

JENISON HISTORICAL  
ASSOCIATION  
PO Box 664  
Jenison, Michigan 49429  
TELEPHONE  
(616) 457-4398

Our mission is to learn about Jenison history, obtain artifacts relating to its history, and maintain the Jenison Historical Museum as a place to share and display our heritage.

## From the Archives

These articles are a regular feature primarily from the files of Virginia Timmer. If you have a topic you would like to contribute (your family stories, etc.) please contact the editor

### STORY OF THE HUSBAND-HANCHETT-TIFFANY HOUSE

*Editors Note: Over time we have published stories that included bits and pieces of this information. This entire story was written by Virginia originally in July 1975 and she revised it in July 1997 and again in May 2001. This is Part 2 of a 3 part series.*

#### ABOUT THE HOUSE

Tiffany House, a name that evolved around the last owners, Clarence and Zoe Tiffany, was built by Mrs. Levi (Margaret Morrison) Husband on land and with money willed to her and her daughter, Mrs. Benjamin (Bessie Husband) Hanchett, Jr. after the deaths of twins Lucius and Luman Jenison who both died in 1899. Mrs. Husband told friends that she wanted to build the best house she could in memory of the Jenison twins. It cost \$13,000 to build at the turn of the century. Completed in 1902, it was called the "Homestead."

Now named the Jenison Museum, in  
*continued, page 2*



At the museum



## HUSBAND-HANCHETT-TIFFANY HOUSE (CONT)

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the Husband-Hanchett-Tiffany House, it is situated on Lot #32 of Jenisonville plat, 28 Port Sheldon Road which at different times in our history was called Beech Street, Maple Lane, Holland Road and Old M21. Main Street was relocated in connection with the interchange on land that once was the southern part of Lot #32. The house stands on the northeast corner of relocated Main Street and Port Sheldon Road, one block east of the Kent-Ottawa County Line on the edge of the southwest quadrant of the M-21/I-196 (Gerald R. Ford Freeway) interchange between Grandville and Jenison, Michigan.

The modified Queen Anne-style house has a foundation of fieldstone matched and cut to fit together perfectly. The house was a showcase in the area because of the curved glass windows in the turret, stained and leaded glass windows, two fire places and five porches. The interior of the mansion is finished with fine oak paneling and woodwork. Maple tree saplings were planted in a row on the north side of the house and in front and grew into huge trees. Because these trees were singed and burned when the Burt and Virginia Timmer house was burned by the State Highway

Department they eventually died and had to be cut down. Behind the house was a grape arbor under which was a naturally flowing well. The grape arbor was relocated just outside the State Highway chain-link fence near the southeast corner of the house.

The basement reveals the massive stone foundation and what is called the "wine cellar" with a vault-type door. Receipts from the interurban were kept there. It is thought to have been added at a later date--possible by Ben and Bessie Hanchett after the death of Margaret Husband in 1913.

At each side of the front door are mullioned window panels which are hand-blown glass. Just inside is the entry from which may be seen the leaded and beveled inner door to the reception room. Separating the reception room from the dining room is a coat closet and another large sliding door with beautiful leaded and beveled glass. On the stair landing is a large stained glass window.

The dining room is wood-paneled with a plate rail, a bay window, beamed ceiling, and a floor button that was used to call the maid at mealtime. (All that remains is a small hole in the

floor as the button is missing). On each side of the bay window are built-in, glass-door cabinets and drawers. Behind one wood panel is a secret compartment. A swinging door leads to the pantry and kitchen. Another door leads to what we call the back parlor, but may have been a library or music room. The Tiffanys used this room as a bedroom.. Off the kitchen are two stairways--one to the basement and the other a back stairs used by the maid to her room on the second floor, a porch, a complete bathroom which had been modernized by the Tiffanys, but has been restored, and a summer kitchen used for cooking during hot weather on a kerosene stove.

Separating the reception room from the front parlor and its bay window are two grand pillars similar to those in the picture behind the settee in the front parlor. A large closet separates the back parlor with its window seat from the restored main-floor bathroom which can also be entered from the kitchen.

Upstairs we find five bedrooms, each having a large closet, some with built-ins, a second full bath and linen closet with built-in shelves and drawers. Doors at each end of the hallway lead to large porches at the front and

## HUSBAND-HANCHETT-TIFFANY HOUSE (CONT)

rear of the house.

Four of the upstairs rooms are large. One used as a guest room is furnished in the Victorian era complete with turret and fireplace. It is located at the top of the front stairway on the right. Directly across the hall is the bedroom that Margaret Husband used. At the top of the back stairway is the second bath next to the furnished maids room, the smallest of the five bedrooms.

From the hall, a stairway leads to the third floor attic which provides the house with a large area for storage and displays. In the attic you can see the hand construction that went into the dome of the turret. The first "Moody" gas pump can be seen along with tools and much more. Missing are the two water tanks that used to be in the attic. Electric was available from the interurban power house which was located where the Aldi store is presently. An electric pump pumped water from the flowing artesian well to fill the one tank. From there it was a gravity flow to the rooms below. The other tank was filled with rain water which was caught with eave troughs.

The power house also furnished electric for lighting. The hired

girl, however, still cooked on an old wood-burning cook stove and ironed with heavy irons that had to be heated on the same stove. In those early days, small appliances were not readily available.

The hired girl, who received from \$3-\$3.50 per week, plus room and board, did the laundry, ironing, cleaning, cooking, baking, canning, churning butter and fed the pigs. Every Saturday, she had to bake a cake because Mrs. Husband's daughter and son-in-law, Ben and Bessie Hanchett of East Grand Rapids, would come for the weekend because they, along with Mrs. Husband, had business interests to look after.

Their business interests included the L & L Mill and Store, the six-hundred-acre Blissveldt Farm, Jenison Park in Holland and properties in Kent County. The Hanchetts would occupy the guest room with the fireplace and turret windows. Before they had a car, the Hanchetts would take their private streetcar "Honolulu" to the Jenison interurban depot and walk to the house.

In the winter, ice was cut from nearby ponds and packed in sawdust in an icehouse somewhere behind the house.

Mrs. Husband used the ice to make ice-cream which was served to neighborhood children at parties given by her.

Part 3: The People



**July:** We will once again take the riverboat tour. Tickets will be going on sale later this month...get yours by contacting Liz Timmer 616-457-3708.

**September:** The ever popular 'Jenison - Then and Now' will be making a comeback in September with an updated and expanded display. Be sure to come out and see what is new in this popular display

**Check out the calendar:** for other upcoming events such as the always popular 'Jenison - Then and Now' coming in September.

We look forward to seeing you, and if you would like to volunteer to help at any of these events, please contact the museum at 457-4398 or email us at [info@jenisonhistory.org](mailto:info@jenisonhistory.org).

If you are not a dues paying member, please consider joining to help support the Association. Contact the JHA

at

[info@jenisonhistory.org](mailto:info@jenisonhistory.org)

or calling the museum



## Volunteer Opportunities!!

**Museum Cleaning:** This is a big job, as you can well imagine, that needs constant attention in order to have the museum look it's best during the open houses. Contact any board member if you can lend a few hours.

**Tour Guides:** The school tours are a great way of teaching the children about our history and is such a rewarding experience. You won't regret being a part of this experience for our local children. Joyce

Klawiter would love to hear from you.

**Community Displays:** An initiative is to get some displays out into the community, possible to local banks, schools and businesses. What better way to get awareness out into the community than to bring the museum to them. Grayce Lancaster is heading up this project. She would welcome any help you might be able to offer from finding the locations

to picking display material and setting up the displays.

**And the list goes on...** Monthly Open Houses, Theme's for Open Houses, Inventory, Museum Maintenance, board trustee.

You can come to a monthly meeting or reach out to any board member if you would like to volunteer in any particular area.

**Riverboat Tour and OPEN HOUSE**

**Historic Riverboat Tour on the  
Grand Lady**

\$10 per person \* Under 2 Years Free

Bring a lunch, but drinks MUST be purchased on the boat

Contact Liz Timmer for tickets at 616-457-3708

Tickets must be purchased in advance by July 9, 2011, no ticket sales the day of the tour. Tickets are Non-Refundable.

SATURDAY, July 16, 2011

12-2 PM

Open House at the Museum after from 2:30 - 4 PM

Donations are appreciated to help maintain the Tiffany House Museum, Jenison

**FOR SALE AT THE MUSEUM**

**‘Bend in the River’ Book  
Mill Prints and stationary**

**Available during any open house, or call the Museum at  
457-4398**

**JHA TRUSTEE’S**

**Chair**

Liz Timmer (13)

**Vice Chair/Co-Historian**

Ken Williams (11)

**Treasurer/Editor**

Ruth Lowing (11)

**Social Secretary**

Nellie DeLaat (13)

**Recording Secretary**

Bev Potter (13)

**Tours/Co-Archivist**

Joyce Klawiter (12)

**Co-Archivist**

Barb Semeyn (11)

**Displays/Curator**

Grayce Lancaster (12)

**Maintenance/Co-Historian**

Mike Timmer (13)

**Trustee**

Anne Foote (11)

**Township Rep**

Del South

(##) = year of re-election to the board

**Contact Information:** To reach any board member, leave a message at 457-4398.

**Historical Association of Michigan**

Find us on the registry of the Historical Society of Michigan  
www.hsmichigan.org



Jenison Historical Association  
PO Box 664  
Jenison, MI 49429

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### **2011 Meeting Schedule**

Thursday, May 19 - Rosewood Reformed  
Thursday, June 16 - Rosewood Reformed  
Thursday, July 21 - Georgetown Library  
Thursday August 18 - Georgetown Library  
Thursday, September 15 - Georgetown Library  
Thursday, October 20 - Georgetown Library  
Thursday, November 17 - Georgetown Library  
No Meeting in December, 2011

**All meetings begin at 6:45 PM unless noted**

### **2011 Museum Open House Schedule**

May 21            2-4 PM    LaGrande Riviere  
July 16            2:30-4 PM    The Grand Lady  
September 17    2-4 PM    Jenison Then and Now  
October 15        2-4 PM  
December 3       1-4 PM    Holiday Open House

1st Tuesday of the month April thru November  
10 AM - Noon

Themes posted on web site: [www.jenisonhistory.org](http://www.jenisonhistory.org)  
Call to volunteer your time at the open houses