

MARCH 1989

THE CLINTON INDEPENDENT

CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Florence Gay

The following article was taken from the Clinton County News June 4, 1985

RETIRED LOCAL ARCHITECT DIES

Florence White Gay died May 12, 1985, at the Schnepf Health Care Center in St. Louis, Michigan, at the age of 88 years.

She was born December 18, 1896, in Owosso, the daughter of John and Anna (Becker) White. As a young child she moved to Clare, with her parents and two brothers.

After graduation from Clare High School in 1915, she moved to Toledo, Ohio, where she was employed by the Pennsylvania Railroad, purchasing land rights. She studied voice and diction for two years at the Toledo

Conservatory of Music and Art.

She then entered Ohio State University to study civil engineering and architecture, following in her father's footsteps, John White (Chief Engineer of Surveys and Superintendent of Construction of the Ann Arbor Railroad, 1883-1893).

While employed by the architectural firm of Warren S. Holmes in Lansing, she met and married R. V. Gay of St. Johns. Soon after their wedding in September, 1923, they opened architectural offices in St. Johns.

During their partnership, they produced many schools, hospitals and structures that dot the map of Michigan today. Five of these structures are here in St. Johns: St. Joseph School, 1924; Clinton Memorial Hospital and Nurses Home; 1926-1939; First Methodist Episcopal Church, 1937; Perrin-Palmer School, 1939; and the Municipal and Library Building, 1939.

R. V. Gay was born in St. Johns and graduated from St. Johns High School in 1913. After serving in the army in World War I, he returned to the University of Michigan, and received his degree in Architecture and Engineering in 1921.

Mr. Gay's maternal grandfather, Cornelius G. Barne, was one of the builders of the Clinton County Court House and the John Hicks residence. His paternal grandfather, Richard E. Gay, arrived in St. Johns in 1854, and was known as the "Pioneer Shoemaker", making the first pair of shoes and boots in St. Johns.

While a resident of St. Johns, Mrs. Gay was an active member of the St. Johns Episcopal Church Choir, the Child Study Club and formed the St. John Civic Players Guild.

During the 1940's and 1950's, she was an Engineer with the State Department of Bridge and Highways.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 16, the regular meeting of the Clinton County Historical Society will be at the Capitol Federal Savings and Bank Building. Program to be announced later.

Genealogists will meet at the same place April 3.

Meeting of the Archives Committee and any interested volunteers, Tuesday, March 28, 7:00pm at the Archives. Agenda-Indexing format for newspapers and scrapbooks. Also shelving system.

Archives hours are from nine to four, Monday and Tuesday. Volunteers welcome.

Myrna Van Epps is enjoying a European trip at the present time. Maryalice Brooks is filling in at the Archives in Myrna's absence.

MUSEUM RE-OPENS APRIL 2nd SUNDAYS 1 - 5 p.m. & WEDNESDAYS 2 - 8 p.m.



Clinton County Historical Society

P. O. Box 174
Saint Johns, Michigan 48879

Mrs. Gay-continued from page I.

She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Benjamin (Helen) Barners, of Alma, Mrs. Albert (Arita) Ehinger of New York City, and one son, Robert V. Gay of Richmond, Virginia, seven grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Burial was May 15 at Mt. Rest Cemetery. St. Johns.

PIONEER CERTIFICATES PROVING POPULAR

Kenneth Coin has stated there is a lot of interest being shown in the PIONEER CERTIFICATES.

An application will be included with this Newsletter for anyone who needs one.

Any further information can be had from Kenneth at 669-9448.

Nominations are now being sought for both the Historical Society and the Genealogists for officers for the upcoming 1989-1990 year. If interested in a position, see Janet Tiedt.

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