



Manchester Area  
Historical Society  
PO Box 56  
Manchester, Michigan 48158

Meetings: 7:30 pm  
Second Thursday each Month,  
September through June  
Village Room, 912 City Rd.

**2004-2005 Officers**

Don Limpert, President  
Jim Wilson,  
First Vice-President  
Howard Parr,  
Second Vice-President  
Betty Cummings, Secretary  
Carl Curtis, Treasurer  
Reno Feldkamp, Trustee  
Jerry Swartout, Trustee

**December 2004  
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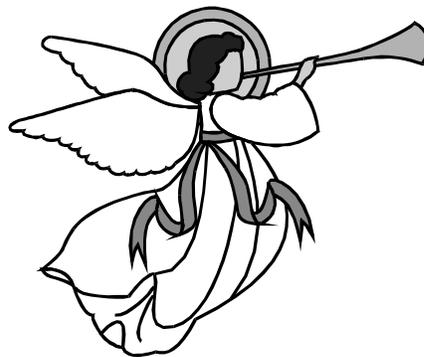
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Volume XX, No. 4  
December, 2004

**M A N C H E S T E R**

**CAROL SING &  
COOKIE EXCHANGE**



It's time once again for the joyous and rousing, annual Carol Sing and Cookie Exchange. Don Limpert has once again agreed to host this traditional event at his home and museum, 901 City Road, at 7:30 pm, Thursday, December 9th.

Luke Schaible will provide the music. Bring your appetite, some Christmas cookies to share, your singing voices, and most of all, your holiday spirit.

Not only do we have a wonderful time singing holiday carols, you'll be able to sample others' cookies and package some to take home. All donations will go to Manchester Family Services.

**EVERYONE IS  
INVITED!**



# Election of Officers

At the annual meeting on September 9th, 2004, the Nominating Committee presented a slate of officers. All of the officers for the 2003-2004 year have agreed to serve another year and the membership unanimously voted their reelection.

Officers of the Manchester Area Historical Society are:

*Don Limpert, President*

*Jim Wilson, First Vice President*

*Howard Parr, Second Vice President*

*Betty Cummings, Secretary*

*Carl Curtis, Treasurer*

*Reno Feldkamp and Jerry Swartout, Trustees*

*photo taken at annual meeting in 2003*



## Future Meetings

### January 13th

Tentative - Ted Micka will be telling us about the business of old barn restoration. Ted is a local craftsman who specializes in saving antique barns and has taken many pictures showing the complete process from start to finish. This will be an interesting program. If Ted can't make the presentation in January, he will reschedule it for a later meeting. Watch the *Enterprise* for any changes.

### February 10th

Carol Britten will show a video and talk on the history of small town fairs. Carol is a local resident and active in the Manchester Fair.

Jim Wilson is always looking for programs for future meetings. If you have a request or know someone who wants to share information on an interesting job or hobby with us, please call Jim at 428-0407.



# CRC Volunteer Banquet honors Jerry Swartout

The theme for the 17th annual benefit banquet sponsored by the Manchester Community Resource Center was "Small Town, Big Heart," a phrase that well describes the Manchester community. At this year's banquet there were many outstanding area volunteers honored for their community service.

MAHS recognized **Gerald Swartout** for his contributions to the Society. Jerry has been an active member of the Manchester Area Historical Society for fifteen years and is a current member of the Executive Board.

Jerry has been collecting and preserving all type of Manchester area artifacts and memorabilia for many years and has the largest collection of postcards, trade cards, tokens, and souvenirs of Manchester. Jerry has been a member of the Calendar Committee and since 1998 he has provided many early photographs and



postcards for the monthly scenes of the Society's annual calendar.

Jerry originated the idea of the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary token for Manchester, located a manufacturer and worked with the Manchester Men's Club to get the tokens produced. In 2004, Jerry was appointed to the Village of Manchester Historical District Commission. He has made photographs and postcards available to public displays at the Village Hall, the Bridgewater Bank, and provided the original postcard which was copied for one of the display cases at the Sharon Mills County Park.

Recently, the Washtenaw County Parks Commission purchased "Ridgewood Farm" which was owned by Frank and Toni Leonard. The farm is to be maintained as a natural area. Jerry has an aerial view painting of the farm, which includes a portrait of Frank and Toni, which he will loan to the Commission if they establish a display facility.

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## LUMINARIA

**Luminaria Supplies**  
will be sold  
at the Blacksmith Shop

Wednesday, December 22,  
4:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Thursday, December 23,  
4:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Friday, December 24,  
12:00 noon to 3:00 PM

It is certainly the desire of the Luminaria Committee that the entire village of Manchester would be wondrously lit up on Christmas Eve. This tradition began in 1977 and the job of securing and providing the supplies to the public was taken over by the Historical Society in 1983.

Participation in this event has decreased in the past few years and last year there were many conspicuous dark places in the Village.

Please help publicize this event and encourage your friends and neighbors to participate. Consider being a block captain, or volunteer to set up and light candles for a neighbor who will be unable to do so.

Let's make this year's Christmas Eve the "brightest" ever!



# BLACKSMITHING

The meeting of September 9th was held at the home of Bob and Sandy Mottice, where Bob presented a program on blacksmithing.

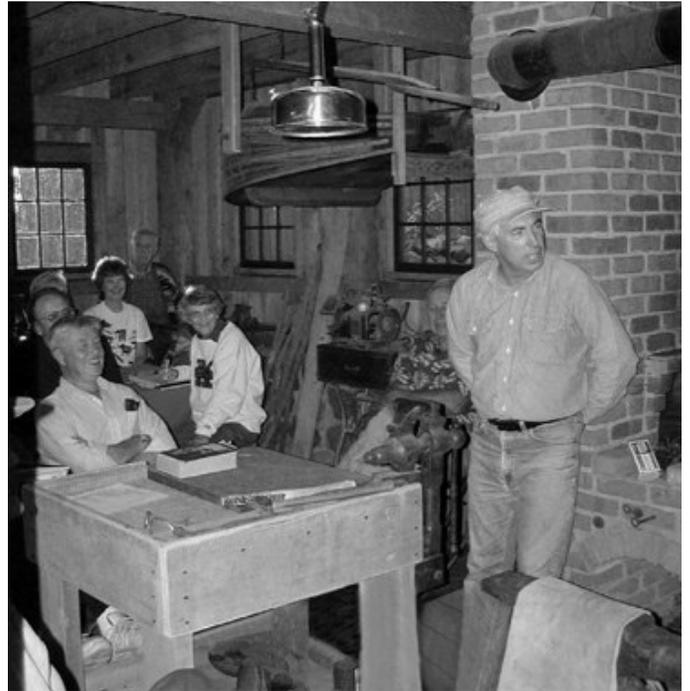
In 1979, Bob took a blacksmithing class at Greenfield Village. Shortly after that, he took a class on stone splitting at Manchester High School taught by Ray Gonyer. And in 1982, he started building his own blacksmith shop. The stone walls are 18 inches thick, and all the mortar was mixed in a wheelbarrow.

An Amish man from Ohio helped with the timber framing. Hemlock was used for the siding, while the window frames are made of sassafras and there are cedar shakes on the roof. Bob's future projects include a stone smokehouse, a brick bake oven and an icehouse.

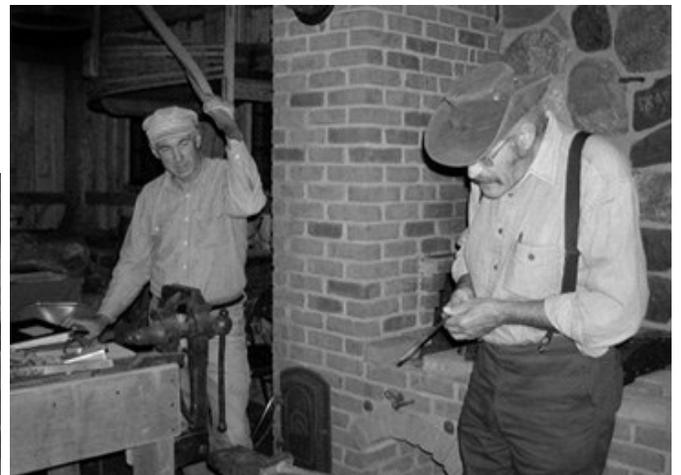
Blacksmiths were essential and respected in days gone by. They touched every aspect of life. Some of the items they made were nails, anchors, rifles, and axles. They shod horses and repaired farm and household equipment. People used to burn down their houses when they moved in order to take the nails with them for reuse in building another house.

Blacksmiths got their name because the men who worked with metal were called smiths and after iron is worked, it is black. There are three types of iron—wrought iron has no carbon and will not rust; steel has a little carbon; and cast iron has a lot of carbon.

Dave Goodrich demonstrated blacksmithing on Bob's forge, by making an "S" hook. The tip of each end



of the iron was hammered to a point, which was then curled around. After both ends were done, the piece of iron was placed in a vice and, with a large pair of pliers, the iron was pulled and twisted to form an "S".



*JOHN DEERE STARTED OUT AS A  
BLACKSMITH OUT EAST*



# Auto Restoration

The meeting of October 14th was held at Anzalone's Auto Restoration Company, on Sharon Hollow Road at the former Macomber farm. The brick house was used for a couple of years in the 1880s as the first Lutheran seminary.

Bob and Mary Anzalone talked about how they came to Manchester and then led a tour of our group through the restoration area.

For 25 years, the Anzalones have restored cars, specializing in pre-1942 models. They had a small shop in Monroe and when they outgrew it, they bought the Macomber farm. They made extensive changes to fit their needs, but the barns provided a lot of room under one roof. They currently employ five young men.

There were several cars in various stages of restoration and car parts and tools were neatly stored on shelves and in tool boxes. The owners of some of the cars only show them at car shows, others drive them.

On display was a 1928 Isotta Fraschini chauffeur-driven car built in 1928 in Milan, Italy. The car cost \$20,000 when it was built. It took 8000 man hours to restore and is valued at about \$1 million now. It was shown recently at the Pebble Beach, California, car show and belongs to someone in Grosse Pointe.

One car, a Monteverdi built in the early 1970s, is not being restored. It was the first production car, designed in Italy and built in Switzerland of Chrysler parts. The Anzalones are working the bugs out of it so it runs and shifts properly.

A 16-cylinder 1932 Marmon is currently having its paint color changed. Typically, when a car is restored, seven coats of paint are applied, with hand sanding between each coat.

Members ended the evening by visiting the two Percheron's that also call the farm home.



*Conveyances in the barn included the last buggy built in Manchester in the late 1890s when the Blacksmith Shop was called Neebling Carriage Works. It was restored by an Amish man about five years ago.*



# Christmas Eve in New Guinea - 1944

*submitted by Howard Parr*

Our troop ship with 3600 troops on board left San Francisco November 29th and didn't stop until we debarked on Christmas Eve. We docked in a torrential rain storm in a place called "Base F" which turned out to be Finschaffen, New Guinea.

After I had stowed my gear in my tent in the officers' area, I went to check on the comfort and well-being of my men. I finally found them in 16-man squad tents in the enlisted billet area located in a lower section of the cleared area. Canvas cots were the only things placed in the tents. On these, each man had to put his two duffel bags and his rifle. There was enough room left over for a slender man to sit, but since there

were 6 inches of water running over the floor area, nothing was to be put under the cots.

Here and there was a lighted candle stuck on someone's helmet in use temporarily as a candle holder. Above the pounding rain and other camp noises came the sound of music. As I moved closer I realized the men were singing Christmas carols. Even under such trying conditions, they were remembering the Season and also expressing their thanks for a safe arrival and being on "dry" land.

One young second lieutenant learned a lot that night about the stamina and esprit de corps of young American soldiers. It was indeed a merry Christmas.

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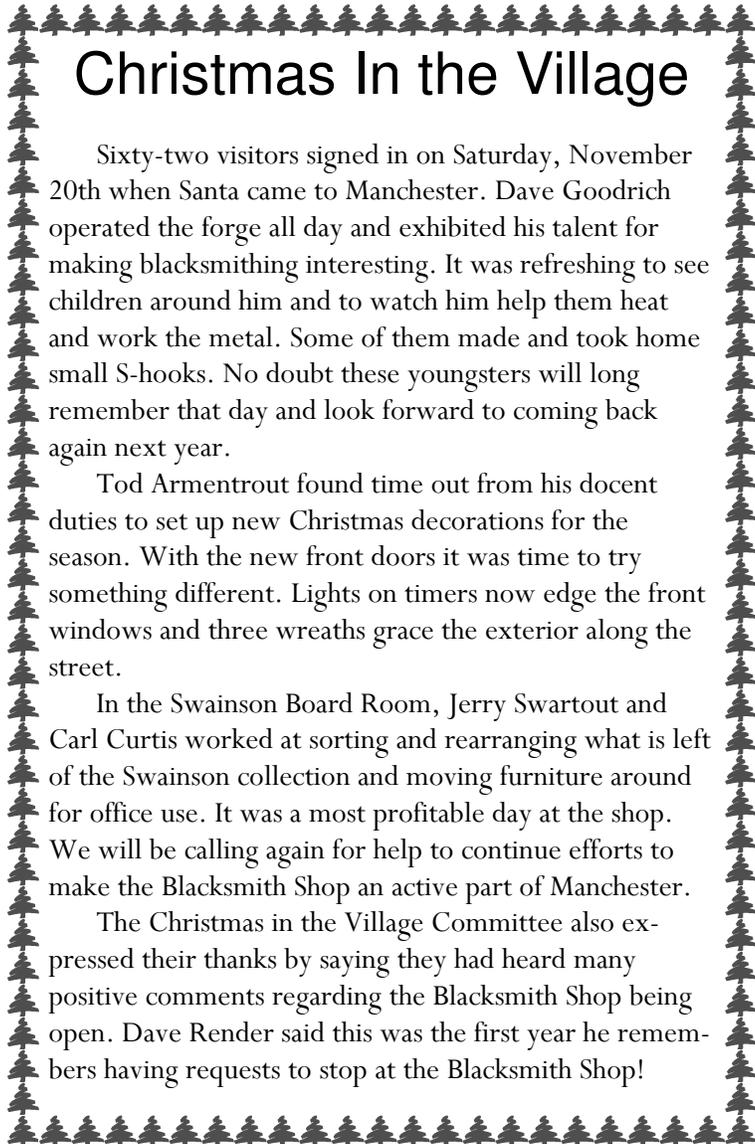
## Noted Events Elsewhere

The Old Mill Museum in Dundee will have its annual Candlelight Home Tour and Homestead Supper, Dec. 12th. From 5:00 to 9:00 pm you will be able to tour Dundee area log homes and the recently refurbished Pocklington Hotel. During this time they will be also be serving a hearty supper at the museum. Tickets for the tour are \$7.00, and \$10.00 for the supper. Call 734-529-8596 for more information.

The Plymouth Historical Society presents a Lecture Series on "The First Ladies of Fashion" at the Plymouth Historical Museum, 155 S. Main St. On Friday January 7th, 12 noon, First Ladies Fillmore, Grant, Cleveland, Garfield and Lincoln will be discussed. Admission is \$5.00, which includes coffee and dessert. The Museum also has an exhibit on Inaugural Ballgowns of the Presidential First Ladies.

The Museum on Main Street in Ann Arbor is featuring vintage table settings and recipes. The exhibit will run through February 20th and the museum is open Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday from noon to 4pm. Homemade taffy, butterscotch cakes and candy canes will be part of the treats shared at their special Holiday Open House weekend, December 11th & 12th.

Russell Collins will talk about restoring the Michigan Theater on Sunday, Feb. 20th at 2:00, 603 E. Liberty Street, Ann Arbor, sponsored by the Washtenaw County Historical Society. There is no charge.



## Christmas In the Village

Sixty-two visitors signed in on Saturday, November 20th when Santa came to Manchester. Dave Goodrich operated the forge all day and exhibited his talent for making blacksmithing interesting. It was refreshing to see children around him and to watch him help them heat and work the metal. Some of them made and took home small S-hooks. No doubt these youngsters will long remember that day and look forward to coming back again next year.

Tod Armentrout found time out from his docent duties to set up new Christmas decorations for the season. With the new front doors it was time to try something different. Lights on timers now edge the front windows and three wreaths grace the exterior along the street.

In the Swainson Board Room, Jerry Swartout and Carl Curtis worked at sorting and rearranging what is left of the Swainson collection and moving furniture around for office use. It was a most profitable day at the shop. We will be calling again for help to continue efforts to make the Blacksmith Shop an active part of Manchester.

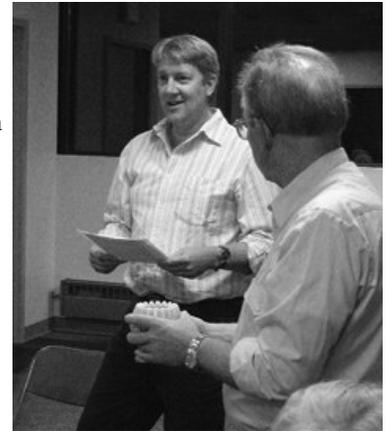
The Christmas in the Village Committee also expressed their thanks by saying they had heard many positive comments regarding the Blacksmith Shop being open. Dave Render said this was the first year he remembers having requests to stop at the Blacksmith Shop!

# November Meeting - Bring An Antique

Jim Wilson facilitated our “Bring An Antique” program on November 11th. There was an interesting variety of objects, some of which were a mystery, but there was a lot of speculation on what they were. Many items belonged



to great or great-great grandparents or aunts and uncles. Among the antiques brought in by members and guests were a collection of eye cups (used to wash dirt out of the eye), in various sizes, shapes, and colors. There was a Vaseline glass candy dish that had belonged to someone born in 1851 and married in 1877. Doug Howell read from a love letter dated May 19, 1877. Del Ludwick brought a 1918 U.S. Army compass. He told us that we could tell due south by holding a twig against a wristwatch with the shadow aligned with the hour hand. Halfway between the shadow and 12 is due south, sun time.



There was a mourning ring that belonged to a woman who died in the 1899 flu epidemic in England, dolls made in 1890 and 1895 that belong to the Society, a doll with a metal head from Germany, and a 25-caliber Smith and Wesson hand gun made in the 1860s.



There were salt cellars in different sizes, shapes and designs. These were used before salt shakers.

Darrel Suhre demonstrated an apple peeler patented in 1878.



In the 1860s, his ancestors came to the United States from Germany. They were not allowed to bring anything with them, but the women brought beans hidden in the hems of their skirts. His family has been growing beans from those seeds ever since. He gave packages of beans to those in attendance to plant next year.



There was a cotton scale, a box of Gold Dust scouring powder that had never been opened, an 1881 History of Washtenaw County, a McGuffey’s Eclectic Spelling Book from 1905, an 1868 Bible, and a 1907 telephone directory that includes Manchester. A ballot box used by the GAR was made in Dundee and looks like a cannon. A secret vote was cast by placing a white or black marble in the barrel, which then rolled into a drawer. The white marbles signified approval, while a black ball was a negative vote. That is where the phrase being black-balled began.



## Manchester High School Exhibit

The Society was asked to provide items for an historical display when our new High School was dedicated recently. We are fortunate to have a large number of items in our possession about many early Manchester-area schools.

School Board member Marlene Wagner checked out dozens of items to help her set up a display which was left intact for building use after the dedication. A prize item was one of the first six diplomas issued from MHS—to Willis Watkins, in 1871. Other representative diplomas since then gave a perspective of how diplomas have changed. Dedication programs for the first two new high schools were also included and Nondus Buss is due thanks for contributing the one for the third new building, the one just vacated by the high school and converted to a middle school. Alumni, class pictures and commencement programs were used to broaden the collection. John Korican furnished some items from the athletic collection.

Calendars from 2003 and 2004, featuring one-room schools, were available that day for those interested in them. The MAHS Board added to the monies collected, bringing the total to \$25, which was donated to the Manchester Schools Foundation, a group which raises money for enrichment of budgeted classroom programs.

We remembered to add a copy of the dedication program of the day to our files!

The Calendar Committee, with Doug Howell in charge of production, has created a beautiful calendar for 2005, following the theme “What Used To Be.” Filled with excellent photographs and history of Manchester, this calendar will make an especially nice Christmas gift!

## JOHN B. SWAINSON BOARD ROOM

The former John B. Swainson Room, which contained memorabilia from his retirement office at the Hustings, is being converted into an office area for the Society, a better area to install our computers, a regular room for board meetings and work and storage space for the Society’s museum collection. The Swainson Board Room will honor John for who he was and all he did for the Society, both as president and as a loyal member.

John’s daughter, Tina Way, arranged to dispose of most of the display set up in 1995 by her mother, Alice. Some items went to the Michigan Historical Museum, some to the Michigan Historical Commission, and some to John’s family members.

The remainder was donated to the Society for disposal. The largest part remaining consists of the collection of law books which filled the shelves. We hope they may be of use to some lawyer starting out today.

We thank John’s family for the use of this collection as well as for their assistance in dismantling it.