

# "The Clinton Independent"

CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

1985

## In The News

WALLACE WATT, CCHS member and Clinton County's "first" and "oldest" Boy Scout, was honored with a Senate resolution citing him for his years of service in Scouting. Watt was a member of the first troop formed in the U. S. - Troop 1 in Barre, Vt. In a ceremony later local scouting officials presented Watt with a 75-year pin.

About 2 dozen fire departments from neighboring cities and counties saluted when the casket of Bob Bennett, a Maple Rapids volunteer fireman, was carried from the church there. He died fighting a house fire near Eureka which claimed the life of an occupant, Barbara Lindsley. The home was owned by Lewis & Linda Thayer.

The oldest industrial building in St. Johns came tumbling down last month. The old factory at 407 N. Lansing St. was cited earlier by city officials as being in hazardous condition. It was erected in 1867 as a soap factory and later became the Anchor Spoke Works. Later it was Cooper Engine and Boiler works and for much of this century it was a machine shop, owned in recent years by Jesse Jones.

A snow storm collapsed its roof in January.

HAPPY ST. PAT'S DAY

BRRRRrrrr...It's Cold Outside: February 1984 - second warmest on record in Michigan with 7 days above 50 degrees.

February 1985 - 10 to 20 degrees below normal with some of the coldest days on record recorded here



# GENEALOGY

## Meet the people

### Who Came To Clinton County . . .



#### The McCUTCHEON Family

Peter McCutcheon and his son, George, came to America from the Northerly portion of Scotland some time before the Revolution, the exact year is not known, but it was probably not far from 1770. At that time George was about 13. This is an estimate based mainly on the tradition that he was about 18 at the time resided at Inverness or perhaps Aberdeen. They were seafaring people and the occasion of their immigration was an accusation of some violation of the revenue laws. My grandfather put it very plainly when I asked him about the occupation of our people. He said, "Well, they followed smuggling." They went in their own boat or maybe that of some friendly neighbor, as far as Belfast, Ireland. On this point my grandfather was equally direct. He said, "They escaped." At all events, they reached Belfast in safety and were fortunate enough to find a ship on the point of sailing to New York on which they secured passage and in due time arrived in America. I know nothing of what other members of the family came and very little of the family history prior to the immigration. It is plain enough, however, that they were the usual roystering Highlanders and it is said that Andrew McCutcheon, father or grandfather of Peter, lost his life by falling under a truck wheel, in consequence of too much "splicing of the main brace", presumably with Scotch whiskey. One of the ancestors, I think Peter, married a certain Jane Adair. A cousin of mine, now residing in California and apparently possessed of a genius for genealogy, has somehow figured out that a strain of noble blood ran in the veins of Jane Adair, but I know not upon what this claim is based. Browne's History of the Highland Clans mentions the name as far back as the fourteenth century. Returning to Peter in America, they went up the Hudson into the wilderness and finally settled near Saratoga, N.Y. The battle of Saratoga was fought on land, part of which they occupied, and long after the war they plowed up parts of guns and other warlike materials.

Continued on next page...

# GAZETTE

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Peter and George went into the American Army and were at Saratoga and Monmouth. I know not when Peter died nor where he was buried, but doubtless it was at Saratoga. Some traditional stories of events of the revolution in which they figured were told me by my father, but space will not permit their record here. The family remained at Saratoga till about 1806 or maybe 1810 and then removed to Ogden, Tompkins Co., N.Y. George was the father of quite a large family, among which was Robert, born about 1791. Robert enlisted in the military service of the State of N.Y. under Captain Thos. Dougherty. He served one year on the Niagara River. Fourteen children blessed the union of Robert and Mary...6 sons and 8 daughters. Renssellar was the eldest of the sons...born Oct. 1st 1814. Mary Snyder was the daughter of Christopher Snyder or "Schneider", as he spelled it, who came to America from Germany about 1795. She died about 1866. Robert died about 1882. It is believed George died about 1828. Written by O. E. McCutcheon July 21, 1902, Clinton Co., MI. (Is this the family history of the Andrew McCutcheon 1836-1920 buried in South Bingham Cemetery? .... If so please contact J. Snyder 224-4315 or P. O. Box 23, St. Johns, MI.)

## Book Notes



The following new books are now on our shelves.

"TAKEOFFS AND TOUCHDOWNS" by Fred E. Jacobs, a first edition, gives an account of the author's 60 years of flying. It was presented to the Archives by Frank Bishop, an Owosso resident and CCHS member, who has kept in touch with Davis, a former resident now living in California.

"MICHIGAN SOLDIERS AND SAILORS ALPHABETICAL INDEX" was purchased by the genealogists.

TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES....our collection grows. We now have directories for most Michigan areas. We also have some duplicates. Anyone wishing one of the duplicates may pick them up at the Archives.

"Each individual in this world is a part of the history of today, and is a contributor to the history of tomorrow. There is little room upon the sidelines for mere spectators"

George Matthews Adams

# Obituary

Margaret J. Streit, daughter of a pioneer St. Johns family, died in California in January. She celebrated her 100th birthday last November, relatives said.

The daughter of the late Judge Robert Merrill, Streit and her sister, Treva; and a brother, Robert, grew up in the historic old "Joslen" home at Ottawa & State Street which was built by their grandfather, Dr. Oliver Case Joslen.

Catherine Rumbaugh, co-director of PGS Museum, said through the generosity of the family many Merrill/Joslen heirlooms have been donated to PGS in recent years. Included is a primitive oil painting of Joslen; items from his doctor's office; and household items.

Dr. Joslen lived four years in Rochester Colony before setting in St. Johns. He nursed wounded Civil War soldiers in his home and treated Indians from as far away as 200 miles when they came for medical care. He made his own medications from home grown herbs.

Treva Merrill Smith passed away in 1982. She was a CCHS member and her donations of antiques and money made PGS a viable museum.

## Clinton County Historical Society

P. O. Box 174

Saint Johns, Michigan 48879

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Arlyn Gantz  
Box 535  
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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

CCHS March 21, Capitol Savings & Loan, St. Johns, 7:30 p.m.

April 18, DeWitt High School Auditorium, 7:30  
THE CIVIL WAR - David Finney & His Living History Program

PGS Closed for winter  
Reopens March 17  
SPRING HOURS TO BE SAME  
AS LAST YEAR  
Sundays 1-5 p.m.  
Wednesdays 2-8 p.m.

### GENEALOGISTS

March 4, Capitol Savings & Loan, St. Johns, 7:30 p.m.  
"DECLARING WAR" on the search for your ancestors by using military records



St. Patrick's Day



The Civil War Historical Society invites all Civil War enthusiasts to attend this special presentation. Come with us and step back in time 120 years as we welcome a soldier of Michigan's Seventh Infantry returning to his home in Farmington Hills. Listen to him relate his experiences of the past four years from pre-enlistment to Appomattox courthouse.

## DAVID FINNEY\*

AND HIS



\*David Finney, Civil War historian and teacher at North Farmington H.S. and Oakland Comm. College.

## LIVING HISTORY PROGRAM

DEWITT HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM  
Thursday, April 18, 1985 - 7:30pm  
Admission is FREE -Public invited



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"DECLARING WAR  
ON THE SEARCH FOR  
YOUR ANCESTORS BY  
USING MILITARY RECORDS...  
...AND HOW TO WIN  
THE BATTLE!"

PRESENTED BY THE  
GENEALOGISTS OF THE CLINTON  
COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

"MARCH FOURTH"  
7:30 PM

CAPITOL FEDERAL SAVINGS BUILDING  
IN ST. JOHNS