



Volume 25, No.3
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MANCHESTER

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.



2008-2009 Officers

Carl Curtis, President
Jim Wilson,
First Vice-President
Jerry Swartout
Second Vice-President
Betty Cummings, Secretary
Sharon Curtis, Treasurer
Don Limpert, Imm.Past Pres.
Reno Feldkamp, Trustee
Doug Howell, Trustee
Howard Parr, Trustee

September Meeting - The Annual Meeting of the MAHS and the Election of Officers

September 10th will be the Annual Meeting of the Manchester Area Historical Society and the election of officers for 2009-2010. The meeting will be held in the Village Room at the Village Hall at our usual starting time of 7:30 PM

The Nominations Committee has placed the following members on the ballot:

President	Carl Curtis	Treasurer	Sharon Curtis
1st Vice President	James Wilson	Trustee	Reno Feldkamp
2nd Vice President	Gerald Swartout	Trustee	Douglas Howell
Secretary	Betty Cummings	Trustee	Howard Parr

The floor will be opened for further nominations prior to the election.

The program for the evening will be presented by Jennifer Bucholtz, a veterinarian, who has worked at the last couple of Iditarod dog sled races in Alaska.

We are looking forward to another informative and fun filled year of meetings of the MAHS.

August, 2009

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Now Available

2010 MAHS Calendar

\$8

From MAHS or Various

Manchester Merchants

A Smoother Floor in part of the Blacksmith Shop

During the later part of 2008 and the early part of 2009, the Board of Directors considered the possible tripping hazard of the uneven plank floor in the blacksmith shop. After several discussions, and the weighing of the pros and cons of possible solutions, it was decided to place tongue and groove plywood over the eastern half of the forge room and leave the forge area with the original plank flooring. Bridgewater Lumber Company was contracted for the work, which was completed in time for the Open House and Blacksmith activities at the shop on Chicken Broil day.

The Board wanted to leave the old plank floor intact, and essentially unchanged, in the event that it might be uncovered in the future. Plastic sheeting was placed over the plank flooring and a layer of silica sand was spread over the sheeting. The sand acts as a continuous shim layer over the entire floor and stabilizes the 3/4 inch plywood covering. The new floor has some undulations because the original floor has settled unevenly over the years, with a considerable variation in the amount of settling. However, the showcases sit more firmly now and the walkways are reasonably flat even though the floor is not level throughout the forge room.

In upcoming meetings the Board will address the type of finish for the plywood. Initial thoughts would have the light colored plywood darkened to match, or approximate, the old plank floor with a surface that would not be slippery.



Looking toward the front door from a position near the back of the forge room

MAHS Display at the 2009 Community Fair

Howard Parr and Gerry Swartout assembled a fine display for the 65th Manchester Community Fair. The display was designed, with counsel from Carol Britten, Kathy Richardson, Rita Huber, and Deniene Schaible, around the Fair theme “A Small Town Fair With A Big Heart” to celebrate 65 years of fair operations starting in 1944, the third year of the 2nd World War. The display commemorated the history of the Manchester Community Fair, the military and civilian activity of the USA during World War 2, and recognized the six Manchester men who died in the conflict. The display utilized newspapers and magazines of the war era and some Manchester artifacts, including ration books and pictures from a MAHS calendar of some local activities during the war years. Gerry and Howard extend thanks and appreciation to Carol Britten for the Fair’s history.

After the fair, the display was moved to the blacksmith shop and set up for visitors to see on Chicken Broil day. Photographs of the display are shown on page 3.

MAHS Fair Display



The Blacksmith Shop on Chicken Broil Day

By count in our guest register book, more than 85 people visited the blacksmith shop on July 16th, Chicken Broil day. How many more we cannot tell because some of the entries had the notation, "and family." But that fact notwithstanding, 85 visitors was a fine turnout.

Blacksmiths Tim Armentrout, Alex Gleason, David Goodrich, Nathan Klump, and Joe Vigilanti took turns at the forge and the anvil to demonstrate the blacksmithing art. They explained what was being done and answered questions relative to blacksmithing while MAHS members Betty Cummings, Carl Curtis, Margaret Goodrich, Doug Howell, Howard Parr, and Ann Walton, in shifts, explained and answered questions about the history of the shop, the artifacts, the community, the MAHS, and other topics as warranted.



What's Going On Here?



Above and left are three scenes along Main street in Manchester but the names are different than the names we are used to seeing. Above, is the Whistle Stop restaurant but converted to McElliot's Ice Cream & Candy store. Manchester's well preserved, late Victorian era architecture on Main street filled the bill for some scenes in the Rob Reiner, circa 1963, film, "Flipped". A set crew worked about 2 weeks converting the Whistle Stop into the ice cream store then different business signs went up along the business district. Sunday, July 26th, a multitude of large trucks and trailers from the film company filled the American Legion Parking lot, waiting for the film shooting on Monday, July 27th.

On Monday, Main Street was closed between Clinton street and M 52 and late 1950s through early 1960s cars and trucks were parked, or driven, along the street as required for the filming. A few Manchester folks came out to watch the filming, which must have gone well because on Tuesday, July 28th the trucks and trailers were gone, the familiar business names were again seen on Main street, and the Whistle Stop was being converted back into a restaurant.

Whatzit and Wherzit

The identification game is back. Below, are the clue pictures for the next round of the game.



The First Golden Years Picnic

Editor's Note: MAHS member Dianne Schwab suggested that the MAHS sponsor a potluck picnic for couples in the community who have been married 45 years or more. In addition to a pleasant afternoon picnic there was opportunity to socialize, share memories, tell stories, and have a good time. Following is a summary of the picnic and the events from Dianne Schwab, coordinator of the Golden Years picnic.

Adults, especially those of us over 55 talk a lot about the good old days and wish we could return to them. But do we truly want to return to those times or is it the happy memories of love, belonging, family and contentment that we really cherish. Twenty-four couples took advantage of the opportunity to gather August 12, 2009 for the Golden Years Picnic at Carr Park sponsored by the Manchester Area Historical Society. The favorite old-fashioned potluck included a delicious display of food. The only dish missing was baked beans.

Push pins in maps were used to identify where people were born. Two guests were born in Germany, five in other states of the US and the majority in Michigan, most within 50 miles of Manchester.

Local business and industry, especially Double A Products and Johnson Controls provided employment for many of the couples. Other fields of employment included agriculture, the automotive industry, education, the health field and building trades.

Following dinner Luke Schaible entertained with music and humorous stories. Carl Curtis represented the Manchester Area Historical Society with a greeting of welcome and an invitation to join the MAHS.

Some family traditions shared by the guests included: Christmas stocking stories, making Easter baskets and hiding eggs, family canoe trips and camping. There were gardening stories: Looking at seed catalogs, planting seeds and watching the children discover the sprouts, digging potatoes, then finding the lost ones under the soil. Family gatherings were remembered: parties for birthdays and holidays, especially Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve when Santa Claus came. One of the favorite toys received at Christmas was a plywood dollhouse. For some, waffles and Strawberries with Cool Whip are special for Christmas. Everyone did something to make the day joyful.

Many families lived in the same homes for 50 years or more, remodeling it several times through the years. Others moved a few, or many, times and made several houses their homes.

The last 60 -70 years have experienced amazing changes in technology: Ice boxes to refrigerators, washboard to wringer washers to gas and electric laundry appliances; black and white tube TV to color to digital flat screen; space travel, computers, cell phones, voice mail and blue tooth provide too many ways to communicate. A decline in TV programming standards was noted, particularly the tolerance of language considered dirty and unacceptable in earlier years. The generation of our age bought, and many still buy, Ford, GM, and Chrysler cars while the next generations will buy more foreign cars.

Special memories to share with grandchildren start with the horse and buggy as transportation to town, then maybe a Model T. Castor oil and liniment were purchased at the local drug store and the first family TV may have come from Buff Brown. Record players and film cameras were lots of fun. Music, home-made pretzels, quilting and woodworking provide special learning opportunities when the grandchildren visit. Can you imagine teaching a 16 year old how to drive a stick shift car? Reunions, camping, traveling, fishing, and appreciation of nature bring families together.

Eleven attendees were recognized for serving our country in the armed forces. Three couples were recognized for the most golden years. Ray and Gladys Uphaus have celebrated 62 years of marriage; Ellis and Doris Pratt, 61 years; and Floyd and Florence Parr, 61 years. Twenty-one couples celebrated 45 to 58 Golden Years together. A good time was enjoyed by everyone and hopefully, more people will attend in 2010 to celebrate the next Golden Years picnic.

MAHS at Business Expo 2009

June 4th was the Chamber of Commerce Business Expo for 2009 with many merchants and service business people lining Adrian street in conjunction with the Farmers' Market. The MAHS anchored the south end of the Expo with a table display of some Manchester artifacts, our informational trifold, and photographs showing some of the MAHS's involvement in the community. MAHS President, Carl Curtis provided a trailered band organ to help draw visitors toward the south end of the expo and David Goodrich set up his portable forge to demonstrate blacksmithing. Carl Curtis, Sharon Curtis and Howard Parr took turns at the display table during the 5 hour Expo and a few visitors stopped to look, listen and learn more about the Historical Society and its activities. Although we did not get a large number of visitors we feel that the Historical Society's participation at such events keeps people aware of the Society's presence and contributions to the community.



Sharon and Howard talk to a visitor while youngsters dance to the music of the band organ. David Goodrich has fired up his portable forge left of the trailer and is ready to shape some metal.

Howard likes music but he decided that the next time the MAHS has a display with a band organ the display table should not be in front of the organ. Better, he said, to be off to the side or behind, maybe closer to where David was set up. I agree.

Annual June Picnic

Ray and Karen Berg hosted this year's picnic in their barn, an excellent site because the weather was cool and rainy. The picnic was well attended and various people brought items as prizes to be won at a drawing after the meal. The drawing was inspired by Jerry Waters' donation of a container of maple syrup. Other items brought for prizes included several jars of jams and jellies and 2010 MAHS calendars. Each picnic attendee was given a numbered ticket which had a matching number on a ticket in the drawing container. The drawing was a fun event and one that should probably be continued in the future.

