

# Ypsilanti GLEANINGS

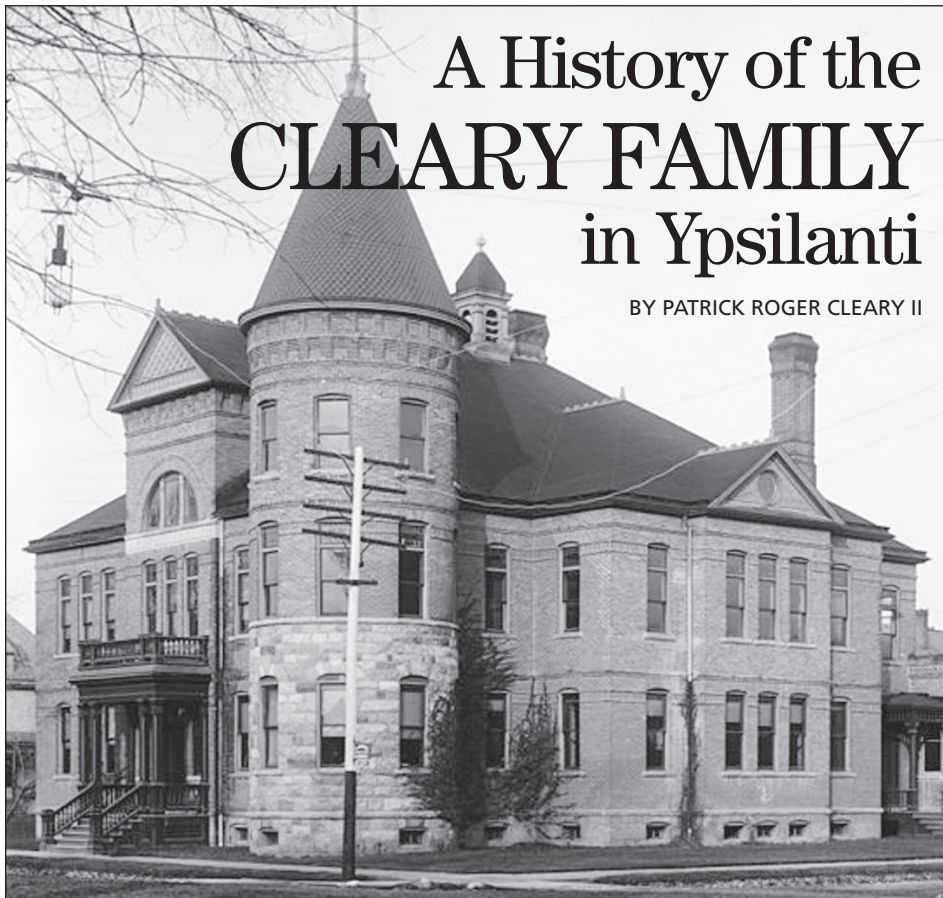
Official publication of the Ypsilanti Historical Society, featuring articles and reminiscences of the people and places in the Ypsilanti area



SUMMER 2016

## A History of the CLEARY FAMILY in Ypsilanti

BY PATRICK ROGER CLEARY II



The original Cleary College building in 1893. This picture was taken in circa 1905.

Ypsilanti welcomed a new era on October 8, 1883 when an ambitious and talented twenty-five year old Irish immigrant opened a school of penmanship in Ypsilanti and created an institution that continues to thrive today, 133 years later.

Our story begins in 1858 in the town of Borrisokane, Tipperary County, Ireland. A fifth child was born to Roday and Julia Cleary who they named Patrick Roger. Patrick's parents were poor. Roday was a stockman on a large farm owned by the Marquise Tuthill, an Englishman. Julia worked in the farmhouse and they lived in a two-room thatch roofed cottage on the farm property.

Patrick's father and mother died about 6

or 7 years after he was born. The dates and causes of their deaths were never revealed to our family. His older siblings



The two-room thatch roofed cottage where Patrick Roger Cleary's parents lived in Ireland in 1858 when Patrick Roger was born. The picture was taken in 1938, 39 years after Patrick Roger left Ireland for the United States.

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The Ypsilanti Historical Museum is a museum of local history which is presented as an 1860 home. The Museum and Fletcher-White Archives are organized and operated by the Ypsilanti Historical Society. We are all volunteers and our membership is open to everyone, including non-city residents.

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## Ypsilanti Historical Society

220 North Huron Street  
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

Museum: 734.482.4990

Archives: 734.217.8236

[www.ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org](http://www.ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org)

## GLEANINGS Staff

Co-Editors ..... Al Rudisill  
Betsy Gross  
Assistant Editors..... Peg Porter  
Fofie Pappas  
Design & Layout.....Pattie Harrington  
Advertising Director .....Michael Gute  
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If you have suggestions for articles  
or if you have questions, contact  
Al Rudisill at 734.476.6658 or  
[al@rudisill.ws](mailto:al@rudisill.ws).

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MI 48197

## From the PRESIDENT'S DESK

BY ALVIN E. RUDISILL

Our Spring Membership Meeting was a great success with Lisa Walters presenting a program on "Route 66." Lisa had many slides and covered many of the historical places and events on the Route 66 highway system. Thank you Lisa. We received many comments about the great program you presented.

During the Spring Membership Meeting, held on Sunday – May 15, we presented three "Gerald Jennings Service Awards." Recipients were Bob Southgate, Nancy Wheeler and Marcia McCrary. These three individuals have contributed significant amounts of their time and effort to the development and expansion of services provided by the Ypsilanti Historical Society and it was our pleasure to recognize these contributions.



Charles Kettles will receive the Medal of Honor in a White House ceremony on July 18, 2016.

Also, during the Spring Membership Meeting, we dedicated the "George Ridenour Research Room" in honor of George Ridenour. George passed away on December 11, 2015, after suffering a heart attack. The YHS Board of Trustees voted to name a room in the Archives in his honor in recognition of all his contributions to the organization and operation of the YHS Archives. The dedication included placing a certificate on the door describing all of George's contributions as well as a name plate inscribed the "**George Ridenour Research Room.**"

On July 18, 2016 Charles Kettles will be presented with the "Medal of Honor" in a ceremony in the White House in Washington, D.C.

I have been invited to attend the ceremony representing the Ypsilanti Historical Society. Charles is extremely deserving of this award and we owe a debt of thanks to Debbie Dingle for all of her efforts in getting the award approved by the Defense Department, Congress and the President.

If you are not on our email listserv please call the Museum at 734-482-4990 and have your name added. We are using the listserv only for program notifications and your email address will not be shared with others. Also, please check the Event Schedule on our website for upcoming special programs and displays.



220 North Huron Street | Ypsilanti, MI 48197

MUSEUM  
734 482-4990

[yhs.museum@gmail.com](mailto:yhs.museum@gmail.com)

ARCHIVES  
734 217-8236

[yhs.archives@gmail.com](mailto:yhs.archives@gmail.com)



had migrated to the United States earlier and had settled in various places in Michigan. After their parents died, the Tuthills took in Patrick and his younger sister Annie. Since the Tuthills were English, the children were able to continue their education in the English School that was not open to Irish children at that time.

In 1869, when Patrick was eleven, their older siblings sent for him and his sister Annie. They brought them to the United States where they settled in Hubbardston, Michigan. Hubbardston, a hamlet of less than 400 people today, is located in Ionia County not far from Lansing.

Patrick was an astute and industrious young man. He continued his schooling until he was fourteen and then went to work in a shingle mill for two years. He saved the money he earned while working and later returned to school where he completed high school in two years at age nineteen. Patrick Roger preferred being called P.R. or P. Roger rather than his given name due to the anti-Irish sentiment of the times.

After graduating from the Sheridan school, he entered the Northern Indiana Normal College (now Valparaiso, University) where he studied for a year before enrolling in the Spencerian Institute in Cleveland where he received his diploma in penmanship. Although the first typewriters came on the market in 1874, Spencerian script remained the standard in business well into the new century.

From his attendance at these institutions he formed his basic principles of education; learn in the same environment where the individual will be working; provide a rounded educa-

tion to include English, mathematics and civics; afford the student a social environment.

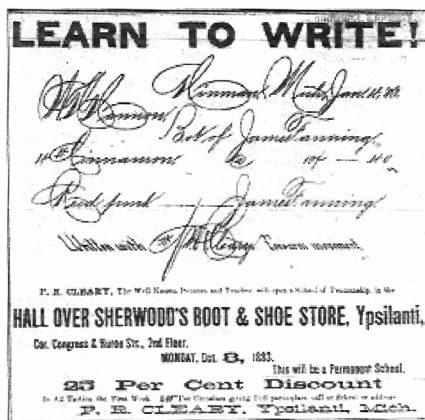
Early on he had discovered that he had a wonderful talent in not only penmanship but also in drawing. Possessed of an entrepreneurial spirit and equipped with this talent, he saw that he could make a living by teaching penmanship. Returning to Hubbardston in 1880, he began teaching classes in this valuable skill in many towns in southern Michigan. Towns such as Ovid, Albion, St Johns and Fowlerville saw advertising bills and notices in newspapers citing classes in penmanship to be given by P.R. Cleary. His efforts proved lucrative and he enjoyed teaching.

By 1883 he had decided that Ypsilanti was where he would start a school of penmanship. Ypsilanti at that time was a bustling and prosperous city with 15 factories manufacturing a variety of products and enjoying a cultural environment with an opera house and a conservatory of music.

He opened his school in the second story of the Warden block on the corner of Huron and Congress (soon to become Michigan Avenue) Street. His first students were the three Babbitt sisters, daughters of Judge and Mrs. Babbitt. The October 13, 1883 edition of the Ypsilanti Commercial observed, "such a school was much needed."



Patrick Roger Cleary at age 25.



Patrick Roger Cleary started teaching penmanship in many towns in southern Michigan in 1880.

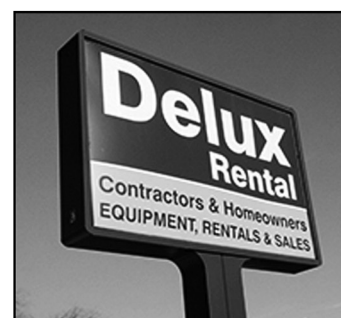
He was precise and demanding of his students. But as he continued to advertise his enrollment increased quickly and he moved his classes to the

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Union Block on the north side of Michigan Avenue between Washington and Adams Streets. He commenced holding both day and evening classes as well as acquiring a position as professor of penmanship at the Normal College at a salary of \$50.00 per month.

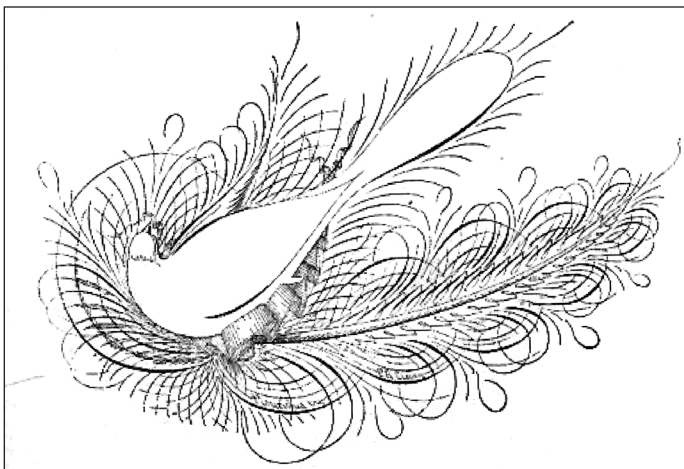
In 1887 P.R. realized that his school was growing so rapidly that he must have a new building and purchased land on the northwest corner of Adams and Michigan Avenue for \$2,200.

The highlight of 1887 for P.R. was that he met Helen Clarke Jenks, a very pretty twenty-two year old from St. Clair, MI. She was a cousin of Mrs. Scherzer and was visiting in Ypsilanti. P.R. was smitten with this pretty young lady and began a correspondence with her. By 1889, he had proposed to her and she had accepted. They were married in St. Clair in June 1889. The wedding surprised the Ypsilanti residents since they had considered P.R. as a most eligible bachelor and he had given no indication that marriage was imminent. The newlyweds left immediately after the wedding for a month long honeymoon in Europe.

For the next fifty years Helen Cleary was to be P.R.'s confidant, enthusiast and co-worker in the expansion of Cleary College. Her participation would provide great enrichment in the lives of thousands of young men and women who attended the College.

P.R. began construction of the new building in 1889. Although it was not completed until 1891, he began to hold classes in rooms that had been completed. The building cost \$20,000. P.R. received much support from Ypsilanti businessmen and raised over \$10,000 in donations. He took out a mortgage for the balance. Carved into the capstone at the entrance to the building were the words "Cleary Business College."

The next year, P.R. incorporated the college under state law. Earlier he had begun



Cleary included handwriting samples in this 1883 newspaper ad.

delivering courses in penmanship in Toledo, OH. He found that the man he had hired to deliver these courses was dishonest and had taken money from him. Thus, he was concerned that a lawsuit would impact his family and the way to protect them was to incorporate.

Tragedy struck on Wednesday evening April 12, 1893. The atmosphere was very heavy and humid and there were thunderstorms in the area. P. R. and Helen were sitting in the

living room of their home on Forest Avenue holding their two children on their laps when a man banged on the door and said "Mr. Cleary, the college is gone." P.R. raced out of the house and ran to the college to find that a cyclone had struck and knocked the roof of the turret from the building besides knocking out the east wall.

The next day, after surveying the damage, he posted signs on the wrecked building saying "classes will resume in all branches of work on Monday, April 17<sup>th</sup>." This was a demonstration of his courage and determination. The college was soon repaired at a cost of \$7,000.

During this period he formed a close relationship with J.L. Hudson of the J.L Hudson Department store in Detroit. Hudson had shown him how to figure profit. Business textbooks at the time taught that profit should be figured on cost. For instance, if a merchant bought an item for \$6.00 and wanted to sell it for a gross profit of 33 1/3 %, he was actually making only 25%. Hudson stressed that profit should be figured on sale, not on cost. P.R. said, "I had to work to get my teachers to see that profit should be figured on sale,

not on cost and also that expense should be figured on sale."

He established a practice of visiting businesses to help them set up a bookkeeping system which allowed him to keep abreast of business practices, place students in jobs and kept him aware of salaries in the marketplace. With this experience, he published his first book, *How to Fig-*



The cyclone that struck in Ypsilanti on April 12, 1893 did severe damage to the newly constructed Cleary College building.



ure Profit in 1900 which was published by the Huron Press that was owned by the Cleary's.

P.R. continued to expand his course offerings including accounting, shorthand and typing. In the secretarial studies curriculum, P.R. required all students to take dictation from him before they could graduate.

By the end of the decade, P.R. and Helen had had four children born to them; Charles Brooks Cleary in 1890; Marjory Julia Cleary in 1892, Ruth Marie Cleary in 1894 and Owen Jenks Cleary in 1900. In 1905, P.R. moved his family from the house on Forest Avenue, where all the children had been born, to 7 N. Normal St., a house that had been built in 1848 by the Smith family. It was a large, four-bedroom, Georgian style, house which had an upper front porch with wooden scrollwork forming the railing giving it a "New Orleans" appearance.

In 1912, Cleary College and the Michigan State Normal College formed a joint program where high school business teachers would study education subjects at the Normal College and business subjects at Cleary. He did this in collaboration with Charles McKenny, President of the Normal College.

All the Cleary children attended Ypsilanti High School with Charles, the oldest going on to Cleary College and then the University of Michigan. Marjory attended Cleary College, the Michigan State Normal College and the University of Michigan. Ruth followed suit, attending the same institutions. Owen attended the Michigan State Normal College for one year prior to entering the U.S. Army.

When the U.S. entered World War One, all the Cleary children took part in the war effort. In 1917 Charles was commissioned a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the U.S. Army. Marjory and Ruth traveled to Washington, DC where they found work at the War Industries Board. In 1918 Owen was commissioned a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the U. S. Army. He was one of the youngest 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenants in the Army at that time.

Charles saw action in France in 1918, but Owen remained stateside and was stationed at Camp Perry, OH as a small arms instructor. The girls returned to Ypsilanti in early 1919.

Early in the decade of 1920's Charles Cleary moved to Florida and became engaged in real estate activities. He married May Weaver of St. Petersburg, FL. The couple subsequently had three children, Patricia, Thomas and Anita Joyce. Charles left Florida and returned to Michigan in 1933 where he became Director of Admissions at Cleary College.

Marjory married Arthur McKenny, son of Charles McKenny who was the President of the Michigan State Normal College. Arthur had been awarded a degree in Mechanical engineering from the University of Michigan in 1916 and subsequently entered the Army and saw action in France. He later was an engineer and manager for the Chevrolet Company and the couple lived in Detroit. They had two boys, Charles, born in 1920 and Owen in 1925. Both subsequently served in the U.S. Army during World War II.

Ruth moved to Riverside, IL where she taught business and bookkeeping at Riverside High School where she was also head of the commercial department. In 1958 she retired after 40 years of teaching and returned to Ypsilanti to live out her life.

Owen Cleary was discharged from the Army in 1919 and returned to attend Cleary College until 1920 and then entered the Michigan State Normal College. He received his teachers certificate in 1922 and then attended the University of Michigan. He received his BA degree in 1925. He then entered the University of Detroit Law School and graduated in 1931 being conferred with a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree. Owen J. Cleary married Marie DeWaele in 1929. Catherine Ann Cleary was born in 1930 and Patrick Roger Cleary II was born in 1934.

Cleary College kept on growing and by 1925 the college had 325 students

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enrolled. It had reached some prominence when it was announced that other Michigan educational institutions were giving credit to their students for courses taken at Cleary. Among those institutions crediting Cleary courses were The University of Michigan and the Normal College.

With the depression in full swing in 1933, Ypsilanti was significantly affected. By now the college was 50 years old and P.R. wanted to ensure that it would continue in perpetuity. Thus all assets were turned over to a Board of Trustees. In late 1933 the Board met and P.R. Cleary was elected president, Helen Cleary was vice president, Irene Hines was secretary and Owen J. Cleary was treasurer.

As P. R. Cleary stated in the 1940's, "we started with three charter members and the membership of the board has grown with current membership at 18. Prominent among board members were Daniel L. Quirk Sr., Donald M. Silkworth of Ypsilanti and Cecil Billington of Detroit.

In 1938, P. R. took a six-week trip to Ireland and England, the first time he had seen his homeland in 40 years. He had planned to take his wife Helen, but she was in ill health and instead took his daughter Ruth.

In 1938, Owen Cleary was admitted to the University of Michigan hospital with acute stomach ulcers and underwent a partial gastric resection. He incurred a serious infection and almost died, but recovered and was released after spending eleven months in the hospital.

A year later Helen Jenks Cleary passed away in December 1939. She had suffered from heart

problems and had been in declining health for several years. P.R. decided to retire in 1940 and the Board of Trustees appointed Owen J. Cleary president of Cleary College.

Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, Owen attempted to go on active duty with his National Guard unit but his medical condition prevented him from activating his commission. Governor Harry Kelley then appointed Owen Chief Air raid /Warden for the State and then Major in the newly organized Michigan State Troops, a militia to replace the National Guard. Since Owen was now on active duty, P.R. resumed the Presidency of Cleary College.

Owen was promoted to Colonel and assumed command of the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment, Michigan State Troops at the Brush Street Armory in Detroit where he was stationed until the end of the war. In August 1945, Owen was promoted to Brigadier General and was charged by the governor to reorganize the Michigan National Guard. He officially retired from the Michigan State Troops in January 1947.

Charles Cleary worked at the Ford Willow Run Bomber Plant during the war and following the war moved to La Mesa, CA to re-enter the real estate

business. Charles died in 1958. His children continued to live in St. Petersburg, Fl. Patty Cleary married Larry Baynard. Tommy Cleary served in the U.S. Marine Corps in World War II and saw action on Guadalcanal in the south Pacific. His battalion received the Presidential Unit Citation for heroism in battle. He died in 1963. Joyce Cleary lived in Atlanta and passed away shortly after Tommy.

Marjory Cleary McKenny's son Charles Graduated from Albion College in 1942 and served in the Army during WW II. In 1947 he married Mary Louise Whitney of Toledo, OH. She had served in the Navy during WW II as an officer. Both graduated from the University of Michigan Law School in 1948 and began practicing law in Toledo. They had three children, Thomas born in 1949, Arthur in 1951 and Anne Elizabeth in 1957. Later Anne and her mother would become very involved with Cleary College as substantial donors.

Marjory's second son, Owen Cleary McKenny, graduated from Michigan State University in 1954 and went on to become an engineer and manager with General Motors. He married June Faber after graduating and the couple had four children; Gail, Gerald, Stephen and Mark. Owen served on the Cleary College Board of Trustees for a number of years and was on the search committee for former president of Cleary College, Tom Sullivan.

By 1946, Owen had resumed the presidency of Cleary College and returned to his law practice. He ran for the office of Lieutenant Governor on the Republican ticket that fall but was unsuccessful. With Owen reassuming the presidency, P.R. Cleary retired



By the end of the decade, Patrick Roger and Helen had had four children born to them; (L to R) Marjory Julia in 1892, Ruth Marie in 1894, Mother Helen, Owen Jenks in 1900, and Charles Brooks in 1890.



# Museum Board Report

BY NANCY WHEELER, BOARD CHAIR

The May 7 High Tea was very successful! We had a full house, lots of goodies and help. The quartet, "Anything Goes" was outstanding. The "Tea for Two Hat Box" was won by Midge Fahndrich. Thank you to all who came and to those who worked.

The Art Show May 15 through June 1 was also spectacular. There were 20 local artists and 68 art pieces. We had oil, watercolor, pastels, colored pencil, photographs, 3D works, woodcarvings and ceramics. "Meet the Artists" drew about 60 guests. A huge thank you to Chair Louise Nagle and her committee.

The Meredith Bixby Marionettes display is ready! Mr. Bixby performed in the Midwest from 1932 to 1982. Some of you may remember seeing the shows in el-

ementary school. The case in the Library is filled with photographs and an unfinished puppet. The toy room upstairs has a stage and characters from "Jack and the Magic Stalk". There are other puppets on display. More information is in Bill Nickles' article in this Gleanings.

The Kitchen has a beautiful display of hand painted china by Mariel Rita Quackenbush who started painting at age 67. Her granddaughters, Barbara Saxon and Catherine Walker, loaned us 33 pieces. Barbara also loaned us her "Blue Collection" on display in the dining room.

Welcome to new Docent Joanne Waller! To become a docent just call 734-482-4990.



One of the hand-painted china pieces by Mariel Rita Quackenbush.



The Meredith Bixby stage display in the upstairs Toy Room.



The Meredith Bixby Marionette display in the Library.



Some of the marionettes on display in the upstairs Toy Room.



The pieces of the marionettes were joined by mason cord so they could move.

again and began work on a history of Cleary College. He remained active until 1948 when just 3 months past his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday he suffered a stroke and passed away. He is buried next to his wife Helen in Highland cemetery.

Owen was named to the Michigan Liquor Commission in 1947 by then Governor Kim Sigler. One year later assumed the Chairmanship of the Republican Party of Michigan, a position he retained until 1952 when he was elected Secretary of State of Michigan. During this period Owen had named Walter Grieg Vice-President of Cleary College. Walter handled the day-to-day operations of the college.

Following his term as Secretary of State, he returned to his law practice and the College. By this time, Donald M. Silkworth, a long time Trustee and supporter of the College had commenced a fundraising program for a new campus to be located at the northeast corner of Washtenaw and Hewitt Roads.

Tragically In 1956, while in Florida, Owen fell and injured his neck. He endured but was in constant pain and his doctors did not recommend surgery. He continued his work as president of Cleary College as well as pursuing his law practice. His health was waning, but he continued to work toward erecting the new campus and the cornerstone was laid in early 1960. On September 10, 1960, Owen J. Cleary passed away from renal failure and Donald Silkworth was named president. Thus ended the seventy-seven year tradition of a Cleary as president of Cleary College.

With the new building holding classes in 1961, enrollment began increasing and by the mid-1960's, it was over 1400 and Cleary College was offering 146 classes. But, in 1965, Washtenaw Community College opened and Cleary enrollment began to decline. Because it was a publically funded institution, tuition at WCC was less than at Cleary and by 1978, enrollment stood at 459.

With college enrollment dropping steeply, in 1978 the Cleary Board of Trustees named Gilbert Bursley President. Bursley, a former state senator and U.S. Congressman increased fund raising, modernized college equipment and opened the Livingston campus in 1979. Under Bursley's leadership, enrollment began to increase and by 1980, stood at 765.

Following Owen's death, Marie Cleary, with her characteristic grit and courage, embarked on a mission to complete her teaching degree that she accomplished by 1964. She followed this up by completing her Masters degree the following year and commenced a second career as a guidance counselor at West Junior High School.

In 1973 Marie married Jess Mangas whom she had known since 1941, when he and his then wife Mildred rented an apartment at the house on 7 N. Normal. Jess had worked at the Ford Motor Co. in Dearborn for many years. He and Mildred moved from 7 N. Normal in 1953 to a new home



Donald Silkworth and Owen Cleary at the cornerstone laying ceremony in 1960.

at 1310 W. Cross St. Jess retired from Ford in 1964, and following Mildred's death, began courting Marie. Shortly thereafter, Marie and Jess moved to Sarasota, FL where Marie had a home that she and Owen has purchased in 1958

Owen and Marie's daughter Ann attended Roosevelt High School and the University of Michigan graduating In 1952. In 1953 Ann married Patrick Heck of Toledo and had four children, Teresa, Catherine Ann, Patrick and Maria. In March 1975 Ann divorced Patrick Heck.

On March 14, 1977 she married Lieutenant Colonel Charles S. Kettles (a corporate merger with net assets of 10 children). Ann had known Chuck since her high school days when he was living next door. Chuck was drafted for the Korean War in October 1951 after completing two years at Michigan State Normal college. He completed Officer Candidate training at Fort Knox, KY and the Army flight Training program before being assigned to Korea. He achieved a distinguished record as an officer and Army aviator being awarded the Army Distinguished Service Cross for heroism in combat in Vietnam.

The Kettles family have truly been pillars of the Ypsilanti community, for Eastern Michigan University (EMU), Cleary University, Washtenaw Community College and Washtenaw Technical Middle College (Charter School).

Ann Cleary Kettles began working at EMU in September 1972. Her excellent organizational and leadership abilities were recognized and she rapidly advanced from secretary in the Nursing Department to becoming Director of Records, Registration and Academic Advising in early 1990, a position she held until her retirement in January 1996. She also served on the Board of Trustees of the Washtenaw Community College for over 12 years and Chair of the Board for the last four years of her service. She served on the initial board for the Charter School created under the Washtenaw Community College and on the Board of the Red Cross of Washtenaw County.



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She began serving as a Trustee of Cleary College in March of 1985 and retired as a Trustee Emeritus in 2003. Ann suffered a hemorrhagic stroke in October of 2001 at the age of 71 that left her paralyzed on the right side. With the determination that has been her "hall mark," she continued to serve on three of the boards for over two years before accepting the fact that it was no longer practical.

Chuck served on the Ypsilanti City council for four years. Further, he developed and implemented the Aviation Management Program in the College of Technology, Eastern Michigan University that continues to graduate students in Management and Flight. He was instrumental in establishing a scholarship in the name of Capt. Robert Arvin, USA which provided over \$110,000 to deserving students over the ten year period of the Foundation. The program continues as an endowed Scholarship in honor of Bob Arvin, a graduate of Ypsilanti High School and the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY. Arvin lost his life in Vietnam after having earned two Silver Star medals for heroism.

Patrick Cleary II attended Roosevelt High Schools and the University of Michigan and received his B.S degree in 1956. he entered the U.S. Navy Flight Training later that year. He married Wilma Louise Stiltner in 1957 and was designated a naval aviator in 1958.

Pat and Wilma had two sons, Patrick Roger Cleary III in 1962 and Michael Jenks Cleary in 1964. During Pat's 24 years of service with the U.S. Navy, their family lived in the Far East including Guam, Japan and the Philippine Islands. They also were stationed in San Diego and San Jose, CA, Lexington Park, MD and Washington, DC. While living on Guam, Wilma taught school and in Japan she taught English to Japanese doctors.

Following his retirement from the Navy in 1980 as a Captain, Pat was employed by Litton Industries and retired as a Vice-President and General Manager of the Warfare

systems Division. After Pat's retirement, Wilma opened a boutique in Alexandria, VA, successfully operating it until she retired in 1991. After she retired, she and Pat traveled extensively in Europe, Canada and the U.S. Wilma passed away in September 2015.

Patrick Roger Cleary III graduated from The College of William and Mary in 1984 and also became a naval aviator. He retired in 2013 as a Captain. He married Annemarie Dinardo in 1989 and they have two daughters, Emma, 22 and Erin, 17.

Michael Cleary graduated from James Madison University in 1987 and went to work with the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI). He married Ellen Grube in 1990 and they have three children; Bridget, 20, and twins, Owen J. Cleary II and Dana, 16. Michael eventually transferred from ONI to the Defense Intelligence Agency where he is currently a senior executive.

In the three decades from 1980 to 2010 Cleary College saw many milestones achieved including accreditation as a university, a high ranking among specialty colleges and being ranked as the second best value education in the state of Michigan just behind the University of Michigan's extension campus in Dearborn.

Today, two of P.R.'s. and Helen's descendants continue to be involved with the Cleary institution. Anne McKenny, a software engineer and manager for General Motors, was named to the Cleary College Board of Trustees in 1990. She continues as the longest sitting member on the Board and one of the University's most significant donors. Patrick Roger Cleary II is also deeply involved with Cleary University, having been on the Board of Trustees since 2003. He has now been named as the vice-Chairman of the Board.

*(Patrick Roger Cleary II has served on the Board of Trustees of Cleary University since 2003 and was recently named Vice-Chairman of the Board.)*



The Cleary College building that was located on the Northwest corner of Washtenaw Avenue and Hewitt Road in Ypsilanti.

# The Surprise Treasure Box

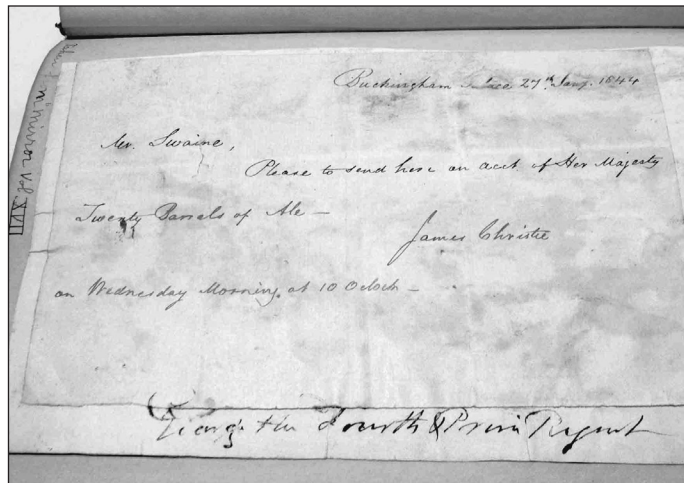
BY JAN ANSCHUETZ

If you like surprises, you might want to live in an old house. We have lived in our 140 year old home for nearly 50 years and have had many surprises - from the hot water faucet that “blew” last week creating a geyser that cleaned the kitchen ceiling, to digging up seven tombstones in our garden, to the return of the dolls that were played with in our home in the 1880s. Perhaps one of the best surprises ever was the 17 pound cardboard box delivered by UPS a week ago. Why was it mailed to us and what did it contain? Pour yourself a cup of tea, and I will let you look in the large box with me.

Before we look in the “treasure chest” you need to have a little information about the reason that it was mailed here from Pennsylvania. When Jessie Swaine died in the same bed in the same room that she was born nearly 90 years later in 1968, the family home at 101 East Forest Avenue was inherited by three family friends, one of them Audrey Yeager. For the first time in history the house would be sold. We bought it and soon moved in with four children under the age of five and another on the way. The delivery of the box started when I received a message on Facebook from a woman I had never met. She stated that she had inherited some items from Jessie and Jessie’s sister, Florence Swaine, from her grandmother Audrey Yeager who had also inherited them and asked if I would like them. My prompt reply was very enthusiastic. Several weeks went by and then there it was – a large cardboard box on my front porch.

The items in the box could best be described as artifacts which together tell the story of the family that had built and lived in our home – Frederick and Lizzie George Swaine - and also information about their ancestor’s lives. This treasure trove could not have found a better place since I am a history buff and genealogist.

Let’s start by opening a large red book which was in the box. It once had blank pages which are now filled with family history. There are letters of introduction that Frederick Swaine brought with him when he came across the ocean around 1871 to visit his George cousins. They had left England ten years before and were living in Ypsilanti and operating a malt house. Pasted on one of the first pages is a fragile piece of stationery from Buckingham Palace. Queen Victoria needs more beer! The letter reads “*Buckingham*



Buckingham Palace malt order written to Frederick Swaine’s father.

*Palace, 27th January, 1844. Mr. Swaine, Please to send here on act of Her Majesty Twenty-Barrels of Ale -James Christie on Wednesday Morning at 10 O’clock”.* This was written to Frederick Swaine’s father who, like his father before him, was a prominent maltster, brewer, and farmer and they were both licensed to brew for the royal family. In the next page – written in cursive is more information about this stating that the Swaines were “hop factors” in the Burough (sic) of London accompanied by a family tree.

Also, pasted in the book were pictures of the family ancestral home in which Frederick’s wife and second cousin Lizzie George’s family lived before coming to America and where Frederick Swaine had been born. There are many pictures of Lympne Castle, which is in the Romney Marsh area of Kent and where the orphaned baby Frederick Swaine was raised by his mother’s cousin who was his guardian.

Family genealogy is included in several different handwritings for various lines. Inscriptions from tombs and churches are noted as well as from legal and church records. Pictures of family homesteads and farms, churches and cemeteries fill pages of the book. Many of the photographs were taken in 1937 when Jessie and Florence, then in their 60s, visited their ancestor’s homeland of England.

There are newspaper articles about family heirlooms that are now in British museums. Frederick Swaine in 1881 writes a history of Lympne Castle, his childhood home, which dates back to Roman times. There are photographs of an elegant mansion in Kansas City, Missouri that Lizzie Swaine’ brother, who was a malt dealer, lived in. Pictures are pasted in the book of an aging Lizzie Swaine in her garden at our house taken in the 1920s, as well as interior shots of the family enjoying the parlor. Obituaries of family members and friends, as well as wedding announcements, reports of Swaine bridge parties and talks they gave at the Ladies Literary Society and St. Luke’s church provide nearly 100 years of informal history of the well loved family that lived in our home.

The box contains many loose papers including a handwrit-



ten will by Frederick's father who died when he was only 41 years old. Frederick's mother Lady Hester Green died within a year of her husband. Her baby, Frederick Swaine, who was about two years old, went to Lympne Castle to live with her cousin who owned the castle and grounds. The guardian then kept a record book of his ward's inheritance, starting with his father's handwritten will inserted into the front. He kept track of how it was invested, what money he spent and interest earned. This small book was also part of the collection delivered to us.



This large box contained not only Frederick

The items in the box could best be described as artifacts which together tell the story of the family that had built and lived in our home – Frederick and Lizzie George Swaine.

Swaine's report cards, school records, exams and even his certificates from King's College in London, but a "copy book" from 1852 which was written by the 12 year old Frederic George, his wife Lizzie's brother, who died in England at the age of only 22. Copy books were a common method of teaching during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was a blank book in which the student would copy information provided by a teacher – such as a math fact – and then problems which would be worked out by the student in the book. The handwriting and arithmetic problems are artfully written in the most graceful

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Frederick Swaine.

family moved from England leaving behind this son buried in a churchyard along with his sister who died as a baby.

There is a once lovely white vellum (calf skin) notebook with large script on the front cover proclaiming that it belonged to Frederick Swaine Esq., newly graduated from King's College. He used this to keep track of his finances when he set off to seek his fortune and invest his inheritance in America and more exactly the town of Ypsilanti, Michigan, and more precisely River Street. To go along with this there are numerous letters from bankers in England and America as he attempted to change his money in pounds into dollars when he decided to marry his second cousin Lizzie and purchase the malt house from his father and brother in law. Letters from his guardian, bankers and customs officials in England and the United States document his efforts to move his possessions from Lympe Castle in Kent to River and Forest Streets in Ypsilanti.

Most exciting to our family was his account of building our home and also enlarging the malt house from a small 20 by 40 foot school house to a three story structure which covered two additional lots. Here are the items that he spent his money on between 1873 and 1875 - a total of over \$22,000. "Cost of House & Lot" Land 500, Fence 150, Trees 30, Labor on Land 70 = 750. Bricks 500, Brick work 520, Stone 190, Ornamental 190, Carpenters 520, Lumber 456, Sand 41, Lime 78, Fire grate 85, Plastering 430, Painting 189, Stair-Case (sic) 140, Parsens Acct 807, Well digging 17, Hardware 565, Glass 22 = 4250." On

the back of his business card, inserted into the account book other expenses are noted such as furniture for \$1000, buggy \$1000, piano \$445 (which we still have).

Frederick is paying off his brother in law and father in law for the purchase of the malt house and then enlarging it. His first entry is for going into partnership with his brother in law L.C. Wallington for \$1200 and then making a further payment to him of \$2300 in May, 1872 before marrying Lizzie George and having the majority of his money transferred to America from England. By the next year - May, 1873 he invests nearly \$12,000 in the malt house so we might assume that this was for the enlargement and installation of steam equipment. He also pays his brother in law an additional \$2300.

The handwriting in the small white book changes in 1898, a year after her husband's sudden death. Lizzie Swaine records improvements made to her home including the addition of an upstairs bathroom and small bedroom and a new radiator heating sys-



Jesse and Florence Swaine.

tem. The front porch is also rebuilt to try to make the house look more modern in a Colonial Revival style. A telephone is installed on February 25, 1898



The Swaine house at 101 East Forest Avenue.



for \$18. Again in 1923 the handwriting changes to oldest daughter Florence's decisive script as she records the money spent for kitchen cupboards and a downstairs bathroom, probably necessary as her mother would find the winding stairway difficult to navigate.



Lizzie Swaine.

In 1928 it is recorded that the house is painted and the kitchen addition is plastered over with stucco. Hardwood floors were also installed at this time and the last home repairs were for a boiler (furnace), water softener and water heater.

Hundreds of postcards and letters, many in the original envelopes, from family and friends throughout the United States and England, demonstrate that the Swaine family must have looked forward to the "post" each day. Among the loose papers are ships passenger lists, play bills from the 1890s, menus from France, Germany and England and receipts from European hotels and even Jessie's high school graduation program. We know that Lizzie Swaine and her

two young daughters visited not only England but France and spent a winter in Germany before the turn of the century.

One of the most interesting items is a "confessions book" which was the property of Florence Swaine, given to her by her father and purchased in England on the trip that she took with him when she was only 10 years old in 1885 to visit family and see the "old country." This confessions book has printed questions such as "What is your favorite virtue?" or poet or composer or where would you want to live? Florence had various relatives in England fill in the blanks and then when she brought it back to Ypsilanti had her grandmother and mother and various friends, including Ruth Pease, oldest daughter of Frederic Pease, founder of the musical department at the Normal (EMU) "confess" by answering the questions. When she visited her wealthy uncle, who was a malt dealer in Kansas City, his family took the time to "confess" too.

Audrey Yeager was a wonderful soul mate to the Swaine family to gather up and keep all of the items in the box which were saved and honored by her dear friends - Florence and Jessie Swaine. Not only that but she contin-

ued documentation of the family and the Swaine home by carefully pasting in the big red book the obituary of Jessie Swaine and then a newspaper article about our family purchasing the Swaine home in 1969 which, I believe, we love and treasure as much as the Swaine family did.

I hope that you enjoyed looking in this fascinating and historical box with me. Perhaps you may even be inspired to document your own family history with pictures, narratives, letters and who knows perhaps even a "confession" book and then you need to find a dear friend or relative to leave it to as Audrey Yeager was to Jessie and Florence Swaine.

• • •

*I have written many articles about the Swaine and George families, our home, the Peck Street Primary and malt house in previous editions of the Gleanings. I hope that you have enjoyed your cup of tea and looking into this box with me. Here are some links if you would like to read more about the Swaine and George families, the malt house and our corner of River and Forest Avenue in Ypsilanti and the good people, and even a camper down elm tree, who lived here long ago.*

*Malt house* [ypsigleanings.aadl.org/taxonomy/term/537](http://ypsigleanings.aadl.org/taxonomy/term/537)

*George family* [ypsigleanings.aadl.org/ypsigleanings/89878](http://ypsigleanings.aadl.org/ypsigleanings/89878)

*Tombstones & George family* [ypsigleanings.aadl.org/taxonomy/term/553](http://ypsigleanings.aadl.org/taxonomy/term/553)

*Dolls* [ypsigleanings.aadl.org/taxonomy/term/551](http://ypsigleanings.aadl.org/taxonomy/term/551)

*Camperdown elm tree* [ypsigleanings.aadl.org/ypsigleanings/219839](http://ypsigleanings.aadl.org/ypsigleanings/219839)

*Swaine auto trip* [ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org/publications/spring2011.pdf](http://ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org/publications/spring2011.pdf)

*Swaine family and end of malt house* [ypsigleanings.aadl.org/node/89918](http://ypsigleanings.aadl.org/node/89918)

*Jessie Swaine flower train girls* [ypsigleanings.aadl.org/ypsigleaning/89878](http://ypsigleanings.aadl.org/ypsigleaning/89878)

*(Janice Anschuetz is a local history buff and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)*



The Swaine Family – Jessie on top and Florence at left in the front row.

# Joe Butcko

BY BILL NICKELS

## PART 1

Preston Tucker and Joe Butcko: Joe's dad farmed 4 acres along what is now Spring Street. Henry Ford bought the four acres in 1921 and assembled other parcels to build his Ypsilanti Ford Plant. Joe was born in 1925 in a home built by his father in 1922 at 634 Harriet Street in Ypsilanti. At that time, there was only one other home on Harriet Street.

Joe's mother died in 1929. Reminiscing, he said "I did not have much education, but I spent three years in 1st Grade." His dad was a custodian at St. John's Church and School in Ypsilanti. Knowing his dad could use child care, the 1st Grade Nun offered to have Joe attend her class starting at the age of four. Attendance continued until Joe officially finished 1st Grade at the age of six.

Moving to East Forest, he became friends with Ray Hatch's sons who lived on Hemphill. Ray was an engineer and sometimes brought blue prints home. Intrigued with the blue prints, Ray explained to Joe how they were used.

Finishing St. John's in the 8th Grade, Joe attended Ypsilanti High School through the 10th Grade. During that time, the Industrial Arts Department encouraged their students to enter an apprenticeship. Interested, at the age of 16 during the summer of 1941, Joe worked and served an apprenticeship with Hamilton Rifle Company in Plymouth and became a tool and die maker. He worked in the plant all week, and then picked up his schoolwork which consisted of history and English from his shop teacher.

When the United States entered the war, Ypsilanti and Southeastern Michigan tooled up to build trucks, tanks, and war materials. There were 3,500 tool and die "Job Shops" in the Detroit area. They varied in size from just one or two employees to major factories.

The war was a boon for those who were not eligible for military service. "There was a tremendous demand for skilled labor, even for someone like me with only a year of experience," Butcko recalled. "We moved from shop to shop, more for the experience than for the money."

After leaving Hamilton Rifle Company, Joe's work was never limited to 40 hours per week. He was working for Hoover Ball Bearing in Ann Arbor on December 7, 1941 when Pearl Harbor was bombed. Then, during 1942, Joe worked for Motor State in Ypsilanti, making components for howitzer cannons. At the age of 17, he took time out to



Joe Butcko at the Automotive Heritage Museum at 100 East Cross Street in Ypsilanti.

marry Mae Alice, "The prettiest girl in Ypsilanti."

Joe saw an advertisement for machinists posted by Ypsilanti Machine Tool Company owned by Preston Tucker. Knowing Tucker's sons, he answered the ad and found himself working 12 hours a day and 7 days a week in a 60' by 180' barn behind Tucker's 110 Park Street home. The barn was filled with toolmakers, machinists, draftsmen, engineers and mechanics. Recalling that time, Joe found Tucker "Very nice to work for, everybody got along."

Preston Tucker had partnered with Andrew Jackson Higgins who described himself as "The Henry Ford of the South." Tucker's Ypsilanti group built marine engines for landing crafts that were assembled in New Orleans.

During the spring of 1943, Higgins and Tucker built a factory just off of Canal Street in New Orleans allowing Tucker's Ypsilanti operation to consolidate. The prospect of going to New Orleans was exciting for 18 year old Joe! The tool room where Joe worked was the first part of the building to have a roof. Right next to Joe worked Arthur Chevrolet, one of the famous Chevrolet Brothers. He told Joe that he received \$3 million from General Motors for his car company, but then lost everything on airplanes in the stock market crash of 1929. Arthur was responsible for a dynamometer that measured the power of the engines they were building.

The summer of 1943 was very hot in New Orleans. Following his wife's desire, the couple returned to Ypsilanti during the fall of 1943. Machinists continued to be in big demand in Ypsilanti. Joe got a job at Woods Manufacturing in Ann Arbor. When he got old enough for military service, the inevitable draft notice arrived in the mail. With three brothers in the service, two in the Navy and one in the Merchant Marines, Joe ignored the request from his employer to stay and joined the Navy. He served on an LST (Landing Ship Tank) that saw action in the Philippines and Okinawa.





Joe Butcko's shop (left) and Clow's Welding Shop (right) were located at the corner of Holmes Road and North River Street.

After his military service Joe's relationship with Preston Tucker was renewed in 1952. He rented a 16 foot by 20 foot empty garage that was attached to Clow's Welding Shop at 830 North River Street, at the corner of Holmes Road. Joe talked to Bridgeport Brass about doing machine work on aluminum airplane struts. They asked Joe if he had a boring mill and could he do the job? He answered yes to the first question even though the correct answer was no.

Bridgeport Brass delivered the struts to the shop in a semi filled with crates, 15 struts per crate. When the first shipment arrived, Joe did not have a way of unloading the crates and did not have a building large enough to put them in. He solved the first problem using an AAA wrecker which unloaded the crates to his alley.

He solved the second problem by going to see his old friend Preston Tucker who recently returned home to Ypsilanti after his auto making venture closed in Chicago. "Tucker owned a large brick building that was in front of the big wooden barn we had all worked in, and he was renting it out for storage," said Butcko. "Fork lifts were included, and thereafter I had the parts delivered to the warehouse. We would also ship from there. I received several letters of commendation from Bridgeport Brass for the fine job we were doing. I was constantly concerned that the buyer might come

down and see my setup. I think we both would have died...me first."

Across the street from Tucker's brick building was the Tucker Machine Tool building, which Tucker told Butcko he was vacating. "He said I was welcome to pick out as much of the equipment as I wanted, and pay him what I thought it was worth whenever I got the money," said Butcko. "Unfortunately, all the equipment he had was production equipment and was of no use to me."

Preston and Joe did spend some time together in the warehouse office. "He had terminal cancer and told me he had been going to South America for some treatments that were not allowed in the States," Butcko said. "Close to Christmas, I went to his house and gave him a couple of bottles of White Horse scotch – that's what he always drank in New Orleans – for doing me the favor. He was pale, weak, sentimental, and somewhat bitter. He said of all the SOBs he had given jobs to and paid them money they weren't worth, they didn't even send him a Christmas card, and I thanked him for a favor he didn't remember."

Preston Tucker died from cancer on December 26, 1956 at the age of 53. Joe remembers him as a devoted family man. Joe went on to a very successful tool and die business which is described in Part II of this article.

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## PART 2

Joe Butcko and Crescive Die and Tool Company: Early in his career, Joe worked for Crescent Tool and Die Company in Lincoln Park. He thought it was the most efficiently run shop he ever worked in. When he started his own shop in 1952, Joe adopted the name Crescive for his shop, "I wanted to be very close to it, partly so people might mistake us for them, and I think 'crescive' was the next word in the dictionary. I liked the meaning, 'growing from within,' and that's where I got the name. I also named it 'die and tool' instead of 'tool and die' for two reasons. One reason is our primary function was dies, and the other reason is it causes people to ask."

Crescive Die and Tool first occupied an empty garage at 830 North River Street. As his business grew, old pal John Smith asked Joe why he didn't

build on a couple of lots he owned on Ann Street. Joe told him "I didn't have the money for a building." John told Joe "I do" and two months later the building was finished. Together, Joe and John asked attorney Robert Fink to draw up a land contract whereby Smith would sell the new building to Butcko. Fink, in disbelief, said to John, "You mean you built a building on Joe's land and you had nothing signed? He could tell you to just shove off." John said, "Fink, you don't understand, Joe and I shook hands."

With the new building, Joe's wife Mae finally had her own office. Mae kept the company books that included payroll, insurance, and all the company's paper work. Crescive grew to 15 or 20 employees before Mae got some help. Joe said "She would accompany me, regardless of the time, whether I was delivering dies to Grand Rapids or heat treated items to Detroit at 2 AM.

Sometimes she would drive; sometimes she would just keep me awake."

They had, as Butcko put it, "twenty-three great years in Ypsilanti," during which time the shop expanded from 2,400 square feet to 20,000 square feet. That physical growth came to a halt in 1960. "Eastern Michigan University was expanding very rapidly also and had acquired every inch of land around me," he says. "However, I had an option on one half acre site to the south of me. Eastern offered their limit of \$2 per square foot and I had to better their offer. I did, but that ended my expansion in Ypsilanti." Joe's burgeoning manufacturing business finally ran out of room.

In Ypsilanti, between 1952 and 1975, Joe served on the Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce as board member and president as well as Ypsilanti City Council, including a stint as mayor pro tem.

One of Crescive's customers was Motor State Products, the original mechanical convertible top manufacturer. With Motor State tops, owners did not have to get out and have someone on the other side to manually push the top up and help pull it down. Joe said, "When the Ford Mustang came out, Motor State was up to their capacity in convertible tops for Chrysler. The production projection for the Mustang was 1,000 per month. Since I had built the convertible top dies for Motor State, they asked me if I would run the dies for that 1,000 a month. I didn't have any presses, but they had some old presses that they sold me relatively cheap so they could get out of the obligation of making that paltry 1,000 a month." The Ford Mustang caught fire and sales soared. Soon, says Butcko, "It became 1,000 a day, and I was in the production business thereafter."

In 1975, Butcko bought a 65 acre farm within the city limits of Saline from Bob Merchant and began developing the Saline Industrial Park. "The city



Preston Tucker's office on North Grove Street in Ypsilanti.



had a very astute mayor named George Anderson,” said Butcko. “He and the city council wanted to assist in the development of the industrial park. The city floated a municipal bond for me for some \$225,000. My civil engineer, Ken West, drew up and



Joe Butcko with Joe Butcko IV.

presented a plan to the city. The city sublet all the work and submitted the bill to me, to be paid back to the city in 10 annual installments at 6 percent interest. I was in my new plant within six months after buying the land; I paid the city back in less than four years.”

At the time when Crescive moved to Saline, Joe’s older son Joe D. became president. Joe D. worked in the shop since the eighth grade and had just graduated from Ferris State with an engineering degree. Son Jim, five years younger than Joe D., earned a degree from Ferris in business administration. He became CFO of the company. His first grandson, Joe III, worked in production, maintenance, the tool room and sales.

In addition to two Crescive plants, Joe’s industrial park housed book printers McNaughton & Gunn, two R & B Machine Tool Company plants, and a bowling alley. “When I was negotiating with Saline, the mayor mentioned

that what they really needed was a bowling center,” Butcko recalled. “I told him that if he would get me a liquor license, I would get him a bowling alley. That wasn’t the biggest mistake in my life, but it was damn

close. I did build a bowling alley; it’s probably the nicest in the state. But I have never spent a moment managing it, I never got involved, and we also never made the first dime.”

The combined Saline facility grew from 25,000 square feet to 150,000. The company bought a plant in Milan with more than 120,000 square feet. Crescive grew to more than 500 employees.

Having been in business for a long time, Joe saw the corporate culture change. He said, “It’s damn near impossible to find someone in our business who can make a decision and won’t deny making it if something goes wrong.”

Thanks to Joe for a couple of interesting and entertaining interviews.

*(Bill Nickels is a long time member of the Ypsilanti Historical Society and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)*

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# LIFE ON THE HOME-FRONT

## Washtenaw County in World War II

AN INTERVIEW WITH VIRGINIA DAVIS-BROWN BY ERIC SELZER



Virginia Harwood in 1943.

***Virginia, you started high school in 1937 and you were in high school when Pearl Harbor was bombed. Could you tell me about your experiences when that happened?***

Well, my girlfriend and I had just met two young men from Ann Arbor and we had gone out a few times. They had invited us to go to church on Sunday and go to their place for dinner. So, we went and after we had dinner we walked out and went to the woods, which was just down the road a little ways. The snow was falling in those great, big flakes that you only see in [a] picture postcard. We were down there about a half an hour or so and we were getting cold so we went back. When we walked into the house everyone was sitting in the living room and they were telling us to be quiet because the word had just come over the radio that Pearl Harbor had been bombed. Now, the fellows were very anxious to go enlist right away. They were ready to go then, but both of them were still in high school, so they didn't. They didn't go for a couple of years.

But, it was quite a shock. We never realized that there was any problem in Japan, at least in our area, I don't think. Germany – yes – we figured that there might be a problem there. But it was a complete surprise to all of us when it happened.

***So what was your immediate reaction to the declaration of war and how did it affect you in those early days and weeks?***

One thing about it was when they said that it was at Pearl Harbor, we had no idea where Pearl Harbor was. You must remember that the world was much bigger then than it is today. Pearl Harbor was in Hawaii and it was so far away that we didn't know anything about it.

It was a surprise. We were very upset. We were very upset because we knew that, probably, the young men that were in the household were going to have to go to war. It was not right away, because they were both in high school. They both went in about 1940 or late 1942.

We didn't know what was going to happen because we didn't know anything about rationing and things like that that were to be in our future. It took a while for these things to come about because, the government may have had some idea and were beginning to plan for war, but I think it was more for Germany. All of a sudden we were

pushed into rationing and the bomber plant ... [and] hundreds of people coming into our community, where we had been a very small community, primarily an agricultural country. We had all these people coming from places in the South that we had hardly ever heard of, again, because of our situation. We did not have television like we have today. We only had the radio and newspapers. In some instances the news that you got would have been a couple weeks old by the time it got to us.

***When and why did these people start coming up from the South?***

They started coming up [because] Henry Ford first had to go someplace to get people, because there were nowhere near enough people to put in the bomber plant. So he went down south and this was probably in late forty or forty-two. He would take buses down and he would go to the prisons. And he would literally bail the men out of prison ... Maybe they were just arrested for drunkenness or something minor. But he would pay their bail and they would come up. And that was why 'the Southerner' got a bad name with us, because we did not get the better class of people when they came up.

There was no place for them to go. Many people would take people in if they had an extra room. My in-laws had a three-story house and they turned the third story into a dorm-room. And they put in cots and they had men coming in two shifts to sleep. One man would get up and another man would get right in the same bed ... because there was no place for them to go. This disturbed us immensely because some of the people were coming up ... in campers or tents. And there was really no place for them to go except the fields or the woods that were around. There was no sanitation. They had no water in some areas. And then that is why they put up Willow Run Village. And this was a big shock to us too, because these were people that, again as I say, the first ones were not very good people.

I remember the first man from the South that I ever met. He was buying groceries at the A & P store. He was a little man, probably about five foot three or four. And he came up to my check-stand and he asked me if I would put his 'vittles in a polk' so he could take 'em home. I had no idea what in the world the man was talking about. He was simply asking me to put his groceries in a bag so he could take them home. This was so different to me. Then, there were



a lot of people ... there were a lot of the men that could not even sign their name. They had no education at all, so they would make their 'x'. And we did that until they started getting other people to come up.

***Tell me about the first job that you had after graduating from high school.***

I went to work for A & P Stores. I was a cashier for about a year and then I became a head cashier. And that was where I got started and where I met these people. This was in October. I started working in October of 1942 in Ypsilanti. It wasn't too long after that that we had rationing come in.

We had to account for it the same as we would money, all the stamps ... We had to account for them just like our money, because we didn't get food in the stores if we didn't have [them]. There were certain foods that we had a lot of difficulty getting. And that was bananas and a lot of the fruits that we couldn't get. You'd only get vegetables of the type that were grown in your area at the time ... Sugar was rationed; clothing was rationed; gas was rationed. Just about everything that you can think of was rationed, except your produce, and that was depending upon what was in the area that you could get.

***Tell me more about rationing in the supermarket. How did you approach that?***

Well you had to ... have a stamp of a certain amount. Now, it could have been a five, a ten or a twenty. And each item would have a number on it. Like sugar, maybe, was ten points. And something else, such as coffee, might be five points. It would depend upon what that point was. And then you had to have the coupons to match that just as if you were paying for something for fifty cents or a dollar. It was the same type of thing.

***So you could use your points towards anything in the store?***

Yes, if it was groceries ... You couldn't use your clothing coupons for groceries or your gasoline coupons for groceries. They had to be grocery coupons.

***And do you remember any other foodstuffs that were limited during wartime besides the fruits that you were talking about?***

Oh sure, we didn't always have sugar. There were things like that. Soap powders ... we had that pretty much all the time. Coffee was another thing that was sometimes hard to come by and meat especially. You must remember that everything was going to the army or the navy or the military, because they needed it worse than the people did that were here.

***Did you ever have to tell anyone that something was not available to them?***

Oh, of course, lots of times.

***What was that like?***

Well, it was hard ... We just didn't have it. There was no way we could give it to them. And ... another thing that was hard to get were cigarettes, because Lucky Strike Green went to war. And the Lucky Strike packages were white instead of green, because ... they wouldn't use the color, because they could use the color green for the military. Military took over everything.

***Can you tell me about rationing in your household?***

Well, there were seven of us. There were my mother and father and five children. And so once a month my folks would have to go and get their rationing books. There was one for every member of the family and you were allowed certain things. Like the baby didn't get anywhere near as much as what someone that was older would get. They wouldn't get coupons for cigarettes or things like that. They would get coupons for milk and things like that.

***So what came in your booklet?***

I can hardly remember, but I assume I had a clothing book and I had a grocery book. I wouldn't have had gas because I didn't drive. I was too young. That probably was it, groceries and the



Virginia Harwood with Charles Brown in 1943.

clothing.

***So people had to produce a coupon with every purchase they made at the supermarket, but what kind of situations did you encounter where people might have tried to buy things without the proper coupons?***

We had very few of those. Maybe once in a while someone would ask you to save them a bunch of bananas and put

them under the counter or save them for when they came in again. But we couldn't do that, because then other people would want to do that too. People were very good in those days, because they knew that what they were not getting was going to the servicemen overseas. Now, we had to account for every coupon or every stamp that we had before we could get any merchandise back. It was just like having cash and having to take it to the bank.

When a customer would come up to the check-stand they would have to give the cashier the amount of coupons they needed for the merchandise that they had as well as giving them money. Then, at night when the cashiers would check out, they had to count all their coupons, their stamps, as well as their money. Then they were taken into the office. The head cashier would have to put all of the coupons together, put them in an envelope and they were picked up. As I remember, they were picked up by someone from I-don't-know-where, but we had certain people that picked them up. It would be just like having cash. You had to hold it just the same as you would cash and then account for everything.

***In what other ways was your life impacted by the war in those early days?***

Well, there were a lot of things that were very hard to get. Eggs were one thing. You didn't get eggs very often and different kinds of meat, such as beef. We didn't get a lot of beef and, again, that was all rationed, so you could only get it if you had the coupons to use it. So most people didn't have a lot of meat anymore. Bacon and ham were very scarce and so was beef. So you had chickens that grew fast and they could be taken care of and grown at home. A lot of people grew them at home even in the cities. They had their vegetable gardens and they had their own chickens - a lot of people did. It was acceptable at that time so they would have eggs.

***What other sorts of changes did you see in the area and in your day-to-day life?***

Well, at the store we really didn't have any men. And if we did they were older men that were not eligible for the draft. Because all the young men were gone, all the women took over their jobs of produce manager and meat manager. We had no young men at all. We had to learn to pick up boxes and cases and move them around. There was no longer a weight restriction on what we could lift. Up until that time ... women were not allowed to pick up over fifteen pounds. And now they were picking up cases of produce or big boxes of meat.

Then another group of people that came into the store that we thought were very interesting were the little people, the dwarfs and the midgets that worked in the wings of the plane. They were primarily welders and they would be down in the plane, in the wing of the plane itself, weld-

ing, because they were small enough to get down in there and the other people couldn't. We had several little people coming in all the time.

As far as transportation ... getting to work was difficult ... With the gas rationing on I rode to work with my dad. I had to go in an hour early and he had to wait an hour after for me to get out, but we could work that out okay. We didn't go to Detroit or anything like that so we didn't get on I-94 very much ... And I'm going to guess that that was started probably in about thirty-nine or forty, whenever the bomber plant was started. And it only went towards Detroit. It only went east toward Detroit at first.

The area was changing so fast it seemed like buildings were going up overnight. We felt like the bomber plant went up overnight and then came the Willow Run Village, which was a city within itself. Now, everybody thinks of Willow Run as the bomber plant, but there certainly was an awfully lot more than that. There was a city there. They had their own police department, their own fire department, their own school district and their own post office. They had their theaters, their stores, their bowling alleys and everything, including churches. So, it was a city within itself.

Now, they had built houses for people. First they put up dormitories. And there were dormitories for women and dormitories for men. Of course it was very, very segregated at that time. Then later on they started building what they called 'flat-tops' and 'peaked-roofs'. Some of the buildings were absolutely just little apartments with a flat roof on it. They had, usually, a cook-stove, an ice-box, not a refrigerator but an ice-box, and then they would bring their own furniture if they had it. The peak-roof was the same thing, except it had a peaked roof on it and some of them were a little bit bigger than the others. These were used all during the war and then, after the war was over, the servicemen came back. Of course they had the G.I. bill so they could go to school and they had to have a place to live, so these were rented out to the students and their families, because most of the men coming back now had families.

***Did you know anyone connected with Willow Run?***

Yes, I had several friends that worked there. But they really didn't talk that much about their job. We didn't socialize a lot or see each other. Sometimes they were working nights, midnights or afternoons and I worked days, so the time was not right. We did not have the gasoline to run to one person's place or the other.

Another thing was that we had things to do at night. If we needed something new, it wasn't like it is today, you didn't just go down to the store and buy it. You didn't have the money or ... you didn't have the ration coupons. Sometimes you could get fabric and you did your own sewing. And that was what was done a lot in the evening. You had laundry to do and laundry was not like it is today, where



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you just throw things in the automatic washer and the dryer and that's it. You don't even have to iron them. Everything had to be ironed back in those days. And sometimes that's what you had to do when you could have been socializing.

***What about romantic situations?***

Well, in February of 1942 Chuck Brown gave me a diamond ring. We had gone out for a while. I had met him on December the seventh ... My girlfriend and I went out with he and another boy and I was with the other boy, but it was shortly after that that we got together. He gave me a ring before he went overseas. He was gone for a while, probably about eight months or a year, and he broke the engagement off. I'm the one that got the 'dear-John' letter ... I didn't date any time while he was gone and then when I got the letter [I did]. My folks had friends who had a son. I had never known him. He came home on leave and he came up to the grocery store, up to A & P, and asked me if I would go out with him, which I did. And in 1946 we got married.

Chuck was overseas until the latter part of 1945. Newton Davis, Newt, was my first husband and he came home in August of 1945. He was on his way to the Pacific. Both of them had fought in the Battle of the Bulge and there were many, many times that I would go a month without a letter, because the mail was not coming through or they could not write. All the letters that we got would have sentences that were cut out. It might be something to do with the war that the government didn't want us to know. All their mail was censored. So when Chuck broke up with me, his commanding officer would not send the letter for a month to give him the opportunity to change his mind, but fifty-seven years later we got married after my first husband died.

***Do you know about their experiences in Europe?***

Both of them were behind German lines at one time or the other. Newt was caught behind the lines. I don't know how many men were in the group, but there were only eight of them that came back. The rest of them were all killed. He also suffered from trench-foot. He spent six months in an English hospital. Trench-foot was where his feet had gotten wet and had been frozen for a while. They wanted to amputate them, but he wouldn't allow that. He lost his stripes for refusing to have his feet amputated. He came home later and his feet were fine, but it was pretty bad at the time.

Now, Chuck was behind the enemy lines. There was a hedgerow that went for about a half-a-mile. They were on one side and they got to one point where there was somebody coming the other way on the other side and it was the Germans, so they passed. I think you've seen that in movies ... That actually happened to my second husband. He was not wounded, but he came home alright.

***What other sorts of things did you and your family do on the home-front to help the war effort?***

Well, my mother would get together with some ladies. I think it was the MOM'S Club, that was 'Mothers of Men in Service'. They would knit if they could get the yarn. And they would pack boxes at Christmastime to send cookies. They did learn to put popcorn in to help preserve the cookies, to keep the cookies from breaking up. It was very difficult because, again, there was rationing on and they did not have all the things that they needed to send a lot of things overseas. You could not send candy or anything like that, because there were not a lot of those types of things around unless you made them, if you had the sugar ... I was not involved in that activity. Usually it was a group and there would be five or six ladies that got together ... They would usually go to either a home or to the church and work there. That would have been the Stony Creek Methodist Church.

***Could you tell me more about your family's participation in home-front activities?***

We saved oil. We would render out the fat from the pigs and chickens. We used that and we saved that. We also saved all the aluminum foil that was around, the gum wrappers and things like that. We wadded aluminum up and saved that, because that was going to war ... We saved metal. We collected metal from around the house ... We saved rubber items. There were stations that we could take the stuff to, where it was recycled back in those days.

My father was a warden. He had a certain area that he had to check every night to make sure that there was no light shining out from a house, that the curtains were all drawn. He visited people if you could see a light. He also would check on women whose husbands and sons were gone and to make sure that they were alright. The only problem that a warden would have was if someone had a little dog that was hiding under the porch or something. It would come out and bite 'em on the heels or catch 'em in some way.

I'm not sure exactly how he got picked to do that. I think probably he volunteered ... Probably the county would pick the person to do that. He did get a little extra gasoline, because he did have to go around every night to check the neighborhood. And so they gave him some extra gas stamps for that. He did it for quite some time. I don't know how long, but he was at it for quite a while ... He could have been drafted, but he had flat feet, which would keep him out of the army. There was always a possibility that he could be drafted, because if the war went on for some time they probably would have to take older men. He probably was in his late forties ... just about fifty.

***So who was drafted? Did you have any experience with friends being drafted?***

Yes, all the fellas from my class were drafted into the army except two. And they were kept from going in because they were farmers and they had to take care of their older parents. Most everybody went in. Chuck got drafted and he

went overseas. We had no idea, of course, where they were going. They went to training in different places. Chuck went to South Carolina, and then to Indiana and then to the East Coast, where he was sent overseas on a ship. There were no planes at that time to take them over.

***Do you remember saying 'good-bye' to him?***

Yes, he went by train from here to South Carolina and I went with his parents to the depot to say 'good-bye' and I came home with his hat. Of course I cried a lot, because I didn't know if I'd ever see him again, because at that time the biggest fear was that they would be killed overseas.

We didn't have any idea where they would go after they left the United States. We knew that they were going to Europe and probably into Germany, but we didn't have any idea ... He would write letters and they would be censored. The commanding officer would actually cut out certain parts or sentences that might give some indication as to where he was at or where he was going to be going.

We were afraid that Hitler might have the ability to get over to the United States and invade us. We figured that he was going to try and take over the world. But with the British and the French, why, we were able to help stop that!

***Can you talk to me and tell me why you were afraid that Hitler might invade the United States?***

You must remember that things are so much different today than how they were back then. Battles can be filmed right now. We had to wait months to get information from the front lines. It was very difficult for us to understand what was going on. And I know it's difficult for you to understand today, because you have everything at your fingertips.

It was very difficult. We were trying to do things back here for the war effort. People were working in the factories. Our part of the world was completely torn apart when they started putting the bomber plant in. New roads were coming very fast and they were building bombers ... We lived within about four miles of the plant and when they would try out the machine guns to make sure that they were working, we could hear that. We had never heard planes like they were building then and they were constantly going over our house. Whenever they finished one, one would be flown out.

*(Eric Selzer has been an active volunteer in the YHS Archives since 2012.)*

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# The Butcher Boy of Ypsilanti

BY KELLY BEATTIE

The Ypsilanti Historical Society houses a robust archive packed with a variety of materials. A better picture of history develops when this mixture of resources comes together. Many times, the genesis for these connections is a peculiar or interesting photograph. Recently, Lyle McDermott, a volunteer in the archives, ran across a photograph of Jacob Martin. The odd clothing in this photograph set the wheels of the archives staff in motion.

In the collection, most 19<sup>th</sup> century full-body portraits featured well turned out men, women and children in their nicest clothing. The photo of Jacob Martin reminded the archives staff more of a strongman than anything else. A search through old *Gleanings* articles turned up a mention of Martin written by Foster Fletcher in the February 1980 issue in an article titled "Chronological History Following Civil War up to 1880." In this article the specific mention of Martin reads as follows: "... *Jacob Martin was a powerful young man who was born on a farm south of Ypsilanti and worked as a butcher for fifteen years in various Ypsilanti meat markets. Louis S. White has written on Jacob's biographical card: '...at one time he was World Champion Wrestler' but the source for such is not stated. About 1895, his parents lived at 306 South Huron Street.*"

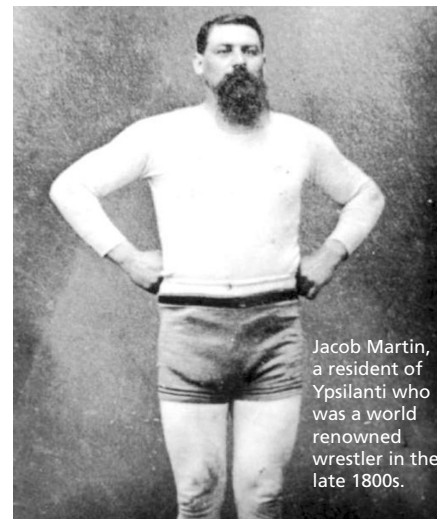
With the new information found in the *Gleanings* based on the biographical card collection, an explanation for Martin's unusual dress was apparent. With one question answered, the new question was about the wrestling career of Martin. Was Ypsilanti home to a World Champion Wrestler? The website of the Professional Wrestling Historical Society did not have a biography page about Martin, however information about his opponent, McLaughlin, turns up information on a few matches between Martin and McLaughlin. Three matches took place in 1876: On March 23, June 29, and October 16. Using these dates, a search of

the *Ypsilanti Commercial* newspaper preserved on microfilm, gives some insight into the March and October matches.

The March 25, 1876 issue of the *Ypsilanti Commercial* reported on the popularity of the March 23 match which took place in the Detroit Opera House. The article reported: "The house was literally packed. Unfortunately, for anyone in this crowd rooting for Martin, the match was decided by three falls, with two of the three rounds going to McLaughlin. Surprisingly, the article closed with a statement that, "Mr. Martin did splendidly, when it is considered that this is his first match in public and McLaughlin is an old stager at the business."

The brevity of this article compared to the popularity of the event did not seem to ruffle many feathers. One reader took time to write in thanking the *Commercial* on the brevity of the article. The reader's comment and the response by the *Commercial* were printed on page 2 of the April 1, 1976 issue. The exchange started with the phrase, which read, "The *Ypsilanti Commercial* gave just two inches of space to the McLaughlin-Martin match. It goes into the church business much more heartily, which is very commendable." The *Commercial* then responded by writing, "In our opinion the revival is worth more to our city than ten thousand giants. The revival is of unspeakable advantage to the public morals, and means eternal salvation of many precious souls. The wrestling match is demoralizing, and was of lasting benefit to no human being."

Curiously, after taking this stance, the report of the October 16 match was quite exhaustive. The opening of the article makes it clear that this match was the "final contest for superiority" and would "decide the championship of the world." The blow-by-blow description helps bring the match alive, even 140 years later. The report begins: "Martin put up a cross toe which



Jacob Martin, a resident of Ypsilanti who was a world renowned wrestler in the late 1800s.

was met by McLaughlin, who got him off his balance and took an inside lock with his right on Martin's left leg. A mighty test of strength ensued. Martin held his ground bravely but to no avail, his muscles, iron though they are, not being sufficiently strong to withstand the strain, and after swaying back and forth with desperate energy came down with a crash square upon his back."

The writing continued to describe the match with great character through the end of the match. Sadly, for anyone optimistic of Ypsilanti having been home to a World Wrestling Champion, Martin lost the championship bout. Thankfully, Martin did not suffer the same hatred for his defeat as the fictional Casey of the Mudville Nine did. Again deferring to the writing of the *Commercial*, "Ypsilanti still has faith in her champion. He made a splendid effort. But as 'knowledge is power,' so years of scientific practice prevailed over the brawn and gigantic powers of Ypsilanti's great wrestler."

Just like that, an unanswered question is solved after Lyle first came across this photograph. Just as many other days in the archives, a photograph led to a question. A little research leads to more questions. Then, only by searching the combined collections of the archives, is a story fully fleshed out.

*(Kelly Beattie was enrolled in the Graduate Program in Historical Preservation at Eastern Michigan University and served an Internship in the YHS Archives.)*

# Meredith Bixby

## An Entrepreneurial Puppeteer

BY BILL NICKELS

A year ago Nancie Loppnow and Nancy Wheeler were talking while both were serving as docents in the YHS Museum. Knowing that Nancy is an Ypsilanti Historical Museum officer, Nancie mentioned that Meredith Bixby's puppets were stored in Saline and they could make an interesting display at the YHS Museum. Nancy remembered the Bixby puppet shows when she taught in Willow Run. With contact information, Nancy called Erik Grossman who has been looking after Meredith Bixby's collection after he passed away.

Nancy and Karen Nickels then visited Saline City Hall where the collection is stored and instantly decided to ask to have the puppets displayed at the YHS Museum. The Toy Room on the second floor would be the perfect place to show them! The original Bixby stage, Jack, Jack's mother, and the Giant from the *The Magic Stalk* show were moved from Saline to the YHS Museum and are now ready for viewing.

Meredith Bixby was born on May 31<sup>st</sup>, 1909 in Ypsilanti on Pearl Street. He found his way to Detroit and on to New York City to study painting at the Art Students League. He worked at the main library and painted during the day. He and his wife made some marionettes for the fun of it. They decided to focus on making the marionettes for the Paul McPharlin version of *Dr. Faust*. In 1932, when a month of vacation time became available, they were off to Covington, Kentucky to visit Meredith's mother. They met a theater group who helped build a stage, rehearse *Faust*, and play for a couple of Women's Clubs. That led to their first school show in Cincinnati. Their show was a hit. Meredith returned to New York and quit his job, he was on his way.

A friend in Detroit asked Meredith to fill in for a sick puppeteer in a performance of *Faust*. Together, they did *Faust* for a couple of years. Knowing *Faust* is a show for adults and realizing there wasn't much theater entertainment available for children, they planned shows for school age kids. During his early years, performing in schools required that they prepare a new show every year. His shows eventually included *The Wizard of Oz*, *The Magic Stalk*, *Aladdin* and *His Wonderful Lamp*, *Pinocchio*, and Russian folk tales including *The Little Humpbacked Horse* and *The Enchanted Birds*. The shows were 50 to 55 minutes long and contained about six scenes. Bixby made all the marionettes by hand,



Jack from the Beanstalk set.

wrote the scripts for all shows, painted the back drops, and studied period costumes that his wife Thyra sewed. Each year a new show was produced. After preparing eight or nine shows, he would revise and repeat the most popular productions and make a new program every once in a while. Later, he pioneered tape recording the shows requiring his puppeteers to keep up with the recordings while shows were performed. Ann Arbor talk show host Ted Heusel was one of many voices in Meredith's shows.

At one time or another, he performed in every Ypsilanti school. Barb Dykman, Ypsilanti Public Schools teacher, remembers "*The kids were enthralled and delighted by the production. It was a new experience for them.*" Chris Riley, Lincoln Consolidated Schools teacher, said "*After the show, they would bring the puppets out and show the kids how they worked. The kids and I were fascinated.*" Nancy Wheeler from Willow Run School District added, "*Meredith looked gigantic compared to the puppets.*"

When Bixby's father died in the late 1940s, he and his family came to Saline to close his dad's dentist shop and decided to stay. Meredith and his wife Thyra had two children, son Michael and daughter Norah. While living in Saline, Michael remembers many puppeteers visiting his dad. Meredith had many friends in puppetry and knew Burr Tillstrom of





"The Giant" puppet.

the *Kukla, Fran, & Ollie* television show and the *Howdy Doody* creators. He had also met Jim Henson of *Muppets* fame. During the 1930s, Meredith was a cofounder of the Puppeteers of America, a national organization that continues to this day.

Bixby did not always operate the marionettes himself. After the first 20 years or so, he hired two puppeteers each year to actually give the shows in the schools. Every year he would hold rehearsals for nearly two months, training the operators on how to manipulate the marionettes, and practicing the exact movements of each character, just as actors must do. Then the show went on the road, usually performing at two schools each day for a total of about 500 performances each year, for more than 45 years. Bixby probably worked with 80 or 90 apprentices over the years. They were college students, unemployed teachers, and career puppeteers.

Meredith and his wife Thyra handled all the bookings for the shows in hundreds of elementary schools. While he travelled around securing bookings, Bixby would often drop by a school where his puppeteers performed to look at the show. In that way, he kept tabs on the quality of the theater that bore his name.

Bixby estimated that about a quarter of a million children saw his puppet shows every year in places as far away as Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland and Atlanta. Nancie Loppnow watched the Bixby Marionette performances each year as an elementary student in Cincinnati. It was a coincidence that she was invited to see the last show Meredith performed above Mac's Seafood Grill in Saline.

During Meredith's last twenty years of operating the shows, he stopped long distance travel and focused on doing

shows in Ohio, Michigan and Indiana. Bixby retired in 1982 at the age of 73 after 46 years of performing with his puppets. He built a three-car garage in Saline to house his marionettes and scenery. The puppets were grouped together by each of his shows.

After about ten years, Meredith and the City of Saline entered into an agreement whereby he donated his puppets and sets in trust to the City of Saline while the City provided a place to store and display them. Opening in 1998, Saline refurbished a storefront on Michigan Avenue in downtown Saline and created a small museum that displayed the puppets. In 1998, at the start of the Great Recession, Saline's budget cuts resulted in the closing of the museum. Some have been on display at the Saline library and the rest are now stored in the basement of the city hall where City of Saline employee Erik Grossman looks after them. Erik has long been interested in puppetry and was a very good friend of Meredith's. Erik has said, "*The shows were real theater on a small scale.*" Meredith died on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2002 at the age of 93.

*(Bill Nickels is a member of the Ypsilanti Historical Society and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)*



The Beanstalk set.

# Famous Ypsilanti Sports Figures

BY ROBERT ANSCHUETZ

Ypsilanti is a relatively small Midwestern city. Any city the size of Ypsilanti could probably lay claim to one or two famous and successful sports figures, but Ypsilanti has produced more than its fair share. Additionally, when the list is expanded to include those who have attended Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti has been home to literally dozens of famous sports figures.

Growing up in Ypsilanti, I was aware of a few famous athletes who used to call Ypsilanti home. My 8<sup>th</sup> grade algebra teacher at East Middle School, Mrs. Louise Bass, was the mother of former football player Mike Bass, who was best known for scoring a touchdown in Super Bowl VII. Mrs. Bass never really told our class about her son's football career or his famous touchdown, but classmates talked about it as rumors circulated in the lunchroom and hallways. My twin brother, Eric, confirmed the connection through a book found in the library about the history of the Super Bowl. He showed the book to Mrs. Bass, who was all smiles as she read the short description of her son's famous touchdown. Mrs. Bass confirmed that she had even attended the Super Bowl and witnessed her son's touchdown in person.

Ypsilanti High School teams in the 1970's and 1980's excelled at sports and produced many great athletes. I was fortunate enough to have attended high school in years that overlapped future professional athletes Fred Cofield and Eric Ball. So I knew that there were at least a handful of additional athletes from Ypsilanti that made it to the big time.

Also in high school, one of my best friends was friends with another student who said that his uncle graduated from Ypsilanti High School and played baseball for the Boston Red Sox. Met with some initial skepticism, the student elaborated that his uncle was even voted the American League Rookie of the Year. This required some additional research, and a search in a library baseball encyclopedia confirmed that my friend's friend's uncle was Don Schwall, who lived in Ypsilanti and was a baseball player in the major leagues.

One of my best friends in high school is the son of Eastern Michigan legendary track coach, Bob Parks. My friend told me stories of how his dad coached Hasely Crawford at Eastern Michigan, who won a gold medal in the 1976 Olympic Games. My friend also told me that his dad was coaching another rising track star, Earl Jones, who at the time went on to win a bronze medal in the 1984 Olympics. My friend also told me that superstar basketball player George Gervin and legendary coach George Allen attended Eastern Michigan, facts that I hadn't known previously.

While attending Eastern Michigan in the late 1980's, Grant Long and the Thomas twins (Carl and Charles) led the bas-



Mike Bass made an improbable mark in NFL history during Super Bowl VII in 1972 against the undefeated Miami Dolphins when he picked up kicker Garo Yepremian's botched pass following a blocked field goal and returned it 49 yards for a touchdown. Mike Bass was named one of the 70 greatest Redskin players of all time.

ketball team to some very successful years. Chris Hoiles was a star catcher on Eastern Michigan's baseball team during that time. Each of these players made their way to play professionally, so that added to my list some additional professional athletes that I knew once lived in Ypsilanti. Over the years, I've followed other players from Eastern Michigan as they became professional athletes, and have always had a sense of pride when they've done so.

On January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016, a headline in the Detroit News sports section read, "Ypsilanti native Adam Gase hired as Dolphins coach." It was this article that made me reflect back at the other sports figures that I knew were from Ypsilanti. This provided me with the curiosity to attempt to create a comprehensive list that led to the writing of this article.

I have included a short biography of several sports figures from Ypsilanti in this article, but there are many more that have not been included. It was fairly difficult searching for athletes who were born elsewhere but lived in Ypsilanti for a period of their lives. Internet searches and Wikipedia listings can certainly provide many more names of athletes and coaches who have once resided within the limits of this fair city. I have grouped the Ypsilanti sports figures by the sport for which they are known.

**BASEBALL SPORTS FIGURES:** A complete list of Major League Baseball (MLB) players who were born in Ypsilanti consists of the following athletes:

Arch McCarthy, Pitcher, 1902, Detroit Tigers

Frank Owen, Pitcher, 1901-1909, Detroit Tigers, Chicago



White Stockings, Chicago White Sox  
Aaron Scheffer, Pitcher, 1999, Seattle  
Mariners

A short biography of some of Ypsilanti's most interesting baseball sports figures follows.

**Walter Owen Briggs, Sr.** was born in Ypsilanti in 1877. Although Briggs was not an athlete, he became the owner of the Detroit Tigers from 1919 until his death in 1952. Briggs was also a major patron of Eastern Michigan, where Briggs Hall and Briggs Field are named in his honor. Briggs' story of growing up on River Street in Ypsilanti has been covered in a previous article written by Janice Anschuetz.

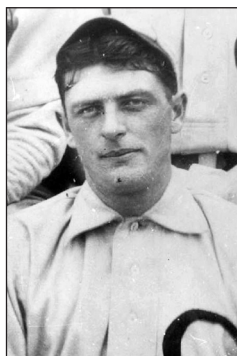
**Carolyn King** was born in 1961 and was one of the first girls ever to play Little League Baseball. In 1973, a 12-year-old King tried out for the Ypsilanti American Little League, even though Little League baseball prohibited girls from participating. The Orioles team manager selected King, but the Little League International officials pressured the Ypsilanti Little League to remove her from the team. The Ypsilanti City Council then told the Little League that they couldn't use city fields if they wouldn't allow her to play. So the Ypsilanti Little League relented and allowed her to play in her first game on May 10, 1973 at Candy Cane Park. As a result, Little League International pulled the Ypsilanti Little League charter, and King and the City of Ypsilanti sued them for discrimination. Although Little League won the case, the next year they decided to change its rule and in

1975 girls were allowed to play Little League baseball nationwide.

**Frank Owen** was born in Ypsilanti in 1879. Owen was a right-handed pitcher and played for the Detroit Tigers in the first year that they joined the American League in 1901. Because he was born in Ypsilanti, he was nicknamed "Yip." Owen pitched in the second-ever Detroit Tiger American League game on April 26, 1901 against the Milwaukee Brewers at Bennett Park in Detroit - a game won by Detroit. Owen only pitched one year for the Tigers, and played the rest of his professional career from 1903-1909 with the Chicago White Stockings, which a short time later became the Chicago White Sox. In 1904, Owen had a 21-15 record with a 1.94 Earned Run Average. He also won more than 20 games in 1905 and 1906. In 1905, in a doubleheader, Owen pitched two complete games in a one day. In 1906, Owen appeared as a relief pitcher in a World Series game for the champion Chicago White Sox. Owen finished his baseball career with a record of 82-67 and a 2.55 Earned Run Average. After his major league career, he spent three seasons in the minor leagues, playing for the Toledo Mud Hens and the Kansas City Blues. Owen retired in 1911.

**Don Schwall** was born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania in 1936, but moved to Ypsilanti as a child and attended Ypsilanti High School. Schwall was a multi-sport athlete, and initially attended Eastern Michigan before transferring to the University of Oklahoma. At Oklahoma, Schwall was selected to the All-Big Eight basketball team in 1957. In 1958, Schwall signed a baseball contract with the Boston Red Sox as a right-handed starting pitcher. It took Schwall a couple years to make it to the big leagues, but when he finally arrived in 1961, he burst onto the scene with a fantastic rookie year. Schwall won his first 6 decisions and won a roster spot on the American League All-Star team. Schwall finished the 1961 season with a 15-7 record and a 3.22 Earned Run Average.

Frank Owen pitched one year for the Detroit Tigers, and played the rest of his professional career from 1903-1909 with the Chicago White Stockings, which a short time later became the Chicago White Sox.



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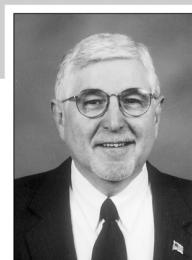
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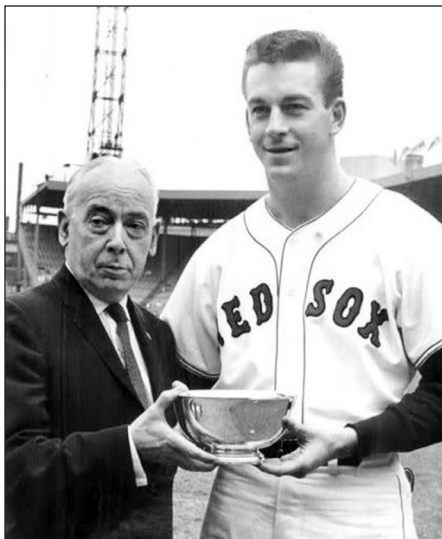


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In 1961 Don Schwall won the American League Rookie of the Year award and his career got off to a very promising start winning his first 6 decisions and winning a roster spot on the American League All-Star team.

That year, which was the year that Roger Maris broke Babe Ruth's single season home run record, Schwall finished 14<sup>th</sup> in the American League Most Valuable Player voting. Schwall won the American League Rookie of the Year award and his career got off to a very promising start. However, following that first year, Schwall never achieved the success of his rookie season, and was ultimately traded to Pittsburgh and then Atlanta, where he finished his career in 1967.

### FOOTBALL SPORTS FIGURES

A complete list of National Football League (NFL) players born in Ypsilanti includes the following athletes:

Mike Bass, Defensive Back, 1967-1975, Detroit Lions, Washington Redskins

Audie Cole, Inside Linebacker, 2012-2015, Minnesota Vikings

Ron Fernandes, Defensive End, 1976-1979, Baltimore Colts

Rodney Holman, Tight End, 1982-1995, Cincinnati Bengals, Detroit Lions

Kris Jenkins, Defensive Tackle, 2001-2010, Carolina Panthers, New York Jets

Lowell Perry, End, 1956 Pittsburgh

Steelers,

Russ Reader, Defensive Back, 1947, Chicago Bears

Keith Simons, Defensive Tackle, 1976-1979, Kansas City Chiefs, St. Louis Cardinals

Lou Vedder, Fullback, 1927-1927, Buffalo Bisons

Dan Williams, Defensive End, 1993-2000, Denver Broncos, Kansas City Chiefs

A short biography of some of Ypsilanti's most interesting football sports figures follows.

**Eric Ball** was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1966, but his family moved to Ypsilanti when he was a child and he became a star on the Ypsilanti High School football team as a running back in the early 1980's. Ball graduated high school in 1984 and was offered a scholarship to attend UCLA, where he played for the Bruins from 1985-1988. In 1986, he had a standout performance in the New Year's Rose Bowl game by scoring four touchdowns for UCLA against the Iowa Hawkeyes, and was named the Rose Bowl Most Valuable Player (MVP). Ball was drafted by the Cincinnati Bengals and played for them from 1989-1994. Ball also played the 1995 season for the Oakland Raiders. Ball was used as both a running back and a kick returner in his NFL career. He rushed for a total of 586 yards and returned 115 kicks for 2,474 yards in his career. Ball is now the Director of Player Relations for the Bengals.

**Mike Bass** was born in Ypsilanti in 1945 and attended Ypsilanti High School. Bass was offered a scholarship to play for the University of Michigan where he had a standout career from 1964-1966 as a halfback and in the defensive secondary. Bass also started a game at quarterback in the 1965 season. Bass was drafted in the 12<sup>th</sup> round of the 1967 draft by the Green Bay Packers. Before the start of the season, Bass was sold by the

Packers to the Detroit Lions where he played mostly on the practice squad, but also appeared in a couple games for the Lions. In 1968, Bass played exclusively on the Lions practice squad. In that year, Bass had a small speaking part in George Plimpton's movie *Paper Lion*. In 1969, the Washington Redskins took a chance on Bass as a free agent signee. Incidentally, Bass's head coach with Washington was George Allen, a graduate of Eastern Michigan. Bass made an immediate impact with the Redskins as a cornerback, and ultimately appeared in 104 consecutive games for them from 1969-1975. In those seasons with the Redskins, Bass had 30 interceptions and 3 touchdowns. He also recovered 6 fumbles. Bass made an improbable mark in NFL history during Super Bowl VII in 1972 against the undefeated Miami Dolphins. The Redskins were dominated by the Dolphins, and Bass scored the only touchdown for the Redskins when he picked up kicker Garo Yepremian's botched pass following a blocked field goal and returned it 49 yards for a touchdown. That play has been shown on television over and over again, and makes the blooper highlight reel for

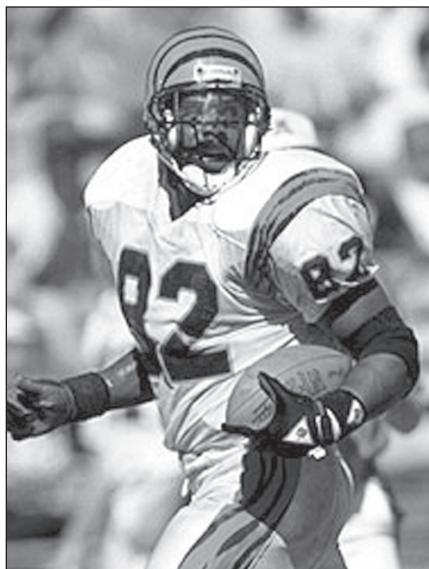


In 1986, Eric Ball had a standout performance in the New Year's Rose Bowl game by scoring four touchdowns for UCLA against the Iowa Hawkeyes, and was named the Rose Bowl Most Valuable Player (MVP).



most Super Bowl pregame shows. A clip of the touchdown can be seen on YouTube at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9enWb-bLIHrk>. Bass played until injuries forced his retirement in 1976. In 2002, Bass was named one of the 70 greatest Redskins players of all time.

**Adam Gase** was born in Ypsilanti in 1978, but his family moved around often while he was growing up. Gase graduated in 1996 from Marshall High School. Gase was not a star football player, but he was an outstanding student of the game at Michigan State University as a coaching assistant under Nick Saban. Gase followed coach Saban to Louisiana State University as an assistant in 2000. Gase's first opportunity with the NFL was as a scouting assistant for the Detroit Lions in 2003. In 2007, Gase was named the Lions' quarterbacks coach. Gase went to the San Francisco 49ers in 2008 as an assistant coach, then to the Denver Broncos in 2008 as the wide receivers and later quarterbacks coach. In 2013, Gase was promoted to be the offensive coordinator for the Denver Broncos, where he coached Tim Tebow in his most successful NFL season. In 2014, Gase also helped resurrect Peyton Manning's career with the Broncos as Manning came back from a serious neck injury. Gase followed former Broncos coach John Fox to the Chicago Bears and became the Bears'



Rodney Holman was a three-time Pro Bowl selection from 1988-1990, and his offensive production helped send the Bengals to Super Bowl XXIII.

offensive coordinator in 2015. In 2016, after developing a reputation in the NFL as an offensive guru, Gase was named the head coach of the Miami Dolphins.

**Rodney Holman** was born in Ypsilanti in 1960 and went on to be an all-state wrestler and football star at Ypsilanti High School before graduating in 1978. Holman accepted a scholarship to play football at Tulane University, where he set school records for receptions and receiving yards by a tight end. Holman was drafted by the Cincinnati Bengals in the third round

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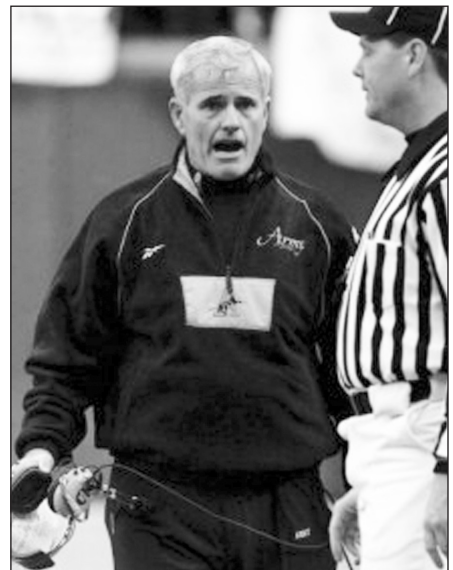
of the 1982 draft. Holman had an outstanding NFL career. Holman was a three-time Pro Bowl selection from 1988-1990, and his offensive production helped send the Bengals to Super Bowl XXIII. Holman signed with the Detroit Lions and played with them from 1993-1995. Holman ended his career with 365 receptions for 4,771 yards and 36 touchdowns. After his career ended, Holman served as an assistant coach for the New Orleans Saints from 1998-1999.

**Lowell Perry** was born in Ypsilanti in 1931, the son of a prominent Ypsilanti dentist. Perry attended the University of Michigan, where he played both offense and defense as an end (receiver) and defensive back. Perry was a standout player, and named as the best defensive back in 1951. Perry was drafted by the Pittsburgh Steelers in 1953, but an ROTC commitment to the Air Force led him to a different path. In 1956, when his military commitment was completed, he joined the Steelers. Perry was having a good year as an end through the first 6 games, as he had 14 catches for 334 yards and 2 touchdowns. Unfortunately, in that sixth game, Perry suffered a broken pelvis and dislocated hip. He was forced to retire without ever playing another game. Perry's story doesn't end there – in fact his post-football resume is far more impressive than his NFL career. In 1957, the Steelers hired Perry as the team's ends coach, making him the first African American to serve as an assistant coach in the modern NFL. While working for the Steelers, Perry attended Duquesne University law school, and then transferred to the Detroit College of Law, where he obtained his law degree in 1960. In 1966, Perry was hired as an analyst for CBS to broadcast Steelers games. He was the first African-American to broadcast an NFL game to a national audience. In 1963, Perry began a long career with Chrysler. In 1973 he was appointed the plant manager at the Eldon Avenue Axle Plant in Detroit, and thus became the first Afri-



In 1957, the Steelers hired Lowell Perry as the team's ends coach, making him the first African American to serve as an assistant coach in the modern NFL.

can American plant manager for a U.S. automobile company. In 1975, Perry was appointed by President Gerald Ford as the commissioner of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Perry later served as the director of the Michigan Department of Labor starting in 1990 for a total of six years. In 1996, Michigan Governor John Engler appointed Perry to the director of the Office of Urban Programs.



Bob Sutton's coaching highlight with Army was the 1996 season, where he led the team to a 10-2 record and an appearance in the Independence Bowl with a Top 25 finish.



**Bob Sutton** was born in Ypsilanti in 1951. Sutton attended Eastern Michigan, where he earned a physical education degree. In 1972, Sutton joined Bo Schembechler's staff at the University of Michigan as a graduate assistant. From there, he held various coaching positions at Syracuse, Western Michigan, Illinois, and North Carolina State. In 1983, Sutton became the defensive coordinator for Army, and in 1991 he was named the head coach. Sutton's coaching highlight with Army was the 1996 season, where he led the team to a 10-2 record and an appearance in the Independence Bowl with a Top 25 finish. Sutton was named the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Coach of the Year that season. In 2000, Sutton transitioned to the NFL where he was named the linebackers coach for the New York Jets. Sutton was promoted to the defensive coordinator position for the Jets in 2006. In 2013, Sutton was hired by the Kansas City Chiefs as their defensive coordinator, a position which he still holds.

#### BASKETBALL SPORTS FIGURES

**Fred Cofield** was born in Ypsilanti in 1962 and graduated from Ypsilanti High School in 1980. He excelled in multiple sports in high school, and was the quarterback of the football team. In the fall of 1979, Cofield led the Ypsilanti football team to a road win over Ann Arbor Pioneer by a score of 26 to 12. The quarterback of Pioneer that day was Jim Harbaugh. Cofield went on to play basketball at the University of Oregon before transferring to Eastern Michigan, where he continued a successful college career. Cofield was selected by the New York Knicks in the 4<sup>th</sup> round of the 1985 National Basketball Association (NBA) draft, and thus became the only Ypsilanti-born NBA player. Cofield had a short career as a point guard in the NBA, playing for the Knicks in the 1985-86 season, and the Chicago Bulls in the 1986-87 season, where he was teammates with Michael Jordan. After leaving the NBA, Cofield played for

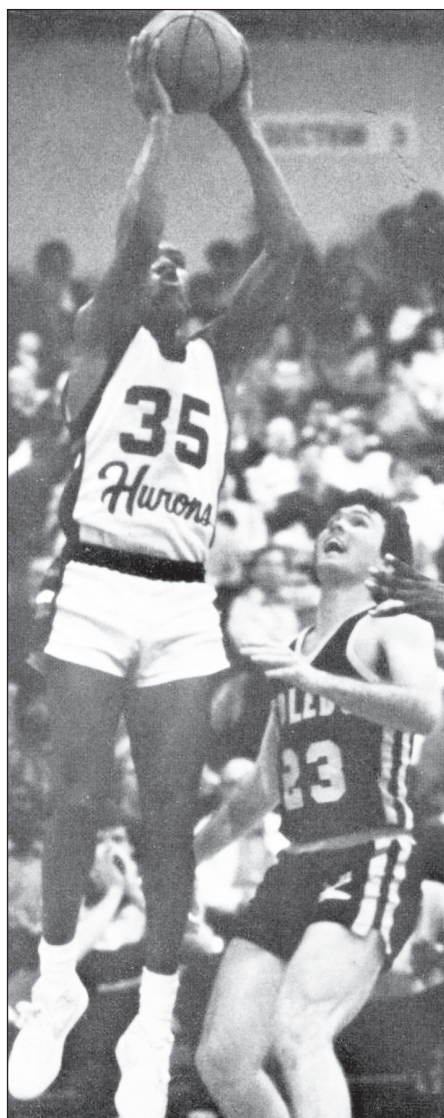
various minor league and international league teams before retiring in 1996.

#### HOCKEY SPORTS FIGURES

A search of professional hockey players from Ypsilanti showed a handful of minor league players, but no players from Ypsilanti have played in the National Hockey League (NHL).

#### TRACK SPORTS FIGURES

**Dennis Lewis** was born in 1959 and graduated from Ypsilanti High School in 1977. Lewis excelled in the high jump in track and field. Lewis attended Long Beach City College and Mich-



Fred Cofield had a short career as a point guard in the NBA, playing for the Knicks in the 1985-86 season, and the Chicago Bulls in the 1986-87 season, where he was teammates with Michael Jordan.

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igan State, and in 1985 set the American outdoor high jump record with a jump of 7'8" in 1985.

### MOTOR SPORTS FIGURES

**Connie, Doug, and Scott Kalitta** are prominent names in American National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) racing. Originally from Mt. Clemens and involved in the cargo airline industry, the Kalitta family moved to Ypsilanti and established Kalitta Motorsports, now with headquarters near the Ypsilanti Public Library off of Huron St. and I-94. Connie Kalitta, born in 1938, was the first driver in NHRA history to surpass 200 MPH in a sanctioned event, and he won 10 NHRA top fuel drag racing national events from 1967 to 1994. Connie Kalitta was inducted into the Motorsports Hall of Fame of America in 1992. Connie Kalitta owns Kalitta Air, a cargo airline based at Willow Run Airport. Connie Kalitta's son, Scott Kalitta, born in 1962, raced both funny cars and top fuel drag racing cars. Scott Kalitta had 18 career wins and was the NHRA Top Fuel champion in the 1994 and 1995 seasons. Scott Kalitta's career came to a tragic end when he was fatally injured in a race in 2008. Scott Kalitta's cousin, and Connie Kalitta's nephew, is Doug Kalitta, born in 1964. Doug Kalitta raced in the United States Auto Club (USAC) midget and sprint series, winning 21 USAC events from 1991-1997. Additionally, Doug Kalitta won the 1994 USAC sprint car category championship. In 1998, Doug Kalitta joined the NHRA top fuel drag racing series where he raced with his cousin and uncle. Doug Kalitta continues racing and has 35 total top fuel drag racing victories. Doug Kalitta owns Kalitta Charters airline with a main base at Willow Run Airport.

### EASTERN MICHIGAN SPORTS FIGURES

There are many athletes who attended Eastern Michigan who went on to become professional athletes. Some of the more prominent athletes from Eastern Michigan include John Banaszak (NFL), Charlie Batch (NFL), Brian Bixler (MLB), Earl Boykins (NBA), Clarence Chapman (NFL), Bryan Clutterbuck (MLB), Fred Cofield (NBA), Lionel Dalton (NFL), Derrick Dial (NBA), Reggie Garrett (NFL), Antonio Gates (NFL), George Gervin (NBA), Glenn Gulliver (MLB), Chris Hoiles (MLB), ), Jason Jones (NFL), T.J. Lang (NFL), Grant Long (NBA), Harvey Marlatt (NBA), John Martin (MLB), Kennedy McIntosh (NBA), Andy Mulumba (NFL), Bob Owchinko (MLB), Jereme Perry (NFL), Jim Pietrzak (NFL), Dave Pureifory (NFL), Ron Rice (NFL), Ron Rightnowar (MLB), Rob Rubick (NFL), L.J. Shelton (NFL), Pat Sheridan (MLB), Barry Stokes (NFL), Carl Thomas (NBA), Charles Thomas (NBA), and Bob Welch (MLB).

A short biography of some of Eastern Michigan's most interesting sports figures includes:

**George Allen** was born in Virginia in 1918, but his parents moved to St. Clair Shores when he was a child. Allen earned varsity letters in football, track, and basketball at Lake Shore High School. Allen attended Alma College and Marquette University prior to transferring to Eastern Michigan, where he received a B.S. degree in education. He also attended the University of Michigan where he earned an M.S. in Physical Education in 1947. Allen coached football at Morningside College and Whittier College prior to transitioning to the NFL, where he

was an assistant coach for the Los Angeles Rams and Chicago Bears. In 1966, Allen was given the job of head coach of the Rams, where he coached until 1970. In 1971, he was hired as the head coach by the Washington Redskins, where he remained until 1977. Allen's Redskins won the 1972 NFC Championship but lost in Super Bowl VII to the Miami Dolphins. Allen was named NFL coach of the year in 1967 and 1971. After leaving the Redskins, Allen coached for the Chicago Blitz and Arizona Wranglers of the United States Football League (USFL). Allen returned to college football and coached for one season at Long Beach State in 1990. Allen was inducted in the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2002. Allen's son George Allen Jr. served as Governor, U.S. House of Representatives, and U.S. Senator from Virginia.

**Charlie Batch** was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1974 and played quarterback at Eastern Michigan, where he was First-Team All-Mid-American Conference (MAC) in 1995. Batch was drafted by the Detroit Lions in the second round of the 1998 NFL draft and was their starting quarterback until 2001. In 2002 he signed with the Pittsburgh Steelers, and played mostly as a backup until he retired in 2012 after a long 15-year career. Batch won Super Bowl rings with the Steelers in Super Bowls XL and XLIII.

**Charles Beatty** was a Detroit native born in 1909 who went on to become a Michigan State Normal College (MSNC) track star and 400-meter hurdle world record holder in 1931 and 1932. Beatty missed the 1932 Olympics when he tripped on the last hurdle while leading his Olympic qualifying race. Beatty went on to make a huge impact in the field of education. Beatty was the first African-American school principal in Michigan at Ypsilanti's Perry Elementary School. Beatty was instrumental in creating the nationwide pilot "Head Start" program at Perry, which proved the benefits of providing preschool education for

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children. Beatty was admitted into the Eastern Michigan Athletic Hall of Fame in 1976 and the Michigan Education Hall of Fame in 1985.

**Earl Boykins** was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1976 and played basketball for Eastern Michigan from 1994-1998, where he was an All-MAC first-team honors in his junior and senior years. Boykins also led Eastern Michigan to MAC conference championships in 1996 and 1998. Boykins had a successful career playing for several NBA teams including the New Jersey Nets (1999), Cleveland Cavaliers (1999), Orlando Magic (1999), Cleveland Cavaliers (2000), Los Angeles Clippers (2000-2002), Golden State Warriors (2002-2003), Denver Nuggets (2003-2007), Milwaukee Bucks (2007-2008), Charlotte Bobcats (2008), Washington Wizards (2009-2010), Milwaukee Bucks (2010-2011), and the Houston Rockets (2012). Standing at 5'5", Boykins was the second shortest NBA player of all time other than Muggsy Bogues (5'3").

**Terry Collins** was born in Midland in 1949 and attended Eastern Michigan from 1968-1971 where he was the shortstop on the Eastern Michigan baseball team that won the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) national championship in 1971. Collins was drafted by the Pittsburgh Pirates, but never made it to the major leagues. In 1981, Collins began his coaching career in the minor leagues. In 1992, Collins was promoted to bullpen coach for the Pittsburgh Pirates. In 1993, Collins was hired as the manager of the Houston Astros, where he remained until 1996. From 1997-1999, Collins managed the Anaheim Angels, and in 2001, Collins was a coach for the Tampa Bay Devil Rays. Collins was out of baseball for several years until he took the job of managing the Orix Buffaloes in Japan from 2006-2008. In 2011, Collins returned to the major leagues as the manager of the New York Mets. In 2015, Collins was named the National League Manager of the Year.

**Hasely Crawford** was born in Trinidad and Tobago in 1950 and ran for Eastern Michigan under coach Bob Parks during his college years. Crawford qualified for the 100-meter dash final in the 1972 Olympics in Munich, but he pulled his hamstring in the race. Things went better at the 1976 Olympics in Montreal where Crawford won the gold medal in the 100 meters. The winner of the 100 meters is often called the world's fastest athlete, so that was quite an accomplishment. Crawford also qualified for the 200-meter final in the 1976 Olympics, but was forced to pull out mid-race with a groin injury. In the 1976 Olympics, Crawford was a teammate of gold medal decathlete Bruce Jenner.

**George Gervin** is a Detroit native born in 1952 who was known as the "The Iceman." Gervin played for Eastern Michigan from 1970-1972, then left early to join the Virginia Squires of the American Basketball Association (ABA) where he played with Julius "Dr. J" Erving. Gervin was traded to the San Antonio Spurs in 1974. In 1976, the ABA merged with the NBA and Gervin started his NBA career with the Spurs. Gervin was one of the greatest shooters in the history of the NBA, and led the league in scoring for three years in a row from 1978-1980, and again in 1982. Gervin was traded to the Chicago Bulls in 1985 where he played alongside Michael Jordan. Gervin spent the last several years of his career playing in the minor league Continental Basketball Association (CBA) and overseas in Italy and Spain before finally retiring after the 1989-1990 season. Gervin was named to the NBA Hall of Fame in 1996, and has been named to the NBA's 50 Greatest Players.

**Earl Jones** was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1964 before moving to Taylor. Jones ran track at Eastern Michigan and excelled in the 800-meter distance. At the 1984 United States Olympic Trials, Jones won the 800-meter distance with an American record time of 1:43.74. In the 1984 Los Ange-

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les Olympics, Jones received a bronze medal in the 800-meter distance. At Eastern Michigan, Jones won the 800 meters in the NCAA Outdoor Championship in 1984 and also in the 1985 NCAA Championships. In 1986, Jones ran a sub 4:00 minute mile, posting a time of 3:58.76.

**Hayes Jones** was born in Starkville, Mississippi in 1938 and ran track at Eastern Michigan in the 1950's. In 1959, while running for Eastern Michigan, Jones won the NCAA 120-yard and 220-yard hurdles. Jones also won the gold medal at the 1959 Pan American Games in the 110-meter hurdles. In 1960, Jones won the bronze medal at the 1960 Olympics in Rome. In 1960, Jones ran on a 4x100 meter relay team that set a world record. In 1964, Jones returned to the Olympics and won the gold medal in the 110 meter hurdles in Tokyo.

**Grant Long** was born in Wayne in 1966 and played basketball for Eastern Michigan from 1984-1988, where he was the MAC Player of the Year in 1988. Grant Long's uncle, John Long, and cousin, Terry Mills, also played for the NBA. Long was picked in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the 1988 NBA draft by the Miami Heat, where he played the power forward position. Long played in the league for 15 years with the Miami Heat, Atlanta Hawks, Detroit Pistons, Vancouver Grizzlies, Memphis Grizzlies, and the Boston Celtics. In 2014, Long joined Fox Sports Detroit as a Detroit Pistons analyst and sideline reporter.

**Norm Parker** was born in Hazel Park in 1941 and played football for Eastern Michigan in the 1960's before graduating in 1965 and embarking on a long and distinguished career in coaching. Parker coached at St. John's high school for 3 years prior to joining Eastern Michigan coaching staff in 1968. After his stint at Eastern Michigan, he was also a position coach for Wake Forest, Minnesota, Illinois, East Carolina, Michigan State, and Vanderbilt. Parker is best known for being the defensive coordinator of the Iowa

Hawkeyes from 1999 to 2011. Parker was the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) Assistant Coach of the Year in 2011.

**Rocky Roe** was born in Detroit in 1950 and played baseball at Eastern Michigan. Roe got his nickname as a child because he was a fan of baseball player Rocky Colavito. Roe was a member of the Eastern Michigan baseball team that won the 1970 NAIA national championship. After graduating, Roe became a major league umpire who worked in the American League from 1979-1999, and both the American and National Leagues from 2000 to 2001. Roe was an umpire in both the 1990 and 1999 World Series, as well as the 1984 and 1994 All-Star games.

**Jack Roush** was born in Covington, Kentucky in 1942 and grew up in Ohio. Roush earned a Bachelor's degree from Berea College, and received a Master's Degree in Scientific Mathematics from Eastern Michigan. Roush is the founder of Roush Fenway Racing, a NASCAR team headquartered in North Carolina. Roush Fenway Racing has won seven championships in NASCAR's top three series, including two Sprint Cup titles. His teams have won a total of 283 wins in all three NASCAR series. Roush Enterprises is headquartered in Livonia, and provides automobile engineering services. Roush was inducted into the International Motorsports Hall of Fame in 2006.

**Bob Welch** was born in Detroit in 1956 and played for Eastern Michigan and helped lead the team to the 1976 College World Series before losing to the Arizona Wildcats in the championship game. Welch had a long and distinguished MLB career, and played for the Los Angeles Dodgers from 1978-1987 and the Oakland Athletics from 1988-1994. In his 17-year career, Welch compiled a 211-146 record with a 3.47 ERA. Welch was selected to two All Star Games (1980 and 1990), and was a three-time World Series Champion (with the Dodgers in 1981, with the Athletics in 1989, and as a



pitching coach with the Arizona Diamondbacks in 2001). Welch won the American League Cy Young Award with the Oakland Athletics in 1990, when he won an incredible 27 games.

**(Internet References:** 1) Wikipedia.org – Biographies of various sports figures; 2) Baseball-almanac.

com – Comprehensive list of every professional baseball player, including birthplace; 3) Pro-football-reference.com – Comprehensive list of every professional football player, including birthplace; 4) Basketball-reference.com – Comprehensive list of every profes-

sional basketball player, including birthplace; 5) Hockeydb.com – Comprehensive list of every professional hockey player, including birthplace.)

(Robert Anscheutz grew up in Ypsilanti on River Street and is a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)

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