable removal of the Indians to the country west of the Mississippi river.

150 years ago : 1867

General dissatisfaction with the 1850 Michigan State Constitution led voters to approve the calling of a constitutional convention in 1866 by a three to one margin. 100 delegates were elected in April 1867. They convened in Lansing in May and adjourned in August. Their proposed constitution was rejected by the voters in 1868 (71,733 in favor, 110,582 opposed).

On April 9, 1867, the U.S. Senate ratified the purchase of Alaska from Russia for \$7,200,000. Russia was a reluctant seller and the United States was a reluctant buyer. Many Americans thought the purchase was superfluous, and called it “Seward’s Folly” after the U. S. Secretary of State William H. Seward, who negotiated the transaction.

The first two Reconstruction Acts were passed by Congress in March 1867 over the vetoes of President Andrew Johnson, and went into effect in April of the year. Among the provisions of the Acts was the organization of the “unreconstructed” former Confederate states into military districts under the control of generals with extensive civil powers. This martial law would remain in effect until the states adopted constitutions containing provisions for the protection of blacks as defined in the acts. One of the first things the military commanders were required to do was to organize voter registration in preparation for elections to state constitutional conventions. This would be the first elections in which blacks would be allowed to vote in those states.

The International Exposition of 1867 (French: Exposition universelle [d’art et d’industrie] de 1867), was the second world’s fair to be held in Paris. It ran from April 1st to November 3rd, 1867. Forty two nations were represented at the fair. Following a decree of Emperor Napoleon III, preparation for the exposition was started as early as 1864, in the midst of the renovation of Paris, promoting the glory of the Second French Empire.



To Sigfrid Meyer, New York Hanover, 30 April 1867

Dear Friend,

You must think very badly of me, and all the more so when I tell you that your letters did not merely give me great pleasure but were a real comfort to me since they reached me at a time of great affliction.

The first volume of the book will be published by Otto Meissner in Hamburg in a few weeks. The title of the work is: 'Capital. A Critique of Political Economy'. I traveled to Germany to bring over the manuscript, and I am spending a few days with a friend in Hanover on my way back to London.

I hope that a year from now the whole work will have appeared. Volume II contains the continuation and conclusion of the theory, Volume III the history of political economy from the middle of the 17th century.

As to the 'International Working Men's Association', it has become a power to be reckoned with in England, France, Switzerland, and Belgium. You should form as many branches as possible in America. Contribution per member 1 penny (about 1 silver groschen) per year. However, every branch gives what it can. Congress in Lausanne this year, 3 September. Every branch can send one representative. Do write to me about this matter, about how you are faring in America and about conditions in general. If you do not write, I shall take it as showing that you have not yet absolved me.

*With warmest greetings,
Karl Marx*

100 Years Ago : 1917

In 1917, Germany announced the resumption of unrestricted warfare in war-zone waters. Three days later, the United States broke diplomatic relations with Germany, and just hours after that the American liner Housatonic was sunk by a German U-boat. In late March, Germany sunk four more U.S. merchant ships, and on April 2 President Wilson appeared before Congress and called for a declaration of war against Germany. Two days after the U.S. Senate voted 82 to 6 to declare war against Germany, the U.S. House of Representatives endorsed the declaration by a vote of 373 to 50, and America formally entered World War I. Wilson's hope was that this would truly be the war to end all wars.



On April 2 Jeannette Rankin (Republican from Montana) began her term as the first woman member of US House of Representatives in time to be a part of that historic ballot.

In the same month, Vladimir Lenin, leader of the revolutionary Bolshevik Party, returned to Petrograd after a decade of exile to take the reins of the Russian Revolution.

On April 10, an explosion at the Eddystone Ammunition Corporation's artillery shell plant in Eddystone, Pennsylvania, killed 139 people. The majority were women and girls who worked in the loading room, loading shells with black powder. 55 of the victims could not be identified and were buried in a mass grave. Hundreds more were injured. The Eddystone

Ammunition Company paid for all the funeral services. In less than two weeks the company was back to work. The mystery of the explosion was never solved.

Also in April, 1917, Henry Ford began construction of his manufacturing complex on the banks of the River Rouge. By the mid-1920s this Ford Motor Company plant was the largest manufacturing center in the world. Detroit and its suburbs had 65,000 cars on the road in 1917, resulting in 7,171 accidents and 168 fatalities. Three-fourths of the victims were pedestrians.

50 years ago : 1967

The United States Department of Transportation became official on April 1st, 1967. In a transportation-related story (sort of), the American spacecraft "Surveyor 3" soft-landed on the moon on April 20th after a 3-day flight.

In the entertainment world, a comedy film starring David Niven and Peter Sellers premiered called "Casino Royale". It was loosely based on the Ian Fleming James Bond novel of the same name. And in Detroit on April 29 Aretha Franklin released her monumental hit record "Respect".



The 1967 International and Universal Exposition or Expo 67, as it was commonly known, was a "General Exhibition, Category One World's Fair" held in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, from April 27 to October 29, 1967. It is considered to be the most successful World's Fair of the 20th century with the most attendees to that date and 62 nations participating. It also set the single-day attendance record for a world's fair, with 569,500 visitors on its third day. Expo 67 was Canada's main celebration during its centennial year. (*And I was there!* — D.M.)

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered a sermon at the Riverside Church in Harlem, New York on April 4 which soon became known as his "Beyond Vietnam" sermon. In the speech, he condemned the Vietnam War and called for a fundamental change in the way the United States conducts foreign policy abroad. It was exactly one year before his assassination. He indicated that his commitment to non-violence left him little choice. "...I knew that I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos, without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world: my own government."

April 21, 1967, was known as "Tornado Day" in the Midwest. There were nine tornadoes in Michigan that day, and a total of 46 reported between Kansas City MO and Lansing, MI. One of those tornadoes touched down near Lake Odessa.

A new downspout is needed on the house. Thought it's not an expensive item (\$10 to \$12), arrangements need to be made for installation. (Anyone volunteer?)

Barb Ehlert asked permission from the Board to collect estimates to have the kitchen and pantry painted, hopefully before the end of April. As of April 5, colors have been chosen and estimates are under way.

Three keys were assigned at the March Board meeting, viz: Mary Kimble, key #14; Shawna Hoekstra, key #15, and Goose Elliott, key #16.

The Treasurer reports nothing out-of-the-ordinary in the accounts over the past month. Incomes have been modest (see notes elsewhere) and nothing exceptional in expenses lately. The need for additional effort to recruit "Business Buddies" and a general membership drive was mentioned.

The need for someone to help us with grants came up. It was suggested to talk to other members of the Tri-River group, and Shawna H. said she may have a resource available to help.

The new Website ICHS is now live, and ready for updates when brought to our attention. The photo archives at Flickr.com will be used for our on-line photo gallery, and we will continue to use a Google calendar on the site. There is also a listing of items available in our gift shop, but we are not yet equipped to sell on line. Anyone desiring training to help support the website, please contact the Secretary!



Above: Our new "home page."

Public Comment —

Lyle Joslyn noted that he is collecting Ionia High School Yearbooks, and asked if the ICHS has surplus copies of some years, for which he would be willing to pay. Linda C. received a copy of the years that Lyle is looking for, and she will check our collection to see if we have extras. (The Board decided previously to keep two of each year, and sell any additional copies we acquire.)

Members mentioned that the state flag on display at the Blanchard House is getting quite faded, and it's time for a new one. If someone would like to donate, it's suggested that the flag be a "marine grade" material to last longer.

Our calendar of upcoming events.

Tuesday, April 18, 7:00 p.m. - Presentation by Tracy Groot, author of *Sentinels of Andersonville*, sponsored by the Ionia Community Library

Wednesday, April 19, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House (open to all)

Wednesday, May 3, 7:00 p.m. — Program at the Blanchard House by *Three Husbands and one daughter on the Loose: "A Century of Songs"*

Saturday May 6 & Sunday, May 7 — "Spring into the Past" Tri-River Museum Tours

Sunday, May 14 — ICHS Blanchard House "Summer Sundays" begin, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 17, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House (open to all)

Saturday, May 20, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. — Annual Upstairs Downtown Tours, downtown Ionia

Saturday, June 3 — Ionia Cruisin' Classics Car Show on Main Street Ionia (ICHS will have a booth)

Wednesday, June 7, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Program at the home of Char Sherman in Lyons (details to come)

Friday, June 16 thru Sunday, June 18 — 16th Annual Ionia Farm Power Show at the Ionia Fair Grounds

Saturday, June 17 (all day) — The Fourth Annual Ionia Oz Festival (ICHS will have a Booth)

Wednesday, June 21, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House.

Wednesday, July 5, 6:00 p.m. — The annual Independence Day Pot Luck at the Blanchard House.

July 14 thru July 22 — The Ionia Free Fair. The ICHS will have a presence at the Antique Village in the Floral Building, as well as a position in the Free Fair Parade on July 15th.

Wednesday, August 2, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS regular monthly meeting — Program to be announced.

Wednesday, August 16, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House.

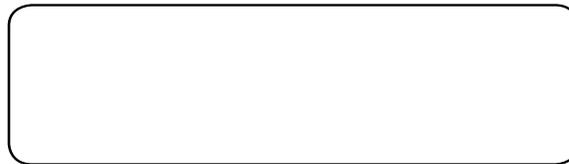
Wednesday, September 6, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS regular monthly meeting — Program to be announced.



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 176, 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!

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>