



Canton Historical Society

LINKING THE PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

PO Box 87362
Canton, MI 48187
734-391-9260

cantonhistoricalsocietymi.org
info@cantonhistoricalsocietymi.org



Canton Historical Society
(Michigan)

MUSEUM HOURS

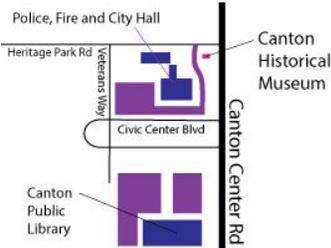
CLOSED FOR THE SEASON

REOPENING SPRING 2026!



VISIT THE MUSEUM

1022 Canton Center Rd.
Canton, MI 48188



The Canton Historical Society would like to thank all of the dedicated members who continue to show interest in the museum's education and preservation efforts. We appreciate your ongoing support!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Kimberly Mabie
President
- Melinda Korenchuk
Vice President
- Mary Cayton
Secretary
- Mike Bonello
Treasurer
- Su Kaur
Trustee

CANTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Est. 1834

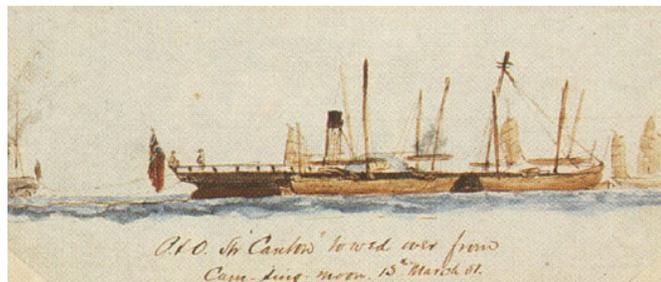
Winter 2025 · Edition CXXVI

Canton, Michigan

A SHIP NAMED CANTON

by Carl Katafiasz

There are numerous instances of the name "Canton" designating townships, villages, and cities throughout the United States and the world; yet this article will find the word *Canton* on the side of a ship...in fact, three ships!



www.gregormacgregor.com/Tod&Macgregor/Canton_64.htm

Brodie McGhie Wilcox, a London ship broker, and Arthur Anderson, a sailor, began a shipping line in the early 1820s operating between England, Spain, and Portugal. Captain Richard Bourne, a Dublin shipowner, joined the duo in 1835. They chartered the *William Fawcett* and started a regular steam service between London, Spain, and Portugal (the latter geographically recognized as the Iberian Peninsula) creating the Peninsular Steam Navigation Company.

The business won a contract from the British Admiralty to deliver mail to the Iberian Peninsula and later, in 1840, acquired an additional contract to deliver mail to Alexandria, Egypt. The business was finally incorporated that same year as the Peninsular and Orient Steam Navigation Company, commonly referred to as the P&O Line.

There were actually three vessels that bore the name *Canton* on their sides and stern. The first *Canton* was built by the Tod & McGregor shipbuilders of Glasgow and delivered to the company on May 26, 1848. She was a paddle-wheel steamer of approximately 173' in length, 21.4' in width, and a depth of just over 10.5'. With paddled propulsion she could muster a whopping 8 knots in speed.

(continued on page 2)

GHOST STORIES EVENT IS A SPOOKY SUCCESS

This past October 23 CHS presented its annual Ghost Stories event at the Canton Public Library. Many local ghost stories were told including the tales of the Denton Demon and the Dixboro Ghost. Thank you to all who organized and attended this eerie event and we look forward to next year!



A DELIGHTFUL DESK DONATION

This past summer we received many rocking chairs from donors throughout the Metro Detroit area for events and relaxation on the porch of the Bartlett-Travis House. We also received several period school desks from generous donors including one from our new member, Diane Gaubatz (pictured below with Kim Mabie). These desks will assist us to provide old-time school experiences for local youth and scout groups. Thank you to all of our donors!



A SHIP NAMED CANTON (CONT. FROM PAGE 1)



She was specifically built for armed defense against pirates plundering vessels along the Canton River in China. She carried two 32-pound guns, 30 muskets, 30 cutlasses, 30 pairs of pistols, and a crew including ex-Naval gunners.

Her service for the company got off to a bit of a bad start. Leaving for Southampton on June 25, 1848, she collided with the brig *John Woodhall* off the Isle of Wright. She slowly made her way back to port, with a severely damaged bow, on June 27th for repairs and costing the second officer his position, since the collision occurred on his watch. She was quickly repaired and found herself sailing once again in early July around the Cape of Africa to Singapore and finally arriving in Hong Kong on February 19, 1849.

Her most renowned military experience occurred in late September of 1849. On an excursion, she happened across the brig HMS *Columbine* becalmed and battling pirates in junks; the latter escaping by using their sweeps. The *Canton* secured herself to the warship and towed her to within range of the pirates whose vessels were either sunk or surrendered to the *Columbine* crew. Post battle, she then became an "ambulance" transporting British Naval casualties back to Hong Kong for treatment.

Afterward, she was chartered to search for several ships that had been pirated; a mission she accomplished quite successfully. The *Canton's* military service was not as eventful in the following years; in fact, her next notable event occurs in 1856 when she runs aground on an uncharted rock. She remained grounded for 8 long weeks before being rescued and repaired at a moderate expense. Captain and crew may have sensed the inevitability when the *Canton* was replaced in service by the new steamer *Sir Charles Forbes*.

An October 1859 typhoon spelled the end of the first *Canton*. She was helplessly driven ashore at Macao and suffered a total loss as she broke in two and was completely abandoned. Though all on board were saved, her ruined condition determined she was not worth restoring.

The P&O Company decided to resurrect the *Canton* name once again and contracted the Caird & Co. Shipyard in Greenock, UK to build its new ship; on September 28, 1889, they launched the next *Canton*. She became the first P&O ship to repeat the name of a former vessel in the company's service. Compared to her predecessor she was just under 350' in length, just over 42' in width, and measured a depth of 26.5'. She was powered by a single propeller, speeding her through the water at 12 knots at full speed; and had accommodation for 26 first-class passengers.

The *Canton* was part of a quartet of ships that would prove to be one of the most profitable foursomes in the line's history. Rounding out this group were the *Bombay*, *Shanghai*, and *Hong Kong*. She recorded a rather uneventful passenger/cargo history; her highlight being the provision of critical transportation for those seeking to depart China during the height of the Boxer Rebellion.

Canton's time with the P&O Line ended on October 28, 1903. P&O sold the *Canton*, *Bombay*, and *Shanghai* to the French company Messageries Maritimes since the vessels no longer met P&O's needs. *Canton* was renamed *Bosphore* and remained in service until 1922 meeting her final end at the hands of Italian shipbreakers.

More of this story, including the history of the third *Canton*, will be in a future article!

TRAVEL TRUNK RESTORATION



While cleaning out our chicken coop at Preservation Park this past spring, members found a beautiful historic trunk in the back chamber. Covered with dirt and dust, it seemed an unlikely candidate for restoration but through the dedicated work of member Bob Dettling, a volunteer for our Thursday night barn crew, its beauty now shines again.

NEW MURAL UNVEILED AT THE POLE BARN

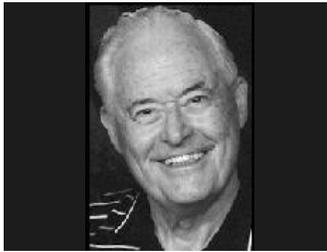
The grand opening of a new mural at the pole barn in Preservation Park, painted by artist Gabbi Dolin, was mostly funded through a grant by Canton's Partnership for the Arts and Humanities. The unveiling event took place in September and was attended by over 500 visitors who also enjoyed activities held in the barn during Canton's ArtoberFest. The barn is open to the public during Farmers Market in summers and improvements made to our exhibits and buildings will help draw residents, visitors, and shoppers to Cherry Hill Village. Be sure to visit this coming summer to see the entire beautiful work of art!



CLIFFORD MCCLUMPHA'S LETTER TO HIS GRANDPA

by David Curtis

The following is a letter from ten-year-old Clifford McClumpha to his grandpa on November 7, 1941. This letter was probably typed at his childhood home on Warren Road west of Ridge Road and is transcribed as it was typed by him at that time. Who would guess back then that his childhood experiences would lead him to become a future Plymouth-Canton veterinarian? Clifford died in 2007 at the age of 76 after a lifetime of contributions to the community.



Dear Grandpa

We went over to Aunt Dorothys for dinner sunday. We had my dog vaccinated last monday for rabies so we will not worry about him. Aunt Dorothys kids have a dog. It is named lassie. I thought that was a funny name for a dog, but they like it so I guess it will have to do. Uncle Billy butchered a cow two weeks ago. They had to let it hang for a week. then they will cut it up into slices and freeze it. I sold 9 more roosters. I have 22 hens. Four of them are laying eggs.. They lay all over the farm in funny places. One of the hens has been laying for a long time. The hen that has been laying the longest has a very red comb. Four pigs that come in the pig house now. All the rest are in the barn. I made a slingshot. I got my report card today. I got all b's and c's on it. I came home for dinner today. I have \$19 & 70cents. I am going to save up enough mony to buy a bicycle. Tell aunt Mabel that I will write soon. your friend Clifford

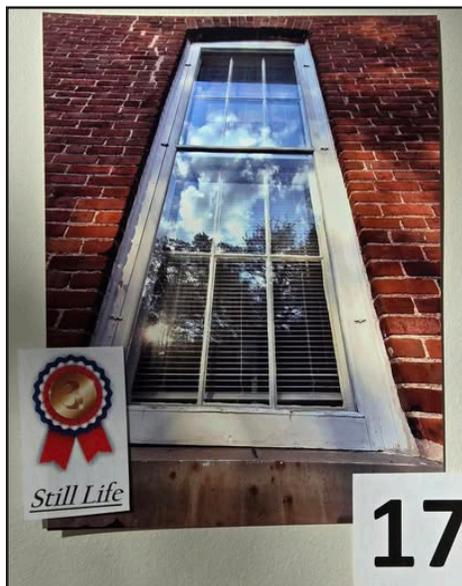
AWARD WINNING PHOTO REOPENS VIEWS OF HISTORIC SCHOOLHOUSES

by Cheryl Martin

"As an artist, author, researcher, and fine art photographer, etc., I create artistic pieces to showcase one room schoolhouse history when possible. This still life award winner is a part of the historic Sheldon School built in 1870 located at 44649 Michigan Avenue in Canton, Mi. For me, I am literally stepping back in time when I study country schools as I feel connected to them and their history.

"I have studied and researched primary resources regarding one room schools. The physicality of being immersed in the written words and documents from the 1800's is incredible. Standing next to a country school and thinking about the scholars learning their lesson plans and perhaps gazing through the window I captured in this fine art photographic piece dreaming of playing during recess or perhaps seeing the wildlife meander by. If I had lived in the previous century or earlier, I have no doubt I would have taught in a one room school."

This still life fine art photograph won 3rd place through the Photography Contest held at the Westland Library in October 2025. Congratulations to Cheryl and thank you for sharing the joy and beauty of so many historic structures in our community!



UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2026

HISTORIC HOUSE TOURS

Lasko Estate (Formerly Haggerty House) tours will resume in the spring and are exclusively for Canton Historical Society members only. Look for updates in future newsletters and at www.cantonhistoricalsocietymi.org.

Bartlett-Travis House tours will resume this spring during Farmers Market Sundays at Preservation Park. Tour info will be posted on our website and Farmers Market info is available at www.cantonmi.gov/496/Canton-Farmers-Market.



CANTON CENTER SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Starting this spring, the Canton Historical Society will have limited availability for **educational programs for scout troops, youth groups, and home-schooled students**. Please complete our online information form on our website to receive more information.

GUEST LECTURE SERIES

Our Guest Lecture Series was off to a great start this past fall. In collaboration with the Canton Public Library, we featured Gary Franchina from the **Henry Ford Heritage Association** who presented the history of Henry Ford's Village Industries projects around southeast Michigan. We also presented Jodi Brandon from **Anishinaabe Consulting**.

ANISHINAABE CULTURE, THEN AND NOW

by Kathy Martin

Jodi Brandon, known as Biimskanodin in the Ojibwe language, or "Little Whirlwind," gave guests a look into the Anishinaabe culture—past and present—at a mid-November presentation at the Canton Public Library.

She spoke of the major tribes who have inhabited Michigan: the Ojibwe (Older Brother), known as the Keepers of Knowledge, the Odawa (Middle Brother), known as the Keepers of Water, the Potawatomi (Younger Brother), known as the Keepers of Fire.

Through treaties made in the 1800s, the Anishinaabe clan were pushed out of the Eastern Michigan region into the Sarnia area in Ontario, Canada, where they largely remain today. As a result, Jodi stated she has US, Canadian, and Anishinaabe citizenship.

Jodi gave credit to her grandmother for providing a strong influence on Jodi in learning and maintaining interest in her indigenous roots. This was accomplished in part through storytelling, customs and dance. She mentioned her grandparents had been forced into boarding schools as a way of attempting to erase their heritage. Punishment for reverting to their native ways was often extremely severe.



Teachings of what is referred to the Seven Grandfathers are central to her native culture. These focus on: love, respect, bravery, honesty, wisdom, humility and truth. The buffalo were considered the source of life: every single part of the animal was used for food, clothing, shelter, tools (yes, there were buffalo in Michigan at one time). The backs of turtles have been used as a calendar. The twenty-eight outer bumps align with the twenty-eight-day cycle of the moon. The twelve larger middle bumps align with twelve months of the year. Sacred medicines are used in ceremonies and in healing. The four that were locally foraged for use are sage, sweet grass, tobacco and cedar. Jodi mentioned these are often still used by herself and others today.

For more information or to host your own event, visit Jodi's website at www.awishinaabe.com.

CANTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY GUEST LECTURE SERIES 2026

Our Guest Lecture Series is provided through collaborative agreements between the Canton Historical Society and the Canton Public Library or through a grant to the Canton Historical Society from the Canton Partnership for the Arts & Humanities and are presented at the **Canton Public Library from 7-8:30pm** and are **FREE** to the public (donations are appreciated).

Tuesday January 13, 2026

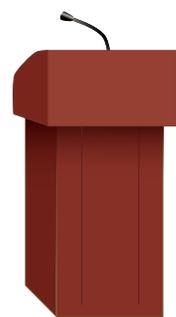
The guest speakers at this event will present **A History and Panel Discussion of Worship Sites in Canton**. Join us for a presentation and discussion of some of Canton's worship sites by panelists from Resurrection Parish, Geneva Presbyterian, Hindu Temple, and BAPS International. Learn about their buildings and membership histories that will expand our understanding about our diverse Canton community of today.

Tuesday March 10, 2026

A History of the American Flag will be presented by Lance Youles. He will discuss the everchanging transformation of the American flag throughout our country's history. Find out how it looked in the past, how it has been portrayed in film, and how it transformed into its present layout of thirteen stripes and fifty stars. There is so much more to know about our flag than we were taught in school.

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Abolition and UGRR Movement in Canton and Western Wayne County will be presented by Rochelle Danquah, Committee Chairperson of the Michigan Freedom Trail Commission.



Tuesday, August 18, 2026

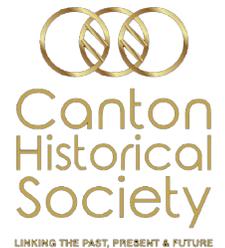
The Detroit Lions & The Early NFL will be presented by Jeremy Dimick of the Detroit Historical Society. More information to come.

Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Tyler Moll, Director at the Wayne Historical Museum, will present **American Architecture**. More information to come.

Tuesday, November 10, 2026

Topic and speaker TBA.



LINKING THE PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE



TRACTOR AND MANURE SPREADER RESTORATION PROJECT

This past summer we started repairs and alterations on these two pieces of farm equipment in our collections at our Farm Museum in preparation for the America 250 Celebration in 2026. This equipment was featured in the Canton Bicentennial Parade in 1976 (bottom right photo), and



we hope to get these items ready to roll again for this next summer. We have a dedicated fund to help with tractor repairs. Donations of \$50 or more will be acknowledged on a dedicated plaque in our barn. Any excess funds received will support restoration of other pieces of farm equipment in our current collection.



EXHIBIT SHOWCASES WAYNE COUNTY HISTORY



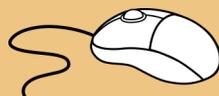
In collaboration with the **Detroit Historical Society** and **Canton's Historical District Commission**, the Canton Historical Society provided artifacts and documents for the **Wayne County History Project**. This temporary exhibit highlights series of six rotating history exhibitions that will showcase each of the county's 43 communities and was held in the historic Guardian Building located in downtown Detroit. Plymouth and Canton were featured this past fall (pictured below left) but new communities will be featured in the new year. Thanks to member Jo Ann Dionne for coordinating

this effort. Individuals can assist with this project to document resident experiences online by sharing their own stories. Exhibitions will be on display at the Guardian Building through January 2027 and will be supported by a new free, searchable archive database of the county's rich history. Scan the QR code or visit www.detroithistorical.org/projects/wayne-county-history-project to submit your own story!



PRESERVATION PARK UPGRADES

This past year saw big changes made at Preservation Park to our historic sites and community structures. The new Farmers Market pavilion opened, and the exterior of Bartlett-Travis House received repairs, repainting, new railings and lighting for the porch ramp. At the pole barn the Farm Museum, Palmer Shed, chicken coop (right photo), corn crib, and outhouse also were repaired or replaced and buildings were painted. A blacktop walkway was installed between buildings and the pavilions to ease accessibility (left photo). These repairs not only help keep the park looking great but also protect the buildings from the weather and preserve them for future generations. We thank our township residents and staff that made this possible.



BROWSE OUR WEBSITE!

Check out upcoming events, historical articles, board information, and much more by scanning the QR code or visiting us at:

www.cantonhistoricalsocietymi.org



HELP US ADD TO OUR COLLECTION!

Over the decades the society archives has accumulated hundreds of photos that give us a glimpse into the history of Canton. We are always looking for anyone who has old photos of Canton to add to our collection. We appreciate photos of businesses, long gone buildings, homes, streets, events and people. If you do not wish to donate your original copy, we are always happy to scan a copy and return the original to you. If you are willing to donate photos or a copy of them, please contact us at info@cantonhistoricalsocietymi.org.

Thank you for helping us to grow our archives!

SALUTE TO SERVICE EVENT HONORS LOCAL VETERANS

Canton's Salute to Service event at the Cherry Hill Village Theater was held on Veteran's Day in November. CHS Board member Mike Bonello represented the historical society with a tabletop display of local artifacts and documents. We proudly thank all those that have served our country.



WELCOME TO THE CANTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP STATUS:

 NEW RENEWAL

2026 MEMBERSHIP TYPE INDIVIDUAL \$20

 HOUSEHOLD \$25 STUDENT \$5 PATRON \$50 BUSINESS \$75 SPONSOR \$200 DONATION \$ _____

I would like information about volunteer opportunities. **TOTAL AMOUNT \$** _____

MEMBER/ ORGANIZATION/ BUSINESS NAME _____

OTHER MEMBER(S) NAMES _____

STREET NUMBER & ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS (necessary for receiving newsletter): _____



Scan to Pay

Mail check with completed form to:

Canton Historical Society, PO Box 87362, Canton, MI 48187

OR

Pay online at www.cantonhistoricalsocietymi.org or use the QR code.

*We are an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
and rely on memberships and donors like you!*

ARTOBER FEST BRINGS FAMILIES TO CHERRY HILL VILLAGE

Canton's Artober Fest on September 27 in Cherry Hill Village was a fun fall day of art, food, music, and more! This family-friendly event included Canton's 3rd annual Youth Art Fair, Canton's 2025 Fine Arts Exhibition, an activity tent provided by the Detroit Institute of Arts, and a bustling artisan marketplace, along with beer, cider, donuts, food trucks, chalk art, live music, seasonal snacks, and more. Shuttles were provided to transport festivalgoers between Preservation Park and the Village Arts Factory so plenty of visitors were able to enjoy activities at the pole barn museum and throughout the park as well!



OUR FARMERS MARKET FRIENDS

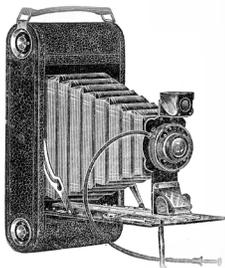
Members Dave Truesdell (left) and Bob Wychulis (right) have been greeting us early Sunday mornings for Farmers Markets and special events to provide information about the historical society to visitors. We thank them for their dedication and assistance over years and look forward to seeing their smiling faces during next summer's markets.

And a shout out to our Canton Township Farmers Market staff that assists tent and table set up. We greatly appreciate all of their help!



DID YOU OR YOUR FAMILY GROW UP IN CANTON? WE NEED YOUR HELP!

If you have memorabilia in any form, such as pictures, letters, journals, or artifact objects, we would love to hear about it! Our archives are always in need of more Canton-specific history so researchers in the future can learn from us and help preserve the township's history.



Please contact us at 734-391-9260 or info@cantonhistoricalsocietymi.org to discuss your items!

Mayflower TOWING



1179 Starkweather St
Plymouth, MI
734-459-0053

Plymouth-Canton Community Schools



LEARN. PREPARE. THRIVE.

TIM FREEMAN

734-693-7380

SHINES HANDYMANS SERVICE

HANDYMAN

timfreeman205@yahoo.com

