



the **CHRONICLE**

The Almost Monthly Publication of
the Ionia County Historical Society



Programs

Derek “Goose” Elloitt addressed the Historical Society members a guests on June 7th with his presentation about Route 66. He tried to come up with a title for his presentation, but it was essentially the story of how he “discovered” Route 66 by traveling much of its length without actually realizing that’s what he was doing.

He shared some tales of the road—confused directions, car troubles, long hours in a cramped car—and photos of some of the derelict landmarks that are vestiges of the highway’s heyday..



After he “put together the pieces of the puzzle” from his personal experience on the road, he developed a real appreciation for the cultural significance of Route 66.

His was an entertaining and informative presentation, and we’re thankful for his sharing with us his tale of discovery.



The next “Monthly Program Meeting” on the calendar is our Annual Independence Day Pot Luck on Wednesday, July 5th at the Blanchard House. Bring a dish to pass and we’ll talk about some Ionia history!

On August 2nd, the program will be a presentation by Larry Galloway about Corvettes made by AO Smith in Ionia - another chapter in the factory story with a touch of auto-industry drama.

Events Past

May 20th brought the annual Upstairs-Downtown Tours. This year there were 11 buildings on the tour, and there were almost 100 tickets sold. It was a beautiful day in Ionia and the event was an outstanding success. Thanks to Annette McCord for the volunteer name tags, and to all the volunteers and sponsors that made it happen. (See page 2.)

On Thursday, June 1st, the Ionia Community Library sponsored a presentation from the State Historical Commission. Coauthors Amy Arnold and Brian Conway described a project which culminated in a substantial book entitled “Michigan Modern.” The presentation, and the book, describes our state’s significant role in design throughout the 20th century in architecture, furniture, and automotive industries.

The Historical Society participated in the “Cruisin’ Classics” Car Show

in downtown Ionia on June 3rd, as well as the “Drive for the Community” fund raiser on June 10th sponsored by the M-1 Credit Union for local non-profits.

The ICBS Summer Sundays commenced on June 4th, welcoming guests at the Blanchard House for tours throughout the summer from 1 to 4 p.m. (There are still openings for hosts and tour guides, if anyone is available to help. Please contact Kathleen Cook if you’re available on a Sunday afternoon: email her at kathleencook@live.com, send a text to 616-755-2423 or call 616-527-2626.)



Business and Projects

The upcoming September meeting is the deadline for nominations for this year’s ICBS election. Two seats will be open on the Board this year, and any interested members are encouraged to consider joining the Board for the 2018-19 term. If you’re interested, or know someone who is, please contact a current Board member (listed on page 4) to find out about the process. (Elections take place at our annual meeting in October. Be sure your dues are paid by then so you can vote!)

The Ionia Community Library (ICL) program on Thursday, June 1, needed an ICBS member to serve as host. Thanks to Gordon Wright who opened the doors for the program, and David & Annette McCord helped to close up the House afterwards.

A chairperson is needed to host the Queen’s Reception at the Blanchard House prior to the Free Fair Parade on July 15th. This annual event is a highlight of the morning for visiting beauty queens from all over the state. The Free Fair Parade committee offers funding for the refreshments. If you or someone you know would like to help with this event, please contact Kathleen Cook (contact info on page 6).

The Chamber of Commerce reports that there is a major RV organization coming to Ionia in September, and they’ve invited us to “roll out the red carpet.” The ICBS is asked to give them a tour - and maybe more.

Ally Cook asked the Board about a petty cash fund for small items to support events. As an example, she wanted some foamcore and copies to create a last-minute display for one of the Upstairs-Downtown sites, and to laminate some info sheets for the event. The Treasurer noted that there is a petty cash fund in the cash box that is used for making change at events. The Board discussed the possibility that this could serve Ally’s purpose between events, but emphasized that its use must be carefully tracked. The Board agreed it was a good idea, but decided to wait until after the Upstairs-Downtown event to implement a plan for it. Meanwhile, Ally moved to provide \$25 for the immediate need, which was supported by Goose and passed.

The Board decided we should sell bottled water at the Cruisin’ Classics show on June 3. Annette McCord said she would print ICBS labels for the bottles and find a good deal on water. The ICBS had a small booth there to sell souvenirs as well. The effort earned about \$100.

Ally Cook has been looking into a bus trip as a fund raiser for the ICBS, either a Chicago trip or a day at Greenfield Village / The Henry Ford. She has done some research, and Goose said that he would look

Continues on page two



into it as well to see if it's a viable idea. The general membership will be surveyed, and other Tri-River museums contacted as well.

Bryan Kimble donated several new U.S. flags and one Michigan flag for the pole at the Blanchard House. They are temporarily stored in the desk in the southeast corner of Blanchard's office. The used flags will be handed over to the Boy Scouts for retirement. Thank you, Bryan.

Shawna H. mentioned that she had discovered an autograph book amongst the archives, and that she found it a fascinating record of the time. She suggested that the Historical Society create a sort of note book that could be circulated to collect comments and greetings of the present day which could be tucked away for posterity. It might be treated as a time capsule with a specified date to be revealed, and members suggested that Ionia's bicentennial in 2033 would be a perfect target for it. Goose moved to support the effort, supported by Dave W. and passed. See Shawna for more details, and to contribute your own entry for posterity.

Kevin Drescher suggested that the ICBS consider a Memorial Day Cemetery tour of program to focus on veterans - something to consider for the 2018 schedule. Ideas welcomed!

Linda C. passed around a thank-you note to be signed by the Board that she will forward to the city garage in thanks for installing the plaque at Cornell Alley.

Linda C. also continues to work on the Green Monument project, and (with David McCord's help) is preparing an information sheet to summarize the project. This info sheet will be used for awareness, and accompany press releases and fund-raising efforts. NOTE: Since this effort is being pursued with the authority of the ICBS, the final document needs to be reviewed and approved by the Board before it's officially put into use.

Linda is also working on a project to have murals painted on the sides of buildings in Ionia to celebrate our town's heritage. Grants and proposals are presently under way.

Rental Committee — Barb Ehlert

There is a full schedule of rentals on the calendar. This includes two rentals on June 17th (the day of the Oz Festival).

If anyone's interested in helping with scheduling, set-up, clean-up, or hosting at these events (the conditions of rental require an ICBS member to be on site), please contact Barb. (There is a calendar on the closet door in the kitchen where all such events are posted.)

Housekeeping Committee — Barb Ehlert

Barb asked the Board if there could be some petty cash allotted to Housekeeping for small unforeseen purchases. Along with the decision above RE: petty cash, the Board agreed, but tabled the topic until after the Upstairs-Downtown event. (This might be a separate petty cash account from the events fund noted above, still TBD.)

It was noted that coordination with the House & Grounds committee is vitally important - case in point being the painting project presently in progress.

Gift Shop — Katelyn Mooney

Katelyn has very recently volunteered to be chairperson for the gift shop, a valuable part of our organization. Items in the gift shop provide a way for guests to take something home with them to continue their experience of Ionia's history and the Blanchard House, and share it with family and friends. We look forward to her service!

Membership — Goose Elliott

Membership lists are currently maintained by the Treasurer (both individuals and Business Buddies) based on dues payments. The Membership Committee is primarily concerned with renewing and recruiting members for the ICBS. At the May 17th business meeting,

Goose Elliott volunteered to co-chair this committee with Linda Ciangi.

Membership Cards have been used in past years, serving as a receipt and record of dues payment and voting rights. The Board would like to reinstate their use, and will discuss this further. (This is not related to the "Tax Deductible" authorization cards that some members have.)

House & Grounds — Dave White

Dave accepted chairmanship of this committee at the May 17th business meeting. He stated that his first task is to figure out the status quo and compile a current "to-do" list. This will include a "walk-around" to take notes, and he will be working on a budget for the committee. He requested some reports from the Treasurer on the past two years' expenses. Anyone with skills in maintenance (inside and out) is welcomed to help; there are plenty of challenges in this department.

The pantry has been painted, and the kitchen is next on the list. Linda Ciangi has also donated a new carpet for the pantry floor.

Linda C. reported that John Lupien has taken the south storm door to his shop to restore and rebuild it for \$100 (previously approved to come



IONIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THANK YOU!

...to the volunteers and sponsors of our 2017 Upstairs-Downtown Tour, and to all of our local "Business Buddies" for their continuing support of our programs!

**Coldwell Banker
Greenridge Realty
Reurink Roofing and Siding Sales
Promo Print and Stitches
Duey Flinn
Simpson's Greenhouse
Main Street Music
Lamplight Grill
The Community Theatre
The Ionia Theatre
WION AM-1430 and FM 92.7
Michigan One Credit Union
Edward Jones - Paul Lentz
Duff Chadwick and Associates
S&K Printing
Ionia Sentinel
Vayda's Boutique
Wilson's Heating and Cooling
The Ionia Barber Shop
Dan Balice
Lyle Joslin, Auctioneer
Glen Rairigh, Americana Auctions**

WWW.IONIAHISTORY.ORG

out of the income from the Antiques Appraisal in March). He will also provide an estimate to bring the back steps on both the pantry door and back porch “up to code.”

The chimney challenge is still being discussed. The east chimney is deteriorating due to erosion, and there are some pieces of slate roof that have been found on the ground in that area. The chimney repair folks don't want to deal with the slate roof, and the slate roof folks don't want to deal with the chimney. Kathleen has contacted Butch Mason to evaluate the situation, and Greg Cook says that he will help devise a plan.

Dave W. also noted that no one seems to want a ginkgo tree, dead or alive, but at least one of them must come down. Other trees and shrubs need to be taken out as well, and Dave is looking into it. There was also some discussion on planting lilacs near the creek, and “redesigning” the flower gardens. Jane Horrocks and Patty Simpson-Goeke are the garden experts, and the Board is looking forward to a plan from them.

Accessions Committee — Shawna Hoekstra and Mary Kimble

Shawna H. represented the committee at the May 17th meeting, and delivered a report that included a case of how the system can easily break down. She described a situation wherein something which had been cataloged and placed on display had been taken from the display without authority or proper notification. She emphasized that the system only works if everyone follows the rules, as approved by the Board of Directors. She also noted that ICHS asset tags will be included with all cataloged artifacts moving forward to further clarify their status.

Bryan Kimble described a scanner that he'd acquired that is specially configured to scan books. He and Mary are donating this to the ICHS Accessions Committee. Bryan also noted that he'd scanned thousands of photos to date from the archives, and many more to go.

Shawna shared the committee's evaluation criteria with the general membership at the June 7 meeting, to help the members understand what's going on and why some decisions are being made. She also said that the committee plans to share “Nuggets of History” with the members—monthly finds from the collection.

One of the major donations to the Historical Society recently has been from the new owners of the Elks Club building. There are many boxes of articles which recount over a century of history of the Ionia Elks, adding to the artifacts already in our collection.

Also, several more articles have been moved into our rented storage space at S&K printing, making “more room to maneuver.”

Museum Committee — Linda Ciangi

Displays are ready for visitors during Summer Sundays. Members are encouraged to consult their own calendars to schedule hosting on Summer Sundays, as well as try to recruit other members to help. At least four people are needed to give visitors a proper experience at the Blanchard House / Museum. We now have more members trained as docents, so they have a chance to conduct tours now as well.

Treasury — Annette McCord

Annette McCord delivered a detailed report covering the past seven months financial activities. Despite successful fund raising, the operating funds continue to fall short of the need in most months. On the upside, our investments have earned some income over the same period, and our project funds are still intact. Committees are encouraged to formalize their budgetary needs so that the Board can have a better overview of expenses in the future.

Annette also reported that she has met with our investment people and tax advisor to be sure that all necessary paperwork and filings are up to date and in proper order. It was pointed out that the Treasurer is presently the only authorized signatory on our investment account. Goose moved that we should add Larry Tejjema, accountant, and Kathleen Cook, the president, to that authorized signature record. Dave W. pro-

posed an amendment to the motion to add that the Treasurer, together with one other Director of the ICHS, be required to meet with the Tax Accountant at least once per year and Investment Broker at least twice per year (in November and May). The motion was supported by Ally C. and passed. As always, details and copies of reports are available on request from the Treasurer.

Newsletter / Website — David McCord

Trying to keep up the newsletter schedule, as well as add current information to the website and Facebook page. Thanks to Kathleen and everyone else who helps with Facebook, and other publicity. (It would be WONDERFUL if we could have a publicity committee to keep all of these sources up to date and keep the media informed!)

Our calendar of upcoming events.

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.

Tuesday, July 18th, 12:00 noon — The annual Tri-River Museum Network Banquet at the Belrocton in Belding. Tickets are available for any interested persons for \$12. Contact Kathleen Cook for info.

Wednesday, August 2, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS regular monthly meeting — Larry Galloway presents the fascinating story of Ionia's Corvettes.

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.

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

Sunday, October 1 — The annual “Spirits of Ionia” Cemetery Tour. Volunteers are needed for tickets, parking, driving, research, and actors. Please contact Kathleen Cook if you're interested!

Be sure to monitor our Facebook Page for current information.

SOUVENIRS

MEMORIES & MOMENTOS IONIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY HERITAGE & HISTORY

THE WAYBACK MACHINE

May & June, 1817

- The first private mental health hospital in the United States opened in May of 1817. It was called “The Asylum for the Relief of Persons Deprived of the Use of Their Reason” (now Friends Hospital) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- Mississippi River steamboat service began with disastrous affect: On the 4th day of May, 1817, as the steamer *Constitution* was ascending the Mississippi river, passing Point Coupee, LA, the boiler exploded, destroying the whole front part of the cabin and killing or wounding thirty persons, eleven of whom perished instantly. As soon as the explosion was heard on board, many of the excited passengers threw themselves into the rapid current, and many were drowned or rushed downstream before assistance could reach them. “The shrieks of the wounded and dying were reverberated from the distant shores, and many a ghastly and heart-sickening spectacle presented itself on the deck of the ill-fated vessel.”

- On June 1, 1817, President James Monroe began a three-month Grand Tour of the Northeast and the Northwest. As part of that journey, he became the first U.S. President to visit Michigan Territory, greeted by a large reception in the capital city of Detroit.

- Being just two years since the second war with the British, the Americans wished to ensure that the sympathy of natives in the Great Lakes region was known to be with the United States. To that end, a new treaty was enacted with the Sauk and Fox tribes in June of 1817.

May & June, 1867

The Treaty of London (French: *Traité*

DVD Videos

'Sno Wonder – 1936 Winter Scenery and the 1940 Bertha Brock Snow Festival

1939 “We’re In The Movies” A historic promotional film about Ionia.

1950s Home Show and Free Fair

1976 U.S. Bicentennial in Ionia

1937 Ionia Airport Inaugural

1973 Ionia Centennial

“Ionia’s First 150 Years” and “Ionia - A Look Back” - Films by Monroe MacPherson transcribed from original 16mm sound films.

DVDs are only \$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

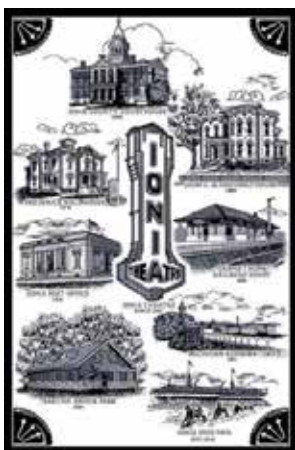
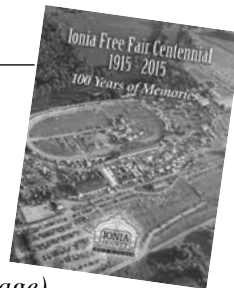
The Journey of the Dexter Colony, 1833, by David and Annette McCord. A detailed history of the settling of Ionia, fully illustrated.

\$12 each
(\$15 with postage)



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 with 328 pages of history and over 1,000 photos and graphics.
Softcover: \$29.95 / Hardcover: \$44.95 (add \$5 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 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

de Londres), often called the Second Treaty of London after the 1839 Treaty, was an international agreement signed on May 11, 1867. The treaty was signed in the aftermath of the Austro-Prussian War by representatives of all of the Great Powers of Europe:

- Count Rudolf Apponyi of the Austrian Empire,
- Sylvain Van de Weyer representing the Kingdom of Belgium,
- Prince de La Tour d’Auvergne-Lauraguais on behalf of the French Empire,
- Marquis d’Azeglio from the Kingdom of Italy,
- Baron de Tornaco and Emmanuel Servais of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg,
- Baron Bentinck representing the Kingdom of the Netherlands,
- Count Bernstorff-Stintenburg from the Kingdom of Prussia,
- Baron Brunnow on behalf of the Russian Empire,
- and Edward Stanley, 15th Earl of Derby, signatory from the United Kingdom.

“Acts of Reconstruction” went into effect in the U.S. on the first of May. Simultaneously, the first students entered Howard University in May 1867. General O.O. Howard, who was Commissioner of the Freedmen’s Bureau from 1865 until 1872, directed considerable resources to the university, including the original 3-acre campus, the Main Building, and the Old Medical School. Before the Freedmen’s Bureau was dissolved in 1872, it had helped in the building of 45 hospitals and the education of approximately 150,000 former slaves.

On May 23, Jesse James robbed the bank in Richmond, Missouri. In this, his first such robbery, two people died and he got away with \$4,000.

In June, 1867, the Michigan Legislature instituted a system of “Vital Records” to record births, marriages, and deaths in the state—a great advantage for future genealogists! Michigan also granted women taxpayers the right to vote for school trustees during June, but rejected total woman suffrage.

May & June, 1917

Michigan church, business, and community leaders had been working to ban the sale of alcoholic drinks since 1852, believing that such a ban would reduce crime and improve both family life and employee productivity. Their campaigns succeeded in 1916, when the citizens of Michigan approved a prohibition amendment to the state constitution. Bootlegging operations and smuggling networks formed within hours of Michigan’s prohibition which went into effect on May 1, 1917. Individual entrepreneurs could be seen with a bottle or two tucked under their coats, and professional smuggling rings brought contraband liquor from Toledo, where alcohol

was still legal. Smugglers developed increasingly clever ways to outwit the police, and the threat of legal penalties did little to slow them down. The fines handed down to convicted smugglers were insignificant compared to the profits involved. However, the supply from Ohio dried up in 1919 when that state passed its own prohibition laws.

In May 1917, Gen. John J. Pershing had cause to celebrate and lament his appointment as commander-in-chief of a “theoretical army which had yet to be constituted, equipped, trained, and sent abroad.” As his first step in the monumental effort to build the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF), he carefully chose his field general staff comprised of Administrative (G1), Intelligence (G2), Operations (G3), Logistics (G4) and Training (G5) sections.

A deadly tornado ripped through lower Michigan in June of 1917. Several tornadoes tore through Michigan communities that day, including Springport, Battle Creek, Climax, Leslie, Mason, Chelsea, Delhi and the Sharon Valley region.

May & June, 1967

Lunar Orbiter 4 was designed to take advantage of the fact that the three previous Lunar Orbiters had completed the required needs for Apollo mapping and site selection. It was given a more general objective, to “perform a broad systematic photographic survey of lunar surface features in order to increase the scientific knowledge of their nature, origin, and processes, and to serve as a basis for selecting sites for more detailed scientific study by subsequent orbital and landing missions.”

The summer of 1967 saw tens of thousands of protestors against the Vietnam War, while the U.S. dropped bombs on Hanoi. On May 8, Muhammad Ali was indicted for refusing induction in US Army. On May 19, the USSR ratified treaty with Britain & US banning nuclear weapons in space.

The Butler Act, a Tennessee statute prohibiting the teaching of evolution, was repealed on May 17th after 42 years. The act, known as the “Monkey Law”, was upheld in the famous 1925 Scopes Trial.

In the entertainment world, television’s “Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood” debuted on NET (now PBS) on May 22nd. And “It was 50 years ago today, Sgt. Pepper taught the band to play.” June 2 1967 was the release of the record-breaking record by the Beatles entitled “Sergeant Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band.”

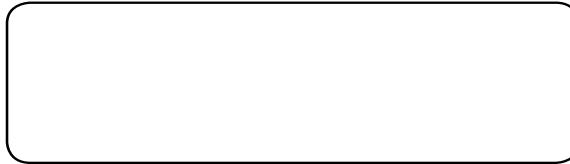
June 22, 1967 — Ralph C. Nuss, murderer of two teen-age boys, was admitted to the Ionia Hospital for the Criminally Insane. Sheriff’s Detective Lt. Stanton L. Bordine and Detective Chester A. Wilson arrested Nuss after a months-long investigation beginning the previous November.



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>