



the **CHRONICLE**

The Almost Monthly Publication of
the Ionia County Historical Society



Some Great Story Telling

The ICHS welcomed back Ray Goodwin in another Library-sponsored presentation at the Blanchard House. Mr. Goodwin's one-man, two-act play this time was entitled "Wreck of the Gimpy Gin." Portraying the constable of a small town on the shores of Lake Huron, he told the story of a shipwreck that occurred in 1927. But more than that, he conveyed the historical background of the story, the personality of the people and places involved in the wreck, and most significantly the way the wreck affected one of the town's prominent families over the generations.

The play was written by Mr. Goodwin, and his personification of the characters was excellent, as was his earlier presentation to our group last year. Our thanks to Mr. Goodwin for visiting us again, and to the Library for another successful collaboration.



Minutes of the Meeting of Nov 7, 2018:

The meeting was called to order shortly after 7:00 p.m. at the Blanchard House by president Linda Ciangi. The Secretary's Report was accepted as published, and the Treasurer's Report was a brief summary of that given at the recent Board meeting. (See minutes in this issue.)

David McCord reported another successful Trick-or-Treat at the Blanchard House, with exceptionally nice weather (for a change). Thanks to Shawna Hoekstra and her daughters for their portrayal of spirits in the windows!

Stacy noted that the Mystery Theatre event on Nov. 4th was a great success as well.

Linda C. delivered a brief summary of the status of the Carriage House (as reported in the Board Meeting minutes in this issue). She also informed the assembled members and guests about the progress with the Christmas tree and decorating plans.

She noted that the restoration of the cutter (sleigh) in the Carriage House is still an open issue, seeking someone to do the job, hopefully for less than the \$1500 estimate we have so far. It was noted that it could be the subject of a targeted fund drive.

Linda then invited everyone to the December Pot Luck and noted that the Board was working on the program schedule for 2019. The January gathering would once again be dinner at the Lamplight Grill in Ionia, and she proposed that attendees gather at the Sentinel-Standard storage area before dinner to see the status of that facility.

Governor Snyder's "Rising Tide" program will be coming to Ionia, and Linda reported that she and Dale Parus (ICHS member and Library Director) would both be on the committee. (More can be learned about this program elsewhere — D.M.)

David McCord reported on the "Grand River Communities" project being sponsored by the Kutsche Center for Local History at Grand Valley State University. He has attended two of their meetings so far, representing the ICHS. He also mentioned his continuing involvement with the Tri-River Museum Network.

The meeting was adjourned for our special presentation (see story on page 1).

ICHS Board Meeting, October 24, 2018:

The meeting was called to order by president Linda Ciangi at 7:05 on Wednesday, Oct 24, at the Blanchard House. Also present were Directors Barb Ehlert, Katelyn Mooney, and Dave White, plus Treasurer Kathleen Cook, Margot Cook, and Secretary David McCord.

The Secretary's report was accepted as published in the October newsletter. David reiterated the need to verify and update the mailing list, and Kathleen said she would forward her undated membership list for him to compare to his own.

The Treasurer's report included the expense of \$1.18 to fix the vacuum cleaner, and receipt of a recent invoice from S&K Printing. Kathleen also noted that a CD investment at Portland Federal Credit Union was coming up for "roll-over" and the authorized signatures would need to be reverified. Mary Kimble asked for permission to purchase the Library Scanner that had been approved by the Board pending receiving the money from the Ionia County Foundation granted last winter. The Board approved the request, and Kathleen said the Foundation money would be deposited directly into the ICHS account. The Treasurer's report was accepted by the Board unanimously.

Margot Cook delivered Ally Cook's report on the Beer Tent event

Continues...

"News" continued from page 1:

recently held in downtown Ionia. There were expenses of approx. \$900, and income generated approximately \$320.00. Attendance and reaction to the event in general was very good, and Ally has been encouraged to hold another such event in the Spring of 2019. The main glitch in the arrangement was the State's paperwork regarding the reinstatement of the ICHS non-profit status last Spring. It turned out that one more fee was required on the order of \$1,000. Ally paid this herself to ensure that the event would go on as scheduled. It was moved by Dave W. and supported by Barb E. to reimburse her for the expense; the motion passed. Ally has the official documents in hand and will turn them over to the Board at her earliest opportunity.

Dave White, as Chair of the Maintenance and Grounds Committee, reported on several projects as follow:

He had received an estimate for the rebuilding and improvements to the back porch stairs, rails, and pantry door stairway. The estimate totaled about \$4000, and he stated that he wanted to get another estimate or two. With the hope that the project could still be done before the coming winter, Dave asked the Board to authorize him to continue his research and authorized him to engage a carpenter to get the project completed without further Board discussion. This motion was supported by Linda C. and passed.

Dave also disassembled the fence along Adams Street where the tree growth had distorted the ironwork. The trees will be removed by Rick White for \$1,000 and the fence repaired and replaced.

Linda C. delivered a Carriage House report, stating that the south windows had been replaced now by Bert Dickinson, who donated \$400 to the project. There is still more clean-up to do, but things are very close. Linda said that Jerry Adams, museum consultant, advised the electrification of an oil lamp that had been installed in the carriage house. Linda will contact Warren Wentworth about that task. The woodwork in the Carriage House will be stained to give it a more consistent look, and still be historical. Adams also advised Linda that the ICHS should refuse the offer of the Imus Piano - a square grand that had been in the home of Dr. Imus, Director of the Ionia State Hospital over 80 years ago. The piano had been offered by the family, and plans were in the works to have it delivered, but ultimately the Board agreed and Linda said she would contact the Imus family to let them know. Linda also passed out a summary of recent additions to the Sentinel-Standard storage inventory.

Regarding upcoming events, Stacy Tchorzynski is hosting the Friends of the Library's "Mystery Theatre" event at the Blanchard House on November 3. Dave Cusack and Dave and Lori White will be there to help as well.

Volunteers are still needed to help with Christmas Decorations and to host visitors at the Blanchard House during December Sundays, the 2nd, 9th, and 16th. The new Christmas tree is currently on sale at Menard's for \$330. Dave W. moved to purchase the new tree. The motion was supported by Barb E. and passed. The new tree will be set up in the parlor. Barb Ehlert is the contact person for the decorating efforts.

The November 7th program at the Blanchard House has been confirmed with the Library. (See story on page 1 — D.M.)

November 17th is the bazaar at the First United Methodist Church. The booth cost is \$10, and Linda C. will cover the cost and be in charge of ICHS participation. The Board approved the \$10 expense.

December 1 is the annual Mrs. Claus sale at the Middle School. This is being chaired by Kathleen Cook in the morning, and Katelyn Mooney in the afternoon. Help is needed for the set-up and take-down at this event. Other staff will be confirmed soon. It was moved by Linda C. and supported by Dave White to pay the \$40 booth fee for this event.

Linda C. also reminded the Board that we've been discussing a Raffle for 2019, and a chairperson is still needed for that effort.

The December 5th meeting will be the annual December Pot Luck at the Blanchard House. The schedule of programs and events is being

Our calendar of upcoming events.

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

Wednesday, December 3, 7:00 p.m. — The annual
Holiday Pot-Luck at the Blanchard House.

Wednesday, January 3, 2019, 7:00 p.m. —
Members and guests are invited to meet at the
Sentinel-Standard building to see the storage
facility where many of the ICHS artifacts are
being kept. Following this, we will adjourn to
the Lamplight Grill on Main St. for a "Happy
New Year" meal (ordering from the menu).

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!



developed now, and will hopefully be available very soon for public distribution. The challenge continues to be finding persons to chair future events and volunteers in all capacities.

Dave White noted that the election of our new Vice President was still an unfinished business. After some discussion, Barb Ehlert was elected by the Board to serve in that position for the ensuing term.

Margot Cook presented the board with a proposal to sell pies as a fund-raiser for the holiday season. She worked out a plan and was the opportunity to utilize the licensed kitchen at the First Christian Church to assemble the pies for sale. She stated that all the expenses would be covered by the sales except the vital pre-payment of rent for the kitchen. She asked the Board for \$100 in advance of the project. It was moved by Dave W. and supported by Katelyn M. to pay the \$100, and passed by the Board. The pies will be sold unbaked for \$15 each, and Margot estimates 75 pies could be sold over the holiday season.

ICHS Board Meeting, November 7, 2018:

President Ciangi asked the Board Members present to assemble briefly after the program on November 7th to address the back porch / rear stairs project. Director Stacy Tchorzynski noted that the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO), the authority behind our status as a registered historical site, responded to our plans for the carpentry. Our contact there, Bryan Lijewski, said that, to gain approval of our metal railings proposal, we would have to show evidence that the original house had such metal railings. He also recommended a design for wood railings that would more likely be historically accurate. Stacy quoted from an earlier email and clarified the authority of SHPO, and the Board would need to respond before we could go ahead with the project. Further developments will be forthcoming.

WAYBACK

November 1818 —

Charlotte Sophia von Mecklenburg-Strelitz died on November 17th, 1818. She was born in 1744, the youngest daughter of Duke Charles Louis Frederick and Princess Elizabeth Albertina of Saxe-Hildburghausen. At the age of 17, she was moved to England to be married, and in 1762 moved into a new home purchased by her husband called "Buckingham House." She went on to have 14 children while living there. Being a great supporter of the arts, she was taught by Johann Christian Bach and entertained by Handel and Mozart. She was also an amateur botanist, established orphanages and hospitals, and was very popular. Charlotte, North Carolina, was so named in her honor, as well as Charlottesville, VA, Mecklenburg Co., VA, and other locations around the globe. Did I mention that she was Queen of England during the American Revolution?



awaited and hard-won silence to the western front. The final act ending the war wouldn't be signed until the Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919, but the Armistice is celebrated as the historic end of World War One.

American soldier Henry Gunther was killed by machine gun fire at the French village of Chaumont-devant-Damvillers, France one minute before the armistice went into effect, the last known Allied soldier killed in World War One.

November 1968 —

On November 5, former U.S. Vice-President and Republican Party nominee Richard M. Nixon was elected President of the United States, defeating incumbent Vice President and Democrat Hubert H. Humphrey, and American Independent Party candidate George C. Wallace. Although the popular vote was close, with Nixon winning 31,783,783 votes and Humphrey 31,271,839



the electoral vote (301 to 191) was not.

What would become known as "The Heidi Game" in professional football history took place when the NBC television network abruptly halted its broadcast of an American Football League game between the Oakland Raiders and New York Jets, in order to telecast its scheduled Sunday night movie, Heidi. With 65 seconds left, Oakland had the ball and was trailing, 32 to 29 and television viewers nationwide were unable to see what happened next. The NBC



network offices were inundated with calls from angry viewers, and NBC was harshly criticized by the press. Since then, American TV networks have delayed scheduled programming in order to show sporting events in their entirety. As for Heidi, the movie broadcast was the top-rated program of the week.

Also this month in 1968, Yale University announced that it would admit women students for the first time in its 267 year history, beginning with the 1969-1970 academic year. The Yale Corporation (the university's board of trustees) had approved the proposal, made by university president Kingman Brewster, Jr., on November 9 and referred it to faculty for ratification. In the Thursday faculty meeting, the vote was 200 in favor, 1 against.



November 1868 —

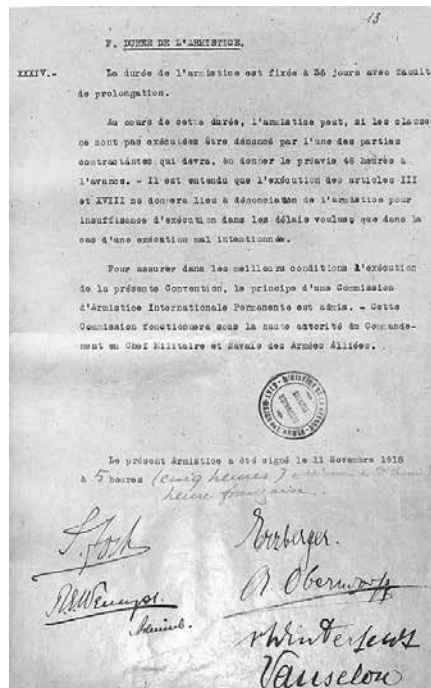
In Oklahoma Territory, Colonel George Armstrong Custer lead a vicious massacre against a band of peaceful Cheyenne. The Indians' leader, Chief Black Kettle, had always been a solid friend of the whites, and was working on a new agreement with the local Indian Agents at Fort Cobb when the mindless slaughter by Custer's unit occurred.

Custer had been "suspended from rank and duty" for ten months prior to the incident, but Genl. Sheridan reinstated Custer to help put down a band of renegades. Custer didn't bother to identify who he was attacking, ignored the white flags flying around the Indian encampment, and destroyed the entire Washita band of 103 Cheyenne within hours.

Meanwhile back east, the first black congressman was elected in the U.S. - Mr. John W. Menard of Louisiana.

November 1918 —

Early in the morning of November 11, Field Marshal Ferdinand Foch of France accepted the signature of German representative Matthias Erzberger, enacting the Armistice that eventually lead to the end of "the Great War." The cease-fire thus negotiated began at "the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month", bringing a long-



Above: The final page, with signatures, of the WWI Armistice agreement - 11 November 1918.

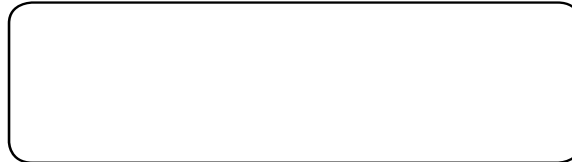




the www.ioniahistory.org **CHRONICLE**

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
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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
- Barb Ehlert, Vice Pres/House Rentals — 616-522-0844
- Dave White, Director — 989-855-2350
- Katelyn Mooney, Director — 616-902-7777
- Stacy Tchorzynski, Director — 517-763-1770
- 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>