

# Ypsilanti GLEANINGS

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



FALL 2013



## The Dynamics

BY FRED THOMAS

The Dynamics: (left to right) Doug Fasing, Leonard Finley, Randy James, Harry Short, and Ted Carson.

*In the spring of 1954*

a music style called rhythm and blues was making its way across America. Vocal groups with finely tuned harmonies gained increasing popularity among teenage audiences. Doug Fasing and Ted Carson were influenced by this musical genre and decided to form a singing group. Both were juniors at Ypsilanti High School. Rumors of their efforts circulated quickly. Soon three close buddies wanted in on the action. After a few practice sessions, a group name was being considered. The word dynamic in a newspaper advertisement caught Doug's eye and stuck with him.

He suggested it to the others as their moniker and a yes vote was unanimous. The Dynamics.

During the 1950's the Gilbert House was home to the Gilbert Teen Club. As you entered, there was a pool table area to the left. To the right was a dance floor. Beyond that was a refreshment area with tables. I recall a nearby jukebox playing records most of the time.

I first saw the Dynamics at a performance there. The dance area was crowded with onlookers sitting on the

*continued on page 3*

## In This Issue...

The Dynamics.....	1
<i>By Fred Thomas</i>	
Ypsilanti History on the Internet.....	5
<i>By Melanie Parker</i>	
Ypsilanti's Dutch Town.....	7
<i>By Doreen Binder</i>	
An Ypsilanti Childhood.....	9
<i>By John Shepherd</i>	
First Prize to Ypsilanti's Neptune No. 1.....	13
<i>By James Mann</i>	
Ypsilanti's Own "Legend of Sleepy Hollow" .....	15
<i>By Peg Porter</i>	
An Artist at the Bomber Plant.....	17
<i>By Dan Choate</i>	
The Search for Anastacio Cardenas.....	18
<i>By George Ridenour</i>	
First Free Church of Michigan .....	20
<i>By Karl Williams</i>	
Case of the Lost Hand Bag.....	22
<i>By James Mann</i>	
Wanderer Arrested .....	24
<i>By James Mann</i>	
Just Suppose .....	26
<i>By John Dawson</i>	
Whiskey was the Antidote.....	27
<i>By James Mann</i>	

## Society Briefs

From the President's Desk.....	2
Society Board Members .....	2
Membership Application .....	4
Fletcher White Archives Report.....	21
Museum Board Report.....	23
GLEANINGS Sponsors .....	27
Coming Events.....	28





floor, eager to hear them. The listeners were indulgent when mistakes happened. Those early singing opportunities improved their presentations.

At the time, Ypsilanti had two record stores downtown. One was Magee Music at 303 West Michigan Avenue, just west of Adams. The other was Carty's Music Box at 204 Pearl. The Carty store occupied the northwest corner of Pearl and Washington. While this location offered music lessons and sold a variety of music, Magee Music stocked rhythm and blues. That enabled customers to buy records by groups the Dynamics introduced them to such as the Cadillacs, the Charms, the Coasters, the Drifters, the El Dorados, the Imperials, and the Midnighters.

The more the Dynamics practiced, the better they became. Before long their reputation preceded them, and appearance requests multiplied. They were just happy to show up, have an audience, and get a few bucks for gas.

In addition to the Gilbert House, they sang at high school proms and private parties. If they got invited, they made every effort to be there. One event was for the Ladies Literary Club at 218 N. Washington where they sang R&B to those sophisticates. Another time they shared billing with the Crew Cuts at a program in Ann Arbor.

In 1954, a popular Detroit disc jockey began hosting the "Ed McKenzie's Saturday Party" on WXYZ-TV Channel 7. During the two-hour show he discussed new records with teens and hosted talent competitions. Professional entertainers also performed.



In June of 1955 The Dynamics appeared on the "Saturday" show and took first place in the talent competition, performing "Chop Chop Boom" by the Danderliers.

In June, 1955 the boys auditioned and earned a spot on the popular program. Not to be outclassed, they donned their finer threads to impress the judges. Word had gotten around town about them appearing on the show and many Ypsi teens tuned in, me included. Well rehearsed for the competition, their vocal talents were at their best. When the acts concluded, studio applause insured their win over four other groups. The first place prizes included an album of Glenn Miller songs, a 45 rpm record player, and season passes to a major Detroit amusement park.

passes to a major Detroit amusement park.

Harry Short joined the U.S. Army in 1956 and was replaced by Bruce Johnson.

In addition, show promoters became aware of their talents. Ollie McLaughlin, a disc jockey at WHRV (now WAAM) represented them for awhile. The Ypsilanti Armory at 1025 South Huron hosted many R&B shows and often invited them to participate. The Dynamics shared the stage with Hank Ballard and the Midnighters, the Coasters, Muddy Waters, Bill Doggett, and Little Willie John.

Out of town, regulars at Inkster's Club Vogue kept them returning every weekend for a month, doing two shows a night. Count Belsa, the band leader at the club, thought highly of their talents. On one occasion he set them up to perform along with some big



left: Guest entertainers at the "Saturday Party" included Billy Ward and the Dominoes, seen here with host Ed McKenzie, and many others.

top: An old friend took this shot during one of the Dynamics' performances at Inkster's Club Vogue.

right: The Dynamics performed along with some big name R&B groups at the Warfield Theater on Hastings Street in Detroit.






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*Dynamics* continued from page 3

name R&B groups at the Warfield Theater in Detroit. Their numbers were well received.

In the fall of 1957 the now-seasoned quintet got an opportunity that might have changed their lives. With help from Bruce's brother who was disc jockey Sleepy Head Ted for WFDF in Flint, they arranged an audition with Barry Gordy, the founder of Motown records. They drove to his Detroit residence where they sang several songs a capella and a few with piano accompaniment. Mr. Gordy liked the group so much that he gave them two original songs to learn before a return visit. Whatever

potential the meeting offered, nothing materialized as a result of it.

Unfortunately, the guys couldn't exist in two worlds at the same time. Devoting time to singing became difficult. Some were now married, one had joined the service, others had job demands, and college study time had taken another. Eventually these diversions made them face the fact that each member wanted to go his own way. And go they did, taking all those Dynamics memories with them.

*(Fred Thomas lived in this area (1948-1998) and enjoys sharing his articles.)*

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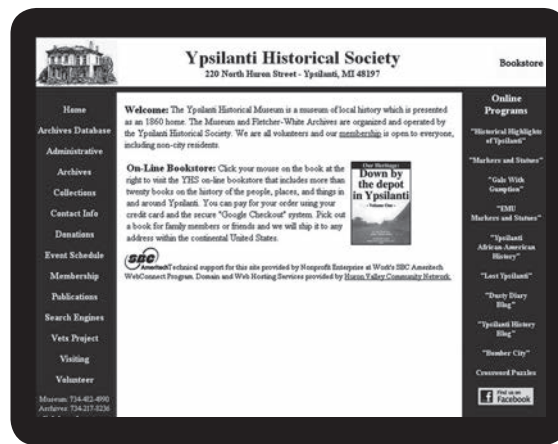
*Type of Membership:*

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Life	\$200.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please make check payable to the **Ypsilanti Historical Society** and mail to:

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Ypsilanti, MI 48197

The Ypsilanti Historical Society web page at [ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org](http://ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org).



*(Melanie Parker is a student in the graduate program in Historical Preservation at Eastern Michigan University and is currently serving an Internship in the YHS Archives.)*

# Ypsilanti History on the INTERNET

BY MELANIE PARKER

A strong internet presence has become essential for historical institutions. Providing an informative, easy-to-use website helps information seekers discover what an institution has to offer, and aids potential guests in planning their visit. "Social media" sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, have also become increasingly more important, because they are free marketing tools and allow people to have constant connection with a site.

In recent years, many museums and archival institutions have taken the initiative to digitize their collections. Digitization preserves content for the future, and helps safeguard original materials from frequent handling by creating an accessible, digital replica. Moreover, this process makes collections available online to people all over the world, and gives the public access to these materials even if they are unable to visit the institution.

Here at the Ypsilanti Historical Society, we too are taking steps to digitize our collections and bring Ypsilanti history to life online. Links to online re-

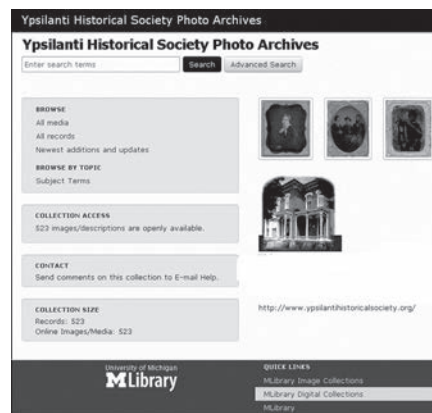
sources are available on our website homepage, [www.ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org](http://www.ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org). Under "Collections," there are photographs of the Museum, giving you a taste of what you will see on an on-site tour. To aid in planning your visit, our event schedule is complete with upcoming exhibits for the year.

Interested researchers should consult our "Master Database," a listing of the material we have in the archives. This can be done at home to give you an idea

of what is available prior to your visit. Are you from out of town? No problem: simply call us or send an email with what you are interested in, and we can assist your research from there. Though we are constantly updating our database and adding new items, it currently contains 23 different collections and over 20,000 entries.

Also in progress is the "Digital Photo Archives Project," a cooperative venture between the Ypsilanti Historical Society and the University of Michigan Digital Library System. Once complete, the collection will contain approximately 5,000 photographs dating from the 1850s to the present.

A benefit of membership in the Ypsilanti Historical Society is receiving the *Gleanings*, which can be a great resource when researching. Through a partnership with the Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti District Libraries, we have been able to digitize past issues of the *Gleanings*. Both these and the Digital Photo Archives Project are available on our website under "Publications."



Over 600 Ypsilanti history photos can be viewed on the University of Michigan Library digital collection site.

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



## Civil War Barracks - 1862



- This was the home of the 14th and 27th Michigan Infantry during the Civil War.
- The building is located on the corner of River and East Cross Streets.
- The building later became known as the Thompson Block.

The "Historical Highlights of Ypsilanti" program on the YHS website includes pictures and information about people and places in Ypsilanti.

States, and was known for completing one bomber every hour. The plant attracted so many workers that a community emerged around it. Information on the plant is available in the Archives, and a portion of what is available is online under the "Bomber City" page.

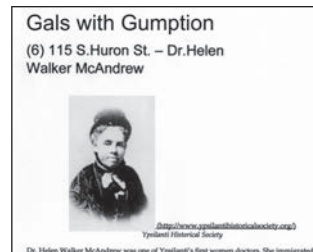
On the right side of our homepage are links to "Online Programs." The "Historical Highlights of Ypsilanti" section offers a look at citizens who were an integral part of the development of the city, as well as places of significance from 1900-1975. For more information on these locations, many of which are recognized as Michigan State Historic Sites, visit our "Markers and Statues" pages. The Willow Run Bomber Plant has left an undeniable



The "South Adams Street @ 1900" covers the history of African Americans in Ypsilanti.



The "Markers and Statues" program on the YHS website highlights the many historical places and events in Ypsilanti history.



The "Gals with Gumption" program highlights the women who played significant roles in Ypsilanti history.

mark on Ypsilanti. At the time of its construction, it was the largest factory under one roof in the United



The "Bomber City" program contains pictures of Willow Run before, during and after World War II.

The Ypsilanti Historical Society is not the only group working to bring Ypsilanti to life online. The "Online Programs" section also offers links to other sites that focus on Ypsilanti history. Two of these links lead to projects completed by students in the Historic Preservation graduate program at Eastern Michigan University. "Gals with Gumption," designed as an informative website and walking tour "reflects the accomplishments and struggles of women in the city of Ypsilanti." The "African American History" link directs to a website focused on the historic South Adams Street neighborhood, circa 1900. You can stay connected with the neighborhood by "liking" them on Facebook; search "South Adams Street circa 1900."

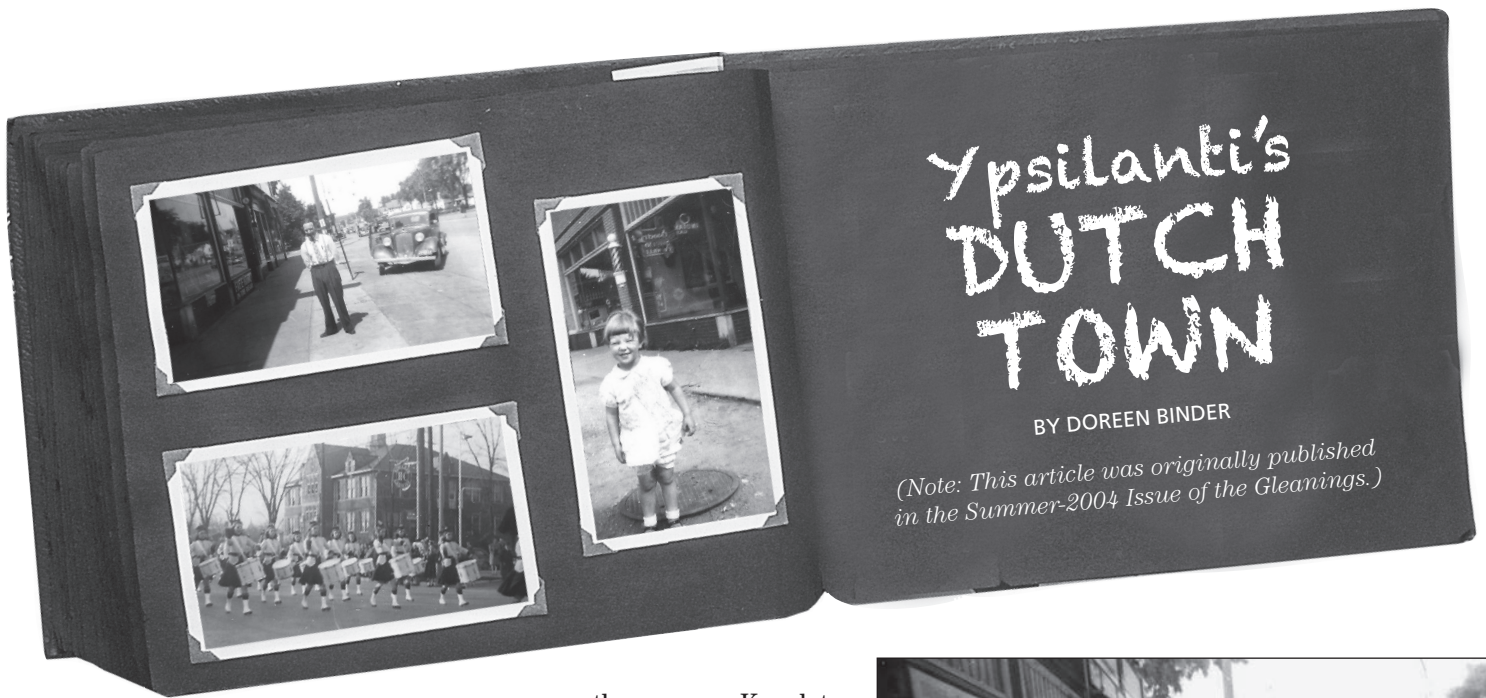
Independent blogs are kept by two Ypsilanti historians, both of whom have published books on Ypsilanti history. Laura Bien keeps the "Dusty Diary," and James Mann writes the "Ypsihistor." Both are volunteers in the Archives; please contact us for more information regarding these blogs and their content.



James Mann has posted 33 stories about Ypsilanti history on his "YPSIHISTOR" blog since January 1, 2013.

Many historic sites and organizations in Ypsilanti have websites and Facebook pages that you can "like" to stay updated with news and events, including the Downtown Association of Ypsilanti, Visit Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Museum, Michigan Firehouse Museum, Yankee Air Museum and I Grew Up in Ypsilanti. The Ypsilanti Historical Society is also on Facebook! Please "like" us to stay updated with what is going on in the Society, see posts featuring collections from the Museum and Archives, and photographs uploaded weekly. For more information on this and our other online initiatives, please contact us by phone or email. Museum: [yhs.museum@gmail.com](mailto:yhs.museum@gmail.com) - 734-482-4990; Archives: [yhs.archives@gmail.com](mailto:yhs.archives@gmail.com) - 734-217-8236.





# Ypsilanti's DUTCH TOWN

BY DOREEN BINDER

*(Note: This article was originally published in the Summer-2004 Issue of the Gleanings.)*

# My

family has fond memories of growing up in the "Dutch Town" area of Ypsilanti during the 1930s and 1940s. The neighborhood borders River Street to the west, Babbitt to the north, Grove on the east, and South Street to the south with Michigan Avenue cutting right through the middle. Other streets included Parsons, Lincoln, and Park.

Woodruff School, at the corner of Michigan and Park, was a local landmark. Floyd Smith was the well-loved principal who cared for his students as family. Floyd was an effective role model for the boys in the school. Louella Parsons, Esther Fletcher, Jane Holzhauser, and Amy Hopkins Thomas were some of the wonderful teachers. Derwood Hagen, the Poling girls, and Bob Russell were some of the alumni. Derwood later served as an election worker at the Adams School polling station.

Businesses on the north side of Michigan Avenue going east from River Street started with Ken Brokaw's gas station

on the corner. Ken later opened Ken's Bar in Depot Town. Continuing east, Dolph Thorne's Tire and Appliance store was on the site of Lucas Restaurant, followed by the A & P store on the northwest corner of Grove and Michigan. Marsh Plating is now located on that corner. On the south side of Michigan, early businesses included Otis Tooze's Barber Shop, Herzberg's



Doreen Binder at three years old in front of the drug store.

Processing (we called it a junk yard, modern jargon would call it a recycling center), Steffe's Gas Station, Russell's Bakery, and C.F. Smith's Grocery on the southeast corner of Park and Michigan. Parkview Pharmacy occupied what is now the party store on the south side of Michigan Avenue. My dad, George Binder, partnered with Bernard McLhargie and bought the pharmacy. The pharmacy was locally called McLhargie & Binder drugs where

I spent many hours serving sodas and helping dad. Later, John Kealy's Bakery replaced Russell' Bakery. John's glazed donuts were memorable.

Additional businesses included Al Holz-



George Binder in front of store (c1935).

hauer's Print Shop, Max Bitker's Dry Goods, and Emil Batchelor's Meat Market where neighbors bought fresh meat daily. What is now the Bomber Restaurant was started by the Baldwin family and was known as Mrs. Baldwin's Restaurant. During World War II, the family changed the name to the Bomber. The house that stood to the east of the small building that was Al's Barber Shop was Clarence Tyrell's Plumbing Shop. Clarence taught his customers how to do repairs and he had every plumbing part a customer could ever need that only he could find. Clarence even made labor free house calls for his Dutch Town neighbors. The plumbing shop building burned and was demolished as a consequence of the fire in 2004. Carrie Chadwick's Piano store occupied the southeast corner of Grove and Michigan where the Mida's Muffler is now located.

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In 1935, a State Police Post was erected on the southwest corner of Michigan and Park. The first commander was Frank Walker. The good looking troopers brought a new look to the area. The building became a rug market and was demolished as part of the Water Street development. Gilbert Park, on the south side of Michigan Avenue and between Park Street and Lincoln Street, was the center of summer activities for the neighborhood kids. There were band concerts in the summer as well as supervised playground activities. Summer ended with a friendly tournament with kids from all the City supervised playgrounds competing. Gilbert Park was sold by the City of Ypsilanti during the 1960s for economic development that featured an Arlens Department Store.

Dutch Town families included the Thumns, Beggars, Harners (Ev, Harp, and Win), Horns, Hipps, Redaways, Hinschs, Croghans, Parkers, Thibodeaux, Mayos, Malcolms, Hines, Tuckers, and others. With his automotive dream, Preston Tucker became the most famous Dutch Town resident. Bob Mayo delivered newspapers to Dutch Town residents during the 1950s. Carl Hipp grew up on Michigan Avenue between Park and Grove and was always eager to share his stories of the area. Carl moved up near North Congress and Wallace and died some time ago in his late nineties.

Within the small town of Ypsilanti, Dutch Town was a district residential community served by a full service



Dutch Town parade (c1940).



Corner of Park and East Michigan Avenue

business district. The local businesses provided all of the needs and services a family could want. The families gave me warm memories of my childhood. As is the same story everywhere, the small businesses lost out to supermarkets and large chain stores. With the loss of businesses, Dutch lost its identity and is only remembered by us old timers.

*(Doreen Binder, now retired, was a teacher and principal for forty-two years and is a life long resident of Ypsilanti.)*





John B. Shepherd

# An Ypsilanti Childhood... My Father, John Bogan Shepherd

BY JOHN DOBNEY SHEPHERD

*Edited by Peg Porter with Pamela Shepherd DeLaittre*

*Background: this remembrance was written by John D. Shepherd (known to everyone as Jack) and shared by his daughter Pamela Shepherd DeLaittre. The Shepherds lived in Ypsilanti until 1956 when the family relocated to Minneapolis, Minnesota. Jack Shepherd's father, John B. Shepherd, died before his grandchildren were born and this piece was written to let his children, Pam, John and Fred, know more about their grandfather and their father's childhood.*

This is not going to be in good chronological order, but I will try and tell you all of the things that I remember that made my early years so enjoyable and made me love my dad so much.

Of course it is a little difficult to tell you about when I was born, but it was in 1912 and we were living on Ann Street in Ypsilanti, MI in the same house that the finishing foreman at Peninsular Paper Co., Mr. Fred Holly, finally lived in. This was just around the corner from where I was a little kid and really the earliest time that I remember. Dad was 24 years old and was working at "The Mill" (Peninsular Paper Co.) at the time that I was born. He worked on the shipping dock.



John D. Shepherd

He had had a rough life up until he came to Ypsilanti and to the Mill. John Martin Shepherd, my grandpa, had come to Ypsilanti first as a millwright at the Paper Mill. My dad, (John B.) was born in Amanda, Ohio, a suburb of Middletown, Ohio, near Hamilton, OH. He lived there until his father got him to come to Michigan to work on a crew that was building dams up and down the Huron River for the paper mills that were to come.

Dad had always been a big, strong kid and he was only in

his early teens when he came to Ypsilanti. He was working with a tough crew of Mexicans on the dam building and he soon became foreman of the crew simply because he could lick any other member of the crew. It was necessary to have someone that could keep order amongst the employees. He was very strong and could lift 100 pound sacks of cement up on each shoulder and carry them to the job.

After the dams were built, the Mill was looking for a strong roustabout type of individual to work in the yard and on the dock. Grandpa (John Martin) got the job for Dad from Mr. D. L. Quirk, Sr. Dad worked through various jobs until he became the shipping clerk.

It was at this point that he first saw my mother, Ethel Dobney. It was never quite clear to me who was the moving factor in the romance. She used to sit out on the steps of her rooming house on Washington Street and wait for Dad to go by in the Mill's horse and wagon and they would wave at each other but that was as close as they got for



Both John Dobney Shepherd and his father worked at the Peninsular Paper Company that was located on the Huron River. The power plant that supplied electricity for the mill was located across the river.



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a long time. Finally, Dad got up the nerve to ask Herb Bisbee, a friend, to find out who she was and the romance progressed from there. The courting of John and Ethel was all done on the old horse and freight wagon of Peninsular Paper Co. He would pick her up and they would have picnics in what is now Peninsular Grove.

John B. and Ethel were married July 5, 1910, in the Scovill home where Herb and Genevieve Scovill Bisbee were living and where Dad was rooming. After they were married, they bought the house on Ann Street. I came along August 24, 1912. We lived there for some time and then we moved to the house on the corner of what is now College Place and Washtenaw Avenue.

It was there that Dad and Mother made the acquaintance of the Lister family. One of the most terrifying moments in their young married life was one day when the beer wagon pulled up in front of their house to make a delivery. It was ginger ale but Mother thought surely that the Listers, who were staunch Presbyterians, would think they had ordered beer. In those days the beer distributor hauled all of his wares in a horse and wagon and for a young couple to have the wagon stop in front of their house was unheard of!

They did not live on College Place for very long. They moved to Lowell Street where I really for the first time come into the picture. I am not sure how old I was at this time, probably around four years old.

Back in those days Montgomery Ward Company was a very real part of all family life. It was not only a large merchandizing company but it was also the place from where a lot of staple groceries were purchased. Everything came out of Chicago by train. I can remember my dad bundling me up in the winter time and starting off with me for the freight house to get our order. He used to pull me on my King of the Hill sled for which he had made a box so that we

could carry the merchandize home.

At Christmas Time there were many mysterious packages that arrived from Montgomery Ward. I could never handle those packages. They were private for my dad and mom. We always celebrated Christmas on Christmas Morning. We did not always have a tree but we always hung our stockings on the fireplace in the parlor and Santa filled them and left the larger packages on the hearth in front of the fireplace. Some of those larger packages looked an awful lot like those that we had hauled from the freight house but they couldn't be because Santa had left them in our house and not in the King of the Hill delivery!

My dad and mom were always quite lenient with us. We could sneak down stairs at any time on Christmas morning to see if Santa had come as yet and what he had left. One thing that we could always be sure of was that there would be the "Teddy B" series of books and Christmas Day was taken up partly by Dad reading one of the "Teddy B" and "Teddy G" books. They were teddy bears that lived in the woods and were like people.

Christmas always meant that my Grandpa Shepherd (John Martin) would come from Kalamazoo, and of course, Grandma Dobney lived with us all of the time. So after my brother Bob came, we had six for Christmas dinner which in those days was a great big chicken. We couldn't afford turkey, which was not as plentiful then as they are now. Grandma Dobney and Mom would always fix the Christmas dinner. Grandma Dobney always made sage dressing for the festive bird. We had cranberries which had been in one of the packages from Montgomery Wards. We also always had dried apples in one of the packages for apple pie, instead of pumpkin that we have now.

After the dinner and the gifts were in shambles, Dad, Grandpa and I, and later Bob, would take a walk out in the



cold brisk air, usually up into what is now known as Sleepy Hollow in back of the college. There was always one place we would have to go. It was to a large hole in the ground. I was told it was an elephant hole, although I never saw any elephant go in or come out. In later years I was convinced that someone had pulled my leg.

One year Grandpa Shepherd drove over from Kalamazoo in his new car. It took him all day to come two hundred miles in his Willys Knight, the one and only sleeve valve car I have ever seen. Grandpa usually came over on the interurban, an electric car that ran from Kalamazoo to Detroit.

Our first car was a Dodge Touring Car with side curtains and all of the modern conveniences. It had a self starter. You didn't have to crank it. It was black and would go up to thirty miles per hour. It never went that fast as there were no roads that would take that speed. They were all sand or gravel "roads" and I use the term loosely.

We went to Clarks Lake in the summers. It was forty miles from Ypsi and we would leave early in the morning and get to Clarks Lake in the late afternoon. How I remember Clarks Lake. We rented the cottage from some people in Jackson, MI. I remember most the General Store at the lake. I don't know why unless it was there that I first tasted fruit drops like our life savers now. They also had ice cream for sale at any time you wanted it.

We couldn't keep ice cream because we didn't have a refrigerator; only an ice box. We kept all of our perishables in the well house by the lake where we had cold artesian well water all of the time. We had no electricity, only kerosene lamps.

My dad and I and sometimes my grandpa would go out fishing every day. In those days we would catch fish and not have to tell fish stories. Dad would clean them and Grandma and Mom



A group from the Peninsular Paper Company (Circa 1925): (front row – left to right) Vasily Preinshnicoff, Harry Johnson (Superintendent), John Bogan Shepherd (Sales Manager), Howard Cooney (Assistant Superintendent) Paul Snowman (Technician) and George Rominski (Office); (back row – left to right) ????, Dan T. Quirk (Assistant Sales Manager), Bud Robtoy (Traffic Manager) and John Dobney Shepherd (Technician). Jack Shepherd is on the far right in second row. His father is third from the left in the first row.

would fix them for supper on the kerosene stove. Boy, were they good right out of a cold lake.

Usually, while we were at the lake we would go into Jackson, about 15 miles away, and did I look forward to this. We would go to a movie and have lunch at the restaurant; something that we did not do at home.

It was here that I first met some show people. The people who rented the cottage next to ours played in stock companies and were the nicest people but different from us. They were always quoting from plays that they were in and all of them could play a musical instrument; so we never lacked for entertainment.

After the summer was over we came back to Ypsilanti. The First World War was just about to begin and everybody was so conscious of the needs of the service men who were going to Europe to fight for world peace. The German armies had overrun Armenia and we were all conscious of the starving Armenians. The Red Cross was putting on one program after another to raise money. One of the features was a parade put on by the Red Cross and the War Bond committee to sell War Bonds. This was in 1917 and I was a poor little

Armenian waif on the Paper Mill truck. I was being held by Pearl Filkins, Dad's secretary, who was Miss Liberty and we were in an old Pierce Arrow truck with a chain drive and the chain was forever slipping off and Bud Robtoy would have to put it back on. If you had ever seen your dad then, a real ragamuffin, you would never have claimed him as your dad.

One of the most memorable events that took place each year was the coming of the Ringling Brothers Circus. It came to Ypsilanti each summer and played on the circus lot on Hamilton Street near what is now Ainsworth Drive. There was a big open field in the middle of the block south of Ainsworth. My dad and mother always took Bob and me to the show. It was mostly a wild animal show, but it later became The Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Combined Shows.

Also every summer, we had the Redpath Chautauqua come to the same lot. Here we saw some of the greatest actors of that time in some of the greatest melodramas of that era. They also had great musical stars like Harry Lauder, great violinists, and one year the Sousa Band.

Of course we always had medicine shows that sold snake oil that would cure anything from an earache to ingrown toe nails, tape worms, the summer complaint and, believe it or not, they were all friends of Buffalo Bill, Wild Bill Hickock and they always had real live Indians who made up the wonderful potions.

Then of course there was the Weurth Theater where every Saturday the year round we could see the best Wild West Shows with Tom Mix, Buck Jones, etc. and a continued serial that always left you with the hero just about to be burned at the stake by unfriendly Indians or run over by a wild buffalo stampede. Then we would get there the next Saturday to see the hero or heroine saved only to be put into another death defying position.

It may sound like all we did was go to the shows but that was not the case. When I was still in grammar school at the Michigan State Normal Training School, my dad was playing baseball for the Peninsular Paper company baseball team in the city league. Besides the paper company, the league was made up of teams from the Stove Works, the Ladder Company, the Foundry and the Coaster Wagon Factory. Dad was a fine pitcher and had played baseball in high school in Ohio.

The Peninsular Paper Company had been making the paper for the Chicago Tribune Newspaper. They were printing it on fine rag content paper. The same type of paper we now find being made by such companies as the Crane Company for the finest writing papers. This was very expensive. The Mill was the only source of supply that the Tribune had and they demanded that another mill be built across the river from the present mill. This plant burned down and at about the same time the Tribune started using ground wood newsprint as is used now. Peninsular could not compete with the new high speed newsprint mills that were springing up in Canada so they lost the Tribune contract. This left the Mill with production of ground wood papers but no customers so they decided to try to make ground wood covers for booklets and, having rag paper before, they also made rag grade.

The Mill had no sales force so Mr. D. L. Quirk, who was president of the Mill, started out on the road to try to interest book publishers in the Mill's first cover papers. He was only relatively successful, and, as he was needed back at the Mill to administer the business, he had to find someone else to do the selling. He approached Dad, and, although Dad had no more idea what it took to be a salesman, he started out. This is how Dad got into the sales end of the Paper Mill.

I have gotten a little ahead of myself so I guess I had better go back to my earlier days and the story of our family before Dad's selling experience.



The Shepherd house on Congress Street as it looks today.

There was a creek that ran through Sleepy Hollow, but before it got that far it also ran past Bissel's Store and Norton's Greenhouse. In back of both of these establishments we used to hunt for crayfish, minnows and once in a while small turtles and small fish. I think it is these experiences that have hung on all of these years and has started me on my poems about the brooks and the tiny bugs and animals.

One of my early recollections about the Michigan State Normal College was that every spring on the first of May they had a May Day celebration out in Sleepy Hollow. They always danced around the May Pole and of course all we kids had to be there and we were.

In 1919, Dad and Mother bought the house on Congress Street at the corner of Summit Street. At that time there was a dusty gravel street out in front and on the side of the house. The Summit Grocery was in the back end of what later became Fred Walton's house on the corner of Summit and Congress. Across Summit Street from our house was the Pray family home. Dr. Carl Pray, head of the History Department at the college, and his family lived there. We had one of our first baseball diamonds in their backyard. They had four children, Carl, Audrey, Ellen and Joe.

Across the street on Congress from the Pray backyard was the home of the Burrell family. Besides Mr. and Mrs. Burrell there were Wesley, Eugene, Sylvia, Alfred and Allen Chester. The other kids in the neighborhood were Andy Smith, son of the electrician, and later the Wal-

ton and the Westcott kids.

Living next to the Burrells was the Young family. Dick Young was the first airplane pilot in the city and he used to take people up for rides from Recreation Park. He had a Waco Biplane and gave me my first airplane ride.

My grandfather was a miller by trade and also a machinist. He came to Midland, Michigan from England to work in the flour mill in that city, a village then. I am not sure of the year, but I believe it was in the late 1880s. It was in Midland that he met Nellie Sproul and they were married. My mother, Ethel, was born in Midland, September 11, 1885 and died March 15, 1958.

When your Great Grandpa Dobney came to this country and to Midland, he worked as a miller and took care of the milling machines. This led to his next job in Ann Arbor at the Hoover Steel Ball Company. Here he was in charge of maintenance of the machines. He roomed in Ann Arbor and your Great Grandma Dobney lived with us in Ypsilanti. Great Grandpa Dobney came over every weekend to visit. He took the interurban electric car that went down Cross Street in Ypsilanti. He went back to England once to see his family and never returned to Ann Arbor. My Grandma Dobney lived with us from then on until her death. My brother, Bob, and I never knew what it was to be without a Grandma in the house until we were in our teens.

*(Notes by Peg Porter: John (Jack) Shepherd was the Class President of the Ypsilanti High School Class of 1931. He married Barbara Jean Choate of Greenville in August of 1940. They had three children: Pamela, John and Frederick. In 1956 the family moved to the Minneapolis area where Jack had been hired to work for a Minnesota paper company. Jack Shepherd died in 1999 from complications related to ALS (often referred as Lou Gehrig's Disease). His wife Barb lived into her nineties, passing away in June 2012.)*





Neptune Company's highly prized Command Horn.

BY JAMES MANN

On display in the Bill Edmonds Room of the Ypsilanti Historical Museum is a silver trumpet. The trumpet, in fact, more a megaphone, stands inside a display case, enclosed in a glass case of its own. Trumpets such as this would have been used to shout orders to firefighters and others during a fire. This trumpet was most likely never used for this purpose, as it was a prize awarded to the firefighters of Ypsilanti in 1859.

The third annual fireman's tournament was held on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of July in 1859 in Jackson, Michigan. The tournament was attended by eighteen fire companies and thousands of spectators. A special train left Detroit at four in the morning with five fire engines on board, and increased in length as more cars were added when more fire companies joined the train. The weight of the added cars taxed the train's engine and the special fell behind schedule. A reg-

## FIRST PRIZE TO Ypsilanti's Neptune No. 1

ular train which left Detroit at seven in the morning passed the special, as it sat on a siding, to let the scheduled trains pass.

There was a stop at Ypsilanti, so the men of the volunteer fire company, Neptune No. 1, and its Wright 2<sup>nd</sup> class engine, sometimes called "the tea kettle," was attached to the train.

"The variegated colors composing the firemen's uniforms were visible at every standing point, and they covered the train like a swarm of bees, hanging upon platforms or window sills, sitting on the roofs like passengers on a Broadway omnibus, or riding astride their favorite machines on the open cars, all in the highest spirits, and wakening the echoes with shouts and cheers, and waving of hats, that reminded one of schoolboy days come again. The swift express train shot by in the midst of a rousing cheer from several hundred lusty throats, and was followed by the long special at the best pace it could make, which eventually brought it into Jackson two hours behind time," reported *The Detroit Free Press* of Friday, July 8, 1859.

"The main street of Jackson was crowded with thousands of people who had come to see the tournament. So many had arrived that movement from one place to another on the sidewalk was almost impossible. One could only stand in place and watch events pass

by. The firemen formed a procession at the depot and marched to the Hibbard House where there were brief speeches of welcome. Then the procession was reformed and marched to the public square where the firefighters were addressed by Governor Austin Blair."

"The firemen then disbanded for dinner, which exercise being concluded the alarm bell was sounded, and the several companies proceeded to the grounds selected for the trial, below the city, near the Central Railroad," reported *The Michigan Argus* of Friday, July 8, 1859.

"The ground where the engines were placed was near the depot, a platform having been built across a mill-race which furnished water. The streams were thrown down an inclination of several feet, the wind blowing considerably during a greater part of the trail. Twenty minutes were allowed each engine, during which time the company had the privilege of throwing as often as it chose. Numerous accidents occurred, such as bursting of hoses, breaking of connecting rods and plungers, and displacement of packing, all of which had the privilege of repairing if it could within time," noted the account.

The Neptune, No. 1 from Ypsilanti, with its Wright 2<sup>nd</sup> class engine had a distance of 183 feet.

Because of the late hour the train had



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Ypsilanti firefighters in 1870 with their new steam fire engine.

arrived at Jackson, the contest for quantity was postponed until the next day. For the contest on quantity, a large tank with accurate measuring facilities had been prepared. Each engine had three minutes to play their hose. The contest was lively. Neptune No. 1 from Ypsilanti won first place for second class engines with 32 and a half barrels. The prize was the silver trumpet.

Then was held the "sweepstakes" trial on distance, which was entered by ten engines. This was won by Neptune No.

1 from Ypsilanti with 211 feet 11 inches. The prize was \$150 in gold.

"Our Ypsilanti friends," noted *The Michigan Argus* of Friday, July 8, 1859, "have reason to feel proud, a \$125 trumpet and \$150 in gold, the reward of energy and perseverance."

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




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# Ypsilanti's Own "Legend of Sleepy Hollow"

BY PEG PORTER

*(Several contributors to Gleanings have included Sleepy Hollow in their stories. It occurred to me that many of our readers would not know what or where it was. One of my functions as an editor is to help clarify what the author intended. Sometimes this is as simple as unscrambling an awkward and confusing sentence. Other times more work is required. Such was the case with this article. There is virtually no written history of the Hollow. I tried another approach. That is to find people who remembered the place and who were able to expand my own somewhat sketchy recollections. For their help I thank Don Foreman, Karen Nickels, Pam DeLaittre, Joyce Wales Novak, Judy Morey, and Anne Tubbs Massey. I also drew on the writings of Jack Shepherd and Barney Hughes. Also thank you to the Eastern Michigan Archives especially for the photographs that illustrate this article.)*

A long time ago, before there was a Michigan State Normal, let alone an Eastern Michigan University, a small stream made its way from deep in Washtenaw County towards the Huron River. During the last part of its journey it was nearly parallel to the River itself. The stream traveled across the flat land that lay below the bluffs where, in the 1850s, the first buildings of a new educational institution were constructed. This institution was dedicated to the training of teachers, the second such school in the entire United States.

A number of years passed before the little stream was to feel the effects of this change. Trees grew along its banks. In some places the trees thickened to form woods. Homes were built to the east as the small town of Ypsilanti expanded. The stream made its way through this newly developed area and joined the Huron close to the big bend where the river heads south toward Lake Erie.

The earliest buildings that housed the college were on Cross Street. Eventually the small campus expanded to Forest Avenue, but no further. However, in 1913 the school, now the Michigan State Normal College, began expanding. The college administrators acquired sixty-five acres to the north and east. The acquisition included 43 acres belonging to T.C. Owen who had once sold mineral water from wells beneath what

would become Roosevelt High School.

The stream and surrounding areas were known as Sleepy Hollow, probably after the setting of Washington Irving's famous short story, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." How and when it was named is not recorded. Perhaps someone noted that Ichabod Crane, the primary character in the story, was a teacher as did Joyce Novak when asked to share her memories of the Hollow.

All sorts of Ypsilanti residents began to visit the Hollow. Children splashed in the stream watching the minnows and crabs. Families visited, usually on the weekend to take a stroll along the stream and through the woods. And college students found their way down the hill to court their sweethearts or just commune with nature. During the snowy days of winter, the hills above were filled with sledders who could get a good run down to the more level land below. And spring brought May Day. Young female students, dressed all in white, danced around May Poles, an event that attracted numerous spectators. At the western end of the Hollow, kids from the nearby neighborhood played a boisterous game of Capture the Flag using the stream as the border between the two warring factions.

In 1938 the Rackham School was built on what was then on the outer edge of the campus. According



Michigan State Normal College – 1940 – The tree line running from west to east, marks the creek:

- 1) Gymnasium (*demolished*);
- 2) Old Pierce Hall, also known as Old Main (*demolished*);
- 3) Snow Health Center, later Department of Music classrooms (*demolished*);
- 4) Zwergel's Book Store (*demolished*);
- 5) Rackham School;
- 6) Roosevelt High School (*now classrooms and offices*).

to a virtual tour of the campus, Rackham overlooked a scenic area known as Sleepy Hollow. Close by was Sherzer Hall and the campus gardens. These gardens extended north from Sherzer to Sleepy Hollow. During the 1930s, 1940s and early 1950s the Hollow was part of the campus but left untouched and remained much the same as it had for many years. The local Girl Scouts used it as a Day Camp during this period.

Michigan State Normal College became Eastern Michigan College. The Gymnasium, dedicated in 1894, was demolished in the 1960s. The gymnasium, recognized as state of the art when it was built, had its own historic significance. It was the site of the first basketball game in the State of Michigan played on May 19, 1894. This imposing building was replaced by a parking lot. A new field house was constructed and much of Sleepy Hollow was destroyed in the process. A parking structure finished the job.

Now a University, construction contin-

ued to the north until the campus backed up to Huron River Drive. Was this the end of Sleepy Hollow? Not quite. Surprisingly the stream still makes its way across the campus. It feeds two "lakes" (most Michiganders would call them ponds). Each lake has a jetted fountain that shoots the stream up in the air, a sort of "grand finale" of its trip to the Huron River. It is no longer the gentle, sleepy stream of years past. And yet, if you cross a bridge between the parking structure and the Student Center and look towards Oakwood, you will find a small stretch of creek that resembles what many of us remember. The creek is bordered by reeds, trees, and wildflowers. So despite all the construction, landscaping and whatever else we humans do to our natural landscape, Mother Nature prevails.

*(Peg Porter is Assistant Editor of the Gleanings and third-generation Ypsilantian. Her articles cover a wide range of topics, some based on first-hand experience.)*



The campus gardens extended north from Sherzer Hall to Sleepy Hollow.



Michigan State Normal College students working in the campus gardens (circa 1930).



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May Day dancers (1917).



The stream still makes its way across the campus and feeds two "lakes" (most Michiganders would call them ponds) each with a jetted fountain.





Don stands between two of his drawings from his "In Your Face" series and behind a self-portrait (photo by Jenna Isaacson).

# AN ARTIST AT THE BOMBER PLANT

BY DON CHOATE

*The following article was contributed by Pam Shepherd DeLaitre, the author's niece. Pam lived in Ypsilanti until 1956 when her family relocated to the Minneapolis area.*

*(Don Choate was an artist and activist who worked at the Willow Run Bomber Plant during World War II. He passed away in Columbia, Missouri on October 9, 2008. He was a native of Greenville, Michigan and came to this area to attend college. Don led a long and interesting life including attending art school in New York where he became familiar with the poets and writers of the Beat Generation. He was hired by Norcross Greetings but was later dismissed because of supposed connections with Communists. Don was interested in politics and different points of view and like many others during the McCarthy era was wrongly accused of Communist Party leanings. He continued his career in art, achieving recognition and success.)*

**“Yes**, I was lucky not to be in the war! At Willow Run I started out on the production floor testing and oiling the superchargers that went on the planes (B24s). I would sing while working and my boss who was a funny Italian guy wanted me to enter a talent show of the factory workers. So I went to a Detroit theater and sang to a record and came in first. He was always asking me to sing this and that song. I remember the center wing section where they did riveting. The roar of the riveting was enough to make you sick to your stomach when you walked through there. They used little people to be inside of the wing during the riveting process.

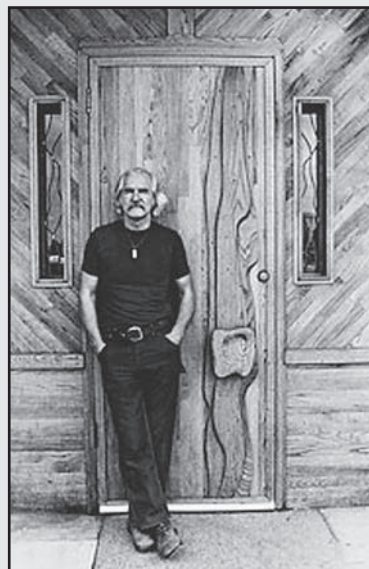
I had signed up to be in the engineering department but had to wait until they had an opening. Finally, I was transferred to the drafting department where they designed all of the decals that went on the plane.

I worked under a guy who had worked in New York designing advertising lettering. He taught me a lot about the art of lettering. Ironically, I got a D in lettering in art school. But when I went to New York I made a living doing lettering that led to my job designing at Norcross. What was remarkable about the Willow Run plant



Don worked in the Drafting Department at the Willow Run Bomber Plant during World War II. Workers in this Department were responsible for the various markings on each plane which are visible in this photo of a B-24 on a mission.

is that it produced 14 B24 planes a day. Hard to believe that whole period. It's like I have gone through three or four lives.”



Don Choate leans against the carved wooden door he made for the Tofle, Hajicek & Oxenhandler law offices in Columbia, MO.

# The Search for Anastacio Cardenas

BY GEORGE RIDENOUR

While scanning newspapers in the archives I came across the following:

*“General Cardenas the well known dwarf, who for 17 years has made his home at Dexter, died Friday afternoon of consumption. He was born in Mexico 51 years ago (1838) and has been exhibited as a “freak” in all the principal cities in the United States. He came to Dexter from California about three months ago. He was 31 inches tall and weighed but 49 lbs.”*



General Cardenas was 31 inches tall and weighed only 49 pounds.

Curiosity swept over me like a chilly wind. Who was this general? Certainly this was not the general in Mexican history? My curiosity led to reading books, researching circus history, searching the plowed fields of Dexter, and finally to visiting a cemetery that was forgotten and hidden among the trees in a farmer's field. Come with me on this adventure.

I found an unlikely notation! Harris Newmaker, author of “Sixty Years in Southern California (1867-1913)” included the following notation: “Anastacio Cardenas, a “dwarf” who weighed one and a half pounds at birth, came to LA in 1867 and soon appeared before the public as a singer and dancer. He carried a sword and was popularly dubbed “General.”

Looking further I found the following advertisement in the Daily “Alta California,” Volume 19, Number 6222 of 28 March, 1867. **“TOM THUMB OF THE PACIFIC.”** “The Mexican dwarf, Anastacio Cardenas, who arrived on the last voyage of the Sierra Nevada is the: ‘...smallest man on this continent.’ His age is 30 years and his height but thirty four inches. He will be on exhibition for a limited period at: **LYCEUM HALL** Montgomery Street between Opine and California commencing on Monday - March 25, from 10 am to 5 pm. Also, in the evening from 8-10 o'clock. He will give his wonderful imitations of Songs of Tropical birds. He will be accompanied in his Evening Soirees by Donna Carmen Mendoza who will perform some of the National Dances of Mexico, and those peculiar to Sonora, in costume, with Mexican Music. Admission: In the Day 25 cents: Evening: 50 cents: Children half price.”

Seeking more information I contacted the Circus World Museum in Baraboo, Wisconsin. I was told by Peter,

their librarian that the archives had NO records. I contacted, as well, the Circus Historical Society, and they had no records. Finally, I contacted Ringling Brothers (circus) museum in Sarasota, Florida and again “No records.” Washtenaw vital records were checked and there was no record of a death certificate.

Dexter Historical Society assistance was invaluable. I gleaned by reading an obituary in the Dexter Leader of Friday, April 5, 1889 the following additional bits of information:

- 1) He had resided at the residence of L. Cooper of Lima, Michigan;
- 2) He made his “home” in Lima when not on the road;
- 3) Funeral services were held in the Dexter Methodist Church.

The following additional information was found: This appeared in the Dexter Leader of 21 August, 1941! (52 years after his death. Mmm???)

- He was raised (??) by Mr. L. Cooper of Lima.
- He was considered a “second” Tom Thumb.
- He made his quarters during the Winter in Chicago in a “dime museum” (Kind of like a side show where for a dime you could view freaks, and items of amazement)
- He came to Michigan in 1872.
- He was buried in the Lima Cemetery.

Further searching archival records I found that he was indeed buried under the name of Gardenas, Anasta(g)ia



and that he was born January 22, 1834 and died March 29, 1889. Evidence indicated that the inscription on his gravestone read "OUR FRIEND." Scratching my head I wondered why the gravestone read "OUR FRIEND" since other sources indicated he was raised by the Cooper family? Other evidence showed that he was buried in Row 3 of the Lima Center Cemetery (aka Easton or Luick Farm Cemetery) near Lester and Susannah Cooper.

While looking through information provided by the Dexter Historical Society, which was a part of the (Dexter) Cooper family, I did not see any reference to a Lucian Cooper (aka General Cardenas). However, there does appear a Lucius Lester but again nothing mentioned matches the information about Cardenas.

Determined to find at least the grave, I set out along Jackson Road to find the cemetery. The directions quoted were mind boggling to me especially when I have difficulty finding anything without a map or a navigator. *"The cemetery is located on the north side of Jackson Road (US-12) approximately 3.6 miles east of the intersection with M-52. It lies between Jackson Road and I-94. It can ONLY be reached via a narrow lane and is about 600 ft. north of Jackson Road."*

HUUUH??? WHERE???

I went to the area four times and could find NOTHING close to that location. I was about to toss this story out when, with the help of Gerry Pety (YHS archivist), I got hold of a satellite map which showed a location of trees in a farmers field a distance from Jackson Road.

Finally on the fifth try I arrived at a closed gate and looking down saw a grove of trees. I was able to "bang" open the gate and drive through the field. Lo and behold I was at the final resting place for Anastacio Carden(g)as. His grave was on a small rise right next to the Cooper family. Although the grave was moss grown and unkempt, I was able to photograph it. Sure enough, engraved on the tombstone was "OUR FRIEND."



The "Our Friend" part of the inscription on the General's gravestone is still visible.

I was able to find on the web site, quasi-modo.net, photos the General Cardenas. However, again, there was no credible biography.



The General's grave is in the Lima Center Cemetery in the Cooper Family plot.

Thus ends not the story but the search for General Cardenas (aka Cooper??). He remains a mystery but is resting in peace, in a farmer's field, among the trees, with those who befriended and loved him.

*(George Ridenour is a member of the YHS Archives Advisory Board, a volunteer in the YHS Archives, and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)*

The General's gravestone is badly weathered but according to cemetery records had the following inscription: "Anastacia Cardenas - b. Jan. 22, 1834, d. Mar. 29, 1889 - Our Friend."



# First Free Church of Michigan

BY KARL WILLIAMS

Superior Township, through the efforts of the Superior Land Preservation Society, has acquired the historical site on which the First Free Church of Michigan was located. The church's non-denominational congregation was established in December of 1849, and was perhaps influenced by the First Free Church of Scotland that was established in 1843. The Free Church building was erected in 1855 near the then existing pioneer cemetery now known as the Free Church Cemetery.

The building was a typical small white frame church measuring approximately 32 x 48 feet, reportedly having a spire so tall that it could be seen for miles. For many years it was the center of religious and social activities in the northeast part of Superior Township. Initially, sermons were given by local speakers or by circuit riding Methodist preachers. Later, preachers from the Dixboro and the Cherry Hill churches performed these duties.

By the 1920s the church building was in need of repair and the declining membership chose to attend other churches. The church building became derelict and was demolished in 1934. The site, now overgrown, contains only the remnants of a foundation, some remaining landscape plantings, a prominent row of Osage Orange trees, and the ghosts of our township forebearers. There are no immediate plans for the property but it is protected from future development as part of our local heritage.

• • •

*Few records survive and only one picture is known to exist of the First Free Church of Michigan. If anyone has a picture or information about the church, please contact our Superior Township Clerk, David Phillips.*

• • •

*(Karl Williams is a Superior Township resident interested in local history. The Superior Township Preservation Society provided the funds for the purchase of the land, which is contiguous with the Free Church Cemetery, and then turned over the property to Superior Township.)*

“By the 1920s the church building was in need of repair and the declining membership chose to attend other churches.”



The First Free Church of Michigan was erected in 1855 in Superior Township and was demolished in 1934



# News from the Fletcher-White Archives

BY GERRY PETY

**D**uring the past year the Fletcher-White Archives has been blessed with an inordinate number of acquisitions. In November of 2012 we came across the long lost accordion file filled with Ypsilanti business documents from 1846 to 1924. Part of this hoard was the remarkable documents relating to the Michigan Central Railroad and the very early business surveys, payrolls, contracts, and other business documentation. Included also were doctor bills, cargo transfer payments, checks, and other ephemera. Many people have now had a chance to see this "find" that had been lost within the YHS inventory since 1954. The information has now been cataloged into our master database and is available for viewing and for the research community to further their studies relating to early railroads and businesses.

Not to be outdone by this, in May of this year I was contacted by a Mr. Allen Maxwell regarding photos taken by his father Ellsworth Maxwell during World War II during the construction of the Consolidated B-24 bomber plant. The photos were taken while Mr. Maxwell worked for Henry Ford and as a freelance photographer. The photos, over 450 in number, are really outstanding as they are in pristine condition, and the content would make any historian or researcher of the period in aviation history beam with joy. Over 120 are photographs of the bomber in flight over Ypsilanti, in and around the airport, and others cover the various stages of mass production.

Henry Ford and Charles Sorensen brought the man hours needed to produce a B-24 down by almost 90%. Being able to out-produce the enemy was one of the things which made the Women's Ordnance Workers (WOWs) play such a vital role in winning the War! These are truly amazing pictures and included are a whole host of star-studded visitors to the plant, like Joan Crawford and President, Harry S. Truman!

And yes, there actually were plant tours during the final stages of the war - take that Tojo, Hitler and Mussolini!!!

## Non-local banks think Wurst Bar is not very good.

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# Case of the Lost Hand-Bag

BY JAMES MANN

Travelers must be careful when in strange places, as it is easy to lose personal property. Habit causes us to place items in the same place every day, but when away from home, habit can cause us to put something down and then not be able to find it again. This may explain what happened to a family passing through Ypsilanti one day in 1913.

Frank M. Mason a doctor from Rossville, Ill., was passing through Ypsilanti with his wife and three children, when they stopped at Ypsilanti on their way to Niagara Falls. The family stopped for dinner at the Occidental Hotel, on the east side of North Huron Street, on Monday, July 7, 1913.

Mrs. Mason carried her hand-bag into the dining room with her, and placed it on the floor beside the table. When dinner was done, they got up and left the room, leaving the hand-bag behind. When they realized what they had done, they returned to the dining room and a search for the hand-bag was made. No trace of the hand-bag could be found. The police were then informed of the missing hand-bag, and the waiters were questioned. One person in the room said they had seen the hand-bag on the floor of the dining room. A search was made of the building, but again, the hand-bag was not found. The police did not believe the hand-bag was stolen.

The police still had to question three girls who occupied the table after the Mason family had left.

The hand-bag, reported *The Daily Ypsilanti Press* of Tuesday, July 8, 1913, had "contents valued at a considerable sum, in a monetary way, and inestimably precious to his wife because of associations formed with certain gifts that were in it."

The family had spent time on the campus of the Normal College, now Eastern Michigan University, so President Charles McKenny was informed of the loss. McKenny was asked to advertise the loss of the hand-bag on bulletin boards throughout the campus. President McKenny complied with the request.

On the morning of Wednesday, July 9, 1913, a student at the Normal, Marjorie Snow, found a hand-bag lying in the road. As soon as she heard that there was a search for a missing hand-bag, she informed President McKenny of what she had found. President McKenny then informed the police. Police met with Miss Snow on campus, just before one of her classes. She was questioned, and police concluded she was telling the truth. The contents of the hand-bag were intact.

"There was about \$60 in bills and a \$20 gold piece, the two rings that had been mentioned by Mrs. Mason, one of three turquoises and the other of three topazes, and among the customary miscellany of every hand-bag, a set of gold ornaments and brooches with old fashioned ivory engravings upon them," reported *The Daily Ypsilanti Press* Thursday, July 10, 1913.

"What still remains to be discovered, if all the facts related are true, is how the bag got from the Occidental hotel to the Normal campus? If any one had taken it, it would seem that with so certain a getaway, the thief would have kept it in his possession, instead of dropping it on the street, without even sampling the contents. Unless the thief, in turn, lost the bag unintentionally," noted the account.

In the end, all that mattered was the hand-bag, with all its contents, had been found and returned to the Mason family.

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



# Museum Board Report

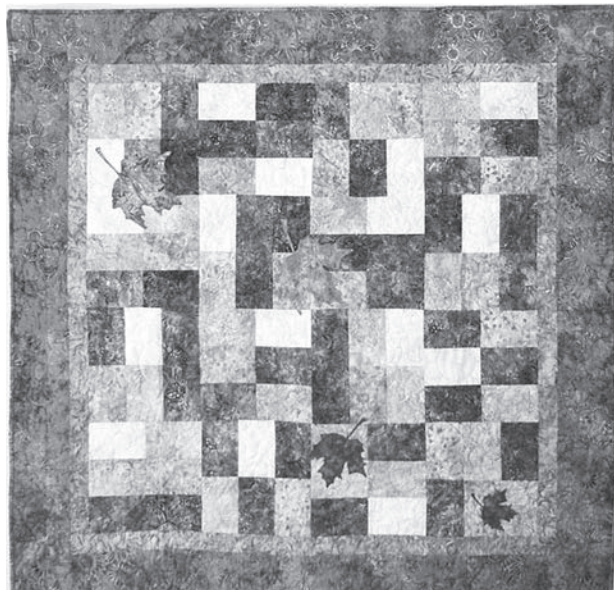
BY KATHRYN HOWARD, CHAIR

*When you think of the different seasons of the year,  
"Mother Nature" really puts the most colors into the fall.  
Can the trees be more beautiful?  
After the summer we will welcome fall.*

Our museum displays have all been changed. Our large case has crystal and china from our own collection of which we are very proud. The kitchen display case showing past school years is for the younger generation. The glass top tables are Nancy and Virginia's collections and are very interesting as they display what one got in premiums when you purchased "Rose Tea." Also, the mannequins have all been dressed up for fall.

**Starting September 22, and running through October 13, the "Quilt Show" will be featured in the Museum.** The display will be available

for viewing during our regular museum hours. We have many new quilt makers in addition to our regular talented contributors. Rita Sprague has made a beautiful wall hanging called "Mist of Fall" for which we will take contributions in exchange for a chance to win this beautiful piece. This year's donations will go toward renovations of the Dining Room. We look forward to this wonderful show. If you wish to have a guided group tour, contact Nancy Wheeler at 734-483-7749.



Chances to win the "Mist of Fall" quilt made by Rita Sprague are being given to individuals who make donations to the Museum.

**The "Lost Ypsilanti" exhibit** has featured some very interesting people who played important roles in the history of Ypsilanti. Thank you Virginia and Bob for this outstanding exhibit. We also thank Donna Carpenter and Diane Schick for their displays.

If you have any interesting collections that would be appropriate for displaying in our Museum please contact me at 734-482-7081.

It's hard to believe but already we are beginning to plan for the "Holidays." Fall days are so beautiful. Please enjoy them and come visit us at the Museum.

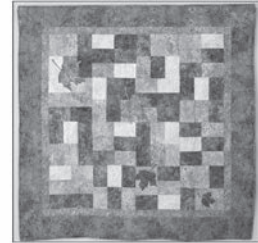
## 11th Annual Quilt Exhibit

Ypsilanti Historical Museum  
220 N. Huron Street  
Ypsilanti, Michigan

Sept. 22 through Oct. 13, 2013  
Tuesday through Sunday - 2-5 p.m.

(Closed Mondays)

Free Admission - Donations Accepted

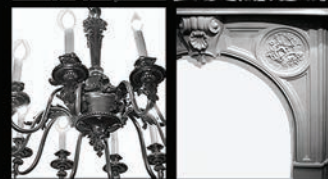


Approximately 100 quilts of all styles and ages will be on display. A drawing for a quilted piece will be held at the end of the exhibit. Entries will be accepted at the museum for a donation.

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# Wanderer Arrested — Charged with Arson

BY JAMES MANN

Washtenaw County Deputy Hipp arrested a man on Saturday, May 24, 1913, on a charge of arson. The man was accused of setting fire to a stack of straw on the farm of D. V. Harris, just east of Ypsilanti. The stack of straw was valued at over \$150. Little more could be learned about the man at this time, as he would not speak to officers. Novak seemed to have little understanding of English. He was arraigned before Justice of the Peace Martin Stadtmiller on a charge of arson. Novak remained silent during arraignment, which Justice Stadtmiller decided was a plea of not guilty. He was then sent to the jail in Ann Arbor to await examination.

The identity of the man remained unknown until Saturday, May 31, 1913, when a woman in Detroit reported her husband missing. The woman reported to police her husband, Joseph Novak, had disappeared from their home at 1560 Dubois avenue in Detroit, on Wednesday, May 21, 1913. Novak left the house to look for work, with ten cents in his pocket. The wife was left alone to care for their two young children. The family was from Poland, and had little understanding of English.

In the morning on Saturday, May 31, 1913, a representative of *The Daily Ypsilanti Press* went to the jail in Ann Arbor, and talked with the man. The report that followed in the paper stated:

*“Novak could understand but little English and could say only a few words. The words Dubois Avenue struck a vein of memory, and he nodded eagerly. He traced the figures 1560 indicating his residence laboriously on a piece of paper. He did not understand the word wife; but ‘babies’ brought forth the guttural response, ‘boysh.’ He remembered his two little ones,”*

*“Novak is thought to be slightly unbalanced,”* continued the report.



The man was accused of setting fire to a stack of straw on the farm of D. V. Harris, just east of Ypsilanti.

*“He had been saving money for a home, and was not in want...for several weeks previous to his disappearance, his wife says he had been acting strangely, and brooding over much.”*

An examination of the case was held before Justice Stadtmiller on the afternoon of Tuesday, June 4, 1913. The case was bound over to the fall term of the Circuit Court. Novak was returned to the jail in Ann Arbor.

*“Prosecuting Attorney Burk intends to write his family in Detroit of his present circumstances. An investigation will probably be made into his sanity,”*

noted *The Daily Ypsilanti Press* Wednesday, June 14, 1913.



Mrs. Novak stopped in Ypsilanti on the afternoon of Saturday, June 7, 1913, as she made her way to Ann Arbor to visit her husband in the county jail. She told a reporter for *The Daily Ypsilanti Press* she believed her husband to be mentally unbalanced.

*"For some time before he disappeared,"* she said speaking through an interpreter,

*"...he has been acting strangely. He used to brood for long hours. He had a seeming mania for clothes. Often I have found him putting on, or parading around in mine; and he was continually changing the clothes of our boarders from one trunk to another. Up to the time he left, he was working, and we had some money laid away, so that there was no reason for him to worry,"*

reported *The Daily Ypsilanti Press* Monday, June 9, 1913.

Mrs. Novak brought the matter to an end on Wednesday, June 30, 1913, when she arrived from Detroit with an interpreter, to talk with the farmer D. V Harris. She paid Mr. Harris \$60 for the stack of straw. In return for this Mr. Harris withdrew the complaint against Joseph Novak. *"The police,"* noted *The Daily Ypsilanti Press* of Thursday, July 1, 1913,

*"are confident that the fire was the result of nothing more serious than carelessness, and that Novak had no criminal intent."*

Novak was released and returned to Detroit with his wife.

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

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[mmanchester@manchester-associates.com](mailto:mmanchester@manchester-associates.com)  
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## *Just Suppose*

BY JOHN DAWSON JR.

*Just suppose there was no Heaven  
No stars up in the sky  
Just suppose there was no after life  
When they lay you down to die  
Just suppose God didn't love you  
Just suppose he did not rise  
Just suppose the empty feeling  
When the world looked in your eyes.*

*But we know that there is a Heaven  
And there's proof that Jesus rose  
And we know that he loves us  
From our head down to our toes.*

*So raise your hands to Heaven  
And call his name in praise  
And there'll be no more supposing  
We'll go to Heaven Judgement Day.*



*(John was an active member of the Ypsilanti  
Historical Society. He died in September of 2012  
at the age of 89.)*



# Whiskey was the Antidote

BY JAMES MANN

On the night of Tuesday, July 8, 1913, Lynn Crosby went to see his ex-wife Ella, from whom he had been divorced for some time. He had been trying to get back together with her, but his efforts at this were seen as obnoxious by his former wife. She was in fact, seeking an injunction prohibiting him from trespassing on her property.

Crosby had been drinking heavily, as he was very drunk when he arrived at the house at 317 Chidister Street in Ypsilanti. Ella Crosby informed the police her former husband Lynn Crosby was there and making trouble. The police came and arrested Lynn Crosby. He was taken to the city jail where he spent the night.

Crosby was to appear before the Justice of the Peace Stadtmiller the next morning, but he was physically unable to make the appearance. His condition was so bad, it was at first thought he was suffering from delirium tremens. Dr. Hurbert Johnson examined Crosby at the jail, and determined he was too unstrung by the after effects of his drinking the night before to appear. His appearance before Justice Stadtmiller was held one day later, on the morning of Thursday, July 10, 1913. Crosby was fined \$6.15.

That afternoon Crosby was in Ann Arbor on the banks of the Huron River. At about 1:30 p. m. Crosby drank two ounces of strychnine. Crosby then calmly walked around, and coming to a laborer said, "I've taken strychnine." The laborer did not at first believe Crosby, until he was shown the empty vile. Sheriff Stark was at once summoned. By the time the sheriff arrived, Crosby appeared nearly dead.

*"He was taken at once to the hospital, where attempts were made to save him. Dr. Weisinger, who attended him, said that he could not recover, as the emetic he had been forced to administer on account of the size of the dose of poison the man had taken, would almost be sufficient to cause his death, even if the poison did not,"* reported *The Daily Ypsilanti Press* of Thursday, July 10, 1913.

By the afternoon of Friday, July 11, 1913, Crosby seemed to be recovering. As Crosby had tried to take his own life, he may have made his recovery possible. *"This unexpected turn of events is due to his ignorance of whiskey as an antidote. He washed the poison down with a large draught of the liquor,"* reported *The Daily Ypsilanti Press* of that date. Crosby did recover and was discharged from the hospital on Tuesday, July 15, 1913.

He once again found himself standing in front of Justice Stadtmiller on November 11, 1913, on a charge of being drunk and disorderly. The chief witness against him was his former wife Ella. This time Justice Stadtmiller sentenced Crosby to thirty days in the county jail. Crosby appears to have left the area after his release, as he disappears from local records.

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

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## Museum Events

### SEPTEMBER

- 8 Quarterly Membership Meeting - 2:00 pm
- 9 Museum Advisory Board Meeting - 1:00 pm
- 12 Board of Trustees Meeting - 3:00 pm
- 22 Quilt Exhibit (*September 22- October 13*)

### OCTOBER

- 7 Museum Advisory Board Meeting - 1:00 pm
- 10 Board of Trustees Meeting - 3:00 pm
- 22 Archives Advisory Board Meeting - 7:00 pm

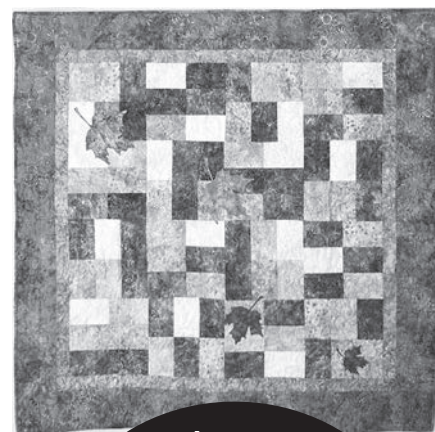
### NOVEMBER

- 4 Museum Advisory Board Meeting - 1:00 pm
- 14 Board of Trustees Meeting - 3:00 pm
- 28 Museum & Archives Closed - Thanksgiving Day

### DECEMBER

- 1 Christmas Open House 12:00 noon to 5:00 pm

## Win This Quilt



Chances  
to win the  
"Mist of Fall" quilt  
made by Rita Sprague  
are being given to  
individuals who make  
donations to the  
Museum.