



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.



2006-2007 Officers

Carl Curtis, President
Jim Wilson,
First Vice-President
Jerry Swartout
Second Vice-President

Betty Cummings, Secretary
Rosemary Whelan, Treasurer
Don Limpert, Imm.Past Pres.
Reno Feldkamp, Trustee
Doug Howell, Trustee
Howard Parr, Trustee

May, 2007

In This Issue:

June Meeting, the annual picnic
President's Message
Meetings at a Glance
March, 2007 meeting, Don Limpert: the GAR
April, 2007 meeting, Doug Howell and David Glaser: their tour of historic Italy
Whatzit and Wherzit
May, 2007, Barry Kenyon: numismatics & Manchester coins and currency
Some Thank-yous
Michigan Chapter-Victorian Society in America visits Manchester
2008 Calendar available soon



Volume 23, No.2
May, 2007

MANCHESTER

Annual Picnic at Chi Bro Park



The traditional June picnic, our last meeting before the Summer break in activities, will be held at 6:00 PM, in the pavilion at Chi Bro Park. Of course we hope it doesn't rain but if water is falling from the sky come to the picnic anyhow because we'll have a roof over our heads and a good time can still be had by all.

Recall last year's picnic which had no desserts? I guess that's why it's called a Potluck. This year we are hedging against a similar occurrence and a sign-up list was provided at the May membership meeting. Here are the results from that meeting:

Main dish	1 sign-up	Bread/rolls	1 sign-up
Vegetable	1 sign-up	Deserts	3 sign-ups
Salad	2 sign-ups	Beverage	2 sign-ups

If you have already signed up for the picnic and want to bring a second dish that's fine. If you have not signed up and plan to come to the picnic then the sign-up list, shown above, can help you decide what to bring.

President's Message

I've got a new game to play and, no, I did not invent this particular game. I'm sure there are myriad variations of the basic game and many different names. I'm going to call my particular version of the game, "Whatzit and Wherzit?" The idea emerged slowly and casually after the visit in Manchester of the Michigan Chapter of the Victorian Society in America. I admit that I don't look carefully, nor long and hard, at many of the details of my surroundings, especially the architecture of our area. Sure, I take in the general lines and styles but I don't concentrate on the details. Mistake on my part. Each architectural style has specific, unique and attractive details, one just has to spend a little time looking up, down, and around to see them.



Prior to the Victorian Society's visit, I spent a few hours reviewing a walking tour of Manchester. I went on the tour with camera in hand and tour sheet and pencil in pocket because I wanted to be sure the tour was clear, easy to follow, and up to date. Things do change with time and so with a couple corrections to the tour sheet, it was ready to hand out to the visiting Victorian Society members. My tour was on 3 May, 2007, a warm and pleasant day. I met and talked to several friends and acquaintances along the tour and I also met, talked with, and formed new friendships with some people I hadn't met before. It's always a pleasure to meet local people because I come away from the meeting with a better understanding of the community and a little more information about the history of the area. And I always meet nice people. But, I digress from my original topic.

I now have pictures of some Manchester architectural details and I shall print them in the "Whatzit and Wherzit" section of the newsletter; that's my part of the game. Your part, if you want to play the game, is to identify the building, and of course as soon as you identify the building you have located it. A variation is to name the particular architectural piece or section then tell where it is located. Who knows, we may have a goodly number of Manchester area people looking up and pointing at some architectural details that have been around for a long time but haven't garnered much interest of late. But then, we might have folks looking down too; looking at the foundations in our community.

MEETINGS AT A GLANCE

There are no meetings July and August, it's a time for summer activities and relaxation. The newsletter staff hopes everyone has an outstanding summer.

The September meeting is the Annual Meeting and the Election of Officers for the MAHS. No program has been established yet for the September meeting but information about fall programs will be forthcoming on The MAHS web site. Check the web site to find out what is happening in the society.

www.manchesterareahistoricalsociety.org

March, 2007 MEETING

Don Limpert—GAR

From the meeting minutes

The Manchester Area Historical Society met on March 8 at Emanuel Fellowship Hall. Don Limpert presented a program on the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR). The GAR was started by honorably discharged veterans from the Union Army after the Civil War. The organizational meeting was held in 1866. Each community had its own post and there were over 400 posts in Michigan. The posts were named for soldiers who were killed in the war. Many of the posts in this area were named for soldiers who were from the 20th Michigan Infantry. Most posts were formed between 1880 and 1900. Manchester's post was chartered in 1886 with 26 members.



There were two million union veterans. The GAR posts were the center of social life in their communities. The GAR was responsible for obtaining pensions for the veterans and for starting the soldier's homes. They were a formidable group and, in their heyday, controlled Congress and most state legislatures. They also raised money for widows and orphans.



Don displays and explains part of his collection of GAR badges

The GAR held local meetings, state meetings, and national meetings. National meetings were held each year between 1868 and 1949 and were held in different parts of the country. The 1891 reunion was held in Detroit and 44,000 veterans came. Cities competed to get the national reunion. Six veterans attended the last national reunion that was held in Indianapolis. The youngest was 100 years old. The last Civil War veteran died in 1958 at the age of 108. He was probably a drummer boy in the War. Some of them were as young as ten years old.



April, 2007 MEETING

Doug Howell and David Glaser—Italy Tour

From the meeting minutes

The Manchester Area Historical Society met on April 12 at the Village Hall to hear a program entitled, "Touring Historic Italy" by Doug Howell and David Glaser. Doug and David took us down narrow streets and alleys in Venice with centuries old buildings and many canals. Venice was built on 7 million tree trunks and there are over 700 bridges. During high tide, water comes through the pavement to a depth of 2 to 3 inches. A train ride to Florence showed a city with statues and fountains at every turn. Tuscany, with its rolling hills, olive groves, and vineyards, was quite a change from the cities. One hill was so steep the farmer only plowed going downhill. He would back the tractor up the hill and start down again. Rome was the final destination. We saw pictures of The Coliseum, The Pantheon, and many churches with beautiful mosaics and paintings on the ceilings.

Fellow tour group members Marcia Ledford, Linda Sankovich, Jake Grimes, and Kathy Scharp attended the MAHS meeting and participated in the presentation.



Doug takes a break in the narration



Linda displays some fine cashmere from Florence while Kathy and David look on



A pedastalled alabaster bowl



4 MAHS members admiring the souvenirs from Italy



Kathy shows an ornate Venetian mask

Whatzit and Wherzit

Here is an example of the the Whatzit and Wherzit game format. From the building to be identified or located, one or more clue pictures of the building's architectural detail will be printed. Here are three clue pictures for the example.



Because the camera was not positioned straight on to the building, but was at an angle to the front, some of the pictures may appear distorted or strangely shaped but that should not keep you from viewing the architectural features in the picture.

At right is the building which was photographed for the example. The identity of each newsletter's Whatzit and Wherzit building will be given in the following issue of the newsletter and in the same format as shown here, specifically, the clue pictures followed by the overall picture of the building.

Other than the satisfaction of being successful, there are no other prizes or rewards for determining the correct answer. It's a fun game to help us all be a little more aware of our surroundings so give yourself a pat on the back if you identify the building correctly.



Whatzit and Wherzit continued

The clue pictures really have square corners and they are rectangular. It's an optical illusion, which is caused by the perspective of the picture elements, that makes the pictures look misshapen.



Here are three filler pictures of the flowers at the Blacksmith Shop this year. These pictures are not part of the Whatzit and Wherzit game.



May, 2007 MEETING

Barry Kenyon—Numismatics

From the meeting minutes

The Manchester Area Historical Society met May 10 at the Village Hall. Barry Kenyon presented a program on Numismatics—The Study and Collecting of Items Used as Money. Kenyon started collecting coins in 1961. It is a hobby for the entire family; there is beauty, artwork, and history in the design of money; and it can be an investment and inflation hedge. Even if the collector's value of a coin decreases, it is always worth face value. Since 1792, the United States has minted over 600 billion coins. Currently, 15 to 20 billion coins are minted each year. Some, such as the penny, cost more to mint than their face value. Some interesting coins the United States has issued over the years are the half-cent (about the size of a quarter) that was issued from 1793-1857, the three-cent piece (used to buy postage stamps), the half dime (the nickel was not minted until 1883), the 20-cent coin (issued from 1875 to 1878 and was unpopular), and the \$2-1/2 dollar gold coin.



In 1863, Manchester merchants issued a Civil War token. They were given in change to customers so they would return to Manchester for future purchases. Kenyon noted the population of Manchester during the Civil War as 805 and it is just about 2000 now. There were many wildcat banks in Michigan in the 1800s and Manchester was no exception. Kenyon's slides included pictures of 1837 Bank of Manchester bills in denominations of \$2, \$3, \$5 and \$10. Coins are the most popular item traded on eBay today. Potential buyers should beware of counterfeit coins, especially those coming from China.



Manchester Bank currency pictures on page 8

More Numismatics Pictures



OUR THANKS TO:

Mike Helton and The Flower Garden for the plants along the front of the Blacksmith Shop and the half barrel planter on the terrace between the sidewalk and the curb. When you see Mike give him a complement on their nice appearance and a personal thank-you for the plantings.

The MAHS house committee for their diligence during the cold snap last Winter. An electric heater had been placed in the Blacksmith Shop lavatory to keep the water pipes from freezing but the cold temperatures were more than the heater could handle. The Village was contacted, the water was shut off at the street, and the meter was removed. There was some ice in the pipes until the Spring thawing but no ruptured pipes.

MAHS members Ray and Karen Berg, Rosalyn Breitenwischer, Carl Curtis, Howard Parr, and Karl Racenis who welcomed, entertained, and educated the visiting members of the Michigan Chapter of the Victorian Society in America on May 5th.

Victorian Society Members Visit Manchester

The MAHS hosted the Spring, 2007, meeting of the Michigan Chapter - Victorian Society in America. The Michigan chapter has members primarily from the southeast Michigan, roughly, the region from the Saginaw/ Bay City area to the Lansing area and south to the state line and east to Lake Erie. The chapter holds two meetings each year, a Spring meeting and a Fall meeting, and they select different cities, towns, or villages in Michigan as meeting sites where they hope to see and experience fine examples of Victoriana, primarily architectural. With about two months lead time the MAHS Board agreed to host the May 5th meeting of the Victorian Society with MAHS President, Carl Curtis, coordinating the activities.



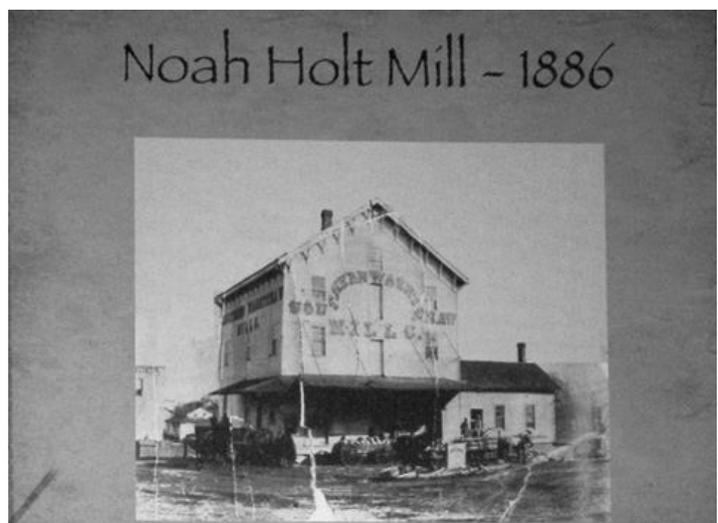
Rosalyn and the group in Emanuel Church sanctuary

Eighteen Victorian Society members registered in Emanuel Church Fellowship Hall and listened to music from some table top organs, which were typical household items in the later 1800s. After registration, Rosalyn Breitenwischer led the group to the church sanctuary where she presented a history of the church building, which is celebrating its 125 year in 2007, and the history of the congregation over its longer span of time. The group was led to the church parsonage by Pastor Gary Kwiatek and his wife Nannette where Nannette led a tour of the parsonage and related some of its architecture and history.

Returning to Emanuel Church Fellowship Hall, the group watched and listened as Karl Racenis presented a slide show and talk on the history of the Manchester Mill. The Mill presentation was followed by a brief talk and slide show by Carl Curtis about Victorian era photography, stereo views, and viewers. During the lunch break the group had opportunity to look at some stereo views, talk to the program presenters and pick up copies of a walking tour of Manchester Village.

After lunch the group members had time for themselves to visit Manchester shops, follow the walking tour or meander about the village on their own before reconvening at the Blacksmith Shop at 2:30 PM.

continued on page 10



A slide view from Karl's mill presentation

Victorian Society Members Visit Manchester *continued*

Howard Parr greeted the Victorian Society members at the Blacksmith Shop and related the history of both the shop and the MAHS. Howard showed Blacksmith Shop artifacts, as well as other Historical Society items from the Swainson Board Room, answered questions, and completed his session with an Historical Society videotape about the Manchester area and the Blacksmith Shop.

From the Blacksmith Shop the group went to the new, Victorian style home of Ray and Karen Berg, the last site for the group's visit. Ray and builder, Jeff Proctor, answered questions about the house and the timber frame barn construction while Karen conducted smaller groups through the house tour.

All members of the visiting Victorian Society were pleased with the day's events. They all had a good time and they left Manchester with good feelings about the community, the MAHS, and the various program presenters.

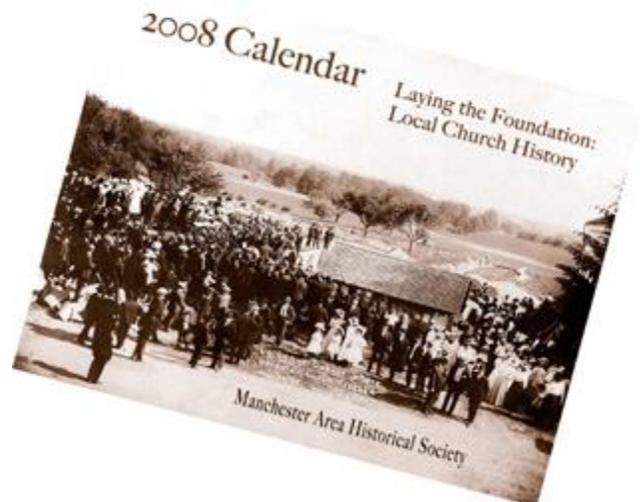


Ray Berg explains the construction of the old style timber frame barn built to today's construction codes

2008 calendar

Some of the Manchester area's early church buildings are gone while others remain. Some denominations are no longer in the area either by dissolution locally or by merging with other denominations. The 2008 calendar presents an historical look at the Christian churches in Bridgewater, Freedom, Manchester, and Sharon townships and the village of Manchester.

The 2008 calendar has gone to press and should be ready by early to mid June.



The 2008 calendar price is \$8.00