

# MEMBER NEWS

## Focus on Your Museum

By Ken Williams



It was suggested at our January meeting that we have a Curator's section in our Newsletter highlighting things in and/or ideas about our museum. Some envisioned an article focusing on an artifact and its "back story". Others envisioned helpful information to enliven our docent stories for our visitors. And still others envisioned a "soap box" opportunity to keep us focused and together in our mission. In the months to come I hope to offer a little on all three visions. I would also urge all of you to suggest topics and/or artifacts to write about so this article can stay relevant and be helpful to us all.

I cringe a little when a visitor asks if there are any "ghosts" in our museum. I politely explain that through the years I have been in the museum at every hour of the day and night and have never seen or heard any "paranormal activity," but I do see and hear (in my mind) the "spirit" of past Association members in every corner of the museum. When the Association started all we had was the possibility of a museum and a campaign to "Save the Tiffany House." In the end the Highway Department finally gave the Tiffany house to Georgetown Township and the Jenison Museum started as an empty house. There were no furnishings, no artifacts; even the ceiling light fixtures had been removed. With the financial help of the Georgetown Township Board, generous donations of both money and artifacts and loans of specific items, all of what we have in the museum today and its solid condition is the result the hard work of hundreds

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<http://www.jenisonhistory.org>

different volunteers.

These are the "spirits" I see and hear at the museum. In my mind I hear Betty Galer, standing in the northeast corner of the front parlor, say "someday this will be a world class museum" as she explained to our group how she and Chris Tucker had managed to acquire the "correct" antique pieces (Continued page 3)

## Minutes of the Jenison Historical Association - January 21, 2016

Present: Ken Williams, Yvonne Williams, Ruth Lowing, Nellie DeLaat, Liz Timmer, Gene Kort, Ronnie Aungst, Linda Droog, Mary Raper, Mike Timmer and Sandy Wensink.

### ASSOCIATION BUSINESS

Welcome New Members: Liz shared that we have several new members who are not present tonight, Carol Dilly and Makenna Bosch, a young girl who might shadow with Emi. There are also 2 new members from Hudsonville.

Approve January Agenda: Supported and approved as presented except to add name badges to other business. Carried

Approve November Minutes: Supported and seconded as written. Carried.

Treasurer's Report: Gene and Sandy motioned to approve as written. Carried. Ruth presented the final 2016 Budget as approved. Liz asked for an Ornament Update. Sandy volunteered to get a running total.

### Curator/Historian's Report:

- Gerald Scholma was remembered at his recent passing. He was on the township board at the time the historical association was organized and was very instrumental in preserving and placing the stump fence here at the museum as well as being involved in saving the Tiffany House.
- Rebecca Bush, a family member researching the Gerrit VerStrate home on Tyler/36<sup>th</sup> Ave. (just east of Port Sheldon) was present to share a book she had put together with her research findings. She had also researched the diary of Abe VerState that we have a copy of in our files.
- Christmas Open House: Had 240 visitors over the two open houses plus 2 private tours.
- Local TV Station had requested a walk thru interview featuring our Christmas trees.
- Additions to the cleaning closet have been purchased. We have purchased a new Shark vacuum as well as cleaning and reorganizing the closet, Yvonne found a wood shelving unit.
- Ken noted ice buildup on the roof of the front porch as well as exposed wood that needs to be repaired and painted.
- We now have a new used printer donated by Ruth. Thank you, Ruth.
- The Garfield home in Jamestown, which had been damaged by fire in the past, was found to be demolished recently. Another piece of history is gone.
- Haire's Landing on the Grand River is of interest again. Jeff Seaven and Carl Bajema are involved in compiling information and artifacts found at the site. This property is owned by the GR Gravel Co. GVSU Archeology Department is now interested also.
- The old Bob Andre Insurance building has been demolished, most recently housing the "Love Tattoo" business.

Township Representative's Report: Ron not present

Acquisitions Report: Barb not present

Maintenance Report: Mike has the estimate to fix the roof and has been approved. Work will be completed once weather permits. We will also look into doing touch up painting on the dark green siding.

### Master Plan Report:

- Time Line -- work is progressing, Ken is working on finding pictures.

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## Minutes of the Jenison Historical Association (Continued)

- Inventory -- is on going
- Clear Coat Basement -- need to wait for warmer weather to complete the job.

2016 Meeting Locations: We have been approved to use the Library for all months except for May and June. Rosewood Ref. Church has been reserved for those months.

January Holiday Open House Report: 25 visitors toured the house and \$83 was donated.

Holiday De-decorating and Cleaning: It was decided to start on Tuesday, Jan. 26 at 10 a.m. and complete it on Saturday Jan. 30 at: 9:30 a.m. We will need the boxes brought down by Tuesday morning.

March and April 2016 Open House: History Mystery questions are ready and Liz now has colored paper to print them on. She will also attempt to get some gift card donations from local businesses for prizes.

Advertising: Liz contacted Dan Carlton about advertising our open houses on the new township digital sign, as well as posting on the township FB page and web sites. He has agreed to this.

Newsletter: Ruth has introduced a new format for our quarterly newsletter. Other members are encouraged to get involved with input and research that can be used in the newsletter. Ruth would be very excited if another member would be willing to take it over.

### OTHER BUSINESS

Name Badges: Liz presented pricing for new magnetic name badges that are uniform for all the docents. Yvonne will check out some additional pricing and sources.

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## Focus on Your Museum (Cont.)

for the four front rooms on the main floor. I can hear Gerald Scholma and Doris McKenzie as they assembled the stump fence outside the museum and their excited story of how neighborhood kids had helped them pick out "just the right stumps" for the project. I can hear Betty Groendyke playing Christmas Carols on the front parlor piano during a Christmas open house.

I can see Wayne Lowing and Ken Smedly applying plaster to the ceilings of the kitchen and bedrooms upstairs. There was laughter in the air and more than a little plaster. I can see Bob Duell building the showcases and mural frame in one of the bedrooms upstairs and Burt Timmer helping Mike Timmer and others bringing the restored Jenison Store cash register up the front stairs.

In the kitchen I can hear Bob Andre telling me about the many trails where he rode his horse in the hills south of his place which is now Sonny-brook Country Club. On the front porch I can hear Gerald Scholma telling me that as a kid he and his neighborhood friends would throw a wire over the overhead interurban wire and drop it in Rush Creek to shock the fish. I can hear Christ Tucker describe a ceramic vase displayed in the dining room as rare and valuable addition to our collection. I can also hear Virginia Timmer, a former historian and chronicler of all things Jenison history, report on what she had found "in her files" about the question or issue at hand. Every time I use those files today I hear her voice and the amazing historic details she collected.

These are just a few of the many volunteers that have helped us on our way to becoming a "world class museum." These are the shoulders we are standing on as we continue the work. We are sharing in their vision and continuing the mission. When you wonder, what good am I doing?

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Think of that 3<sup>rd</sup> grader who is just learning his or her place in this big world. We can be the place to help them learn about the past. Think of the young families and new Jenison residents who are putting down roots. We can be that place where fertile soil helps them take root in their community. Also, think of that “lifelong” resident or the one who has “lived here for 30 years” and has never gone through the museum. We can be that place where they meet their personal history and are reminded of how important and rich those memories are.

Yes there are “spirits” in our museum and we are their guardians, dispensers, and most of all beneficiaries. They are the spirits of the past. They guide us, remind us, humble us, entertain us, inspire us, and amaze us. And now that we have joined in the effort, let us hope our “spirit” will continue and sustain the mission that has begun here in this place.

## Treasurer Report -Year End 2015

### Jenison Historical Association Treasurers Report 1/1/2016 thru 1/31/2016

Date	Num	Transaction	Memo	Category	Amount
<b>Beginning Balance</b>					<b>\$6,280.03</b>
1/11/16	2078	Historical Society of Michigan	JHA Membership Dues	Dues	(\$35.00)
1/19/16	Deposit	Deposit	Postage for Ornament shipment	Postage	\$6.00
			Ornament Sales	Gift Store: Ornaments	\$50.00
			Open House 1/9/16	Donation	\$87.00
			Membership Dues-10 Members	Membership Dues	\$100.00
			Donation-Ron Hambly	Donation	\$15.00
				Activity for report period	\$223.00
				<b>Checking Account Balance</b>	<b>\$ 6,503.03</b>
<b>Petty Cash</b>					<b>\$50.00</b>
	12/1/12				
				<b>Petty Cash Balance</b>	<b>\$ 50.00</b>
<b>ENDING Accounts BALANCE</b>					<b>\$ 6,553.03</b>
					<b>2014 Retained Earnings</b> \$5,513.43
					Total Income 2015 \$3,202.51
					Total Expenses 2015 (\$2,435.91)
					2015 Retained Earnings \$6,280.03
					Total Income 2016 \$258.00
					Total Expenses 2016 (\$35.00)
					Checking Account Balance \$6,503.03
					Petty Cash Box \$50.00
					<b>Cash on Hand</b> \$6,553.03
					Receivables \$0.00
<b>Total Equity</b>					<b>\$ 6,553.03</b>
<b>SPECIAL RESERVE FUND-RESTORATION PROJECT-BEGINNING BALANCE January 2015</b>					<b>\$ 101.68</b>
<b>SPECIAL FUND-RESTORATION PROJECT-ENDING BALANCE (note, this balance is part of the total Cash on Hand above)</b>					<b>\$ 101.68</b>

## Upcoming Open Houses

## JHA Trustee's

### Jenison Museum "History Mystery"

March 2, 2016 – 10 to Noon AM

March 19 – 2 to 4 PM

April 5, 2016 – 10 to Noon AM

April 16, 2016 – 2 to 4 PM

Tour the Museum during the March and April Open Houses to look for clues about Jenison History.

### Jenison Museum Souvenir's

Our newest souvenir in the Gift Shop is still available for sale. This year we are highlighting the Jenison Mill. We also have a few of our previous design from 2012 highlighting the Jenison Museum



**Prices:** \$15 each or two for \$25

*Find us on Facebook at Jenison History Association and become a friend.*

#### Chair

Liz Timmer (2016)  
457-3708

#### Vice Chair/Curator/Tours

Ken Williams (2017)  
772.6523

#### Treasurer/Editor

Ruth Lowing (2017)  
540-4709

#### Social Secretary

Nellie DeLaat (2016)  
457-1193

#### Recording Secretary

Linda Droog (2018)  
457-3016

#### Archivist

Barb Semeyn (2017)  
457-9343

#### Maintenance/Historian

Mike Timmer (2016)  
531-1218

#### Trustee

Yvonne Williams (2017)  
772-6523

Gene Kort (2016)  
534-6769

#### Township Rep

Ron Villerius

(####) = year of term expiration

**Contact Information:** Members may contact the board at the above phone numbers or leave a message at 457-4398 or [info@jenisonhistory.org](mailto:info@jenisonhistory.org)

**Organization Membership in the Historical Association of Michigan**  
Find us on the registry of the Historical Society of Michigan  
[www.hsmichigan.org](http://www.hsmichigan.org)

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## 2016 Association Schedule

### Museum Open House Schedule

Saturday, Open House schedule

March 1, 2016 10-12 AM "History Mystery"  
March 19, 2016 2-4 PM - "History Mystery"  
April 5, 2016 10-12 AM - "History Mystery"  
April 16, 2016 2-4 PM - "History Mystery"  
May 3, 2016 - 10-12 AM - "When and Wear"  
May 21, 2016 - 2-4 PM - "When and Wear"  
June 7, 2016 - 10-12 AM - "When and Wear"  
June 18, 2016 - 2-4 PM - "When and Wear"

Check out the web site for the entire 2016 schedule

### Meeting Schedule

Meetings are all open to the public and held on the **3rd Thursday** of the month at 6:45 PM at the Georgetown Library, unless noted. No meeting in December.

Thursday, February 18

Thursday, March 17

Thursday, April 21

Thursday, May 19 - watch for alternate location

Thursday, June 16 - watch for alternate location

Thursday, July 21

Thursday, August 18

Thursday, September 15

Thursday, October 20

Thursday, November 17

> > No meeting in December

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*[www.jenisonhistory.org](http://www.jenisonhistory.org)*

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JENISON HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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