



The Oakland Township Historical Society (OTHS) Newsletter
www.oaklandtownshiphistoricalsociety.org Oakland County, Michigan

From the Desks of the Co-Presidents



Spring is the season of renewal, so it's a wonderful time to set goals for our society for 2023. We were blessed with two very successful fundraisers in 2022, the now annual Flumerfelt Flea Sale and Cranberry Cheer (*see the article on page 4 to learn more about Cranberry Cheer*). The money raised will help us accomplish our goals in 2023. First and foremost is moving the Goodson Station signal booth to its original location on the Paint Creek Trail. This will help to emphasize and educate our residents and trail enthusiasts on the history of this beautiful "rails to trails" pathway. Our second goal for this year is to work on the re-creation of the 1974 historic home book in honor of our 50th anniversary in 2024. We look forward to sharing interesting history and pictures of our Township with all of you.

In an effort to continually work toward preservation of our history, we would love to hear how you would like to become more involved to help. An area of concern for us is our low participation and membership. Although our membership has grown slightly in the past year, the participation in lectures, fieldtrips and fundraising remains low. We would love for new individuals to come forward to get involved in our society. Please come to our Open House on April 29!

**Anthony Kowalchick and Mary Tischler,
OTHS Co-Presidents**

Chair Caning Class

Jean Kroger will be offering a chair caning class at Cranberry Lake Farm during April, 2023.

Class size limited to 12

Cost for members \$10 to OTHS plus supplies cost

Cost for non-members \$15 to OTHS plus supplies cost

Meets at Main House at CLF

Saturdays

March 18, April 1, 15, 22 and 29.

Time: 9 AM- 11 AM

Any conflict will be rescheduled to a late afternoon weekday.

For the March 18th meeting, please bring your chair. We need to take measurements to order supplies.

Please contact Colleen Barkham at thsbarkham@hotmail.com or call 248-652-0712 to sign up for the class.



*Tom Pederson,
Jean Dertouzous and Jean Kroger
at previous chair caning class*

Helen Waite, interviewed in April 2001 by Carolyn Dulin.



In July 1918 Helen, the second of five children, was born to Otto and Clara Muckenhiren in Hudson, Wisconsin. About 1924 the family moved to Detroit and Otto worked in an auto plant. The youngest child contracted tuberculosis and the doctor recommended he be moved into the country out of the city. Otto made an arrangement with a Mr. Rackham who owned an orchard on Gallagher Rd in Oakland Township. The family could build a house on his property if they took care of the orchard and picked the apples. The verbatim text of the interview follows and will be printed in the next several issues of the newsletter due to its length.

Dad took the job. We picked the apples. We had a wonderful orchard, real good apples. Us kids had to get in there and help dad with the apples. My dad and I cleaned and polished all those apples, and they were big, and we had to have them ready for Mr. Rackham when he came out. We polished them one at a time and put paper around each one. We did that for quite a while.



My dad liked to garden, so we got into gardening. With all those kids it wasn't easy. We had chickens. Then the depression came, and then everything stopped. There was hardly anything you could get to do. Dad worked on the milk depot in Goodison between Orion and Territorial Roads. Then Dad and Lloyd Blankenburg were mining gravel from big holes way up by Silver Bell and Orion.

One man had a house and barn right by Gallagher road - Mr. Tower. The Towers - there was a bunch of them - were kind of characters. Irvy Tower was the one we liked, because if we needed anything, he'd be right there if something happened and mother and dad weren't home. I don't think they ever married. Their house didn't look like they got married - but there were 4 or 5 of 'em. They're buried up in the cemetery- five brothers.

We moved out of the big house Mr. Rackham rented to us and stayed with Clarence Kramer while dad was building a house. Some of his friends and relatives from Detroit came out and built a sort of self-built house. Then we lived in that house right across from the railroad tracks. You couldn't have been any closer to the tracks. You could hear that bell. You had to learn to sleep through it. That train was there for a long, long time. Even when Kenny and I moved, that train was still there. We used to have field fires that would catch from that train. Up near our place on Lake George Road, the fire almost went through the cemetery. It went by the cemetery up the road further by MacDonald's and Johnson's.

Kenny Waite and I got married in Goodison. I met him through mother and dad. My cousin, Virginia, came from Wisconsin. She could play the accordion so one night we went out to a dance place on Auburn Road. Kenny had seen me at the dance. He asked me to go out with him. He came from Lake Orion. His folks had a farm on the corner of Stoney Creek and Orion, and that house is still there.

There was a country school at Gunn Road and Orion Road - one room. That's where I went to school. I remember when the brick schoolhouse, Baldwin School, was built in Goodison with 2 rooms. In the other school we didn't have anything. There were 8 grades with one or two in a grade. The last one I was in, 6th or 7th, there were 5 or 6 of us. And then I think my brother caught up with me because I failed a grade. The

Helen Waite, interviewed in April 2001 by Carolyn Dulin. *(Continued from page 2)*

teacher was nice. The guys there, come fall, had to leave to help their dads in the fields, to pick up the potatoes, and the corn. The girls didn't. They stayed in school. The guys had to go into service, too. My teacher's name, I think, was Ruth Martin. She got married there and lived in those two houses together that Kremer had on Orion Road, past the cider mill [where Flagstar Bank is].



Now they've torn those two houses down, right by the railroad tracks. We had some good times with a lot of the people who lived there.

Us kids had quite a time when we were little because we didn't have any lights back then. We used lamps and chimney lanterns. They'd get so dirty from that smoke, and we had to clean 'em. We had to find a way to get to high school. There were no buses. There was nothing. June Tyson (was June Collins) lived on Orion Road. She was in the same grade as I was. They told us we could have a choice - to go to Lake Orion High School or Rochester High School. It wasn't much of a choice because we didn't have any way to get there. My dad was working in a shop in Pontiac. Us kids would ride in with him in the morning and we'd have to stay at the hotel that used to be at the corner of Fifth and Main, the St. James hotel, until school opened, and we'd walk up to school. When dad came home from work, he'd pick us up. When we got older and needed some money, we got jobs around town at the grocery, or ice cream stores on weekends. My brother, Willis, bought a pickup. He was in the eleventh grade and he quit school, because he could see a need for him to do something for the family. So I got a ride with him. By that time, some of my brothers were signing up for the war, WW II, the navy or army.

I graduated in '37 and got married that year. We had Janet in '38. We lived in Goodison for awhile. There was a store on Territorial Road in back of the factory. It was built but never used. It was brand new. A guy on Silver Bell bought the building and Kenny found out that we could rent it for just a little bit. So we rented the bottom part of it. We had to do a lot of work to get it livable. We lived there for a couple years. Then we moved up on Lake George Road. There weren't many buildings to choose from for young people. On Lake George we were just down over the hill on the right hand side. We had 4 acres. The house had 1 big room and we added one. We had brothers to help us. Kenny got a job at Fisher Body in Pontiac. I remember just before we got married, he bought a car. First thing, we had a car and a house, and he got furniture. We had all this stuff. It was really good, even though we were still coming out of the depression.



After we were married, and the folks were still in the house by the railroad tracks, a house got empty on Collins Road across from the church. My folks rented that place. When I was about to have my second daughter, Lois [about 42 or 43] that house burnt.

Men from the box factory came over and put the fire out for mother. It started in the back room where she had her laundry. She had a wood stove going and it got too close to the wall. That wood was dry. And they have never done anything with that property. A man in Rochester owns it. [There is a barn on it now].

Transcribed Helen Waite oral history to be continued in a future newsletter

PDF versions of the Oakland Township Historical Society's newsletters are available online at www.oaklandtownshiphistoricalsociety.org under NEWS.

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Cranberry Cheer Success

The OTHS held a new event at Cranberry Lake Farm this past November. Cranberry Cheer was a great success thanks to our many volunteers and members! The event hosted over 100 attendees, who enjoyed a stroll through the decorated main house and grounds. The event included live music and refreshments, a chance to make a holiday craft and shopping the numerous vendors in the Flumerfelt Barn. A huge thanks to Gretchen Drader, of Drader Interiors, who directed our decorating team as we spent 40+ hours adding holiday sparkle throughout the farm buildings.

Again, a very heartfelt thank-you to all our volunteers, members, the Drop In Bluegrass Band, BSA Troop 106, our decorating team and craft committee. This was a tremendous effort to highlight our beautiful Cranberry Lake Farm during the holidays and we hope to do it again!

*Co-Chairs,
Gayle Kowalchick and Colleen Barkham*

The **OTHS store** has many great gift items for sale - A few popular items: Ed Noble prints, Lyn Seiffert large color prints, Lyn Seiffert note cards, *It's the Berries* Cranberry Recipe Book, Carolyn Dulin ceramic art, Mill sack dish towels and aprons, and many other items! Contact Sue Fox.



OTHS Membership

It's membership renewal time, and if you don't know your status, just contact Sue Fox by email at othsmember@comcast.net or call 248-693-9646 to find out. When sending in your membership dues, let us know if you have a change in address, phone or email address. We will be putting dues status information with all future mail, so you will be able to see your expiration date anytime. Thank you for being an Oakland Township Historical Society member.

OTHS BOARD



*Mary Tischler,
Co-President*

*Anthony Kowalchick,
Co-President*

Sue Fox, Treasurer

*Barbara Barber,
Corresponding Secretary*

*Bill Kroger,
Recording Secretary*

Tom Asmus, Director

Colleen Barkham, Director

Diana Borrusch, Director

Gayle Kowalchick, Director

David Phillips, Director

OTHS Membership

Help us continue to be a Society to be proud of. We welcome new members!

Share the form below with a friend or neighbor.



Membership Application Form

Membership Category:

Additional Donation:

Individual \$18 _____

\$ _____

Family \$25 _____

Total Enclosed _____

Patron \$50 _____

\$ _____

Business \$100 _____

New _____ Renewal _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail: _____

Make checks payable and mail with this form to :
Treasurer, Oakland Township Historical Society
384 Predmore Road, Oakland, MI 48363 (do not send cash)
For more information contact Sue Fox at 248.693.9646 or
e-mail othsmember@comcast.net

We need your help! Consider donating your memories, time, money, or skills to help us preserve our heritage. Do you have a story to share? Do you want to submit a written memoir to our archives or have us tape an interview with you? Do you have a barn more than 50 years old? Have you found any old arrowheads or other ancient artifacts? Do you want to help with the plant sale at Heritage Days, Flumerfelt Flea, Down on the Farm, restoration of Cranberry Lake Farm, or other fun things? Please indicate below. We will contact you!

YES! _____ I have artifacts or historical photos, stories or other information YES! _____ I would like to Volunteer with an event, committee, program, etc.

The OTHS is a 501©(3) charitable organization. All contributions and membership fees are tax deductible as provided by law.

SPRING OTHS PROGRAMS

Wednesday, April 5, 2023 Fillmore 13 Brewery, 7 North Saginaw , Pontiac 48342

6:00 pm Dinner and Drinks (cash bar, separate tabs)

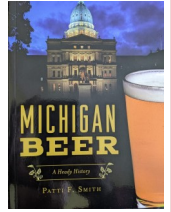
7:00pm Program : **Michigan Beer: A Heady History**

Join us for dinner & beer at 6:00, then at 7:00 head to the lower-level private 'speakeasy' for our program! Michigan has long been called the Great Lakes State, and in recent years, it has also become known as the Great Beer State. During this interactive presentation, hear stories about local brewers, how early immigrants brought their distinctive beer styles from their home countries, how early local brewers made their mark in beer, and how the brewing industry consolidated after World War II. Along the way, participants will discover different styles of beer, from ales to lagers, and learn about the current state of local craft breweries.

Limited to 60 people, RSVP by March 31st to ganechow@sbcglobal.net with total number of guests attending.



Presented by Author Patti F. Smith, lifelong Michigan resident, craft beer drinker, and enthusiast. She lives with her husband in Ann Arbor where she teaches school, tells stories, writes, and occasionally brews her own beer.



April 29 **Open House at Cranberry Lake Farm Historic District-11am-2pm** - Details on next page.

May 2023 A joint outing/**field trip** with the Rochester Avon Historical Society
Date – Location – Details to be announced.



Wednesday, June 7, 2023

6:30 pm CLF Barn

Potluck, Elections and Program – bring a dish to pass

Spring Pot-Luck Dinner, Annual Membership Meeting, Elections and Program

"Puddleview: The Fascinating History of the Land that became Addison Oaks"

Beginning with Native American trails and continuing through the development of the Snyder and Shoemaker farms as well as the Buhl family estate, Addison Oaks County Park has an amazing history. It includes the stories of resilient farmers, a questionable marriage and a governess from France.



Presented by Carol Bacak-Egbo, historian, researcher, educator and strong advocate for the appreciation and preservation of local history. She is the historian and archaeology consultant for Oakland County Parks and Recreation and a Commissioner on the Oakland County Historical Commission. Her current research projects include the Underground Railroad in Oakland County, the history of Rose Township, African American History in Oakland County 1820-1860 and the transition from carriages to cars in Pontiac, Michigan. She has won several history-related awards and is known for her engaging presentations.

Tour Cranberry Lake Farm Buildings!

On Saturday, April 29, 2023 from 11:00 am - 2:00 pm, the Oakland Township Historical Society will provide tours of the five buildings at the Cranberry Lake Farm Historic District, located at 384 West Predmore Road in Oakland Township. The open buildings will be the Main House, Caretaker House Museum, Carriage Barn, Flumerfelt Barn and Milk House. Docents will be available in each building to answer questions.



Have you always wondered what is inside these buildings? Now is your chance to find out. Come and satisfy your curiosity. There is no cost and plenty of free parking. Come out to enjoy the day and the park!

Get Ready --- Flea Market This Year

**FLUMERFELT
FLEA
MARKET**

The Flumerfelt Flea Market is planned again for the fall of 2023. Date to be announced in future. Remember us as you clean-out your house, garage or barn! The things that we like to sell include antiques, vintage items, collectables, farm rustic items, housewares and furniture. Please no appliances, books, computers, clothing or exercise equipment. Contact Colleen Barkham at thsbarkham@hotmail.com or 248-652-0712 to arrange drop-offs.

Oakland Township Historical Society is on Facebook

Follow our Facebook posts to stay up to date with our latest activities and programs, present and past events that shape our area, and learn about people, businesses and history in our Township. Visit [facebook.com/OTHSMI](https://www.facebook.com/OTHSMI) or search for Oakland Township Historical Society.



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YOU
SHOP
OTH
WINS!



Don't forget that your Kroger purchases can help support OTHS. Sign up for Kroger 'Community Rewards' and choose Oakland Township Historical Society as your charitable organization.

Mission Statement: OTHS is dedicated to gathering, interpreting and preserving the history of Oakland Township. It's your memory, it's our history, it's worth preserving!



384 West Predmore Road
Oakland, Michigan 48363



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