

Ypsilanti GLEANINGS

YHS Museum & Archives

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



FALL 2006

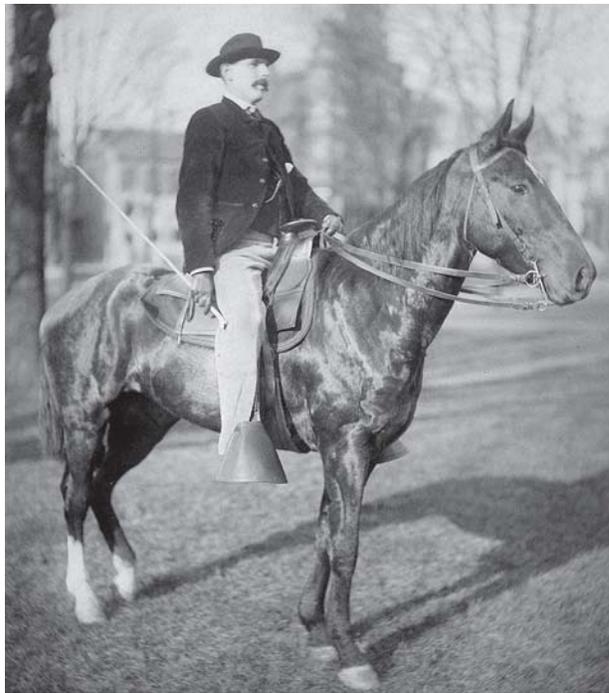
Tubal Cain Owen and the Healing Waters of Ypsilanti

By Heidi Nielsen and Marcia Phillips

Tubal Cain Owen (1843-1913) was named for the Biblical character in Genesis 4:22 who was a pioneer in metallurgy. Perhaps these high expectations were the motivation that led him to try his hand at several business enterprises (including attempting to build a flying machine) before pursuing the marketing of mineral water. Often described as “flamboyant,” “cocky,” and even a “bit peculiar,” he married Anna Foote, the daughter of Normal College music professor E.M. Foote. He bought property on West Forest Avenue where he built a pagoda-shaped house, and later would drop a well.

Between 1880 and 1900, Ypsilanti became known far and wide for its mineral water enterprises. In 1882 the Ypsilanti Paper Company bored a well, seeking pure water but found what was then perceived and marketed as medicinal mineral water. Various sanitariums sprang up in a vigorous rivalry. Tubal Cain Owen jumped into the fray when he sank an 808 feet deep well in 1884 at 360 feet north of Forest Avenue, behind his house (presently near the northwest corner of the east wing of the Roosevelt Building on the Eastern Michi-

gan University campus). He named the well “Atlantis” and by 1885, acquired patent number 13127 for his trade mark for Ypsilanti Mineral Water. He found darker, even murkier water than his competitors, which at that time was believed



Tubal Cain Owen (1843-1913).

to be more beneficial. It was reddish brown and described as having an “odor that sent strong men reeling toward the saloon,” yet was sold as far as Boston and with great popularity particularly in Chicago. The water’s chief ingredient was bro-

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From the President's Desk

By Alvin E. Rudisill

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Ypsilanti Historical Society
220 North Huron Street
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197
Telephone: 734-482-4990
www.ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org

We have reached a verbal agreement with the City of Ypsilanti to purchase the property at 220 North Huron Street where the Museum and Archives are located. At their meeting on Tuesday, August 1, 2006 the City Council agreed in principal with our offer to purchase the property for \$250,000. \$125,000 will be paid immediately and the balance of \$125,000 will be due in no more than 10 years. The mortgage to the City will not accrue interest as long as the Society uses the property for a Museum and/or Archives. Lawyers for the City and the Society were asked to write up the agreement. Once the agreement has been signed the Society will launch a fundraising campaign to raise the \$125,000.

The Graduate Intern Agreement between the Society and Eastern Michigan University has been implemented and Jessica Williams and Laurie Turkawski have started working 20 hours per week in the Museum and Archives (see article in this issue of the Gleanings). They are both busy organizing and packing artifacts in the basement of the Museum so renovation work can begin when the Society assumes ownership of the property. New storage shelving and storage boxes have

been purchased so maximum use can be made of available storage space.

Please put the following dates on your calendar: September 15: Annual Membership Meeting; September 28 to October 15: Quilt Exhibit; December 3: Quarterly Membership Meeting and Christmas Open House; and December 31: New Year's Eve Jubilee. Ted Ligibel, Director of the Graduate Program in Historical Preservation at Eastern Michigan University will be our speaker for the September 15th Annual Membership Meeting.

We are still in need of volunteers with various skills (carpentry, lawn care, computer data entry, painting, etc.) for maintenance projects in the Museum and Archives. If you are willing to do volunteer work for a few hours each month please call me at 734-484-3023 or email me at al@rudisill.ws and we will get you started. Also, if you have writing skills and are interested in researching articles for future issues of the Gleanings we would like to get you involved.

We are receiving many favorable comments about the expansion of "The Gleanings" publication. Our sincere thanks to the authors who are writing the stories that make this expansion possible. ■

Ypsilanti Historical Museum and Archives

Home
Visiting
Collections
Archives
Membership
Publications
Volunteer
Donations

Welcome!

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

2006 Schedule of Events

Jan	Museum Closed in January
Jan 10	Archives Advisory Board Mtg (7:00 pm)
Jan 12	Endowment Advisory Board Mtg (7:00 pm)
Feb 6	Museum Advisory Board Mtg (1:00 pm)
Feb 9	Board of Trustees Mtg (3:00 pm)
Feb 19	Quarterly Membership Mtg (2:00 pm)
Mar 6	Museum Advisory Board Mtg (1:00 pm)

For information about upcoming Society events, visit us on-line at:

www.ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org

Tubal Cain Owen and the
Healing Waters of Ypsilanti -
continued from front page

mine and was sold for \$8 a barrel under the labels of "Atlantis" and "Paragon," the labels becoming works of art in themselves.

The Owen home and connected out-buildings began to draw visitors to the many promised healing activities that included bathing as well as drinking. Owen's promotional material stated that the water was marketed "to fulfill its errand of mercy," even if the effect was not always merciful. For instance, the instructions for the treatment of cancer included that "the water must be taken freely, three or four glasses a day, no matter how nauseating it may be." (Ironically, all three of Owen's children would die of cancer.) Eventually, the water was also packaged as soap, bathing salts and ointments and later used to make ginger ale.

The following introduction was published in a promotional book used to publicize the Ypsilanti Mineral Water:

On the beautiful banks of the Huron River, some thirty miles west of Detroit, and a very short distance below the city of Ypsilanti, in Michigan, are located the old Paper Mills of the Ypsilanti Paper Company, and also the Ypsilanti Mineral Spring. That company owning, in that region, paper and pulp mills some six in number, has for over twenty-five years supplied white paper to various newspapers of the land, among others the Chicago Times.

By a mere chance, the Company bored for pure water at a point a few rods across the road from the old Mill. The drilling was for a deep, or artesian well, which it was hoped would reach an unfailing supply of pure water, needed in the processes of paper making. The Company desired a water different from that found in the pretty river which turns the wheels of the Paper Mill. Such an artesian well had been long contemplated, and it was at last commenced by experienced borers, brought from the oil regions of Pennsylvania. The

continued on page 25



The Ypsilanti Sanitarium was located on the west banks of the Huron River.

BEST MINERAL WATER IN THE WORLD.

— — — — —

PRICE LIST,

INCLUDING PACKAGE.

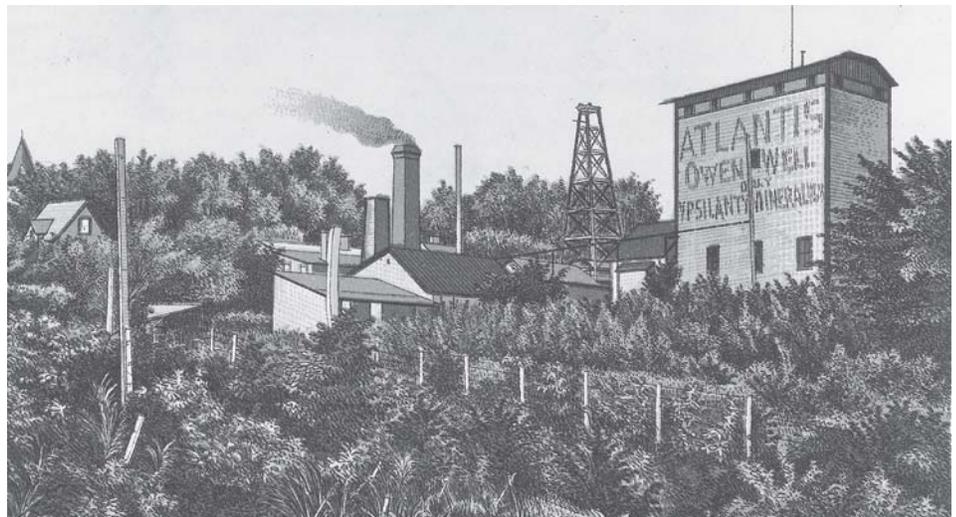
One Case, 1 dozen quart bottles,	\$ 3 50
One Case, 2 dozen quart bottles,	6 00
One Barrel,	10 00
One Keg, 10 gallons,	5 00
One Keg, 5 gallons	3 00
Jugs,	per gallon, 60

Free on board Lake Shore, Michigan Central, or American Express.

Address YPSILANTI PAPER CO., Ypsilanti, Michigan.

Remit by P. O. Order, Express Order or Bank Draft.

Envelope ad for Ypsilanti Mineral Water.



Artist's sketch of the Atlantis Owen Well.

EMU/YHS Intern Agreement Implemented

The five year agreement between the Ypsilanti Historical Society and Eastern Michigan University is now in operation. Two interns from the graduate program in Historical Preservation started working in the Museum and Archives on August 7th. Each intern will work 20 hours per week on projects assigned by YHS officers. Eventually, it is expected that the intern program will allow the Society to keep the Museum and Archives open to the public for up to 24 hours per week.



Jessica Williams

Museum Intern

Jessica Williams is serving as the intern for the YHS Museum. Jessica has an Associate of Applied Science Degree from Belmont Technical College in St. Clairsville, Ohio with a concentration in Building and Restoration Technology. Her Bachelor's Degree is in Business Administration with concentrations in Economics and East Asia Studies from Ohio University in Athens, Ohio.

Jessica served as a 2005 summer intern at the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) in Washington, D.C. During her service as an intern at NTHP she worked for the Kellogg Foundation Grant for the NTHP Rural Heritage Initiative Study where she researched rural preservation projects in relation to grassroots preservation efforts. In the summer of 2006 she served as a summer intern at The Center for Historic Preservation at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. On this internship she completed the existing conditions assessment and appropriateness of building materials for a historic structures report for the State of Indiana on the Old State Bank in Vincennes, Indiana.

In the future, Jessica visualizes herself within a hands-on work environment. She might be found at a historical site, or perhaps at an architectural firm working on preservation projects. Other options might be working as a consultant in restoration/revitalization efforts for rural or small town historic districts or you may find her researching city or regional planning regarding demographics relative to economic feasibility and funding sources at the local, state, or federal levels. In the meantime, Jessica is looking forward to her internship at the Ypsilanti Historical Society and to her pursuit of a Master's Degree in Historical Preservation from Eastern Michigan University.



Laurie Turkawski

Archives Intern

Laurie Turkawski is serving as the intern for the YHS Archives. Laurie has a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Finance from Oakland University and a Master of Science Degree in Finance and Economics from Walsh College in Michigan. After working for over 15 years in the accounting and finance field, she has completed 28 credit hours toward the Master of Science Degree in Historical Preservation at Eastern Michigan University in order to change her career. She has a current graduate grade point average of 4.0 and expects to graduate in the spring of 2007. Laurie looks forward to a career in cultural resource management.

Laurie just completed a "Simmons Internship" at The Henry Ford (Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village) in Dearborn, a program which was designed to give work experience to graduate students pursuing careers in museums, historical agencies, or related fields. She conducted historical and architectural research and building condition assessments, resulting in a historic structures reports for the Grimm Jewelry Store in Greenfield Village. She is continuing on at The Henry Ford as a volunteer to document the recent restoration of the Sir John Bennett Sweet Shop, also in Greenfield Village, as well as other projects. Laurie has also performed Michigan Historic and Architectural Field Surveys within the City of Ypsilanti to help update the documentation of the city's historic districts.

In 2003 & 2004 Laurie served as a volunteer for Preservation Wayne in Detroit, where she participated in the organization of the archives, researched historic buildings for the Cultural Center Tour Route, and assisted tour guides for the Cultural Center Tour, Freer House, and Century Club and Gem Theater. ■

“The Roman Catholic Church Here Has Almost No History”

By Dennis Zimmer

So asserted the Rev. G. I. Foster in 1857 and, measured by tangible resources, one might well agree. Twenty years after the incorporation of Ypsilanti, the Catholic parish of St. John the Baptist was barely 130 families whose place of worship was open timbers without a roof. It would take another year to complete it – and even then would still lack doors, pews and steps, “the entrance formed by an inclined plank (Mann, 27).”

But there has been a Roman Catholic presence in Ypsilanti from the first. LaSalle and the French fur trappers almost certainly were the first Europeans to traverse Washtenaw County, and where they went, the Jesuits were with them. The Parish of St. Anne was founded along with Detroit in 1701 and divided pastoral administration of the lower peninsula with St. Ignace. The first permanent building in Washtenaw County was the trading post established in 1809 by Gabriel Godfroy, Francois Pepin and Romaine DaChambre, three Frenchmen from Detroit, who located on the Pottawatomie Trail at what is now Ypsilanti. Born at Fort Ponchartrain in 1758, Col. Godfroy was a devout Catholic and one of the leading men in the Parish of St. Anne. Missionary priests are presumed to have stopped at Godfroy’s trading post from 1809 to its abandonment in 1818 (Beakes, pp. 539-40; 750); unfortunately, no church records survive to substantiate that any of the priests in the Michigan territory ever visited the post.

Irish immigrants began settling in what would become Ypsilanti as early as 1820, and missionary priests from Detroit continued ministering to the needs of both this new flock and the French and Native

American converts that remained. The earliest recorded names of missionaries serving the Catholic community from Detroit are the Reverend Fathers Montard and Montcoq, although, again, the records say little about their activity. Father Gabriel Richard, who was both pastor of St. Anne’s and Vicar General of the territories around the Great Lakes, appears to have given some thought to the changing ethnicity of the mission congregation. In a letter from the summer of 1829 he writes that Fr. Patrick O’Kelly, from Kilkenny, Ireland is working with him.

Father O’Kelly ministered to southeast Michigan until 1835 from a home base in Northfield, where he also founded a parish. He was joined by Father Morrissey who also resided in Northville. By 1836, the year before Michigan became a state, Ypsilanti was a town of 1,000 inhabitants, 50 of whom were Catholic.

The first resident priest of Ann Arbor was the Reverend Thomas Cullen, who came to the city in 1839 or 1840. Fr. Cullen was also an Irishman, native of Wexford, *continued on page 6*



St. John the Baptist Church, begun in 1855, completed in 1880. It was the second Catholic structure on the corner of Cross and Hamilton, replacing the parish’s wooden first home. (photo taken after 1884 – the cupola of the brick school built in that year can be seen behind the church roofline).

“The Roman Catholic Church Here Has Almost No History” -
continued from page 5

who had come to America as a seminarian in the household of Edward Dominic Fenwick, Bishop of Cincinnati, of which the diocese Detroit was then a part. He accompanied Bishop Frederic Rese when the Diocese of Detroit was created in 1833, was ordained in 1836 and received a missionary assignment in 1840 in which he was given the task of creating permanent parishes. His district extended across southern Michigan along the Ohio and Indiana borders and for the next ten years he saw to the spiritual life of the various towns in the area. In 1848, Fr. Cullen was joined by Fr. James Hennessy who worked with him founding churches in the surrounding communities, including Dexter, Jackson and Marshall. Ann Arbor's first St. Thomas Church was built in 1843 and Fr. Cullen remained pastor there until his death on September 7, 1862. The parish of St. John the Baptist in Ypsilanti was founded by Fr. Cullen the following year, 1844. Names of the original parishioners – Cosgrove, Kirk, Keegan, Casey, Kelley, Boyle – attest to the predominantly Irish makeup of Ypsilanti's early Catholic community.

There is some confusion regarding the first Catholic place of worship in Ypsilanti. Initial arrangements were temporary, with services occurring in private homes. Sources describe a small wood frame chapel built in 1839 on Ballard Street, possibly by Fr. Cullen, but there is no information as to its location (Weber). It was not the site of the present church, as records agree that Fr. Cullen (or, more correctly, Peter LeFevere, then Bishop of Detroit) bought that lot on April 26,



Rectory built by Fr. Edward Van Paemel. Constructed in 1863, it remained in use until 1932, when it was replaced by the present rectory.

1844 from one Charles W. Lane for forty dollars. The following year a frame structure was built on it measuring 24 x 16 feet. The poverty of the parish was such that at first they could not purchase windows, and blankets had to be hung in winter to keep the wind from blowing out the candles. Because of the missionary nature of the parish, services were held only once a month for the next thirteen years (Colburn: p. 122; Mann: p. 27).

A Tastefully Planned Edifice

By the 1850's St. John's had outgrown its wood-frame church and in 1855 the parish approached Fr. Cullen about building a more fitting structure; he demurred, believing the burden of the cost would be too great. A delegation then went to Bishop LeFevere and, with his encouragement, \$500 was pledged within two

weeks. The parish purchased an adjacent lot in 1856, and on May 25, the bishop laid the cornerstone for a new brick church, an Italianate structure large enough to seat 500 members. Work began at once, but did not proceed smoothly. "The walls and the timbers for the roof were put up, and there the work has rested," Rev. Foster disparagingly reported the following fall. The reason for the delay in construction is simple, however: Bishop LeFevere's support carried the stipulation that there would be no parish debt.

Progress was sufficiently along in 1858 to dedicate the church to St. John the Baptist (see photo of church on page 5). According to oral reports recorded 50 years later by Fr. Kennedy, the first mass, held on the feast day of St. John the Baptist

<p>SESI Lincoln Mercury Mazda 950 E. Michigan Avenue Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197</p>		<p>SESI Lincoln Mercury Volvo 3990 Jackson Road Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103</p>
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(June 23) also included the marriage of John and Margaret Kennedy. On the occasion of this first mass, the church still had no doors, no pews and the bride was obliged to enter from the back by way of a plank. The church was completed for Christmas, 1858, fully paid for.

1858 also saw Father Charles Lamejje named the first resident pastor. He served for 14 months and was succeeded by Father J. Kindekins, later Vicar General of Detroit, from 1860 to 1862. Father Van Jeniss of Dexter visited Ypsilanti once a month in the interim.

Fr. Edward Van Paemel was appointed pastor in 1862. Belgian by birth, Van Paemel immigrated to Detroit while still a seminarian and was ordained by Bishop LeFevere on May 27, 1853. He remained pastor until 1871, adding considerably to

the physical plant of the parish during his tenure. Shortly after his arrival in Ypsilanti, Van Paemel purchased the lot next door to the church on Cross Street. A rectory was erected there the following year, 1863; it remained in use until 1932.

During the Civil War years, the parish of St. John under Van Paemel took upon themselves the welfare of troops housed in the Thompson Building. In gratitude the 129 soldiers of the 14th Michigan Infantry subscribed over five hundred dollars toward the improvement of church property before leaving for the war. It is generally understood that the money was used to purchase land for a Catholic cemetery in Ypsilanti, the nearest Catholic burial grounds until then being either in Northfield or St. Thomas Cemetery in Ann Arbor. The St. John Cemetery *continued on page 16*



St. John's School, 1884. Closed in 1895, it led a second life as the St. John Club House during the first quarter of the 20th century. Extensive remodeling reverted it to a school (Needham Hall) in 1925. It remained in use until the end of parochial schooling at St. John's in 1971 and was demolished in 1979.



MUSTER

August 26

10:00 am to 3:00 pm

RIVERSIDE PARK
Ypsilanti, Michigan

*Bring your truck for a
fun day of pumping
water and fire truck talk*

2-PERSON
GOLF SCRAMBLE
September 17

9:30 am Shotgun Start

CALDERONE FARMS
GOLF COURSE

Call Tom Urquhart
734-662-1931 x217

110 West Cross Street
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

Tel: 734-547-0663

Email: firemuseum@msn.com

Jacob Thumm- Indian Artifact Collector of Ypsilanti

By Margaret & Frank Freeman

Jacob A. Thumm was born in Ypsilanti Township, the son of George and Amelia (Grebe) Thumm. He was a first generation American, his parents being of German descent, from Wurttemberg and Prussia, respectively. His father, George Thumm, arrived in America as a very young child with his parents, Adam and Anna (Schlecht) Thumm. They were pioneer, immigrant settlers and farmers in Superior Township, Washtenaw County.

In his youth, George Thumm worked on his father's farm on Prospect Road. By the summer of 1870, he boarded and labored on the farm of Charles Sweitzer at the southeast corner of Cherry Hill and Prospect in Superior Township.

On 20 December 1870, George A. Thumm married Amelia (Millie) Grebe in Mt. Clemens, Michigan. They made their home in Ypsilanti. He continued in his occupation of farmer through the birth of their six children and throughout his lifetime. Time passed and in November 1886, George purchased Lot #260 in Hunter's

The Jacob A. Thumm collection contains pieces dating from 10,000-8000 B.C., the Paleo Indian era, to the present century...



Jacob Thumm

addition to the Village (now city) of Ypsilanti. Herein, he also became a saloonkeeper, the same being located on the north side of Congress Street (Michigan Avenue), between Park and Grove Streets. As was the custom of the time, the residence was also in this building. George sold this property in March 1890, but retained possession until May 1890 to allow some transition time between residences.

Also in March 1890, George and Amelia (Millie) Thumm purchased a farm with land totaling 106 acres in Ypsilanti Township, section 13, at the southwest corner of Tyler and Rawsonville (County Line) Roads. Running through this farmland was the Willow Run Stream/Creek.

Jacob, or "Jake" as he was better known, was born on March 18, 1884 in Ypsilanti. He was the youngest of six children born to George and Amelia. His three siblings, who lived to adulthood, were Frank (1873-1961), Louise (Anderson) (1874-

1962) and Lydia Ann (Freeman) (1876-1927), mother of Frank Freeman.

Weighing in at 14 pounds at birth, Jake maintained this size advantage into adulthood, maturing at about the height of six feet two inches, and weighing over two hundred pounds.

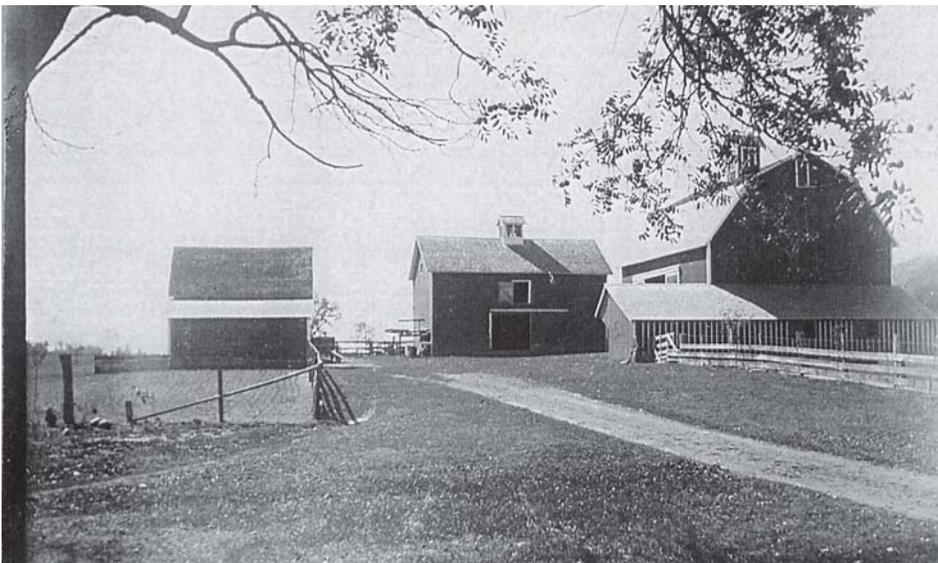
Jake was baptized a Lutheran, at St. Emmanuels Evangelische Lutherische Gemeinde, now Emmanuel Lutheran Church of Ypsilanti, which was established as a German Lutheran Congregation in 1859. His grandfather, Adam Thumm, was one of the sixteen charter members of this congregation. A plaque on the wall of the church hall denotes this fact. The hand written record of Jacob's baptism can still be found (1992) written in German, as one of the early entries in the church records.

Little has been recorded or handed down concerning Jake's childhood, except that he was raised and educated in the Ypsilanti area. The few remaining members of the family, who were contacted, could not contribute any additional information. It is known that Jake began collecting Indian artifacts on his father's farm on Tyler Road, as a youngster of six years old. The area around the Willow Run Stream was rich with Indian artifacts. Plowed fields on this farm were also an excellent source of these buried remnants from the daily lives of the inhabitants of the Ypsilanti area of long ago.

On Monday evening, 14 October 1918, Jacob Thumm married Elizabeth (Libbie) Sweitzer in Ypsilanti at the Baptist parsonage with the Reverent Charles G.



George Thumm farm at Rawsonville and Tyler Road.



George Thumm farm at Rawsonville and Tyler Road.



The George Thumm family, (back row) Frank, George & Jacob, (front row) Lydia, Amelia & Louise.



Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Thumm.



Archie and Frank Freeman and Libbie Thumm at Freeman's cottage on Base Lake in Dexter Township.

Morse officiating. My parents, Archie and Lydia Freeman served as witnesses. The newlyweds immediately moved into their new home at 312 Ballard Street, Ypsilanti. A joyous and boisterous shivaree was held at their new residence. Dozens of their friends and family were present and a good time was had by all. Frank Freeman recalls that his father, Archie Freeman, hung three sleigh bells from the newlywed's bedsprings.

Back in 1907, at the age of 23 years, Jake had joined the Knights of Pythias, Queen City Lodge #167, in Ypsilanti. He had rapidly advanced from the rank of "Page" in January, to "Esquire" in February, and to "Knight" in May 1907. In 1909, Jake joined the Odd Fellows Lodge, I.O.O.F. #548 of Ypsilanti, Michigan. After marriage, Libbie joined the Rebekahs. These lodges were a source of fellowship throughout their lifetimes.

In those days, many folks would drive to downtown Ypsilanti, on Michigan Avenue, to socialize. This was a favorite pastime of Jake and Libbie. Many afternoons were spent visiting and dining at the old Adam Thumm farm and at the Sweitzer farm, both on Prospect Road in Superior Township. Weekends were enjoyed at the Base Lake cottage of the Freemans in Dexter Township.

Also in 1911, at the age of 28 years, Jake had purchased 26.5 acres of land near Ashland, Virginia. It was from this area that approximately 118 Indian artifacts were added to Jake's collection. These points are distinguished from those found in the Great Lakes area, being made of clear glasslike to snow white colored quartz. This acreage was retained throughout Jake's lifetime. Jake and Libbie made several visits to this land in Virginia. And, through the years, many visits were made to the Thumms, in Ypsilanti, by their Virginia friends.

Jake had spent some time in Kansas. The dates of this have not been established. But, 26 Kansas type Indian artifacts were added to his collection.

By 1917, Jake was employed by the Julius Weinberg Auto Finishing Company in *continued on page 10*



Jacob Thumm - Indian Artifact Collector of Ypsilanti - *continued from page 9*

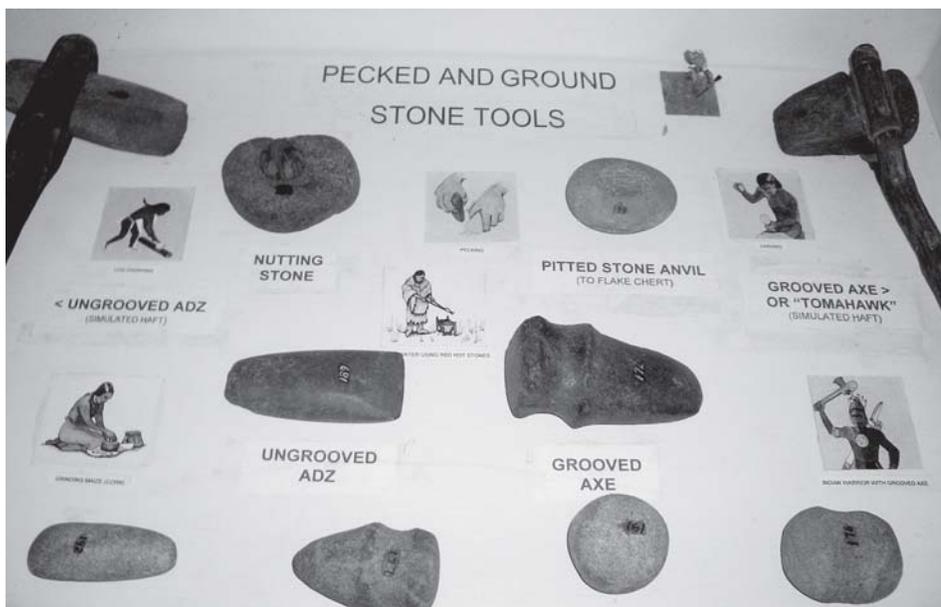
Ann Arbor, Michigan. He retained this position of detailing paint stripes on automobiles for 15 years. It was incongruous that such a large man should become a professional auto striper. This delicate, artful occupation eventually took its toll on Jake's health. He became sensitized to certain metal oxides in the paints. This allergy became so severe that even eating foods prepared in aluminum utensils, elicited a serious reaction. Therefore, Jake withdrew from painting in order to avoid contact with lead based painting materials.

Experience was then obtained in several fields before Jake found an occupation to his liking. Among the trial activities, he was, at one time or another, a policeman at the Ypsilanti Normal College, a night watchman at the Huron Motor Company in Wayne, Michigan and a manager of a refinishing company in Ypsilanti.

Finally, in 1934, Jake became a custodian at the Ypsilanti Central Elementary School. This position seemed to satisfy his need for fulfillment. He took great pride in providing the teachers and the students with clean comfortable classrooms. His proximity to the children may have provided a satisfaction that had been missed in a childless marriage. Contact with several teachers and other custodians provided social interests, both reassuring and stimulating.

A recent interview (March 1992), with a former Ypsilanti Central elementary grade school teacher, whose room had been cared for by Jake Thumm, elicited this statement, "Jake was the most wonderful custodian we ever had. He not only swept the floors meticulously, but he cleaned the desks, the woodwork, black boards and washed the windows, all without being asked. He worked spontaneously and derived much pleasure from a job well done."

Jake's retirement in 1959, at the age of 75 years, left an opening that was difficult to fill, for want of caring and the compulsion to do a good job pleasantly. Jacob A.



Views of the Jacob A. Thumm collection of Indian artifacts in the YHS Museum.



Home of Jake and Libbie Thumm at 312 Ballard Street in Ypsilanti.

Thumm passed away in Beyer Memorial Hospital at 10:05 A.M. on April 5, 1965, shortly after suffering a heart attack in downtown Ypsilanti. Funeral services were held in the Moore Funeral Home with Reverent Paul T. Pretzlaff, pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, officiating. Burial was in Highland Cemetery, Ypsilanti, Michigan.

In the dining room of their home at 312 Ballard Street sat the china cabinet with the curved glass door. Inside could still be seen the precious collection of Indian artifacts that had been gathered by Jake, throughout his lifetime. In keeping with Mr. Thumm's wishes, this collection was given to the Ypsilanti Historical Society in 1966, by Mrs. Elizabeth Thumm. It is displayed in the Ypsilanti Museum for the educational pleasure and interests of the school children and all who pass through the museum.

In over fifty years of our association, Uncle Jake was never heard to curse. He did not drink or smoke. His shy, mild and quiet manner belied his enormous energy. He was a very hard working, fastidious person who knew right from wrong and made sure that things were done right.

Jacob A. Thumm's hobby was the collection of Indian artifacts. His total collection contained approximately 600 pieces. About 118 pieces were from the Ashland,

Virginia area, and 26 pieces were identified as artifacts from Kansas. The remainder of the collection came from in and around Washtenaw County, Michigan. Many pieces no doubt came from the George A. Thumm Farm on Section 13 at Tyler and Rawsonville Road.

As a matter of interest, it can be noted in the History of Washtenaw County by Chapman (1881), that in 1875, at the second annual meeting of the Pioneer Society of Washtenaw County, A. B. Covert and others presented 400 Indian relics and curiosities to the society. A. B. Covert, my paternal great grandfather, along with his brother, Ralph, had owned the entire northern half of section 13 since 1834. Possibly, many of those artifacts also came from section 13.

The Jacob A. Thumm collection contains pieces dating from 10,000-8000 B.C., the Paleo Indian era, to the present century. In 1991 and 1992, specific identification, as to type and age of the Indian artifacts in this collection was directed by Professor James Payne of the University of Michigan, Department of Anthropology. The Paleo-Indian pieces in the collection have been of special interest and detailed drawings were made of these particular arrow points by the department at the university.

The collection includes Indian artifacts consisting of ornaments, small stone tools, pecked and ground stone tools and projectile points and knives. Stone chert sources from the Great Lakes area are identified as to particular source location. Other educational material relating to this subject is also displayed in the Ypsilanti museum.

The lives of Jacob and Elizabeth Thumm were very closely entwined, almost as one. They planned together, worked together and lived for each other. The finale of either life could not occur until both had made their passage. Elizabeth (Sweitzer) Thumm passed away December 28, 1969, four years after Jake. Honoring their previous agreement, substantial portions of the Thumm estate were left to Emmanuel Lutheran church of Ypsilanti and to the Odd Fellows-Rebekah Home in Jackson, Michigan. ■

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Gleanings – Where Did That Name Come From?

By Tom Dodd

Regular “Gleanings” readers at the “Ypsilanti-every-morning-since-WWII-coffee-drinkers-group” asked Society President Al Rudisill, “What’s the meaning of our publication’s name? What are *gleanings*, anyway?” Paterfamilias Barney Hughes looked it up:

Gleanings:

“Things – especially facts – that are gathered from various sources rather than acquired as a whole.”

Historical:

“Grain or other produce that is gathered after a harvest.”

19th century realism painter Jean Francois Millet may have popularized the term with his 1857 painting, *The Gleaners*, we remember seeing in many

of our elementary school classrooms alongside Lincoln, Washington, and *Washington Crossing the Delaware*. The French artist depicted peasants scrounging for leftovers in an already-harvested field. After the harvest, landowners permitted poor local families to scour the fields for whatever they could save (glean) for their own humble larders.

A leader in the Barbizon School of realistic painting, Millet was the first painter to endow rural life with a dignity and monumentality that transcended realism, making the peasant an almost heroic figure. Between 1858 -1859 Millet produced the famous *Angélus*. Both works are now in the Musée d’Orsay. This enormously popular painting, showing farm workers pausing for evening vespers was sold forty years later for the sensational price of 553,000 francs. *Angélus* reprints also appeared on the classroom and Sunday School walls of our youth.

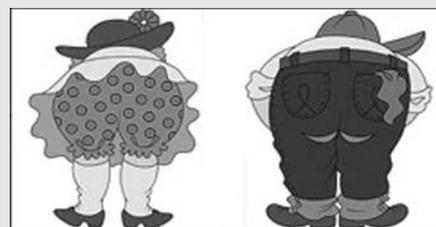
The Ypsilanti Historical Society encourages readers to scour the field for stories of the community’s past. Look for stories of “dignity and monumentality that transcend” local history and submit them for publication in the “Gleanings.” ■



Jean Francois Millet’s “The Gleaners” painted in 1857.



Jean Francois Millet’s “Angélus” painted in 1858-1859.



Modern-day plywood cut-out “yard art” version of suburban gleaners.

Ypsilanti Historical Society Museum & Archive Hours

The Museum, located at 220 North Huron Street, is owned by the City of Ypsilanti and is operated and maintained by volunteer workers in the public interest of the Ypsilanti Historical Society. The Museum and Archives are open to the public at no charge.

Museum Hours:

Thursday _____ 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Saturday _____ 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Sunday _____ 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Archives Hours:

Monday _____ 9:00 am – 12:00 noon
Wednesday _____ 9:00 am – 12:00 noon
Sunday _____ 12:00 noon – 3:00 pm

Note: The Museum is closed during the month of January

News from the Fletcher White Archives

By Gerry Pety

The costs of air fare and gasoline have taken a perceptible toll on the number of out of town guests that visit our archives. We have not had as many out of state visitors and people who fly in for a one or two day visit as in the past. Some of my favorite visitors who did show up this year were the Sprague family from the great state of Oregon. After a two year hiatus Richard and wife Polly have come back for a visit with Richard's mom, Rita Sprague who runs the YHS museum gift shop. Besides general information they also did some more research on Polly's family, the Coochs. Thanks for coming and don't stay away so long!

My two interns this year are Makoto Ikegaya who is here from EMU's outstanding Historic Preservation Program

and Andrew Callam, a history major, from Emory University in Georgia. These two gentlemen are helping us organize the archives. What a job they are doing! Some of the things they have found are amazing and will greatly add to our collections. Thank you, and one more reason to come on down to the greatest little archive in Michigan. So strap on you Avia, Pro-lite running shoes and streak on down here.

More big news is that our 1890 Ypsilanti Heritage Maps are at the printers and should be available when you read this. The maps are full size reproductions of the original 1890 Ypsilanti Map with improvements that make it easier to locate items noted on the legend. They are 24 inches by 36 inches in size and printed on off white, acid-free paper and come in a protective tube for storage. We are hoping to sell 100 of these maps on a first come, first serve basis. The proceeds will be used for reproducing our Ypsilanti City Directories. If you have seen our fully restored and preserved 1890 map in the archives, the map is absolutely stunning in detail and, should because of its restoration, last for many generations. If you wish to reserve a copy,

call me at home at 572-0437 or mail your request with check or money order to the Ypsilanti Historical Society at 220 N. Huron St., Ypsilanti, MI 48197. The cost is \$37.50 each if picked up at the archives. If you want it shipped first class USPS, the cost for postage and insurance is \$6.35 each.

As I have noted before, the directories are really beginning to show their age and we truly need to do something to preserve the information they contain. They are our most used resource and contain much more information than a phone book of the era.

We have also received from Standard Printing the much smaller version of the 1890 map that measures 11 by 17 inches. These are available for \$3.50 and there is a vast clarity improvement over the earlier rendition that we once sold. This map will be available at both the museum gift shop and here in the archives. We have no way to ship the smaller maps without folding them in half. Postage is \$1.41 each uninsured if you want it shipped. ■

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Ypsilanti High School Boys Band and the Ypsilanti Community Band

By Lois Katon

Professor John F. Barnhill, Head of the Michigan State Normal College Math Department, came to Ypsilanti High School on his Wednesday afternoons off in 1925 to organize a Boys Band. He believed that "any boy who can whistle can play in a band." He taught the fundamentals of various instruments and drilled the boys in precision marching. They played in all Ypsilanti parades and major parades throughout Michigan, and as early as 1927, gave Summer Band Concerts in Prospect Park. A very memorable occasion

After the interruption caused by World War II, the band resumed Summer Concerts in the Park under several different conductors including Allan Townsend, Don Racine, and George Cavendar. In 1979 Lynn Cooper was Conductor and it became known as the Ypsilanti Community Band. Later Paul Stanifer and Charles Lee served for a short period of time, then Ken Bowman was Conductor for a few years.

Professor John F. Barnhill ...He believed that "any boy who can whistle can play in a band."



Professor John F. Barnhill

was playing in a massed band performance under the direction of John Phillip Sousa in Flint. In the 30's, new uniforms were ordered from the Craddock Company in Kansas City, MO. They were navy blue with gold trim & braid. Red epaulets and black leather belts set off the uniforms. Summer Concerts in the Park continued to be popular in the 1930s until Professor Barnhill died in May, 1941. After his death, The Barnhill Memorial Band was organized with help from Ernest Chappelle and the Ypsilanti Kiwanis. Harold Goodsman was appointed the new Director of the band.

Some of the young bandsmen still remembered in Ypsilanti today are: Bernard Baer, Willard Clawson, Lionel Fulton, Harry Gillett, Clarence & Harold Goodsman, Lavern Howard, Rernard Hughes, Lorne Kennedy, George Moorman, Ed Morhous, Art Smith, Don Stadler, Ralph Stitt, Bob Taber, Edmund Terrall, & Ken Thayer.

When Jerry Robbins came to EMU in 1991, he joined the band as a trombone player and was Assistant Director from 1993 'til he became Director in 1998. He remains in that position today. The Community Band performs about eight concerts a year including the Memorial Day Concert at The Yankee Air Force, The Ypsilanti Heritage Festival at Riverside Park, The Christmas Concert at Washtenaw Community College, and others at WCC and Recreation Park.

Some of the longtime members still active in the YCB today are Harold Goodsman, Lorne Kennedy, Wayne Jahnke, and Tom Warner. ■

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Company Coins From the 1800's

By Gerry Pety, Archivist

Sometimes people donate items to our archives that at first do not seem to fit our mission at the archives. That mission being to accumulate the written history and the collective memory of entire Ypsilanti community through written information and pictures that relate to that history. This time that item is neither, it is in reality a coin or token having been issued by the Hewitt Brothers Dry Goods Company in 1864, right here in Ypsilanti (see image below). While this cent-sized coin is wonder-

ful to look at, in itself it does not impart any knowledge except to stimulate the curiosity of the viewer. Ah, but beneath its simple appearance is a peek at the problems of commerce during the Civil War in Ypsilanti and throughout the United States during that perilous time.

According to Gresham's Law, bad or inferior money drives good money out of circulation. Unlike the "fiat" money of today, the "real" money of the 1860's had an intrinsic value based on its metallic content. Money in circulation then was composed primarily of the regal metals of gold, silver and the base metal copper for "inferior" coins below ten cents. Money was REAL in every sense and people did not like paper money after the experience of "wildcat" or "fraudulent bank notes" which I have written about in previous issues of the *Ypsilanti Gleanings*. The people of Ypsilanti
continued on page 24

Token issued in 1864 by Hewitt Brothers Dry Goods Company located on the corner of Congress (Michigan Avenue) and Washington Streets.



Acquisitions

By Grace Cornish

New acquisitions for the Museum have come in at a steady space in 2006. Recent donations include a 1941 satin wedding gown with lace trim. Mrs. Norton gave us two long muslin petticoats with wide embroidered bottoms. These are used under our full Victorian dresses. Mrs. Wheeler donated numerous toddler garments including 8 short dresses, 2 jackets, sun suits, overalls, underwear with garters, bonnets, a bathing suit, small blankets and many infant items. She also donated a Hawk Eye folding camera. The museum has many beautiful christening dresses but few short infant dresses.

Other recent acquisitions include a leather finger-holder instrument and a Rolo Harmonica from Cheryl Farmer. Donna Emerson brought in "A La Greeque Food For Palates" cook from the 1965 Ypsilanti Greek Theater. Mary Adams gave us a picture of Dr. Edward Shutte George from the plaque that hung in the George School. Numerous items have been given to the Archives. The Museum needs early 20th century children's clothes, especially boy's and men's clothes. Items should be in good shape and if not duplicates of what is here, the acquisitions committee will welcome them. Call 482-2108 if you have questions. ■

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“The Roman Catholic Church Here Has Almost No History” - *continued from page 7*

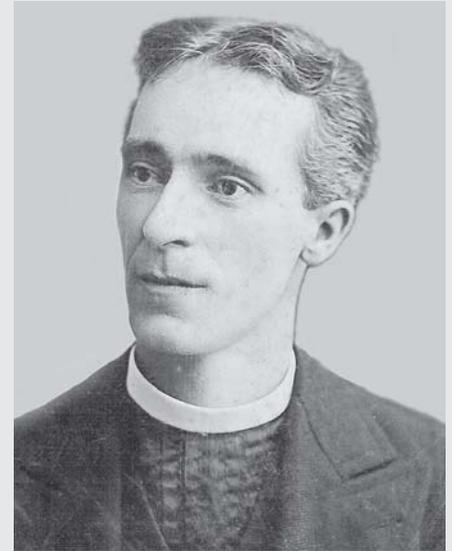
grounds were located at the foot of St. John Street, north of West Forest Avenue. The cemetery included a watch house, an eight foot square structure used by family members to guard at night against body snatchers who had an active trade with the University of Michigan medical school.

Fr. Van Paemel opened the first parochial school. On May 30, 1867, he purchased two lots on Florence Street from Patrick Kelley, and either remodeled the Kelley home or - more likely - constructed a new building to house a school. This was a one room frame structure, spartanly furnished with long wooden benches and a box stove. Instruction was confined to elementary courses (it being customary for most children to leave school by the age of twelve), and judging from the predominantly Irish ancestry – Sarah Foy, Elizabeth Foy, Maggie Murphy, Bridget Monaghan and Michael Morin - the teachers seem to have been drawn from among the parishioners.

The parish grew to 136 families by 1868. One of Fr. Van Paemel’s final improvements was to enlarge the church to accommodate this growth by extending the front (north) entrance to the street in 1870.

Fr. Marcius Pieter Uyt Willigan was pastor for one year, 1871-1872, followed by Fr. Patrick B. Murray for the next three. He was replaced in 1876 by Father William DeBever. “Father DeBever, a Hollander by birth, was a devoted pastor, strict in his standards of living and church observance and stern in his rebuke of laxity, yet genial and kindly. He was a familiar figure driving about the town with his phaeton and fat black pony ‘Fanny’ presented to him by his congregation (Colburn, p. 216).” Part of the reason for the carriage was that, as earlier pastors had done for the nascent parish of St. John, Fr. DeBever acted as visiting pastor for communities in Milan and Whittaker. The parish of St. Joseph in Whittaker was established June, 1889, but continued to

In the Roman Catholic Church, the year 1892 witnessed the beginning of the long and notable pastorate of Reverend Father Frank Kennedy, during which the congregation was to more than double. Father Kennedy, during the long years of his ministry, held a unique place in the affections of Ypsilantians. He was deeply concerned in all the best interests of the town and found friends in many circles. (Colburn, p. 261-562)



Fr. Frank Kennedy (1866-1922). The first native-born and longest serving pastor at St. John.

function as a mission of St. John’s until Rev. John F. Needham was assigned as their first resident priest in 1904; until that time the fourteen mile trip had to be made regularly by priests from Ypsilanti.

During the early pastorate of Fr. DeBever, renovations to the interior of the church were completed, including the addition of a small chapel and installation of an organ. As William Beake describes it, “the interior with its frescoes, candelabra, statues, organ and beautiful altar will compare favorably with any church in the State. This building is a great credit to the small congregation and even to the citizens (1170).”

In 1880 the membership of the parish numbered around 500 (240 families), the church was valued at \$18,000 dollars, and St. John the Baptist Parish set about preparations for the expansion of its school. Fr. DeBever secured six Sisters of Providence from Terre Haute, Indiana to teach, marking the start of formal parochial education at the parish. A square frame house next to the school was purchased on November 4 as a residence for the teaching sisters and the one room school-house continued to serve until 1884, when it was replaced by a two

story, four classroom brick structure. Under the Sisters of Providence the curriculum was expanded to include high school classes. Courses included algebra, chemistry, geometry and botany as well as music and needlework for the girls. The Sisters also provided a dormitory of fourteen beds for girls who attended from the surrounding townships. The first class - five girls - graduated in 1887.

The Panic of 1893 left the community with insufficient funds to retain the Sisters’ services. Lay teachers were again hired to provide elementary instruction at least, but times were so bad that even the lower grades had to be discontinued. The school remained open only until 1895, when as Colburn so succinctly puts it, “owing to discouraging conditions it soon closed.” (Colburn, p. 238)

Fr. Frank Kennedy

In 1892, poor health made it necessary for Fr. DeBever to step down. His replacement was a 28 year old native of Brighton – the first American-born priest to serve at St. John - the Reverend Father Frank Kennedy (1866-1922). Kennedy was intellectually precocious; having passed the state board teacher examinations at the age of 11 (the teaching certifi-

cate reluctantly awarded to him was never used). In seminary at Assumption College, Sandwich, Ontario, he was twice promoted for being first in class for ten consecutive weeks. The rule which allowed these promotions was abolished to prevent Kennedy from finishing his coursework in a single year. Graduating cum laude, he spent three years as a member of the diocesan college of St. Mary's in Monroe before completing training for ordination at St. Mary's, Baltimore. Frank Kennedy received holy orders August 18, 1889 and served at parishes in Niles and Dearborn before being assigned to St. John the Baptist in Ypsilanti.

One of the first alterations Fr. Kennedy made to the parish grounds was a renova-

The school building stood empty for a few years, but with the growth of the Normal College, parishioners refurbished one of the rooms and made it available to the Catholic students and faculty for meetings of the Catholic Students Club. This drew interest from other social organizations and the school soon was leading a new life as St. John's Club House, one of the most popular meeting and recreation spots in town. Besides the Catholic Students Club, the Young Ladies Sodality, the Ypsilanti Study Club, (an offshoot in 1901 of the Ladies' Literary Club), the Kiwanis Club and the newly-formed Rotary Club all met at the Club House. The second floor was refurbished for dancing and dinners and the Rotary Club held its weekly luncheons there until the Huron

Normal College Catholic students were welcomed by open houses at the rectory in the autumn, and Fr. Kennedy's tenure is remembered for outdoor socials which included an orchestra on the front porch and dancing on the rectory lawn.

tion of the rectory. It had been neglected and needed repair, and had accumulated several horse sheds at the rear of the building which had become objectionable. But it was the cupola that apparently set Fr. Kennedy off – he considered it unattractive and unnecessary and asked that it be removed. This was the impetus for a much larger remodeling campaign which added a kitchen and living room to the rear of the house (the horse-sheds came down to make way). A recreation room was created on the third floor and a library on the second. The rectory yard was landscaped using dirt hauled from the recently evacuated cemetery. (Poor drainage had made the Forest Street location unsuitable and Fr. DeBever purchased the present location on River Street near the end of his pastorate.)

Normal College Catholic students were welcomed by open houses at the rectory in the autumn, and Fr. Kennedy's tenure is remembered for outdoor socials which included an orchestra on the front porch and dancing on the rectory lawn.

Hotel opened in 1923 and the club moved to the larger quarters the hotel offered. (Fr. Kennedy seems to have been as skilled a carpenter as he was an academic. He took an active role in the remodeling, laying flooring and rebuilding the staircase. He had done similar labor on the rectory, and built a pulpit for the church whose artistry was highly regarded by the parishioners.)

Aside from his work in the church, Fr. Kennedy was actively involved in the civic life of Ypsilanti. A prominent member of the Ypsilanti Rotary Club, the Country Club and the Knights of Columbus, Fr. Kennedy was a frequent and popular speaker, and his support was sought out – and usually given – for most local public undertakings.

St. John was involved in the Ypsilanti cultural scene to the point of producing at least one theatrical production at the Ypsilanti Opera House: *Daniel O'Conner* by *continued on page 18*

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“The Roman Catholic Church Here Has Almost No History” - *continued from page 17*

John Wilson Dodge, a musical melodrama. (It should also be noted that the Club House was furnished in part with proceeds from a theatrical at the Weurth Theatre put on by the men of the parish.)

Fr. Kennedy was appointed Diocesan Superintendent of Schools for Detroit in 1918, overseeing around 100 parish schools with an enrollment of 75,000 children. His concern was to standardize the parochial curriculum with public instruction and raise the standards of parochial education in Detroit. Anti-foreign sentiments generated during World War I and the Red Scare, which reached its height in 1919-20, translated into hostility against the eastern and southern Europeans who were immigrating into the area in large numbers during the first decades of the century. Many of these immigrants were Catholic which fostered anti-Catholic sentiment as well. Attempts were made in 1920 and 1924 to outlaw parochial school systems at the state level. It was in this climate that Fr. Kennedy was striving to turn out “good, educationally well-equipped American citizens.”

Fr. Kennedy also had responsibility for the needs of the scores of nuns who attended

the Normal School over the summer (a single summer’s estimate of nuns requiring accommodations through the church was 150 from nine different orders), and an annual influx of about three hundred Catholic students placed additional strains on the parish staff. At the close of the summer session of 1921, Fr. Kennedy suffered a complete breakdown from which he never recovered. He was treated at St. Joseph’s sanitarium in Ann Arbor and sent to convalesce in Arizona but failed to improve. Fr. Kennedy returned home to Ypsilanti in December and died February 18, 1922.

The funeral of Frank Kennedy is probably the largest in Ypsilanti’s history - or rather funerals, as there were three separate requiem masses held to accommodate the large number of mourners. Detroit Bishop Michael J. Gallagher presided at the requiem high mass on February 22, with over one hundred priests in attendance. Fr. Kennedy’s honorary pallbearers included two governors (Alex J. Groesbeck and Alfred Sleeper), three senators, judges, mayors and the entire city council. All stores in the city were closed the morning of the funeral. *The Daily Ypsilantian* reported nearly two hundred automobiles in the funeral cortege, and the church could not hold the crowds assembled to pay their last respects. “I doubt,” said Bishop Edward Kelly of

Grand Rapids, who delivered the funeral sermon, “if any other man in the entire state ever did more to break down religious barriers than Fr. Kennedy.”

The Church has Not Ceased to Foster True Art

The early twenties were a period of prosperity in Ypsilanti, and when the Rev. Dennis Needham arrived to replace Fr. Kennedy, he decided to utilize that prosperity to rebuild the church. The growth of the parish under Fr. Kennedy combined with the increased student presence from the Normal College had made Fr. Van Paemel’s brick edifice insufficient, and a new building program was begun. Fr. Kennedy had himself considered a new church, and gone so far as to spend the summer of 1914 abroad studying Catholic architecture and drawing some initial sketches. Although nothing concrete came of this work, friends of Fr. Kennedy did promise financial support to the project providing the new church was built. These included Arthur D. McBernie, the Hon. Fred Green, later governor of Michigan (1927-1930), Hon. Fred Chapman, mayor of Ionia and Hon. John S. Haggerty, head of the Wayne County Republican Party organization and Secretary of State under Green.

Initial designs were produced by the firm of Van Leyen, Schilling, Keough & Reynolds of Detroit in 1923. These were for a Spanish Rococo church seating 700 and intended to be a cultural statement within the growing academic community – “a building reminding students coming from all parts of Michigan that the Church has not ceased to foster true art,” as the *Ypsilanti Press* described it.. During the razing and initial phase of construction, mass was held first in the club house and, when that building was partially demolished, in the Wuerth Theatre. The basement was completed in March of 1924, and officially celebrated with a St. Patrick’s day banquet; services were held there until the project’s completion in 1932.

Unfortunately for the original designs, Fr. Needham also chose this time to reopen the parish school. Van Leyen, Schilling Keough & Reynolds were again the archi-



Below: Present St. John the Baptist Church, 1933. The original designs included a campanile over the transept door on Hamilton Street; the open porch above it is the only part of the tower completed.

Inset: Original interior of the 1933 church.



archs and engineers. On November 8, 1924 the cornerstone to the new school was laid. The school was expanded to nine classrooms and the building was completely renovated, the interior being partly preserved, and the exterior stripped and refaced with new brick and stone masonry. The Dominican Sisters of Adrian were secured as teachers and the school reopened in 1925. The church again purchased property as a residence for the sisters; 309 N. Hamilton functioned as a convent until the construction of the current school building. The renovation cost approximately \$50,000, and the convent added another \$10,500. In order to accomplish this, funds intended for the building of the new church were used. Church construction halted, and for the next ten years the home of St. John the Baptist Parish was their roofed over basement. Fr. Needham did not live to see the new school open; he died July 10, 1925. The building was renamed Needham Hall in his honor.

Fr. Charles Linskey replaced Needham as pastor in September, 1925. Fr. Linskey was the Detroit Diocesan Superintendent of Schools when appointed to St. John

and continued to hold that position in conjunction with pastoral work until 1929. In poor health for most of his pastorate, faced with mounting parish debt – the start of the Great Depression also marks his tenure - Fr. Linskey died of illness following major surgery on October 29, 1931, the third pastor to die at Ypsilanti in ten years.

Austere simplicity

Prospects for the parish were grim when Rev. G. (George) Warren Peek assumed the pastorate. The basement had proven to be poorly designed and faulty in construction, the school debt had grown to \$17,000, the rectory was in such disrepair as to be considered unsanitary and a discouraged congregation was facing the Great Depression. Fr. Peek appears to have been quite an optimist; he believed the best course for the parish was that the church be completed as soon as possible - the construction would give work to some of the unemployed and the cost of labor and materials might not be so low again for years.

Rather than continuing with the original designs, new plans were drawn by

McGrath and Dohman, Architects and Engineers, 2231 Park Avenue, Detroit. These follow the footprint already established by the basement's construction, but the elaborate Rococo tracteries were abandoned and a Romanesque design proposed in its place. The revised plans included a new rectory which would harmonize with the church exterior. The construction firm of Bryant and Detweiler, Detroit, was retained in June

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church may well have been the only building of significance built in southern Michigan during the early Depression

of 1932 and work began at once, starting with demolition of the rectory.

The cornerstone for the present church was laid by Bishop Gallagher on September 11, 1932. In it was placed a copper box with photographs of the church it replaced and the four preceding pastors who had built the parish to this point, then-current editions of the *Ypsilanti Press*, *Detroit Free Press* and *Michigan Catholic* and a list of 320 parishioners "whose contribution . . . made the church possible." The copper box also contains photos of the four non-Catholic benefactors whose generosity in memory of Fr. Kennedy had made the building possible.

Construction was completed by the following May and the new Catholic Church of St. John the Baptist was dedicated Sunday, June 4, 1933, Bishop Gallagher again presiding. The date was chosen to honor Fr. Peek, marking his fourteenth anniversary as a priest,

The church is a pure Romanesque design and early commentators were struck by its dignity and "simplicity which is almost austere." The roof peak rises 61 feet
continued on page 20

“The Roman Catholic Church Here Has Almost No History” -
continued from page 19

above the ground and is 53 feet above the main floor. The original layout was estimated to seat 1100 persons. The clerestory is open beamed and lit by a row of stained glass windows, six to the side. The main processional entrance is dominated by a rose window and the chancel contains a combination of three windows, each a memorial to the pastors LeBever, Needham and Lindskey. Stained glass medallion windows in the nave illustrate the life of Christ. The main altar and matching side altars were made in Italy of Botticino marble. Their green and white facings contrasted with the black and

honey colored sanctuary floor, cut from blocks imported from France, Belgium and Italy, and with the communion rail of bronze and Numidian red marble. Stone carvings adorning the door frames and exterior of the building are the work of Parducci of Detroit.

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church may well have been the only building of significance built in southern Michigan during the early Depression. The cost of construction, including the rectory, is variously given at \$98,000 to \$100,000; the appraised value of the buildings was placed at \$252,000, according to the *Free Press* for November 4, 1933. At the time of its dedication, the parish of St. John numbered 360 families. That so much was accomplished by such a small congregation

during the worst financial downturn of the twentieth century is evidence of their dedication, determination and faith.

The Continuing Cost of Education

Peek remained pastor until 1940. He was succeeded by Erwin Lefebvre from 1940 to 1943 and Rev. John Larkin for the following ten years. The decorative painting still seen on the ceilings and exposed beams were commissioned by Fr. Larkin in 1949, as well as mural work on the clerestory and within the chancel. The lot opposite the church at the corner of Cross and Hamilton was purchased in 1942 as the site for a Shrine to the Virgin Mary. Fr. Larkin also eliminated the church debt, leaving a surplus toward expansion.

Report from the Museum Advisory Board

By Virginia Davis-Brown

Wow, what a summer we have had so far, weather nearing the 100 degree mark and humidity right along with it. Things are heating up at the museum also. Our tours have been outstanding. In June we had over 475 students and adults tour our museum. I think that is the highest number we have had go through in a month in just tours. It was a great job by the docents.

Flag Day found the museum in a party atmosphere, as we tried to show our appreciation to our Docents for all the work that they do, with a luncheon. There were 31 in attendance. Each received a small gift.

We will, again this year, be participating in the Heritage Celebration. It will involve between 80 and 100 people for the 3 days to act as docents. If you are in Ann Arbor near the Ann Arbor Street Museum you might stop in and see their exhibit of the 1920 and 1930 era. They have borrowed 3 of our dresses to show some of the clothing that was worn during that period.

This year we have a new “Lost Ypsilanti Speaks” exhibit. There is information on 15 sites, 3 families and a map showing where each had lived. If you didn't see last years exhibit we have that on the second floor which makes it a total of 34



different sites. Do you know which Mayor was a professional baseball player and also the first African American, in Ypsilanti, to be elected to that high position, or what church burned almost to the ground right across from the fire department? If you don't, stop in and find out. If you haven't been in yet plan on stopping in before September 5.

The museum now has an Intern working five days a week. Jessica Williams was born in West Virginia and is in the Graduate Program at Eastern. She will be helping us in many areas.

Our 4th Annual Quilt Exhibit is now being planned. If you have a quilt that you would like to exhibit, and it has not been shown before, please let me know and we will be glad to display it for you. The quilts will be different than those that have been shown before. It will open September 28 and run until October 15. There will be a suggested donation of \$3.00 this year. The hours will be Thursdays and Fridays from 2:00 to 4:00 pm and Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 4:00 pm. There will be more information coming.

If you have any questions about any of these things please feel free to call me at 484-0080. ■

This new construction once again focused upon upgrading the school.

Needham Hall was adequate through the Second World War, but post-war growth in the Ypsilanti area and spreading population from Detroit rapidly increased the size of the congregation to over a thousand families, and the Baby Boom taxed available classroom space. When Fr. William Mooney arrived in June, 1953, he immediately accepted the charge to expand the parish's educational program. An addition was necessary to provide more classrooms; a new convent would also be required to house the additional nuns needed to teach. But even for a parish the size of St. John's the cost of two new construction projects was prohibitive. The problem was resolved by designing a combination building, a two-story block with classrooms occupying the ground floor and basement, and a convent - complete with roof garden - on the second. This new building would triple enrollment from 200 to over 600 students and the convent provided living quarters for 16 sisters - twice the number crowded into 309 N. Hamilton. With cost reductions from combining the projects the new school/convent came to \$300,000. Through pledges from approximately half the congregation, the \$150,000 needed to

This new building would triple enrollment from 200 to over 600 students and the convent provided living quarters for 16 sisters - twice the number crowded into 309 N. Hamilton. With cost reductions from combining the projects the new school/convent came to \$300,000.

go forward was exceeded over a two year period, and the new school was dedicated in 1955. The two story structure stretches along Florence Street and was anchored on the east to Needham Hall. The alley connecting Cross and Florence was vacated to accommodate the new construction. Encouraged by the success of the grade school, the parish decided to continue expanding and a high school was completed in 1961 on Packard Road. Fr. Mooney died one month before its dedication.



Architect's drawing of new school and convent completed in 1955.

Despite this early optimism (Fr. Young was working on expansion of the high school in the mid -60's), rising operating costs and lack of funds forced the closure of the entire school system - the high school in 1970 and the elementary school in 1971. The high school would eventually be sold to Faithway Baptist Church.

Monsignor Lawrence Graven served as pastor from September, 1961 to January 1965, his tenure spanning most of the Second Vatican Council (final session, December 8, 1965.) His successor, Rev.

Marvin Young, was pastor through January, 1968.

In 1964 the Diocese of Detroit ordained its first Black priest, Donald M. Clark. Father Clark, a native Detroiter, graduated from Cass Technical High School. Brought up in the Second Baptist Church, Fr. Clark was a convert to Catholicism. At about age 14 he expressed a desire to change denominations; his parents urged him to wait a year. He continued to attend Second Baptist while also attending St.

Benedict's. At the end of the year, seeing that his desire remained firm, his parents consented, aiding him in the cost of his education. He attended Sacred Heart Seminary and concluded preparation for ordination at St. John's Seminary in Plymouth. His first assignment was St. John the Baptist in Ypsilanti. Fr. Clark is considered one of the founders of the National Black Catholic Caucus.

Fr. Clark replaced Fr. Leo P. Broderick, who was actively involved in student ministry at Eastern Michigan University, and had been released to devote his full time to that work. As chaplain of the Newman Club, Fr. Broderick revitalized the Catholic student presence on campus and would be instrumental in establishing the student parish of Holy Trinity, which was dedicated September 18, 1965.

Two sister parishes were also created in the sixties, St. Alexis and St. Ursula. St. Alexis had been a mission to the Willow Run Housing Project since 1943 when associate pastor Clare A. Murphy began holding mass in the recreation hall. The Willow Run mission continued to be served by assistants from St. John's until June, 1966 when it was raised to parish status. St. Ursula parish was formed in June, 1960; its church dedicated July 8, 1967. Both parishes were closed by Bishop Kenneth J. Povish on January 8, 1994 and merged that same day into the newly established Transfiguration Parish. *continued on page 22*



Our river, museums, and historic district are a draw for heritage tourism travelers. Heritage tourism is one of the fastest growing segments of the travel industry and has the potential of bringing a significant amount of money into Ypsilanti restaurants and shops.

We are slowly identifying our City as an interesting place to visit. Several years ago, the Heritage Foundation paid for the installation of "Historic District" signs throughout the District. Our car museum and fire museum were added to the AAA Michigan Tour Book as places to visit. Our Historical Museum will be added to the Tour Book after it increases the number of hours it is open to the public. The AAA requires that facilities be open a minimum of fifteen hours per week to be listed.

MotorCities and the Ypsilanti Convention and Visitors Bureau applied to MDOT for signs to be posted identifying Exit 183 as a place to get off and visit our museums. After over a year of negotiating, MDOT finally approved big brown signs that will say "Ypsilanti Museums, Exit 183." Directional signs will also be installed at the top of each exit ramp.

People walking around town and visiting our museums and RM Classics have been noticeable this summer. As we continue to increase our visibility, heritage tourism will continue to grow and prosper in Ypsilanti.

*Bill Nickels, Chief Steward
Ypsilanti MotorCities*

**Experience
Everything
Automotive**

"The Roman Catholic Church Here Has Almost No History" - *continued from page 21*

In 1971 the Catholic Church hierarchy in the state of Michigan was restructured. The new dioceses of Gaylord and Kalamazoo were created and existing diocesan boundaries were redrawn. A consequence of this reconfiguration was that Washtenaw County became part of the Diocese of Lansing, ending St. John's 125 year connection with Detroit.

The Second Vatican Council brought profound changes to the structure of the Church and the form of its liturgy, and responsibility to begin implementing these reforms fell to Fr. William King (January, 1968 to April 2, 1973). Changes in the liturgy required structural changes in the layout of the church interior, the most evident being the repositioning of the altar to face the assembly. The original "shelf" altar and redos were removed and replaced by a freestanding altar sited partly within the nave. To accommodate this new placement a rectangular wooden platform was constructed, extending the level of the main floor of the sanctuary. The altar rail was also removed (a portion of it served as a barrier across the rear of the chancel, as the altar steps remained in place but now led to empty space). The church also underwent some cosmetic updates, acquiring carpeting and fresh paint (part of the mural work was lost in the repainting).

Rev. David Harvey was appointed administrator April 2, 1973 and became pastor March 8, 1974. Under his administration the elementary school was converted to a parish activities center and the church basement renovated for social functions; it has been renamed Harvey Hall in his honor. Parish council also decided to demolish Needham Hall, as the space was not needed and repairs had become too costly. This action was blocked by the Historic District Commission as efforts were made to save the building, and remained at a halt for around three years – into the pastorate of Rev. Edwin Schoettle (appointed 16 July, 1979). Needham

Hall was demolished in June, 1980 under protest of the Ypsilanti Historical Commission and the lot landscaped as a memorial garden for the parish.

Fr. Schoettle died unexpectedly on April 8, 1981. Rev. Gerald Ploof, who had served as Associate Pastor at St. John in 1975, was chosen as pastor following Fr. Schoettle's death. Fr. Ploof was able to retire the school debt during his tenure, in part through the sale of the high school.

Part of the administrative change brought in by Vatican II was the implementation of pastoral teams, with separate agents responsible for overseeing Religious Education, Liturgy, Christian Service and so on. As yet there were few trained laity in these fields and pastoral teams were mostly comprised of women religious. The presence of four nuns as Fr. Ploof's pastoral team led to the reopening of the convent to provide housing. Although members of the current pastoral team are all lay persons, the convent has remained open to religious working in the Ypsilanti/Ann Arbor area. The present pastor, Rev. Edmond L. Ertzbischoff, was appointed 1 July, 1988.

Renovation & Restoration

St. John's celebrated its Sesquicentennial Year in 1995; the desire to prepare for that occasion, in part, prompted the most recent renovation. The church building would be sixty years old and had, over time, suffered from a certain amount of benign neglect. With the debt retired, capital improvements that had been delayed might now be addressed. Liturgical reforms were now twenty years along, with more definitive guidelines published by the National Council of Catholic Bishops as well as local Diocesan requirements, and a more careful assessment of the worship space also seemed in order. Accordingly, a renovation committee was formed in 1991. As the list of capital repairs grew and questions were raised about preserving the historic structure while embracing liturgical change, it became apparent that – even without new construction – St. John's was facing a major undertaking, and what had begun as liturgical correction and "asset protection"



Gathering Space, 2000.

had grown to encompass needs from the full spectrum of parish activity. Finally, an overarching concern of the renovation was the issue of accessibility – a concept that neither Romanesque architecture or, 1930’s building codes addressed.

After much deliberation and extensive listening sessions with the parish, the solution to most of the stated needs that emerged was to create a connecting structure between the church and the former school. This correlated to a revived concept in church architecture, that of the gathering space. As detailed in the parish Restoration & Renovation newsletter for June, 1997:

Discussion of a gathering space originally began in conjunction with the liturgical and fellowship needs of the parish. It progressed to its current scale when other unmet needs were under discussion: restrooms, elevator, storage, meeting rooms and parish offices. In new church construction projects, the gathering space is a transitional space from parking lot to worship area. It affords a place to celebrate the many rites of the church which take place outside the sanctuary, e.g. Palm Sunday, portions of the Easter Vigil, wakes, etc.

The gathering space at St. John’s is designed to be an extension of the original church architecture and care was taken to match as closely as possible the materials



Present St. John the Baptist Church after 2000 renovation of worship space.

and detailing (e.g., size and style of windows, doors and frames, copper downspouts, roof tiles, brick and stonework). Similarly, the interior echoes the open beams and columned supports of the nave and the triple chancel window. The addition contains a full basement which is serviced by an elevator. Each level is approximately 4200 square feet, of which half is open gathering or multi-use space. Cost constraints curtailed much of the finish work for the lower level, but it does serve for meeting space and smaller social gatherings. Connectors on both levels allow free access to the Activities Center (former school building) and the lower level is similarly linked to Harvey Hall. With this addition the entire public physical plant is now interconnected and barrier free.

The north (chancel) wall was opened to accommodate two doors into the gathering space – these now serve as main entries into the sanctuary. To make this a barrier free environment, ramps have been cut into the chancel floor along either wall to reach the nave (a third ramp is also provided as a late entry). The chancel area now functions as the baptistry; it contains a cruciform font large enough for full immersion. The marble facings for the font were chosen to mirror the smaller original, which has itself been re-worked as a column for the ambry (the case used to contain sacramental oils).

The renovated worship space does not deviate greatly from the 1973 layout – an arched, oak floored platform approached by a single step extending into the nave. This holds only the altar, an Italian marble table supported by eight columned legs. The ambo, of matching material and de-

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“The Roman Catholic Church Here Has Almost No History” - *continued from page 23*

sign, is slightly behind the altar's left, within the chancel arch. Portions of the original altar have been incorporated into the current furnishings – the ambo is faced with its central, monogrammed panel, and side panels and support columns from it have been reworked to form a pedestal for the tabernacle.

Chapels for the sacrament of Reconciliation and for reservation of the Eucharist were created from the former vestry. The side altars were removed and the arch on the east side was opened so the tabernacle is visible and opens to the main body of the nave. (The western alcove currently houses the ambry.) To properly display the statues of Joseph and Mary which formerly adorned the side altars, devotional alcoves were created from the wall recesses that had contained the confessional booths.

The primary architectural firm on the renovation was Siler & Associates, Inc. of Adrian, who brought in Lincoln Poley of Ann Arbor as design architect for the project. Mr. Poley's firm is recognized for its work in preservation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings and he had recently completed a similar project for St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Ann Arbor. St. John's also retained Christine Reinhard, liturgical design consultant, to facilitate the process and aid in adhering to the diocesan and NCCB guidelines, and the contract was awarded to J. C. Beal Construction, Inc., of Ann Arbor.

Groundbreaking ceremonies occurred on December 20, 1998 when the parish at large was invited to shovel out the footprint of the new addition, and 1999 found the communal spiritual life of the community once again housed in its church basement. The rite of dedication for the new altar was celebrated on October 8, 2000, Bishop Carl Mengeling presiding and St. John Parish emerged into its renewed space for the beginning of a new millennium.

Fr. DeBever closes his 1876 account of the church's history with a brief census: “The

number of faithful about this time is 135 or 140 families, many of whom are from Ireland and a few from Germany. All speak the English language and live in peace.”

Today's congregation numbers over 800 families representing every continent and dozens of languages. And that is as it should be, for the Church is a universal church and - more than ever in this third millennium - she is a global church, one in which the Parish of St. John the Baptist strives to participate fully. We may not be able to say with certainty that “all speak . . . English,” but it is our fervent prayer that all live in peace. ■

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Company Coins From the 1800's - *continued from page 15*

had been stung badly with the fraudulent Bank of Ypsilanti notes some 30 years before and other “funny” money issued by insolvent banks. The U.S. Constitution required that gold and silver be the only means of payment allowed in the United States and there was just not enough of these metals available to facilitate trade with all of the hoarding of “real” money.

When the Civil War broke out in 1861 between the states, one of the first problems was the vanishing supply of “real” money. Coins disappeared rapidly and the exchange function of money was dependent on the ingenuity of the merchants of the area. And that is what we have here to behold some 143 years later! While the bulk of transactions could be handled by checks, postage stamps and paper money and barter, how do you make change for a nickel on a three cent sale? Simple, you give the customer change in coins from your own company! That is what Hewitt Brothers did from 1863 until the end of the war. These coins were good advertising for the company concerned and it was a necessary medium of exchange. The Hewitt Brothers Dry Goods Company was located on the corner of Congress (Michigan Avenue) and Washington Streets and they existed as a business enterprise for many years. The only other company to circulate these types of tokens in Ypsilanti was Showerman & Brothers Company, also purveyors of dry goods, clothing and boots and shoes.

Oh yes, the U.S. Congress passed a law in 1864 to make all private tokens illegal, but company coins circulated until well after the war when “real” money was again plentiful. Over 25 million company coins were made in the North and many of them are now in private collections. And yes, these coins are now worth much more than a cent a piece! ■

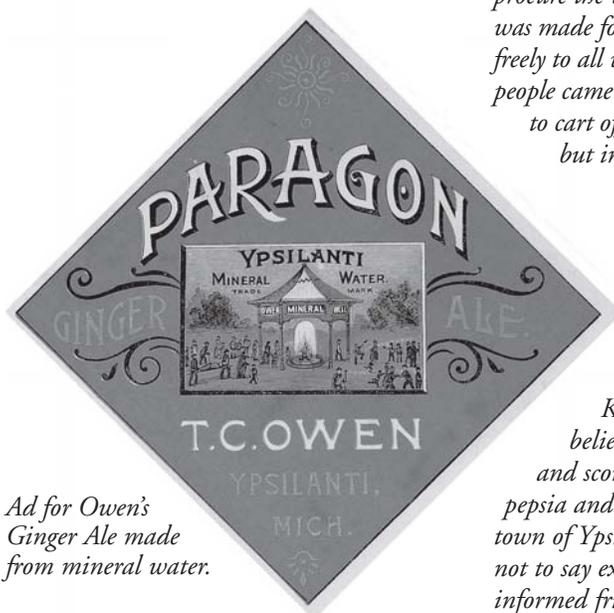
Note: Coins and some historical notes were provided by Jerry F. Gooding, past Chairman of the Board of the National Bank of Ypsilanti. Digital pictures were provided by Mr. Mark Mueller, Photographer for the Ypsilanti Courier.

Tubal Cain Owen and the Healing Waters of Ypsilanti - continued from page 3

spot chosen is a beautiful one in its general surroundings; the Mill, the river, and the City, with trees and hills in the foreground or beyond, make a pretty picture.

The pure water which was sought for, was never reached, but in its stead a far more precious water was found. A healing water, rich in mineral ingredients was struck by the drills, below the rock of various kinds and thicknesses, at a total depth of 740 feet from the earth's surface. That discovery was made on the 14th day of December, 1882 and may be well regarded by those acquainted with the subject of healing waters, a remarkable event. Compared with the medicinal properties of its waters, those of the celebrated Springs of Europe and America are indeed mild. From the earliest antiquity till now nothing so valuable in the way of curative waters, has been known to man. Many valuable Mineral Spirits existed, but none equal to this.

The Ypsilanti Mineral Water has consequently reached a success without parallel in the history of Mineral Wells. The discovery of the water was quickly followed by its general use in Ypsilanti and by cures so remarkable as to attract attention elsewhere, and to create a demand for shipment to various parts of the country. That demand has been



Ad for Owen's Ginger Ale made from mineral water.



Cover of book promoting Ypsilanti Mineral Water.



Ad for "A Delicious, Healthful, Invigorating Drink."

increasing ever since, until now it is used in every State in the Union. The well is still owned by the Ypsilanti Paper Company, one of the largest and most responsible paper companies in the United States.

The discovery of the peculiar water and the development of the healing power it possesses, was entirely unexpected; and, indeed, the proprietors were the very last to give any serious credit to the stories about relief and cures brought to their office by those who came to procure the water. Hence, at first no charge was made for the water, but it was given out freely to all who wished it. Strange to say, people came after it regularly and soon began to cart off, not only in bottles and jugs, but in barrels and kegs.

The reports of relief and even cures, were numerous within a few weeks; but before six months had passed there was no doubt about it whatever. The cases of Mr. Kimbel and Mr. Guild, currently believed to be genuine cancer cases, - and scores of cases of rheumatism, dyspepsia and kidney troubles cured, set the town of Ypsilanti in an uproar of interest, not to say excitement. Meantime friends had informed friends, and the water was shipped

away and used in distant parts, without even the knowledge of the owners of the mill, until long afterwards reports of the cures in cases never dreamed of by them came back to their notice. A remarkable case in New York City - a very wealthy lady (as it is said) with cancer of the womb, a case in Toledo, Ohio, one at Bay City; several cases of dyspepsia, kidney complaint, eczema, etc. in Chicago, followed in rapid succession. Demand for the water increased. Arrangements were made, circulars printed and stationery prepared, jugs and casks were brought by the hundreds, for shipping; and the Mineral Water Department of the Ypsilanti Paper Company became an established fact. All this was literally without design or previous plan. It was forced on the proprietors by the simple merits of the water.

The following interviews, chosen at random, will, when read, give a fair idea, not at all overdrawn, of what the waters are doing and what its patrons claim for it. The proprietors make no pretensions whatever in the matter; but the water is offered to the public on what is said of it by those who have used it. Wherever it is introduced it makes its own way.

The promotional book includes a series of testimonials regarding the healing qualities continued on page 26

Tubal Cain Owen and the
Healing Waters of Ypsilanti -
continued from page 25

of the Ypsilanti Mineral Water. Here is the first testimonial from John J. Kimbel:

The following interview was had with the first person cured by the Ypsilanti waters. The statement here given was made at Ypsilanti on August 12th, 1885, and is worth perusal:

“What is your full name, your Residence and your present occupation?” “My name is John Jonas Kimbel, my residence is Ypsilanti, and I am in the express business; I drive a dime express.” “How long have you lived in Ypsilanti?” “Most 39 years. I was born and brought up here.” “How long have you been in the express business?” “About a year and four months.” “Before that, what did you do?” “Working in the paper mill.” “What paper mill?” “Cornwell’s – the Ypsilanti Paper Co.” “How long did you work for the Paper Co?” “Just three years.” “Were you working for that Company when the Ypsilanti Mineral Spring was struck?” “Yes.” “When was it struck? What year?” “I cannot say. They have it down stairs though.” [December 14, 1882.]

“It is said you had a cancer when the Ypsilanti well was struck; is that so?” “Yes sir. Four years. Well, it was six years a coming. It was from the time I first noticed it until they struck the water, six years.” “Did you use the Ypsilanti Water for your cancer?” “I did.” “How did you use it, and what was the effect?” “Well, I bathed my face, my nose, ten or fifteen times a day. Then I drank the water as free as I would pure spring water.” “How much would you drink in a day?” “Well, I will tell you, - that would sound a little big to anybody – but the room that I worked in was very warm and close, and I drank on an average about two quarts of the Ypsilanti water every day. I drank it before they knew the benefits of it.” “How long did you continue to drink that water in that way?” “Four months.”

“Please describe your trouble, - the condition of your cancer at the time you commenced to use the water?” “Well, it began

*from an itching, the same as if needles would be darting through my nose, - pricking like that, and through the sides of my face.” “How did the sore look at that time?” “Well, it was a dark spot, - considerable of a raise on the end of my nose, as large as a silver five-cent piece.” “Had it broken the surface of the skin on your nose?” “Yes. Well, I will tell you. Every full moon, that would drop off, then it would fester and come on larger.” “Was it always painful?” “Always, Mostly in the night and when my blood would be a little warm.” “Did you consult any physician as to your case?” “Yes sir, I did; I consulted ***** doctors in Detroit, Michigan. Also two other doctors in Detroit – I do not remember their names. Then there was one Indian Doctor from Toledo, Ohio, he heard about it and came out to my house.” “What did those doctors tell you about your case, or their opinions of it?” “Well, they pronounced it cancer, and all advised me to let them make an operation on it, it would save me trouble in time. But my conscience always told me not to meddle with it.” “Did you consult any physician here in Ypsilanti?” “Yes sir. Let me see, Dr. *****.” “What did Dr. ***** say about it?” “He thought it would be all right in a little while, - that is all*

he said to me.” “Did he say whether it was cancer or not?” “He did not say. He was doctoring my mother then, - she was dying with a cancer then.”

“Do you mean to say your mother died of cancer?” “Yes sir. In the stomach her cancer was.” “How do you know it was actually a cancer in her stomach?” “Well, all the way I know it was by the way the doctors all claimed.” “Now, coming back to your own case, please state what effects the Ypsilanti Mineral Water had upon your nose, or in any other way.” “In two weeks after bathing my face it showed signs of coming off – the scab, - and it came on again the same as it had before, but not quite so large, and then in four weeks it came off and left a raw place, and it began healing up from the edges to the center. And my body was covered with little boils from drinking the water. Then the prickling sensation and soreness ceased, and I have not been troubled with it any since.”

“Have any other members of your family had cancer?” “My sister, - they claim, - taken the same as my mother.” “Did she use the Ypsilanti Water?” “She did.” “How long did she use it?” “She has used



Box of toilet soap made from Ypsilanti Mineral Water.

The Ypsilanti Commercial in the mid-1980s published the following ballad touting the values of the water:

*"If you are sad, with sickness worn,
And have the headache every morn,
Just come and drink a healing horn,
Of Ypsilanti water.*

*There's forty new baths agoing,
And all the healing waters flowing,
Better days and health bestowing,
On many a weary one.*

*It's true, it has a woeful smell,
But if your stomache don't rebel,
It's just the thing to make you well,
And praise up Ypsilanti."*

it over a year." "Is she now free of her trouble?" "She claims she is." "Please state fully the present condition and appearance of your nose, where the cancer was located?" "In changes of weather it shows plainer where the cancer was located. My nose is perfectly smooth now." "Do you ever have any pains now?" "No, only when I press there I can feel a little pain. In the winter time when it is cold I have to keep my hand on the end of my nose, - it stings and burns."

In the above case the Ypsilanti Mineral Spring Water was used by simply bathing the nose (and cancer) many times a day, and drinking the water freely. A perfect cure resulted.

In the same book promoting Ypsilanti Mineral Spring Water the Ypsilanti Sanitarium contains an ad claiming:

"... This water is the MARVEL of the age in which we live for its CURATIVE and MEDICAL PROPERTIES. Also, NATURAL SPRING water of EXTRAORDINARY PURITY; both are NATURAL RESTORERS to health and have performed MANY MIRACULOUS CURES. To these are added ELECTRICITY, AIR, STEAM, FURM,

MINERAL and SOFT WATER baths in the varied forms and at ALL TEMPERATURES required; also the VIBRATORY EXERCISER, WALKING and KNEADING machine and BED-COUCH, with a JUDICIOUS use of MEDICINE, which constitute in part our MATERIA MEDICA."

The promotion continues with "... This SANITARIUM is located on the west banks of the Huron River in a BEAUTIFUL PART of the City of YPSILANTI, Michigan; with a surrounding country free from the low grounds and malaria breeding marshes. - Also it is THOROUGHLY VENTILATED, with SEWERAGE GOOD; consequently it has had FOR YEARS an INCREASING PATRONAGE from all parts of the UNITED STATES and CANADA, ITS PATRONS having ENJOYED the benefits of its UNRIVALED facilities for the TREATMENT of all forms of ACUTE and CHRONIC diseases."

The healing waters business took a major hit after the passing of the 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act which required an accurate listing of ingredients. Truth in advertising would have dictated that Owen's water be undoubtedly described as "foul-smelling muddy water." Also, local residents complained of the yelling of the patients at Owen's house of healing so the state condemned the property, claiming that the sanitarium posed "a serious menace to the social life of the Normal College," allowing it to then "acquire" the land for the college's use. The Roosevelt Building was constructed on the site of the former Owen home as a high school for teacher training. The March 10, 1904 issue of the Ypsilanti Daily Press expressed the sentiment, "One wonders whether the Michigan State Normal College will ever put the water to work. Since educators have tried everything for juvenile delinquency - why not line up all youthful offenders and see what Tubal Cain Owen can do for them?" ■

Bibliography:

- John Knott and Keith Taylor, ed., The Huron River, Voices From the Watershed, (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2000).
- Harvey C. Colburn, The Story of Ypsilanti, (Ypsilanti, MI: Ypsilanti Bicentennial Commission, 1976). Knott and Taylor.
- Healing Waters Found at Ypsilanti. Ypsilanti Paper Company.



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Mineral Water

Toilet Soap

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THIS SOAP is manufactured from the PUREST Oils and Alkalies obtainable, and with the most scrupulous care for the Perfection and CLEANLINESS of the product, as any one can see who will visit the Well. So Delicate and Pure is this Soap that it may be used for CLEANING THE TEETH.

SAPON is Unexcelled for Toilet and Bath purposes. It is unequalled as a Remedial Agent for all Irritations of the Skin and Scalp. So mild is its action that even the delicate skin of an Infant is Positively Benefited by its use. The Complexion is Beautified and the Hair rendered soft and glossy by the use of this Soap which owes its Wonderful, Emollient and Curative Properties to the fact that it contains ONLY PURE MATERIAL and OVER TWENTY PER CENT OF

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For Cleansing Wounds it has No Equal.

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MANUFACTURED ONLY AT THE WELL, BY

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Of Ypsilanti Mineral Water, and Products.

INQUIRE AT ANY DRUG STORE FOR

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Sapon	- - -	25c. per Cake.
Sapon	- - -	10 Cakes \$2.
Soap with 50 per cent Salts, per cake	- - -	\$1

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