

Ypsilanti GLEANINGS

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



SUMMER 2020

YPSILANTI and the Governor's Stay at Home Order of 1832

BY JANICE ANSCHUETZ

Ypsilanti has long been known as a "rough and tumble" place but you may be surprised to learn that this reputation began in 1832 during a worldwide cholera pandemic and what became known in history books as Ypsilanti's "Cholera War."

Let me tell you the story with help from Samuel Bonaparte Pettibone, a pioneer citizen and witness, along with the books *"The History of Washtenaw County, 1881"* published by Chapman, and *"The History of Ypsilanti"* written by Harvey C. Colburn, as well as various other sources. 2020 is not the first time that Michigan has been in a "stay home, stay safe" order from the governor. There was a worldwide pandemic of cholera beginning in 1829 until 1837, and it spread quickly to the 5,000 residents of Detroit in 1832. Many died, including the much revered Father Gabriel Richard, who caught it while tending to the sick and dying.

"2020 is not the first time
that Michigan has been
in a "stay home,
stay safe" order from
the governor."



Territorial Governor George Bryan Porter, in an attempt to stop the spread of Cholera issued an order to hold Detroit under strict quarantine and mandated that no citizens were allowed in or out of that community.

Michigan was not yet a state, but the 2nd governor of the Territory of Michigan, George Bryan Porter, in an attempt to stop the spread of this deadly disease, issued an order to hold Detroit under strict quarantine and mandated that no citizens were allowed in or out of that community. This was supported by legislative action at the June, 1832 assembly that allowed communities to form local militias to ensure that no one entered or exited their jurisdiction. The good citizens of Ypsilanti quickly responded and a company was formed with Captain Josiah Burton their leader. The men were headquartered about three miles south of the village on the Great Sauck Trail, then known as The Chicago Road and what we know today as M-12 or Michigan Avenue, at Bowen's Tavern.

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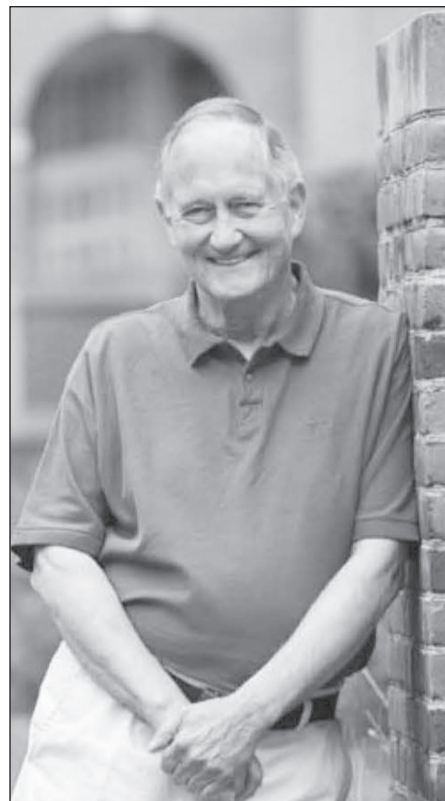
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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK BY BILL NICKELS

Our museum and archives closed starting in mid-March. With Michigan's "stay at home order," both were closed through the month of May and on into June. Plans to make these areas safe for visitors and staff are underway with the goal to reopen both, probably sometime in July.

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Ypsilanti native Joe Lawrence. Joe managed both commercial and residential properties in Ypsilanti and lovingly restored them all. His obituary read "Friends claimed his philosophy as a landlord was 'I dare you to rent from me,' but if accepted as a tenant you would be fortunate to live in a beautifully designed and well maintained space." His estate was bequeathed consistent with his life. With a generous donation, his trust created the "J. Don, Christine S, and Joseph D. Lawrence Memorial Museum Building Fund, the income from which shall be used for the preservation, maintenance and refurbishment of the current historic Italianate building at 220 N Huron and the carriage house therefor." Operating the museum and archives completely consumes our income from memberships, sponsorships, and donations. Our building and carriage house are both 160 years old. Money from the General Fund has not been left over for their major maintenance projects. Joe's Memorial Fund is a start towards fulfilling this need.

Recognizing that we are actually going through a very historic time, Archives Advisory Board member Kim Clarke initiated a plan to photographically record how the Ypsilanti area has



The generous donation left by the late Joseph D. Lawrence will be used for the "preservation, maintenance and refurbishment" of the historic buildings at 220 N. Huron street.

changed because of the pandemic. She formed a Facebook page titled "Ypsilanti Coronavirus Digital Archives" and invited our greater community to add photographs that picture how the coronavirus affected their lives. Readers of the Gleanings are invited to do the same. That was followed up with an invitation to everybody to supplement the photographs with written descriptions of how the pandemic has changed their lives. Written narratives can be sent electronically to yhs.archives@gmail.com or by mail to 220 North Huron, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Pho-



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tographers and writers are reminded of the importance of identifying the places and people written about and photographed.

Our new website should be live soon. Go to www.ypsihistory.org to check it out. Members will now be able to keep up with YHS events and new displays at the museum. People interested in our local history will again be able to cruise the some 15,000 photographs in the online photo archives and catch up with old issues of the Gleanings.

A new permanent display was added to the museum this spring. Ypsilantian Mary Baker collected over 200 ink wells. With her husband Jim, she

bought a nineteenth century wardrobe. Jim stripped the silvered mirror and installed shelves to display the ink wells in their home. Jim recently donated the ink wells and display case to the museum in memory of Mary. The display reminds viewers of a time when beauty was as important as function.

As we all move from staying at home, we need to minimize risks. I look forward to safely opening the museum for both staff and visitors and having our archives safely available for local research. Our Facebook page and website will have up-to-date information. Stay safe everybody.



Ypsilanti residents are urged to take pictures for the "Ypsilanti Coronavirus Digital Archives" initiated by Kim Clarke.



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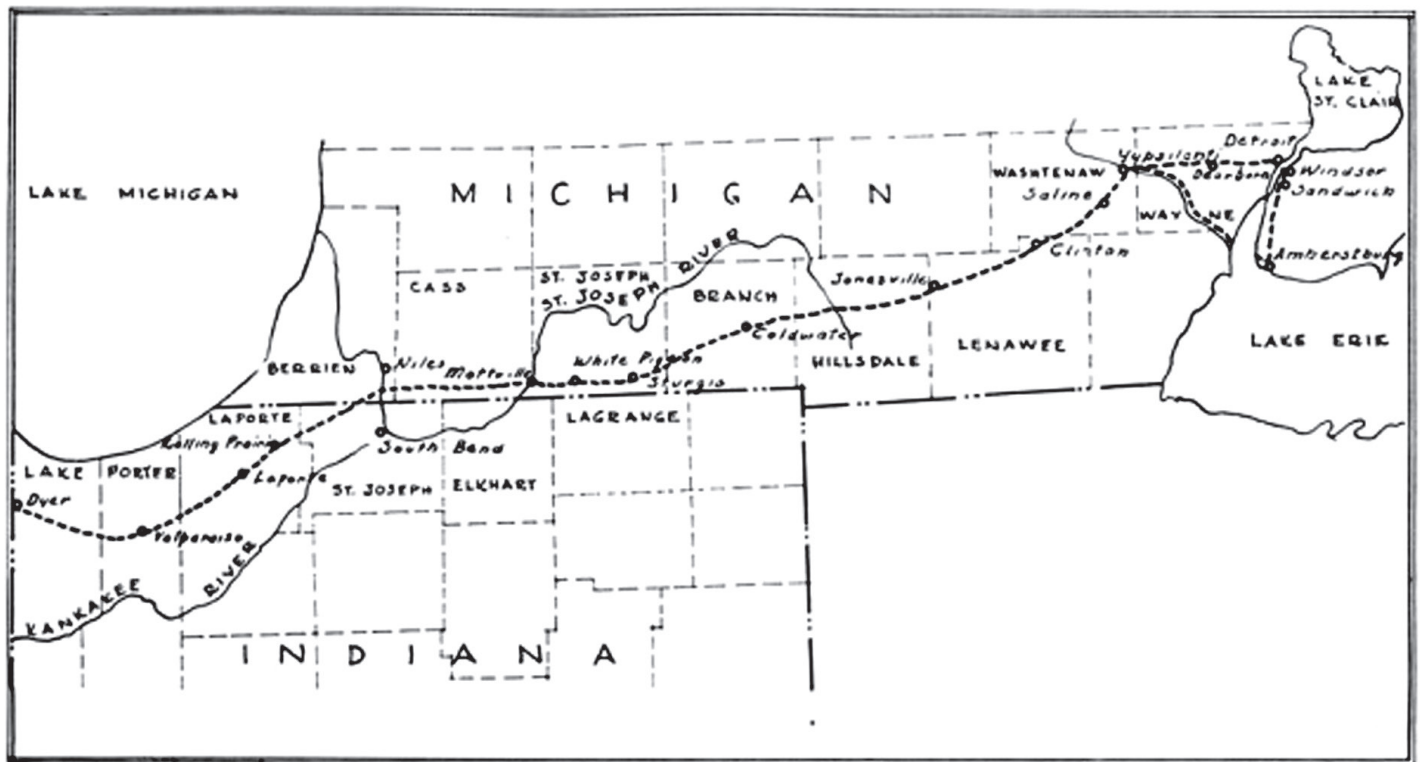
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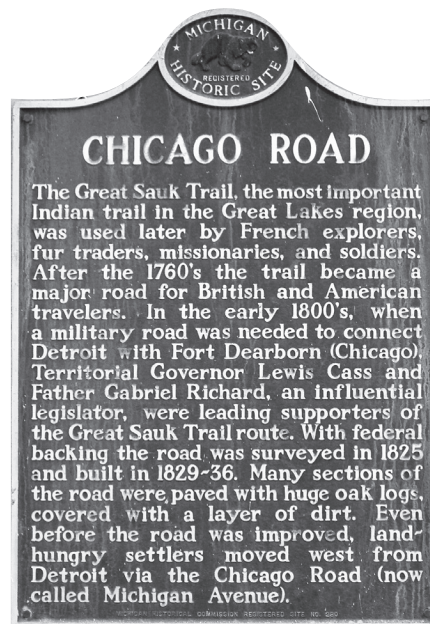


THE GREAT SAUK TRAIL IN INDIANA AND MICHIGAN

Ypsilanti quickly responded to the governor's order and a company was formed with Captain Josiah Burton their leader that headquartered about three miles south of the village on the Great Sauk Trail.

People in the small village of Ypsilanti, with a population of less than 3,000, had been alarmed when a few weeks earlier, refugees from Detroit tried to escape the disease by journeying out of the city and coming to Ypsilanti, where they soon sickened and died. What was not known at that time is that cholera is not spread person to person, but is an infection of the small intestine caused by strains of the bacterium, *vibrio cholerae*, and is spread by ingesting contaminated water or food. It could be spread when one was tending the sick and washing soiled bedding in a stream or water supply, or from emptying a chamber pot. Those wastes, combined with the usual animal excrement on roads, polluted streams, shallow wells, and privies, encouraged the rampant spread of this disease.

A person could die within a day with symptoms of severe diarrhea, vomiting, stomach cramps and pain, and electrolytic imbalance. An infected



In 1832 the Great Sauk Trail was known as The Chicago Road and today as M-12 or Michigan Avenue.

person would soon have a blue complexion, and become wrinkled with sunken eyes. Treatment at the time consisted of a medication mainly com-

posed of a mercury-based substance, heating small cups and placing them on the skin to cause blistering, and bleeding the patient through small cuts which were thought to rid the body of the poisons. If one did not die of cholera, the person could die of the treatment, or if the person did not die, it could lead to suffering the effects of lifelong mercury poisoning.

Captain Burton and his men were very serious about the business of keeping cholera out of Ypsilanti and their vigilance was soon tested when they stopped a stage coach from Detroit traveling with passengers and mail. The driver was asked to turn around, but he was not convinced of the seriousness of the situation and resented the interference. Instead of turning back, he whipped his team into a gallop to go through the road block. In response, Captain Burton ordered his men to fire at the stage coach and the lead horse was shot and fell into the dirt road causing the carriage to

stop again. Undaunted, the determined driver inspected the horse, found that the bullet had hit its skull and bounced off, helped it to its feet and fled towards Ypsilanti while the militia men stood watching. Perhaps they thought twice about interfering with the delivery of United States mail which was, and still is a federal offense. This incident was reported to the Post Master General in Washington, D. C. and an inquiry was initiated, but nothing came

of it. However, news traveled fast and Ypsilanti soon gained the reputation as a place that travelers should avoid at all costs if they valued their safety.

Not long after this, along came Stevens T. Mason, then Secretary to the territorial governor Porter. He was on territory business and headed to the town of St. Joseph. Having been warned to stay clear of the militia in Ypsilanti, he was advised to stop at the farm of Samuel Bonaparte Pettibone, just east of Bowen's Tavern, in order to hire the man to lead him safely around Ypsilanti. Pettibone, in *"The History of Washtenaw County 1881,"* gives us an interesting first hand narrative about this event. He tells us that during the quarantine, he made extra money by leading travelers around the village of Ypsilanti and then back onto the Chicago Road. Pettibone was able to do this and had Mason safely back on the Chicago Road past the village. Mason, then only 19 years old, asked Pettibone where he could stop and have some refreshment before continuing his journey. Pettibone told him that he would have to travel five miles further to a tavern. Mason looked



Stevens T. Mason, then Secretary to the territorial governor Porter, was arrested by the zealous vigilantes of Ypsilanti. He later became the first governor of the newly formed state of Michigan in 1834.

back at Ypsilanti, which was only a half mile away, and ordered his carriage to be turned around. He did not think that anyone traveling from the west would be stopped since the intent of the governor's order had been to prohibit anyone traveling from Detroit, which is east of Ypsilanti, to spread cholera.

As many people do to this day, Mason had underestimated citizens of Ypsilanti. He was quickly arrested by zealous vigilantes. The sheriff was notified, and his case was brought to magistrates. Eventually Mason was allowed to go about his journey, but within days, Governor Porter fired the sheriff, magistrates, and militant militia and replaced them all with other men. As they do today, people in Ypsilanti spoke up in protest of Porter's actions. Public meetings were held in opposition and steamy editorials were published in newspapers, but Porter's new appointees continued about their business and Stevens T. Mason went on to become the first governor of the newly formed state of Michigan in 1834. He is known as *"the boy governor"* because he was only 22 years old when elected.

As they say, history often repeats itself and we can all relate to this incredible story. I hope that you enjoyed reading about the governor's *"stay at home"* order of 1832 and learning about how Ypsilanti first earned its *"rough and tumble"* reputation.

(Janice Anschuetz is a local historian and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)

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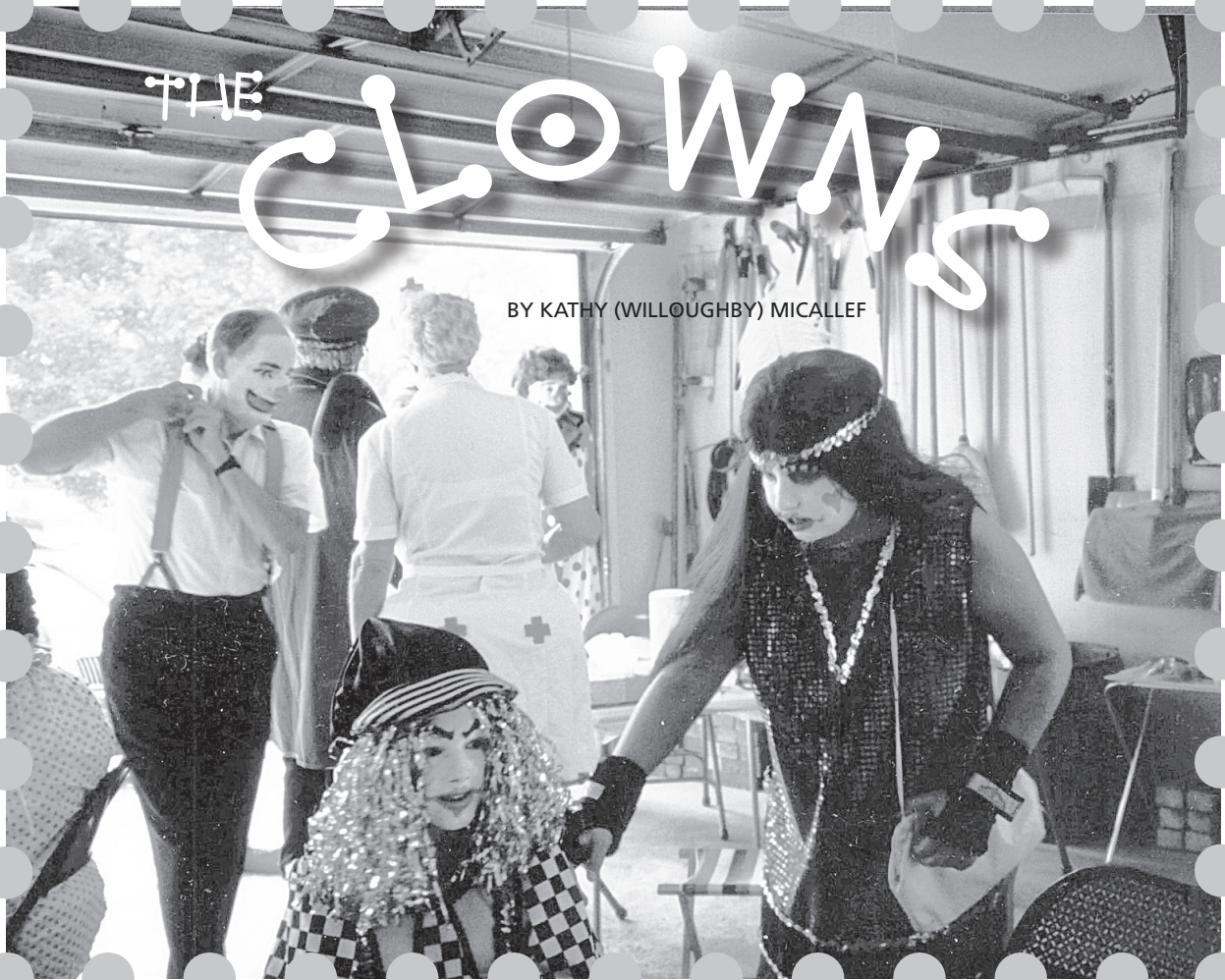
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THE CLOWNS

BY KATHY (WILLOUGHBY) MICALLEF

On parade days locals from the College Heights neighborhood would gather in someone's garage to prepare for the parade.

Do you like parades? What comes to mind when you think about parades? How about parades in Ypsilanti? Maybe you think of fine marching bands, vintage vehicles, boisterous crowds? Or maybe....just maybe....you remember a group of Ypsilantians who dressed up as silly clowns year after year? Clowns who made us laugh out loud!

I am the daughter of one of those clowns, and still to this day, I chuckle when thinking of our neighborhood dads who took clowning around quite seriously!

Possibly you remember one of these clowns? Maybe you had a favorite clown you would hope to see each year in the annual Ypsilanti 4th of the July, or Heritage Festival Parade?

In the early morning hours before any parade began, a group of locals would gather in each other's garages in the College Heights neighborhood. One year in Carl Elliott's garage, the next year in Tom Willoughby's, in John Salcau's or then in Herb Miller's or Don Buckeye's garage. Whoever opened

their garage for dressing up would have coffee and maybe even a few donuts on hand and later, maybe even a few libations!

Clown wife, Barb Miller, remembers how parade days were a big deal. The family didn't do anything else except parade prep, which included setting up the appointed garage with card tables, chairs and picnic tables for make-up, gathering lots of baby oil, paper towels and tissues, and organizing costumes.

Whenever the neighborhood friends decided to dress, these businessmen, shop owners, educators, builders, and quite well-respected gentlemen of Ypsilanti, got busy applying thick, sticky, white grease-paint make-up on their faces. Then they would apply false eyelashes, lipstick, and, or lines for age. Next they would get busy donning wigs, shawls, spats, uniforms, etc., as they dressed up in their various character costumes.

My mom, Lois Willoughby, loaded up these costumed clowns into the back of her station wagon, with the seats all folded down, and the clowns squished inside. Then she drove them to the beginning of the parade route. Later they would gather for a ride home.

My dad, Tom Willoughby, was the voluptuous nurse ~ you know the one with a very curvaceous figure, a nurse's cap perched on his blonde wig, false eyelashes, and a huge syringe! He would use his gigantic shot needle to pretend he was going to give you a massive shot!!

Tom's close friend since kindergarten, Herb Miller, was the dapper gentleman, who dressed in an old-fashioned morning suit, and who walked an invisible dog down the street. This invisible dog, named Sebastian, looked like he was yanking on his leash. You could hear Sebastian quietly bark and occasionally see him piddle, maybe even on your shoes.

Herb had help with getting Sebastian to piddle on people! His friend and neighbor, Walt Gessert, a former physics professor at EMU, invented a way for Herb to string a thin plastic tube down his sleeve and into the leash. Herb had a hidden flask of water in his suitcoat, and could direct water out the end of the leash when he so desired. Occasionally Herb would need more water so he had friends along the parade route ready to supply him with more water as needed. One water refill station was John Barr's office, another one was at the Freeman Bunting building, and Betty Campbell downtown Ypsi had water ready also.

Carl Elliott was the sad, slow moving WWI Vet who carried, half dragged, a real,



loaded rifle, and he would occasionally shoot this rifle up into the air while walking the parade route. That sure got people's attention! He also encouraged many of the neighbors to join this motley crew. I guess he had the power of persuasion!!!

Bob Woodside, dressed as an old washerwoman, pretended to mop the streets behind the horses, as if cleaning up the mess. He might lift his mop up and put it near your face! Of course screams ensued, then he would smile shyly and wink!

Another old lady clown was John Salcau, dressed as Granny Fricket. She might come up to you along the parade route looking for a hug or kiss!

David Slough, the neighbor who lived between Carl Elliott and our house, probably felt pressure from both sides of the fence to join the clown antics! He was a happy policeman, with orange red hair, who carried a soft foam stick! He might blow his whistle and pull an unsuspecting friend from the crowd to chase and bop on the head!

Each of the clowns created

top photo

Tom Willoughby dressed up as the voluptuous nurse with a very curvaceous figure.

middle photo

Herb Miller was the dapper gentleman who dressed in an old-fashioned morning suit and walked an invisible dog named Sebastian down the street.

bottom photo

Carl Elliott dressed up as a slow moving WWI Vet who carried a real, loaded rifle and would occasionally shoot this rifle up into the air while walking the parade route.



The parade routes were always crowded with people.



The dads of College Heights gather for a photo opportunity. From left to right: Carl Elliott leans on Tom Willoughby, Mr. Woodside, David Slough, and an unknown neighbor clown.

his or her own silly scenario to act out along the parade route. It got better and better each year!

The clowns would recognize various friends, family members, and acquaintances, along the parade route and pull them out into the street to play. Many Ypsilantians got into the fun by acting goofy with the clowns until the next parade unit arrived. *I'm not sure who had more fun, the clowns, or the parade attendees!!*

Once the clowns arrived home from a 1-2 mile walk/jaunt along the parade route, they would soak tissues with baby oil to remove the grease paint from their faces. Oftentimes, a can of Hamm's beer helped with the transition from clown to regular old Dad and removal of make-up! My brothers remembered the type of beer...I wonder why?

The neighborhood kids saw the fun their dads were having and wanted to get in on the hilarity! Jill Salcau Arcure dressed in a red dress that her mom wore in the parade one time. My sister remembers dressing up several times, and one year I did too! My costume was just odds and ends from the costume trunk.

Ava Elliott stored the costumes in her basement under the steps. Her daughter, Jane Elliott Delleman, remembers being afraid to go up and down the basement stairs because of the costumes hanging in the closet!

Writing this article, and gathering photos about the Ypsilanti clown group has been so much fun! I have met with people, emailed and texted others, talked by phone, and laughed a whole lot too!

I think I got a sense of perhaps why these gentlemen dressed up as clowns, parade after parade even though it was often hot sticky, and tedious to dress up with full make-up, wigs, and funny shoes! *Seeing people laugh and being the instigator of laughter is a great feeling!*

Thanks for sharing your clown memories and photos: Jane Elliott –

Carl Elliott's daughter; Mimi Willoughby Knox, Chuck Willoughby, and David Willoughby – Tom Willoughby's children; Barb Miller – Herb Miller's wife; Jane Salcau, Jill Salcau Arcure – John Salcau's wife and daughter; and Chris Slough Spellman – David Slough's daughter.

Most of all, thanks for the fun and laughter we shared!!!

By Kathy (Willoughby) Micallef is one of many in the College Heights neighborhood of Ypsilanti that regularly participated in the Ypsilanti parades.



Reminiscing with clown wives many years later. Seated in the chair is Jane Salcau. Standing behind from left to right is Jill (Salcau) Arcure, Kathy (Willoughby) Micallef, and Barb Miller.

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ENJOY A 4TH OF JULY PARADE LIKE NO OTHER

BY JANICE ANSCHUETZ

Parades, picnics, fireworks and other traditional activities to celebrate the birth of our nation are cancelled this 4th of July, due to the corona virus. The year 2020 will be the first one in 97 years that we will not be able to enjoy a 4th of July parade. So, I thought that I would take you on a virtual parade and 4th of July the likes of which Ypsilanti is yet to match. You will have to use your imagination though, since videos were not available 146 years ago. I will share with you a description of this joyful day which is written about in the book *"History of Washtenaw County, Michigan"* published as a joint effort of the Ypsilanti Pioneer Society and Charles C. Chapman and Company in 1881. If you wish, you can read this book in its entirety, over 1000 pages, on Google Books, which also has a link allowing you to purchase a reproduced copy.

https://books.google.com/books/about/History_of_Washtenaw_County_Michigan.html?id=2z0XAQAAMAAJ

Now, put your imagination to work and enjoy this most spectacular parade and memorable day. First of all, pretend that you are one of the thousands of people fortunate enough to celebrate the 4th of July in Ypsilanti on July 4, 1874. Besides honoring the formation of our country, you will be joining those who came by train, wagon, horseback or foot to gather here and rejoice in the town of Ypsilanti's 50th birthday. On that special day it was estimated that 30,000 people were in Ypsilanti which was then a village of less than 7,000 residents. You would have to plan ahead if you were coming from out of town.

Chapman writes *"The train on the railroads were all loaded to their utmost capacity. The mail train on the Michigan Central road had to be increased by the addition of an extra car at Detroit, and after leaving the Junction hundreds of people were left at every station, until reaching Ypsilanti, who were unable to get on board. A monster train of 19 cars came in from Detroit as an extra, bringing the Detroit Cadets, the National Guards and 2,000 or more people from along the line of the road. A special train came in on the Detroit, Indiana and Hillsdale road, bringing a trail of 21 cars, all loaded to their fullest capacity. On the arrival of the extra train from Detroit at Ypsilanti, a telegram was received from Ann Arbor announcing that the regular train could not bring the people. The Detroit train's engine with eight coaches was then sent down to Ann Arbor and returned with all the coaches loaded."* Besides the people who arrived by railroad, thousands of farmers and out of town visitors came in wagons or carriages, ox cart, riding horses, or on foot.

All of the hotels and boarding houses were filled beyond capacity and many

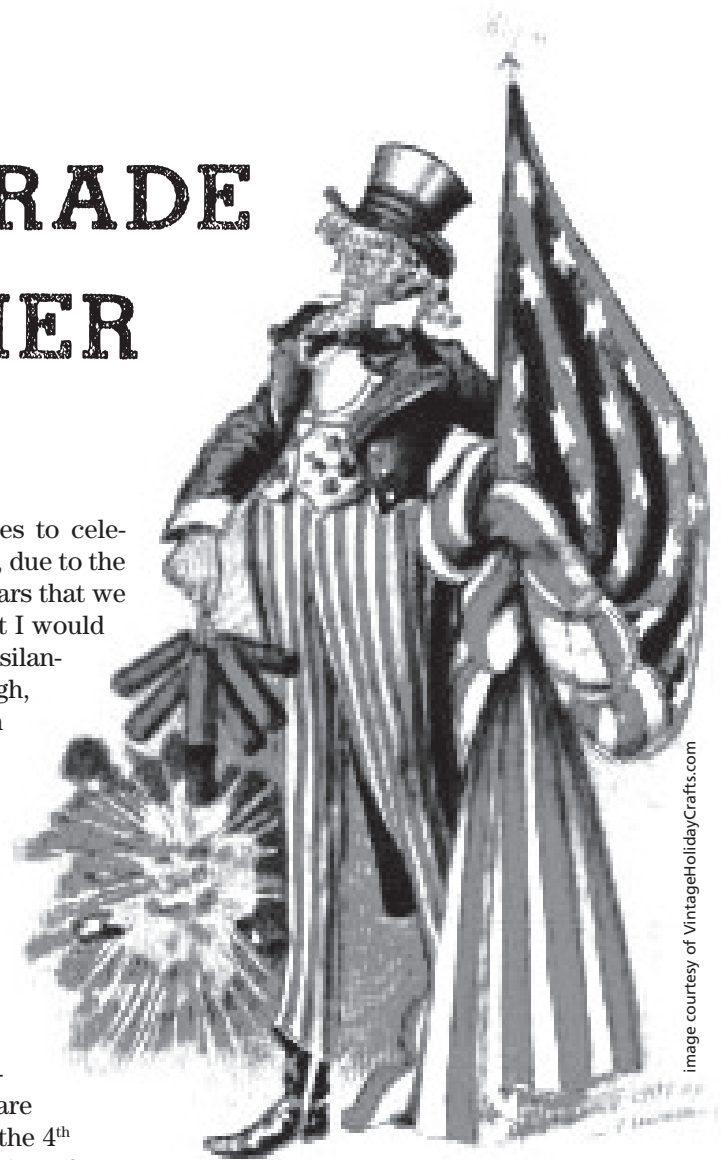
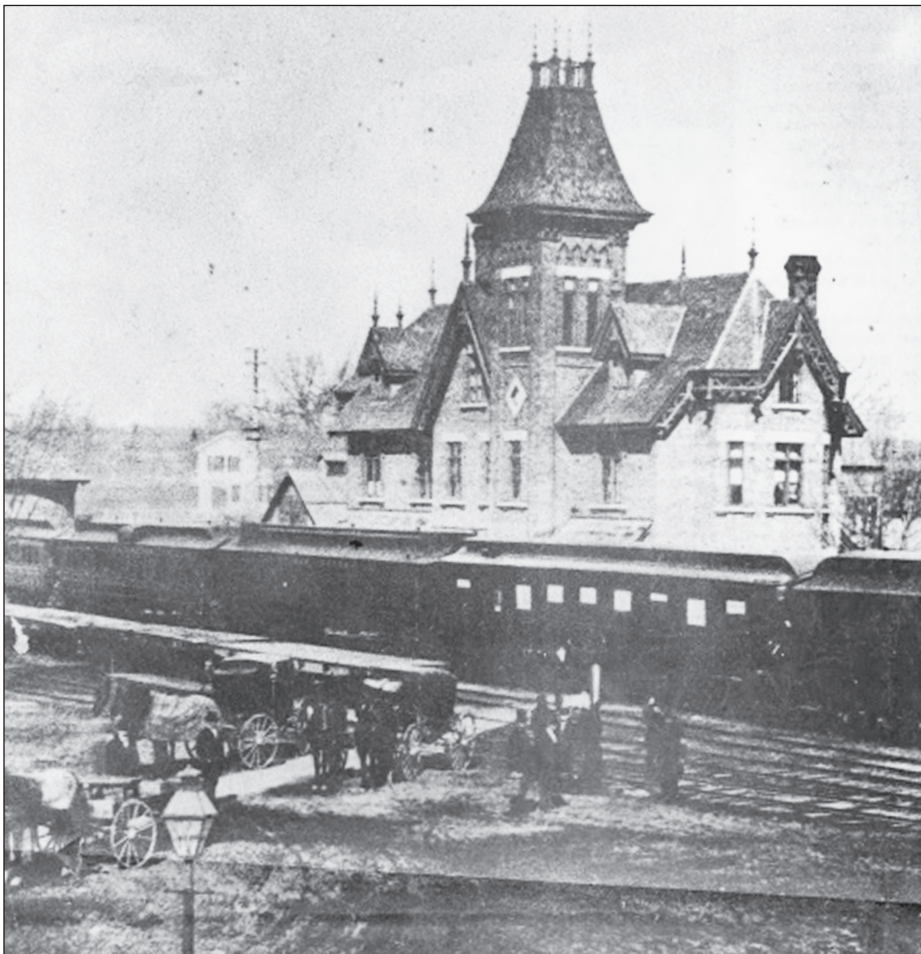


image courtesy of VintageHolidayCrafts.com

houses were bursting at the seams with family and friends who came to town to be part of this spectacle. Now imagine the parade beginning on Cross Street with F. P. Borgardus as Chief Marshal. To begin with, the Ypsilanti Light Guard Police Force kept the dirt roads and dusty streets along the way cleared and the crowds orderly. Then came Crosett's Constatine Band. Following was the Detroit National Guard of about 90 men. 175 Detroit Cadets preceded Company G, of Michigan State troops, Ann Arbor, carrying about 60 rifles and *"the Ypsilanti Light Guard"* in about the same numbers. The first part of the parade was also made up of various officials and the Martial Band. The Detroit Cadets were next along with The Pelouze Corps, Company B Michigan State Troops from Ann Arbor, the Governor of Michigan and his staff, orators of the day, and members of the press – who all rode



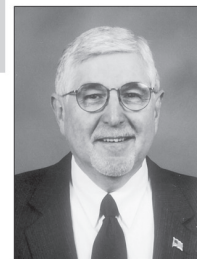
The Ypsilanti train depot was a busy place with hundreds of people coming to the spectacle by packed train cars.

in carriages. Then came the Ypsilanti Fire Department along with their horse drawn apparatus, various bands and societies, numerous citizens and visitors in carriages, and others following on foot and horseback traveled behind on the dusty roads. *"The bulk of the procession was composed of carriages and wagons, and especially of the latter, carrying farmers from the adjoining townships with wives and families."* In perhaps a bitter note, the Pioneer Society is mentioned. *"The pioneers occupied the place in the procession assigned them. They numbered some 50 persons, consisting entirely of old men from 60 to 85 years of age. It would seem that they, of all others, should have been furnished with carriages, but they had been assigned a place on foot, and marched sturdily the entire line of march."*

On this hot and sunny day *"The streets and many of the dwelling houses along the line of march were handsomely decorated with flags, flowers and evergreens. Across Cross Street, just west of the Michigan Central railroad track, a grand arch was stretched, composed of flowers and evergreens, the top surmounted by the American flag. Suspended from the top of the arch was a female figure representing the Goddess of Liberty, draped with the Stars and Stripes, and wearing the cap of Liberty. Across the lower segment of the arch was stretched a banner with the inscription "1824-1874 Welcome"."*

Across Congress Street, which we now call Michigan Avenue, was another large banner with this slogan *"Yipsylanty, Washtenak 1824-*

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Governor Bagley and other dignitaries traveled to Ypsilanti for its 50th birthday and 4th of July celebration in 1874.



Roccena Norris was honored at the 4th of July celebration when she was a spunky 80 year old pioneer resident.

1874. *Hard to spell but can't be beat.*" Still another large banner could be seen at Congress and Summit Street bearing the motto *"The day we celebrate, 1824-1874"*.

The procession stopped at the Ypsilanti Fair Grounds, which we now know as Recreation Park. Thousands of people were waiting for the long parade and hot and dusty participants at the speaker's stand which had been erected in a shady spot in a grove of trees. On the southern part of the fair grounds, a large stand had been built for various speakers and important people. S. M. Cutcheon, Medal of Honor winner from the Civil War, served as president of the occasion, and mayors along with supervisors of surrounding townships in the county served as honorary vice presidents.

The ceremonies began with music by the Constantine cornet band and then a prayer given by Reverend John D. Pierce who was known throughout the United States as the *"Father of the University"* and was one of the Washtenaw County Pioneers. Professor Frederick Pease led a song entitled *"Hand in Hand"* sung by a choir from Ypsilanti. L.D. Norris, who came to Ypsilanti from New York in 1824 as a small boy, and also a Washtenaw County Pioneer, delivered the major address. The entirety can be found on page 521 of the *"History of Washtenaw County, Michigan"* by Chapman. Norris' mother, Roccena Norris, was recognized and stepped forward where she was loudly cheered, and described as being *"eighty years old but remarkably lively for a woman her age."* Mr. Norris had

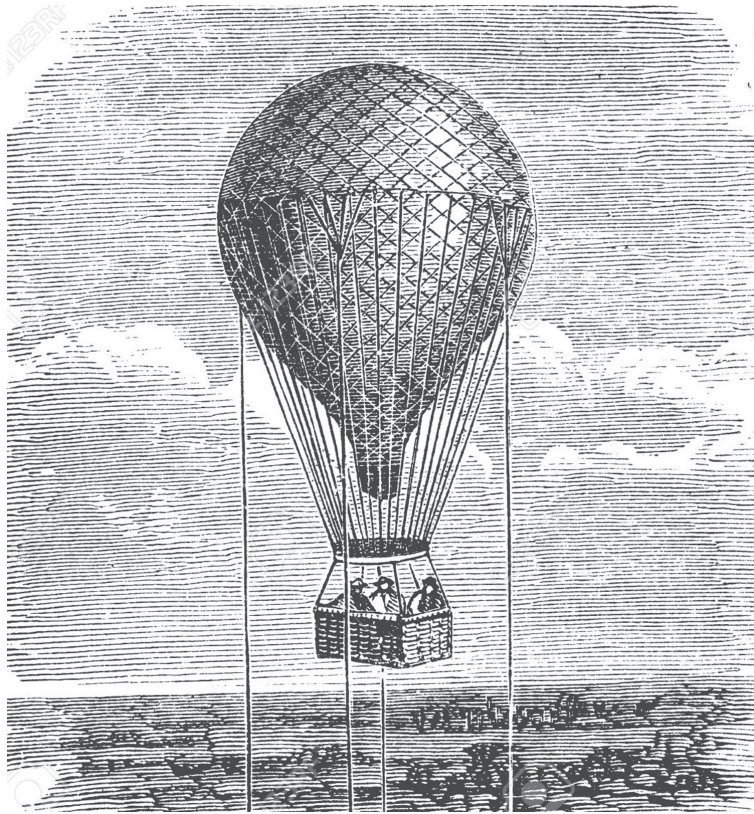
to cut short his narration due to the wind, but was able to provide a pioneer history of Ypsilanti. His whole speech can be read in the Chapman book. The choir then sang *"The Star Spangled Banner,"* followed by the audience joining in singing *"America,"* and then finally *"Auld Lang Syne."*

Next came time for dinner with quilts spread over the grass, baskets open and families and friends gathering to share delicious food and fond memories. Various societies and honored guests ate under tents. After eating their picnic lunch, many went back to their homes, hotels, or boarding houses, but returned in time to enjoy a band concert and a review of the various troops which had been in the parade by Governor Bagley of Michigan. This was held at the adjoining horse race track.

Festivities are not over yet, so imagine what is to come! Around 6 o'clock, *"the Ypsilanti Fire Department was reviewed. The company, with new uniform, and the steamer, Clark Cornwell, appropriately trimmed presented a very attractive appearance."* By evening, even more people arrived at the crowded fair grounds in order to see the fireworks! First, if you can envision it, a large hot air balloon ascended, sending down an assortment of colored flairs, and once it disappeared into the



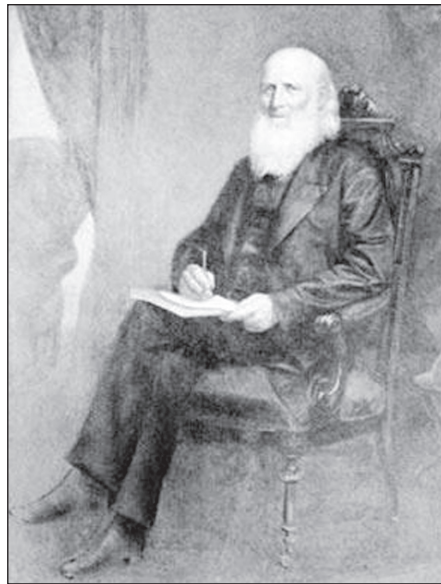
Around 6 o'clock the Ypsilanti Fire Department was reviewed.



A hot air balloon ascended in the evening prior to the fireworks.

sky, the show began. *"The fireworks were set off by experts from Detroit, thereby insuring greater safety. In addition to the proverbial rocks (sic) and candles several pieces had been manufactured expressly for the occasion. Prominently among them there was 'Washtenaw 1824-1874' and 'Welcome to Ypsilanti'. George Washington on horseback was also exhibited and several Chinese flower pots. The exercises closed with a beautiful 'Good Night' and the audience slowly dispersed for their respective homes. The celebration was in every sense a success. The arrangements of the various committees and officers were perfect and were carried out with promptness exactly according to the programme (sic). Not an accident occurred during the day to mar the festivities, and all went home in the best of humor"*.

And now, dear reader, I hope that you have enjoyed using your imagination to experience a 4th of July parade and



Dr. John D. Pierce, considered the father of education in Michigan gave a speech.

celebration in Ypsilanti like no other before and none since.

(Janice Anschuetz is a local historian and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)



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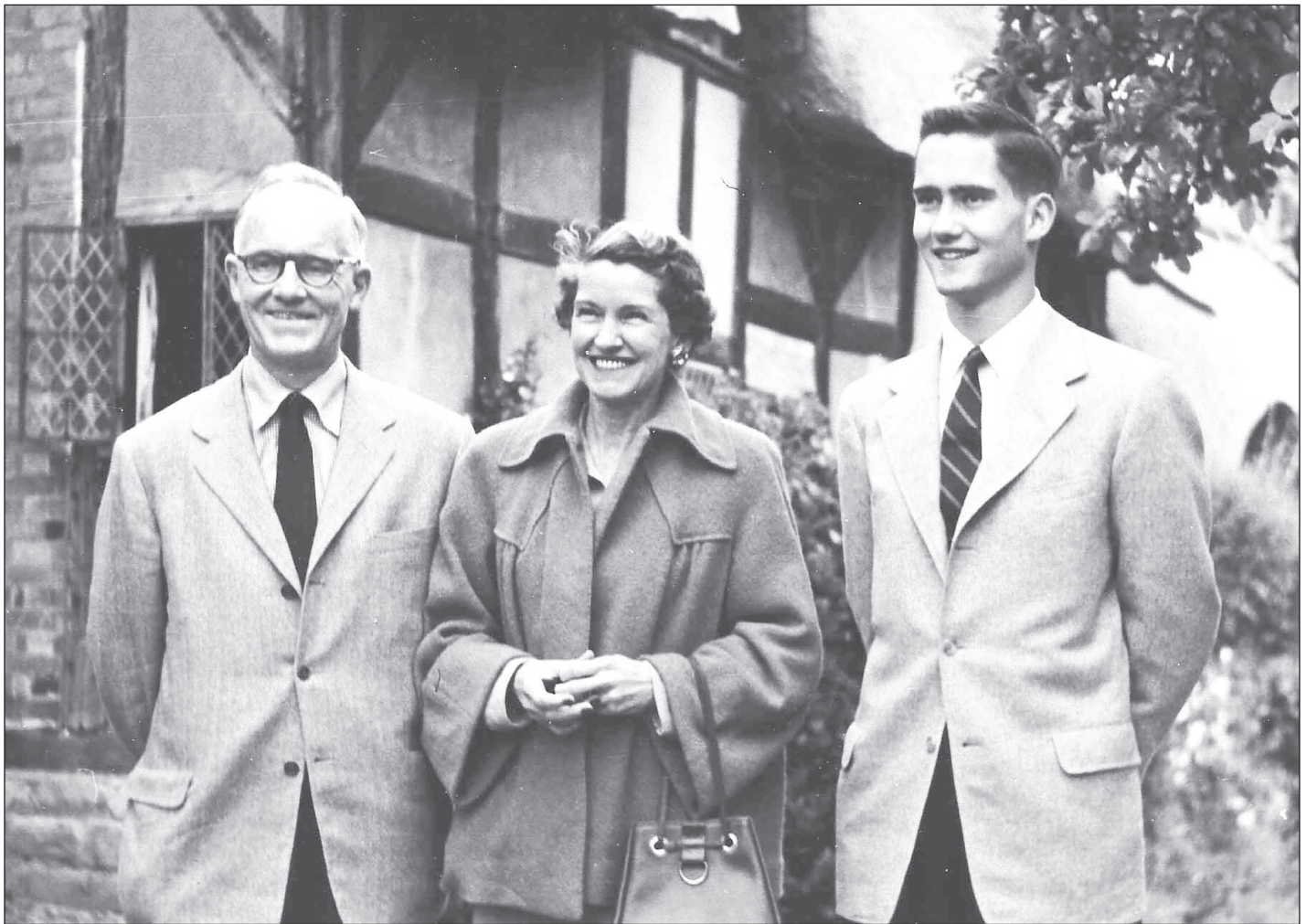
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Joe's Parents, J. Don and Christine Lawrence, and Joe Lawrence.

Following Joe: “A Reminiscence”

BY PEG PORTER

(Editor's Note: Joe Lawrence passed away on March 23, 2020. His family had deep roots in Ypsilanti and Joe was responsible for the preservation of several historic homes in the city.)

In later life, Joe observed he was a fourth generation Ypsilantian and the last of his line. Joe's ancestry in North America began in Colonial New England. Members of the Lawrence family began the move west as early as the 1830's. Joe's great great grandfather, David Whitney Lawrence was born in New York in 1811 and along with other members of his extended family migrated to Michigan. David was a blacksmith who lived in York Township. He died in Ypsilanti in 1888. His son, James Elliot, was the first of Joe's line to both be born and die in Ypsilanti (1847 to 1886). James was in the wholesale grocery business.

James fathered four children. His oldest, Joseph Don born in 1876, was Joe's grandfather. His younger son, James Edmund or “Ed,” was a legendary University of Michigan football player under Fielding Yost. Joseph Don had one son, Joe's father, who was known as J. Don who became

a prominent local attorney, banker, delegate to Michigan's Constitutional Convention (Con-Con) and a regent of Eastern Michigan University.

J. Don married Christine Marie Schultz in 1930. Their only child, Joseph D, was born in Ypsilanti in 1936. Joe's deep roots in Ypsilanti would shape the way he lived his life, his devotion to family and to his hometown.

The Lawrences lived in a brick Tudor on Sherman during Joe's childhood. The Porter home, a white frame Colonial, was just around the corner on Owendale. Their side yard blended with our front yard. There weren't many children in the neighborhood at that time. I was an only child until age six. I longed for a big brother. Joe was an only child as well. Although I was five years younger, I “adopted” him. He could have ignored his little neighbor but he didn't. He was kind and friendly. One of my earliest memories is of the day I decided to follow him up Sherman. He was riding his bike and I was on my tricycle. I am sure he had no idea I was following him. There was a bend in the sidewalk and Joe disappeared. I finally reached Wallace. I looked

all around. No Joe. For some reason I decided to break a cardinal rule: I crossed the street. I rode south on Wallace past the farmhouse and barn until I came to Grant. This was unfamiliar territory. A nice grandmotherly woman looked out her window and saw a forlorn little girl. She came out, asked if she could help, and then invited me into her house and gave me a cold drink. Fortunately I knew my telephone number and I was soon on my way home.

There was a second incident involving a bicycle that ended more favorably. By then I was about seven and Joe was twelve. I had just received my first bicycle and was anxious to show it to Joe. I wheeled it around the corner. Joe admired the new bike and wanted to see me riding. I probably replied I was still learning. He offered to help. I remember him holding the bike steady while I got on, then I began to pedal with Joe holding onto the back of the seat and running along beside me. At the right time he let go and I was riding on my own. What a sense



Young Joe Lawrence.

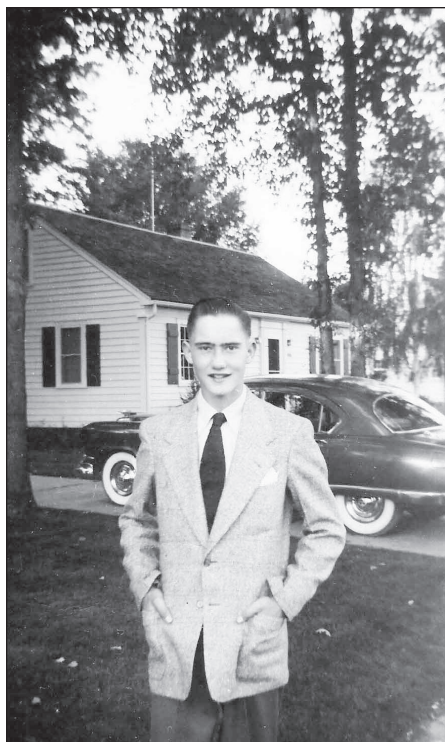
of accomplishment to share with my "big brother."

Joe spent his freshman year at Ypsilanti High School. The following year he was enrolled at Deerfield Academy, a preparatory school in Massachusetts. The headmaster at the time, Frank Boyden, made a strong impression on Joe. He would later remark, "*he had preserved in that school all the traditional, old, Yankee New England educational virtues.*" All the students, for example, had kitchen duty. Joe went on to observe that the common belief that private school students "*are a bunch of elite snobs*" was simply not true. He pointed to classmate Steven Rockefeller as "*an outstanding guy and as common as an old shoe.*"

The prep school experience gave Joe a renewed appreciation for Ypsilanti and his parents. The solid Midwestern values and consistency of his parenting provided him with a sense of stability that would provide the basis for the man he would become.

He spent his college years at Princeton majoring in history. Following graduation, he was awarded a Rotary Foundation Fellowship for Understanding which he used to attend Oxford. He completed his formal education with a law degree from the University of Michigan.

In 1957 the Lawrence family left the house on Sherman and moved to 212 S. Huron, a beautiful old home in need of renovation. Joe was involved in the



Joe Lawrence and the family car on Sherman Street in Ypsilanti.

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David W. Lawrence, Joe's great great grandfather, migrated to Michigan from New York in the 1830's.



Joe's grandfather, J.D. Lawrence, as a young man

restoration. This led to a lifelong interest in the preservation of old homes. In 1962 he joined his father's law practice. That lasted two years. He appreciated law but he also quickly discovered that is was not what he wanted to do for the rest of his life. He described this decision as *"the first of my eclectic nonconformities."* Instead of law, he became a partner in a Chevrolet dealership.

As he was completing an application for his own dealership, Joe was contacted by Al Brown former Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at EMU. Brown had been installed as President of the State University of New York (SUNY) at Brockport. He wanted an attorney who was *"more interested in solving problems rather than practicing law."* Joe accepted the offer and headed to the Finger Lakes Region. He spent twelve years there as counsel as well as *"chief cook and bottlewasher."* He also was the broadcast voice of the Golden Eagles hockey team where he developed close friendships with hockey coaches Don Murray and Mike Keenan. Following his father's death, he returned to Ypsilanti to care for his mother. He maintained close ties with the Brown family in Chautauqua, New York making annual trips to celebrate Al's birthday.

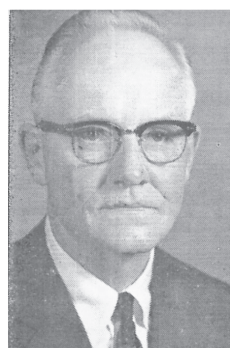
Back in Ypsilanti, he expanded his involvement in car dealerships - adding two in Indiana. He managed his family's commercial real estate portfolio while also acquiring and preserving old buildings. His commitment to Ypsilanti was evident as he brought the old structures back to life by studying old photographs and working with the best architects and contractors he could find. In 1991 in an interview with the Ypsilanti Press, he said, *"Certainly the way I've done them is not a good investment. It's the lousiest investment I could make...Certainly somebody who was*

looking to invest with making money in mind would not have done it the way I've done it."

Music was an important and consistent element in Joe's life. His mother taught piano and he became an accomplished pianist. He also loved to sing and was a member of the Michigan Glee Club. He continued his choral involvement through the remainder of his life with the a cappella group called the *"Grunyons of Southeast Michigan."*

After many years I reconnected with Joe when we were both back in Ypsilanti. It was an article I wrote for the Gleanings that resulted in a call from Joe. We had a good visit and shared memories and laughter. He was on his way to visit the Browns and we planned to get together when he returned. That, unfortunately, did not happen. There

was one more connection though. In 2017 the Ladies Literary House Foundation was established. I was a founding member of the Board. We created a brochure about the Foundation that addressed the historic significance of the Ladies Literary Clubhouse, built in 1843, and the need to establish funds to preserve the structure. Each of the board members developed a short list of contacts. Joe was on my list. I sent him the brochure with a personal note. There



J. Don Lawrence, Joe's father, served as a delegate to Michigan's Constitutional Convention

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was no direct response. And then following his death in March, the House Foundation received notice of the gift from his estate. It brought tears to my eyes. The language in the bequest reflected that of the brochure. Somehow I knew he would come through and he did.

(Peg Porter is Assistant Editor of the Gleanings, a regular contributor of articles, and also serves as the Historian for the Ladies Literary Club in Ypsilanti.



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DONALD and LUCY GRIDLY and the Hiawatha Card Company

BY ROBERT ANSCHUETZ



Donald J. Gridley - Ypsilanti High School Yearbook Photograph.

He worked for the post office and had a passion for flying. She was a marketing specialist and was an avid photographer. Is it any wonder that this ambitious Ypsilanti couple combined their skills and started a postcard company in 1950 that grew over the years to produce a prolific number of postcards and tourist publications?



Lucy Gridley - Argus Eyes Newsletter - 1944.

Donald Jay Gridley was born in Ypsilanti on August 15, 1905. The Gridley family in Washtenaw County goes back several generations to about 1850, as they were one of the area's early pioneer farming families. Donald's parents were Palmer and Fannie Gridley, who farmed in Ypsilanti and had another son, Laurence Sheldon Gridley, who was born in 1909 and died at age 18 of typhoid fever and pneumonia in 1927. Palmer Gridley's parents were Jay and Minnie Gridley. Jay Gridley's parents were Sheldon and Catherine Gridley, whose first husband was Isaac LeForge. Many of the Gridley family members are buried at Highland Cemetery.

Lucy Patterson Ross was born on October 28, 1907 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to Daniel and Cora Ross. She was adopted by George and Elizabeth Jackson, both of Pittsburgh. The Jackson family relocated to Ypsilanti, and in 1920 they purchased a two-bedroom bungalow at 192 Oak Street from Frank Lidke. The house was built in 1912 by Lidke, who lived nearby on Forest Avenue. It was one of several houses that Lidke built in the area.

After Lucy's father George Jackson died, Lucy's mother Elizabeth moved to Toledo, Ohio. Lucy continued to live in the house at 192 Oak Street while she attended Michigan State Normal College. Donald and Lucy met each other in Ypsilanti, and they fell in love. They applied for their marriage license in Toledo, where Lucy's

widowed mother was living. Donald and Lucy Gridley were married on leap day, February 29, 1928, in Toledo.

The newly married couple moved into the Jackson family house at 192 Oak Street in 1928. The 1929 Ypsilanti city directory indicates that Lucy was a student at MSNC, while Donald worked for the post office. By 1930, Lucy was working as a stenographer at MSNC. Through the 1930's, Donald continued his career with the post office, while Lucy worked as the private secretary to the president of the Ypsilanti-based United Stove Company.

At this point in their lives, the couple's story may sound somewhat unremarkable and typical of a young Ypsilanti couple making their way through their working careers in early adulthood. However, their professions were soon to change dramatically as we will now explore more details of the lives of Donald and Lucy Gridley.



Donald and Lucy Gridley's House at 192 Oak Street.

When Lucy Gridley began her job in 1944 as an editor for the Argus camera company in Ann Arbor, the company newsletter, called *Argus Eyes*, published a short biography which provides some insight that the Gridley's were a little more remarkable than their story thus far shows.

Maybe you've noticed that Jimmy Barker is looking much healthier

Donald and Lucy Gridley and the Hiawatha Card Company continued on page 20

Museum Advisory Board Report

BY JIM CURRAN, CHAIR

The Museum has been closed since May 13th, however the Board members have continued communicating with each other and have shared plans for future displays and events. The greatest event will be reopening the museum and determining what will be our new procedures.

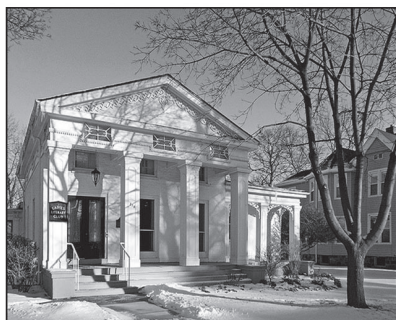
Our acquisition committee has accepted a portrait of Hal Glover, an active member of the Society during the 1800s, who also served as Mayor of Ypsilanti. One member recalls Hal to have been a very well liked person from material she had found when working on a "Lost Ypsilanti" project several years ago. We also learned that the Glover mansion today is in great condition on Woodward and Washington streets.

Unfortunately, we mention the passing of a former Board member Robert "Bob" Southgate in May 2020. Bob was an educator in the Plymouth School District after receiving a bachelor's degree from Eastern Michigan University. The Ypsilanti Historical Society was fortunate to have Bob's experience and interests that



Portrait of Hal Glover from the late 1800s.

he brought to our group. He was also a founding member of Elderwise serving their community in multiple capacities.



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and happier these days. He doesn't have the overworked look about him anymore.

The reason is shown above. It's Mrs. Lucy Gridley who has joined the Argus organization as assistant in the advertising department. Lucy has a wide background of experience in Sales Advertising and Export, having been secretary to the president of the United Stove Company, in Ypsilanti, Michigan.

She will assist Jimmy Barker with publicity and advertising activities and will also be assistant editor of the Argus Eyes and Argus Dealer Talk.

Incidentally, Lucy is an aviation enthusiast and holds a pilot's license. This all came about because she likes flying, and also because her husband, Don Gridley, is a civilian instructor at the Ypsilanti airport.

We're glad to welcome Lucy into the Argus organization, and Jimmy Barker is particularly pleased. Because now he is able to leave the office a lot earlier these hot evenings.

Asst. Editor's note: It goes without saying that I am happy to be a member of the very friendly and ever amazing Argus family.

From this short biography, we learn that Donald Gridley is a civilian flight instructor at the Ypsilanti Airport, and Lucy Gridley is also a pilot and advertising specialist. The Spring 2010 issue of the *Ypsilanti Gleanings* includes an article written by George Ridenour called "The 1944 Christmas Eve Air Plane Crash." The article details the remarkable mid-air collision between a commercial American Air Transport DC-3 airplane and a Civil Air Patrol training plane piloted by Donald Gridley. Gridley, and his student pilot, Eleanor Cramer, parachuted safely to the ground from an altitude of 1,200 feet after being clipped by the commercial plane heading from New York to Chicago carrying 15 passengers and 3 crew members. All 18 people aboard the commercial plane landed safely in a field near 1330 Willis Road. Gridley's unpowered plane crashed near 1521 Thomas Road, about four miles south of Ann Arbor. Gridley and his student landed their parachutes not far from where their plane crashed.

The Winter 2008 issue of *Ypsilanti Gleanings* discusses the Ypsilanti Airport in great depth in an article by Tom Dodd and James Mann called "An YPSIAEROTROPOLIS!" The Ypsilanti Airport was located at the northwest corner of Carpenter and Morgan Roads near the current intersection of I-94 and US-23. According to the article, the Ypsilanti Airport was sold to Donald and Lucy Gridley in August,

1946, and was renamed Gridley Airport. Gridley Airport had three unpaved runways and two hangers. The Gridley's owned and operated a flying service at the Ann Arbor Airport that was moved to Gridley Airport after the Gridley's purchased the airport.

Alas, Gridley Airport didn't have much of a future after the Gridley's purchased it. An article in the October 12, 1949

issue of the *Ann Arbor News* states that the Gridley's offered to sell the airport to Washtenaw County for \$40,000. Washtenaw County declined the offer, and a follow-up article from June 10, 1950 states that the 113-acre Gridley Airport was sold to Jack Smith Beverages, Inc. for use as a beer distribution center. The Gridley's did keep an airplane in their possession after the sale of the airport.



Gridley Airport - 1949 Detroit Sectional Chart.

The Gridley's loved flying and Lucy was a skilled photogra-

pher, perhaps due to her work at the Argus camera company and having access to superior camera equipment. The photographs that Lucy took while they flew around Michigan offered a unique perspective not seen from the ground. At this point, everything came together. Donald and Lucy decided that they could go into business selling their aerial photography. And what better way to sell photographs to the public than on postcards, possibly influenced by Donald Gridley's career with the Post Office?

In 1950, Donald and Lucy Gridley trademarked the name "Hiawatha" which they used for their business of creating original photographs and color transparencies that would be printed in color and sold through various tourist outlets in Michigan. The Gridley's owned numerous cameras and photography equipment and they also owned an airplane. Donald flew the plane, Lucy took the pictures, and their company, Hiawatha, sold the prints throughout the state of Michigan. The Gridley's did not have sophisticated printing equipment, so Hiawatha used a company based out of Boston, Colourpicture Publishers, Inc., to create color postcards from their photographs.

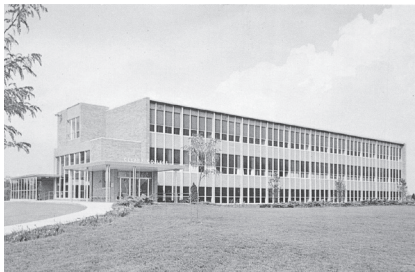
The Gridley's owned a vacation home in Mackinaw City, which they frequented quite often. Many of the pictures that the Gridleys took and made into postcards documented the construction of the Mackinac Bridge, which occurred from 1954-1957. In 1959, the Gridley's sold off a portion of their business for \$53,000 to David and Mary Gunn of Ypsilanti. The Gunn's spun-off business, which was still based out of Ypsilanti, was called the Hiawatha Card of Detroit, and had rights to publish pictures and postcards in



Penrod/Hiawatha Logo.



POSTCARD: THE MACKINAC BRIDGE – State of Michigan. The world's largest suspension bridge is seen here from the deck of one of the Michigan State Ferries, which it replaces in spanning the Straits of Mackinac between the Upper and Lower Peninsulas of Michigan. The bridge is five miles long, and has four lanes of traffic. It was designed by D. B. Steinman, and was opened for traffic in the fall of 1957. Hiawatha Card Company- Ypsilanti, MI. Photo by Lucy Gridley.



POSTCARD: CLEARY COLLEGE – YPSILANTI, MICHIGAN. This new classroom and administration building was built on a new 20-acre campus in 1960. Founded in 1814, Cleary College is one of the outstanding collegiate schools of business in the United States. Hiawatha Card Company of Detroit.. Photo by David Gunn.



POSTCARD: THE GRAND HOTEL AND GARDENS along the entrance drive portray the quiet charm and elegant atmosphere of this world famous hotel. It is the social center of Mackinac Island, Michigan and its spacious grounds and prominent location offer visitors an unexcelled view of the Straits of Mackinac. Penrod-Hiawatha Card Company, Berrien Center Michigan. (no photo credit)



POSTCARD: THE SOO LOCKS – Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. The Henry Ford II in the MacArthur Lock, downbound from Lake Superior. Ships being lowered or raised in the locks is an ever fascinating drama, appreciated by more and more visitors each year. The difference in water level between Lake Superior, lower St. Mary's River and Lake Huron is approximately 22 ft. Photo by Lucy Gridley. Hiawatha Card Co., Mackinaw City.

the southeastern portion of Michigan. The Gridley's business continued to be called the Hiawatha Card Company and focused on pictures of the Upper Peninsula and the northern portion of the Lower Peninsula, including Mackinac Island. Another Michigan-based company, Penrod Studio, owned and operated by John and Alice Penrod of Berrien Center, Michigan, produced postcards for the southwestern portion of Michigan.

The Hiawatha Card Company used Colourpicture Publishers to create their postcards and other printed ma-

terial from 1950 to 1963. The relationship between the two companies was a good one, but the Gridley's became concerned about the copyright ownership of their photographs. They brought forward their concerns about copyright notices being placed on the postcards to Colourpicture Publishers early in the 1950's. Colourpicture Publishers said that such a notice would not accomplish anything, that there was very little to be gained, that the copyrights would cost Hiawatha money, and the cost of the copyright production would be more than it was



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worth. The Gridley's trusted this opinion and backed away from copyright notices being stamped on their postcards.

Colourpicture Publishers was very aware of the copyright laws that they were trying to discourage Hiawatha from pursuing. They purposely changed the copyright language on the purchase orders from Hiawatha, and printed and sold their own postcards using pictures and images taken by the Gridley's. There were additional shenanigans from Colourpicture Publishers about exclusive distribution agreements, and the Gunn's, as owners of Hiawatha Card of Detroit, were also misled about copyrights and distribution rights. In 1963, the Gridley's and Hiawatha Card Company provided notice to Colourpicture Publishers that they were infringing on their copyrights and filed a lawsuit. The lawsuit was ultimately concluded in 1966, and Hiawatha was awarded a settlement of \$20,750.

Don and Lucy Gridley decided to retire in 1969. They sold the Hiawatha Card Company to John and Alice Penrod and Penrod Studios. The company was renamed Penrod/Hiawatha, and that same year Penrod/Hiawatha introduced the first 4" x 6" glossy postcard which would become the industry standard. In 1979, David and Mary Gunn sold their interest in Hiawatha Card of Detroit to the Penrod's, thus creating the Penrod/Hiawatha that still exists to this day. The company still is in business producing postcards, guide books, calendars, puzzles, and tourist products for three states, with their primary focus on Michigan.

The chronological history of the Penrod/Hiawatha postcards is summarized by the company names printed on the reverse side of their postcards.

- Hiawatha Card Co.,
P.O. Box 56, Ypsilanti, Michigan (~1950--1959 - Gridley)
- Hiawatha Card Co.,
Mackinaw City, Michigan 49701 (~1960--1969 - Gridley)
- Hiawatha Card of Detroit,
P.O. Box 488, Ypsilanti, Michigan (~1960--1979 - Gunn)
- Penrod-Hiawatha Card Co.,
Berrien Center, Michigan 49102 (~1970-Present - Penrod)

Donald and Lucy Gridley continued to split time between their house at 192 Oak Street in Ypsilanti and their vaca-

tion home in Mackinaw City. In 1984, the Gridley's sold their Ypsilanti home and lived out the remainder of their lives in Mackinaw City. Lucy had lived at her home on Oak Street for 64 years. Lucy Gridley died at age 90 on December 11, 1997. As is often the case in long-lasting and loving marriages, less than a year later Donald Gridley died on August 8, 1998, a week shy of his 92nd birthday. They are buried together at Lakeview Cemetery in Mackinaw City. It's impossible to calculate how many people's lives were touched through the postcards and souvenir booklets bearing the artistic and photographic creations of Donald and Lucy Gridley. All of this was made possible through their passions of flying, photography, marketing, and postcards, influenced by their lives and careers in Ypsilanti.

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(Robert Anschuetz grew up in Ypsilanti and is a regular contributor to the *Gleanings*.)



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Elsie Janis at Pease Auditorium

BY JAMES MANN

A feeling of excitement must have run through the city of Ypsilanti in November of 1923 when it was announced that Elsie Janis, star of the stage in London, Paris and New York, would appear in concert at Pease Auditorium on November 19, 1923. She had begun performing on stage at the age of two and grew into a star of musical comedy. In the play *The Vanderbilt Cup* (1906) she drove a car on stage. During the First World War she was among the first performers to go near the front lines to entertain the troops, sometimes placing her life at risk. For this, she was known as *"the sweetheart of the American Expeditionary Force."*

This was her first concert tour and she arrived in Ypsilanti with her company of a pianist, a tenor, a violinist and her own curtains and electrical effects. The show opened to a full house. *"A setting of dark curtains, gorgeous in gold and rose designs made an effective background."* noted *The Daily Ypsilanti Press* of Tuesday, November 20, 1923. Walter Verne opened the show by singing love songs. Then Rudolph Bochco performed on his violin. *"The curtains parted - and there stepped forth youth incarnate, in a gown of pink rose petals and silver lace. With engaging smile and a wealth of personality Janis explained her methods."*

"She explained that her voice is still limited but that her experience with the army has made it almost impossible to take an old time role that ignores the audience and she has chosen the concert stage as enabling her to talk directly to her hearers, which she does entertainingly during and between impersonations."



During the first World War Elsie Janis entertained the troops near the front lines.

Then she sang first as herself, and then as a Spanish flower girl, even pinning her hair back and donning a red shawl as she sang, tossing roses to the audience. Then she appeared as a Cockney girl and then as a devotee of Irving Ber-

lin. *"Miss Janis then appeared in the role of a newly arrived French opera singer, in a costume of ravishing beauty - from the long cape of silken fringe, shaded from pale yellow to deep flame, to the gorgeous and marvelously draped gown of cloth of gold, with colored shading, and the wondrous yellow head dress of feathers. She sang in English with a very French accent then two charming French love songs."*

She was famous for her impersonations and gave imitations of such stars as Ethel Barrymore singing the *"banana song,"* as well as Fannie Brice and George M. Cohan. She did an impersonation of Will Rogers while whirling a lariat in endless circles above her head and about her knees. *"While she talked wild-west and danced gaily within it's circle. By request she gave an imitation of Eddie Foy impromptu, which she pronounced bad but which was very like,"* noted *The Normal College News* of November 23, 1923.

The show ended and Elsie Janis moved on to the next stop on her tour, but those she left behind in Ypsilanti enjoyed a wonderful memory.

(James Mann is a local historian, a volunteer in the YHS Archives, and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)

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Whittaker Jewelry Store Robbery

BY JAMES MANN

Orrval F. Hawkes had his jewelry store in the village of Whittaker, about seven miles south of Ypsilanti, for over thirty years. Hawkes enjoyed a reputation as a skillful workman and watches and clocks were taken to him for repair from a wide radius.

His shop was described as a poor old rickety place with the Wabash railroad passing through the village of Whittaker near his shop. The shop was the second place across the tracks on the east side of the street. A lumber yard and sawmill were next to his shop, with the general store across the way, but nothing close to the shop. The shop, it was said, stood in a desolate site.

Hawkes was 73 years of age in 1921, and was not married. He lived alone in the back of the shop. In the shop stood two large safes and a lot of his stock on display in show cases. At about 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, October 30, 1921, a large touring car was parked in front of the shop. Two young men entered the shop and asked to see some watches. Hawkes opened a safe to take some out for the men to see. As Hawkes did this, one of the men hit him over the head knocking him unconscious. The men then tied his feet and bound his hands behind his back and gagged him. He was then carried into the back room where the men tossed him onto the bed and covered him with blankets.

The two men then proceeded to loot the store, filling their pockets with cash, jewelry and Liberty bonds. The value of the loot was about \$2,000. The men left the store to get in the car, a Hudson Super Six with red running gear, and drove away.

About an hour after the robbery, Hawkes regained consciousness, and although he was tied to the bed, managed to wriggle free and untie his legs. He made his way to the door, which he found locked. Hawkes, with his hands still bound behind him, succeeded in opening a window. Passing through the window he fell to the ground and began to crawl to a nearby house. As he made his way toward the house, friends found him and set him free.

At once a doctor was summoned and police were informed of the crime. Ypsilanti Chief of Police John Connors spread the news as soon as he was informed, and the Michigan State Police, Washtenaw County Sheriff's Department and other police agencies were on the lookout for the car. Connors then went to Whittaker to investigate the case. At Whittaker, Hawkes told Connors he would recognize the men who robbed him if he saw them again. Chief Connors visited gas stations and other places and was able to track the car, which was headed toward Detroit, for several miles.

On Monday, October 31, 1921, Connors used the information he had to locate the car in Ecorse. The car belonged to a woman named Veda Sikie, who had the reputation of

being a bootlegger. Connors, accompanied by Washtenaw County Deputy Sheriff Dick Elliott, found that the car on Sunday was used by a man named Sam Stanich, who lived at 33 Edith Street in Ecorse. At the house Connors and Elliott found the car parked in the back yard. Connors and Elliott went to the house and knocked on the door.

"Anybody here?" asked Connors, when Stanich answered. "Only my own family," responded Stanich. "You are a liar," said Connors, "for we just saw two men enter." "Oh, yes; they are friends of the family," said Stanich. "Well," said Connors, "you are under arrest." Connors placed handcuffs on Stanich.

As Stanich was talking to Connors, he was wearing a watch and watch chain. Connors and Elliott noticed that Stanich was trying to do something with his watch chain. On that watch chain was found one of the watches stolen from the shop in Whittaker.

At the house was a Charles Lynbenvoich, who ran a jewelry store at 105 West End Avenue in Detroit. When Lynbenvoich's shop was searched, more of the stolen items were found there. As they searched the house Connors noticed one of the panel steps on the stairway was loose. The step dropped forward when taken up, and behind the step they found a revolver and a blackjack. When Stanich was asked his occupation, he answered, "Bootlegger," with pride. He was listed as such at the county jail.

The next morning at Whittaker, Hawkes positively identified Stanich as one of the men who had robbed him. The trial of Sam Stanich opened in December of 1921, with jury selection. The selection of the jury was longer than normal, as the panel was exhausted and attorneys agreed to draw members of the jury from spectators in the courtroom. Several of the spectators were examined and excused. Then officers were sent out on the street to find men to fill out the jury.

When the jury was selected, Stanich's attorney made a motion to have the case dismissed; claiming the arrest of Stanich was illegal. He noted the return date on the warrant was November 4 while the date on the complaint was November 5. The motion was denied by the court.

Ovaille Hawks took the stand and positively identified Stanich as one of the two men who had robbed him. "I know that is the man," said Hawks. Defense tried under cross-examination to shake his belief Stanich was the man. Hawks was firm in his belief Stanich was the man who had robbed him. Jewelry found in the Stanich home was identified by Hawks as his stolen property.

Thomas Hitchingham a resident of Whittaker told the court

he saw Stanich leave the store on the day of the robbery, and get into a car with red wheels. John Connors testified that on the day after Stanich was arrested, he was taken to Whittaker. On the way, Stanich asked where they were going. When told, according to Connors, he was being taken to where he had been on Sunday, Stanich said, *"I didn't hit the old man."*

The defense tried to show Stanich was at home on that Sunday when the LeBlanc brothers returned the car and Herschel LeBlanc borrowed \$68 and offered the stolen jewelry as security. Sara Stanich, wife of Sam, took the stand on behalf of her husband. As Mrs. Stanich testified, she fainted. The case went to the jury and after being out nearly 20 hours were unable to agree on a verdict. The jury had taken eight ballots of which seven stood at six and six and the eighth stood at seven to five for conviction.

The case was bound over to the March term of the court. Jury selection for the second trial of Sam Stanich began on the morning of Tuesday, March 7, 1922. The trial was off to a slow start, as there were so many peremptory challenges by the defense of the jurors on the first panel that a second panel had to be called. A total of 28 men were excused before a jury of 12 men could be formed. There was good reason to excuse one of those on the first panel, as he had been dead for a year and a half. One of the men excused from the second panel had been dead for some time as well.

Orville Hawks recounted the events of the morning he was robbed, but stumbled a bit on the chronological order. He did, however, identify Stanich as the man who had robbed him. Pointing a finger at Stanich, Hawks said, *"That is the man."* Charles Lynbenvich, who had been arrested with Stanich and was now testifying for the prosecution, said Stanich had shown him a watch the day of the robbery.

From the witness stand Stanich claimed he had never been to Whittaker until taken there the day after his arrest. He denied he had given his occupation as bootlegger, when asked, and said he did not say he did not hit the old man when told he was being taken to Whittaker. Stanich claimed he had just moved into the house where he was arrested, so the revolver and blackjack found hidden in the step, must have been left by a previous tenant. He further claimed he was the innocent holder of the stolen jewelry which had been left with him to sell.

Sara Stanich, the wife of Sam, was called to the stand by the defense. The prosecution chose not to cross-examine her. As she was leaving the witness stand she fainted and fell to the floor, while holding a baby in her arms. The child was not harmed. Mrs. Stanich was carried to the jury room, where she recovered.

Judge George Simple in summing up the case told the jury of the value of circumstantial evidence, and the prisoner was entitled to acquittal if the prosecution failed to prove its case. After 72 hours of deliberation the jury asked to be admitted to court. Entering the courtroom the members of the jury looked worn and haggard. The jury reported they were unable to agree on a verdict.

Judge Sample ordered the jury back to continue their deliberation until they reached a verdict. The jury returned to their task with heavy hearts. Late that afternoon the jury returned with a verdict of guilty.

Judge Sample sentenced Stanich to 12 to 24 years in the prison at Jackson. As sentence was pronounced Mrs. Stanich, who had been quietly crying, broke into sobs and was taken from the room by a friend.

(James Mann is a local historian, a regular volunteer in the YHS Archives, and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)

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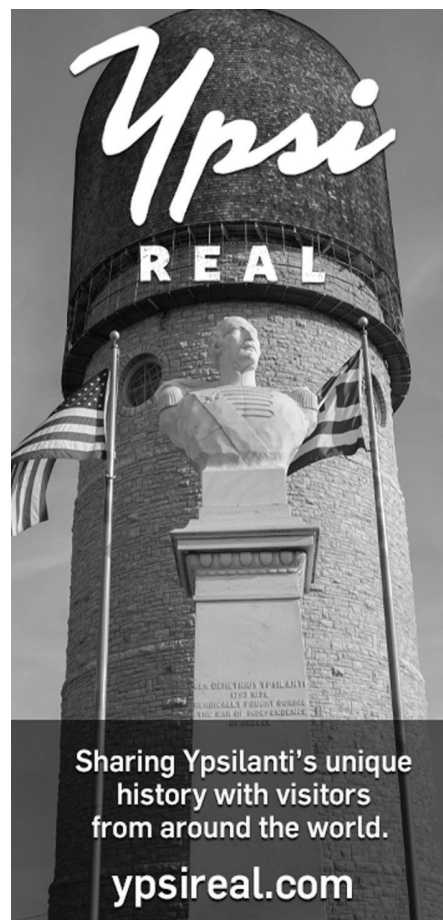
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The front of the building at 100-102 West Michigan Avenue sometime prior to 1929 when the business was still named Davis and Kishlar.

The Changing Face of 100-102 West Michigan Avenue

BY JAMES MANN

There are those among us who have long wondered what was beneath the aluminum siding covering the building at the corner of North Huron and West Michigan Avenue. Some thought there was a hidden jewel of a building, waiting to be discovered and brought to light. Then there were those who may have wondered if there was anything at all to be found. Now we know, as the aluminum siding has been stripped away, and a diamond in the ruff has been unveiled. It will need a lot of work before it comes into a new age of glory.

The building was built in 1860, and hosted a store operated by Samuel Post. He was listed in the City Directory of 1861 as a general merchant. He sold the business to Henderson and Glover in 1866 and they used the building as a dry goods store. Glover sold the business to Lamb, Davis and Kishlar in 1888. Not long after Lamb left the partnership and the business was renamed Davis & Kishlar. They were

in the dry goods business.

Will Kishlar died in 1926 and Guy Davis left the business in 1929. Guy Davis opened a flower shop on North Huron and continued in that business until his death in 1929.

The 1930's seemed to have seen a number of businesses on the site, but none were able to secure a solid base at the location and quickly disappeared from the record.

The Landy Furniture Store had moved into the site by 1940, and was listed in the City Directory as: "*The Friendly Store - Making New Friends Every Day.*" The Landy store had been replaced by the Modern Appliance Company by 1951. The store sold appliances, sweepers, washers, ranges, television sets, refrigerators and furniture.

The Pear's Clothing store moved into the building in 1960. The owner, Max Pear, had opened a bargain store on North



The front of 100-102 West Michigan Avenue with the aluminum siding removed.



The side of 100-102 West Michigan Avenue with the aluminum siding being removed.

Huron Street in 1939 and moved the business to the new location because the city was planning to demolish the previous site for a parking lot. He oversaw the business at the new location until his retirement in 1980, but the business continued as a family concern. The business closed in 1997.

The husband and wife team of Bui Lang and Le Hoanh, opened a Vietnamese restaurant at 421 West Cross in 1991. They purchased the building in 1998. The couple planned to move their business to the new location at 100-102 West Michigan but the discovery of a huge hole in the foundation of the building, caused by years of water seepage, pushed the opening date into the year 2000. When the restaurant opened it had a seating capacity of 70 to 100, and a banquet

room was opened on the second floor. In time, the couple decided to retire, and once again, the building was placed on the market.

Work on the building progresses, but there appears to have been no official announcement as what is planned after work is completed. Rumor has it, the first floor will be a restaurant, with the second and third floor available for offices.

In time, a new chapter in the history of the building will open.

(James Mann is a local history buff, a volunteer in the YHS Archives, and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)

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Death at Ypsilanti City Airport

BY JAMES MANN



Waco biplane, The Waco Aircraft Company (WACO) was an aircraft manufacturer located in Troy, Ohio, USA. Between 1919 and 1947, the company produced a wide range of civilian biplanes. courtesy of NationalWacoClub.com

Today the Ypsilanti City Airport, which was at Carpenter and Morgan roads in Pittsfield Township, would not be an impressive site. Long grass strips for landings and takeoffs, a hanger and perhaps a few other buildings. Still, in 1930, it was the marvel of the age. Airplanes and airports were new, and an image of the future to come. Families would come to watch the planes take off and land, as this was then a wonder to behold. Yet the future holds dangers, and those who dare to try new things sometimes risk injury and even death.

There was, most likely little if any, thought of injury or death, on Sunday, April 13, 1930, as Levi Keppler, a 24 year old teller in the Farmers and Mechanics Bank in Ann Arbor, sat in the front cockpit of a Waco biplane. The pilot, Leon Hanselmann, sat in the rear cockpit of the plane. Hanselmann was a licensed pilot, and had taken Keppler for a ride many times before, as it was his custom to do so on Sundays and evenings.

The flight was coming to an end, when at about 3:30 in the afternoon, Hanselmann was turning the plane toward the runway. *"The plane as bystanders saw it, approached the field in a circle from the south, and very low, the pilot apparently being without power or misjudging his height. On the south side of the road a tree and telephone wires caught the landing gear throwing the plane into a line with high voltage electric wires which run on wooden poles along the north side of the road. The first wire was broken by the impact and the tail of the plane caught on the second and held fast, nosing the plane into the ground. A perfect circuit was thus formed, one wire contacting with the ground and with a wire fence, the second holding the tail of the plane in the air while the nose of the plane was buried a foot into the ground,"* reported *The Ypsilanti Daily Press* of Monday, April 14, 1930.

Hanselmann was thrown clear of the plane, with only minor injuries. Keppler was held fast in his seat, as he was unable to unfasten the belt which held him to his seat. The crash had started a fire, which was burning the covering of the plane.

Milan McKenna, an employee at the hanger, went to get a rope so he could pull the plane free from the wires. At the same time Harry Walters rushed forward with a fire extinguisher, apparently failing to realize the plane was conducting an electric current. He was seen to start fighting the fire, then dropped the fire extinguisher and fell forward into the wreckage. At this, Walter Clawson rushed toward Walters to pull him away, but fell dead as he came in contact with the electric current..

Keppler, the flames coming closer, managed to undo the belt, and tried to jump from the plane. He came in contact with the electric current and fell into the wreckage of the plane. Richard Jermeay, who had been employed by the Detroit Edison Company and knew how to handle high tension wires, used ropes to pull the bodies away from the wreckage.

"Keppler's body," noted the account, *"was badly burned across the chest and face. His arm was badly burned and one of his feet almost burned away by the wires which came in contact with his body as he attempted to leap from the plane."* The electric wire had fallen across the fence, charging it for about a mile. A wire had also charged the telephone lines.

"The plane," said William Martin, an eyewitness, *"was flying not more than 100 feet up when I first saw it. The pilot straightened it out, the plane brushed the tops of the trees across the road as it approached the air field, and flying forward, it hooked its tail on the high tension*

wires strung up beside the field. With the tail hooked, the nose fell forward, dragging the wires from the fastenings and throwing the pilot to the ground.”

“Keppler, the other man, remained in the ship. Attendants ran up with fire extinguishers and we tried to fight the flames that had been started by the high tension wires. All this time Keppler had remained in his seat, afraid to move because of the wires around him. But a man, who said he was a brother of Keppler, ran under the plane with the idea of trying to reach him. I saw this chap double up suddenly, stagger away and collapse. Then Walters, the field manager, tried it. He collapsed where he stood, and then the third man was killed when he attempted to drag Walters’ body away. The flames were gaining headway steadily and suddenly Keppler stood up in his seat, preparing to jump. He placed one foot on the edge of the cockpit. Then he fell forward into the tangle of the high tension wires. Most of this was witnessed by Keppler’s mother, who had to be prevented from rushing into the tangle of highly charged wires.”

Hanselmann was driven to Beyer Hospital by Milan McKenna, where his injuries were dressed, and from there was taken to his home in Ann Arbor.

An inquest into the accident was held in the courtroom of the Washtenaw County building on the evening of Wednesday, April 16, 1930. Here Hanselmann told his version of the accident for the first time in public.

“The pilot attributed the accident to the failure of the wind,” reported *The Ypsilanti Daily Press* of Thursday, April 17, 1930. “He stated that he took off to the north, circled the field once and flew 10 or 15 minutes, coming back from the southeast and circling to the south side of the field. He was then about 2,000 feet up with the wind blowing in gusts. He first tried to land starting from the north but slip looped to diminish the altitude. After slip looping twice he was still too high. He decided to slip again, watching the tree, with which he was familiar, but as he approached it, the wind failed, he said.”

“Failure of the wind acted momentarily like a stoppage of the engine and the ship began to settle but even then Mr. Hanselmann stated he still hoped to be able to clear the tree. He recalls striking the tree but said he was unable to remember what happened immediately afterward. He said that he believed he was thrown out of the plane.”

Under questioning Hanselmann said the plane was in good repair, and seemed to be in good condition. He had often made landings from that same point before and had been flying earlier that day.

The jury rendered a verdict: “We the undersigned jurors find as follows in regard to the deaths of Levi Keppler, William Clawson and Harry Walters. Death was caused by electrocution by high tension wires coming in contact

with the planes or vice versa. We find it to have been an inevitable accident as far as the airplane was concerned. Owing to the fact that this is a public airport where people congregate to watch the maneuvers of airplanes and take rides we the undersigned resolve that this menace be removed.” The verdict was signed by the members of the jury.

Funeral services were held for two of the three victims of the accident on the same day the verdict was released. Services for Levi Keppler were held at the home of his parents in Ann Arbor Township. The Rev. C. A. Brauer, pastor of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church officiated. Internment was in Fairview Cemetery. Rites for Harry Walters were held at the Walters home in Ypsilanti, on Washtenaw Avenue. The Rev. Russell N. McMichael, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Ann Arbor presiding. Internment was in Forest Hill Cemetery.

The Rev. William Shaw had officiated over the funeral of William Clawson on the afternoon of Tuesday, April 15, 1930. The service was held at the Clawson home at 213 River Street, Ypsilanti, with the Ypsilanti High School Band, of which Clawson’s son Willard was a member, played “Abide With Me” outside the home. At the burial service at Highland Cemetery, the band played “Nearer My God to Thee.”

(James Mann is a local buff, a volunteer in the YHS Archives, and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)



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Student Pilot Crashes Plane into Devil's Lake

BY JAMES MANN

James D. Morton, of Douglas, Wyoming, was a student at the University of Michigan in his senior year, and a student pilot at the Ypsilanti Airport at Carpenter and Morgan roads in Pittsfield Township. His goal was a to obtain a limited commercial license and he had 40 hours of flying time to his credit. On Saturday, May 31, 1930, he arrived at the airport to add some solo hours toward his pilot's license. He had his student license and had completed the requirements for ground work and dual flying, and was now completing his solo work for his pilot's license. Morton intended to add several hours of flying time for his solo requirements. That afternoon he took off alone in a three passenger biplane, owned by the Michigan Aeronautical Corporation.

According to government regulations, he was to keep within gliding distance of the landing field. The regulations also required that Morton was not to carry passengers. Instead of following regulations not long after he set out he was no longer in sight of the field.

"Apparently Morton had gone in the direction of Devil's Lake (18 miles northwest of Adrian) and as he circled the lake the plane, according to witnesses, faltered, went into a nose dive, faltered again and then fell and was wrecked a short distance from Manitou Beach," reported The Ypsilanti Daily Press of Monday, June 2, 1930.

"Morton, in a dazed state, was rescued from the plane by Ollie Imerson, of Devil's Lake, and J. O. Shannon, who witnessed the accident." Imerson and Shannon said there was a second man in the plane with Morton. What became of this second man, if there was one, is not clear, as accounts

make no further note of him.

"Morton was removed," noted the account, "in Imerson's boat to the summer home of Richard Cornelius near Manitou Beach and was later taken to St. Joseph's Hospital at Ann Arbor." As a result of the crash, Morton suffered a fractured jaw, several broken ribs and other injuries.

On Sunday, June 1, 1930, Milo Oliphant, the secretary-treasurer of the Michigan Aeronautical Corporation, which owned the plane, went to the site of the accident to arrange for the removal of the plane. On Monday afternoon of June 2, 1930, he set out with a crew to return the plane to the Ypsilanti Airport. Oliphant returned to the Ypsilanti Airport that evening with the wrecked plane.

Oliphant said the plane was almost a total wreck and the entire plane was badly damaged. He said there were a few parts which might be salvaged, but even the engine was badly damaged. Further, he said, there were no problems with the plane, and the accident was, he said, most likely due to the misjudgment of Morton. Another possible cause might have been trouble with the engine.

"No attempt will be made to repair the wrecked plane," Mr. Oliphant stated. "The plane, costing approximately \$3,000, was not insured." Because Morton had not obtained permission to fly from University officials and was breaking government regulations by flying away from the landing field at the Ypsilanti Airport, he was suspended from the University for the first semester of the next school year.

(James Mann is a local historian, a regular volunteer in the YHS Archives, and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)

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