



"The Clinton Independent"

1984

CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Spotlight

The spotlight this month is on Paine-Gillam-Scott Museum which has reopened after its winter hiatus. Hours are Sundays from 1 to 5 p.m. and Wednesdays from 2 to 8 p.m. It will be closed Easter Sunday April 15.

Catherine Rumbaugh, co-director, said the special exhibits include items from Essex Township and a collectors' showcase.

Coming up in May will be our 3rd annual Trash 'n Treasure auction May 12 at 11 a.m. in the live-barn at the 4-H fairgrounds. Donations are needed and she reminds that tax deductible receipts will be given on request. Anyone needing a pump organ? That is one of the items to be auctioned.

Also coming up is PGS's annual Magnolia Week celebration which begins May 6. Included will be the annual Magnolia Tea May 9.

Drop auction items off at PGS at 106 S. Maple St., St. Johns or call 224-3737 or 224-7402 for pick up. All proceeds from the



Chimney
Remains
Standing

History records that the school was built in 1858 on an old trail that connected Maple Rapids and Pewamo. Of wood framing, the timbers were fastened with wooden nails.

Its shingled roof was detailed with hand crafted brackets. The plaster included a horsehair filler. Originally there was a cupola on top of the building but that was removed near the turn of the century when it burned. In 1868, at a cost of \$60 which included the parcel, the building was moved to the French-Grange Road site. In its early years

THE OLD ROUND SCHOOL HOUSE

What to do about the Round School House is a question we won't be asking any more. The historic old octagonal shaped structure that stood on the corner of French and Grange Roads burned down recently. Dallas Township fire officials said the fire was accidentally started when a neighbor was burning trash and sparks ignited the school. Years ago the building was considered as a project by Greenfield Village. That fell through as did efforts by CCHS to preserve - and use - the building.



Drop auction items off at PGS at 106 S. Maple St., St. Johns or call 224-3737 or 224-7402 for pick up. All proceeds from the auction are used for upkeep of PGS. For more information or to help, call PGS.

Mint Festival

The St. Johns Chamber of Commerce is planning a community festival for 1985 and while no theme has yet been chosen there is talk of a mint tie in. Manager Joan Martis thinks that might be fitting because the Chamber wants something unique to Clinton County. At one time Clinton was known as the mint capitol of the world but that ground to a halt in the 1930's when a root disease caused many growers to move elsewhere. In recent years mint production has picked up and state officials say there are now 15 growers in Clinton with 3,500 acres in production.

Some residents recall a Mint Festival held in 1936. Then Elouise Irving was crowned Peppermint Queen by then Gov. Frank Fitzgerald in front of what is now the Clinton Bank and Trust Building on Clinton Ave. A coronation ball was held on the third floor of that building.



Where oh Where Have They Gone ??????

Catherine Rumbaugh, museum director, got to wondering one day about "where oh where have all the friends of our museum gone?" She said the list of people making monetary donations shrinks each year. "Now that the museum is established we need continuing support for upkeep and maintenance," she said. Donations can be sent to Paine-Gillam-Scott Museum, c/o Clinton County Historical Society, Box 174, St. Johns, 48879.

... but that was removed near the turn of the century when it burned. In 1868, at a cost of \$60 which included the parcel, the building was moved to the French-Grange Road site. In its early years the school was the nucleus of social events in that area and it served as the registration center for Civil War enlistees. It was closed in 1942. The building was owned by Bernard Vance.

MORE SCHOOL NEWS



CCHS will hold its May 17 meeting at the Bath Methodist Church in Bath which is where Bath High School graduates were practicing in May 1927 when dynamite which had been planted by Andrew Kehoe destroyed the Bath School killing 45 people. Kehoe, a disgruntled school district treasurer, also destroyed his own nearby home, barns and he killed his wife and then himself.

On May 17 survivors of that event will put on our program, sharing their recollections and answering questions.

Our president, Betty Moore, suggests CCHS members plan to arrive prior to the 7:30 p.m. starting time to tour a gazebo erected by the James Couzens Society of Bath at the site of the destroyed school.

History records that after the disaster then Gov. Fred Green asked for help, which came from all over the state, to rebuild. One contributor was Sen. James Couzens who donated \$75,000. The new school was named for him in 1928. It was demolished in 1975 and then the tower, shown above, was preserved as a memorial on the site.

Think Spring

GENEALOGY

GAZETTE

Genealogical Research

People researching their roots will find help available at our Archives from the "Green Thumb" lady. Wilma Sowle, a long-time CCHS member, has been hired under the federally funded Green Thumb program to work 21 hours a week. Well acquainted with our archives, Wilma oversees the operation and is always willing to help people find materials, teach them how to use the equipment and answer questions. Stop in and say "hello" the next time you pass through DeWitt.

Do You Remember . . . ?

When the cathedral-like St. Mary's Catholic Church at Westphalia burned down in 1959?

Among the items rescued by parishioners was the painting of "The Fourteen Holy Helpers". Because it suffered fire damage it was not hung in the new church. In 1983 parishioners took it from storage and sent it to Chicago for restoration by artist Angelo Gherardi. Meanwhile, back at Westphalia Rose Schafer and Helen Schneider were busy refining the ornate massive old hand carved black walnut frame.

The congregation recently hung the restored painting in the church and that prompted Evelyn Weiland to research its history which began when Barbara Heinlein was born in 1797 in Bavaria in W. Germany. In 1836 she and her husband, and their three young children set sail for America. While crossing the Atlantic a storm arose and survival seemed hopeless. The captain ordered the ship closed and Barbara promised God that if they were saved she would donate a painting of the 14 Holy Helpers to the parish the family would join in America. They settled in Westphalia in 1842 and she kept her promise commissioning the beautiful painting.

The iconography at St. Mary's is like the painting in the famous "Vierzehnheiligen" pilgrimage church in Bavaria, West Germany. That is near the site where the 14 saints depicted in the painting

appeared to a young shepherd boy in 1445. Many miracles followed and the famous Baroque Church of the Fourteen Holy Helpers was built. Inside hangs the painting by the famous German wood carver Riemenschneider.

1883 DEWITT BUSINESS DIRECTORY

H. C. HART, POSTMASTER
 AVERILL, JOTHAN, SHOEMAKER
 BATES, AMBROSE T., PHYSICIAN
 CATTERMOLLE, ARTHUR, WAGONMAKER
 HALL, SAMUEL, WAGONMAKER
 HART, HENRY C., CARPENTER
 HOLMES, GEORGE, LUMBER MNFR.
 HUFFMAN, DAVID, STONEMASON
 JAYNE, HENRY, GROCER
 JAYNE & McLOUTH, GENERAL STORE
 LOTT, ALBERT, FURNITURE & WAGONMAKER
 LOTT & LIN, HOTEL PROPRS

MAY & SON, MEAT MARKET
 MERRITT, RICHMOND, FOUNDRY
 OSGOOD, W. L. & SONS, *FLOUR MILL
 PILLBEAM, ED., BLACKSMITH
 POTTER, WM. M., LUMBER, MNFR.,
 SIMMONS, RICHMOND, PHYSICIAN
 STEWART, N. J., PAINTER
 TERBUSH, WM., BLACKSMITH
 TOPPING, GEO. W., DRUGGEST
 TUCKER, FRANK, MEAT MARKET
 VAILE, CHISHOLM M., MEATS & BILLIARDS
 WILLIAMS & TOUT, BLACKSMITHS
 WOODRUFF, ADDISON A., GENERAL STORE

in the famous vielzenmünnen pilgrimage church
in Bava, West Germany. That is near the site
where the 14 saints depicted in the painting

FIRST INHABITANTS POSTED NOTICES AGAINST FARMERS

THE NAMES OF THE FIRST SETTLERS OF BATH (OSSOWA) TOWNSHIP ARE NOT AVAILABLE. IT IS KNOWN THAT WHOEVER THEY WERE, THEY DID NOT WELCOME THOSE WHO PLANNED TO MAKE CLEARINGS AND FARM, THEY LOOKED UPON THE HOME SEEKERS MUCH AS DID THE INDIANS. NOTICES WERE SOMETIMES POSTED WITH FICTITIOUS NAMES SIGNED, WARNING INTRUDERS THAT ALL LAND HAD BEEN TAKEN AND THAT NO TREES SHOULD BE CUT. ONE SETTLER AFTER CONSTRUCTING A ROAD AND A SHACK WAS PESTERED SO MUCH THAT HE FINALLY MOVED OUT. SILAS ROSE AND IRA CUCHMAN WERE THE TWO EARLIEST KNOWN RESIDENTS OF BATH. ROSE SHELTERED HIS WIFE AND FIVE CHILDREN UNDER A SORT OF TENT MADE FROM POLES AND A QUILT AND BLANKET COVERING UNTIL HE COULD GET HIS CABIN BUILT IN 1837. NOTE: CUCHMAN SHOULD BE CUSHMAN.....J. SNYDER



Peary discovered the North Pole on April 6, 1909.

1853 EXPRESS..BUSINESS DIRECTORY LISTED THE FOLLOWING
DEWITT MERCHANTS AND PROFESSIONAL MEN:

BAKER & RANSOM, R. STRICKLAND AND C. W. LEFFINGWELL, LAWYERS; JOHN H. BACON & SETH P. MARVIN, PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS; A. W. PATTRIDGE & CO., D & L. STURGIS & CO., JOHN W. GARDNER, JOHN HICKS AND J. D. EDWARDS, MERCHANTS; AND JOHN F. MCKEEN AND WILLIAM UTLEY, CABINET MAKERS.

1853 NEWS ITEM OF EXPRESS

"THE CLINTON HOUSE...THE WELL KNOWN AND COMMODIOUS HOTEL AT DEWITT, HAS BEEN LEASED BY A. W. PATTRIDGE, ESQ., TO DAVID OLIN OF THIS PLACE, WHO TOOK POSSESSION ON TUESDAY OF THIS WEEK. MR. PATTRIDGE HAS MADE AN EXCELLENT LAND LORD, AND WE HOPE THE MAJOR WILL KEEP UP HIS WELL EARNED REPUTATION."

OCTOBER 22, 1853 ISSUE OF "CLINTON EXPRESS"

THEY CAME TO CLINTON COUNTY MICH.



DORR K. & MARY LOUISE (NICHOLS) STOWELL

Dorr K. Stowell was born in Cayuga Co. N. Y. Dec. 24/29 1824. He moved to southern part of Mich. when he was a small boy and later came at the age of eight to DeWitt, Mich., where his father Dr. Hiram Stowell practiced medicine through-out the county. His father visited his patients on a buck skin Indian pony. Few white settlers lived near the Stowell home and the boys playmates were Indian children. At age of 23 he purchased from the government 80 acres of forest land in Bengal, four miles West of St. Johns for \$10.50 per acre. After clearing a little patch he built a one room log cabin, clinking the cracks with clay.

On 3rd Dec. 1852 before the mud plaster was dry he brought to his home in the forest his bride of Oct. 10, 1852.

Mary Louise Nichols daughter of Samuel D. Nichols and Maria Fox. Mary was 17 at the time of her marriage.

Their cabin had no doors or windows and very little furniture at the time. The bed being made from saplings with tough young bark for bed cords. In 1874 they erected a fine frame farm house on the farm.

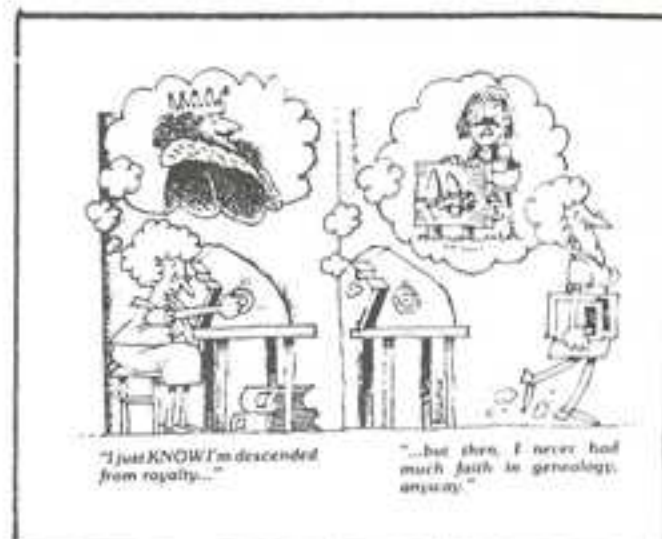
The pioneer couple were married at the home of Miner Prink, Mrs. Lucinda M. Prink was a sister to Mary. In preparing for the wedding dinner, Mary and her sister Lucinda washed the wheat at a near by spring. Then the wheat had to be taken by oxen team to Rochester Colony 12 miles away to be ground into flour for the dinner.

Mary Louise was born in Farmington, Oakland Co. 12th Jan. 1835, she was 15 years old when she came to Clinton Co. She taught school for 2 years in rural districts of the county. Mr. Stowell was also an early teacher in the county.

Six children were born at their home in the forest, two died in infancy and a third died at age of 4 years. The three living were A. K. E., Fred L. and Emma L.

Mr. & Mrs. Stowell lived 45 years on their farm on E½ of N. E. quarter Sec. 15, Bengal Twp. and later moved around 1899 to W. State St. in St. Johns.

They were very active and prominent in the grange, Dorr being



SURVEYOR OF HIGHWAYS

These officers were responsible for laying out and maintaining the towns' roads. Most towns had several. Each looked after the roads in the section of town in which he lived. In addition, each surveyor was responsible for calling out and supervising the two days of work on the roads which was required annually by each of the towns' inhabitants.

(Janet Snyder)

FENCE VIEWER

This office was one of the first established in each town after its founding. The duties of the fence viewer consisted of supervising the laying out of boundaries and the construction of boundary fences and walls. They were also responsible for making sure that these boundary markers

quarter Sec. 15, Bengal Twp. and later moved around 1899 to W. State St. in St. Johns.

They were very active and prominent in the grange Dorr being Master of the Bengal Grange. He also served in many township offices through-out the years while he lived in Bengal. For 10 years he was President of Clinton & Gratiot Farmers Mutual Insurance Co. Dorr was President for several years of the Clinton County Pioneer Society.

They both lived to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary in 1912. Mary Louise died suddenly at her home Jan. 23 1916, she was 81 years old. Dorr K. followed his wife one year later on 19th of April 1917, at age of 93.

Both Mr. & Mrs. Stowell were buried from their home on W. State St., with the same pastor from a Universalist Church in Lansing. Burial was in the family plot at Mt. Rest Cemetery.

Mr. & Mrs. Stowell were a fine example of the stalwart, honest stock of settlers, who laid the foundation for Clinton County.

NOTE: Can anyone add any additional information or make any corrections to the above history compiled by Janet Snyder, great-great niece of Mary Louise Nichols. Janet can be reached in care of the society or at 517-2244315 after 5 p. m.

aries and the construction of boundary fences and walls. They were also responsible for making sure that these boundary markers were in good repair and for arbitrating boundary disputes.
(Janet Snyder)

OBITUARY: Glenora Burk- Brunett

Old friends gathered at Mt. Rest Cemetery in St. Johns in March for the funeral of Glenora Burk Brunett, 101, who lived in Newberry for the past 40 years. She & her husband, Fred, owned a general store on N. Clinton Ave. (where PX Store now is) and the Triangle Motor Truck Co. at St. Johns in the mid-1920's. They were also involved in mint farming. A huge pudding-rock field stone from their Shepardsville farm marks her gravesite.

HILL FAMILY BIBLE

Daniel Hill born March the 23, 1785

Olive Hill born February the 13, 1786

Sarepta Hill born Sept. the 16, 1808

Asro Hill born November the 19, 1811 and died the same day

Ruth Hill born July the 3d, 1813

Rebecca Hill born June the 6, 1816

Elizebeth Hill born March 30th, 1819

Lorenzo Hill born May 20th, 1822

James Q. Hill born Oct. 20th, 1824

Daniel Hill Jr. born Sept. 29th, 1829

James Q. Hill died August the 4, 1830

Daniel Hill died May the 2, 1840

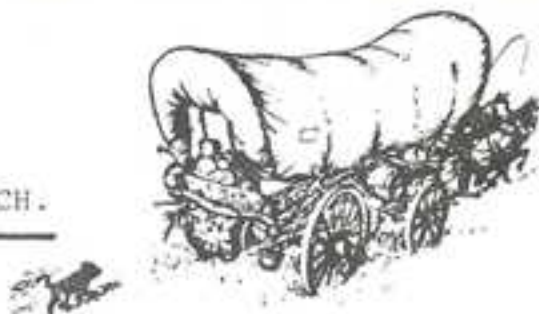


This information was transcribed by Randy Phelps from Bible donated to our Archives by an unknown doner in November 1983.

There was no date for the printing of the Bible and no identification as to type of Bible or who owned it.

All entries appear to have been made by the same person except the last of Daniel Hill.

THEY CAME TO CLINTON COUNTY MICH.



WILLIAM FREEMAN & HARRIET (GOODWIN) WELLS.

William F. Wells was born in 1812 in Mass. and moved to western N. Y. with his parents, David Danforth Wells and Wealthy Freeman before 1820. He married ca. 1839, Harriet Goodwin, who was born in 1815 in London, England, she was the daughter of James Goodwin.

Their first five children were born in western N. Y. Alvin E. born 1840; Wealthy, born 1842; Mary A. born 1844; Alcena born 1847; and Jane born 1850. The family then moved to Erie Co., Penn., where their son Edward Levander was born in 1851, later moving on to Clinton County, where their son Oscar was born in 1855. A daughter Nettie was born in 1865.

William & Harriet first bought land in Ovid Twp. in 1854, but soon afterwards bought land in Duplain Twp., near Elsie, where they lived the remainder of their lives.

William F. Wells died Aug. 17, 1870 and Harriet Goodwin Wells died Sept. 14, 1895. Both are buried in the old Elsie Cemetery in Duplain Township.

Submitted by Myrtle Salter, Great, Great Grand-daughter of William F. & Harriet Wells, through their daughter Alcena who married Frank Pearce 1871 in Elsie. Their daughter Emma Pearce, married Emmet Stevenson 1890 and their daughter Lillian Stevenson, married James Salter in 1930.

Mrs. Myrtle Salter desires information on any of these Clinton Co. MI. residents. (taken from 1880 Census record) Duplain Township:

Chinsworth, A, Scott Age 32 Farmer, Wealthy Age 38, Wife William, Age 9, Arthur Age 3, and Harriet Wells Age 62, Mother-in-law.

Bengal Township:

William F. Wells, Age 38, Duplain Maker, Rebecca Age

**Mark your
calendar**

AT PAINE GILLAM SCOTT MUSEUM:

April 9, Advisory Board Meets at PGS
May 6, Magnolia Week begins at PGS
May 9, Magnolia Tea at PGS
May 12, Trash 'n Treasure Auction at
livestock barn at 4-H fairgrounds
at St. Johns at 11 a.m.

HOURS at PGS: Sundays 1 to 5 p.m.
Wednesdays 2 to 8 p.m.

CCHS GENERAL MEMBERSHIP:

April 26 (changed from 19) at Capitol
Savings & Loan at St. Johns at
7:30 p.m.

**ANNUAL
MEETING**

This is our annual meeting with election of officers and then any other CCHS business will also be transacted.

May 17 at Bath Methodist Church on Main Street in Bath with program on the 1927 Bath School disaster. Come early and view a gazebo that has been erected on the site. (See story page 1)

CCHS GENEALOGY DIVISION:

April 2, 7 p.m., at the Archives at De Witt with election of officers followed by work session

Chinswo, A, Scott Age 32 Farmer, Wealthy Age 38, Wife
William, Age 9, Arthur Age 3, and Harriet Wells Age 62,
Mother-in-law.

Bengal Township:

Wells, Vander E. Age 29 Pump Maker, Rebecca Age
Wife, Daisey L. Age 2.

Wells, Oscar Age 25 Day Laborer, Alma Age 19, Wife and
Otis Age 1.

Hammond, Eliz. Age 60 Head of house-hold, G. Edwin Age
29, Farmer Son, Jane A. Age 29, Dau. in-law, Pearl A.
Age 3 mo. Also Frank B. Welton, Age 18 Adopted Son.

Mrs. Myrtle Salter's address is R #5, Box 489 Ft. Pierce
FL. 33451.

THANK YOU! Mrs. Salter for your contribution to "Meet
The People". Let's have more miniature Family Histories
from our membership. Send to THE GENEALOGISTS of the
Clinton County Historical Society P. O. Box 23, St.
Johns, MI. 48879.....J. M. Snyder

April 2, 7 p.m., at the Archives at De
Witt with election of officers
followed by work session

May 7 at 7:30 p.m. at Capitol Savings &
Loan in St. Johns.

CCHS NEWSLETTER, edited by Betty Jane
Minsky, welcomes letters from members
for a chit-chat column to be started
which will keep members informed of
who is doing what, where our members
live and what is happening in their
lives. Send short newsy items to Minsky
at Rt. 3, St. Johns, Mich. 48879

THANK YOU!

PAINÉ-GILLAM-SCOTT Museum thanks the following "friends" for their
donations: Mike and Gretchen Muehlenbeck, Tom and Mary Holland, Frances
Conn, Mildred Brown, Martha Goodman, Ford Ceasar, Richard & Marie DePond,

John & Catherine Rumbaugh; Terrence & Myra Fleming; Dixie Kosloski, Max and Harriet Field, Charlene
Cordray, Raymond & Brownie Locher, Rosemary Nester, and Elmer & Jan Upton. Thanks to Betty Jane Minsky
for paying for the printing for the second page of this month's newsletter. We will provide second pages
from time to time if individuals or groups can be found to underwrite the cost.

Clinton County Historical Society



P. O. Box 171

St. Johns, Michigan 48879

St. Johns, MI
PERMIT
NO 104
Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID

Janet Tiedt
551 N. Main St.
Fowler, Mi. 48835