



Jenison Historical Association Footnotes

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

April 2009

From the Archives

Board Members

Chairman

Liz Timmer (10)

Vice Chairman/Co-Historian

Ken Williams (11)

Twp. Rep / Treasurer

Dan Carlton

Secretary

Nellie DeLaat (10)

Trustee/Tours, Co-Archivist

Joyce Klawiter (09)

Trustee/ Co-Archivist

Barb Semeyn (11)

Trustee/Editor

Ruth Lowing (11)

Trustee / Displays/Curator

Grayce Lancaster (09)

Maintenance/Co-Historian

Mike Timmer (10)

Trustee

Beverly Potter (10)

Trustee

Anne Foote (11)

(##) = 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

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...

STORY OF THE L & L JENISON STORE, INCLUDING THE GROCERY STORE, GENERAL OFFICE, POST OFFICE, AND TELEPHONE EXCHANGE

Written by Virginia Piers Timmer, November, 2002

The L & L Jenison Store was built in 1872 at the same time the railroad came through Jenison. It was more than a store. There were other uses of the building. There was a basement, an upper floor, a back shed, the L & L Jenison Company Offices and the Jenison Post Office.

The facade of the original building was a high, square front similar to the Ohler Store. There were steps at either end of the front porch. The porch and steps were of wood.

Later (date?) the building was remodeled with a curved roof, the addition of the office on the west end, the addition of an upper porch and cement steps all along the front of the building. On the front steps I remember metal rings where in earlier days horses could be tied up. All the floors were

wooden. A couple of benches on the porch were used by people waiting for a ride on the Wyoming Transit bus which made a stop there, or to just sit on and watch the world go by. Ads were put up in the large windows in the front. Later there were a couple gas pumps outside that fueled the trucks and they also sold some to customers.

There was a basement, and like most of the homes in the "Jenisonville" area, the basement probably flooded often so I don't know what they were able to store there. There was probably a furnace and a coal bin. I never saw the basement.

There was also a back shed where they probably parked their trucks and maybe stored a few things. I also never got in the back shed which was behind,

but attached to, the store building.

A second floor was used by residents in various ways. The First Jenison Christian Reformed Church, organized in 1875, held services there before the church was built. Ladies Aid groups met there. There were boxing matches. Tables, benches and dishes were there for people to use. Access to the second floor was through an outside door on the east side.. I do not remember there being an access from the inside of the building.

The most notable part of the building was the store itself. In early days, it was heated by a large wood stove in the southwest corner with benches on the south and west walls for sitters. The area between the benches contained two large boxes filled with sawdust for the chewers. There were many

in those days.

According to Dirk Isenga, clerks in the store over the years (not necessarily in order) were Doug Oostema, Benjamin Hartger (the last manager for 33 years), John Dornbos, John DeVries, Charles Gridley, and John Higgins. Levi DePuit worked in the store for several years. He told the story of how he would drive a horse and wagon way out into the country to take grocery orders one day, then return the next day with the goods. My husband Burton Timmer and Roland Stratingh were the last clerks to give the store-to-door service for local residents. By then a truck was used to go out into the neighborhood to

"..It was more than a store"

(Continued on page 2)

From the Archives (can't)

(Continued from page 1)

peoples' homes to get their grocery orders and would deliver the same day. My husband, Burt Timmer, worked at the store in the 1940's, after World War II, and they were still giving the store-to-door service even though many people had phones. Charging groceries was the custom of the day.

According to an oral history I took of my husband, Burt Timmer, there were three routes--one of which was to Grandville. Two routes were done twice a week and once a week to Grandville and those living on Kenowa Avenue.

Last names of customers on the Grandville/Kenowa route were: Van Dam, Vander-Schuur, Dood, Van Boven, Datema, and Van Sloten.

Another route was Baldwin/20th/Bauer areas. Some of the customers were; Oudbier, Northouse, Stratingh, Beute, Jager, Isenga, Steele, Taylor, Gort, Van Farowe, Bosch, Van Duine, Mulder, Krantz, VanderWall, Blakeley, Rillema, Comstock, Louwenaar and Westrate.

The other route was Port Sheldon and Bursley area. Some of the customers were: Japinga, Van Dort, Builema, Sterk, Brinks, Immanse, Kuyers, VanderLaan, Kort, Pauzenga, Andre, Groendyke, De Winter, Wierenga, Elgersma, Vander Kooi, Kunzi, and Plagemar.

Most of the time, groceries were put in wooden crates, like those in the attic at the Jenison Museum which actually came from the L & L Jenison Store. However, if a customer requested a cardboard box, that was used. The crates were emptied and taken back to the store for re-use. Bags were not used except to bag sugar, etc. Sugar came in 100 pound bags and the contents was dumped in a wooden barrel under the counter and re-bagged in five and ten-pound bags. The tops were folded down and then tied with store string all around from top to bottom. Candy and cookies were not pre-packaged, but were sold from bulk--weighed and bagged on the spot.

The customer did not wait on himself, but would give the clerk the name of one item at

a time and the clerk would get it off the shelf, bag it, or whatever was necessary.

As you came in the door to the store, at the right were two cases--one of candy bars, gum, etc. Candy bars cost one to five cents each. In the other case was cigars, cigarettes, pipes and tobacco.

Between these cases and the sales counter was a bread rack. Under the sales counter were covered barrels of brown and white sugar. As you faced the sales counter, the scale was at the right end and cash register at the left. There was also a big round hunk of cheese with white wax paper to wrap the cheese in. Next to the cash register was the case that held all the charge tablets.

The wall behind the showcases, bread rack and sales counter was all shelves containing canned goods, soaps (Ivory, American Family, Fels Naptha, American Family Oxydol, Rinso, Lux--some in bars and some in boxes), cereals (Shredded Wheat, Corn Flakes, Wheaties and Rice Krispies), Aerowax and Johnson's Floor Wax.

“Most of the time groceries were put in wooden crates like those in the attic at the Museum...”

Around the corner from the cash register and charge tablet case was a meat case which held wieners, cold cuts, baloney and picnic hams once in awhile. If a customer ordered other cuts of meat, the clerk went across Main Street to Johnny's Store (formerly Ohler) where they had fresh meat. Across the aisle from the meat case was Mr. Hartger's desk. The coal stove was near his desk.

Across the aisle from the bread rack were the bulk cookies in hinged, glass-covered square boxes. The boxes were removed when empty and a new box put in. The clerk used his bare hands to pick out and package the cookies on request.

There was a wash sink on the back wall which used cistern water. At the right of the sink was a door that went to the back shed or garage where one would find the store deliv-

ery panel truck, Jenison Mill truck and some bagged goods. There was another small room somewhere in back where salt blocks were kept. The vehicles had to exit out of a big door to get to the outside. Also on the west side was the outhouse. I don't ever remember them having inside plumbing at the L & L Jenison Store, but they may have it later.

To the left of the front door were a couple glass cases which held boxed hankies, perfume, stationery, and school supplies (pencils, paper and pens). Further back on the left, in the back corner were dry goods (yard goods, thread, trims like bias binding, embroidery materials, darning cotton, needles, snaps, hooks and eyes). Other dry goods sold were overalls, long underwear, socks, gloves, mittens, shoes, boots and tennis shoes. Overalls were about a dollar.

More in the middle of the store, was a coffee grinder and a big, black tiered metal rack that held nails and other things. They also had tools such as brooms, rakes, hoes, and shovels.

Later there were a couple gas pumps outside that fueled the trucks and they sold some.

In the earlier years, Central Exchange (telephone) was located in the L & L Jenison Store--that is, when the Democrats were in charge. The Jenison's were Democrats. During the Republican Administration, the Post Office was located in the Ohler Store as the Ohlers were Republicans. When Fannie Japinga became Post Mistress, the Post Office stayed in the Jenison Store.

The Jenison Post Office was on the west side of the store building behind the L & L General Office which was located in the front of the building on the west side.. The Post Office was accessible from either the store or the office. The earliest postal employee I remember was Peter Japinga, although it was his wife Fannie who really took the exam. The Japingas lived at 18 Port Sheldon and I grew up next door at 12 Port Sheldon. My father, John J. Piers, who was employed by the Hanchetts as bookkeeper and land manager, and Peter Japinga would help each other--my

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Meeting Minutes—March 19, 2009

Submitted by **Bev Potter**

Present: Bev Potter, Liz Timmer, Ruth Lowing, Ken Williams, Yvonne Williams, Nellie DeLaat, Joyce Klawiter, Grayce Lancaster, Mike Timmer, Virginia Timmer, Bev Potter **Guest:** Kathy Headley

Association Business

Minutes: Ken Williams moved to approve the minutes and Bev Potter seconded. Ayes took it.

Treasurer's Report: Ruth Lowing moved to approve the Treasurers report and Joyce seconded. Ayes took it.

Webpage: Ruth is in middle of moving, but is still working on webpage. Waiting for callback from company that GR History Commission uses. Mike Timmer also knows someone who might be able to do the webpage for a better rate. Mike is going to check out the price. Can also go thru the Historical Association of Michigan.

2009 Goals: Liz Timmer is still working on the goals and nothing to report on recruitment of members. Grayce Lancaster is working on a new member packet and recruiting at the Hudsonville Fair. It was suggested that one person be appointed to take over new member management. Updated list from Treasurer as to who is paid up, addresses and phone numbers, also email addresses. Need to check with area businesses to gain support for Museum.

Historical Association of Michigan report: Liz Timmer shared some information that she received from the Historical Association. In May there is a bus tour, Ohio and Michigan in case anyone is interested. Contact Liz.

Museum Business

Open House Themes: [see ad of upcoming open houses later in the newsletter]

Maintenance Report: Mike Timmer is getting final quotes together for Dan Carlton. Want to get the waterproofing of the basement completed between May and July.

Grayce wondered if we could replace some of the blinds—they are in bad shape, and very brittle. Also would like to replace the plastic tiebacks. She will measure and get the costs.

Nellie DeLaat reminded everyone that the dresses need to be covered after each open house. Liz also discussed identifying items that need to be taken care of better, dresses...etc. Identify and sort. Ruth went to a meeting at the State Conference on taking care of textiles. We are doing the minimum for the most part. We may want to invest in a few pair of cotton gloves.

Other Business:

Kathryn Headley was a valued visitor introduced by Mike Timmer. Kathryn has a lot of memorabilia that she would like to donate to the museum about Jenison schools. Ken suggested we have a theme display in the display room and have a Jenison Schools display perhaps for an open house. Mostly information from the High School, prom, athletic, contracts, etc. Mike will take the collection and bring them to us. Metal shop ashtrays, many items we will store.

At some point we may need to rent storage.

Grayce and Liz made up open house schedules and it has a magnetic strip on it so they can be put on a fridge.

Upcoming open house is decorated goose eggs and there will be plastic eggs with candy in them for the children. Re-enactors' will be here in July and bringing their dogs, they used dogs to pull things.

Grayce made up two posters for the tornado talk and open house in April. She also had doing a poster for Ken to put up in the Byron Bank and maybe another for the Senior Center. More can be made if anyone knows where to put one

Grayce also suggested we will need more cookies for the two day Tornado program in April. Will check for donations from local bakery.

It was also suggested by Grayce that we begin planning open house themes in June for the following year in order to give special guests time to confirm.

There was a suggestion for next year to check into wrapping an open house around a Riverboat Cruise, doing a talk on the cruise, or tie it in with a Museum Open House with coupons.

No discussion on the May Open house as Anne was absent.

Bev brought 3 different price ranges for name tags. It was decided to have Ken design the name tags and get the package at Office Max with the holders having clips. Bev will pick up the package from Office Max.

Liz had a talk with Dan Carlton. The board is trying to find a replacement for our board and he said we have to pick a treasurer from our board. Liz is going to talk to Dan and get more details, do we need a program to be compatible with their computer, who will have the check book, etc.

We are working with the Township board to have their

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Treasurers Report – April 2009

Submitted by D. Carlton

Cash on Hand	
Retained Earnings 2008	\$ 2,381.28
	\$ -
As of 12/31/08	\$ 2,381.28
Total Income 2009	\$ 379.59
Total Expenses 2009	\$ (47.47)
Total Equity	\$ 2,713.40
Receivables- Unpaid Dues	\$ (150.00)
Total Liabilities	\$ 60.00
Cash on Hand	\$ 2,623.40



Income:	Mar 31, 2009	Year to date 09
Books	0.00	3.00
Donations	65.00	79.00
Memorials	0.00	0.00
Dues	0.00	295.00
Mill Print & Photos	0.00	0.00
Stationery	0.00	2.00
Sub Total	\$65.00	\$379.00
Interest	0.30	0.59
Total Income	\$65.30	\$379.59

Expenses:	Mar 31, 2-09	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	(47.47)
Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00
Supplies	0.00	0.00
Insurance	0.00	0.00
Total Expenses	\$47.47	(\$47.47)
Due Grandville for books	\$	60.00



From the Archives (can't)

(Continued from page 2)

father in the Post Office and Peter in the L & L Office. My father at one time was temporary Post Master during a search for a new Post Master.

The L & L General Office was the hub of the Jenison enterprises. My father worked for the Hanchetts from 1928 until Mrs. Hanchett died in 1960. People would come to the office to pay rent for various homes the Hanchetts owned mostly in what was once Jenisonville. Farmers doing business at the L & L Jenison Mill would walk across Mill Street and pay their bill. The receipts from the Blissveldt Farm were funneled through this office as was business which had to do with Jenison Park in Holland, the Hanchett's home at 125 College in Grand Rapids and other properties. The receipts were put in the National Cash Register which is now at the Jenison Museum. When business ceased after Mrs. Hanchett died, no one wanted the old cash register because electric ones were available. My father didn't want to take it to the dump, so he asked us my husband and I if we would like it because it had drawers and we could put tools, etc. in it. So, it ended up in our garage and that's why we have it at the museum today. It was restored by my son, Michael Timmer, even though we had no records as to how it operated.

On September 20, 1952, the L & L Jenison Store went out of business. One reason they went out of business was because Benjamin Hartger retired. The building was purchased in February 26, 1953 by Mr. & Mrs. Peter VanderKlok and Mr. and Mrs. Dick VanderKlok who converted the building in to a super market. This necessitated lowering the store building to ground level so people could get in and out with the carts of groceries. This new store was hard to get used to by people who were not accustomed to paying cash and having to shop for their own groceries. The Vander Kloks lived in an apartment upstairs in the store building.

Paul Pauzenga was in charge of the new store which was called Jenison Food Market. They opened on May 28, 1953. At that time, the Jenison Post Office and L & L Jenison Company offices retained space in the building. Later the store was taken over by Jake Duimstra and Paul Pauzenga.

On May 28, 1956, The L & L Jenison Company records and office equipment was moved to the "flat" or "brick block" building nearby on Mill Street. That building was just east of the original Ohler Store. All the records were offered to the Georgetown Township Board, but they declined. The owners of the "flat" where the records were stored had people come from a library in

Ann Arbor. They took a lot of the records including a lot of interurban records. I was in Ann Arbor twice to see them and did copy some records. The rest were dumped in the milkhouse at the Blissveldt Farm. People helped themselves to the records, but many mildewed and rotted over time.

In 1966, the Jenison Food Market was removed to make room for a service station to be built by Phillips Petroleum Company. The 94-year-old structure was originally built and operated by Lucius and Luman Jenison in connection with their flour mill which stood across Mill Street. On their death, the property was willed to Margaret Husband and daughter Bessie. Bessie married Benjamin Hanchett whose mother was the youngest member of the Jenison founding family who came to the Grand River Valley in 1835.

Sources:

John J. Piers records

Virginia Piers Timmer records

The Grandville Star Newspaper

The Grandville Star Economist

Hildreth Scrapbook

Meeting Minutes—(cont)

meeting at the Museum. Liz ifs fine tuning the dates and schedule. The last time they had their regular meeting at the museum, it was followed with a house tour. We would like to use this time to promote our short and long term goals. Liz will try to get on the agenda and also thank the township for 30 years of support. Some of the current board have been in the museum, others are newer and may not have been.

We have school tours scheduled for Marc 31, May 14, May 22, and May 29. Time for all the tours is 9:30 for Association members to be there. Joyce

Klawiter will make calls to get volunteers for these tours.

Liz is going to forward the museum phone to her house so she can keep up with the messages.

Yvonne brought up portable wheelchair ramp. She will check into the cost of a rental ramp. Also see about improving the hand rails going up to the attic, for safety.

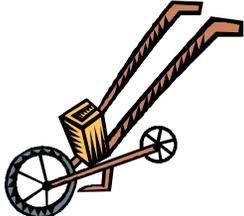
Grayce brought up putting the open house schedule in the Newsletter.

Ken had 4 items. Someone is looking for a photo of the K-Mart building, suggested checking with the Advance or

tax records. Our records have a lot of great things and they are very well organized. We also have a collection of negatives. A women is looking for information about a person who worked in the Mill. Whirlwind tour for the tornado speaker in April.

There will be a short meeting before the Tornado discussion in April. Ask that members meet at 6 PM.

2009 Calendar of Open House Events

<p>April 16, 2009 7-8:30 PM</p> <p>Paths of Destruction</p> 	<p>April 18, 2009 2-4 PM</p> <p>Tornado of April 1956</p> 	<p>May 16, 2009 2-4 PM</p> <p>How does your garden grow!</p> 
<p>July 18, 2009 2-4 PM</p> <p>Voyagers</p> 	<p>September 19, 2009 2-4 PM</p> <p>Jenison Transportation</p> 	<p>October 17, 2009 2-4 PM</p> <p>Muck Farming & Harvesting</p> 
<p>December 5, 2009....1-4 PM</p> <p>Holiday Open House</p> 	<p>January 9, 2010....2-4 PM</p> <p>2nd Holiday Open House</p> 	<p>Cut out and Save!!</p> <p>If you can help on any of these open houses, Please call the museum</p> <p>457-4398</p>

2009 Meeting Schedule

Thursday, April 16 (6:00 PM) –Rosewood Ref. Church
 Thursday, May 21 – ———Rosewood Ref. Church
 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

April 18 from 2-4 p.m. – 1954 Tornado -- Ken
 May 16 from 2-4 p.m. – How does your garden grow? -- Anne
 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

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 experi-

ence 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.

Ernest J. Ostuno

Of the NOAA/National Weather Service and author of

Paths of Destruction

The Tornadoes of April 1956



Thursday, April 16, 2009

7-8:30 PM

Rosewood Reformed Church Youth Building

(corner of Rosewood St and 28th Ave, Jenison)

Admission is Free

but donations are appreciated to help maintain the Tiffany House Museum, Jenison

For Sale at the Museum:

'Bend in the River' book

Mill Prints and stationary

Available during any open house, or call the Museum at 457-4398





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

April 16, 2009 6:00 PM

Rosewood Reformed Church (Youth Building)

General Public Welcome