



The Oakland Township Historical Society (OTHS) Newsletter  
[www.oaklandtownshiphistoricalsociety.org](http://www.oaklandtownshiphistoricalsociety.org) Oakland County, Michigan

## President's Thoughts

As we move into fall we can look back on spring and summer that were full of success for our Society.

Thanks to Jeanne Phillips, Gail Palmer and Jean Kroger we had another good and profitable time at the Greater Rochester Heritage Days on May 19 and 20. Our plant sale profit was \$1,172. We had some additional sales from Sue Fox's OTHS general store table. Many thanks to all the volunteers that worked and/or contributed plants this year.



## FLUMERFELT FLEA MARKET

OTHS will again sponsor the Flumerfelt Flea at Cranberry Lake Farm on the weekend of Down on the Farm. On Saturday October 6 our flea market will be open 10 to 5 and on Sunday, October 7, we will be open noon to 5. Members are asked to donate vintage, collectable, antique, rustic, and household items. Please contact Colleen Barkham if you have items to donate: --- We pick up! --- [thsbarkham@hotmail.com](mailto:thsbarkham@hotmail.com) or 248-652-0712.



Inside the Dossin Museum OTHS and RAHS members receive an introduction to the Museum.

In May we also had a field trip that was jointly arranged with the Rochester Avon Historical Society. Colleen Barkham and Carol Tough pulled the trip together. The bus that left the K Mart parking lot at 9 am on its way to Belle Isle was full and the group visited the Dossin Museum, the Conservatory and the Aquarium. After the Belle Isle visit the group lunched at Sinbad's on the river and visited Pewabic Pottery before returning to Rochester.

At the June potluck our member John Sanderson gave a very interesting presentation about the lower east side of Detroit at the turn of the twentieth century. And at this meeting the Society held its annual election and the officers and existing Board of Directors were reelected. Our Recording Secretary, Mary Tischler, has stepped-up to take on the additional job of Program Chair. If she asks you for assistance, please give it willingly.

During July the Society provided funding and labor to restore the logging wheels at the Paint Creek Cider Mill. Tom Asmus and I had fun replacing the Tongue and restoring the paint.



OTHS Members Bill Kroger and Tom Asmus working on the logging wheels.

On September 5 try our potluck at the CLF Barn and hear Rudy Rudolph talk about the Long Journey to Cleveland. On September 8 you can Square Dance the night away at the Barn and on the 15<sup>th</sup> you can visit our booth at Goodison Good Tyme.

In October come to CLF on Saturday the 6<sup>th</sup> for Down on the Farm and the Flumerfelt Flea Market.

Join our Society and take part and have fun!

**Bill Kroger, OTHS President**



Jeanne Phillips and Christina Wolf are ready to help you find your treasure!

## THE CLARENCE AND GRACE PORRITT FARMS

Corner: Dutton and Adams Roads, Oakland Township, MI

Memories of: Marian Porritt Galler

In the Spring of 1935, Clarence and Grace Porritt gave up their hardware store near Romeo, Michigan and moved to Oakland Township to start a dairy farm. They had purchased 200 acres in Oakland Township because it was located near their relatives – the Russell Porritts and the Ora Porritts who had farms on Silverbell Road. When they moved, I was a baby only a few months old and my sister, Martha, was four. Because this was "The Great Depression", money was scarce and our life was much different than it is now.



Marian and Bob Galler

When we first moved to our farm, the house was a big old farmhouse in need of many repairs. My parents decided it would be best to destroy that house so they moved a house from Pontiac onto a new "cellar." They said that the house only cost them \$100 but it cost about \$1000 to have it moved. The barn was also very old, but after a few years, Dad set up a sawmill in our woods on the farm and had the lumber cut to make a new barn. It was a real memorable occasion when we were able to move into the new barn. Mother named it "Bell Braes Farm" - a Scottish name which meant beautiful hills. The barn was painted bright red with white lettering.

One of my earliest memories was of the groceryman coming every week to our house to deliver our groceries. He had a large truck and Mother would make a list every week of the supplies we would need. To get our groceries, we had to go clear to Rochester or Lake Orion and our car was not the best so we were happy to see the groceryman who came clear from Oxford. As we had a dairy farm, we had lots of milk and also always had chickens and many fruits and vegetables from a very large garden. We got a telephone installed when I was about 5 and then Mother could call the groceryman... to add to her order if necessary. Once in a while we would go to Rochester, usually for medicine for the cows. I remember going to the icehouse on Griggs Street for a cake of ice for our icebox which was located in the basement, as this was the coolest spot in the house.

I attended elementary school at the Brewster School – located at the corner of Dutton and Brewster Roads. Of course I walked to school and was happy when I saved enough money to buy a bicycle so I could ride it in the good weather. One year we only had nine students and when I was in the 5th grade, we did not have enough students to have school, so I went to Rochester on the school bus with my sister who was in the 9th grade starting High School at Rochester High School. I was happy that we were able to open our country school again when I was in the 6th grade as I much preferred the one-room school to the one-class school in town.

We always had a Christmas program for our parents at the country school. Mother insisted we had to take piano lessons since she had sold her car when she got married and purchased a piano with the money. Our piano teacher was Mrs. Barnett who lived near "Five Points" - now the Oakland University area. I never did get very good at playing the piano but had to entertain at the

school and church programs since there were not too many farm children who could play piano in those days. We always looked forward to the Christmas programs at school and Church. We went to the Howard Methodist Church on Silverbell Road when the Church across from our house closed.

This was the Oakland Baptist Church and they would have a reunion every summer - We especially enjoyed going to the program, mostly because following the service they would have Dixie cups of ice cream for everyone - It was packed in dry ice and was a real treat. The Christmas boxes of candy received at the school and church programs were also very special - Mother would set the boxes on top of our piano and we would see how many days we could make our candy last.

Christmas was always a time of joy in our house. Mother would make clothes and doll clothes for us - we had many packages under the tree and before we could open them one at a time she would read the Christmas story from the Bible and "The Night Before Christmas". We would sing several Christmas carols and have our own little program.



Marian at the Township Hall  
on her wedding day

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## 2018 - 2019 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

<p>September 5 6:30 pm CLF Barn</p> <p>“The Long Journey to Cleveland” by Rudolph (Rudy) Ruder, pot-luck dinner and awards.</p>	<p>October 13 10 am (field trip)</p> <p>Chaldean Cultural Center guided tour \$10 per person 5600 Walnut Lake Rd W Bloomfield, MI Lunch after</p>	<p>November 7 7:00 pm PCCM</p> <p>“Missing in Action: US Bombardiers and the French Resistance in WWII” by Mary Shier.</p>
<p>December 5 7:00 pm PCUMC</p> <p>“Selections from OTHS Oral History Archives” by Mary Tischler Christmas Carols sing-a-long follows.</p>	<p>January 2019</p> <p>No Meeting This Month Happy New Year!</p>	<p>February 6 7:00 pm location TBD</p> <p>“Motor Sports: The Thrill of the Track” by Marc Trahan.</p>
<p>March 6 7:00 pm CLF Main House</p> <p>“The Burned-over District: Revival, Reform and the Migration to Michigan” by Jim Craft.</p>	<p>April 3 7:00 pm Rochester Mills Beer Co, Rochester</p> <p>“Prohibition History in Detroit” by Steve Johnson, Motor City Brew Tours.</p>	<p>May 4 or TBD Time TBD (field trip)</p> <p>Joint Field Trip with Rochester-Avon Historical Society – details to follow.</p>
<p>June 6 6:30 pm CLF Barn</p> <p>Program to be announced pot-luck dinner, awards and elections.</p>	<p><b>JOIN US AT THESE SPECIAL EVENTS</b></p> <p>Square Dance at CLF Sat Sept 8, 2018 7 – 9 pm Goodison Good Tyme Sat Sept 15, 2018 11 am – 2 pm Down on the Farm Sat Oct 6, 2018 11 am – 2 pm Greater Rochester Heritage Days and OTHS Plant Sale May 18 &amp; 19, 2019</p>	

Pot-lucks are in the Cranberry Lake Farm (CLF) Flumerfelt Barn. CLF Programs are in the Main House. December program is at the Paint Creek Unite Methodist Church (PCUMC), 4420 Collins Rd. CLF is at 384 W. Predmore Rd in Oakland Township. A bad snow storm will mean that we would cancel our program and reschedule it. Join our Society to stay on our mailing list and receive more information about program location, time and details.

### WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS.

The public is welcome to our programs. There is no charge for our programs. For program information or to submit program ideas and speaker suggestions, e-mail Mary Tischler, Program Chairperson, marytischler@comcast.net. For membership or other information contact Sue Fox, Membership Chairperson, (248) 693-9646.

**Visit our Facebook Page @othsmi or our website:** [www.oaklandtownshiphistoricalsociety.org](http://www.oaklandtownshiphistoricalsociety.org)

## **PORRITT FARMS** *(Continued from page 2)*

One of my best Christmas presents was the year I got store-bought skis. I enjoyed many cold snowy days on our hills trying to ski. We always took our sleds to school during the winter and slid down the hills on Dutton Road during the recess breaks.

We usually went shopping in Pontiac for Christmas presents. We parked our car at Sears and walked through the back to the main store. Dad would buy us a pound of candy from the candy counter. He always said that if you couldn't buy it in Pontiac, it wasn't worth buying. Some people went "clear to Detroit" to go shopping. I was about 13 before I ever went to Detroit. My parents let me stay home from school to go with them to take my Aunt and Uncle to the Greyhound Bus Depot in Detroit. I still remember my first look at a car on top of a building with its wheels going round to attract attention.

We did not have a good car until after World War II. We had to park the old one on a hill and let it coast down the hill to get it started. With gas rationing, all the gas stamps we had went to buy gasoline for the tractor. When I was eight years old, my Dad bought a new Farmall tractor. He taught us girls to drive it as he needed help on the farm and he had no sons to help. I hated the haying season but was lucky that we had quit raising potatoes when I was about six, as my sister spent many a long time picking up potatoes. We sold them to the New Era potato chip company in Detroit until the blight came and ruined the potato crop.

Although we usually had a "hired man" to help on the farm, we still had a lot of chores on the farm. I picked strawberries for Mrs. King on Dutton Road for 5 cents a quart and one summer picked cherries for the Dobats who lived next to us, although it was one-half mile away. When we were done haying, Dad would take us to Rochester to the Avon Dairy and we would buy an ice cream cone - a special treat. I also got to play one whole day with the Dobat girls during summer vacation.

When we got the new tractor, Dad sold our work horses. It was my job or my Sister's to get the cows from the pasture for milking in the evening. I was so glad to see the horses go as they would like to chase me and I was very afraid of them.



We also picked all sorts of berries and put them up for the Winter. We had a lot of blackberries in our woods and Mother would make blackberry pie when we had the thrashers at our house. When we bought a combine, we didn't have to have the thrashers come anymore which was a lot of work for the women - They went house to house to help each other with the big dinners necessary to feed so many hungry men.

After going through the 8th grade at the Brewster School, I went to Rochester High School and upon graduating was offered a job to work in their offices. When I was about 18, I met my husband, Bob Galler.

My Father was President of the local East Orion Farm Bureau group and Bob came to our house to pay his Farm Bureau dues. All the farmers around belonged to the Farm Bureau as it was very active at this time. Our cousins - Ila and Stuart Braid - had told their neighbor boy, Bob, that I was about his age, so after being in our house and seeing my high school graduation picture on our piano, he called and asked me for a date. Although I had never met him, my parents said it would be O.K. to go out with him, and after about 3 years of dating, we were married.

We were married July 9, 1955 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Lake Orion and had our wedding reception at the Oakland Township Hall in Goodison. We had a square dance in the upstairs portion of the hall with refreshments in the basement. When we were married Bob was in the Army and when he returned home we built our house at 5750 Adams Road and have been living

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## **OTHS BOARD**



*Bill Kroger, President*

*Diana Borrusch,  
Vice President*

*Sue Fox,  
Treasurer and  
Membership Chair*

*Mary Tischler,  
Recording Secretary and  
Program Chair*

*Colleen Barkham,  
Correspondence Secretary*

*Tom Asmus, Director*

*Barbara Barber, Director*

*Anthony Kowalchik, Director*

*David Phillips, Director*

*Jeanne Phillips, Director*

*Oral history transcription of Marian Galler (Porritt). PDF versions of the Oakland Township Historical Society's newsletters are available online at [www.oaklandtownshiphistoricalsociety.org](http://www.oaklandtownshiphistoricalsociety.org) under NEWS.*

# OTHS Membership Chair Report Sue Fox

The new year has begun, and the renewal of dues is upon us again. The fiscal year for dues is from July 1 to June 30. It's easy to forget what is due when, so I will send out a reminder for those who renew. Membership is important to the collection, protection and preservation of the rich history of our Township. It's each member's contribution and involvement that makes this possible, and we want to thank you. Paying your dues is just one way to help with our mission. Being active in the Society is another. We can always use the help. We would love to see you at upcoming programs and events and encourage your suggestions and ideas for events, or for a display, field trip or other subject. We also invite you to attend any of the board meetings at CLF AT 6:30 the 3<sup>RD</sup> Tues. of each month, excluding January and July.

*Help us to continue to be a Society to be proud of. We welcome new members!  
Share the form below with a friend or neighbor.*



## Membership Application Form

Membership Category:

Additional Donation:

Individual \$18 \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Family \$25 \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Patron \$50 \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Business \$100 \_\_\_\_\_

New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable and mail with this form to :  
Treasurer, Oakland Township Historical Society  
384 Predmore Road, Oakland, MI 48363 (do not send cash)  
For more information contact Sue Fox at 248.693.9646 or  
e-mail othsmember@comcast.net

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

We need your help! Consider donating your memories, time, money, or skills to help us preserve our heritage. Do you have a story to share? Do you want to submit a written memoir to our archives or have us tape an interview with you? Do you have a barn more than 50 years old? Have you found any old arrowheads or other ancient artifacts? Do you want to help with the plant sale at Heritage Days, Flumerfelt Flea, Down on the Farm, restoration of Cranberry Lake Farm, or other fun things? Please indicate below. We will contact you!

YES! \_\_\_\_\_ I have artifacts or historical photos, stories or other information

YES! \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to Volunteer with an event, committee, program, etc.

The OTHS is a 501©(3) charitable organization. All contributions and membership fees are tax deductible as provided by law.

## PORRITT FARMS (Continued from page 4)



there ever since. We have one son, David who is married and lives in Shelby Township, Michigan. I have lived in Oakland Township almost all my life.

The year we were married, my parents sold our farm and saved one acre for us to build our house. The farm is now "The Hills of Oakland" and grows beautiful homes.

In 1950 when my sister married, my parents bought the farm across Adams Road from us and we moved into the house at 3050 Dutton Road and my sister and her husband lived at the 2974 Dutton Road farm until it was sold. This house has been torn down to make way for progress but the house at 3050 Dutton Road is still standing and being used for the time being. My sister has retired from teaching at Utica Schools and lives in Tellico Village near Knoxville, Tennessee.

Many changes have taken place in our Township during my lifetime. I can barely remember dusty Adams Road before it was paved. The WPA workers built the fence along our orchard when the road was paved. Now we can hardly get our car out of our driveway because of the heavy traffic and a traffic light has been installed on the corner of Adams and Dutton Roads. However, we now have stores, churches, and a hospital close by and as this has always been our home, we have no desire to move from Oakland Township.

## Down on the Farm

Free Family Fun Activities on the Farm!  
**Cranberry Lake Farm, 388 W. Predmore**  
**Saturday, October 6, 2018 11am-2pm**

**Hay rides pulled by a tractor!**  
 Variety of Musicians: banjo and harmonica  
 Local artists display of paintings  
 Honey beekeeping presentation  
 Horse grooming and Farrier demonstration



The historic farmstead is open for family fun with hay rides, pumpkin painting, horse demonstrations, chickens, beekeeping, apple history, tractors, games, painting exhibition, corn husking, spinning, quilting, all set to tunes of banjo's, guitar, and harmonica music! Come on down for the fun and don't forget to stop into the famous Flumerfelt flea-market barn sale to find an antique treasure of your choosing.

*(Brought to you by the Historic District Commission partnership with the Oakland Township Historical Society with sponsorship from the Parks and Recreation Commission and Dinosaur Hill Nature Preserve. Volunteers welcome!*

## The Archive Room

The archives are slowly but surely growing and getting placed in their proper packaging for the shelves. I'll be soon putting into folders, the genealogies of the pioneers I've been working on for some time. There really are so many, and they will be very interesting for everyone to see. Census data of the Township, both residential and farm, are being printed. Plat maps from 1857 into the 1900's will soon be available . The cataloging of all the archives onto the PastPerfect software is almost done. Then an evaluation will be done for any corrections needed.



The public is welcome to join us on Wednesdays from 1 to 4 in the afternoon when we are there working. You can also call for a day that works better for you. Contact Sue Fox at [othsmember@comcast.net](mailto:othsmember@comcast.net) or 248-342-7464 cell or 248-693-9646 for an appointment or to make sure we are there.



YOU  
SHOP  
OTHS  
WINS!



*Mission Statement:* OTHS is dedicated to gathering, interpreting and preserving the history of Oakland Township. It's your memory, it's our history, it's worth preserving!



384 West Predmore Road  
 Oakland, Michigan 48363



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