



Gardner House drawing
by Maggie LaNoue

ALBION HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Programming Fun at the Gardner

By Sylvia Benavidez

The joy of history is ultimately found in the lives and stories of people. In over the past year and a half, the Albion Historical Society has been fortunate to have been able to present exciting, entertaining, and educational programs that share the richness of our community. Some past Program highlights included celebrating Martin Luther King Day with a community reading of his "I Have a Dream" speech, "Albion's Music Through the Ages," "Garden Party at the Gardner," and the annual favorite, our "Mother's Day Tea."

Any member of the Albion Historical Society may offer program ideas at any time and a committee then works through what can be done each year, but it takes one special leader to make sure the entire program details get taken care for presentation to the public and currently that person is Barb McAuliffe. Board member and program and publicity committee chair McAuliffe loves music, Albion, and history, so her volunteer work for the Albion Historical Society suits her just perfectly. Her eyes light up when she talks of future programming for the Museum and the Society. "We learn from history," she says, "and it's as important as because what we learn from history shapes our future." Learn a little bit more about her in our "Meet the Board Member" article found later in this newsletter. McAuliffe is the first to note that volunteers make possible the family-oriented fun at the Gardner House Museum and she can always use people to serve on the committee or work on an individual project.

AHS Member Dolores Manthei is ready to start things off this spring with the annual *Mother's Tea* which will be on Saturday, May 9th. Manthei shares that there will be two sessions to take tea with your mother, friends and family—an 11:00 a.m. tea followed by a 12:00 p.m. craft at the Library and a 1:00 p.m. tea followed by a 2:00 p.m. craft. The Albion District Library's Children's Room will be hosting the craft portion of the program, a garden stepping stone made from concrete. Call Dolores Manthei at 517-629-3041 by May 4th for reservations for the Tea. You never know what surprises she has up her sleeve for the tea!



Message from the AHS President

-Carolyn Gilg

Hello everyone and welcome to this issue of the Albion Historical Society newsletter. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Carolyn Gilg and I'm the new president of the Albion Historical Society. I will be writing to you in each issue of the newsletter, keeping you up to date on happenings here at the Gardner House Museum. First up as noted in the newsletter is our annual Mother's Day Tea, Saturday May 9, and reservations are required and if you want to participate please call Barb McAuliffe, 517-629-629-2879 or Dolores Manthei, 517-629-3041.

Mother's Day weekend is also the weekend that the museum opens for the summer, with volunteers working each day Saturday and Sunday. Share a bit of Albion by sharing an afternoon with visitors at the Gardner House Museum! If you are interested in working at the museum one weekend, please call me at 517-250-1779 or e-mail, carolyngilg@gmail.com, so we can get you on the schedule or you can call Andy Zblewski at 517-629-9974. The museum is open every weekend until Labor Day, so the more volunteers we have, the easier it is to keep the museum open.

Are you familiar with the different committees we have here at the museum? We have Archives, Museum, Programs, Publications and Publicity. If you are interested in serving on any of these committees, feel free to call or e-mail me.

What's Coming Up!

Outdoor activities to come in June include

- Annual Golf Outing,
organized by Andy Zblewski
- Garden Party at the Gardner,
organized by Barb McAuliffe.

Further details will follow in the next newsletter.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Holland Park Transformation Project Oral Interviews

By Jennifer Wood

Wesley Dick, Leslie Dick, and Bob Wall have been in the Albion District Library recording oral history interviews for the Holland Park Transformation Project, which is seeking to upgrade the physical structure of the park, developing it into an intergenerational and multi-use community space. The interviews are a part of the historic aspect of the project, which focuses on its location as the former site of the segregated West Ward Elementary School. West Ward School was closed in 1953, as a result of a Civil Rights campaign led by the Albion NAACP and future City Councilman Robert Holland, for whom the park is named. The completed park redesign will feature "talking kiosks" where visitors can access recordings about the site's past, including the stories of former students and others associated with West Ward School.

Exhibits for a New Century / African American Communities in Nineteenth-Century Calhoun County

By Jennifer Wood

On Thursday, March 12th, area researchers met at the First Methodist Church to discuss opportunities for Albion involvement in a Michigan Humanities Council grant to study nineteenth century Black communities in Calhoun County. The Marshall District Library and Marshall Governor's Mansion Museum collaborated in writing the grant application (which was submitted on March 16th). They have invited Albion and other local communities to participate if the application is successful.

The meeting was part of the ongoing Kellogg Foundation grant-funded Exhibits for a New Century project, which supports research aimed at developing historical exhibits and programming at both the state and local levels to better reflect Michigan's diverse population.

Calhoun County Poor Farm

By Jennifer Wood

From 1849 through the 1950s the Calhoun County Poor Farm (also known as the Poor House or Alms House) was

located in Marengo Township, on the western edge of Marshall. Individuals might be sent there by families or by local authorities, for various reasons in addition to poverty, including long-term physical illness, mental or emotional issues, or the infirmities of old age. Residents came from all over the county, including Albion, and many were buried there in the Poor House cemetery. However, despite the fact that hundreds of people from our area resided there at one time or another, relatively little is known about it today.

Fraya Bushong Weiss and Marc Young, along with a small network of local researchers, are currently seeking to compile data, locate and survey whatever may be left of the cemetery, and utilize heretofore untapped records and documents that will help us learn more about what life was like at the Poor Farm – who were these individuals?, why were they there?, what happened to them? – as well as how the Farm was viewed by area residents and the role it played in the larger community over time.

Meet AHS Board Member Barb McAuliffe!

By Sylvia Benavidez

A lifelong resident of Albion, Barb McAuliffe has served on the Albion Historical Society Board for four years, and particularly enjoys heading up the Program and Publicity committees for the Society. McAuliffe has worked for the Greater Albion Chamber of Commerce, and at Clarant Corporation, where she was in sales. Over the years she has also owned three local businesses, including Country Treasures in Albion, and an ice cream shop in Marshall which also sold antiques.

McAuliffe is married and has two children. Even with all this activity in her life she still manages to nurture her artistic talent, which leads to our Fun Fact feature.

Fun Fact: McAuliffe says, "I used to paint murals on walls, buildings, etc. I once painted a 16-foot-high by 30-foot-wide mural on an antique mall, and it lasted for twenty years in Galesburg. I also painted on a family heirloom a lake scene. It was on a giant oak cabinet."

Visit the Gardner Treasures

By Therese Bramble Cornell

In the Music Room of the Gardner House Museum, tucked away in a corner, is a beautiful full-length mirror. It is a stand-alone mirror in a frame, nine feet tall and 42 inches wide. The reflective beauty fits the room perfectly, with its 12 foot ceiling. It is a grand old lady, an ideal size for the times in which it was originally built. One can look at it and imagine the life it has seen. As a woman, I can tell you that it would have been the ideal "looking-glass" in which to view a lady's ensemble before departing for a social call, to see the sweep of the gown, and the placement of the hat.

The mirror originally came from the Peabody mansion, which stood on Erie and Eaton Streets, and was built in

1836, according to a 1964 article in the Albion Evening Recorder. This was Tenney Peabody's home. It is the present-day location of the Peabody Apartments. Tenney Peabody and his family were one of the first families to emigrate to and settle in the area. Tenney's granddaughter, Frances A. Crane, married James C. Reed.

At some point, the Reed family sold the mirror to Joe Wilcox, who later donated it to the Albion Historical Society. It was then placed in the museum.

The mirror is not one of a kind here in Albion - I have seen one other similar to it belonging to a private individual. So we have in our midst a real treasure. When the museum opens for the season this spring, come see the mirror. It speaks of our past, a past reflected in its beauty and grand stature.

Caring for the Gardner Museum

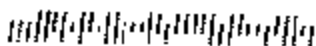
By Jim Seidl

Thirty-nine custom storm windows are being made for the Gardner House Museum. Work began on April 1st.

The storm window frames are to be painted, glass installed, and then fitted by the first week of May weather permitting.



Made possible by a gift from the Albion Area Philanthropic Women



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Honoring History

Please also note, the Albion Historical Society wishes to thank the following for their gift in memory of:

Noe Flores by the Benavidez Family

The memorial fund will be used to further the work of the Society. Honor the ones you love by sharing a gift in their memory to the Albion Historical Society. Contact:

James Seidl 517-629-5736

for more information or send your gift to:

**Albion Historical Society
509 S. Superior Street
Albion, MI 49224**

Upcoming Events-MI

2015 Family History Seminar • April 25, 2015
Lansing Family History Center, East Lansing
For more information call (517)332-2932

Calhoun County Genealogical Society Monthly Meeting
"Researching Michigan Ancestors Online"
April 28, 2015 • 7pm • LDS Church, Marshall
For more information contact Brenda Leyndyke at
(269) 275-0462 or brae957@gmail.com

Newsletter editor: Sylvia Benavidez with thanks to Jennifer Wood and Therese Bramble Cornell for their editorial assistance and contributions

Reminder

Your last renewal date will be circled in red if we have not heard from you lately. If the date in the upper left corner of your label is not '14 or '15 we need to know if you wish to continue your support of the Albion Historical Society. If your label says "tr" in the top left corner of the label, you have received this newsletter as a special invitation to join the financial supporters of the Albion Historical Society and the Gardner House Museum.

Sponsorship Form - Mail to:

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