



Jenison Historical Association Footnotes

Jenison Historical Association
Box 664—28 Port Sheldon
Jenison, Michigan 49429

August 2009

From the Archives

We are adding a new feature to the newsletter beginning this month. Initially, these articles will be from the files of Virginia Timmer, however if you have a topic you would like to contribute, please contact Ruth Lowing. Virginia has kept detailed diaries of her research and contacts over the years, and these are her stories...

Jenison Firsts—Part 2

a compilation of several articles by Virginia Timmer

OUR FIRST GAS STATION

Our first gas pump/station stood on Cottonwood just behind the present “DeWitt’s Service” at the “v” of Cottonwood and Baldwin. It was owned by Charles I. Moody who, in 1913, bought a 1911 Ford Roadster, one of the earliest cars in town. The original garage was a double stall. A year later he bought a woodshed from a schoolhouse and hooked it to the garage. He overhauled cars and pumped gas for about 15 years.

John S. Huizenga purchased the Moody property to build a small strip mall. In 1962, the first commercial “Moody” garage in Jenison was torn down. The old gas pump of Moody was given to Ed and Francis (Closterhouse) De Weerd. Fran’s father, John Closterhouse, pumped gas for Mr. Moody. This strip mall housed the House of Flavors and Dream Donut—just two of the businesses there. This strip mall was torn down for a bank.

The old gas pump was donated to the Jenison Historical Association by Francis De Weerd and can be seen at the Jenison Museum.

The only other gas pump in the area was at Tubb’s Corners (the five corners of Godfrey and Grandville Ave. Etc.) Before there was a gas pump, gas and kerosene was delivered door to door.

New information I found on the moody gas pump in the attic: The “Moody” gas pump is called a Bowser or Bouser and was first made in 1914. It was one of the first gas pumps. [Source: Dick Evans, WOTV, Dec. 18, 1984 and Dec. 26, 1985.]

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FIRST CEMENT ROAD

Our first cement road was known as Trunk M-51 and later became M-21. The old wooden bridge

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***“..before the gas pump,
gas was delivered..”***

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Grayce Lancaster (09)

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Mike Timmer (10)

Trustee

Beverly Potter (10)

Trustee

Anne Foote (11)

Township Rep

Del South

(##) = year this position will be re-elected

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



Newsletter Notice

If anyone would like to receive this newsletter electronically, we have an email option.

Please contact Ruth Lowing at rlowing@aol.com or call 616-896-1447 to e-subscribe

From the Archives (con't)

(Continued from page 1)

was torn out in 1921 and a new concrete bridge and new highway was put in.

M-51 ran from the west edge of Grandville along the north side of the tracks, between the L & L Jenison Mill and Store and hooked up with a cement road under construction to Hudsonville. It is now called Old M-21 since the new M-21 (Chicago Drive) was constructed from the west edge of Grandville to just beyond the L & L Jenison Mill.

Most of the new M-21 in Jenison was built in the early 1930's over what was the interurban road bed with the help of the WPA. A dispute with the railroad about a warning signal over the tracks at Baldwin (called a wig-wag) began in 1922 and wasn't resolved until 1926 when the Pere Marquette railroad was ordered to put it in. The wig-wag warning was removed from Mill Street and moved to Baldwin Street and the tracks.

The railroad had closed Baldwin (then called Grand Haven and Allendale Road) at the tracks when the new cement road was put down. Baldwin had been open for many years.

Petitions were circulated and signed by people living in the area who wanted the crossing reopened due to the inconvenience of it being closed. The main issue was the cost to the railroad to buy another wig-wag warning signal for several hundred dollars. The Pere Marquette people wanted Mill Street crossing closed so that wig-wag could be relocated to Baldwin crossing. The cost of another wig-wag would be several hundred dollars which the railroad didn't want to spend. Maintenance of the crossing was estimated at \$15 per year and the wig-wag maintenance \$130 per year.

Some of the Jenison and Grandville residents who signed petitions in 1922 to get this railroad crossing re-opened included: Edw. De Pute, John De Puit, Gerrit Hoeksema, Guy Northouse, Bert Scuitema, Albert Mackus, W. H. Cheyne, John Scholma, William J. Datema, Carl De Pute, Henry Northouse, M. Van Der Wal, M. Alberda, G. Van Sloten, D. Isenga, E. Boynton, E. Gillett, Wm. Van Der Markt, Jay Cowing, Wm. Hunt, Miner C. Allen, Harvey De Puit, J. Honderd, P.M. Japinga, Fred Klumper, Dick De Went, Fred Abel, A. L. Closterhouse, J. Closterhouse, Darel Cheyne, Geo. W. Cheyne, ??? Westrate, J. Rillema, Roy H. Lowing, T. Isenga, Chas. E. Bosworth, Geo. M.

Wilson, Wm. Haas, Martin Otto, Henry Taylor, Fred Tambke, Lee Wilson, Henry Abel, Emil Niggli, Wm. Haverdink, John Behrens, Cheyne Bros., J. T. Harringer, Albert Lowing, Carl C. Bosworth and Hiram Mackus.



Similar to the Wig Wag Warning light that was in Jenison

FIRST AIRPORT

The first airport (landing strip) in Jenison was on 16 acres north of Baldwin Street just past 20th avenue. This area was chosen for an airport by LeForest G. Krantz because the land ran narrow and long on the crest of a rise. It provided a landing strip half-a-mile long. It served his purposes very well. In 1947, he built a modern ranch home on the property.

In 1941, LeForest G. Krantz already knew how to fly when he joined the civil air patrol in Grand Rapids to help defend his country. Another personal contribution was turning out war material at General Motors where he had worked since 1929.

His light craft was moored to cement building blocks in his backyard. Having an airplane enabled him to visit his mother and mother-in-law one of whom lived in Flint and the other in suburban Detroit. The Flint branch of the family had a pasture that made a swell landing strip. Speedy trips by air also made short weekends even longer for hunting and fishing trips. He frequently flew to work and landed at the old Kent County Airport. His wife also learned to pilot a plane.

Krantz had the plane until about 1950 when he took off, not knowing that the fabric had ripped off the plane. He didn't know what happened until he got back. His son, Fred, said his dad was lucky. They had no hangar so the plane became the victim of the elements. At that time, they didn't use an aluminum

skin, but a fabric something like an oilcloth was stretched tightly and could be painted as one wished.

On April 3, 1956, Frantz's home was leveled by the destructive tornado that hit the area. Frantz's fellow workers from General Motors came out on a Saturday and completely cleaned up the rubble, even to mopping the remaining cement floor. Then they moved on down the road, cleaning up several other places. At noon the Georgetown Grange women served dinner to the 30 or more workers. He sold the land and it eventually became the Lamplight Estates plat. Mr. Krantz was also instrumental in getting Baldwin tarred from 12th Avenue to 28th Avenue.

Another airport (landing strip) was one owned by John Mulder. His landing field was located behind his residence at the crest of Baldwin hill, now the site of Boulder Bluff Condominiums. People who lived nearby complained about the noise. His home was moved to the foot of the incline.

Still later, William and Nathan Boynton built the Riverview airport. In 1978 when the Boynton's came before the township about building a Landing strip on their 150 acre, river front property, Georgetown officials were caught by surprise as no provision was made for such a facility in the zoning ordinance adopted in 1964, although it mentioned "airport landing strips" were "permitted uses" in floodplain areas.

There were no guidelines or restrictions for airport construction. The township board subsequently came up with some guidelines, such as not getting too close to residential property, public institutions, such as health facilities and schools and not near high steeples, chimneys or antennas of any kind.

The airport-in-a-cornfield opened in 1980 by William Boynton and his brother Nathan, provided an uncongested spot ideal for small planes who otherwise had to play tag on runways with the jumbo jets. People started "coming out of the walls when we opened here" according to William Boynton.

In 1985, the township board voted to extend Tenth Avenue 2,000 feet to the north to intersect Taylor Street, and then another 1,000 feet to the driveway of Riverview airport.

Meeting Minutes— July 16, 2009

Submitted by Nellie DeLaat

Present: Nellie DeLaat, Liz Timmer, Virginia Timmer, Mike Timmer, Ken Williams, Grayce Lancaster, Ruth Lowing

Association business

Review minutes: Minutes from June meeting approved as written. Motion made by Ken; seconded by Mike.

Treasurer’s Report: Approved as written. Motion made by Mike; seconded by Ken.

Maintenance Report: Mike reported that the basement waterproofing is done and the bill paid. Quotes for the sprinkler system have been turned into Dan Carlton for consideration by the Township Board for next year’s budget. Cost should be less than \$2,000. Mike will get a new humidifier.

Webpage: Ruth reported that she has received 3 sample pages from the web designers. She will ask them to include the following:

- calendars with links to meeting dates and open house dates
- link for membership application and information
- list of members
- how to schedule school tours
- about the historical association

Ruth and Mike will decided who will take care of what part of the web site.

Hudsonville Fair Info: Liz reported that the cost of a booth at the Hudsonville Fair was \$75 for a 6 x 8 booth or

\$100 for an 8 x 8 booth. Both sizes have 3 sides to put information on. The booth would need to have someone there from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day Monday through Saturday. It was decided not to pursue this. There was some discussion about putting posters at various locations. No decision was made.

Other Business: Ken reported that Allen Springs wanted some pictures of Jenison. Ken put the pictures on a DVD. They gave the Association a \$75 donation. They purchased copies of Bend in the River for three libraries.

Liz contacted Dale Grootenhuis who has joined the Association. He is very interested in doing research.

Museum business

July Open House: Nellie and Grayce reported that everything was set for the open house. Nellie will ask members to bring cookies.

September Open House: A map with pictures will be put together. \$50 authorized for printing of map and pictures. Motion made by Ken; seconded by Grayce.

Cleaning of the museum: Members will be asked to dust while at the open house.

2009 Meeting Schedule

- Thursday, August 20 — — — Georgetown Library
- Thursday, September 17 — Georgetown Library
- Thursday, October 15 — — — Georgetown Library
- Thursday, November 19 — — Georgetown Library
- No meeting in December, 2009

All meetings start at 6:45 PM unless noted.

2009 Museum Open House Schedule and Themes

- September 19 from 2-4 p.m. – Jenison Transportation Thru the Ages – Mike/Liz
- October 17 from 2-4 p.m. – Muck Farming & Harvesting -- Ken
- December 5 from 1-4 p.m. – Holiday Open House -- Grayce
- January 9, 2010 from 2-4 p.m. – 2nd Holiday Open House

2009 Calendar of Open House Events

August

**Enjoy the
Last bit of
Summer**

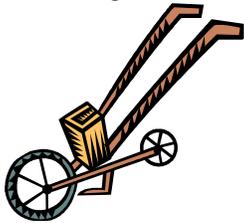
September 19, 2009 2-4 PM

Jenison Transportation



October 17, 2009 2-4 PM

Muck Farming & Harvesting



December 5, 2009....1-4 PM

Holiday Open House



January 9, 2010....2-4 PM

2nd Holiday Open House



Cut out and Save!!

If you can help on any of these open houses, Please call the museum

457-4398

Treasurers Report – thru July 1, 2009

Submitted by R. Lowing



Cash on Hand	
Retained Earnings 2008	\$ 2,381.28
wrote off unpaid dues	\$ (70.00)
As of 12/31/08	\$ 2,311.28
Total Income 2009	\$ 825.25
Total Expenses 2009	\$ (207.47)
Total Equity	\$ 2,929.06
Receivables- Unpaid Dues	\$ (60.00)
Total Liabilities	\$ 60.00
Cash on Hand	\$ 2,929.06

Income:	7/2 thru 8/2/09	Year to date 09
Books	0.00	20.00
Donations	139.00	451.75
Memorials	0.00	0.00
Dues	0.00	325.00
Mill Print & Photos	0.00	0.00
Stationery	24.50	26.50
Sub Total	\$163.50	\$823.25
Interest	0.41	2.00
Total Income	\$163.91	\$825.25

Expenses:	7/2 thru 8/2/09	Year to date 09
Equipment Rental	0.00	0.00
Dues & Subscriptions	0.00	0.00
Fees	0.00	(40.00)
Postage	0.00	0.00
Repairs/Security	\$ -	(47.47)
Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00
Supplies	0.00	0.00
Insurance	120.00	(120.00)
Total Expenses	\$120.00	(\$207.47)
Due Grandville for books	\$	60.00

Volunteer Opportunities!!

Museum Cleaning: A cleaning schedule is being developed. 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 is such a rewarding experience. You won't regret being a part of this experi-

ence 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, possibly 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.

September Open House

Transportation in Jenison



Saturday, September 19

2-4 PM

Admission is Free

but 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



L&L Jenison Company truck—circa 1950



Jenison Historical Association
Box 664—28 Port Sheldon
Jenison, Michigan 49429

Jenison Historical Association Mission Statement:

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.

Next Meeting of the Jenison Historical Association

August 20, 2009 6:45 PM

Georgetown Public Library

Members Encouraged and General Public Welcome