

Clinton Independent

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St. Johns, Michigan

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April meeting scheduled for Bath

The Clinton County Historical Society will meet April 19 at 8 p.m. at the Bath Township Hall on the corner of Webster and Drumheller Roads.

This meeting falls on a very historic date. In 1775 British troops marching to Concord confronted Minutemen in Lexington and the American Revolution began.

At Lexington the British killed 8 Americans, wounded 10 and marched on to Concord. There the Minutemen arrived from all over the countryside and drove them back. They fired at the British from behind fences and trees all along the road to Boston. The Americans lost almost 100 men that first day but the British lost three times as many.

Mrs. June Burnett, Bath Township clerk is local chairman for this meeting. The program will include several teams of students from Michigan State University reporting on a historic preservation study

Airport honors Parmelee

Of special interest to Society members will be the dedication of an official State of Michigan historical information site marker which commemorates Philip O. Parmelee, Clinton County pioneer in aviation.

Sponsored by the Clinton County Historical Commission, the unveiling will take place at 12 noon, May 19 at Capital City Regional Airport, Lansing.

The marker dedication is the first event in a two day Air Days celebration sponsored by the Airport Authority.

The text commemorates Michigan's contribution to the progress of aviation and Parmelee's part during the early days of its development.

they have recently completed. They have examined the history of the Round School House, the Paine-Gillam-Scott - 1860 House and the Manning Bross saltbox house. These sites have been recommended for approval to be placed on the State Register of Historic Sites.

To find Bath Township Hall take Clark Road east off US-27 to Spagnuolo's Party Store and turn south. The hall is less than a mile down Webster road on the west side of the road just past a cemetery.

Artrain coming April 22-May 3

Artrain is coming again to Lansing, this time with a completely new show of Michigan art. The train will be in downtown Lansing, April 22 - May 3 at Riverfront Park.

The show honors the State Capitol centennial. Michigan folk art, fine art and demonstrations are all part of the showing. The weekend will bring additional entertainment with outdoor music and an Artplace where local artists can show and sell.

Fifteen volunteer guides are needed for each day and Mildred Brown is gathering representatives from the Historical Society. If you would like to be a tour guide contact her at once. Orientation will be given in advance and no art knowledge is necessary.

Artrain will be open weekdays from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. Weekend hours are noon until 8 p.m. Each guide will need to serve about two hours. Mrs. Brown's number is 224-3737.

Cemetery stones, surname index are Genealogy project

There has been some confusion with the Society's Genealogy Branch and another group in the area because of a similarity in names.

The Genealogy Branch of the Clinton County Historical Society meets the first Monday of each month at the Bement Library History Room, St. Johns at 7:30 p.m. The next meeting is May 7. Goldie Moore (Mrs. Ray) is chairperson. The group is engaged in recording cemetery stones in the entire county, compiling an extensive surname index file and researching family histories.

The cemetery stones in townships, DeWitt, Olive, Riley and some in Duplain, Bengal and Greenbush have been read and copied. Volunteer transcribers are needed in the remaining townships.

In the '30's the Daughters of 1812 compiled the cemetery information in this county and a book is on file at the Bement Library. The Genealogy Branch plans to re-do and update this book to 1978.

This makes an interesting and rewarding springtime project that even older children can assist with on a warm afternoon or weekend day. If you are interested in recording a cemetery near your home contact Mrs. Moore for details - 669-9061.

The Genealogy Branch is enlarging its surname index file. Copies of these cards will go on file at the State of Michigan Library.

The card contains information (as much as you know) on your oldest known ancestor. Your name and address go on the back so others who are interested in the same family line can contact you with more information.

Each Historical Society person should fill out one of these cards.

Query : Searching for relatives of William Kleinschmidt is Reuben Eirschele, 302 E. Gibbs, St. Johns, Mi. Kleinschmidt is supposed to have settled around the Detroit area. The information on hand gives his parents as Minnie and Rudolph Kleinschmidt from in or around Oshkosh, Wisc. in 1870.

Query : Does anyone have a picture of the Lutheran Church that was built on Wright Road at the Lutheran Cemetery location. It was built about 1869. Contact: Mrs. R.J. Moore, 3623 W. Chadwick Rd., DeWitt, Mi.

Sign Up for 1979

Membership fees are now due for 1979. Stay a member and receive this monthly newsletter.

The Clinton County Historical Society is charged with gathering and preserving county history. Do your part and continue your membership.

You may also help with a Friends of the Museum donation. The Paine-Gillam-Scott 18th House museum needs contributions. This is one of our largest projects to date and one that our county is going to be proud of in the near future.

MEMBERSHIP COUPON

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Membership in Clinton County Historical Society \$2.00

Friends of the Museum \$5.00 \$10.00
More

Clip and send: Clinton Co. Historical Soc.
Box 174
St. Johns, Mi., 48879

Advisory museum board selected

An Advisory Board has been assembled to contribute knowledge and wisdom to the discussion and formulation of policies controlling the destiny of the Paine-Gillam-Scott 1860 House, our new county museum which is to open for Michigan Week, May 20.

Members of the advisory board are: Charles Coletta, Roberta MacArthur, Larry McDiarmid, Betty Moore, Michael Muehlenbeck, Mary Ruppahn and Marvin Robertson.

They will act as a legislative and policy forming board, not an administrative one, and will be a subsidiary of the legally responsible board the Clinton County Historical Society.

So far 1,751 volunteer hours have gone into the restoration of the house museum on the Courthouse Square, Maple Street, St. Johns. It will be ready for public viewing the week of May 20 - 26, when special events and activities

are planned for each day.

Directors John and Catherine Rumbaugh said hours for the new location will include Friday evenings and Wednesday afternoons as well as Sundays.

According to Mrs. Rumbaugh there are many more hours of work before the May opening date. Drop in workers are encouraged to come any Monday or Wednesday. If you have ambition and elbow grease to spare at any other time call the directors to make arrangements.

Furniture donations are being sought to furnish the home in the 1890 period. If you have knowledge of any interesting collections that might be borrowed for a special exhibit at the museum contact Mrs. Rumbaugh.

The St. Johns Jaycee Club has volunteered to paint the museum in June.
The museum number is 224-2894.

Rochester Colony part of fourth home tour

The 1979 Home Tour, Sept. 15 will include sites in historic Rochester Colony. Tour visitors will see an early church and school more than 100 years old. Two beautiful old homes will also be shown. Don and Jeanne Temple and Royal and Eathel Risley will open theirs for the tour.

Other highlights there will be a country luncheon and a tailgate market. One of the nicest community parks in the county is there and tour goers might like to pack a picnic.

A State historical marker gives the Colony credit for being the first settlement in Clinton County. Pioneers

Rochester New York settled the area in 1836. First named Mapleton,

it was changed to Duplain because of a post office conflict.

W. G. Russell and Joseph Sever came to Michigan looking for land for members of the Rochester Colony Association. What they found on the Maple River pleased them and they wrote back: "the water privileges are good and the land first best." They told of timbered land covered with beech, maple, hickory, oak, bass, butternut, and black-walnut, "as handsome as you ever saw and well watered with springs."

They warned however that "the country around this place is new and if any family should leave Rochester for this they had better bring everything they want for family use."

Jeanne Temple is assisting tour chairman,

Put your family in the 1980 History book

The staff of the Society's 1980 History of Clinton County book project is looking for family histories. Put your family in the new history book. Forms are available from Betty Moore or Jean Martin and local libraries.

Families should trace their ancestors back to the oldest known who came to Clinton County. However, new families are wanted too. The people who are settling in the county in recent years are just as important to the 1980 book.

Following are excerpts from a family history that has already been written for the 1980 book.

My name is Kim Robert Altvater. I was born in St. Johns on Dec. 27, 1954. I am single and live with my parents on the family farm. I work at Lansing Fisher Body Plant. I attend St. Joseph Catholic Church. I have membership in the Clinton County Historical Society, Sons of the American Revolution and Denison Society.

Robert Judd Altvater was born in Ovid Township on Mar. 15, 1935. He married Sharon Joan Jacobs on Mar. 3, 1954. Mom was born in Ovid, June 25, 1937. My brother Mark Douglas, was born Aug. 8, 1960.

Bismark Altvater was born Jan. 24, 1899 in Fowler. He married Hazel Argensinger who died in 1927. They owned the farm and "saltbox house" at French's Corners. Grandpa sold the farm in 1928. He later bought a farm in Ovid Township near his parents.

Grandpa married Doris Denison, Ovid Township, in 1934. She was born Mar. 30, 1901 at Grand Haven, Mich. They had three children, Robert Judd, and twins Joyce and Jeanette (1943).

Both my grandparents died in St. Johns. Grandpa died on Mar. 12, 1971 and Grandma on Sept. 22, 1977. They are buried at Maple Grove Cemetery, Ovid.

Lewis Altvater was born, Oct. 12, 1861 in Hanover, Penn. He married Christina Martin of Fowler, Sept. 26, 1893. She was born in Fowler, April 27, 1870. They had six children: Herman (1894), William (1896), Bismark (1899), Fred (1904), Ted (1908) and Louise (1910).

They bought a farm in Ovid Township in 1901. The farm is still family owned. Lewis died Sept. 5, 1947 and Christina, Feb. 25, 1948. They are buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Fowler.

August Altvater was born in Hanover, Germany, Dec. 14, 1825. He married Lizzet Krug. She was born in Germany during 1832. They came to America about 1858. Before coming to Michigan they lived in Washington D.C. and Pennsylvania. The family arrived in Fowler prior to the 1870 census. Among their children were Lewis, William, Gustav, Dora, Dena, George and Henry.

August died in Fowler on Mar. 31, 1906. He is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery.

Kim also tells of a notable ancestor named Jabez Denison. He was born in 1810. His grandfather was a patriot of the Revolutionary War. Jabez married Lousia Kenyon in 1829. They had three children, Jared, Lovilla and Charlotte. The family moved to Ovid Township in 1839.

Jabez shot 19 bears while living in Clinton County. He shot 4 in one day, Feb. 1845. He served with the 27th Mich. Infantry in the Civil War. He died in 1870 and was buried in Blood Cemetery in Victor Township.

Kim also writes an anecdote about his grandmother, Doris Denison Altvater, in his family history. You can do this with your family, too. Take time to record your history now so future members in the future can read it in the 1980 book.