



The Oakland Township Historical Society (OTHS) Newsletter
www.oaklandtownshiphistoricalsociety.org Oakland County, Michigan

From the Desks of the Co-Presidents

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY to the Oakland Township Historical Society!

This year is our 50th anniversary – The Society was founded in 1974 by Delta Kelly, Barbara Kandarian and Jeanne Phillips in order to gather, interpret and preserve the History of Oakland Township. We have accomplished much over the last 50 years. It started with an Inventory of Historic District Homes and Sites in Oakland Township put together by Delta Kelly and the Society from 1974-1975.

Following that was our 1976 publication *Heritage in Oakland Township*. During the past five decades:

We helped to secure the Historic District designation and millage in our Township, restore Cranberry Lake Farm and get it listed on the National Register of Historic Places. We moved and restored the Flumerfelt Barn. We've held numerous exhibits like the Walter Reuther Exhibit, Goodison Exhibit, and others. We've done a Barn Survey, collected Oral Histories, restored the big red logging wheels, and helped with historic markers for the Paint Creek Mill Race, Green Hills Farm (Shelden Estate), and others. We have an artifacts collection and documents archive – from farm implements, spinning wheels, and milk cans to photographs, letters and the Presidential Medal of Freedom awarded to Walter Reuther. We have also participated in the Rochester and Lake Orion Christmas parades and have held numerous programs and fundraising events – appraisal days, plant sales at the Heritage Festival, and our newest holiday program Cranberry Cheer!

Thanks to all of our wonderful members, friends and volunteers for helping the Oakland Township Historical Society achieve all of these successes, and here's to another 50 years!



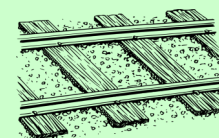
Mary Tischler and Anthony Kowalchick, OTHS Co-Presidents
OTHSpresident@gmail.com



Doug Caruso in front of signal booth he restored with his father

OTHS Donates Goodison Signal Booth

The OTHS has donated an historic train signal booth to Oakland Township Parks. It will be installed in the spring at the new Paint Creek Junction Park off Adams Road. The train signal booth was originally located a little south of the Paint Creek Cider Mill along the old railway, and served as a booth for railroad personnel who controlled the movement of trains in and out of the siding located in the Goodison area. The Signal Booth was restored by Doug Caruso and his father at the time it was given to OTHS several years ago. It has been located under the roofed area at the front of the Paint Creek Cider Mill recently. The booth will be moved in the spring of 2024 and signage will describe how it was used to control rail traffic along the rail line that is now the Paint Creek Trail.

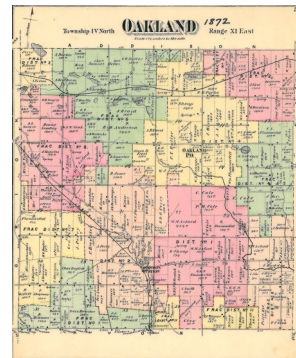


Heritage in Oakland Township

Did you know that OAKLAND TOWNSHIP has the distinction of being one of the state's oldest townships?

It was one of the original 25 when the Territory of Michigan was organized in 1827. The political boundaries which are familiar to us today mark a much smaller area than they did in 1820 when the original divisions were made. At that time, the upper three-fifths of Oakland County was declared to be Oakland Township, and the lower two-fifths was designated Bloomfield Township. By an 1827 act of the Michigan Territorial Legislature, Oakland

Township lost ten townships but still contained what are today Addison, Oxford, Orion, Oakland and Avon. As settlement continued, boundaries changed several times, and in 1837 when Michigan became a state Oakland was at its present size.



The geography of the area, well elevated and regular except along its creeks, appealed to the land hunters who entered the township one year after the first settler in Oakland County, James Graham, built his homestead in what is today's Avon Township. After the government land office opened in 1818, William Russell and Benjamin Woodworth purchased parcels in Oakland Township on March 16, 1819, in Section 33. Other parcels were purchased in 1824 and 1825, but it was not until 1826 that the settlers erected log cabins ... all of whom emigrated from Monroe County in New York state and settled in the western part of the township. Many of these early settlers became influential citizens in the township, many were excellent farmers, and many have descendants here and in adjoining communities.

Schools were built by the first settlers. One was built in 1827 in Section 29. History says it was a log building with a large fireplace that could accommodate six-foot logs. The seats were arranged around the walls and were made of slabs with legs cut from saplings growing on the site. In 1836 a log schoolhouse was built on Section 8 for those living in the northern part of the township, and also in that year a schoolhouse of tamarack logs was built in the Kline settlement (Rochester and Stoney Creek roads). ...The present modern Baldwin school on Bannister Road was dedicated in the spring of 1927. It had existed as a one-room school for nearly a century on the corner of Orion and Gunn roads. On moving day the pupils marched from the old structure to the new while the old school bell rang continuously. ...

Church groups in the early days met in homes, and later in schools. History mentions revival meetings in the Baldwin schoolhouse in 1827. ... In 1854 the Presbyterians also began to meet at the Kline school, and in 1855 they built a church on the southwest corner of Stoney Creek and Rochester roads. The graveyard next to the church marks the location today, and also contains the remains of those who had previously been buried at a burial ground next to the Kline school across the road. ... Before the days of hired caretakers, the families of the association brought picnic dinners to its regular annual meeting in August, and spent the day trimming bushes and attending the cemetery business. ...



A post office was established in Goodison in 1874. It had a daily mail, ...The post office did not have its own building but was housed in various stores. One of these was Billy Wangalien's, which is still remembered fondly by residents who recall going there for after-school candy.

(Continued on page 3)

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This store was adjacent to the Goodison Mill. Mr. Wangalien and his son-in-law Art Fox built a new store across the road on the site of the present Rochester Gear Works, and it was moved to its present location on Territorial Road in 1950. In earlier years there had been a trading post on Axford property at Gunn and Rochester Roads, and a small store in Section 30 owned by John P. LeRoy.



The Goodison grist mill on Paint Creek was built in 1835 by Needham Hemingway. The water power was generous and did not require the usual mill pond. He dug a mill race from a half-mile upstream, and instead of the usual waterwheel, a box-flume fed the water under Gallagher Road (then the old Tower Road) into the basement of the mill, where it turned a turbine. This engaged a shaft that reached up to the second story and turned the mill stones. ...



The Detroit and Bay City Railroad was built through the township in 1872, and established a "flag" station at Goodison. The grist mill and post office were both run by Goodisons at that time, so the crossing was called "Goodison's Station." It was a busy center. Folks gathered at the store and post office located next to the mill, and there was much activity at Maurice Collin's blacksmith shop adjacent on the south. Long freight trains were switched on the sidings along the tracks which lay to the north and to the south from Goodison. A third short siding and weighing platform served local farmers who loaded grain and potatoes for market, and likewise at Rudd's mill crossing at Clarkston Road. A one-car passenger train went daily north to Bay City in the mornings and back in the afternoons until about 1950, when passenger service was discontinued. At about the same time steam engines were replaced by diesels. In the first quarter of this century the railroad serviced a thriving sand-and-gravel operation along its course, traces of which remain, south of Silver Bell and north of Gunn.

A branch of the Detroit (electric) Urban Railway (DUR) was built through Goodison in 1900 and went north to Orion, Oxford, and Flint. In Goodison its track lay along what now is called Territorial Road. There was a substation there, where local dairy farmers brought their daily milk cans for the DUR to transport to Detroit creameries. A passenger waiting station stood on the site of the present Rochester Gear Works; others were located at several road crossings through the township. Many of the local youth rode the DUR to high school at Orion or Rochester. The fare was a nickel. On weekends extra excursion cars were run, to carry vacationers to Lake Orion for boat rides and lakeside attractions. When the automobile arrived, use of the DUR by passengers dropped off, and trucks became the transportation for milk. In 1933 the line was discontinued.

History moves on. Increasing numbers of new settlers are moving in, attracted by the historic and rural character of the area, and by the rolling scenic beauty of its land and streams. Residential developments are being laid out in some of the abandoned old fields. Farming has changed. The plow, though much different in style, still plays a part in the use of the land.



**The preceding is excerpted from the booklet, *HERITAGE IN OAKLAND TOWNSHIP*,
Editors: Delta Kelly and Barbara Kandarian, Oakland Township Historical Society, June 1976.**



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Heritage in Oakland Township Booklet is Available

This booklet was created in June 1976 by some of the first members of the Oakland Township Historical Society. In its 36 pages it has photographs of 25 of the 90 historic structures in the Township. It has a brief history of the Township and a map showing the location of the 90 homes and historic buildings.

The Society has a supply of the booklets and you can purchase one for \$5.00. Copies are available for purchase at most of the Society's meetings and events. See Sue Fox, Treasurer, if you wish to purchase one.



The **OTHS store** has many great gift items for sale - A few popular items: Ed Noble prints, Lyn Seiffert large color prints, Lyn Seiffert note cards, *It's the Berries* Cranberry Recipe Book, Carolyn Dulin ceramic art, Mill sack dish towels and aprons, and many other items! Contact Sue Fox.



OTHS BOARD



Mary Tischler, Co-President

Anthony Kowalchick, Co-President

Sue Fox, Treasurer

Barbara Barber, Corresponding Secretary

Bill Kroger, Recording Secretary

Tom Asmus, Director

Colleen Barkham, Director

Diana Borrusch, Director

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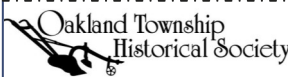
OTHS Membership

It's membership renewal time, and if you don't know your status, just contact Sue Fox by email at othsmember@comcast.net or call 248-693-9646 to find out. When sending in your membership dues, let us know if you have a change in address, phone or email address. We will be putting dues status information with all future mail, so you will be able to see your expiration date anytime. Thank you for being an Oakland Township Historical Society member.

OTHS Membership

Help us 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:

Name _____

Individual \$18 _____

\$ _____

Family \$25 _____

Total Enclosed _____

Patron \$50 _____

\$ _____

Business \$100 _____

New _____ Renewal _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail: _____

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

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.



SPRING OTHS PROGRAMS

Wednesday, March 6, 2024

7:00 pm Program

Paint Creek United Methodist Church, 4420 Collins Road, Rochester, MI

(Parking available next to the church in the Dentist's office.)

"The Chautauqua Movement: Its Origins, Impact and Presence in Michigan" by Jim Craft

Chautauqua is little known but for fifty years it played an important role in the evolution of American Society.

Women's Rights, higher education Progressive reforms and the evolution of Protestantism in America were all deeply affected by the widespread Chautauqua Movement.



The Chautauqua Movement began at Lake Chautauqua in western New York in 1874. Initially, it was a two-week encampment for training Sunday school teachers. Within a few years, it had evolved into a summer long resort community providing the American Protestant Middle Class with a wholesome option for using the emerging phenomenon of summer vacation.

Emulating the "mother" Chautauqua in New York, similar communities spread across the United States. By the 1890s over 100 permanent Chautauquas had been established. While each Chautauqua was unique, they were all modeled after the New York Chautauqua and emphasized religion, education, recreation and the arts.

In addition to the permanent Chautauqua sites, a traveling version of Chautauqua began in 1904 and lasted until the Great Depression. While a pale imitation of the original concept, the "tent" Chautauquas visited thousands of American communities every year for over twenty-five years to bring culture to small communities all across the country.

Inevitably, the educational and religious themes of Chautauqua led them to play an important role as a forum for discussion of public issues. In particular, Chautauqua helped promote the political debates surrounding Progressive Era reforms ranging from women's suffrage to trust busting to child labor.

Jim Craft is on the board of the Oakland County Historical Commission and a retired history teacher.

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

6:00 pm Dinner and Drinks (cash bar, separate tabs), 7:00 pm Program

Miller's Big Red Orchard, 4900 32 Mile Rd, Washington, MI

"Michigan's Native Americans" by Randy Baker

Come at 6:00 pm to join us for dinner and drinks. Program will start about 7:00.

What was life like for the 3-Fires and other Native American Nations that used Michigan's natural resources in their everyday life? What plants did they use and how did they get around? Find out answers to questions you might have as you learn about these hunters and gatherers lifestyles.

Join us for a beer and a program on Michigan's Native Americans by Randy Baker.



May 2024 (Field Trip)

Time TBD

Joint **Field Trip** with Rochester-Avon Historical Society – TBD. Details to follow.



Wednesday, June 5, 2024

6:30 pm Potluck, Elections and Program – bring a dish to pass

Cranberry Lake Farm, Flumerfelt Barn, 388 W Predmore Rd, Oakland, MI

"Celebrating 50 Years 1974-2024"

Spring Pot-Luck Dinner, Annual Membership Meeting, Elections and Program



Also come see us at the Greater Rochester Heritage Days at the Rochester Municipal Park in May!



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Chair Caning Class at CLF

Jean Kroger will teach a chair caning class in April 2024. The class will meet at the Cranberry Lake Farm Main House on Wednesday afternoons, April 10, 17, 24 and May 1 from 4:30PM until 6:00PM. You will need to bring your own chair. The fee is \$15. Call Jean at 586-752-6154 if you are interested in the class.



Jean and Bill Kroger
caning chairs at Down on the Farm

New Intern at OTHS

Tabitha Masters has begun work at CLF on the Oakland Township Historical Society archives. Tabitha brings her background in Historical Archives from her work at the Rochester Hills Museum. She will work with Sue Fox and Colleen Barkham to bring the OTHS archive records to a more complete state. Raised in Oakland Township, she has worked with the software package OTHS uses to record and preserve information about its archives and historical collection.



New intern Tabitha Masters

Oakland Township Historical Society is on Facebook

Follow our Facebook posts to stay up to date with our latest activities and programs, present and past events that shape our area, and learn about people, businesses and history in our Township. Visit [facebook.com/OTHSMI](https://www.facebook.com/OTHSMI/) or search for Oakland Township Historical Society.



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YOU
SHOP
OTHS
WINS!



Don't forget that your Kroger purchases can help support OTHS. Sign up for Kroger 'Community Rewards' and choose Oakland Township Historical Society as your charitable organization.

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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