

## Native American Dioramas Move to Montcalm Community College

Many years ago, CCHS was given four wonderful dioramas depicting local Native American life during the four seasons. The dioramas were a gift from the Cranbrook Institute of Science when our museum was just getting started. The large dioramas were first held on display for six months in the museum. Since then, they have been placed in a different Clarkston elementary school at the beginning of each new year.

Then, in an interesting twist of fate, we were contacted by Cranbrook and they requested the loan of the dioramas for an exhibit they were presenting. Cranbrook paid CCHS a loan fee of \$1,500 for this opportunity. Which brings us to the current time. Because it was difficult for the CCHS to



handle the storage and moving of these large piece, we started the process of finding them a new home. And once again, Cranbrook came to the rescue. Dr. Michael Stafford, Director of the Science Institute, offered to make some calls and find a good home for the dioramas. And so, after providing years of pleasure to our community, the dioramas have been sold to Montcalm Community College. The college has a large collection of Native American material and the dioramas will fit right in. The selling price was \$2,000 and we at CCHS are so pleased that these wonderful works of art have finally found a safe and permanent home.

### Board Members

- Jennifer Arkwright, *President*  
248.922.3757
- Debbie DeVault, *Vice-President*  
248.625.0153
- Jonathan Smith, *Treasurer*  
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- Glenida Olafsson · 248.394.1180
- James Schultz, *Cemetery Walk*  
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- Toni Smith, *Museum Director*  
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248.922.0019
- John Meyland, *Photography*

**CLARKSTON  
COMMUNITY  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**  
  
**& HERITAGE  
MUSEUM**  
6495 CLARKSTON ROAD  
CLARKSTON, MI 48346

### Independence Township Library **A RENEWABLE RESOURCE**

On Tuesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010 Independence Township voters will be asked to renew the library's millage. This is **not an increase** and constitutes nearly 90% of the library's budget. The CCHS and Heritage Museum have called the library their home for over 10 years! Please **VOTE YES** in support of our library.

*If you haven't been  
to the library lately...  
you're overdue!*

Clarkston

# COLUMNS

News about the  
Clarkston Community  
Historical Society -  
Activities, exhibitions,  
people and plans  
for CCHS members

## Heritage Museum Celebrates 10-Year Anniversary with an Open House & New Exhibit

In November the CCHS celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Heritage Museum and unveiled our 20<sup>th</sup> exhibit. The event was held on a Sunday afternoon with music provided by the Carrington Duet and a wonderful dessert buffet arranged by Debbie DeVault and Glenida Olafson.

The event was well attended and everyone enjoyed listening to the music as they browsed through the exhibit titled: THE WAY WE LEARNED: 100 Years of Clarkston Schools. If this title seems familiar to you it is because this was also the title of the very first exhibit we held in the museum way back in 1999. We thought it would be fun to revisit the old theme, as well as add new artifacts that had been acquired since that first exhibit.



The highlight of the display seemed to be the new mural system installed on the back wall. Everyone enjoyed looking at the faces of all the schoolchildren in the large photos and there seemed to be no end of guessing at the "playground personalities" of some of the more animated students.

The new exhibit was deemed a wonderful success and everyone had something positive to say. Thank you to all who attended the celebration. Of course, if you couldn't make it to the open house then be sure to stop by before April 19 and visit THE WAY WE LEARNED: 100 Years of Clarkston Schools. Hurry now, you don't want to be late for class!



### Upcoming Events

One-Room Schoolhouse  
Tuesday, April 6  
7 - 8:30 PM  
Independence  
Township Library

Cemetery Walk  
Saturday, May 22  
6:30 - 8 PM  
Lakeview Cemetery

Library Millage  
Renewal Vote YES  
August 3, 2010

Broadside after preservation



## Wonderful Treasure Comes In Very Thin Package

It is always a good day when someone donates a new treasure to the collection of the Heritage Museum. And like most gifts, some are more useful than others. In September we received a small package from an unfamiliar donor, Mrs. Raymond Smith of Colorado Springs. Inside the package was a folded paper that turned out to be one of the most remarkable artifacts the museum has ever received. Once unfolded, we found ourselves looking at a "broadside" that measured 2 feet wide by almost

6 feet long. Broadsidings were advertisements that were printed on very thin newspaper and meant to be pasted up on outside walls or in

shop windows. They were not intended to last more than a few weeks until the planned event. So imagine our astonishment when we found ourselves looking at an advertisement for a massive 4th of July celebration held in 1873 in downtown Clarkston!

The advertisement listed all of the many events that were going to be a part of the day's celebration. The party would start with a 100-gun salute at sunrise and then continue with speeches by local dignitaries. There would be a parade that included 49 ladies dressed to represent the "49 states and territories" as well as music from the Clarkston Silver Coronet Band. A "Kavacade of Komacalities" would proceed down Main Street. Afterwards there was to be a picnic at "Holcomb's shady grove," a hot air balloon ascension and last but not least, a dance at the Demarest Inn with evening fireworks. I am sure you can imagine how unbelievably thrilled we were to see this wonderful piece of Clarkston history. It is most likely one-of-a-kind and extremely rare.

Of course, once we recovered from the shock of seeing this great artifact, our first order of business was to get the paper stabilized and repaired. Although it was in

remarkably good shape for its age, several folds and small tears put the piece at risk.

After researching for a paper conservator, we settled on Ronna Rivers of Rivers Conservation and Preservation Services in Detroit. Ronna does work for many museums, private collectors and the DIA and is a specialist in the treatment of paper. After receiving a proposal with a cost of \$900 the CCHS board voted to approve the treatment that included complete cleaning, all repair work, mold removal, tape residue removal and an alkalized water wash to remove organic solvents and reduce acids.

Now, the finished broadside is even more amazing. The fold creases are gone and no longer distort the type. It is bright and readable and more importantly – stable. It has been 137 years since this fragile paper was first printed to celebrate the birth of our nation; and we are so very proud to be the caretakers for the next 100 years.

Broadside before preservation



We would miss you!

Clarkston Kindergarten, 1940

### Dear CCHS Member:

We hope you enjoy this spring newsletter. It is loaded with engaging articles and information relating to Clarkston history, the Heritage Museum and activities for the Clarkston Community Historical Society.

As you may remember, last year we simplified our membership renewal process so that this is the only renewal notice you will receive this year.

**Although these are challenging economic times, we hope that continuing to support your local historical society can still be a priority. With this in mind, we are discounting our Individual/Family rate to \$20 (\$5 savings). It's easy to renew! Just place your check made out to CCHS in the white remittance envelope and mail! All donations are tax-deductible.**

Your membership supports the mission of the historical society: to preserve and protect Clarkston's rich history. Without people who want to invest in the community they love, our members, we couldn't provide historical programming and unique events, or retain fresh, exciting and educational exhibits at the Clarkston Heritage Museum.

In addition to membership, you can support the historical society by direct gifts that can be used to sponsor a museum exhibit, event or new program. Some other supportive alternatives you may wish to consider include:

- **Donating Clarkston-related artifacts** for use in our museum or non-Clarkston-related antiques that we can sell to support our operations
- **Specifying estate assets in a will** or other estate-planning documentation, such as a living trust
- **An endowment gift** that will be invested to generate income

Thanks to supportive and dedicated members like you, CCHS has provided for the community a means of learning about our past and has preserved and saved many items that might have otherwise been lost forever.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Arkwright, President

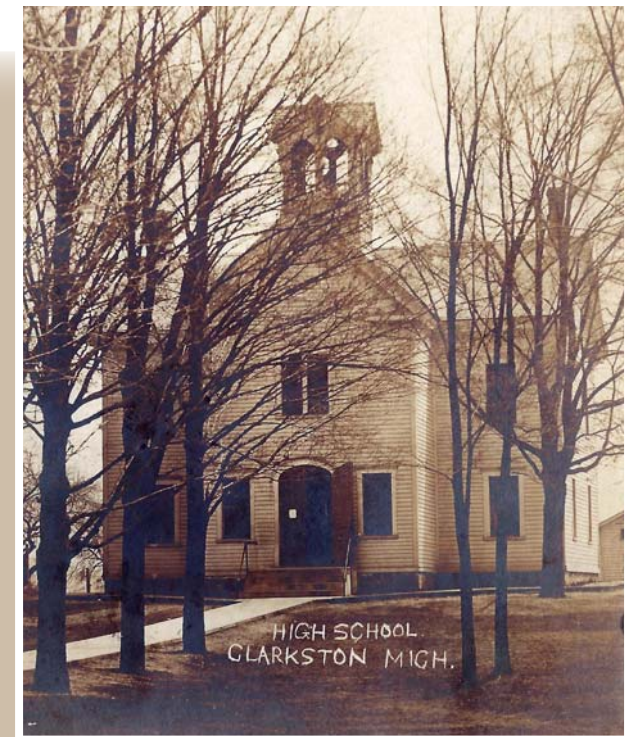
## Museum Photo Collection Almost Doubles Overnight!

It has always been the mission of the CCHS to acquire historically related objects for the museum collection. Most times it's a photo postcard, paper item or small artifact. But recently we had the opportunity to purchase a very large quantity of Clarkston real photo postcards. This collection belonged to Clarkston native Tom Wilford and was the result of many years of searching in the 1970s and 1980s. Comprised of almost 100 cards, it was a unique collection and we could not pass it up. After all, you know what they say about antiques; "buy it when you see it!" Many of the views were new to us, and even those we already had held sentiments and information on the reverse side that was still of importance. With funding help from two generous donors and Tom's willingness to work with us; the collection was purchased and now has a new home in the museum. We think it is a terrific addition and are so thankful we had the opportunity to make this purchase. A sampling of the photos is here for you to view; now you can judge for yourself!

Looking north down Main Street. Notice the gas pumps in the lower right. In 1919 the Seeterlin brothers built a new building here to house their Chevrolet Sales & Service. When the Seeterlins moved their business, Henry Buck & William Chase opened a Ford dealership here. In 1927 Reuben Beattie bought the building and the Beattie's took over the dealership. In 1943 a fire broke out and spread to some large drums of alcohol that were stored on site. The drums exploded and the building was completely engulfed in flames. Postmarked 1932



This is a very rare photo of the original Union School. It was built in 1840 by Nelson Washington Clark for use as a private academy. He is also the man who first lined the front walk with trees. Clark then sold the property to Professor Isaac C. Cochran, who ran a "select school" here until it was sold to the public in 1862. It remained until 1910 when the wooden building was dismantled and a new two-story brick school was constructed on the same site. Postmarked 1908



This scene is a tough one. Shot somewhere in the village, it is difficult to determine which homes and what street this is. We are looking for clues and wonder - do you recognize your house here? Postmarked 1909

The Old Depot Road was named as such because it was the direct route from the Train Depot (now on White Lake Road) and the village. The buggy has the name H.L. Garter painted across the back and is likely bringing new merchandise loaded from the train. The large Garter Hardware building is still located at the corner of S. Main and Depot Road. Circa 1911



This is an unusual view of the West side of Main Street. You may recognize the Clarkston State Bank building in the forefront, but look closely at the next structure to the left. This wooden, false front building was the site of the town barbershop from at least 1914 through 1929. It was then moved off site and soon after the lot was used to add a stone addition to the south side of the bank building. Circa 1913



This view of the Deer Lake Inn demonstrates how busy Clarkston once was. At one time, the local trains added an additional twelve passenger cars on weekends just to accommodate all the tourists coming into town to enjoy our cool lakes and country landscapes. It is said that names like Dodge, Ford and Edison were once found in the guest registry. Circa 1910



This is a wonderful photo of Dr. Clark Sutherland's home and office. Built in 1903, the home still stands on Main Street but has lost its large front porch. Dr. Sutherland was a popular gentleman in town and was active in the Clarkston Masons, as well as a frequent soloist at the Opera Hall. Notice the home with the stone pillars just beyond the doctor's front porch; it is now the Clarkston Conservatory of Music.



The Inn once located at the corner of Main and Washington had several names. The names in order were the Demerest, the Clarkston House, the Nelson House, the Wooster, the New Wooster and finally the Caribou Inn. In 1905 it was noted in the local newspaper that the owner of the Wooster Hotel was sponsoring horse races on the frozen Mill Pond. Certainly this was an unusual attempt to draw visitors to the hotel. We like the fact that there are two little girls on the front porch (standing with a buggy and child) and two little boys are sitting across the street to the right, pretending not to notice the girls! The building burned in 1958. Postmarked 1912



## Dr. Charles Robertson; From the battlefields of the Civil War to the farm fields of Clarkston

My great-grandfather, Charles Gray Robertson, was born Nov. 24, 1829 in Scotland. His father was George Robertson, who was born in Sterling, Scotland in 1781 and his mother, Violet (Anderson) Robertson, was born in Edinburgh, Scotland. He had two brothers, George Jr. and Andrew, and three sisters. Elizabeth and Violet were born in Scotland, and Mary was born in America.

His family was reasonably prosperous, being in the mercantile business and fairly well educated for the time, so it isn't exactly known why they came to America. Possibly it had something to do with the fact that the five children were the only survivors of a family of 10 children. The other five died of various diseases and/or cholera, which visited Glasgow in that period.

The family arrived in America at the port of New York City on June 7, 1836 (a year before Michigan obtained statehood) and traveled north to Lake Ontario and then to Detroit via the Erie Canal and Lake Erie. From Detroit, where they purchased provisions for life on the frontier, the family proceeded along the Saginaw Trail to Pontiac, then northwest on a trail distinguished only by blazed trees, there being no road and not even a path to the White Lake settlement.

George Jr., who was then 22, had preceded the rest of the family by one year and had already purchased acreage in Section 2 and had started clearing the land. Unfortunately, George Sr., who had been reared as a merchant and had been thus occupied in his native land, was not accustomed to the labor and hardships of farm life. He contracted pneumonia and died March 27, 1837, not quite a year after the family arrived.

This was a severe blow to the family, but they did survive and eventually prospered. George Jr. in 1849 moved to Waterford and opened a general store, which he operated until his death in 1900. He also served as a justice of the



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**“Dr. Robertson . . . decided to join the Union Army, which was engaged in a Civil War with the Confederate states. He did this to preserve the Union and abolish the practice of slavery, which he personally abhorred”.**

peace and as postmaster. Brother Andrew became a lawyer and Michigan state senator, dying in 1863 while still in office.

My great-grandfather Charles remained on the farm until he was 16, when he began to prepare himself for a career in medicine. As his means were limited, it was necessary for him to teach school during the winter months to earn the money to pay his expenses while pursuing his studies in the summer. In 1848 he went to live with his brother Andrew, the attorney, in Mt. Clemens and there he attended school and also began reading medicine with Dr. Taylor.

### DR. ROBERTSON WILL BE ONE OF THE PIONEERS INCLUDED IN OUR CEMETERY WALK.

In 1850 and 1851 he attended a lecture at the Medical College of the University of Michigan and in 1852 he began his practice in Waterford and also operated a drug store there. He was the first resident physician in that village.

On Sept. 13, 1853, he married Jessie Newton at the Hodges House Hotel in Pontiac. That same year he sold his practice in Waterford and hired on as assistant surgeon for the Cliff Mines Co. in the Upper Peninsula. He practiced there for three years, but he wasn't satisfied with the amount of technical knowledge he possessed. So he left the Cliff Mines Co. to continue his study, determined to acquire the degree of doctor of medicine. In 1862 he achieved his goal by graduating from the Buffalo University of Medicine in Buffalo, N.Y.

Dr. Robertson returned to Waterford to resume his practice, but soon after decided to join the Union Army, which was engaged in a Civil War with the Confederate states. He did this to preserve the Union and abolish the practice of slavery, which he personally abhorred. He enlisted March 12, 1863 as an assistant surgeon in the 8th Michigan Cavalry and was promoted to surgeon Sept. 12, 1864. His regiment took part in many of the engagements during Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman's march to the sea, and Dr. Robertson was present on many a bloody field. On July 31, 1864, near the settlement of Sunshine Church, Georgia, part of Dr. Robertson's regiment was encircled by the Rebels during Gen. Stoneman's ill-advised raid on Macon, Georgia, and he was taken prisoner. Fortunately for Charles, the South was still accepting prisoner exchanges and he was released Sept. 3, 1864. After a well-deserved 30 days' leave he returned to his regiment.

On another campaign in Tennessee against Confederate Gen. John Bell Hood's army, Dr. Robertson was involved in another horrific battle, the Battle of Franklin and Columbia in which the Western Confederacy was dissolved for all practical purposes. However, it would take another five months before the most terrible war – in terms of casualties – that our country has ever been involved in would come to an end.

## Clarkston Heritage Museum Receives Sign From Above

When the museum first opened its doors in 1999, we had only a single vinyl strip sign over the window display in the library corridor to identify the space as the Clarkston Heritage Museum. It was not very attractive or inviting and was often overlooked. So it seemed fitting that we use our 10th anniversary as an opportunity to replace the current sign and address all the issues around our entrance.

For many years we have relied on the expertise of Joe Hines of Project Arts and Ideas for display case design and exhibit graphics. Of course, Joe was happy to work on a



## We're Talking Again! Oral History Project Underway

The Clarkston Historical Society is looking for the pioneers who lived in the Clarkston and Independence Township area in the early and mid-twentieth century. The society will interview those residents and former residents who grew up and lived in the area in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s.

Eight volunteers met with Lynn Simmons, past president of the Oral History Society of Michigan, who shared tips to aid in interviewing individuals. The extremely thorough workshop provided the volunteer interviewers with tools to make the interviewee feel comfortable and have good quality tapes of the interview. The Historical Society has purchased a

recorder to help with the interviews. Mrs. Simmons is currently transcribing interviews that have previously been made for the historical society and has agreed to type the interviews gained from this project. The interviews will be archived in the collection of the Clarkston Heritage Museum.

If you know of people who grew up in the Clarkston area, returned to the community following World War II to raise their families and rebuild their lives, came to the area in the 1940s and 1950s to build the school system, farmed in the area, worked in the community, developed a business or generally participated in the community, please consider emailing Toni Smith at info@clarkstonhistorical.org with their names and how to get in contact with them. Approximately 40 names have been gathered so far.

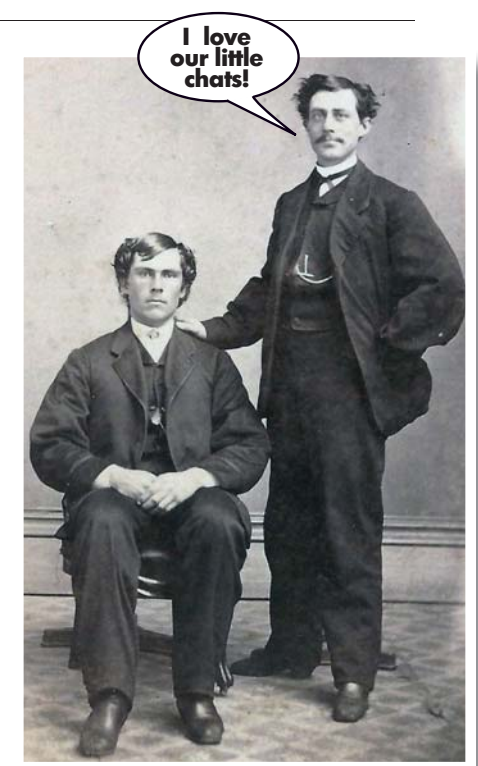
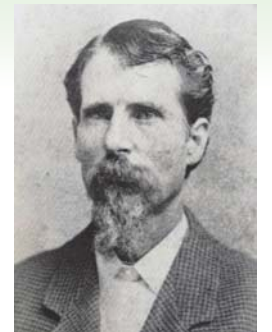
- Joette Kunse

complete package of signs that would really draw the library visitor into the museum and leave no question about what was here and who we are.

The finished results are wonderful and the front façade of the museum looks so much more professional and welcoming. We are grateful to Joe and his team for taking such good care of us. The finished product is terrific. We would also like to thank the Independence Township Library for supporting these positive changes. Be sure to stop by and see everything for yourself, now there is no way you can miss us!

## Old Book Is New To Us

We recently discovered a book first printed in 1883 that has an amazing story. The book reprints many of the 100 letters written by Harry Bartlett while serving with Battery D, 1st Michigan Light Artillery during the Civil War. Harry and many of his comrades from Clarkston had enlisted in the Union Army. For three years, Harry wrote almost daily to his wife Rose, who remained in Clarkston with their children. Harry wrote about his experiences, as well as what was happening to other Clarkston soldiers, and inquired about many of his friends back home. The book is titled 'To The Sound Of Musketry and Tap Of The Drum' by James Genco. We have a copy of it in the museum, or you can purchase your own copy through Amazon for about \$20. We highly recommend it.



If you want to understand today,  
you have to search yesterday.

- Pearl Buck

CLARKSTON  
COMMUNITY  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY  
PRESENTS A

# Cemetery Walk

THROUGH  
LAKEVIEW CEMETERY

SATURDAY, MAY 22<sup>ND</sup>  
6:30 TO 8 PM

This spring the CCHS is going back to Lakeview Cemetery to visit a few of our favorite founding fathers. On May 22 at 6:30 pm the Society will host our third Cemetery Walk. On this special night the Clarkston community will have the opportunity to stroll through the cemetery and learn about Clarkston's past from the history makers themselves. For one evening, W.C. Petty, Maj. John Knox, Frank Yeager, Flower Irish, Edwin Clark, Dr. Charles Robertson and Martha Vliet will come back to life (with the help of local actors) to tell everyone about what Clarkston life was like a hundred years ago. To make this event even more noteworthy, Flower Irish, Martha Vliet, Charles Robertson and Edwin Clark are all being portrayed by their

direct descendants. Each of the historical characters will stand on their burial spot and talk to visitors as they move on this guided tour through Lakeview, one of the area's most historic cemeteries. There will also be musical entertainment and refreshments at the end of the tour.

## CCHS Goes Back to the Graveyard

To join your friends and neighbors for a night of interactive history please contact the CCHS at 248.922.0270 for tickets. They will also be for sale the day of the event, at the Clarkston Country Store, 21 N. Main and also at the Independence Township Library, 6495 Clarkston Road. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students. *Don't miss this opportunity to share our community's rich history. Get your tickets today!*

## We recently received a wonderful collection of items from the King McIntyre family.

Frederick King emigrated from Ireland and among the items in the donation were his citizenship papers witnessed by Nelson Clark in 1857. By 1877, Mr. King is listed as the owner of a house at 149 N. Main. There was also a family farm outside of town. The King family must have been very active in real estate, since there are many, many early deeds, land grants and tax receipts. Also included in the collection is a handwritten document that states Master Frank King had passed his studies in grammar, geography and intellectual arithmetic at the Clarkston Union School in 1878.

One of the most interesting items in this new collection is the will of Huldah Phillips, sister of Bildad Phillips. Her will includes the following excerpts:

“ . . . to Edward Phillips one bed and bedding and standing up chamber (armoire). To Mariah McGunnigh the best table-cloth and to Margaret McGunnigh my loom and all the apparatus belonging to it. One big kettle and flat irons and wash tub to Helen McGunnigh. To Theodore Phillips my cow and to Sylvester Phillips two sets of spoons and to Lydia Ann Phillips my bunnet (bonnet) and shawl and cloak and the remainder of my household furniture and corn on the ground to my brother Bildad Phillips.”

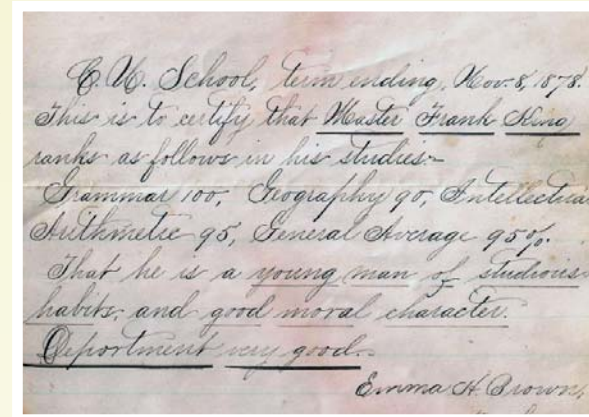
We certainly are grateful to the King McIntyre family for allowing us to add all these wonderful items to our Heritage Museum collection. They add another layer to the history that is so important to all of us.



Another great addition to our photo collection came to us in a roundabout way. For many years, we have been trying to find the original of a photo that was printed in the Heritage Book. It showed Wiltsie Vliet playing cards with three other 'old-timers' in the open doorway of his cabinet shop on N. Main. We have followed many leads but always come up empty handed. Recently, we received a call from the family of the late Connie Lektzian-Scafe, whom many of you may remember was once a columnist for the Clarkston News.

## What's New In The Museum Collection?

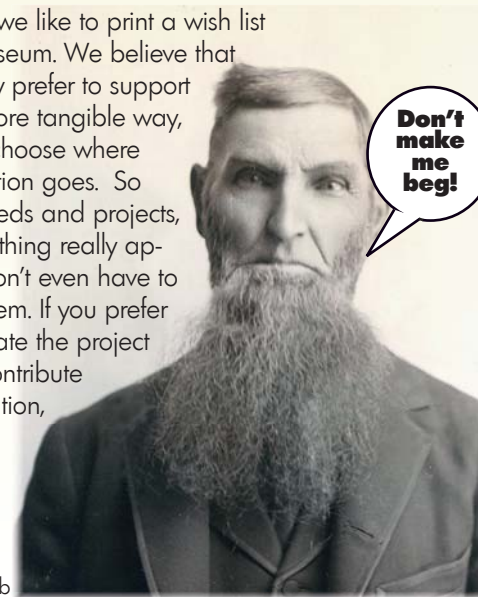
Did we want all her old reference material? Of course we were happy to pick it up and imagine our delight when among the newspaper clippings we found an original of the photo we had been looking for over so many years. It just goes to show, there are still lots of surprises out there and you never know what will come in the door when you least expect it.



## Heritage Museum Wish List (Hey, it can't hurt to ask!)

Once in a while, we like to print a wish list of needs for the museum. We believe that some members may prefer to support the museum in a more tangible way, where YOU get to choose where your financial donation goes. So here is our list of needs and projects, and we hope something really appeals to you. You don't even have to pay for the whole item. If you prefer you can just designate the project you would like to contribute to. For more information, please call the CCHS office at 248.922.0270. Thank you.

Butler Holcomb



Don't make me beg!

■ At the moment, we have only one voice recorder and it is shared by seven interviewers working on the Oral History Project. It would be wonderful if we could purchase another one (plus the mics to go with it). The approximate cost is around \$200.

■ The museum is in possession of 60 negatives of all the Masonic Grand Masters beginning in the mid 1840s. In some cases, these are the only known photos of many of Clarkston's first settlers. We would like to have the negatives scanned (for permanency). The cost would be \$600.

■ This one won't cost you a dime! To cut costs at Art

in the Village this year, we have decided against renting the usual utility cart to move our supplies that weekend. Instead, we are hoping that someone will loan us a golf cart that weekend. We would use it to pull a small utility trailer around and get the job done without the big cost. So, if you have a golf cart or even another idea, give us a call!

■ It would be so much easier to work in the museum office if we had a wider monitor for our computer. We are often working with 11" x 17" documents, as well as our 11" x 17" newsletter format. With a small monitor we have to constantly move things into view. The approximate cost would be under \$300.

## One-Room Schoolhouses of Michigan Presentation

Tuesday, April 6<sup>th</sup> • 7- 8:30PM

Independence Township Library Community Room


To support the Clarkston Heritage Museum exhibit *The Way We Learned: 100 Years of Clarkston Schools*, the Clarkston Community Historical Society welcomes Sue Daniel, current Board Member of the Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Association. Sue has been tracking and recording information on over 6,200 one-room schoolhouses in Michigan. She will share her wealth of information on the architecture, content, books, desks, teacher training and the community role of Michigan's one room schoolhouses.

Please join us for an educational and entertaining evening.

Admission is free and refreshments will be served.

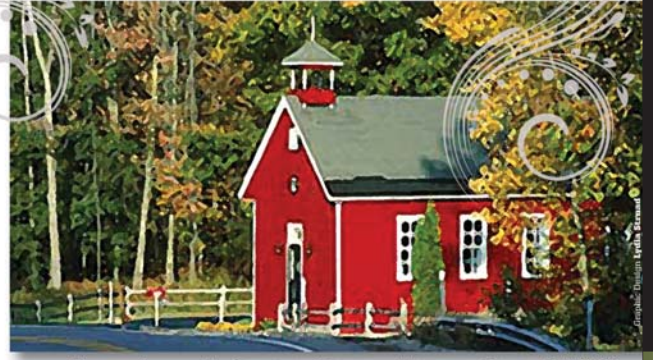
We recommend taking time before or after the presentation to browse *The Way We Learned: 100 Years of Clarkston Schools* exhibit in the museum.

*You won't be disappointed!*



## One-Room Schoolhouses of Michigan Presentation

Tuesday, April 6<sup>th</sup>  
7 - 8:30 pm  
Independence Township Library  
Community Meeting Room



This program is presented by CLARKSTON COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 248.922.0270

## A Little History

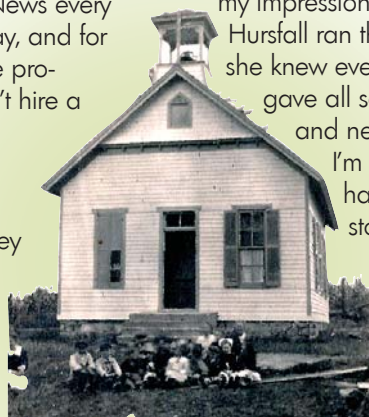
The Clarkston Heritage Museum is currently featuring an exhibit on the history of the Clarkston schools. As Clarkston grew from a farming community to a much more suburban area, the schools have grown a great deal, too. Following are a few excerpts from "The Way We Remember It," a collection of oral histories compiled by the Historical Society and author Catherine Passmore. The passages below are from Virginia Walter. Mrs. Walter came to Clarkston in the summer of 1933 to be a teacher. She admits she had never even heard of the town until she got the call offering her a position with the school. She decided to take the job only after one of her college professors recommended it, referring to Clarkston as "an aristocratic little town."

When Mrs. Walter began teaching, all the students were housed in what is now the Renaissance High School on Waldon Road. The population was so small then that many rooms in that building were vacant. "Dan Will was the superintendant when I came, and

Bob Waters was a teacher. Dorothy Huttenlocher had retired the year before because Jim Huttenlocher was born." (Back then teachers were not allowed to work if they were pregnant or had a child.) Mrs. Walter described what it was like to be a teacher in the 1930s. "I had something to do for extra curricular activities from September through June. We didn't get paid extra, either. There was a minstrel show for instance. I taught dancing and helped them with the show. I coached the girls' basketball team. I ran the school library, as small as it was. I supervised the news column that went into the Clarkston News every week. I coached a senior play, and for graduation they put on a little program and because they didn't hire a speaker, I did that, too."

Clarkston was a much smaller town back then, so everyone pitched in where they were needed. Though it's still a small community today, and also one where many of us are still involved and

Bailey Lake School



eager to help, here is one last short story that illustrates how much we've grown. "One story I've told quite a few people about coming to Clarkston that impressed me at the time, is the first day I was at Clarkston School, and there was a janitor who had been there many years and was a very strong person. He was an institution. Anyway, at the front of the building there was an office where the superintendent had his office and it was a very little office. I followed (the janitor) into the office, and I'll never forget it, he picked up the phone and he said quote "Doris, get me ma." That was my impression of Clarkston. Doris Hursfall ran the phone business, she knew everyone's number and gave all sorts of help to people and never told a thing and I'm sure she could have had a few Payton Place stories if she had. She never told a thing. "Doris, get me ma." That's when I knew I was in a small town."

- Kim Huttenlocher

*Robertson article continued*

For the doctor's part in the Tennessee battle, a correspondent for the Detroit Advertiser and Tribune, dated Dec, 3, 1864, wrote: "The last two weeks' history of the regiment will be remembered by every man belonging to it. No command in this army has seen more service or endured more hardships than the brigade to which we are attached. Too much cannot be said in praise of Surgeon Charles G. Robertson and Assistant Surgeon Samuel D. Toby for their service in caring for our brave wounded boys."

After the war Dr. Robertson returned to Michigan and set up practice in White Lake, where my grandfather Milton Gray Robertson was born on Dec. 17, 1868 and where the family's original home was located when they first came to America. He remained in White Lake until 1875 and then moved to St. Clair. Still looking for the best location to live and work, he finally came to Clarkston in 1880 with his wife, Jessie, daughters Ada and Clara and son Milton.

He purchased eight acres on Main Street next to the Union School property and built a home that stood at the west end of what is now Robertson Court. The rest of the property was used to pasture his horses. Dr. Robertson admired good horses and was an experienced rider, having served in the cavalry. Also, horses were a professional necessity in the 19th Century as most of his patients were cared for by house calls. However, he saw patients on Wednesdays and Satur-

days in an office building, since burned, that once stood on Main Street.

Unlike many of today's physicians, doctors were not as well remunerated as they are now. Often, Dr. Robertson did not receive any money at all for his care, instead receiving produce from his patients' gardens or grain for his horses or poultry such as chicken and geese. To supplement his income he also sold gravel, which was found in abundance on his property, to the village for use on the roads. Also, for a few years he opened a pharmacy business with Dr. Goodenough, another Clarkston physician who had come to the village from Waterford.

Even though his profession took up most of his waking hours, he still found time for social enjoyment and a share in the workings of the local fraternal organizations in which he was interested. He was a Mason, belonging to the Clarkston Cedar Lodge No. 60, and a charter member of the Knights of the Maccabees.

In 1891 Dr. Clark J. Sutherland, who had just graduated from the University of Michigan Medical School, joined the practice. Together they served the community with distinction for 10 years. In July of 1901, while helping to mow hay on his small farm, Dr. Robertson, "by over-exertion, some of the tissues about the heart were ruptured, which caused several hemorrhages and resulted in his death," according to his obituary.

Even with several business ventures, when he died, Dr. Robertson did not leave much of an estate to his wife Jessie. However, she did get by quite well because the U.S. government provided a pension for widows of Civil War veterans. Also, her son Milton, part owner of a profitable department store in Pontiac called Waite Brothers and Robertson, drove out to see her every week, first by horse and buggy and then by automobile, which he was one of the first in the area to own.

After his mother died, Milton subdivided his father's property, moving the doctor's home that was on Main Street to its present location at 10 Robertson Court. He also built several other houses in the subdivision and my father, also named Charles Gray Robertson after his grandfather, built two more houses, one of which I now live in at 17 Robertson Court.

Dr. Robertson was buried at Lakeview Cemetery in Clarkston. Also in the same plot are his wife, Jessie, his oldest daughter Ada and one of his sisters, Elizabeth. In another plot at the same cemetery are his son, his grandson and on some future day, his great-grandson.

- Charles Gray Robertson III



## Our next exhibit

will be on Clarkston doctors. We are looking for additional artifacts, anything related to local physicians, dentists, veterinarians, druggists or birthing homes. If you have something you would be willing to loan, please call the CCHS office at 248.922.0270.

Applications NOW being accepted for ARTISTS who wish to participate in Art in the Village, September 18 and September 19, 2010

Visit [www.clarkstonhistorical.org](http://www.clarkstonhistorical.org) for application materials. All works must be hand-crafted by artist and of original design

Submission deadline has been extended to June 1, 2010

Single booth \$150 Double \$250

## Planning to Clean-Up Your Act?

Then please don't forget the CCHS Antique sale this fall during Art in the Village. Whether you have just a few things set aside or whether you are planning a summer garage sale and need a place to donate the leftover collectibles and antiques, please think of us. We collect items all year long and your donation is tax-deductible. So please keep us in mind over the next few months, and tell your neighbors, too!

