

# Clinton Independent

VOL. 111 No. 3

St. Johns, Michigan

March, 1979

## Society to mark historic Steel Hotel site

The dedication ceremony placing a Tri-County Historical Marker on the site of the Steel Hotel will be the highlight of the March 15 meeting of the Clinton County Historical Society. The dedication will take place at 7 p.m. in the new ultra-modern Capitol Savings and Loan Association building recently completed on the Clinton Avenue site once occupied by the grand Steel Hotel.

Historic Sites chairperson, Shirley Karber said the marker will be placed in the lobby of the new building along with a picture of the Steel Hotel, taken sometime around the turn of the century.

The dedication service is under the direction of William Patton, assistant vice-president of the banking association; Hila Bross, vice-president of the Historical Society and Mrs. Karber. The Capitol Savings and Loan is sponsoring the marker and dedication ceremony.

Music will be provided by Gail Foerch

and Mr. and Mrs. John Caudy will serve as hosts. The Caudys, members of the society, once ran the food operation at the hotel.

Special guests will include Robert Waldron, great-grandson of Robert M. Steel, the original owner of the famous hotel. Mr. Waldron was former Republican speaker of the House of the Michigan Legislature.

Also among the guests will be former owners and employees of the hotel. Artifacts from the Steel will be on display.

The grand and palatial Steel Hotel opened in March, 1888. The 50 guest rooms, ballroom, sample rooms, billiard room, baths and barber shop were built and furnished for \$65,000. Every luxury of the day was included. It became known across Michigan.

The regular March meeting will be held after the ceremony in the new Community Room of the Capitol Savings and Loan. Geneva K. Wiskemann of the Clinton County Historic Commission will be guest speaker.

## Betty Moore assigns new editor

With this issue, Betty Moore retires from her duties as editor. She will continue as Publications Chairperson but Sharon Randall has offered to help edit the newsletter.

Betty established the newsletter when the society was founded five years ago and it will keep her format "The Clinton Independent".

Others who help get this publication to you each month are:

Rosa Hamer, chairman  
Francis Conn

Francis Luther  
Elizabeth Millman  
Donna Carter and  
Elsie Bottum, all of the envelope committee.

When you have information you wish to share you may send it to:

Betty Moore or Sharon Randall  
105 S. Swegles 5774 E. Centerline Rd.  
St. Johns, Mi. 48879 St. Johns, Mi. 48879

## MARCH BUSINESS

Two items are on the agenda for the March meeting of the society, March 15 at 8 p.m. following the Steel Hotel Historic site dedication at 7 p.m. at the new Capitol Savings and Loan Association on Clinton Avenue, St. Johns.

A slate of officers has been presented by the nominating committee and will be voted upon.

The nominations are:

Hila Bross, president  
Ceri Workman, vice-president  
Ora Fish, secretary  
Mildred Brown, treasurer  
Peg Lenon, corresponding secretary  
Alta Reed and  
Ken Coin, directors

Jean Temple and Doris and Alden Livingston drew up the nominations.

Also under consideration are the following amendments to the Bylaws of the society.

Amend Article III by striking out the word "March" and inserting the word "May".

Amend Article V, section 1 by striking out the word "annual" and inserting the word "March".

Amend Article V, section 5 by striking out the words "at which they are elected".

Amend Article V further by addition of a Section 6 as follows:

"In the interval between their election in March and their installation in May, newly-elected officers and directors shall be known as officers-elect and directors-elect. During this period they shall attend Board meetings, and may make plans and arrangements for the work of the Society during the upcoming year, which shall begin June 1".

## HOME TOUR

Mrs. Thomas Teare has been named chairperson of the 1979 Home Tour.

The tour is slated for Sept. 15. Mrs. Teare is assembling her committees. It takes hundreds of people to plan and operate the tour now known statewide.

## GENEALOGY COMMITTEE MEETS APRIL 2

The Genealogy Branch of the Clinton County Historical Society will meet at the Bement Library, St. Johns at 7:30 p.m., Monday, April 2.

## OLD RECORDS SHED LIGHT

After searching for over five years for the birthplace of grandfather, Alfred S. Cowles and finding the only information as New York state, Wilma Sowle found a page from an old family Bible in the handwriting of her grandfather. It read:

Alfred S. Cowles, born July 17, 1824, Cazenovia, Madison County, N.Y.

Also listed was the entire family: wife, children and all their dates and places.

## ROUND-ABOUT ROUTES

A query sent to a publication by a woman in Tacoma, Wash. brought her an answer from Florida. It contained data on the woman's grandmother's family who lived in Tennessee. She recognized the family that of one being searched by someone here in Clinton County and promptly forwarded it.

Information travels; from Durand, Mich. to Tennessee, Florida, Washington and back to Clinton County, Mich.

## QUERIES

Does anyone remember Birdie Hathaway of St. Johns who married a Mr. Stanhope and lived in Detroit? The last I heard of her was an item: Emma E. Bishop died at the home of Birdie Hathaway Stanhope in Detroit, Feb. 1927 at age 71.

Is she a relative of the Bishop and Cowle families? Contact: Mrs. Wilma Sowle 109 Brittany Drive, King Arthurs Court, Lansing, Mich. 48906.

Does anyone have information on the name LUTH? My grandmother "Hannah" was born in Germany, married in Clinton Co. and buried in St. Peter Lutheran Cemetery. When she came to the U.S. and where she lived before she was married is still a mystery. Contact: Mrs. Ray Moore, 3623 W. Chadwick, DeWitt, Mich. 48820