



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

May 2005

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M A N C H E S T E R

**SUMMER PICNIC
JUNE 9TH**

Another year is coming to a close.
And with it comes the annual potluck/picnic.



Once again our
President, Don Limpert
will open his home and museum,
providing a special place for
our annual picnic.

We will meet at 6:30 pm
at the corner of City Road and M-52.

Bring your own table service and a dish to pass.
Bring your appetite!

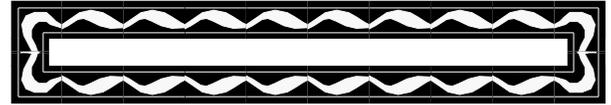
Bring a friend! - All are welcome!

Thanks to everyone who made suggestions for programs and a special thanks to members who presented their programs. Lots of input from members should ensure a good selection of future program topics.

Tentative programs for next season include a field trip to Alber's Cider Mill, History of Federal Income Tax, Antique Bicycles, Antique Bottles and Glass Production, and our annual antiques "road" show.

Don't forget the picnic, at Don Limpert's house
June 9th, 6:30.

—Jim Wilson
Program Chairman



Upcoming Events:

June 5: Orphan Car Show, Riverside Park, Ypsilanti

August 12-13: Dexter Days

August 19-21: Ypsilanti Heritage Festival

August 27: Fire Truck Muster, Ypsilanti
Riverside Park

September 24: Wander Washtenaw

October 1: Antique Truck Show, Ypsilanti
Riverside Park

June 26, noon to 3 pm. Cobblestone Farm, Ann Arbor

Michigan Log Cabin Day, sponsored by the Michigan Log Cabin Society and Cobblestone Farm Association. Experience living history demonstrations and tour the cabin and its accoutrements.

Cobblestone Farm is an 1844 Classic Revival farmhouse, complete with resident goats, sheep and chickens. Being restored and interpreted to reflect its mid-nineteenth century appearance, the farm provides a view of past rural life in Washtenaw County.

July 23, 11am to 4pm. Railroad Depot, 402 N. Ann Arbor St., Saline.

135th Anniversary celebration of the Saline Railroad Depot and the 10th Anniversary of the depot museum. Velocipede races, miniature railroad setup in the freight room, and trolley rides to sites of 19th century businesses around the depot complex.

MEETINGS AT A GLANCE

June 9th, 6:30, Picnic at Don Limpert's home, City Road. Bring your own table service and a dish to pass.

No meetings in July and August.



The 50s & 60s

Because the scheduled speaker for the meeting on March 10 was unable to attend, program chair Jim Wilson showed a videotape about life in the 1950s and 1960s. Members and guests added their memories from that era.

In the 1950s, gasoline cost 29 cents a gallon and people lived in ranch and split-level homes that looked much like the homes of their neighbors. Shopping centers were popular, the average car sold for \$1800, and teenagers enjoyed drive-in restaurants and drive-in movies.



The 1960s brought the Vietnam War, hippies, communes, war protesters, and riots. Cities were set on fire and people were killed. Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy were shot and killed, rock music, go-go dancers, and rock festivals were popular. A half million young people attended Woodstock. Gasoline was up to 33 cents a gallon. The space program accomplished what many dreamed of and many other thought was impossible. Apollo 11 traveled to the Moon and the lunar lander Eagle landed on the surface of the Moon in July 1969.

Many of those in attendance at

the meeting got married and were busy raising their families during this time. Some were in college. Several saw the riots in Rochester, New York, and Detroit. In Detroit, marshal law was declared and only small amounts of gasoline could be purchased in cans in an effort to stop people from setting fires and bombing businesses. Grain prices were about the same then as they are now.



Manchester was a sleepy town. Farm land sold for \$100 an acre. Township Board meetings were held in the back of Marx and Marx clothing store and the public did not attend meetings. In 1968,



Don Limpert bought the Sportsman's Bar and renamed it the Black Sheep Tavern, not as a derogatory name, but as one that stands out from the rest. He sold it in 1976 to two brothers. One was interested in theater and this brother bought the Legion building and created the Black Sheep Theatre.



The Life of Early Settlers

A program on the life of early settlers in Michigan was presented by Nondus Buss at the Thursday meeting, April 14, 2005.

Michigan experienced rapid growth after the opening of the Erie Canal. The population grew from 9,000 in 1820 to 212,000 in 1840. Passage from the Atlantic to Michigan cost \$10 and a farm could be purchased for \$100. Pioneer life was hard and people moved frequently. One woman moved 15 times and refused to move again when her husband died, leaving her with 7 children from 3 to 18 years of age, 3 cows, 1 yoke of oxen, and 7 acres.

Michigan had dense forests and swamps. People suffered from fever and chills (known as ague) that was caused by mosquitoes. Trees had to be cut down as people travelled to make roads.

Buss read several stories about life in the 1800s. One man planted six acres of wheat only to have the entire crop destroyed by yellow birds. Another story told of two boys who went out to get the cows one day. A buck deer attacked one of them and he grabbed an oak limb and clubbed it to death. The deer was too big for the boys to drag home so they went for help. No one believed them at first, but eventually some men went with them and helped them get it home. After that, their mother insisted that they always carry a gun when they went to get the cows.

The early settlers had a sense of humor. The same boy missed five deer while hunting with the gun. His mother told him he should get an oak limb. One evening, two boys had an encounter with a 400 lb. black bear that had been killing hogs. They both shot and wounded it and it went on a rampage. Men tracked it and finished it off. One brother told the other that he should hunt after dark since he had not hit anything in the daytime.

The railroad was pushing west. Passengers were expected to get out and push the train up steep grades and forage along the tracks for wood to burn. The trains were so noisy and the tracks so rough that some preferred the stage coach.



NOMINATIONS

President Don Limpert has appointed Carl Buss and Sharon Curtis as a Nominating Committee to prepare a slate of officers for the 2005-2006 year. They will present a list of proposed officers which will be published in the next newsletter and voted on at the annual meeting in September.

Our Board of Directors meets regularly and tends to the normal business matters to keep our business running smoothly. Committee chairs handle the more detailed operations and still other individuals are needed to take on special projects. Together a team gets the work done.

As the Nominating Committee creates a slate of officers and directors for next year, think about the welfare and strength of our organization and step up to help where needed. We need the initiative and drive of members willing to take their turn as officer, trustee, or committee member. If you are willing to serve, please let the Nominating Committee know.

Isn't this what democracy is all about?

Manchester Michigan in 1871

The following has been excerpted from a piece originally written by Nathaniel Schmid in 1921 and reprinted in the Enterprise, April 8, 1971. Submitted by Jerry Swartout.

It is the intention of the writer, who went to the village of Manchester, Michigan, on the 12th day of April, 1871, and remained there for 47 years, to give a list of the persons who were at that time engaged in the business affairs of the village; also the professional men,

mechanics and some of the older citizens, thinking it might be of interest to the present generation. In those days, fifty years ago, business was conducted in a much different style than now. We knew nothing about telephones, automobiles, electric lights, or waterworks, and seldom had traveling salesmen call upon us with their samplers. We were obliged to go into the markets or order our goods by mail or wire.

We will begin on the north side of Exchange Place
With the Manchester House Hotel,
Which was at that time run by one
Who was named Charley O'Dell.
This house had a reputation both near and from far
In the basement was a billiard hall—also a bar.
On the first floor (where Briegel & Fish are now shaving)
Was Peabody, the banker, who took care of our savings.

Next east, a small frame building then there stood,
On the place where Wuerthmer Brothers now
Are in the store that makes good.
Here Andrew Safe, the French shoemaker, made shoes,
And right next to him, east, John Bauer
Sold all kinds of booze.

Next, where Yocum and Marx now are, was a small frame shanty,
This was a meat market, run by John Koch (he was a dandy).
Then came an alley, about fifteen feet wide
It was the entrance to a livery and stores on the east side.
Next, a one story frame building we saw
Occupied by Charlie Craft, an attorney at law.
In the store now owned by J. Fred Schaible
In a new three story brick
Was Isaac L. Clarkson with a new stock of new merchandise
And every thing was slick.

Next east was Mrs. Thompson in a dressmaking and millinery store
Who sold bonnets and hats and everything that women wore.
Then came John Clarkson, who was one
Of the oldest merchants in those days,
He had general merchandise, which he disposed of in various ways.

Then came the drug store run by Van Duyn, Blosser and Lynch
They also sold books, notions, groceries, and snuff by the pinch.

*Exchange Place (Main Street)
the author begins at the corner of Clinton & Main*



*photo from 2005 Calendar, MAHS
photo taken about 1930
The awning on the right store identifies
J. Wuerthmer Clothing & Shoes*



*photo from 2005 Calendar, MAHS
photo taken about 1920
The awning identifies the store as
J. Fred Schaible,
Dry Goods, Shoes, Groceries*

(Continued from page 5)

Then came William Henry Pottle, the merchant from Maine
Who sold boots, shoes and dry goods both fancy and plain.
In the upper floors of this block, you may have heard tell
Goodrich Conkin and wife ran a neat little hotel.

In the rear of the second floor, to you may be a surprise
But here Mat D. Blosser printed the Manchester Enterprise.
You may talk about perserverance and stick to it iveness of men
Well for 56 long years, Mat has wielded the editorial pen.
Mat was also one of the best singers of that time,
He often favored us with Sword of Bunker Hill and Watch on the Rhine.

Next was Bill Baxter the oldest merchant though always quite frisky
He had a general store and in the back room a barrel of whiskey
Right next to this barrel on a neat little shelf,
Was a tin cup labeled, "Help yourself".
Those early times, lest you forget
Was the time when Manchester surely was wet.

In the Snowman store was Charley Nicholls, clothier, who did no one harm.
He got tired of the business and went back to the farm..
Next, Rose and Miller sold hardware, machinery and nails.
They had no wire fence, for in those days, fences were made of rails.

In the Naumann store, where Kern Brothers have an electrical display
Was a saloon and restaurant, run by one Nathan Hay.
Joe Ottmar came next, the harness maker, he mended the old and sold the new.
He was quite prominent then, and a council man too.

Next to the river was Chubbuck, the jeweler
With a large stock of silverware, watches and chains
He also did repair work with which he took pains.

We now cross the river and go to the east side below
Here much could be said, could the waters speak as they flow.
On the corner was Dr. Conklin who made a specialty of treating cancer.
And at any time, day or night, a call he would answer.

Now we go up Ann Arbor Street, there was Philo Millen in his blacksmith shop
He later moved near the depot and sold lunches and pop.
Edwin Jaynes Lumber yard was north of the Ypsilanti, Hillsdale track
He sold his lumber so cheap that his patrons always came back.

Returning to Jefferson Street we go east and there make a stop
We find Bill Neebling in his Blacksmith shop
He had a large factory, made carriages, wagons, the cutter and sleigh
And had the well earned reputation of always getting his pay.

An 1870 map shows the following owners of buildings on the North Side of Main Street, starting at Adrian St.

Henry Goodyear
M. Walker
O. A. Wait
O. A. Wait
O. A. Wait
alley
J. W. Cowan
I. L. Clarkson
I. L. Clarkson
I. L. Clarkson
G. Conklin
G. Conklin
alley
Wm Baxter
Henry Goodyear
Henry Goodyear
Coon & Hoyt (?)
N. Granger (?)
(?)
River

"Map of Manchester Michigan, from Recent and Actual Surveys" By Dev, Wood C.E. Published by Taylor & Bird 503 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 1870

The block between Clinton and Ann Arbor Street was named Exchange Place. To the west it was named Jackson Street, and to the east of Ann Arbor Street it was Jefferson Street.

Our journey through 1871 Manchester will continue in the next issue of the MAHS Newsletter.



MAHS Goes Wild



The Manchester Area Historical Society met on Thursday, May 12, at the Village Hall. Joe Wissing, owner and operator of Manchester Wildflower Seed Company, presented the program. Wissing, a medical physicist with the Department of Veterans Affairs, started the company at his farm on Bethel Church Road (Freedom Township) as a way to earn money for his daughter's college fund. He sells packets of

wildflower seeds at several locations in the area and makes special packets for people depending on what they want to grow and soil conditions.

Wissing stressed the importance of planting flowers that will grow in your soil and climate. The approach he takes is to define the area, set a budget, prepare the site, and decide on the height and color of the flowers that are desired.

When planning the garden, take into account the amount of sun and moisture, the soil type, traffic pattern, and when the flowers will bloom. Wildflowers can be planted any time of the year, just like Mother Nature does. Many seeds are naturally spread in the fall. Some seeds need light to germinate so they cannot be buried in the ground. Maintenance of the garden (fertilizing, watering, and weeding) also needs to be considered.

When the planning is finished, the area needs to be cleared of weeds and grass. It is best not to till the soil because that will bring up seeds that are buried and more weeds will grow. The area can be sprayed with a weed and grass killer and burned.



Wissing showed slides of two gardens he designed and planted. Since the seed mixture contained both annuals and perennials, some flowers blossomed the first year and others blossomed the second and following years.



Dating Old Photographs

Dating old photographs is an important part of historical research.

Sometimes the job is simple—something within the photograph such as a wall calendar, may be a dating clue. Occasionally dates appear in the photographer's logo on the back of old photographs. Some have a date written in pencil on the back, but such dates must be carefully double-checked because they might have been written well after the picture was taken.

The process used to make the photograph is an excellent starting point if you keep in mind that new methods were generally introduced first in the East and later in the West and remote areas. Daguerreotypes, mirrorlike images on silver or silver-coated copper plates, were developed in 1839 and produced until about 1860. From the mid-1850s to 1870 ambrotypes, images made on glass plates coated with collodion, became popular, eliminating the daguerreotype's mirror effect. The tintype, basically an ambrotype on iron sheeting, proved faster and cheaper and was widely used from 1857 to 1920.

Paper prints made from glass negatives were introduced about 1860. Stereographs (paired shots of the same image that look three-dimensional when viewed through a stereoscope) were both "parlor entertainment and an educational device that brought you your President and the sinking of ships." They remained in use at least until World War I.

Picture content also shifted perceptibly over the

years and is an excellent indication of a photograph's age. Full-length portraits were popular in the 1860s, to be replaced by more emphasis on head-and-shoulder shots in the 1870s. In rural areas, settings were austere until 1885 when elegant clothing and elaborate studio props were prevalent.

Post-mortem shots, an attempt to retain some of a person's existence, were popular to the turn of the century. Landscapes were not considered salable prior to the 1860s because people didn't want to buy pictures that they could see out their front window. At the turn of the century, however, landscapes increased along with a "chamber-of-commerce" type effort to attract visitors and residents.

The way a picture is displayed furnishes additional clues to age. Hinged, velvet-lined cases, made first of wood covered with leather or papier-mache and later of pressed plastic, were used to display photos from 1839 until 1870. Materials and styles used in case art can narrow the date somewhat, as plastic was not introduced until 1853. After that date, the process was used to produce varied shapes and more than 800 intricate designs, often using natural, historical, patriotic, and religious motifs. The patent date stamped on some plastic cases can be used to establish the earliest date the case could have been produced.

Excerpted from *The Historical Society of Michigan Chronicle*



*See You
at the Picnic!*

