



the **CHRONICLE**
 The Almost Monthly Publication of
 the Ionia County Historical Society



Quarterly Chronicle?

Dear Members and Friends -

Our last "Chronicle" newsletter was published on September 17, 2019. That's about 4 months without a newsletter, and for those of us not connected by the Internet and Facebook, that means that very little ICHS information was delivered to the membership during this time.

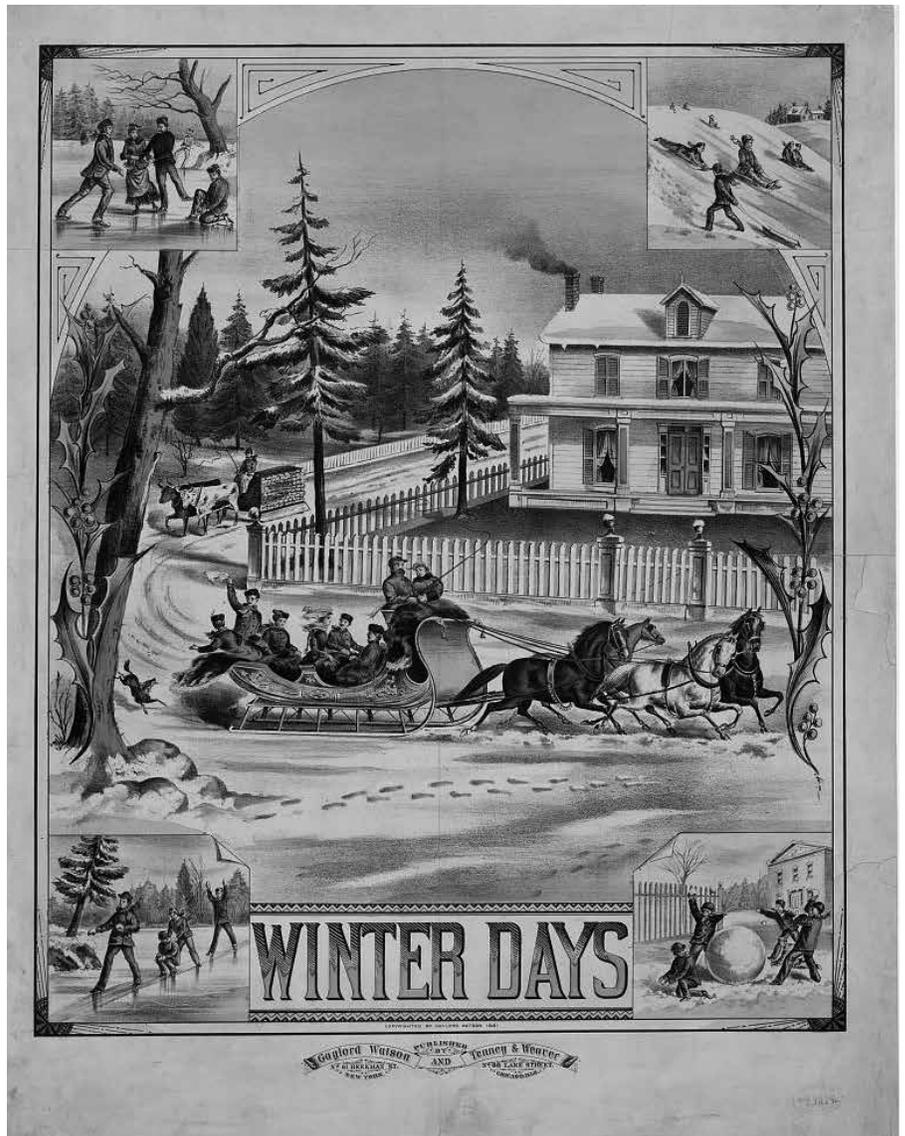
Most of the reason for that was a matter of personal priorities. I had plenty of family challenges to deal with, as well as professional obligations. I apologize for the lack of news. Hopefully, the year 2020 will allow me to keep up with a regular publication schedule.

To make that happen, I've proposed to the Board that we change the newsletter to a quarterly publication, and to focus more on activities, events, historical information and projects than just publishing the minutes of our meetings. My intention is to summarize the minutes into more of an article format. (Detailed meeting minutes will still be available from the Secretary for anyone who's interested, of course.)

So this is the first of those quarterly newsletters. January, April, July, and October will be the newsletters, and there will be event-specific postcards sent to members in between those newsletter dates to keep you up to date.

Thanks for your understanding, and again, I'm sorry for the lack of information over the past few months. Here's to a successful 2020 for the ICHS!

- David M., Secretary, ICHS



Past News & Events — OCTOBER:

On October 2nd, the members of the ICHS gathered together for the Annual Meeting. President Linda C. reviewed upcoming events and activities, including the monthly Sundays for the season and Holiday open house schedule (seeking volunteers to host at the Blanchard House). She also thanked our hosts for special tours this month, including several Scout groups and an auto club. In support of the "Thursday Night on the Bricks" event in downtown Ionia, the ICHS will be giving away books - many, many books donated from the estate of Joan and Joe McCord by the family.

Treasurer Kathleen Cook reported on incoming memberships and recent donations, including a generous donation from life-member Sarah Hamilton. Board member Stacy Tchorzynski also reported that her recent "birthday challenge" brought in \$500 in donations for us!

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David M. reported that the Freeport Historical Society was asking for folks to participate in a large celebration in August of 2020 to commemorate Women's Suffrage in Michigan. David will share additional information as it becomes available.

Kathleen Cook suggested that the ICHS could be more environmentally responsible if we stopped using paper, plastic, and foam cups. Instead, she suggested using washable coffee mugs that are souvenirs of Ionia businesses and events.

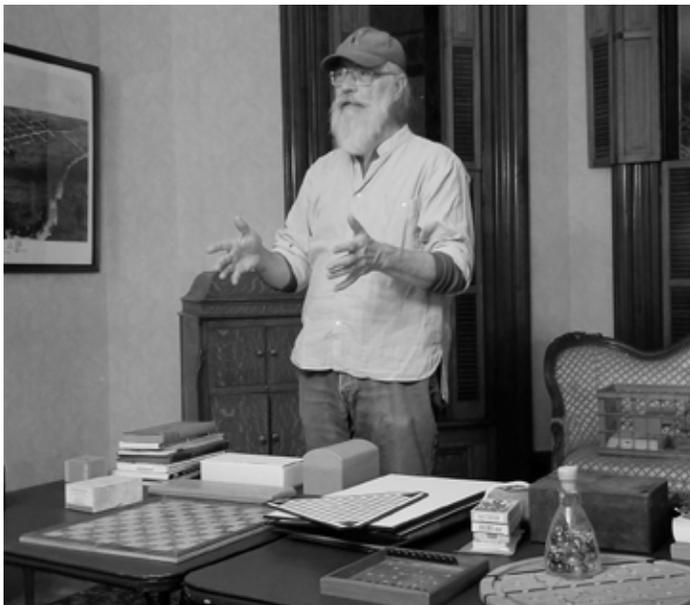
The Cemetery Tour was once again a great success! There was a bit of a chill in the wind, but we had very good attendance and made good money. There were a host of suggestions to help improve future tours. We will be looking for sponsors to help pay for our few expenses at the event, and many attendees asked for our subjects' biographies to be offered as a pamphlet they could take away after the event.

The Annual Meeting was called to order at 7:55 on the same evening, and ballots were collected both mailed-in and from members at the meeting. The result was the election of Stacy T. and Kathleen Cook (incumbents) and Bryan Kimble. Thanks to Ron Thomas for throwing his hat in the ring as well. The Annual Meeting was adjourned by 8:20 p.m.

The new Board assembled directly after the meeting, and they elected the following officers for the coming year: President Kathleen Cook, Vice President Katelyn Mooney, Treasurer Mary Kimble, and Secretary David McCord.

NOVEMBER:

In November, the monthly program meeting was a presentation from David McCord about Victorian Parlor Games and the roots of the



board games that are still popular today. He engaged several members in the audience in a demonstration of "Tableau" - a version of Charades in which the clue-giving team strikes a pose, and the other team tries to guess the scene.

The November 27th Board meeting was held an hour early (a last-minute change to the schedule). On the agenda was a call for a "Publicity Committee" and ICHS President Kathleen Cook nominated David McCord for the position. He said he would give it some thought and come back to the Board with a proposal.

Mary Kimble reported that she, as Treasurer, was working on a membership drive, with postcard reminders to past members and Business Buddies. This will be mailed out the first of the year so as not to get lost in the Holiday festivities.

The ICHS calendar for 2020 was discussed for some time, and the results can be seen in the Events Calendar in this issue. The Board continues to invite suggestions from members for monthly programs, and would encourage someone to take over as Program Chairman to handle this aspect of our yearly activities!

DECEMBER:

Linda C. represented the ICHS at the "Festival of Tables" event at the FUMC, and Katelyn Mooney was again in charge of a successful ICHS booth at the Mrs. Claus Bazaar this year. December Sundays at the Blanchard House were well attended, even though we were short of hosts on a couple of those days. Thanks to those who could help out.

Linda also reported that the Raffle permit has been received and she will have tickets printed soon so we can start selling the first of the year. Prizes will be: First Place - an ICHS souvenir throw; Second Place - a free rental of the Blanchard House for an evening; Third Place - a packet of local gift cards and certificates for a "night on the town". IF you're interested in buying or selling tickets for this important fund-raiser, please contact Linda at 527-4945.

Help Wanted!

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!



Our calendar of upcoming events.

Additional information and changes (where necessary) are posted on our Google Calendar and Facebook page.

January 8th — Our annual “Happy New Year” dinner at the Lamplight for members and guests. We will meet at 7:00 and order from the menu.

January 29, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House (Unless Otherwise Notified.)

February 5th, 7:00 p.m. — A visit to Greg and Kathleen’s historic home (just next door to the Blanchard House). We visited this house last year after they purchased it from Gordon Wright’s family, and now we will see the results of their year-long restoration efforts.

February 26, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House (Unless Otherwise Notified.)

March 6th, 7:00 p.m.— (Tentative) A visit to Public Safety to talk about the history of police and fire services, as well as present services provided by them.

March 25th, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House

April 3rd, 7:00 p.m. — Show & Tell session - a review of recently donated items and “finds” from the ICHS archives. (Possible tour of Paul Lentz’s apartment in a historic downtown building.)

April 29th, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House

May 2nd - 3rd — The Tri-River Museum Network’s “Spring Into The Past” weekend marking the start of the museum season. The Blanchard House will be open for tours both days.

May 6th, 7:00 p.m. — Annual program of Historical Music from Three Husbands on the Loose and Colleen Farrell.

May 2020 also features the annual Upstairs/ Downtown Tours in Ionia’s historic business district. The Board is seeking a new chairperson to take over this annual event - one of our most popular fund raisers.

May 27th, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House

June 3rd, 7:00 p.m. — Program to be determined. Members are encouraged to make suggestions or requests for monthly programs. The Board is seeking a chairperson for finding and scheduling programs!

June 24, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House

July 1, 7:00 p.m. - Our annual Independence Day Pot-Luck at the Blanchard House.

Our usual Weekly Activities.

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 Mary Kimble, 616-897-6592.

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.

Help with standing committees and our many events and activities throughout the year is greatly appreciated. (And you’ll enjoy it, too!)

HOSTING to welcome our visitors to the Blanchard House! From March through December, the Blanchard House is open for tours on the first Sunday of each month from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. (Other tours are scheduled by special arrangement when possible.) Volunteers are needed to staff the house on these afternoons, either as tour guides, greeters, or companions. To help, please contact a Board member.



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



WAYBACK



1820 - 200 Years Ago:

January 29 – George IV of the United Kingdom ascended the throne, on the death of his father George III after 59 years on the throne. (Yes, the King George that "lost the colonies" in the 1770s.) This ended the period known as the British Regency.



January 30 – Irish Royal Navy captain Edward Bransfield landed on the mainland of Antarctica. The mainland had just been discovered by a Russian vessel a few weeks earlier - the first notion of a land mass under the southern ice fields.

February 6 - The US population announced at 9,638,453. African Americans numbered 1,771,656 (18.4%). On the same day, the first organized emigration of blacks back to Africa left New York for Sierra Leone, and the American Colonization Society started a settlement of 86 blacks in present-day Liberia.



March 3 – The Missouri Compromise became law, allowing the admission of Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state. President James Monroe was in office, and his daughter Maria became the first child of a President to marry in the White House on March 8th.

March 26 - Future Mormon church leader Joseph Smith had his "First Vision" in a wooded area near Manchester, New York. The location is now known as the Sacred Grove.

1870 - 150 Years Ago:

Early 1870 was a significant time in the reconstruction of the United States after the dissolution of the Confederacy. As the states conformed to the readmission process, the military governors appointed by the President were dismissed and local governance restored. On the 10th of January, the Georgia state legislature officially reconvened, on the 16th, Virginia was readmitted, and Mississippi followed on February 23rd. Finally, on March 30, Texas became the last confederate state readmitted to Union.

January 3 - Construction began on the famous Brooklyn Bridge in New York. It wasn't completed until May 24, 1883.



January 20 - Integration got off to a good start when Hiram R. Revels was elected to fill the unexpired term of Jefferson Davis as US Senator for Mississippi. This story, though not known by many, has tremendous significance in the nation's history. A week after this election, the state of Iowa ratified the 15th Amendment of the United States

Constitution allowing suffrage for all races & colors. By March 30, the Amendment was signed into law.



January 23 - The bloody genocide by the U.S. Government called "the Indian Wars" raged on. On this day, 173 Blackfoot were killed in Montana by the US Army. 140 of them were women & children.

1920 - 100 Years Ago:

During January, the League of Nations held their first assembly in Paris. One of their earliest resolutions was to recognize

the perpetual neutrality of Switzerland. In March, the US Senate rejected the Treaty of Versailles for a second time, refusing to ratify the League of Nations' covenant. Thus, the US maintained a policy of isolation by not joining the rest of the world's cooperative efforts.

February 14 - The League of Women Voters was formed in Chicago.

March 28 - The "Palm Sunday Tornadoes" affected the entire Great Lakes region and Deep South states with no less than 37 separate storms. Many homes and farms were destroyed and 11 deaths were recorded through central Michigan.

1970 - 50 Years Ago:

The Beatles last recording session as a group was wrapped on January 4th at EMI studios. The final song was the highlight of the album: "Let It Be." Three weeks later was the release of "Bridge over Troubled Water" - the fifth and final studio album by Simon & Garfunkel (Grammy Award: Album of the Year). On March 27, Ringo Starr released his first solo album, entitled "Sentimental Journey." Putting this in perspective, March 21 was the television debut of the Jackson 5 on "American Bandstand".



"M*A*S*H" was released on January 25th. Directed by Robert Altman, starring Donald Sutherland and Elliott Gould, the award-winning film was one of the first to receive a "PG" rating (previously classified as "M"). On February 4, "Patton" premiered in New York City. Directed by Franklin J. Schaffner and starring George C. Scott, the film earned the Academy Award for Best Picture.



January 2 - The US population reached 293,200,000. In March, the US Government lowered the voting age from 21 to 18, put an end to commercial whale hunting, and the Supreme Court ruled that draft evaders could not be penalized after 5 years.

January 16 - Buckminster Fuller received the Gold Medal award from the American Institute of Architects.

March 5 - The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) went into effect, seeking to inhibit the spread of nuclear weapons. Under the treaty, all 190 "states-parties" that signed the treaty commit to pursue "general and complete disarmament," and the non-nuclear-weapons parties agreed they would not develop or acquire nuclear weapons.

Ironically, the US exploded its 500th nuclear bomb on March 26th (strictly experimental.)



SOUVENIRS

MEMORIES & MOMENTOS **IONIA COUNTY** **HERITAGE & HISTORY**
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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)



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

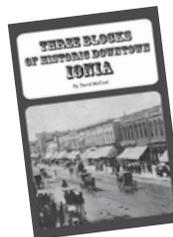
DVDs are available for \$10 each!

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

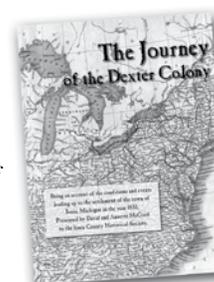
A History of Bertha Brock Park on its 80th “Birthday” by David McCord. \$6 each



Walking Tour of Historic Downtown Ionia - 40 pages of history by David McCord. \$5 each

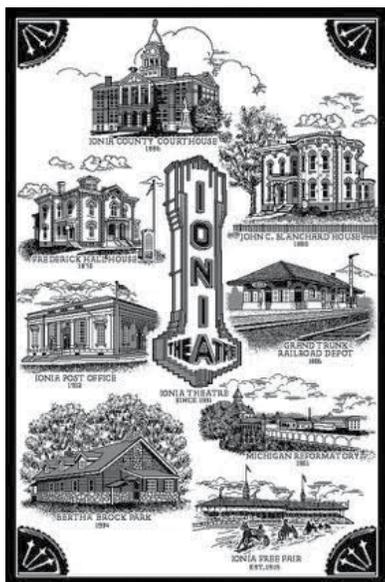
The Journey of the Dexter Colony, 1833, by David and Annette McCord. A detailed history of the settling of Ionia, fully illustrated.

\$12 each
(\$15 with postage)



< 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



Exclusive 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.)



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, P.O. Box 176, Ionia, MI 48846.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, St., Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please Check Your
Membership Type:

- Regular Membership = \$20 Per Person
- Business Buddy = \$40
- Corporate = \$250
- Life Member = \$1000
- Student (under 18) FREE
- Enclosing an additional Gift = \$ _____

I am a:

- Renewing Member
- New Member

If you're a new member, how did you hear about us?

Send my newsletter by US Mail.

Send a link to get my newsletter by email.

Got something to donate?

The Historical Society accepts most donations of antique and vintage photos, documents, and 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 org.)



Ionia County Historical Society 2020 Board of Directors and Officers

- Kathleen Cook, President — 616-527-2626
- Katelyn Mooney, Vice President — 616-902-7777
- Barb Ehlert, House Rentals — 616-522-0844
- Bryan Kimble, Director — 616-897-6592
- Stacy Tchorzynski, Director — 517-763-1770
- David McCord, Secretary — 616-527-3784
- Mary Kimble, Treasurer — 616-897-6592

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



Visit us at www.IoniaHistory.org
and find us on Facebook, too!

Thanks!