

Washtenaw Historical Society

News

November, 1973

Next meeting will be November 15 at 8:00 p. m.
at Ann Arbor Federal Savings -- Liberty at Division
Ann Arbor Community Room in basement

Use rear entrance - well lighted - ample parking
back of building at Division and Washington Streets

Subject of meeting: EARLY MICHIGAN ARTISTS
Speaker: Michael Church

COMING EVENT: Christmas Party -- December 13th
at Ann Arbor Federal Savings - Liberty at Division Sts.
Santa suggests that each bring an inexpensive gift to
exchange -- please indicate whether for female or male!

NOTE: First meeting of 1974 will be January 24th at the Ann Arbor
Federal Savings -- Liberty at Division Sts. Frank Wilhelme will
speak about Judge Samuel Dexter.

The Society has been saddened by the recent deaths of Hudson Morton and
Mrs. Natalie Wahr Sallade.

The Michigan Historical Society held its 99th Annual Meeting in Niles re-
cently. Dr. Robert Warner was elected President of the Society. The 100th
Annual Meeting of the Society will be held in Ann Arbor. Dr. Warner
announced this at the closing meeting of the Society and introduced Hazel
Proctor who welcomed all members of the State Society to the meeting in 1974.

Frank Wilhelme, Executive Secretary of the State Society and Mrs. Wilhelme
were present as were the following: Franklin Everett, Ralph and Lydia Muncy
from Ann Arbor, and Mrs. Natalie Edmunds from Ypsilanti, a Director of
the State Society.

NEWSLETTER STAFF: Ethelyn Morton is in charge of the Newsletter. The
Muncys have written and published the September and October issues and
Ola Gates has assisted the Muncys with this issue.

Meetings of other Historical Groups in the County

COUNTY HISTORICAL NEWS

By our next issue we hope to have established contact with all of the historical groups throughout the county so we can keep you informed of their activities. Following is what we have right now:

DEXTER -- The Dexter Area Historical Society meets every other month. The next meeting will be Thursday, November 29 at 7:30 P. M. at the Wylie School. The speaker will be John Cummin, Director of the Clarke Historical Library at Central Michigan University. His subject will be "Michigan and the Gold Rush."

The Dexter Society will also hold a bazaar on December 1, from 10:00 A. M. to 4:00 P. M. Place: Wylie School, 3060 Kensington. Lunch will be served from 11:30 A. M. to 1:30 P. M.

MILAN -- Next meeting, Wednesday, November 21, 1973 at the Milan Community House, Wabash Street at the Lake. Time: 7:30 P. M. Judge Campbell will speak: Milan and Washtenaw County. Warren Hale is President of the Milan Society. Regular meetings are the third Wednesday of each month.

SALINE -- Will have a potluck supper and Christmas party on December 6. For additional information, telephone Mrs. J. H. Moser, tel. 429-4135

YPSILANTI -- The Ypsilanti Historical Society has a Museum in a charming house next to the City Hall. It is open on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 2:00 to 4:00. During the past year they have conducted a series of craft demonstrations on such things as spinning, weaving, making clothespin dolls. On October 28 and 29 Lydia Muncy demonstrated the making of corn husk dolls. Information on further demonstrations may be obtained by calling the Museum -- phone 482-4990.

The next meeting of the Ypsilanti Historical Society will be an afternoon meeting on December 9. For additional information, telephone the Museum, telephone 482-4990.

More about Board Members and Committees of the Society

RUTH PICKL, Board member, was born in Kingsville, Ontario. She graduated from the University of Western Ontario in Nursing and came to Michigan the same year. The Pickls have four children ranging in age from 19 to 10. Her interest in things historical was sparked by the acquisition of two pieces of antique furniture which had to be refinished. She has lived in a number of places in Michigan, coming here from Jackson. In Jackson she belonged to Questors, an organization devoted to the study of antiques and she has organized a chapter of that group here. At present she is Secretary of the Ann Arbor Historical Foundation and President of the Friends of the Foundation.

DAVID POLLOCK, our Vice President and Program Chairman, is a Hoosier by birth but his great grandfather settled in the Cassopolis area of Michigan in 1830. Dave received his BA degree from the University of Michigan and an MA from Eastern Michigan University. He edited the Michigan Tradesman Magazine, published in Grand Rapids, the oldest business magazine in the state. For fourteen years he was on the U of M Public Relations Staff leaving this position in 1966 to join the staff of Washtenaw Community College. His title is Administrative Dean -- which means Assistant to the President. Members of the Society remember Dave best for his interesting study of the history of Webster Church presented at a meeting of the Society in that church. He frequently teaches a course in Michigan history and will be conducting such a course for Washtenaw Community College in Saline in the near future. The Pollocks have a son doing graduate work in biology at Western and a daughter attending McGill University. (The McGill who founded McGill University was a fur trader who made much of his money in the fur trade in Michigan according to our Vice President.

LOUISE FRAUMANN (Mrs. Harlin Fraumann) is one of our Regional Vice-Presidents. She traces her ancestry to William Brewster of Mayflower fame. Her father was an army officer who was stationed at Fort Wayne in Detroit at the time of her birth. Her childhood and youth were spent in many places, Puerto Rico among others, but she returned to Michigan to attend the University of Michigan from which her parents had graduated. She majored in English and French and had a minor in history. An interest of her family in genealogy and the many places in which she has lived account, in some measure, for her interest in history. She shares this interest with her husband whose college major was history. The Fraumanns have three grown sons. We understand that the property which they have purchased on Fisk Road, Clinton, has an interesting history. Perhaps they will share the story with us.

JOHN DANOVICH, publicity chairman, was a school teacher until he found the problems of a modern classroom not to his liking. He is now a member of the Beau Brian Agency (Publishing). He publishes "On the Town", "For Your Pleasure", and "Ann Arbor Scene". The Danoviches have three children.

MARJORIE BROWN and HELEN SCHMUTZ are our official "greeters." Marjorie was for many years a Buyer in the Purchasing Department of the University, now retired. She is, by the way, a life member of the Society. Helen after a brief period of teaching, returned to Ann Arbor and has worked in various departments of the University. At the time of retirement she was in the Alumni Catalogue Office.

MARY STEFFEK is in charge of refreshments. Mary was also brought up in Ann Arbor. She is now a Junior in the University majoring in history.

WYSTAN STEVENS, a life member of the Society, is Publications Chairman. He was brought up in Ann Arbor, received a BA degree from the U of M in history. Since then he has devoted his time and energy to the history of Washtenaw County, particularly Ann Arbor.

Guess Who

Mrs. CURRY (?) is a native of Ann Arbor. She was born and lived her early life in one of the houses built by John Allen. Across the street from her home was the millinery shop run by Mrs. Rentschler, mother of the Fred Rentschler who ran a photographic studio on Huron Street for many years. (The Ann Arbor City Hall is now in that portion of Huron St.) In those days "ladies" saved their hats from one season to the next. When the ribbons and flowers became faded, the hat was taken back to the millinery shop and ribbons, flowers, feathers, -- any trimmings, were replaced. Our mystery lady recalls the many faded ribbons, flowers, and other trimmings, she and her sister were given and which they in turn used to create fabulous fashions for their dolls. Quoting from her own story, ". . . as the family became larger the little house . . . grew too small, so they built a two-story brick building in front of the little frame house. It had a living room and three bedrooms upstairs. The first floor became a store. The kitchen, dining room, pantry, and a large bedroom we still used in the little frame house with its garden, a large locust tree, and a beautiful grape arbor. A little after the turn of the century this little house was torn down to make room for a large brick two-story building. By this time Ann Arbor had a water system, so we had one of the early bathrooms in the city, with a metal bath tub, a marble lavatory and a toilet with a wooden box near the ceiling, the tank for the water, and a long chain to flush it. My school mates often walked home from school with me, just to flush the toilet as they all had outside toilet facilities."

Her parents were among the founders of Zion Lutheran Church. She taught the first English speaking Sunday School class in that church. However, it was not well attended as the families in the church still clung to the German language. Later, the teacher of the primary section of Trinity Lutheran Church left and Mrs. Curry (?) was asked to take this, which she did, continuing to teach Sunday School there until her marriage. As many young women did, following graduation from Ann Arbor High School, she attended a summer institute and passed the examination which accredited her to teach in a rural school. A tiny person, she often had pupils who were head and shoulders taller than she during her three years of teaching. Although she enjoyed teaching, she found the salary meager, especially since she had no salary during the three summer months. In one school she received \$27.50 per month in the fall and spring and \$35.00 a month during the winter months when she had to build the fire in the big pot-bellied stove. During her last year of teaching she took a course in shorthand by correspondence and when school closed she took typing in the Shelby Moran Business School on North University Avenue. Before school opened in the fall she was working for a professor in the Engineering College and was soon busy with the correspondence of six professors in that College.

Mrs. Curry (?) has been energetic and resourceful in whatever she has undertaken. Her marriage has been a happy one and her one daughter, a great joy to both parents. Homemaking with all its ramifications has not prevented her from being active in affairs of her church as well as many organized groups. She has a host of friends. One of her prize possessions is a dish given to her when she was a small child, by her Sunday School teacher, "Bertie" Muehlig.