



Manchester Area
Historical Society

 PO Box 56
 Manchester, Michigan
 48158

2003-2004 Officers

Don Limpert, President

Jim Wilson,
First Vice-President

Howard Parr,
Second Vice-President

Betty Cummings, Secretary

Carl Curtis, Treasurer

Reno Feldkamp
Jerry Swartout
Trustees

**May 2004
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Volume XX, No. 2
May, 2004

M A N C H E S T E R

WANDER

WASHTENAW

The Manchester Area Historical Society will participate in this exciting event that has been put together by the Washtenaw County Historical Consortium.

Sixteen of the County's Historic Attractions will be open on Saturday, May 15th, from 10am to 4pm and Sunday, May 16th from 1 to 4pm

It is expected that people will *wander* from one place to another— an excellent opportunity to see several of Washtenaw County's wonderful attractions

Donation: Adults \$8 in advance, \$10 at the door
Family: \$15

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|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ann Arbor: | Jarvis Stone School, Salem |
| African American Museum | Salem Walker Church & Cemetery |
| Cobblestone Farm | Rentschler Farm, Saline |
| Earhart Manor | Washtenaw County Parks: |
| Kempf House Museum | Parker Mill |
| Museum on Main Street | Sharon Mills |
| Dexter: | Ypsilanti: |
| Dexter Area Museum | Automotive Heritage/Miller |
| Webster Township Museum | Motors |
| Manchester Blacksmith Shop | Michigan Firehouse Museum |
| Hack House Museum, Milan | Ypsilanti Museum |

Advance tickets are available in Manchester at Village Gifts

The Manchester Area Historical Society remains a small, friendly group with a lively sense of history. We always are in need of newer faces to pick up the local history trail, to adapt it with necessary changes and to carry the message forward. There are many chores yet unfinished which could be completed faster with more volunteers—creation of computer files for our collection, cataloging and marking items in the collection, making and processing audio history tapes, creating displays depicting timely local history, acting as docents at the Blacksmith Shop, serving on committees specializing in historical projects, and so on. Fresh minds would suggest additional interesting activities, I'm sure.

Come to any regular meeting and join our efforts to build a better record of local history. Monthly meetings are held at the Village Room in the lower level of Manchester Village Hall from September through May at 7:30 pm, usually on the second Thursday of the month. All are welcome and this is an excellent way to get started. Meetings are kept short, conducted informally and include a variety of interesting topics, a mix of local, state and national themes and an occasional “hands on” session working with museum and archival materials.

Help yourself by helping us do a better job!



MEETINGS AT A GLANCE

May 13, 7:30. Village Room
Jerry Waters, scale model
buildings

June 10, 6:30. **Picnic** at Don
Limpert's, City Road. Bring your
own table service and a dish to
pass.

No meetings July and August

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

The Membership Committee would like to compile a 2004 Membership Directory to be sent to all members. In order to do this, we would like to request your permission to list your name, address, and phone number. If for some reason you do not want your address or phone number listed, please contact me:

Ann Walton
1321 Brooklyn
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734) 663-1963
awalton@umich.edu

When you renew your membership for 2005, the renewal form will also request your e-mail address for use in the Directory. Thank you.

*Not a member? Join and support the Historical Society!
Complete the dues payment form on the back page.*

Group Tours Two Museums

On March 18th, ten of our members went on a tour of the Hudson Historical Museum and the Lenawee County Museum in Adrian. President Don, board members Reno Feldkamp and Nancy, Jim Wilson and Linda, and Gerry Swartout, along with Doug Howell met there at 1:00. Carl and Nondus Buss and Howard Parr joined them a bit later for the presentation about the museum by Hazel Monahan, curator. The museum, in an old Main Street bank building, is operated by a non-profit association. The historical society for the area concentrates on the Bean Creek Valley, a wide area following the Bean Creek, which eventually flows into the Maumee River in Ohio.

Covering three floors of a commercial building, the museum has ample space to present a broad cross-section of the history of that community, with separate rooms depicting themes such as barber shops, dentist offices, one-room schools, athletic competitions, etc. Even the old bank vaults show earlier banking history. Pictures, carefully identified, supplement most exhibits and cover the walls. There is a full complement of older military uniforms and artifacts.

The project is vivid testimony to the dedication and daily hard work of the curator, who spends time there each day processing materials and artifacts when she isn't acting as docent to visitors during regular hours of operation each week.

One of the benefits of visiting others is the different look of one's home base afterward. No two historical societies or museums are ever the same. Hudson's museum is a composite of all the major aspects of that community's past. We in Manchester came on the scene relatively late, joining other groups already actively following parts of our history. The MHS Alumni Society follows the high school and has been joined lately by the Athletic Boosters who concentrate on athletic history. Our Township Library had maintained an Historical Room for many years and turned only furniture items and some artifacts over to us in 1983 when we bought our building. The other items remain there are now maintained by the District Library. The American Legion and Auxiliary follow military history here and Don Limpert is the expert with his Civil War collection.

Manchester's Centennial Committee produced *Manchester's First Hundred Years*, a summary of local history for Manchester and the surrounding townships.

Last year the Chicken Broil commissioned its first 50-year history with help from Society members. Our 21 calendars contain various elements of history in their scenes and captions. These circumstances but demonstrate that each community is different, but there is still much we do and can still do to develop a better record and understanding of our history.

The Lenawee County Historical Museum is a private non-profit group housed in the old Carnegie Library building in Adrian. Dr. Charles Linquist heads the professional staff and their funds are provided with various fund-raisers each year. Displays are somewhat limited by the building being used.

Our trip was inspirational and helped give us new inspiration to keep up historical efforts in this community. The Board voted to send the Hudson Historical Museum \$50.00 in appreciation for their efforts during our visit. Any of our members, individually or in groups, would thoroughly enjoy spending part of an afternoon in either of these nearby museums. We should take the time to do this more often.

—Howard Parr

Upcoming Program and Picnic

At the May 13th meeting we will have a program on scale model buildings. Local resident Jerry Waters will discuss his hobby and display some of his work.

On June 10th we will have our annual end of season picnic. This year we will meet at Don Limpert's house and museum. If you missed the Christmas party this is another chance to see some of Don's great collections. If you were there at Christmas I'm sure you will see things you missed then.

During the summer I will still be looking for interesting programs for next season. A visit to Bob Mottice's blacksmith shop is being planned and other ideas are in the works. If you think of anyone or have any ideas for programs call me anytime (428-0407).

Have a fun and safe summer.
Jim Wilson, *Program Chairman*

Stereoviews

The Manchester Area Historical Society held its regular monthly meeting on April 6 in the Village Hall.

Carl Curtis presented a program on stereoviews. In 1832 Charles Wheatstone proposed the idea that the brain sees two different views, but does not see double. The eyes get information and the brain puts it together.



In 1834, Wheatstone developed the mirror stereoscope. It was big and heavy. Sir David Brewster invented the Brewster stereoscope, a small and portable version that was the rage at 1851's Great Exposition in London.



In 1854, stereoviews were introduced in the U.S, but they were large, ornate, and expensive. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., thought everyone should be able to afford one, so he made a small

skeleton one. The Holmes/Bates stereoscope was inexpensive and it was mass-produced.

Our eyes are about 2½ inches apart, so in a stereoview, two photographs are taken of the same object, either with a camera with lenses 2½ inches apart or by moving the camera that distance to the side for the second photograph. The photographs are then placed side-by-side on cardboard. When the double photograph is placed in the back of the stereoscope and viewed through an eyepiece, the brain combines the two views into one three-dimensional picture.



In the 1870s and 1880s, millions of prints were made. By the 1890s and early 1900s, almost everyone could afford them and they became the entertainment of the day. Pictures were available with views from around the world.

Curtis brought several stereoviews and a variety of pictures to the Historical Society's meeting. Some of the pictures may now be classified as risqué, showing women in various poses. Some showed the ankle and others were more provocative.

However, they were inspected and passed by the Chicago Police Department in 1917 as suitable for public viewing.



A stereoview of the audience.



Spring at the Blacksmith Shop

Our shop is chinked into a beautiful part of East Main Street. Have you noticed the magnolia tree to the right of the shop? It isn't on our property technically, but could hardly be in a better place to set the shop of when it is in full bloom. The ornamental cherry trees along the street there help, too. On the west side, probably on our lot, the forsythia clumps in vase-like yellow. Ivy vines are creeping over much of our brick work in front to almost frame the spring scene. These vines, however, have become a topic of discussion as to whether they may be damaging the brick. Enjoy them now because they may have to be removed.

The House Committee, consisting of Carl Buss, Tod Armentrout and Howard Parr, plans again to set out bedding plants and fill the barrel planter. Portulaca in several colors will line the wall and sweet alyssum and geraniums will fill the half barrel.

The board/house committee is seeking bids on painting the exterior trim on the building. We plan to keep the same color and hope to do a better job of "feeding the wood" this time. It needs some oil to help that old wood before the finish coat of latex goes on. Of course, with our windows there will be lots of putty to spread.

T&N Services will again maintain our lawn, helping us in summer as they do with snow in the winter. Their service remains inexpensive and we owe them thanks for keeping our costs down.

If you have thoughts or suggestions about the painting project, please don't hesitate to tell any board or house committee member.

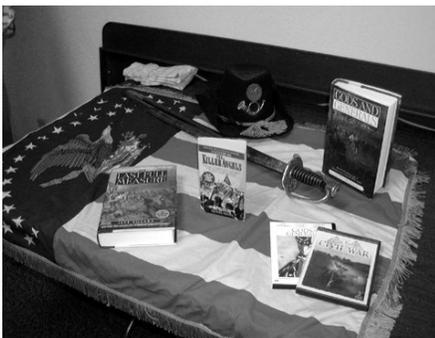
CIVIL WAR REENACTMENTS

The speaker for the meeting of March 11, 2004, was George Till who is a Civil War reenactor with the 24th Michigan Infantry. He started the program with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

George became a reenactor to honor the men who lost their lives in the Civil War. Per capita, Michigan sent more troops to the Civil War than any other state. As a reenactor, Till has been in three movies: *Gettysburg*, *Glory*, and *Gods and Generals*. He showed a film on how the last movie was made.

Gods and Generals is one of the most historically accurate movies he has seen. The actors were not selected because they had big names, but rather for their acting ability. Till was one of about 700 reenactors selected from thousands of applicants. Reenactors were used instead of extras because they know the movements of troops, making it authentic. They provided their own gear and uniforms. They were fed very well, and, during the filming, they were awakened at 4:30 a.m. with a howitzer firing. They worked until dark. Most scenes were shot a dozen times. The big battle scene was filmed only once and it was almost dark. Till was involved in some stunt work and had to be careful where he stepped because gun powder was buried in containers in the ground to make explosions. No one was hurt during the filming.

The director explained to the reenactors how each scene has a dynamic. The secret is to capture it because it is gone in an instant. Till had high praise for everyone involved in the film for their friendliness and the way he was treated.



Manchester Blood Drives

The Manchester Area Historical Society met on Feb. 12, at the village hall, where Marja Warner presented a program on the history of Manchester's blood drives.

During the Korean War, there was a need for blood. Manchester held a drive in March 1951 and got 127 pints. A second, held the following October, collected 91 pints. These two drives were sponsored by the Michigan Department of Health and were staffed by Manchester volunteers.

A year and a half later, Manchester's blood drives were officially started with Claire Reck in charge. The first official drive was held Feb. 5, 1953 and was the very first community blood drive to be held in Washtenaw County.

The blood drives have expanded so Emanuel Church, Manchester United Methodist Church, St. Mary's Catholic Church, and the American Legion each host one drive a year. In addition, a Christmas drive is held as well as an annual drive at the high school.

The most blood collected at a Manchester drive was 230 pints on Oct. 19, 1981. Now, about 75 pints are collected at each drive. The drop is attributed to factory jobs being lost and people working out of town as well as the people from out of town who work at the newer factories having less loyalty to the Manchester community.

In its 52-year history, Manchester's blood drives have contributed a total of 14,492 pints. One donor, Bob Punches, who has donated 141 pints of blood, stands out. His total donations equal more than 17 gallons.

Each pint of blood donated helps three people. The National Honor Society at Manchester High School started sponsoring an annual drive in Feb. 1983 and has collected approximately 900 units in 22 years. Warner

reported that many of the students are scared to death, but are willing to try. She also described a drive held on a very hot day with nine students fainting and lying on the floor.

She described the adventure she and her husband had when they flew to Denver to receive the 1997 National Award of Merit from the American Association of Blood Banks. The Manchester community was selected as one of only eight communities in the U.S. to receive this prestigious award. In 2003, Manchester received a Platinum Sponsor Award given for the number of drives held, when they are held and the types of blood that are collected.

Manchester uses a team approach to organizing its blood drives and this model is now being used in other communities.

Claire Reck was Manchester's first blood drive coordinator. She did everything from nailing the arrow signs on telephone poles at 6:30 a.m. so the blood truck drivers and donors could find their way, to making special cookies for the Red Cross nurses and the volunteers. She coordinated the drives until early 1988 when her health started failing. Jean Little held that position until the summer of 1993 when the reins were passed to Warner.

Warner said that it now takes five people to do the work that Claire Reck once did by herself.



Together, we can save a life

Farming in the Early 1900s

Editor's Note: In the February newsletter began excerpts from the writings of Howard Parr entitled "Mom and Dad's Farm-1915-1965. The farmer's sequence of work, beginning in March when the farm year began, was related. This continues his commentary about a world of simple economy powered by man and his horses.

Cultivating

Usually there was time to cultivate the corn before haying started. We had both a walking and a riding one-row cultivator. The operator behind the walking cultivator used handles to guide the gangs of teeth around the small corn plants and often stopped to uncover one or a few that he had covered up. On the riding cultivator the gangs of teeth were controlled with the feet, moving them back and forth to follow the planted corn rows. When the corn was very small, shields were dragged along the rows to keep from covering the sprouting corn shoots. Later, when the plants were bigger, these were removed so the soil could be thrown over the ground between the corn plants to cover the weeds. Two horses pulled these cultivators but we also had a single row cultivator pulled by one horse which we used in the garden and potato patch.

Haying

Haying was in some ways more difficult because the best weather for it was hot and dry. It was hard on both horses and humans. The following implements were used to make hay: five-foot mower, side delivery rake, dump rake, hay loader, and wagons with a flat rack. Two horses pulled each of these implements. After the mowed hay was dry it was raked with the side delivery rake into long windrows across the field. The hayloader was attached to the rear of the wagon and picked up a

windrow and delivered it to the back of the flat rack where a man used a fork to build his load of hay. A second person had to drive the horses pulling the wagon and loader—this was usually one of the first jobs a kid could do. He had to quickly learn to straddle the windrows and turn on the ends so not to miss any raked hay.

The dump rake was used when we couldn't use the loader—on steep hillsides or in uneven marshes. This rake could be tripped or dumped periodically to release the accumulated hay which then was forked by hand into bunches or haycocks to dry until it was ready to again be pitched by hand onto a wagon and hauled to the barn.

In each of our barns there was a system of ropes, pulleys and forks pulled by a team of horses to unload the hay. The best hay weather was hot and dry but this took its toll in terms of discomfort when working with the dusty, chaffy hay while sweaty. It was stifling in the hay mows when the hay had to be stowed away. All too often it remained so hot at night that one didn't rest as well as usual. We were lucky to be located close to the River Raisin and often ended a hot day with a cooling dip in the river. To do this we walked across to the next farm and the old swimming hole on Herm Schaible's farm. It didn't seem to bother us that by the time we dashed home after the swim we were about as hot and sweaty as when we started—but the hay dirt was gone, more or less.

Fall activities will be presented in the next newsletter

The **Historical Society of Clinton** has been awarded a Michigan Public Humanities Development Grant for a symposium and traveling exhibition to recognize the life, body of work, and influence of native son, Wirt C. Rowland. During Detroit's "Golden Age" he created a new skyline for the city with his 1920's designs. Rowland is most famous as the architect of the Guardian, Buhl and Penobscot Buildings in Detroit..

On May 21st, from 6:30 to 8:00 pm, we are invited to join the society for a private exhibit of the Wirt Rowland buildings at the Township Library. The public exhibit of these buildings opens on May 22 and continues until June 19, 2004. On June 12, the Wirt Rowland Symposium is open to the public and includes a morning bus tour to Detroit to see the skyscrapers he designed and a slide lecture, panel discussion, and dinner in the afternoon at the U.C.C. church. Please phone Shirley Campbell at 517-456-4716 to register.

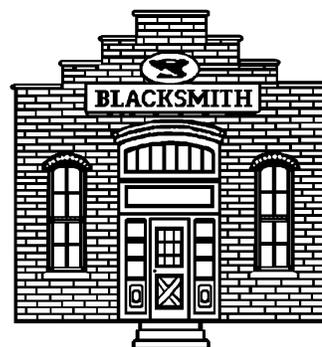
From the President

As the Board discusses various issues over the next months, they would like your comments about the following, as well as any other items that are of interest or concern to you.

Does MAHS want a museum in addition to the Blacksmith Shop? If so, should it be a new, or existing building? What size and style of building? Where should it be located and how should it be funded? Should it have regular open days and hours? How would we staff such a museum?

Should the Blacksmith Shop have regular days and hours that it is open? And again, how would it be staffed? Should MAHS be part of the District Library historical room?

Please let any member of the board know your interest or comments.



Not a Member? Join and support the Historical Society — help preserve Manchester's history.

DUES PAYMENT, 2004

Membership Year is 1 January through 31 December

MEMBERSHIPS

- 1 Year Individual Membership @ \$5.00 each \$ _____
- 1 Year Family Membership @ \$10.00 each \$ _____
- Individual Life Membership @ \$150.00 \$ _____
- Individual & Spouse Life Membership @ \$200.00 \$ _____
- Additional donation \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Please make check payable to Manchester Area
Historical Society and bring to a meeting or mail to:

Carl Curtis, Treasurer, MAHS
PO Box 56, Manchester, MI 48158

Your name
& address

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____