



the **CHRONICLE**

The Almost Monthly Publication of
the Ionia County Historical Society



Annual Meeting and Elections

TWO NEW DIRECTORS ON THE BOARD

V.P. UNDECIDED – See Pg. 4

Future Includes Projects and Progress for the Organization

NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS CONTINUES!

From the Editor – This issue is heavy on Meeting Minutes and not much on history and entertainment. I apologize for that imbalance, and will attempt to remedy the situation in future issues. – D.M.

Minutes of the Board Meeting of Sept 20, 2018:

Present were Linda Ciangi, Barb Ehlert, Kathleen Cook, David McCord, Ally Cook, Margot Cook. The meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m.

The primary purpose for the meeting was to discuss progress on the “Rockin’ the Block” beer tent fund-raiser scheduled for October 13th in the 400 block of West Main St.

Chairperson Ally Cook shared her progress in working with city officials, bar owners, music providers, and so on. She brought to the table permits, which cost \$25 to file, for serving the alcoholic beverages. It was moved by Ally and supported by Linda to spend the \$25 and complete the forms on behalf of the ICHS. The motion passed with a phone vote from Director Stacy Tchorzynski. Most of the form was completed at this meeting, with a few items remaining to be completed soon after. A “bond” is required for the permit, and Ally was directed by the president to check with Jerry Gregory for that.

There was discussion about a large tent rental, wrist bands, beverage arrangements, entertainment, possible foods to be offered, and bringing in a root beer vendor for the non-alcoholic attendees. The event would be free and, except for the beer tent itself, would be open to any age group.

David McCord presented draft copies of flier/posters for the event, and (pending final edits from Ally) would submit the file to S&K Printing for production.

On another subject, David M. also submitted receipts for newsletter

postage, and several membership checks were passed along to Treasurer Kathleen C. Also, to pass along to the Accessions Committee, were two land grant certificates (from the Belding Historical Society) and an Ionia Water Works postcard (from the Portland Historical Society) to add to the collection.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

ICHS Board Meeting, 092618

The meeting was called to order by President Ciangi at 7:00 in the Blanchard House. Also present were Barb Ehlert, Stacy Tchorzynski, David White, David McCord, Ally Cook, Goose Elliott, and Shawna Hoekstra.

President Linda opened with comments regarding commemoration of passed members Gordon Wright and Dave Odette, seeking some kind of memorial for their contributions. The Board expressed support for the idea, but nothing specific was decided at this meeting.

One correction was noted for the Secretary’s Report as published in the September Chronicle: The pie sale should have been mentioned in relation to the November Church Bazaar, not the Mrs. Claus Sale. Goose moved to accept the report, supported by Dave W. and passed.

Treasurer Kathleen Cook was not present to render a report, but some dues payments and money from recent visits to the Blanchard House & Museum were turned over to Ally Cook to pass along to Kathleen.

Continues...

Wreck of the Gimpy Gin

Presented by the Ionia Community Library at the
Blanchard House, November 7th at 7:00 p.m.



“A tragic accident in stormy waters off Burner’s Inlet, MI in 1927 has scarred the reputation of a local family for eight decades. In this one-man play, set eighty-nine years later, a minor official of this small Lake Huron community brings to light evidence that may profoundly change the view of what happened that awful night. Although the setting and circumstances are fictional, Wreck of the Gimpy Gin will resonate with anyone interested in Michigan’s maritime heritage.”

Written and Performed by Raymond Goodwin.

FREE ADMISSION AND REFRESHMENTS SERVED



Ionia
Community Library

“News” continued from page 1:

Accessions Committee members were not present, but it was noted that there is now a plastic bin in the back entry area for new acquisitions (that will fit into it). A clipboard with Accessions Forms has yet to be provided for it.

Dave White reported on several items as Grounds and Maintenance, as the subjects were addressed according to the president’s agenda.

An estimate of \$400 was received from Bert’s Glass to have the window panes in the south wall of the Carriage House replaced with acrylic. Goose moved to have this done using funds from the Hank Knoop Memorial. Ally supported the motion, and it passed. Dave W. also asked the board to check an opening further up in the wall which may need attention.

We’re still awaiting an estimate to refurbish the electrical system in the Carriage House.

The new kitchen door is in place and primed but needs painting. The Cooks will check on getting the paint. David M. noted that he thought the cost of the paint for the door had been previously approved (along with paint for the servants stair-steps). (Record of this could not be found, so a Board vote is still needed to pay for the paint.— D.M.) In case this was not true, the Board approved the expense anew.

The replacement plans for the steps at the back porch, and the addition of a wrought-iron railing on the porch, were discussed. The Board was in favor of the plan described by Dave W. and asked him to carry on with plans to get the work done, hopefully yet this year.

Continues...



Our calendar of upcoming events.

Wednesday, October 24, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Board Meeting at the Blanchard House.

Wednesday, October 31, 6:00 p.m. — ICHS welcomes trick-or-treaters to our front door for Hallowe'en again this year. ***If you'd like to help, or donate goodies, please do!***

Wednesday, November 7, 7:00 p.m. — Presentation co-sponsored with the Ionia Community Library. We welcome back **Ray Goodwin** with a new one-man show called **“Wreck of the Gimpy Gin.”**

Wednesday, November 28, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Board Meeting at the Blanchard House.

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!



Under “Old Business” — Linda offered a report on the Yard Sale beginning with thank-yous to those who helped with the event. Nearly everyone purchased something from the tables. The total earned has not yet been tallied, but it was certainly a success. Items not sold were forwarded to Goodwill or the “Safe Haven” sale at the Animal Shelter.

The Carriage House clean-up continues, and another round of cleaning will be set up for a day in November (details to be announced). (This day may also include painting the new back door off the kitchen, noted above.)

Additional items have been moved to storage at the Sentinel-Standard facility. A detailed list will be forwarded to the Accessions Committee. Linda asked for Board approval to hire Stan Preston and his crew for one final load of items to be hauled from the Carriage House to storage at a cost of \$150. Goose made the motion, supported by Stacy, and passed.

Plans were reviewed once again for the Beer Tent event “Rockin’ the Block.” There was no change to the info shared at the Sept. 20th Board meeting, except that Jim Killion has lined up three bands for the entertainment. The re-edited poster/fliers for the event would now be submitted to S&K Printing for production - Ally would follow up with S&K.

The upcoming “Spirits of Ionia” Cemetery Tour was on the agenda. Kathleen C. was not present to give a report, but information was shared

Continues...



“News” continued from page 2:

by those who would be participating in the event. Aside from sparse publicity and late research, it appears that plans are on track for Sunday afternoon.

It was also noted that the Library is planning to host another Dinner Theater event at the Blanchard House on November 3rd, and Stacy T. will be our host at that event.

Under “New Business” — A visitor to the house mentioned that a “grab bar” for safety might be added to the restroom. Goose moved to add that to the maintenance list, which was supported by Stacy and passed.

Barb E. reviewed recent changes she’s made as to how and where dinner ware and kitchen supplies are being stored. Glassware in particular had been stored on high shelves, and is now lower where it can be reached more easily (and safely). She also suggested that a small overhead kitchen cabinet might be mounted to the pantry wall behind the door to store paper products and cleaning supplies. Presently, these are either on hard-to-reach shelves or on an open wire rack. The Board supported the idea, voting to “keep an eye out” for a good deal on a cabinet, either at Goodwill, Enrich, or the ReStore.

Barb also noted that the vacuum sweeper is not operating as it should, and asked the Board’s permission to take it to the Sweeper Shop for repairs. Ally moved to have this done, supported by Dave W. and passed.

The Mrs. Claus Bazaar will be on December 1st this year. A chairperson is needed to arrange the sales event for us, and volunteers needed

INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

Please contact a Board Member today! (See phone numbers on the back page, or email the Board directly bod@ioniahistory.org.)

to set up, staff, and take down the ICHS booth. The general membership will be asked to help at the next meeting.

Linda and Barb, who handle the holiday decorations at the Blanchard House, asked the Board if we couldn’t purchase a new 12-foot artificial tree for the front parlor. The previous trees are showing their age. The consensus was to ask the membership for a donation, as well as checking with Char Sherman (who has many such items) if she might make us a deal. Linda C. will check with Char. In addition, the request is out for help to clean up the house before the holiday open-houses.

Finally, some discussion was had regarding programs for next year, to make an attempt to fill the schedule earlier this time. David M. mentioned that Al Bryant has a couple of programs we have not yet seen, and that Valerie Marvin from the State Historical Society would like to address our group as well. David also said he would check with other museums in the Tri-River Group for possible programs. Other suggestions were to visit Central Dispatch in February, WION in March, and Stacy said she may have connections to visit the old “Nunnery” on High Street sometime. Someone also mentioned members of the local civic organizations (Rotary, JayCees, etc.) might address the group on their organization’s history. Again, the general membership will be approached to get suggestions.

As a post-script, David M. mentioned that he had attended a meeting hosted by the Kutche Center for Local History at GVSU. The meeting included representatives from communities all along the Grand River, and GVSU has a grant to put together a display of how these communities have been affected by the River, or their relationship to the River. David will continue to keep in touch with this effort. He also reported briefly on recent Tri-River meetings, upcoming Tri-River events, and an upcoming workshop called “History Skills Bootcamp” to be held at Lansing Community College by the Historical Society of Michigan.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Minutes - October 3, 2018

At 7:00 p.m. while awaiting the arrival of some key members, president Linda Ciangi related some late-breaking news about current projects - specifically the Carriage House. The building is nearly cleaned out and in the process of reorganization. Bert Dickinson will be in this week to replace the cloudy plexiglass in the south windows with acrylic panes, and hopefully be able to fix the broken panes in the gable windows at the same time. Chris Bredice will be in before the end of the month to rewire the electrical service in the building to bring it up to code. The electrical will not be too obvious, so we can preserve the historic ambience of the building.

Continues...

Thanks to our ICHS “Business Buddies”

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

"News" continued from page 3:

2018 Annual Meeting —

At 7:13, the Annual Meeting was brought to order by Linda C. Sharing the requirements of the meeting as put down in the ByLaws, she entertained a motion to forego the initial steps and get directly to the Board Elections. The motion was made by Mary Kimble and supported by Phil Kahl, and passed by the assembled members.

Secretary David McCord passed out membership forms to those paying their last-minute dues, and passed the forms and moneys on to Kathleen Cook, Treasurer. Then ballots were distributed, votes cast, and ballots collected. The Secretary and Treasurer then retired to the office to tally the votes (including those mailed in ahead of the meeting) and verify the paid members on the list. The candidates for two Board positions were Phil Kahl, Katelyn Mooney, and Barb Ehlert. David M. then announced to the members that, of 27 votes cast, the new Directors on the Board would be Katelyn and Barb for a regular two-year term. Phil was thanked for his candidacy and continued support, and the out-going Directors, Goose Elliott and Ally Cook, thanked for their service as well. The annual meeting was then immediately adjourned at 7:45.

2018 Membership Meeting —

The regular monthly meeting was then brought to order by President Ciangi, with several reports delivered to the members.

Kathleen reported that the year-end Treasurer's Report was being compiled and should be available to all by the November meeting. She also reported that recent events have brought in some funds: Fall Festival, \$15; Yard Sale, \$1,250; Cemetery Tour, \$275. Sarah Hamilton has donated \$3,000 to the Society as well. Kathleen has yet to total all the membership dues that have come in, and once that's done will coordinate with David M. to put together an accurate membership list.

Kathleen reported that the Cemetery Tour on Sept 27 went well despite the rainy weather. We've made more money in the past, of course, but those who attended shared many positive comments. Linda C. noted that Gary Ferguson at the Ionia Theatre said he would show the documentary file on the Salem Train Wreck some Sunday afternoon. Kathleen & Goose were discussing a scheduled bus trip to retrace the route of the train to Detroit, and possible visits to the same destinations (much changed and some no longer there).

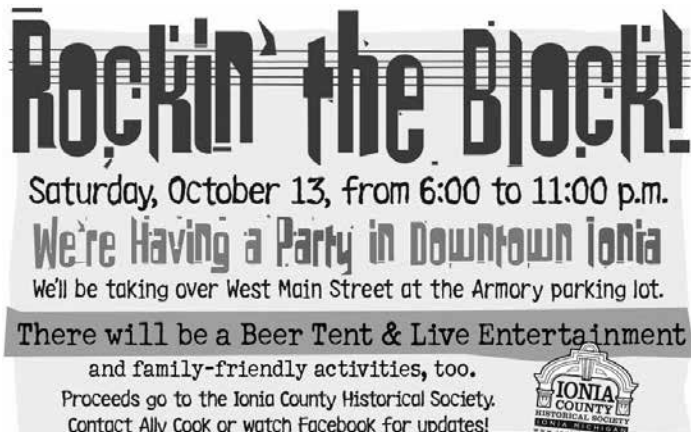
Ally Cook then reported on the progress for her "Rockin' the Block" beer tent event coming on October 13th. She listed the permits and approvals she has arranged for the event. The beer tent will be in the parking lot next to the Armory, the entertainment set up on the street. She is seeking some snow fence to surround the "alcohol limits" for the event, and needs volunteers to staff the tent and help with wet-up and take-down. If you can help, please contact Ally ASAP at 616-821-1406 or cook1ah@cmich.edu .

Linda and Ally had the opportunity to take a tour of the Hanlon Prison (a.k.a. "MTU), focused on the schools and training facilities for the inmates. They saw many examples of skilled and talented work by the inmates. One of Linda's primary interests was the autobody shop, where in decades past many custom autos were produced and showcased at the Ionia Free Fair. One of the others on the tour had been a former instructor in the shop, and related stories of past projects. A highlight was a Shelby Cobra engine still on hand from the late 1960s.


Kathleen also reported that the Tim Lockwood family had visited the Blanchard House last week. The Lockwoods lived in the house for over 40 years, and shared memories as they walked through the house.

Upcoming events were discussed, including the need for volunteers. The Blanchard House needs to be cleaned up and decorated for the holidays. This is usually done in early November. A chairperson is also needed for our booth at the Mrs. Claus Bazaar on December 1st. This is an easy event, the primary challenge being the set-up and take-down of the booth. We also need a chairperson for the 2019 Raffle. There are several promotional and prize ideas being discussed, but a chairperson is needed to take control of the necessary paperwork and manage the ticket

NOTE: This event may be over by the time you receive this newsletter. If not, we hope you can stop by and join in the fun. If so, we hope you had a good time! Thank you for your support.



Rockin' the Block!
Saturday, October 13, from 6:00 to 11:00 p.m.
We're Having a Party in Downtown Ionia
We'll be taking over West Main Street at the Armory parking lot.
There will be a Beer Tent & Live Entertainment
and family-friendly activities, too.
Proceeds go to the Ionia County Historical Society.
Contact Ally Cook or watch Facebook for updates!



sales. For all these opportunities, please contact Linda C. at 527-4945 if you can help - even a little bit!

November 3rd will be a "Murder Mystery" event at the Blanchard House to benefit both the Library and Historical Society. Tickets are on sale at Dave Cook's Main Street "Odds and Ends" store, as well as at the Library. Only 40 tickets are being sold, \$40 each, \$75 for a couple, and table for 4 at \$140.

The December meeting will include a program arranged with the Library. The presenter will be Ray Goodwin who has addressed our group before with a one-man show, "The Last Man in Marrinville." The new show is called "Wreck of the Gimpy Gin."

There was some discussion about the new Library proposal, with questions and answers and comments on a host of related subjects. Members were encouraged to contact the Library for more information (rather than relying on rumor and speculation).

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15.

Board Meeting of October 3 —

Meeting of the Board, Oct. 3, called to order at approx. 8:30 p.m. In attendance were President Linda C., Secretary David M., and Directors Dave White, Barb Ehlert, and Katelyn Mooney. Dave W. moved to maintain the current President, Secretary, and Treasurer positions, but to postpone the election for Vice President until the next regular Board meeting. David M. offered to serve as V.P. Pro-tem until that election. The motion was supported by Barb and passed.

The idea was put forth to offer something to the vendors and skilled tradesmen who were donating labor to the ICHS. Free rental of the House, acknowledgement on nameplates, free Business Buddy recognition were all mentioned as possibilities. No specific action was taken at this meeting.

Lyle Joslyn offered to haul away the K-mart display shelf still in the yard since the yard sale. Linda C. mentioned the dense grapevines growing along the east wall of the Carriage House that are harmful to the brickwork. Dave W. emphasized the difficulty in clearing those out, and Linda said that Stan Preston may take on the job. The task will be added to the Grounds and Maintenance Committee's to-do list.

The next regular meeting of the Board would fall on Halloween Night, so it was decided to change that meeting to the preceding Wednesday, October 24.

Katelyn M. moved to adjourn the Board Meeting, supported by Linda C. and passed by the Board at approx. 8:50 p.m.

— D. McCord, Secretary

SOUVENIRS

MEMORIES & MOMENTOS IONIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY HERITAGE & HISTORY

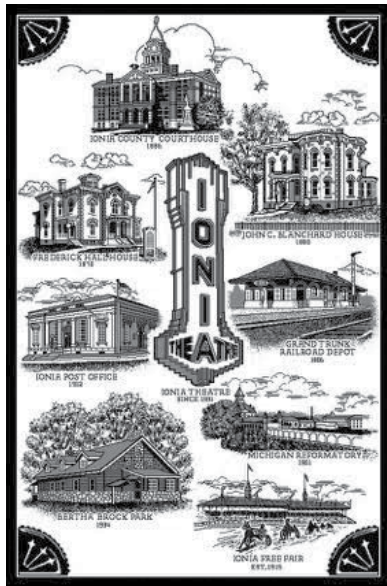
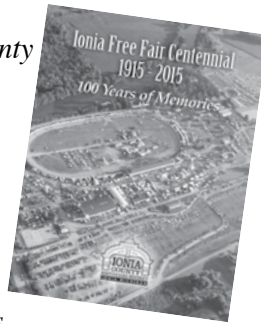
The newest addition to our collection of Ionia County memorabilia, the masterwork for 2016:

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 ICMS 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!



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

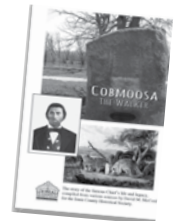
1937 Ionia Airport Inaugural plus Bertha Brock Park's 1940 "Winter Festival"

1973 Ionia Centennial Documentary

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

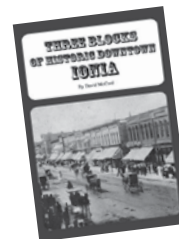
DVDs are available for \$10 each!

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

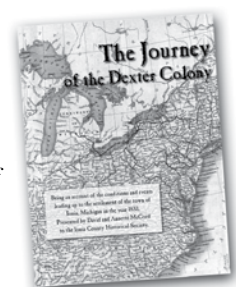
A History of Bertha Brock Park on its 80th "Birthday" by David McCord. \$6 each



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)



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



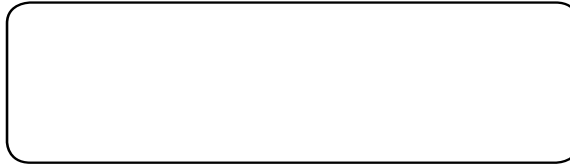
A new addition to the ICMS Gift Shoppe, the 18x24-inch poster on heavy gloss paper sells for \$15, and the packet of NINE "Made in Ionia" automobile postcards are just \$10. (Artwork by David McCord; proceeds go to the ICMS.)



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 2019 Board of Directors & Officers

- Linda Ciangi, President — 616-527-4945
- David McCord, Vice Pres. Pro-Tem — 616-821-1406
- Dave White, Director — 989-855-2350
- Katelyn Mooney, Director — 616-902-7777
- Stacy Tchorzynski, Director — 517-763-1770
- Barb Ehlert, Director/House Rentals — 616-522-0844
- David McCord, Secretary — 616-527-3784
- Kathleen Cook, Treasurer — 616-527-2626

For information on your long-lost relatives in Ionia,
please contact the Ionia County Genealogy Society.
<http://ionia.migenweb.net/ICGS/icgshome.htm>