

MUSEUM ON  
MAIN STREET

A Museum Of County Life

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*Impressions* is published seven times a year, from September to May

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The Washtenaw County Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) organization. Annual Dues, which are from January through December are:  
Individual: \$15; Couple/Family: \$25; Student or Senior (60+) \$10; Senior Couple: \$19; Business/Association: \$50; Patron: \$100.

# IMPRESSIONS

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER • FOUNDED 1857

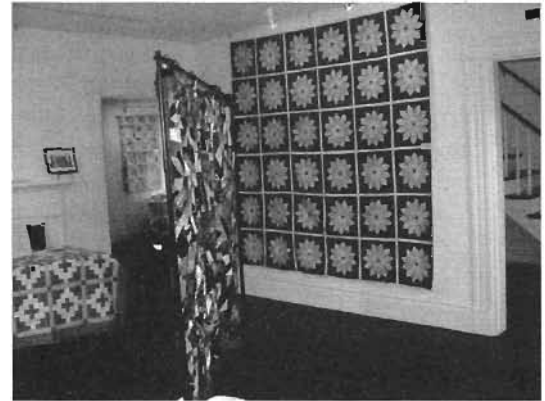
## Displayed Quilts Preserve County History

Our summer exhibition, MoMS Quilts of Washtenaw County, ran from July 17 to September 4. The exhibit showcased 32 quilts from our collection and five that were on loan. Included were two autograph quilts with many well-known county names, five doll quilts, log cabin quilts, patchwork quilts, several quilts from the 1930s and six crazy quilts.

One of the crazy quilts has a silk ribbon "Souvenir of Detroit Art Fair Association September and October 1883" sewn into one of the blocks. The quilt was donated by the estate of Sarah Jacobs Malcolm, who was the granddaughter of Ella and Junius Beal. Junius's signature can be found on the back of the quilt along with drawings and many other signatures. The quilt was used as a casket cover for the funerals of Sarah's mother, Loretta Beal Jacobs, and her sister, Loretta Jacobs Edwards.

As we were planning the exhibit we received a new crazy quilt donated by Christina Biava of Missouri. She found the quilt in a home more than 30 years ago. The quilt has a center section embroidered "Father" and "Mother" surrounded by blocks with many first names and initials. In one block there is an 1884 campaign ribbon stating "For Congress Capt. E.P. Allen of Washtenaw."

Captain Edward P. Allen served with the 29<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Michigan Volunteer Infantry in the Civil War, graduated from the University of Michigan with a law degree in 1867, served as a prosecuting attorney in Washtenaw County from 1873-1875, was elected to the Michigan House of Representatives in 1876 and again in 1878 and was mayor of Ypsilanti in 1880. He lost the 1884 U.S. House of Representative election but did win in 1886 and served as a Republican from Michigan's 2<sup>nd</sup> congressional district from 1887 to 1891. As one of Washtenaw County's leading Republicans, he gave the address nominating Ann Arbor publisher Rice Beal for Governor of Michigan in 1880. Rice Beal was the uncle of Junius Beal.



## Chelsea on Display

*Industry & Art in Chelsea*, an exhibition presented by the Chelsea Area Historical Society, will move into the Museum on Main Street following the quilt exhibit. The Chelsea exhibition follows the evolution of Chelsea from its industry-focused days to the currently flourishing art scene. Visitors will be able to trace the history of businesses such as Frank P. Glazier's Glazier Stove Works; Federal Screw Works; and the Chelsea Milling Company, producer of Jiffy for four generations of Holmes family ownership. Representing art in the community are Chelsea's Cornet Band; E. E. Shaver, a photographer in Chelsea for 50 years; Joe Hale, a native son who has worked as a layout artist with Walt Disney for 35 years; and the Purple Rose Theatre Company. To learn about Ann Arbor's interesting neighboring city, be sure to stop by MoMS from September 25 through November 30. The museum is open Saturdays and Sundays and by appointment.

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HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY  
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**LESLIE LOOMANS****President's Letter**

Missing a goal generally isn't a time for celebration. Our goal had been to create a job description for a new part-time position and then fill the position by April 1, 2010. Nevertheless we are celebrating because subject to completion and signing of an employment contract we will achieve our goal by the first week of September.

It took more work (and time) than we had anticipated to create the right job description, publicize it, receive applications, select those candidates to interview and finally, at the August board meeting, the Board of Directors met and ranked the final four applicants for our new part-time paid administrator position. This position will be partially funded by eliminating external payments for editing and layout of our newsletter, *Impressions*, which is published seven times annually. Our new employee, having the appropriate experience and skills, will become editor of the newsletter. Additionally there will be time allocated to promotion and advertising, exhibits, fundraising and outreach.

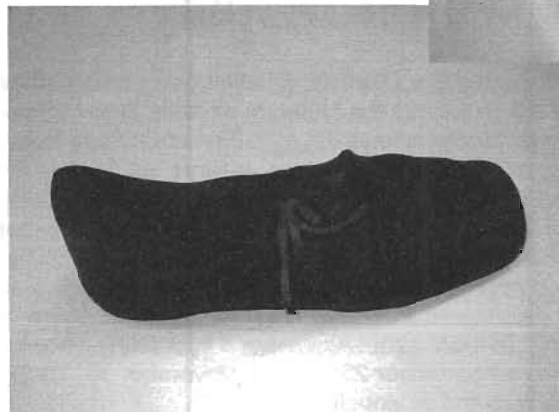
The addition of this position, importantly, will allow our board members to better focus their time on planning and development. We look forward to the announcement of our new employee.

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## Help Solve This Mystery!

On two separate occasions paper bags have mysteriously appeared on MoMS's back porch. The first bag contained five single shoes with a note indicating they had belonged to a Washtenaw County farmer and that more information would follow. Each shoe is accompanied by a museum-style worksheet from 2006.

The second bag appeared about a month later. It contains two lady's straw hats, three white blouses from about 1900, and two pairs of long white kid gloves. There is no note with this one.



Please call the WCHS, at 734-662-9092, if you can help solve the mystery of the bags and their contents.

# Endangered Buildings Need Help

The Museum's spring exhibition, "Use it or Lose it: Historic Preservation in Washtenaw County," featured three endangered historic buildings in Ypsilanti, all crying out for preservation. Recognizing that resources are possibly too limited to attend to all three at this time, visitors were invited to vote for which of the buildings they thought should receive attention first.

Four questions were posed to help visitors decide:

- How significant is the building's historic value?
- What is its artistic value?
- How immediate is its need for preservation?
- Is there enough of the original building remaining to warrant preservation?

Some 4 percent were so enthusiastic that they voted for all three buildings. Of the remaining 96 percent, 22 percent supported saving the Thompson Block, with its extensive historic value and need for immediate attention, as their first choice. Twenty nine percent voted for restoration of the train depot, perhaps more because of a renewed interest in train transportation than about immediate need. The strongest vote (45 percent) was reserved for the 1888 Starkweather Chapel, with its Tiffany stained glass windows and great artistic value.

According to a 2006 report by local architect Denis Schmiedeke, the chapel's collapse is "imminent." In his report, Schmiedeke points out that the building is reaching a point of no return



**This three-story, Civil War-era building, known as the Thompson Block, sits at the eastern edge of Depot Town in Ypsilanti. The city is currently gearing up to make a decision to begin work on the project in three phases: Phase 1 will stabilize the structure; Phase 2 involves rebuilding the structure to its condition prior to a fire last fall; Phase 3 includes renovations and build-out of tenant spaces.**



**Starkweather Chapel was designed by architect George O. Mason, of Detroit. The chapel was a gift of Mary Ann Starkweather to the community in memory of her late husband. She included four Tiffany art glass windows as additional memorials to other individuals important to her. For information about what is happening with the building, we suggest contacting the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation, [www.yhf.org](http://www.yhf.org)**

and will be lost if no action is taken within the next few years, and that was four years ago. The Friends of Highland Cemetery made an unsuccessful effort in 1988 to raise \$25,000 to finance repairs. Museum on Main Street visitors think another effort needs to be made - immediately.

**Discussions are currently in progress regarding the renovation of the Ypsilanti Depot.**



## T-Shirt Quilters Wanted

We have received a donation of many T-shirts with local advertising on them and are looking for volunteers interested in turning the shirts into a one-of-a-kind quilt. Please call us at 734-662-9092 if you would like to help with this creative project.

## Upcoming Area Events

Washtenaw County is rich in history and people who care about history. We will list classes and events from area historical organizations in future issues of *Impressions*, as space allows. Below are the websites for three organizations we have heard from this month. Please visit them to find out about their fall offerings.

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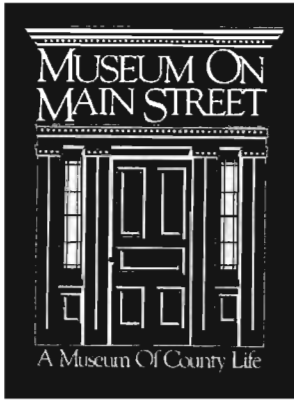
**SALEM AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
<http://sahshistory.org>

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**KEMPF HOUSE MUSEUM**  
[www.kempfhousmuseum.org](http://www.kempfhousmuseum.org)

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**GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHTENAW COUNTY**  
<http://gswcinfo.blogspot.com/>



**WASHTENAW COUNTY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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**Sunday • 3 PM  
October 17, 2010**

Bob Soderstrom will lead a tour  
of the Big House for WCHS members  
Meet at the MI Stadium Junge Center  
Charge: \$1 per person  
for the first 30 reservations  
For 31 + the cost will be \$30 per person  
Send checks to:  
WCHS • P O Box 3336  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3336

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY *IMPRESSIONS*

SEPTEMBER 2010

## Make Note Dates to Remember

2010-2011 General Meeting Schedule • 2 PM

**Sunday, November 21**  
**Women's Suffrage • Zoe Behnke/Jeannine Delay**  
**Glacier Hills Retirement Community • Hanson Room**

**Sunday, February 20**  
**Electric Trolleys of Washtenaw County**  
**Chelsea Retirement Center**

**Sunday, March 20**  
**Women in the Civil War • Jane Schultz**  
**Ann Arbor District Library**

**Sunday, April 17**  
**Joint Meeting with the Genealogical Society of**  
**Washtenaw County • The Civil War • Tom Collier**  
**St. Joseph Educational Center**

## Mission Statement

*The mission of the Washtenaw  
County Historical Society  
is to educate  
and inspire our community  
to engage in the preservation  
and presentation of area history.*