



Jenison Historical Association Footnotes

Jenison Historical Association
Box 664—28 Port Sheldon
Jenison, Michigan 49429

2009

Board Members

Chairman

Liz Timmer (10)

Vice Chairman/Co-Historian

Ken Williams (11)

Treasurer/Editor

Ruth Lowing (11)

Secretary

Nellie DeLaat (10)

Trustee/Tours, Co-Archivist

Joyce Klawiter (09)

Trustee/ Co-Archivist

Barb Semeyn (11)

Trustee / Displays/Curator

Grayce Lancaster (09)

Maintenance/Co-Historian

Mike Timmer (10)

Trustee

Beverly Potter (10)

Trustee

Anne Foote (11)

Township Rep

Del South

(##) = year this position will be re-elected

Contact Information:

To reach any board member, leave a message at 457-4398



Historical Association of Michigan

Find us on the registry of the Historical Society of Michigan:

www.hsmichigan.org



Newsletter Notice

If anyone would like to receive this newsletter electronically, we have an email option.

Please contact Ruth Lowing at rlowing@aol.com or call 616-662-4137 to e-subscribe

From the Archives

We are adding a new feature to the newsletter beginning this month. Initially, these articles will be from the files of Virginia Timmer, however if you have a topic you would like to contribute, please contact Ruth Lowing. Virginia has kept detailed diaries of her research and contacts over the years, and these are her stories...

Stories of the Depression

DEPRESSION

Began on October 29, 1929 when the U.S. Stock Market crashed. There were twelve million jobless by 1932.

Ethel Lewis at age 8, living in New Jersey during the depression. There were five in her family. Her dad wasn't

working at that time and there was plenty of food but no money to buy it. Many nights they went to bed hun-

gry. They had a record player that you had to wind, and a piano. They played with dolls that were made out of straw. If they had a jigsaw puzzle, each of the children would make it. They used little electricity, but used candles and kerosene lamps. School work was done before it got dark. The churches helped. The Salvation Army had soup kitchens. Neighbor helped neighbor. Families were close.

FOOD: Her mother cooked for wealthy people, so took left-overs home if

there were any. Two neighbor girls had boy friends. One went with a man who owned the butcher shop and the other went with the man who had the vegetable store. After the families picked out what they wanted, we got what was left. Between the vegetables and meat bones, they ate a lot of

soup. Three fourth of their meals was soup. When they had bean soup, the first night they had beans. The

second night, they had less beans and the third night about all they got was just broth. My parents saw to it that we children ate first, and mother ate second. "Then father ate. If there was nothing left, bless his dear heart, he went without." Everything was cheap, so for a dollar, they could buy a whole meal. Their dad eventually got a job with WPA, making a dollar or so a day. Bread was three cents a loaf. For a quarter, they could get enough balo-

"..began on Oct. 29, 1929"

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From the Archives (can't)

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ney to make sandwiches for the kids and parents. At school, the children got 1/2 pint of milk and two graham crackers in the morning. Families that had two or more children got two quarts of milk a week given to them. A local bakery would come around with broken cookies and day-old cake. They got the cake for a quarter--cheaper than her mother could make. They could get a chunk of ice from the iceman for ten cents that lasted for a week. They all had gardens, and canned a lot, but couldn't have chickens or anything like that because the houses were too close and it was outlawed. During the depression if you made a dollar a day, it went a long way.

SHELTER: Behind their house was a coal yard, so when it was almost dark, they children went there and scraped coal off the ground so they would have heat. The owner caught them and asked what they were doing there, who they were and where they lived. They told the man they were picking up coal so they would have heat. Then next morning, a coal truck pulled in their driveway and put coal in their coal bin. The man told her mother and dad to not ever go without coal because the children needed warmth so they got coal

free all winter. The Building and Loan Association helped them keep their house although when they got work, they had to pay them back.

CLOTHING: Mother made a lot of their clothes. You could get material for ten cents a yard. A hank of wool sold for about three cents. Mother made dresses with bit seams and wide hems so they could be let out. When they were let out, we went to school with a dress with faded and not faded parts, but at least it was something to wear. The grandparents bought each child a new pair of shoes before school started. When we got home from school, we had to take them off and usually, especially in summer, went barefoot. To keep warm their mother would put newspapers under their clothes and cardboard in their shoes if the soles got thin.

HEALTH: They had a school nurse. If they got a cold or something, then they'd get cough medicine or whatever they needed.

FARMERS: (Gerret Koopman): They raised pigs, but the government wouldn't buy them because they weighed 40 pounds over the

limit, so they ended up selling them both for \$13. The woods where Rolling Hills is now, was cut down and sold. The tree tops were stacked 25 feet high after the logs were taken off. Gerret Koopman, Bill Tate and Ralph Watson got a job all winter cutting up the branches using axes and hand saws. They cut 430 ricks of wood and were paid 15 cents per hour or \$1.20 a day. They worked about 60 days so Gerret made \$70 that winter. They never went hungry because they could grow their food and had eggs, and meat. His father died in 1930 and Gerret said he worked his tail off but couldn't make much money. In 1931, his neighbor sold wheat right out of the machine when they threshed for 28 cents a bushel. One year, their wheat was exceptional so we could make more money selling it for seed. They lost part of their original farm land during the depression after his father died.

LOCALLY: From Abe VerStrate's diary, he wrote "We can't get work and we can't get money." From my dad's diary he wrote that Grandville Bank closed its doors on December 27, 1932, and on February 14, 1933, the governor closed all the banks in Michigan

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Meeting Minutes— May 21, 2009

Submitted by **Nellie DeLaat**

Present: Joyce Klawiter, Barb Semeyn, Mike Timmer, Ken Williams, Nellie DeLaat, Liz Timmer. **Guest:** Curt Coty, Bryce Coty, Zoya Bryce (Bryce Coty attended the meeting as part of his work on his Star badge)

Association business

April minutes: Corrected to reflect that items will be removed from the basement starting May 22. Motion to accept by Barb; seconded by Mike.

Treasurer's Report: \$42 collected at the open house. \$21 collected from school tours

Township meeting: The township board held its monthly meeting at the house on May 11. Liz explained what had been done to the house with their support and what we plan to do. They appeared impressed with the work of the group.

Webpage: No report due to Ruth's absence. Guest Curt Coty offered his services as this is what he does for a living. Liz will give Curt's contact information to Ruth.

Jenison High School Report: No report due to Ann's absence.

Advance membership and advertising fee: No report due to Grayce's absence.

Grand Rapids Press: No report due to Grayce's absence.

Meijer donation: The association received a \$50 donation.

Museum business

Maintenance Report: Mike asked for volunteered to sit at the house during the waterproofing of the basement. Mike will work on getting quotes for a new sprinkler system. The answering machine is not working properly. Ken made a motion to authorize Liz to purchase a new machine for no more than \$40. Seconded by Mike. Motion passed.

School tours: Going well.

May Open House: Very successful and well received. Approximately 40 visitors. Ida's Pastry donated the cookies.

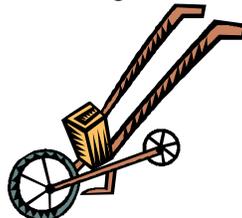
July Open House: A plan in case of rain will be discussed at the June meeting.

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2009 Calendar of Open House Events

July 18, 2009 2-4 PM
Voyagers


September 19, 2009 2-4 PM
Jenison Transportation


October 17, 2009 2-4 PM
Muck Farming & Harvesting


December 5, 2009....1-4 PM
Holiday Open House


January 9, 2010....2-4 PM
2nd Holiday Open House


Cut out and Save!!
 If you can help on any of these open houses, Please call the museum
457-4398

Treasurers Report – June, 2009

Submitted by R. Lowing

Cash on Hand	
Retained Earnings 2008	\$ 2,381.28
	\$ -
As of 12/31/08	\$ 2,381.28
Total Income 2009	\$ 532.96
Total Expenses 2009	\$ (47.47)
Total Equity	\$ 2,866.77
Receivables- Unpaid Dues	\$ (130.00)
Total Liabilities	\$ 60.00
Cash on Hand	\$ 2,796.77



Income:	4/29 thru 5/30/09	Year to date 09
Books	0.00	20.00
Donations	16.00	215.00
Memorials	0.00	0.00
Dues	0.00	295.00
Mill Print& Photos	0.00	0.00
Stationery	0.00	2.00
Sub Total	\$16.00	\$532.00
Interest		0.96
Total Income	\$16.00	\$532.96

Expenses:	4/29 thru 5/30/09	Year to date 09
Equipment Rental	0.00	0.00
Dues & Subscriptions	0.00	0.00
Fees	0.00	0.00
Postage	0.00	0.00
Repairs/Security	\$ -	(47.47)
Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00
Supplies	0.00	0.00
Insurance	0.00	0.00
Total Expenses	\$0.00	(\$47.47)
Due Grandville for books	\$	60.00

2009

Meeting Schedule

Thursday, June 18 ———Georgetown Library

Thursday, July 16 ———Georgetown Library

Thursday, August 20 ———Georgetown Library

Thursday, September 17 —Georgetown Library

Thursday, October 15 ——Georgetown Library

Thursday, November 19 – -Georgetown Library

No meeting in December, 2009

All meetings start at 6:45 PM unless noted.

Note: Rosewood Ref. Church is located on the corner of Rosewood and 28th Ave in Jenison.

2009 Museum Open House

Schedule and Themes

July 18 from 2-4 p.m. – Voyagers (reenactment) – Grayce/Nellie

September 19 from 2-4 p.m. – Jenison Transportation Thru the Ages – Mike/Liz

October 17 from 2-4 p.m. – Muck Farming & Harvesting -- Ken

December 5 from 1-4 p.m. – Holiday Open House -- Grayce

January 9, 2010 from 2-4 p.m. – 2nd Holiday Open House

From the Archives (can't)

(Continued from page 2)

for eight days and finally President Roosevelt closed all the banks in the nation on March 6, 1933. It was called a Bank Holiday. It was done to save the banks as people were drawing out so much money. They began reopening on March 13, 1933.

Salaries at L & L Jenison Company were cut in half, from \$45 to \$25 a week. One family rented out their house and moved in with their parents.

Because of the **WPA** (Work's Progress Administration), the Grandville bridge across the river was built, M-21 was built from Grandville to Jenison following the old

interurban tracks, Johnson Park became a reality, and other public works were accomplished under **PWA** (Public Works Administration)

CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps), gave young men jobs.

There were dozens of aids to the economy under the New Deal in 1933.

In Grand Rapids, single men were lodged in an old church. There were eventually over 300 men who were used for special projects. In the winter, regardless of the hour, day or night, the men shoveled snow. They cleaned streets. They tore down the buildings where the Civic Auditorium was to be located. They cleaned the bricks which were later used to build the 200-foot long bathhouse at the swimming pool at Richmond Park which was also built during the depression. Men with trucks went up north and were able to load up with potatoes at 18 cents a bushel. Former white collared men were pushing wheel barrows and shoveling snow.



1930's-Bob Piers on Main Street

Minutes—(cont)

(Continued from page 3)

Other business: It was decided that Virginia Timmer will be honored as part of the September open house.

Ken will do the history presentation at the October meeting.

Mike suggested asking Cathy Runyon to do an article on the waterproofing of the basement. Liz will check with Dan before we ask.

Volunteer Opportunities!!

Museum Cleaning: A cleaning schedule is being developed. This is a big job, as you can well imagine, that needs constant attention in order to have the Museum look it's best during the open houses. Contact any board member if you can lend a few hours.

Tour guides: The school tours are a great way of teaching the children about our history is such a rewarding experience. You won't regret being a part of this experience for our local children. Joyce Klawiter would love to hear from you.

Community Displays: An initiative is to get some displays out into the

community, possibly to local banks, schools and businesses. What better way to get awareness out into the community than to bring the museum to them. Grayce Lancaster is heading up this project. She would welcome any help you might be able to offer from finding the locations to picking display material and setting up the displays.

And the list goes on..... Monthly Open Houses, Theme's for Open Houses, Inventory, Museum Maintenance, board trustee.

You can come to a monthly meeting or reach out to any board member if you would like to volunteer in any particular area.



Jenison Historical Association
Box 664—28 Port Sheldon
Jenison, Michigan 49429

Jenison Historical Association Mission Statement:

Our mission is to learn about Jenison history, obtain artifacts relating to its history, and maintain the Jenison Historical Museum as a place to share and display our heritage.

Next Meeting of the Jenison Historical Association

June 18, 2009 6:45 PM

Georgetown Library

General Public Welcome