



the **CHRONICLE**

The Almost Monthly Publication of
the Ionia County Historical Society



2018 is History, and a New Year Begins!

Our 2019 schedule began with a brief gathering at our Storage Facility within the Sentinel-Standard building in Ionia. Members and guests got to see the many artifacts there, and get a sense of the challenges ahead in restoring and preserving them. From huge furnishings to tiny hat pins, iron stoves to fragile documents, our collection continues to grow, representing our community's past.

After the visit, members met at the Lamplight Grill to start the year with a meal commemorating the contributions of past members, and to discuss some of the plans for the coming year.

The Board and Officers wish everyone well for the new year and hope to see you at ICHS events throughout 2019. Remember that our organization is supported solely by volunteers, so if you can help in any way, please do!



Minutes of the Meeting of Dec 6, 2018:

There were no minutes for this meeting because no business transpired. This was a house-decorating session for the holidays!

ICHS Board Meeting, December 26, 2018:

President Linda Ciangi called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. at the Blanchard House. Also present were Kathleen Cook, Katelyn Mooney, Barb Ehlert and David McCord.

The Secretary's official Report was not available for review, but notes from the previous meeting were reviewed.

The Treasurer's Report was shared with the Board (available upon request). Additional money was submitted to the Treasurer at the meeting for gift shop income and tour donations for the past month, totaling approximately \$280.00. Also, \$178.50 was brought in at the Mrs. Claus Bazaar in December. An invoice was submitted by the Secretary (and reimbursed) for postage. A notice to renew our Chamber membership was passed to the Treasurer, and the Directors present chose to table that issue until the next Board Meeting. The Financial Committee's meeting with our accountant, Al Kasper, has not yet happened. Al reports that all the necessary paperwork has been filed at this point.

A brief report was delivered by Bryan Kimble on Accessions activities. They are making progress on defining their technology needs. They still are concerned about electrical service on the second floor to power the equipment adequately. Mary Kimble noted that she would be taking the ICHS laptop computer home for a while to work on the Accessions database.

Dave White was not present for a Grounds and Maintenance Report, but several items in his list were discussed. Stacy reported (via email)

that the plans for replacement of the stairs and railings on the south side of the house were approved by SHPO, and Linda C. reported that the electrical is now completed in the Carriage House. Also regarding the Carriage House, the windows in the gables have not been replaced due to health issues with the volunteers who were going to do that. The Board also asked David McCord if he would take the reigns on the Carriage House project at this point to define a plan and budget for the next phase. He accepted the challenge.

The fire extinguishers at the house were recently inspected and found to be "aged out". We are awaiting a quote for their replacement with new ones.

The Pie Sale project noted in the November minutes was cancelled. The money approved by the Board for the project was not issued by the Treasurer.

Moving donated artifacts from the Prelesnik home was accomplished by hiring Two Men and a Truck. The Board had approved \$800 for the effort based on the firm's estimate, but the final invoice ended up being \$1121.73. Linda Ciangi paid the difference, and asked the Board for reimbursement. Barb Ehlert moved to do so, supported by Katelyn, and passed. A rough inventory of these artifacts was shared with the Board, and will be reviewed further when the opportunity arises to determine their ultimate fate.

Thanks were expressed to all the volunteers who helped with decorating the Blanchard House for the holiday season. Someone suggested offering reimbursement for the pizza, but no action was taken. The big tree in the front parlor needs to come down yet, and things packed away again for storage. A date will be set soon for this effort after the next program meeting. Barb E. suggested that we purchase plastic tubs to store the big tree (to replace the cardboard box). Everyone agreed, and

Continues...

“News” continued from page 1:

asked for a cost estimate before the purchase is approved. Kathleen noted that there was a \$37.32 from Menards when the big tree was purchased. There was some discussion about using some of those funds for household supplies as well, but nothing was officially decided.

Regular Thursday afternoon work sessions will be curtailed for the cold season (as usual), but essential activities will continue as needed. As soon as things warm up, the spring cleaning can begin.

The need for event chairpersons was reviewed briefly. We still need someone to work on a spring Raffle, a possible luncheon fund-raiser, Oz Fest participation, and Upstairs-Downtown. Barb asked also about staffing for the Expo in March and the annual Yard Sale. We'll also need someone to coordinate Summer Sundays staffing. All these activities need someone to take the reins, or they will not happen!

David M. still plans on putting together a “History Hike” (walking tour) by springtime, to launch as an event, then offer as a self-guided tour thereafter. He also reported that he is still working with GVSU's Kuetche Center to represent the ICHS in their Grand River Communities project, and representing the ICHS at the Tri-River Museum Network.

The calendar for the year was reviewed further, with the following plans in place up to the August program:

- January 2: Members and guests meet at the Sentinel-Standard at 7:00 to tour the storage facility there and then go to the Lamplight Grill for dinner thereafter.

- February 6: We'll meet at the Blanchard House at 7:00 p.m. for a brief presentation from Kathleen Cook on the history of the house next door (Gordon Wright's residence) which the Cook family is beginning to refurbish. Interested folks can then go to the house for a tour.

- March 2: Ionia Expo at the High School
- March 6: Program still TBD
- April 3: Our guest will be Valerie Marvin, State Historical Society.
- April 7: History Hike with David McCord
- May 1: Civil War program, sponsored by the Ionia Community Library at the First Christian Church
- May 4-5: “Spring Into The Past” opens our Summer Season
- June 5: Program from the Conservation District (to be confirmed)
- June 21-22: Oz Festival and Farm Power Show
- July 3: Annual ICHS Independence Day Pot Luck
- July 9: Annual Tri-River Banquet
- July 11+: Ionia Free Fair (ICHS Parade Float + Antique Village)
- August 7: Al Bryant returns to present “The House of David”
- September 4: Three Husbands & Colleen - a Musical presentation

The meeting was adjourned at approx. 8:30, and the attendees went out to the Carriage House afterward to see the new electrical work and discuss some of the plans for the building.

- D. McCord, Secretary

Minutes of the Meeting of Jan 2, 2019:

There are no minutes for the January 2nd meeting due the Secretary being absent. The nature of the meeting was more of a social occasion.

Our calendar of upcoming events.

Wednesday, Jan 30, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Board Meeting at the Blanchard House.

Wednesday, February 6, 7:00 p.m. — The Cooks have bought Gordon Wright's house next door to the Blanchard House! Members and guests will meet at the Blanchard House for business, a presentation, and refreshments, then adjourn to visit the house next door.

Wednesday, February 27, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Board Meeting at the Blanchard House.

Saturday, March 2 — The annual Ionia Expo will be held at the High School. The ICHS will have a booth, and volunteers are welcomed!

Wednesday, March 6 — This meeting's program is still to be announced. There are several ideas in the works, and the meeting will probably be at a location other than the Blanchard House.

Wednesday, March 27, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Board Meeting at the Blanchard House.

Wednesday evenings are work sessions for the Accessions Committee, documenting the artifacts in the Historical Society's historical collections. If you would like to help, 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!



The New Year means New Opportunities!

If you can spare some time, some expertise, or some muscle-power, there are plenty of things you can do to help support our organization. Please sign up to help whenever you can. If you have suggestions or specific area of interest, please let the Board know also.

The ICHS is for the entire community, and that includes you, too!



WAYBACK



January 1819 —

The White House in Washington D.C. had been burned by the British during the War of 1812. Its reconstruction was completed on January 1st of 1818, and the first family, James, Elizabeth, and their daughter Maria Hester Monroe moved in.



The famous novel by Mary Shelley (left) "Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus" was published anonymously during this month by the small London publishing house of Lackington, Hughes, Harding, Mavor, & Jones.

The first official act relating to the county of Oakland, Michigan (of which any record can be found) is an executive proclamation by Hon. Lewis Cass, governor of the Territory of Michigan, dated the 12th day of January, 1819: "I do, by virtue of these presents, and in conformity with the provisions of the ordinance of Congress of July 13th, 1787, lay out that part of the said territory included within the said boundaries, into a new county to be called the county of Oakland." (That's how they did it back then.)

On January 25, the University of Virginia was chartered by Commonwealth of Virginia, with Thomas Jefferson one of its founders. The University stands on land purchased in 1788 by an American Revolutionary War veteran (and eventual fifth President of the United States), James Monroe. The land was then purchased from Monroe for "Central College" in 1817. Guided by Jefferson, the school laid its first building's cornerstone in late 1817; classes started in the summer of 1825.

January 1869 —

On January 6, the Hon. Henry P. Baldwin took over the office of Governor of Michigan from Henry H. Crapo. Baldwin was an original member of the Republican Party, and a well-known philanthropist. Regretably, he would later veto an amendment to the State Constitution to give women the right to vote.

The Ionia and Lansing Rail Road was incorporated on November 13, 1865; the investors hailed primarily from Lansing, Ionia and Portland. The original charter called for



a 34-mile road from Ionia to Lansing; on **January 13, 1869** this was amended with a much grander vision: a 125-mile line from Lansing to the mouth of the Pentwater River at Pentwater, on the shores of Lake Michigan.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton became the first woman to testify before US Congress on January 20th. She, together with Susan B. Anthony, did not support passage of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution. She opposed giving added legal protection and voting rights to African American men while women, black and white, were denied those same rights. Her position on this issue (among others) led to the formation of two separate women's rights organizations that were finally rejoined, with Stanton as president of the joint organization, about twenty years later.



January 1919 —

The 18th Amendment, prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors in the United States, was ratified by the Michigan legislature on this day. Michigan actually went dry on May 1, 1918, over a year before the 18th Amendment providing for national prohibition became effective. It was estimated that during the years of Prohibition (until 1933) 75% of all the booze smuggled into the United States crossed at the Detroit/Windsor border.

The influenza epidemic was finally beginning to ebb in Michigan during the winter months. The death toll from the flu would reach 15,000 by April of 1919. There were over 100 deaths that year in Ionia County attributed directly to the disease. The urban areas of the state were hit much harder. (Ionia County's population in 1918 was just over 32,000.)

On January 19, 1919, the Russian Bolsheviks launched an offensive against the American and Allied troops along the Vega River. Many of these Americans were from the 339th, trained in winter combat at Ft. Custer and in Northern Michigan.



January 1969 —

Richard M. Nixon was sworn in as the 37th President of the United States on January 20th.

Also in the month of January, on the 7th, the trial began in the case of Sirhan Sirhan who murdered Bobby Kennedy in June of the year before.

The Saturday Evening Post ceased publication in this month after 148 years, its original copies printed in Benjamin Franklin's print shop.

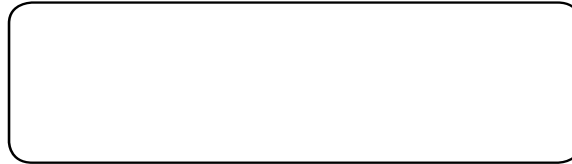
For the first time in the history of manned spaceflight, human beings returned to Earth in a different spacecraft than the one that they had departed in. While American crews had performed the first docking of spaceships, the Gemini astronauts had always come back in the same vehicle that they had started with. Alexei Yeliseyev and Yevgeny V. Khrunov, sent up on Soyuz 5, landed safely (along with Vladimir Shatalov) in Soyuz 4 in the Kazakh SSR (now called the Republic of Kazakhstan).



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
- 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>