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SOCIETY OFFICERS

Tom Heintzleman -
President
Lydia Vierson -
Vice President
Marian Bolhuis - Secretary
Marie Vierson - Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS

Pauline Barton
Marilyn DeGood
Mildred (Susie) Harter
Frank Hoover
Freda Ide
Jeannie Leazier
Kristen Wildes

From the President

By Tom Heintzleman

The Story of OUR Times

A generation or more from now what will be said of us? As importantly, what will be said of our actions? Will our time "in charge" be seen as positive and forward-moving? Will it be recorded as a point in time when battles against the problems and challenges of the day were waged and won? Or will this time period be remembered for mere survival? That we simply "held on" and reacted to outside influences? So many questions, so little time...

Stewards of our Shores

It has been said that in Michigan you cannot be more than six miles away from a major body of water (e.g., a river or lake). Here, in what was once known as the Old Northwest Territory – and what in times past was one of our nation's frontiers – we are temporary stewards of many natural wonders. Included among our treasures are our rivers, lakes and streams. Our small museum and historical society belong to the Tri-River Network of small museums that (at least originally) were located on or near one of three rivers: the Grand, Thornapple or Flat. Part of our society's mission, of course, is to preserve our heritage, be it natural or man-made.

Protectors of our Village and Township

In addition to saving our natural resources for current and future generations, we are tasked with trying to preserve buildings, artifacts

and similar examples of past residents' contributions to our shared history. We do not do this simply for the sake of saving every old building or, as my wife would say, hanging on to every piece of "old junk." Rather, we strive to act when and where **we can** to advance the mission entrusted to our historical society. Included in this mission is the ability to "tell the story of Ada." Representative structures of Ada, past and present, are tools we can use in fulfilling that trust.

Possible Expansion of Museum Grounds

Hopefully you have read about or otherwise heard that we have been exploring the possibility of adding to our small museum. The current state of our museum and grounds is rather poor. We do not currently have the space, facilities and equipment to properly collect, catalog, safeguard, and display the many wonderful artifacts that have been generously donated to the society or township. We are at the proverbial crossroads where we must, as a community and society, decide which path we will take into the future. Will we stand still, unmoving because of fear or uncertainty? Or will we seize this moment in time, make the best decisions we can, and move boldly down the road toward our destiny? Only YOU can answer that question. If you have ideas, or care to help, please contact me at heintzl@comcast.net or 682-0494. Thank you.

Spring into the Past

Once again, for the 7th year, Tri Rivers Historical Museum Network will have their Small Museum Tour on Saturday and Sunday, May 2nd and 3rd, from 11 am to 5 pm. All of the museums, including the Averill Historical Museum, will be open and all will be FREE that weekend.

To encourage everyone to visit the museums, we are trying something new. When you visit your first museum, pick up a coupon along with a brochure. Then during May, June, July and August, please visit more museums and have your

coupon punched at each one. Turn in your punched coupon, with your name and address, at any museum by Sept. 14th to enter for CASH PRIZES. 1st prize is \$200, 2nd prize is \$100, and 3rd prize is \$50.00. In case of a tie, a drawing will be held.

The other participating museums are: Alton Historic Church Museum, Lowell; Belding Museum, Belding; Bowne Township Museum and School, Alto; Boston-Saranac Historical Depot Museum, Saranac; Cascade Historical Society, Cascade; Charlton Park Museum,

Hastings; Pine Forest Museum, Edmore; Fallasburg Historical Village and School, Lowell; Fighting Falcon Museum, Greenville; Flat River Historical Museum, Greenville; Freeport Historical Museum, Freeport; Ionia County Historical Society, Ionia; Lake Odessa Depot Museum, Lake Odessa; Lowell Area Historical Museum, Lowell; Lyons/Muir Historical Museum, Lyons; Oakfield Pioneer Heritage Museum, Greenville; and Portland Area Historical Society, Portland.



*The Averill
Historical Museum
of Ada
is open for tours
Friday,
Saturday,
Sunday
from 1:00-4:00 pm*

*and other times by
appointment.*

Curator's Corner

By Nina Harrington

We have received a number of items for our museum including a collection of hats from Susie Harter. Some of the hats were made by Alice Morris many years ago.

The hats are the inspiration for a new display put together by Sandy Connor who has collected lovely hats from the 1800s and early 1900s.

Also, we'll soon have a display of surveyors' instruments in the barn, as well as the horseshoe display featuring horseshoes made by Fred Haskins in his Ada blacksmith shop.



Ada Historical Society Meeting History

By Marian Wride Bolhuis

This is a history of where Ada Historical Society has held their meetings and how the Museum came to be.

Several Ada people met at the home of Carla Black to discuss reviving Ada Historical Society in early 1989. In the spring, a public meeting was held at the Amway Learning Center. Several of us who attended the meeting continued to meet at the Amway Learning Center on a regular basis. We were joined by several more people during the next several years. During this time, Ada Township acquired the Ada Congregational Church building which was built in 1871, as the congregation had built a new church.

The Church building was renovated and became the new Ada Township Hall in 1990. The Historical Society moved their meeting place to the new Township Hall.

We continued to meet at the Ada Township Hall until June 1999. By this time, most of the work was completed on the building for our Museum and we started holding our meetings in the Museum building.

The house that the Museum is in was built about 1875 and it belonged to the Averill family for many years. Ray and Erie May Averill moved into the house in 1925. Later the house remained in the Averill family and was rented out. Frank Averill became the owner after the death of his parents, Frank and Marvelle Averill. Frank continued to rent out the house and in April 1993 he donated the land to the Society, keeping a Life Lease on the house. In April 1997, Ada Township bought the Life Lease from Frank and the deed for the land was transferred to Ada Township, making the Museum and land Ada Township property.

In December 1997, Floyd Chaffee deeded some property he owned on the corner of McCabe

and Conservation to the Society for us to sell. This money was to be used to renovate the house into a Museum, which included tearing off the back part of the house and rebuilding it.

In January 1998, work was started to renovate the house into a museum.

The parking lot and driveway was paid for by Ada Township by giving us a loan, which was paid back. Ada Township received money every month from rent on the water tower to a cell phone company. Part of this rent money was designated to pay the debt of Ada Historical Society to Ada Township.

I understand that the Barn originally belonged to the Averill family. Prior to 1950, Floyd Chaffee purchased the Barn and he used it for storage. Later, Floyd sold the barn to the Ada Community Reformed Church. In September 1999, the church decided they no longer needed the Barn and it was moved to the Museum property. It was in bad condition and Bruce Roark restored it in 2000-2001. Part of the money for the Barn restoration was donated from various sources and Ada Township advanced the balance of the money, which was again paid back from the rent money on the water tower. A donation was received to cover part of the cost to move the barn.

The Korth Family Foundation gave us a nice donation and we put in the Farm Garden and built the garden shed. Master Gardeners planted the beautiful flowers in the yard in 2000.

In the spring of 2001, a number of dahlias were planted in memory of one of our members, Imogene Vader, who had died. Imogene was a teacher at Ada Elementary School for many years and loved the dahlia garden at her home. We have continued to plant the Dahlia Garden every year with the help of Imogene's daughters.

Proposed Bylaws Changes

By Lydia Vierson

After many hours of reviewing other non-profit and historical society bylaws, we found that our bylaws needed further definition of responsibilities and structure of our organization. A number of grammatical and spelling error corrections are also proposed.

We welcome any member input or discussion related to the bylaws. The proposed bylaws will be voted on at our May meeting, so if you have any comments, please forward them to Lydia Vierson vierson@gmail.com. An electronic copy of the complete proposed changes is available by email and hard copies are available at the museum. What follows is a summary of the more significant proposed changes.

Membership: Define honorary membership status.

Set a good standing rule - members are considered in good standing and eligible to vote when dues are current. Members have one month rather than one year grace period after dues become due until they are no longer considered members of our organization. Members during this month grace period are not

eligible to vote until dues are paid. Members who have fallen off the membership roster can apply/pay for membership at any time during the year. Basically we want to make sure that members renew their membership promptly.

Officers: Provide more detail on responsibilities of officers and definition the structure of committees. Revise procedure for annual review/audit of books to be by a third party certified accountant.

Nominating Committee: Proposed creation of a nominating committee and slate for officers (to take effect after 2009 elections).

Other Committees: Further definition of committees and responsibilities/planned annual events.

Meetings: Meetings shall be conducted according to parliamentary procedure. We hope this will shorten meetings and allow us to conduct business in an orderly and efficient manner.

All officers, directors, committee chairmen and committee members are expected to regularly attend meetings and fulfill the duties assigned to them. We want our members to be informed from month to month and provide steady progress towards goals and objectives.

Finances: This is a new article for our bylaws. Previously this information was found under membership

Music on the Lawn



For the 9th year, Music on the Lawn will be returning. It will be held on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 pm on the Museum lawn, 7144 Headley St. In case of rain, it will be held in the Barn.

A schedule of the groups performing will be out shortly. Please stop by the museum to pick one up or check our website at www.adahistorical society.org.

Congratulations!

On Saturday, March 21st, we set up a display at the **Forest Hills Community Expo** at Ada Christian School. We raffled off

a basket of items from our **Gift Shop**. The lucky winner of the Historical Society basket was **Joe Mancewicz**.

Thank You!

We would like to thank the members who helped at the Forest Hills Community Expo on Saturday, March 21st. We would also like to

thank Jason Van Horn for being Rix Robinson at the Expo and Caroline Van Horn for picking out the costume that Jason wore.

Music CD

Jim Heemstra has written a song, **Reservation Ada**, which the Historical Society will soon have available on CD. The group, Crossroads Country Band, will also have several songs on this disc. The song, **Reservation Ada**, will debut when

the band performs at Music on the Lawn on Tuesday, June 16th. We will then begin selling the CD for \$10.00 each.



Historical Gardens

Once again, several people will be planting a section of the vegetable garden by the barn. Also, the Master Gardeners will be taking care of the flower garden areas again this season. Be sure to stop by and see

the gardens in their glory over the summer.



Aunt Ada's Aprons

Grab your apron and come join the Aunt Ada's Apron Society!

The Apron Society is a fun, social group working together in co-operation with the Ada Historical Society.

They meet the 3rd Thursday of each month at 10:00 am at

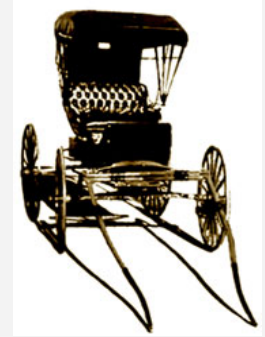
the Averill Historical Museum.

Come and join the fun! If you need an apron, they will have one for you.

Activities for the year include: barn sale fundraiser; helping grow the garden area; 4th of July

Arts in Ada

The annual Arts in Ada celebration will be held on Saturday, May 16th from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm on Bronson Street in Ada. The Historical Society will participate with a booth at the festival.



Arbor Day

Arbor Day festival will be held on Saturday, April 25th at Ada Park from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. The Historical Society will participate with a lumberjack-themed display.

The Ada Historical Society meetings are held on the second Saturday of the month
10:30 am
Averill Historical Museum
7144 Headley, Ada, MI

parade; an afternoon Garden Tea Party; Spring cleaning the Averill Museum; and Farmers Market participation.

For more information about Aunt Ada's Apron Society, please call Angie Zeno at 676-5559.

Upcoming Events...

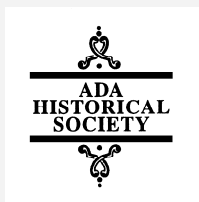
- ➔ April 11, 2009 Easter Bonnets presentation after monthly meeting.
- ➔ April 25, 2009 Arbor Day Celebration, 10:00-2:00 pm, Ada Park
- ➔ May 2 & 3, 2009 Tri-River Tour
- ➔ May 16, 2009 Arts in Ada Celebration, 9:00-4:00 pm
- ➔ June 22-26, 2009 Pioneer Days at the Museum, partnering with Ada Parks Department summer camps

MUSIC ON THE LAWN-Every Tuesday night, June through August, 7:00 pm
Schedule of musical acts coming soon!

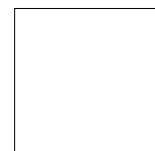
FARMERS MARKET-Every Friday, June through September, 11:00-3:00 pm

Purpose of Ada Historical Society

- ❖ The purpose of the Ada Historical Society shall be to promote the understanding and appreciation of the historical and cultural heritage of Ada Township and the surrounding area, so future generations may take pride and interest in our history.
- ❖ To encourage historical study and research.
- ❖ To collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit historical and cultural objects, artifacts, and sites.
- ❖ To encourage public participation in the activities of the Society through publications, programs, and the operation of a historical museum.



ADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 AVERILL HISTORICAL MUSEUM
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We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.adahistoricalsociety.org