



...because sometimes there's just not enough time for a full-size newsletter.

VAUDEVILLE!

Instead of a typical monthly meeting, the members of the ICHS joined others to attend a special presentation at the Ionia Theatre on the "History of Vaudeville." The presented was Prof. Tim Connors of Central Michigan University, and the evening was arranged by the Ionia Community Library. Thanks to the professor for a fascinating look at how our ancestors were entertained!

The Ionia County Historical Society is headquartered in the historic John C. Blanchard House located at 251 East Main Street in Ionia, including our community's historical museum.

ICHS Contact Information:

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**Messages to this phone at the Blanchard House and Museum are only checked once per week. For a quicker response, please use an alternative contact.*

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Vice-president:

Ally Cook..... 616-821-1406

Directors:

"Goose" Elliott..... 616-755-2486

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ICHS Board Meeting, Feb 28, 2018

President Linda C. called the meeting to order at the Blanchard House at 7:00 p.m. Present from the ICHS were Barb Ehlert, Shawna Hoekstra, Mary & Bryan Kimble, Ally Cook, Dave White, Linda Ciangi, Goose Elliott, Stacy Tchorzynski, David McCord, and Lyle Joslyn.

The President introduced guests Linda Curtis, Ionia DDA Director, and Larry Lathrop, Mural Artist. They presented the Board with plans for the Mural Project being pursued for downtown Ionia's commercial buildings. Mr. Lathrop spoke about his craft and materials he uses, and offered examples of his impressive catalog of work for other communities. Board members also received a copies of a document outlining the project and some of the efforts in progress. The Board asked questions regarding preservation concerns about the historical buildings and the experts being consulted on the subject, and were assured that preservation professionals have been and will be consulted as the project progresses. Others on the committee for the project are Tim Hemenway and Mike Kurgis. Grants requests are in process now. President Ciangi assured the Board that the ICHS support of the project is not expected to be financial or physical, that it is entirely a DDA project. Goose showed a few photos from his archive of similar community mural projects as well. We thanked our guests for the information, and they left the meeting.

Regarding the Mural Project, Stacy expressed her desire to retract her motion on the subject passed at the previous ICHS Board meeting, stating that she supports the project but still has some professional reservations. Goose E. moved to have that motion rescinded, and replaced with his own motion including the same wording, viz: "That the Historical Society support the Mural project with the provision that every effort be made to use the proper procedure to preserve the historic structures, and follow all relevant best practices and regulations that apply for the historic business district status." Ally supported the new motion, and it passed, Stacy T. abstaining.

The President then shared some info about a commemorative event that she had presented to the Board previously, to remember the victims of the 1907 Salem Train Wreck, in which many passengers from Ionia lost their lives. She has contact local churches to see if they would participate in a memorial service on or about July

15th, the anniversary of the wreck. She also proposed to put together a display in the Blanchard House museum to commemorate the event. To that end, she is collecting newspaper articles, photos, and personal accounts.

• The Treasurer's Report: Kathleen Cook was not present, but relayed the brief report that "There's money in the bank and the bills are paid."

• Rental Committee: Barb E. had no new rentals to report, but expect the usual springtime engagements.

• Accessions Committee: Mary and Bryan presented a recommendation to the Board regarding the new grant from the Ionia County Community Foundation. They awarded us \$1,000 for accessions technology, which was half of our request. Due to the reduced funds, the committee wants to maximize the investment and revise the list of items to be purchased with the grant. The revised list included the proposed Library Scanner and back-up hard drives, but they proposed also getting a UPS (Uninterruptible Power Supply) and two digital cameras. This eliminates the computer in the original grant request.

Goose recommended that the two external hard drives be from different manufacturers to ensure that the computer can distinguish between the primary data and back-up data. There was also some discussion about minimum requirements for the cameras to be purchased. The need for a grounded 100v outlet in their workspace was also in their proposal, and Linda C. noted that this was being addressed along with other electrical work to be done at the house that has already been approved.

Stacy said that she would contact the Foundation about the change in the "shopping list" to maximize the benefits of the smaller budget. Upon that clarification, the Accessions Committee can go ahead and make their purchases.

Dave White then stressed that the Accessions Committee has many hours of work into their records currently that is not properly backed-up, and he moved that the Board designate \$300 immediately to purchase external drives and UPS to protect their work. The motion was supported by Linda C. and passed. Kimbles will contact Kathleen for these funds and get the hardware ordered.

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Save The Date:

Our calendar of upcoming events and activities.
To verify current details, please visit our website.

Wednesday, March 28, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House (open to all)

Wednesday, April 4, 7:00 p.m. — CL Trucking will present “Road Building” at the Blanchard House

Wednesday, April 25, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House (open to all)

Wednesday, May 2, 7:00 p.m. — Program at the Blanchard House by Three Husbands (and one daughter) on the Loose: “War and Music”

Saturday May 5 & Sunday, May 6 — “Spring into the Past” Tri-River Museum Tours; ICHS Blanchard House “Summer Sunday” begin, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 19, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. — Annual Upstairs Downtown Tours, downtown Ionia

Wednesday, May 30, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House (open to all)

Wednesday, June 6, 7:00 p.m. — David Cusack presents “Can You Dig It?” regarding local archeology, at the Blanchard House.

Wednesday, June 27, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House (open to all)

Wednesday, August 1, 7:00 p.m. — Al Bryant returns to the Blanchard House with a presentation on the infamous ax murderer Lizzie Borden.

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Mary K. also mentioned the acquisition of a printer/scanner/copier unit, camera tripod, and easel donated to the committee. Shawna noted that her family schedule has changed and she will not be able to attend Board Meetings for a while.

• Building and Grounds: Linda passed along a contact to Dave White, committee chair, for Bryan Lijewski, an architect at the State Historic Preservation Office. Mr. Lijewski would be a contact regarding any concerns with the exterior or structural aspects of the Blanchard House. No other items were discussed regarding this committee.

In the category of Old Business, Linda C. reported that the display is in the works, the theme being the Elks Club. She and Ally will meet to work out the details, and Lyle J. will provide a truck to get the items to the Expo. Any volunteers are welcome to help out!

Shawna H. offered to provide a program for the ICHS on the Civil Air Patrol, in which she is very much involved. The program will be given at our September general meeting. (See the full schedule of programs elsewhere in this issue.)

Linda C. mentioned that an Ionia-built Shelby will be going on display at Cobo Arena soon, and the owner has created a book about the car’s history and restoration called “Built in Ionia Twice.” He offered to make a copy of the book for the ICHS, and the Board would certainly like to have a copy. Linda will find out what the cost would be and report back to the Board.

The “Spring Into The Past” event is set up by the Tri-river Historical Museums Network, of which the ICHS is a member. This year it kicks off the summer season on May 5 & 6. Linda suggested that we set up a slide show of photos taken by Mark Workman, who recently passed away, as a memorial to his contributions to the society. The Board supported this notion, and Linda said that Joel Kilgore of the FUMC will contribute the slide show.

David M. reported that a survey was being taken by the Tri-river group, in which they asked for an estimate of how many guests we have at the Blanchard House every year. After some discussion, the Board concluded that 800 to 1000 was a reasonable estimate.

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for March 28 at the Blanchard House. The current meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m.

— D. McCord, Secretary

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