

C o l u m n s

News about the Clarkston Community Historical Society & activities, exhibitions, people & plans for CCHS members.

6495 Clarkston Road Clarkston, MI 48346 248.922.0270

MISSION STATEMENT

The Clarkston Community Historic Society has been created in order to bring together those people interested in the history of our community and area; and, as far as is possible, to collect and preserve such things that are of historic interest, and may collect, care for, and make these items available for scholars, students and the public to use in researching the history of our area.

BOARD MEMBERS

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248.625.1505

Lydia Strnad

Newsletter
248.922.0019

Amy Wilson

248.625.0583

Toni Smith

Museum Director
248.625.8624

BOARD MEETINGS

are held the 4th Tuesday of each month from 7 until 9 PM at the *Heritage Museum* in the Independence Township Library.

From The President's Desk

Jennifer Arkwright

The historical society welcomes Spring to the Clarkston community again this year with our 3rd annual Cemetery Walk scheduled for Saturday, May 21 from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. This is a wonderful and unique way for guests to experience "living history" as they are guided through the beautiful grounds of Lakeview Cemetery and come face to face with some of Clarkston's earliest settlers. The historical society is pleased to present Lewis E. Wint & Son Funeral Home as this year's event corporate sponsor.

This year, the actors will include **Fred Irish, John Bullen, Marty Johnston, James Schultz, Brian Shepanek, Kay Robertson and Beth Hyde.** Interestingly, Beth Hyde is the great-granddaughter of Adeline Petty, the woman she will portray in the Walk this year!! These actors will be posted at various gravesites throughout the cemetery playing a different character from Clarkston's history. Clarkston historical figures portrayed this year include Erastus Stiff, Peter Addis, Horatio Foster, Eleanor King Dunston, and, as I've already mentioned, Adeline Petty. In addition, Lena Hammond Jossman will be portrayed with a special surprise guest.

If you haven't experienced the Cemetery Walk, it's time!! Upon your arrival at the Walk, you will be grouped with others and given a guide. At each gravesite you will stop and hear a short speech about the life and times of that individual, as well as interesting facts about Clarkston and the cemetery itself. When you have visited all seven sites, you can stop by the CCHS tent for light refreshments and a chance to listen to *Wakes & Weddings* as they sing American patriotic and folk songs.

Shuttle service will be provided to and from Depot Park. Tickets are \$10.00 for adults, \$5.00 for students and children 4 and under are free. Tickets can be purchased by calling the CCHS

office at (248) 922-0270 and also can be bought at the *Clarkston Country Store* located at 21 N. Main Street or at *Tierra Fine Jewelers* located at 64 S. Main.

On April 18, the historical society was excited to present an educational and entertaining program to the community: *Outhouse Archaeology: Buried Treasure.* **Mr. David Bridgens, Historian for the Michigan Historical Museum** amused more than 30 community members with an intriguing family story that offered unusual views of the treasures and family heirlooms that can be found when digging at an outhouse site. The "privy" or "necessary" was often a site where all manner of household refuse was discarded such a bottles and utensils, as well as jewelry or pocket watches that were lost accidentally. More than 30 community members took advantage of this free program and refreshments that was held in the library's community room.

If you have any questions about an artifact donation, upcoming programs or Clarkston history, please don't hesitate to call the office! Happy Spring! ☘



JOIN US FOR
A Stroll Thru History
and experience Clarkston's heritage
from a unique perspective.

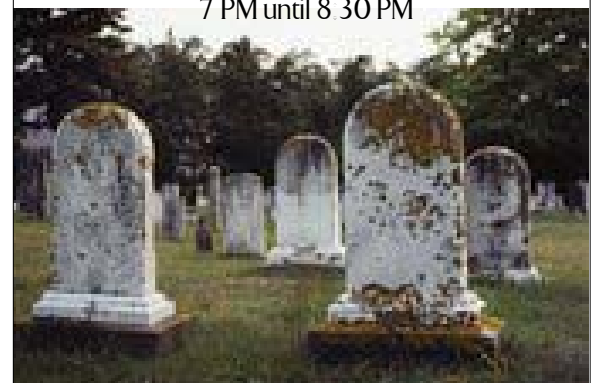
CLARKSTON CEMETERY WALK

Lakeview Cemetery

SATURDAY

May 21, 2005

7 PM until 8 30 PM



How can your treasures from the past assure the future of the Clarkston Heritage Museum?

Toni Smith

By donating them to our second annual Antique Sale to be held during our September **ART IN THE VILLAGE** Festival! Last year we were overwhelmed by the generosity of our members and friends when we asked for antiques and collectibles to sell in our first ever Antique Sale. As you might remember, all the proceeds from this sale went into a budget for purchasing Clarkston artifacts for the *Clarkston Heritage Museum*. That money (almost \$2,500) has been a real blessing this past year, allowing us to purchase items such as the beautiful ruby flash glass souvenir vase with "Clarkston" written in gold across the top. These were popular tourist items in the early 1900s, and until now, we knew they existed but did not have one for the museum. It was a really good day when we found one at an antique mall in Northville and were able to purchase it. And then there is the real photo postcard of the Mill Pond dated 1906. The handwritten note on the reverse side describes how a young boy had just drowned while boating on the pond. Although the photo of the Mill Pond is great, what we found most fascinating was the human-interest story it included. So please, take the time to look around your home and see if there is any type of (non-Clarkston) antique or collectible that you would consider donating to our Antique Sale in the fall. If you have something you would like to give us now, we will be happy to store it until the sale. Since we are a 501 C 3 charity, we will gladly provide donors with a receipt for tax purposes. Thank you again and be sure to think of us while you do your spring-cleaning. Call the CCHS office at (248) 922-0270 to arrange for a drop off or for more information. ☞

Tell Us What You Like

Toni Smith

It has been suggested that the CCHS should compile a list of collections that belong to our membership. Do you collect antique kitchen utensils or tools? What about Victorian hats or military swords? Are you crazy over circus posters or passionate about pocket watches? We think it would be a wonderful idea to create a museum display centered on the various collections of people in the community. For now, we just want to know what it is that you have and if you would be willing to loan it to the museum some time. Please give us a call at the CCHS office or just drop us an email at info@clarkstonhistorical.org and let us know what your collection is all about! ☞

Just when you think there can be no more surprises... something unexpected happens!

Toni Smith

We have had a nice selection of new items donated or loaned to the *Clarkston Heritage Museum*. This time the one with the best "story" is an original Knights Templar ceremonial sword that once belonged to a Clarkston Mason. Forget finding treasure in sunken Spanish galleons or long lost pirate chests, this wonderful Clarkston artifact was found at the Dixieland Flea Market at the corner of Dixie and Telegraph Roads! When **Janet Rimar** and her husband first picked up the sword, it was only with mild interest. But when they drew the sword out of the sheath and saw the name Butler Holcomb engraved on the steel, they knew they had something very special! They quickly purchased the sword for a nominal price of \$20.00 and brought it to us where it has remained on loan. We have done some research and found that the son of early Clarkston pioneer Butler Holcomb (also named Butler) was an active member of the Masonic Temple now located at the corner of Main and E. Washington. Dated from about 1890, isn't it incredible that this item should find its way to a local flea market! And we are so thankful that someone found it and recognized it for what it was or it could have been lost to us forever. Thank you to Janet and her family for this very special opportunity.

There have been other wonderful items added to the collection recently. From **Jerry and Lucia Wilford** came a large group of ladies fashion items such as petticoats, camisoles, hats, shoes and linens. Most of them are exquisitely hand detailed and embroidered and they offer a wonderful peek at the fashions of the Victorian lady. We hope to have these items on display sometime soon when we can devote an entire exhibit to clothing and accessories. We'll keep you informed!

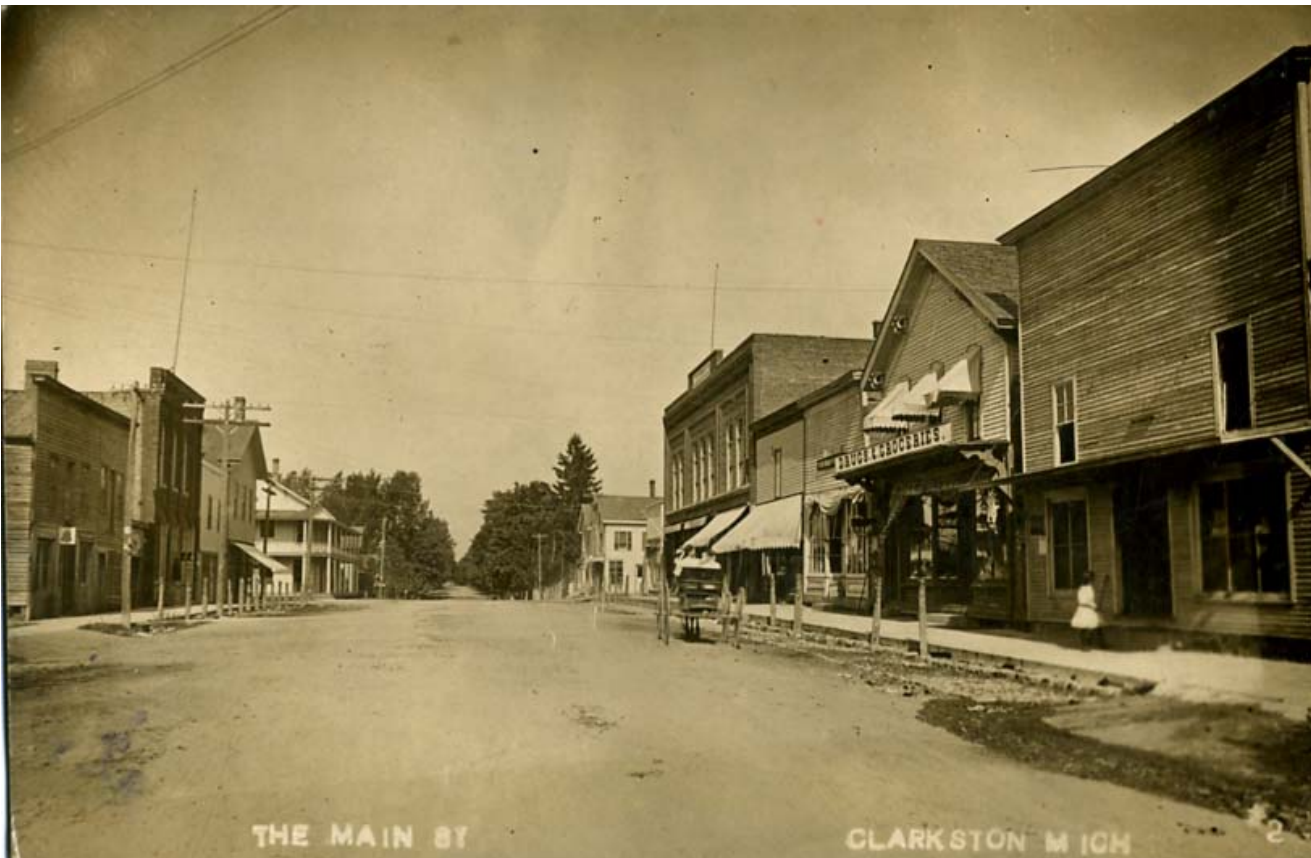
Recent Internet purchases have included several wonderful Clarkston postcards. We thought you would enjoy seeing a few of them, so be sure to check them out on the following page, enlarged for easier viewing. ☞

A T T E N T I O N ! ! !

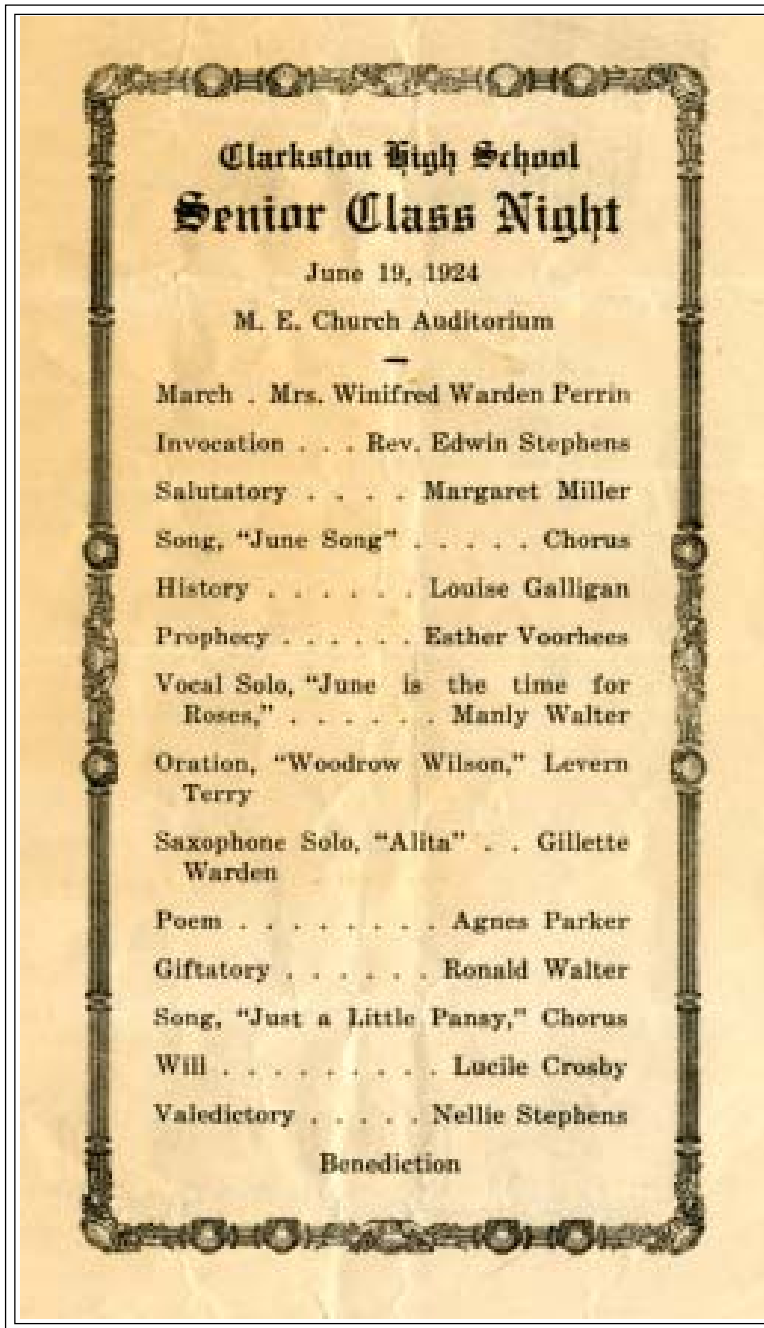
May is the start of our new fiscal year and we will be electing individuals to serve on the *CCHS Board of Directors*. If you are interested in joining a dedicated group of people who take pride in their commitment to preserving Clarkston's history please call the CCHS office at (248) 922-0270.



This postcard shows the east side of Main Street and is postmarked 1901. It shows the corner of Main and East Washington before the Masonic Temple was built on this spot. The clapboard building was home to N.B. Smith's Grocery store where the Mason's met upstairs until they could construct their own building.



This postcard view is looking north on South Main Street. Note the horse & buggy in the center of the photo and the little girl in a white dress walking along the sidewalk in the right-hand corner of the photo. Unused and with no postmark, it likely dates from around 1904.



With spring upon us and another school year ending we thought you might enjoy seeing this program from the 1924 commencement exercises of *Clarkston High School*. At that time, the school was still located in the building that is now the Independence Township Hall on North Main Street.



We recently received a local family scrapbook that seems to have been created around 1906. It is full of old cartoons, clever stories and items of interest. There are several clippings on unusual tombstone inscriptions. With the CCHS Cemetery Walk coming up shortly, we thought it would be fitting (and fun) to reprint some of the epitaphs that were pasted in to this scrapbook. So here they are:

Epitaph from Sevenoaks, England

*Here I lie; no wonder I'm dead,
For a broad wheeled wagon went over my head.
Grim death took me without any warning,
I was well at night and died in the morning.*

Epitaph from Chelmsford, England

*Here lies the man Richard,
And Mary his wife;
Their surname was Pritchard,
They lived without strife;
And the reason was plain –
They abounded in riches,
They had no care or pain,
And his wife wore the breeches.*



Epitaph found in Bideford churchyard

*The wedding day appointed was,
The wedding clothes provided'
But ere the day did come, alas,
He sickened and he dieded.*

Epitaph reprinted from Harpers Magazine, 1856

*At rest beneath this churchyard stone,
Lies stingy Jimmy Wyatt;
He died one morning just at tea,
And saved a dinner by it.*

Epitaph from South Carolina

*Here lies the body of Robert Gordon,
Mouth almighty, and teeth accordin.
Stranger tread lightly over this wonder,
If he opens his mouth, you're gone...by thunder.*



An epitaph from a lonely grave found in Colorado

*An unknown man is buried here,
Whose name was probably Davidge.
(From papers found about his clothes,)
Slain by the lordly savage.*

*We found him by his broken gun,
His hands gripped round the stock yet.
A good big lead mine in his head,
But no gold in his pocket.*

*Only a well-thumbed deck of cards,
All blackened on their faces.
With kings and queens in duplicate,
And thirteen extra aces.*



Tombstone Art & Symbols

Curious about what these tombstone symbols represent? Join us and learn at the Clarkston Cemetery Walk!



Spring is Children's Education Season at the CCHS

Kim Huttenlocher

As it does every year in April and May, the schedule of children's programs at the Clarkston Heritage Museum fills quickly. Spring is the season for field trips, so classes from many of the local elementary schools will be coming in to the museum to learn about local history. Our programs target children in the second grade, which is the year that local history is taught in the district's social studies curriculum. The children use a textbook that was published especially for the schools by the CCHS in 1995 and the interactive educational programs we offer reinforce what the kids have been learning all year long.

This year's programs features discussion on local history, specifically, on pioneer life. The children participate in several skits designed to give them an idea of what it might have been like to be a child in Clarkston in the 1850s. Their favorite activity is forming an old fashioned "bucket brigade" to put out an imaginary fire. At


one end of the line a child pretends to scoop an imaginary bucket of water from the Mill Pond, and the bucket is passed down the line until the child at the other end throws the water onto the fire. This is always accompanied by shouts of "hurry up" and much giggling. The children are also treated to a guessing game where they must figure out the purpose of several period artifacts including a rug beater, a sock darter, an old wooden lunch pail, and a wire egg basket. Their guesses are always very interesting. They also love the old photos of Main Street, and can easily pick out several landmarks that remain to this day. Their favorite is the church that is now the Clarkston Union – they all know that building!

Soon school will be out, and summer in Clarkston will begin, but the second graders will be experts on local history long after their vacation comes to an end.



Mourning Items Needed For Museum Exhibit

Toni Smith

I have been working on a theme for our next display in the Clarkston Heritage Museum. In mid-May, I hope to install an exhibit centered on the traditions and practices of mourning. This exhibit will not only focus on the various stages of mourning, but also on the unusual deaths and local tragedies that occurred in the Clarkston area. As well, I hope to include information on our local cemeteries. I am looking for anything that might fall into this theme. Examples include items such as mourning jewelry or clothing, early funeral information, obituaries and post-mortem photographs (yes, it was common to have a photograph taken of the deceased). If you are willing to loan your items to the museum for a period of six months (the length of the exhibit), I would really appreciate hearing from you. Call **Toni** in the CCHS museum office at (248) 922-0270. 




DAIMLERCHRYSLER

The DaimlerChrysler Corporation Fund has awarded the CCHS Heritage Museum a grant in the amount of \$4000. These funds will be used to make repairs, catalog and ensure the proper storage for our entire collection of artifacts.

The Board of Directors extends a most sincere *Thank You* to the **DaimlerChrysler Corporation Fund** for their generous support.

A big *Thank You* to **Mr. George White** for his generous CCHS lifetime membership contribution of \$500.

We would also like to acknowledge a special donation recently made to CCHS in memory of **Jerry Staley**.
We appreciate your support!

**CLARKSTON
COMMUNITY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

**& HERITAGE
MUSEUM**

6495 CLARKSTON ROAD
CLARKSTON, MI 48346

3rd Annual
**Clarkston
Cemetery
Walk**



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