



Canton Historical Society News

Canton Historical Society Newsletter No. XII

Nov-Dec 2000

MUSEUM HOURS

Tuesday 1 pm to 4 pm

Saturday 1 pm to 4 pm

Calendar of Events

November

4th Harvest Dinner and Pound Auction. 5:00 PM at the Cherry Hill School.

20th Board Meeting 7:00 pm at Canton Center School. Public is welcome to attend.

Count ballots for Board Members.

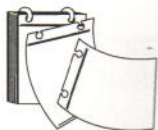
December

2nd Museum Bake Sale.

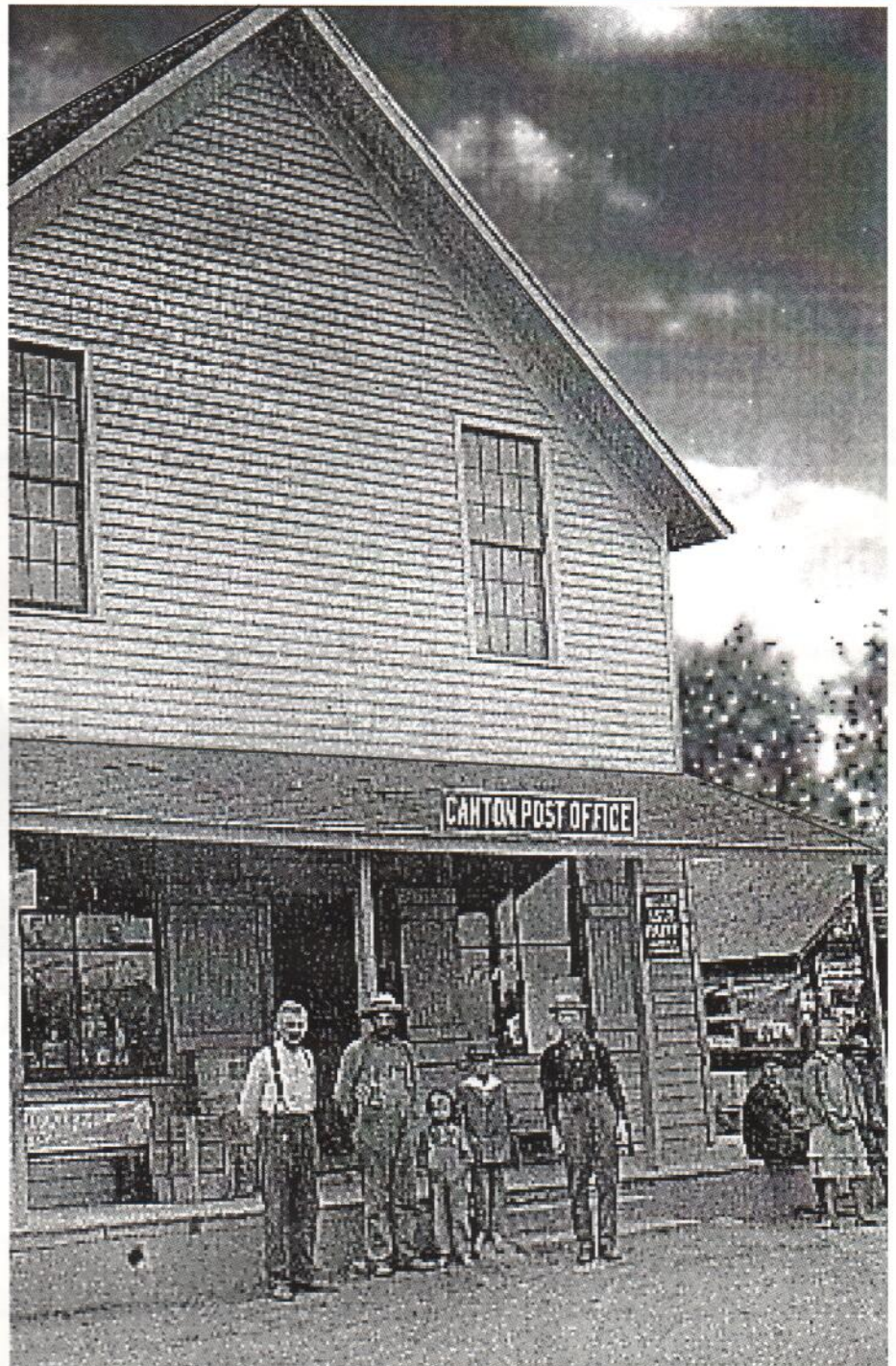
January

Museum closes for two months January and February for cleaning and redecorating.

15th Board Meeting 7:00 pm at Canton Center School. Plan projects and schedule dates for the year. As always the public is welcome to attend.



We were sad to learn of the passing of historical society member **Margaret DeConinck**. Our condolences to her husband Tim and the DeConinck family.



Old photograph of Canton around 1900

DuMouchelle Appraisal is Huge Success

This year's DuMouchelle Appraisal Clinic was even better than last year. Marie Gentz has chaired this event again this year and she has grown this appraisal clinic into a bigger event each year.

The success also goes to the *DuMouchelle Art Galleries* for their donated labor for this event.

We had many volunteers also and we wish to thank them as well, and they are **Ruth Wiles, Ronni Curtis, Bonnie Berg, Kay Kuck, Phyllis Patterson, Pam Heinowski, Cathy Johnson, Marie Hauer.** No event can happen without our members helping hand. Thanks again for your support.

Two things I always like about DuMouchelle appraisal clinics is to see some of the items people bring in. It's worth volunteering to help at this event just to see these items, and also to meet the people that attend the clinic. It sure is a one of a kind event.

The Fall Pot Luck Harvest Dinner and Pound Auction will be November 4th this Year

If you have never attended this event you're in for a big surprise. It is our social event of the year where we all get together over a pot luck dinner and relax. We socialize and always enjoy ourselves.

Here is how things happen at this event. Everyone brings a dish to pass and a gift wrapped package that weighs about a pound. The society furnishes the meat for the dinner. After we have a nice harvest dinner, we then auction off the pound packages. Hopefully, everyone brings something of use. But a few stinkers bring the most unusual things you ever saw. It really is the luck of the bidder that makes the event so unusual.

Last year we all had fun with Bob Boyer as the auctioneer. I think this guy could get blood out of a turnip, and he makes us feel good about doing so.

Don't miss this social event, or we'll miss you.

"FiFi" The B-29 super fortress at the Yankee Air Force event Honoring General Tibbets, the pilot of the "Enola Gay". The first plane to drop the Atomic bomb on Japan during World War II. FiFi belongs to the Confederate Air Force.



Membership Application

Yes, I would like to become a member of the Canton Historical Society. Please complete this form and send \$10.00 to: Canton Historical Society, P.O.Box 87362, Canton, MI 48187-0362

Name _____ Phone _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

You don't have to be a lifelong resident to join, just an interest in history and the desire to preserve it.

Thank you



General Paul Tibbets and Capt. Theodore "Dutch" Van Kirk

General Paul Tibbets was the Commander of the 509th Composite Group. This was the group that trained for the mission of dropping the first atomic bombs. He also flew the plane that dropped the first atomic bomb on Japan. Captain Van Kirk was the navigator. They were honored by the Yankee Air Force at the "Bomber Symposium" held in the Yankee Air Force hangar at Willow Run Airport this past summer. When asked why he flew the plane while he had other pilots under his command that could have done the job, he said, "I felt I could do the job better."

The General, now in his eighties and a little hard of hearing, had many stories to tell. This is to be his last tour. He also will speak to 150 history teachers in Colorado later this year.

He told us his plane's name "Enola Gay" was named for his mother Enola Gay Tibbets.

He also was stationed at Fort Benning Georgia in 1938 with the then Lt. Col. George S. Patton and shot skeet with him for quarters. Col. Tibbets claimed that Patton would be furious to lose a few quarters. Not because of the money but because he hated to lose at anything.

Beside "FiFi" other planes such as "Diamond Lil", also from the Confederate Air Force and the Yankee Air Forces own "Yankee Lady" were on display.



Diamond Lil owned by the Confederate Air Force on display



FiFi, B-29 by the hangar door



Yankee Air Forces B-17 Bomber



General Paul Tibbets speaking at the Bomber Symposium

Canton's Native Inhabitants

By Pamela Heinowski

It is important to remember when discussing the native population of what is today Canton Township that there were no boundaries or ownership when the natives inhabited the land. The population could come and go, shift and change at will. When we speak of the native population we speak of generalities, most of which could be true of Plymouth, Westland, Ypsilanti or any of the surrounding areas. Different bands of Native Americans moved through the area in different eras. Unfortunately for historians they left no written records, so today we are tied to bits of archeological evidence to understand their movements. Michigan's archeological record is not abundant and may point out that until relatively recent centuries the state was sparsely inhabited. Another problem for archeologists in Michigan is that much of the visible record was in man made geographical features, the mounds that were found across the lower Peninsula as the state was becoming inhabited by white settlers. Many of these were destroyed by agricultural activities. Unique earthen patterns resembling the formal garden designs of Europe that were found by Henry Schoolcraft between 1827 and 1837 have also been entirely destroyed, although we do have his notes about them. We know that Natives lived in southern Michigan starting 12,000 to 14,000 years ago. By about 3,000 years ago (the Late Archaic Age) the climate and environment of Michigan was fairly similar to that of today allowing inhabitants to begin primitive agriculture in addition to the hunting and gathering activities that had formerly sustained them.

In the mid-1600s Southern Michigan seems to have been almost uninhabited. One population estimate is that there were as few as 15,000 people living within Michigan's present borders in 1600, about the same number of K-12 students that attend the Plymouth-Canton schools! It is impossible to know how accurate this number truly is. The reason for such a small population is unknown, although some sources speculate that the inhabitants were driven out by warring tribes. By the mid-1700s the Potawatomi tribe had settled across southern Lower Michigan including in the present Canton Township. The Potawatomi are part of a larger tribal group, the Anishnabeg Indians, more commonly known by their language name the

Algonquins. The Ottawa, Chippewa, Sauk and Miami tribes were also Algonquin. The Huron tribe (of Chief Pontiac fame) was an unrelated tribe found slightly East of the Canton area. The Algonquin tribes did not draw distinct lines between themselves. Intermarriage was common, and customs were similar. The Ottawa, Chippewa and Potawatomi formed a loose confederation for trade and council called "the Three Fires."

The Ottawa and Chippewa economies consisted of hunting and trading activities while the Potawatomi were involved in farming for their subsistence. Potawatomi farmers cultivated corn, beans and squash as their main crops. These were crops that were easily dried and stored for use in winter months as well as eaten fresh. Beans and corn could be cooked later to reconstitute their moisture. Squash and pumpkins were dried in strips also to be cooked later. The division of labor left women generally in charge of the farming activities. The men helped with clearing the land for the fields, and with the harvest when the volume of labor demanded that everyone help.



Women also gathered foods including nuts, berries, edible roots, leaves, sap and honey. These were used for medicines as well as food. Men hunted and fished, providing fresh meat and for meat strips to dry for winter, as well as useful hides and furs. They were in charge of creating the necessary equipment needed for those activities. The women were in charge of clean-

ing and tanning the hides and making them into clothing or other useful items.

Potawatomi homes were small round wigwams made of bent sapling poles covered with hides, bark or thick leaves. These wigwams of about ten to twelve feet in diameter were easy to disassemble and reassemble when moving from a summer camp to a winter one. The women were in charge of this activity. Another advantage of these small homes was that they were easy to heat. A fire in the center kept its inhabitants warm and dry. The disadvantage was that the wigwams were cramped and smoky and so were used primarily for warmth and sleeping with the majority of living done out of doors.

Everyone in a village was related. Children usually referred to all of the adults as mother or father. When a young couple was married they would go to live in the husband's village. Young men always chose a bride from another village, so girls always had to leave home upon marriage. Everyone in a village was then related through the male line. Large extended families were part of a clan called a totem. Each totem was named after an animal, bird or fish.

Evidence of Native American populations in Canton Township has been found along Ridge Road near Cherry Hill Village. A farming village found there in summer might have consisted of about one hundred people. Tribal burial grounds and stone artifacts have been found in that area. Ridge Road was originally an Indian trail before the settlers found it and transformed it into a wagon route and then a modern road. Michigan Avenue, Traversing the southern half of the township was a major trail, the Old Sauk Trail, and linked the entire east to west expanse of the Lower Peninsula.

One of the rare local natives to be recorded in modern history was Chief Tonquish. He was either an Ottawa or a Potawatomi Chief of a Potawatomi tribe in the area. Both Plymouth and Westland have claimed him as their own. His band roamed the entire area of Western Wayne County. Chief Tonquish and his son were killed in 1819 in a skirmish with settlers in Nankin Township (now Westland.) Although these natives had signed away their ownership of the land in treaties with the federal government, the concept of land ownership was a foreign one and so created the inevitable conflicts of interest between the tribes and the newly arriving settlers. As late as 1870 local natives were still coming to the trading post of Alvah Smith located at the corner of Geddes and Denton

roads on Fowler Creek. (See Diane Wilson's *Cornerstones, A History of Canton Township* pages 471-472, available at the Canton Public Library or for purchase at the historical society museum.) The native traders came by way of the creek though it is not known where they were coming from. The navigability of the townships creeks comes as a revelation to today's township residents and indicates that the creek levels may have been much higher than they are now.

What happened to Canton's and Southern Michigan's native population? Some moved westward, or were forced to move to reservations. The largest present day Potawatomi reservation is in Wisconsin. Many moved to Canada where they found it easier to continue their native lifestyle. Some died of white man's disease, or married into or adopted the lifestyle of the invading European population. Whichever way they went their natural lifestyle and freedom was gone from Canton Township forever.

Calling all Canton Historical Society members:

I am looking for stories this month about women's suffrage movement and women in the Women's Christian Temperance Movement. If you have stories of your mother's, grandmother's, neighbor's (or even your own) participation in either of the movements to gain the vote or temperance, or interesting stories of women voting in the first half of the 20th century, I would like to hear from you for a future article for our newsletter. Does anyone know or remember if the two Canton United Methodist churches or other Canton institutions had suffrage or temperance organizations? Did women go to Plymouth, Ypsilanti, Wayne or other nearby towns to take part in these activities? Please drop me a note at 329 Kings Way, Canton, MI 48188 or call me at 734-981-1786 Thank you.

Pamela Heinowski

Please, help if you can.

100 Hundred & 75 Years Ago

Researched by Susan Parker

From *The Plymouth Mail*

Nov. 11, 1900

Some people put on so many airs that just to come near them makes one cold.

Some people who think themselves original are not even good imitations.

When a man gets rattled, he probably has a screw loose somewhere.

Nov. 7, 1900

VETERINARY SURGEON'S HARD LUCK.

Veterinary surgeons are complaining of hard luck. With the cable cars, the trolley cars and now the automobiles, their business has gone to the dogs, metaphorically speaking. Soon there will be as many surgeons as there are horses. It is nearly as bad as that now, and, as automobiles become cheaper and the likelihood of airships coming in to supplement them grows, the prospect is not a bright one. Lots of New York veterinarians are giving up the attempt to make a living and coming west.

Nov. 9, 1900

Weather prophets are certain this is to be a mild winter. The fact that there are few, if any hickory nuts, is taken as an indication of mild winter.

The majorities in Wayne County are as follows, all being Republicans: McKinley 8,473; Bliss 482; Sheriff Dickson 4,233; Probate Judge Durfee, 8,811.

Nov. 20, 1900

Advertisement

Dodge Brothers, Inc. have always built a good, sound, long-lived product. They have never built "yearly models" and never will. They do not make frequent expensive changes simply to catch the whim of the hour. This process of improvement has now been going on for 11 years. H.S. German & Sons.

Nov. 23, 1900

Horses hitched on the streets of Holly this winter will have to be properly blanketed or the village marshall will be after the blankety blank wretches who leave

the poor animals exposed to the elements without any covering. The law in this respect should be enforced everywhere.

Dec. 2, 1900

The person who disturbed the congregation last Sunday by coughing is requested to call at the '98 **Pharmacy** and get a bottle of *Foley's Honey and Tar*, it always gives relief.

Dec. 7, 1900

An Illinois editor wants \$1,000 for writing this: *I knew a young lady from Michigan, to meet her I never wichigan; she'd eat of ice cream 'til with pains she would scream, and she'd order another big dishigan.* Ex.

Dec. 11, 1900

As near as we can make out, Germany and France have signed up an agreement not to fight again unless there is another war.

Dec. 23, 1900

Strayed - Came onto my premises two miles east of Canton Center, about Nov. 15th last, a red two year old steer. Owner can have property by paying all charges and damages. **C.B. Truesdell.**

Dec. 28, 1900

An article in a metropolitan paper says "the future women will not do housework." And the future man will not either if he knows his biz. Ex. Well, I don't know, with the "future woman" occupying every position now occupied by men, what else will there be left for him to do?

Nov. 6, 1925

(Herbert Hoover was Secretary of Commerce)

Wanted- A Place to get an elderly lady (not an invalid) boarded for winter. **Mrs. C. E. Kingsley**, R.F.D. No. 2 Wayne, Mich.

Frank Hauk has sold his farm in Canton, and bought one near Saline, Michigan. The family will be greatly missed in this community.

FURS WANTED - DOGS FOR SALE

Skunk \$3.00, \$2.00, \$1.00, 50¢

Coon \$7.00, \$6.00, \$4.00, \$2.00

We have big demand for all furs offered us and will pay top prices. Phone 306-F5

Nov. 13 1925

WOULD YOU GO BACK?

We Talked to a Plymouth citizen who could recall that 10 years ago tomatoes were selling at 15¢ a peck instead of from 8¢ to 12¢ a pound. Dropping apples in orchards were fed to hogs. Fat hens that sold 25¢ each now bring \$1.50 each. Farmers who got 50¢ a bushel for fine potatoes did well - now it costs them almost 80¢ a bushel to raise them. Eggs were considered high at 15¢ a dozen. A fellow could buy all the good fresh country butter at 10¢ a pound. But on the other hand the man was making a dollar and a quarter to a dollar fifty a day and was considered good wages. Today, it is common to find carpenters, brick layers, plasterers, machinists and men in dozens of other lines making from a dollar to two dollars an hour. The average man doesn't have any desire to go back. Would you?

We recently came across a man studying a radio catalogue. He had the "bug" about installing a radio set. He had the desire to keep in touch with the world with this new phenomena. Question: what is going to become of the piano? With thousands buying phonographs and radio sets, what is going to become of the piano and is it going to go the way of the old family organ once found in great numbers but now only in the occasional home. Pianos that would have brought \$500.00 a few years ago are now advertised as low as \$199.00. Is this the indication of the passing of this musical instrument?

Dec. 4, 1925

HOW TIMES CHANGE

Already the "feel of Christmas" is getting in the air, and each day now will find it growing stronger. Even though it may not hold the joy for some of our older citizens that it held in

the days of their youth, we are safe in saying that not one man or women Plymouth would vote to abolish it.

We like to think back to Christmas seasons gone by, and especially to compare the customs of celebrating it then with customs of the present day. Time was when it was not considered good form for a young man to give his best girl articles of wearing apparel. It indicated that her people were neglecting to clothe her. His gift had to be an album, a toilet set or something along that line.

This edition of the

Canton **Historical Society** *News*

was put together by **C.D. Mott**
with contributing writers;
David Curtis, Pam Heinowski,
Susan Parker and Ralph Welton

If you would like more information about
our society call:

Bonnie Berg.....734-495-0811

or

Ronni Curtis.....734-981-1475

Ghost Stories and Other Tales from Canton

By Virginia Bailey Parker

Our best selling book. So don't be left without one.

To order by mail, fill out the form below and mail to:

Canton Historical Society, P.O. Box 87362, Canton, MI 48187-0362

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please make a check for \$14.95 (Includes \$3.00 shipping and handling) Payable to:

CANTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



© 1998

Board of Directors

President Robert Boyer
Vice President Bonnie Berg
Secretary David Curtis
Treasurer Charles Mott
Trustee Ronni Curtis
Trustee Marie Gentz
Trustee Bill Sprengel
Trustee Phyllis Patterson
Trustee Kay Hartman-Kuck

Committee Chairs

Program Bonnie Berg and Charles Mott
Membership Marta McCabe and Phyllis Patterson
Museum Display TBA
Education Marta McCabe
Publicity Marie Gentz
Vital Statistics Ruth Wiles
Hist. Dist. Com. Rep. Ralph Welton and Virginia Parker
Dec. bake sale Bonnie Berg and Nancy Nelson
Harvest Dinner Bonnie Berg and Ronni Curtis
DuMouchelle Marie Gentz and Phyllis Patterson
Liberty fest Kay Hartman-Kuck and Ken Kuck
Flea Market Ronni Curtis and David Curtis

Thanks to the *DuMouchelle Art Galleries*

for hosting our **Antique Appraisal Clinic**



Canton Center School

Canton Historical Society

P O Box 87362 • Canton, MI • 48187-0362