

Well, it's a matter of opinion...

Many thanks to Al Bryant and Vickie _____ for their fascinating (and sometimes humorous) presentation on the famous Lizzie Borden murder case.

We had some technical difficulties with the projector system, so Al shared the story with us without visual aids. Vickie's [creepy] portrayal of the ax murderer in the room, however, was flawless.

After giving a little background into Lizzie's home and family, Al recounted the best-guess happenings of August 4th, 1892, at the Borden home in Fall River, Massachusetts.

Through study of

dozens of books, articles, courtroom and police records, and some of the very first crime scene photography ever used, Al's description was vivid and detailed. He also told of the trial - its sensationalism and strange turns of legal events. (Spoilers: Lizzie was acquitted.)

He concluded his talk with a review of the more popular theories about what really happened, some viable and some fanciful. For those seeking further information, eh recommended several books and a movie that seem the most accurate.

Again, thanks to Al and Vickie for driving down from Benzie County to entertain and educate us. We look forward to Al's next presentation (whatever that might be).

(It was gratifying to see a number of new faces in the audience at this presentation! We'd love to see more of you for our future programs. Please keep in touch via Facebook and our Website, and join the Historical Society to get your copy of the (almost) monthly newsletter!)



ICHS News and Information:

Minutes of the Board Meeting of July 25, 2018:

The July 25 Board meeting was held at our storage facility behind the Ionia Sentinel-Standard Offices, and called to order by president Linda Ciangi a little past 7:00 p.m. Also present were Directors Dave White, Goose Elliott, Stacy Tchorzynski, and Ally Cook, plus Secretary David McCord and Treasurer Kathleen Cook, and members Barb Ehlert and Marilyn Nash.

It was moved by Goose E. and seconded by Ally C. to accept the Secretary's report as published. The Secretary also reported that the new edition of the Chronicle newsletter was in the mail, and the electronic version online.

The Treasurer's report was given, and the details are available on request. Aside from the past month's expenses (\$631.44) and income (\$235.75), a bill was submitted at the meeting for the newsletter production (within budget). Materials for the Antique Village display at the Free Fair totaling \$204, plus \$9 out-of-pocket for Gordon Wright. Goose E. moved to reimburse these Antique Village expenses, which was supported by Ally and passed. It was noted that the Antique Village materials can be for other purposes, so the cost will reach farther than just the one event. Also, the Friends of the Library funds have all be transferred to their own accounts, and subtracted from the ICHS books.

Continues...

"Lessons from J6: Thunderstorm formation and how a microburst changed my life."

That is the title of our presentation for September 5th at the Ionia County Historical Society!

Major Shawna Hoekstra is the Wing Historian for the Civil Air Patrol's Michigan Wing.

The presentation will cover the science of a thunderstorm and relate how she and five fellow officers survived an incredible situation.



**Wednesday, September 5th, 7:00 p.m.
at the Blanchard House / Museum in Ionia**

"News" continued from page 1:

The Accessions Committee was not represented at this meeting, and no report was given. (Due to health issues (and weather!) the committee's efforts have slowed during recent weeks.)

The Thursday work sessions continue apace, and many items have been moved into the Sentinel-Standard storage room. Thanks to Linda C. for arranging for labor to make this happen. She did report that more "person-power" is needed to continue the cleaning out of the Carriage House, especially the second floor. Stacy said that she would be eager to help with that during the month of August (and helpers will be welcomed!). Linda said it would be nice to have it "presentable" by the Sept. 7-8 ICHS Yard Sale. Linda passed along an updated inventory list to the Board of the items in the storage facility. (Linda also noted that she will not be available for the August 2nd work session.)

Barb E. reported that Rentals of the Blanchard House include a July 29 baby shower (deposit paid, ICHS hosts are arranged) and another baby shower on August 11 for which we do need someone to host. Dave White said he could be there, but requested additional help. The Literary Club will meet at the Blanchard House on Sept. 15th (no charge, as is our tradition). Another function is scheduled for Sept 27 which Linda C. will host (details to come).

For the Building and Grounds Committee, Dave White reported on the status of several projects. • Dave called Gregg Yeomans (architect) about issues with the back porch steps and other carpentry projects. Gregg suggested contacting Gordon Kelly, which will be done. In addition, Brian [?], an architect who specializes in historic buildings, has been contacted as well and will be visiting the Blanchard House to advise us on what should be done.

- The broken windows in the Carriage House have been replaced with Lexan, keeping the period window frames in place.

- Dave noted again that the stone experts say (1) don't seal the stonework, (2) don't use any salt-based de-icer on the stone surfaces, and (3) don't leave the rubber welcome mat on the stone porch. It can be put down during events, but must be taken up directly after. He still is waiting for a response from the masonry firm regarding a repair and preservation plan.

- The new back door is in place and primed, but still needs to be painted.

- Linda noted that Jane Horrocks had removed some shrubbery as part of her garden work around the House, too.

- The Orkin company has been at the house and done their first round of inspections and treatments. This was prompted by an infestation of carpenter ants, as well as some mouse signs in the house. Dave W. reports that they will visit again several times to complete the process.

- EPS Security came to investigate a problem with the security system, and determined that the installation of several upgrades to the equipment would solve the problem. These upgrades were covered by our contract and were done at no charge to the ICHS.

Old Business began with a report on the ICHS / Free Fair activities. The parade included a return visit by John Rick with his vintage made-in-Ionia Shelby, carrying the 2017 Woman of the Year, Linda Ciangi. (A thank-you card for Mr. Rick was circulated for signatures.) For the ICHS specifically, the Women's Suffrage marchers were a big hit. Thanks to Ally C. and Stacy T. for putting that together! It's been suggested that the group march also in the Belding Labor Day parade. The Queen's Reception before the parade was a success as well (thanks to Carol Gallagher) but attendance was down a bit due to conflicts with other parades the same day. And thanks to Linda C. for putting together the "Factory" display at the Antique Village this year, too.

Regarding the suffragettes marching unit, it was suggested that we produce some paper hand-fans that could be handed out which were themed for the parade group. Linda C. will check on the cost of these, and David M. will set up the artwork if it's approved. (They can be hand-made also if we can find volunteers who would like to help. — D.M.)

Our calendar of upcoming events.

SUMMER SUNDAYS at the Blanchard House -
*Still looking for volunteers from 1:00 to 4:00
to host our visitors to the house!*

Wednesday, August 29, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Board
Meeting at the Blanchard House

Wednesday, Sept. 5, 7:00 p.m. — Shawna
Hoekstra will present *"Thunderstorm Formation
and How a Microburst Changed My Life."*
(See advert on page 1 and on Facebook!)

Friday and Saturday, September 7 & 8,
the **Annual ICHS Yard Sale** at the
Blanchard House between 9:00 and 2:00.
Interested vendors and area non-profits,
please contact Linda Ciangi at 527-4945.

Wednesday, September 26, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS
Board Meeting at the Blanchard House

Sunday, Sept 30th, at Highland Park Cemetery,
the annual **"Spirits of Ionia's Past"** Cemetery
Tour! More details coming soon!

Thursday evenings are work sessions for the Accessions
Committee, documenting the artifacts in the Historical Society's
historical collections. If you would like to help with this effort,
please contact Shawna Hoekstra, 616-430-1348.

Thursday afternoons are work sessions for housekeeping and
displays. If you would like to help with this effort, please contact
Linda Ciangi at 616-527-4945

NOTE: The work schedules are subject to change.



*Be sure to monitor our
Facebook Page & Website
for current information!*



New Business included the upcoming ICHS Yard Sale on September 7 & 8. Donations to be sold by the Historical Society will be welcomed. (If you'd like to donate something to sell, please contact a Board Member listed on the back page of this newsletter). Other non-profits and all ICHS members who would like to set up a booth to sell items are invited free of charge. It will be advertised on Facebook, in the Chronicle newsletter, and Goose E. volunteered to contact WION with the information. It will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. both days at the Blanchard House.

A request has come from the Friends of the Library to host another Dinner Theater event at the Blanchard House. Last year's event was

Continues...

“News” continued from page 2:

successful, and they’d like to repeat the performance on November 3rd, splitting the proceeds with the Historical Society. The Board supported the idea, and Stacy T. said she would host on behalf of the ICHS.

The president stressed the need for some fund-raising activities. A Raffle (always a success in past years) should be arranged over the winter, but a chairperson is needed.

- Stacy suggested a “Charity Tap” wherein local bars might donate a portion of sales to the ICHS for a month.

- The annual Duck Race at the Fall Festival (September 15th) was brought up, too. This is a popular event, but we need a chairperson to make it happen, and to coordinate with the Park Board. (Interested? Please contact a Board Member listed on the back page!)

- Kathleen suggested that we sell water at the Fall Festival for a buck a bottle, and that we apply custom labels to the bottles (as we have before) to commemorate the Bertha Brock Park. David M. said he has the bottle-label template and can create the labels. More to come on this topic.

- Ally C. suggested a holiday Pie Sale. She and her sister are licensed bakers and the First Christian Church would let us use their licensed kitchen. Boxed pies could include some info about the ICHS and how the funds would be used.

- Because the Tea Party concept seems to be a sell out (at the Oz Fest and Free Fair), Ally wondered if we could arrange something on the Blanchard House lawn, with kid’s activities and entertainment.

- The Bus Tour idea is still a possibility. Ally reported that visits to Chicago and Shipshewana are very successful, and she has been in touch with several bus companies.

- Ally also proposed organizing a major “Beer Tent” event to be held downtown. She’s done some investigation of the permits and permissions to be had, and says that there is plenty of support for the idea in the community. It would be a Friday evening event, with live music and a number of family activities. Arrangements for the tent and beer sales are still being figured out, but are do-able for “not much money.” She suggests splitting the proceeds with downtown merchants in some way. She called the idea “Rockin’ the Block”. The Board asked her to continue her research and report further.

Linda reported that the cutter (the small sleigh) in the Carriage House is in need of some repair. The Board is unanimously in favor of repairing it, and Dave W. will contact the Amish community to look it over and make suggestions.

Barb Hogan has asked that the large-drawered cabinet in the “Resource Room” be replaced with a more efficient way to store photos and documents. The Board said that the cabinet could be brought back to the Sentinel-Standard storage area and be put to use there. Linda said that it would have to be disassembled to get it out of the room, and would check with some of her sources to make that happen.

**Thanks to our
ICHS “Business Buddies”**

**Dan Balice
Darin Elliott
Larry Heffelfinger
Lyle Joslyn
Glen Rairigh
Todd Reurink
Rich and Lindsay Thompson**

PLEASE! PLEASE! PLEASE!

**Volunteers are still needed for our Summer Sundays at the Blanchard House! If you can possibly spare a few hours for the cause, please contact a Board Member right away! (Phone numbers are on the back page.)
...or just drop in!**

Linda informed the Board that she anticipates approx. a \$150 expense to move items from the Carriage House to the storage facility in the near future. She has a source to do the work, with a crew and trailer. Goose suggested that we might offer professionals who do such tasks for us (either free or at a reduced rate) a complimentary Business Buddy membership. No action was taken on this suggestion.

Linda C. showed the Board a large paper portfolio (approx. 24 x 36 inches) that is idea for storing signs and graphics for specific events. She’d like to find more, and will be looking for pricing and possible alternatives. More to come.

The subject of Summer Sunday volunteers was brought up. It’s been very hard to find help, and the Blanchard House has been closed two Sundays this summer. This is due in part to the heat, but also due to lack of staff. Stacy suggested that we could reduce the public hours to just one Sunday per month, but emphasize the “by appointment” option. The Board is in favor of this idea, but it will be taken to the general membership at the next meeting. If enough volunteers come forward, the Summer Sundays program can continue as is.

The next general meeting will be August 1st - a presentation by Al Bryant on the Lizzie Borden mystery. David M. has arranged a digital projector to be borrowed from the Library for that event.

The meeting (not formally adjourned) concluded with a tour of the storage facility so the Board and assembled members could see how items are being organized and stored. Some items were in question as to their fate, and ideas shared about ways to store things. Many artifacts need serious cleaning and restoration, and this facility is much more suited to long-term storage than either the Blanchard House basement or the Carriage House. David M. suggested a “to be cleaned or repaired” area segregated from the “ready for use” items. There is (of course) much more work to do, and members are encouraged to help however they can.

Overall, the progress made in utilizing the storage facility is outstanding, and many thanks to Linda C. and her helpers for making this huge undertaking a reality. (And thanks for the refreshments, too!)

The next meeting of the Board will be held on August 29th at the Blanchard House.

— Duly submitted, July 26, 2018
David McCord, Secretary

Updates from the General Meeting of August 1:

The meeting was opened to a full room at approximately 7:00 p.m. at the Blanchard House. President Linda Ciangi gave a brief summary of ICHS news, events, and projects (as reported in the Board Minutes above). She asked the members to share ideas with the Board on these and other projects.

Volunteers are sought for all of our projects! If anyone is interested in getting more involved in the routine operations of the house, or in some special project or event, please contact a Board Member, or stop in whenever the door’s open!

Many items have been moved to storage off-site now, which leaves the committees much more room to do their work. Anyone interested in

Continues...

"News" continued from page 3:

seeing this storage area can contact Linda or Kathleen Cook to arrange a visit. Plans for the Carriage House are getting serious as well, hoping to make great progress in the coming months so that this area can be open to the public again as part of our tours and activities in 2019.

It looks as though our annual Hank Knoop Duck Race at the Bertha Borck Park Fall Festival will have to be cancelled this year; the creek is obstructed very much by downed trees which make the route impassable. The ICHS will have a table at the Festival on September 15th and we'll sell bottled water with custom souvenir Bertha Brock Park labels!

Ally Cook addressed the audience with her idea for a Beer Tent event in downtown Ionia to raise funds and awareness for the Historical Society. She has talked with several folks, including city authorities, music providers, and bars, and is seeking support and suggestions from the members. The membership has indicated support for the project, and Ally will continue her planning efforts.

Finally, members and guests were reminded of our upcoming program on September 5th to be presented by Shawna Hoekstra (see advertisement on page 1 and on Facebook).

LOOKING FOR PRESENTERS for our "Spirits of Ionia" Annual Cemetery Tour!

We do the research, we can provide a costume, and we'll bring the audience. This can be a simple reading or an elaborate characterization - your choice! If you're interested, please contact
Kathleen Cook : 616-527-2626 today!

Don't Miss
It Again
This Year!



THE ANNUAL
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

YARD SALE

Friday & Saturday
September 7th & 8th

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**Many fabulous items
you can't live without!**

The Historical Society is clearing
out their closets and offering
splendid pricing on items old and
new, vintage and modern.

TWO DAYS ONLY!
at the Blanchard House
251 East Main St.
Ionia, Mich.

SPIRITS of Ionia's Past 2018

On Sunday
September 30
from 1:00 p.m.
until 4:00 p.m.

**This Year's
Theme:**

Highland Park
Cemetery
on East Main at
Prairie Creek

Victims of the 1907 Salem Train Wreck



**Just \$5.00
Admission!**

The Salem Train Wreck in July of 1907 was one of the worst wrecks of the century, and over 26 citizens of Ionia died in the crash. Railroad employees and their families were on a company sponsored outing to Detroit. The trip was tragically interrupted by a head-on collision. Join us to hear the stories of just a few of the victims, and share the community's grief as the town attended a week of mass funerals.

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www.ioniahistory.org



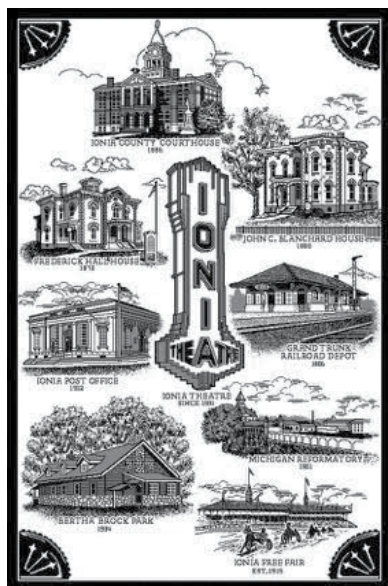
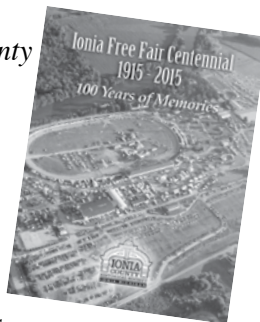
The newest addition to our collection of Ionia County memorabilia, the masterwork for 2016:

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 contains 328 pages of history and over 1,000 photos and graphics.

Softcover: \$29.95 / Hardcover: \$44.95 (add \$5 for 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 former 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
- Antique Ionia Photographs

AND MORE!

IONIA-MADE AUTOMOBILES



A new addition to the ICHS Gift Shoppe, the 18x24-inch poster on heavy gloss paper sells for \$15, and the packet of NINE "Made in Ionia" automobile postcards are just \$10. (Artwork by David McCord; proceeds go to the ICHS.)

Historic DVD Videos

'Sno Wonder DVD — 1936 Ionia County Road Commission + 1940 Bertha Brock Snow Festival Short films that show us a glimpse of the challenges and the fun of Winters in Ionia County a generation ago.

1939 "We're In The Movies" A promotional film produced by Ionia businesses and organizations. It's a wonderful look into our town over 70 years ago.

1950s Home Show and Free Fair Movies

1976 U.S. Bicentennial in Ionia

1937 Ionia Airport Inaugural plus Bertha Brock Park's 1940 "Winter Festival"

1973 Ionia Centennial Documentary

"Ionia's First 150 Years" and "Ionia - A Look Back" - Films by Monroe MacPherson

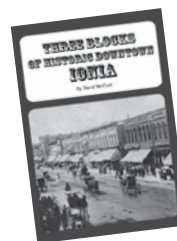
DVDs are available for \$10 each!

Cobmoosa: The Great Walker — A biography of the last Great Chief of the Grand River Indians. by David McCord. \$6 each



Who Was John C. Blanchard? A biography of one of Ionia's leading businessmen. by David McCord. \$6 each

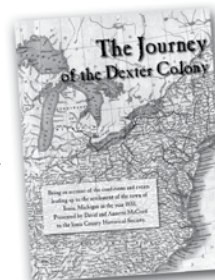
A History of Bertha Brock Park on its 80th "Birthday" by David McCord. \$6 each



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)



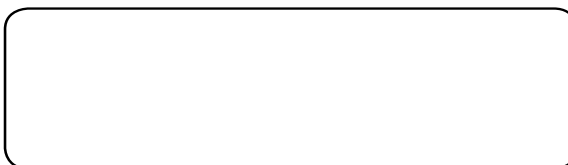


the CHRONICLE

www.ioniahistory.org

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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 2018 Board of Directors & Officers

Linda Ciangi, President — 616-527-4945
Ally Cook, Vice President — 616-821-1406
Dave White, Director — 989-855-2350
Goose Elliott, Director — 616-755-2486
Stacy Tchorzynski, Director — 517-763-1770
David McCord, Secretary — 616-527-3784
Kathleen Cook, Treasurer — 616-527-2626
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>