

# DEXTER AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

3443 Inverness St. Dexter, MI 48130

Summer 2012 Newsletter

## Letter from the President

We have just completed another successful Civil War Days event at Gordon Hall. Thanks to those of you who helped! We still have a long way to go to pay off our mortgage. We will need more fundraisers and help from our members. We have three more years of Civil War Days and will then need to come up with other ideas. Please let us know if you have any good ideas for fundraisers.

Due to the rising cost of mailing our Newsletter, this will be the last one we mail. Those of you who have e-mail will continue to receive the Newsletter four times a year (winter, spring, summer, and fall). It will also be on our web site ([www.dextermuseum.org](http://www.dextermuseum.org)). For those of you who do not have access to a computer, we will have a calling committee to keep you informed of upcoming events.

Starting in January, we will have a new membership form and all members will receive a copy. We must raise our dues in January, so it will be a good idea to pay your dues before then.

I know you will continue to support and attend events at our Museum and Gordon Hall. Our goal is to preserve, protect, and present the history of Dexter. Please help us in this effort.

*Bene Fusilier, 734-426-8972*

## Living History Cemetery Tour

The tour at Forest Lawn Cemetery will be held on Friday, August 10<sup>th</sup> from 5:30pm to 8:30pm. We will be offering 8 stations this year, which will include Judge and Millicent Dexter, Calvin Fillmore, Charles S. Gregory, Harrison Jeffords, Dr. William Wylie, Bruce Waggoner, Edwin Coy and Dennis Warner. The tours will begin at the corner of Grand and Broad Streets (the last entrance). We are asking for a donation of \$5 for adults that will go to the cemetery to support their tree fund. Wear comfortable shoes and come join us to learn about some of our famous residents from the Dexter Area.

**DAHSAM Dexter Daze Events**  
August 10th & 11th

### **The DAHSAM Booth**

Downtown 9am-5pm Fri & Sat

*In front of Huron Camera*

### **Antique/Collectibles Yard Sale** **and Quilt Show**

at Dexter Area Museum

9am to 6pm Fri & Sat

*\$4 Donation*

*Corner of Fourth & Inverness*

### **Dexter Living History** **Cemetery Tour**

at Forest Lawn Cemetery

Friday 5:30pm to 8:30pm

*\$5 Donation*

*Corner of Grand and Broad Streets*

### **Gordon Hall Tour**

at Gordon Hall

Saturday 1pm to 3pm

*\$5 Donation*

*8341 Island Lake Road*

### **Union Base Ball Club**

at Gordon Hall

Saturday at 1:00pm

## Gordon Hall Tour & Tea

On Saturday, August 11<sup>th</sup> from 1 to 3pm we will be providing tours of Gordon Hall. The tour includes stairs to the basement, second floor and the attic. We do have areas to rest if you tire. There is a new script this year incorporating some of the information gathered by James Baldwin Parker for his book. We are asking for a \$5 donation for the tour that goes toward the Gordon Hall mortgage. Tea, cookies, and lemonade will be served on the front porch. There will NOT be a bus this year, so you are encouraged to drive up to Gordon Hall and join us for a relaxed afternoon at the Mansion.

## Antique/Collectibles Yard Sale and Quilt Show

The DAHSAM is pleased to present another Quilt show and yard sale during on August 10 and 11, from 9am to 6pm. The quilt show will feature approximately 45 quilts from the Museum's permanent collection, newly donated quilts from Jean Thomas and her family, and more from friends. An antique Sewing Notions Exhibit will also accompany the show. (\$4 Donation)

## New Book on Gordon Hall Available

The book, by James Parker, *Voices of the Past: The Saga of Gordon Hall* will be available during Dexter Daze at our booth downtown in front of Huron Camera and during the Gordon Hall Tour. The books are \$25 and the proceeds go toward the Gordon Hall Mortgage. Make checks payable to DAHSAM. James Parker will be at Gordon Hall signing his book, a comprehensive collection of information about Gordon Hall and the various persons involved with it through its 169 years of existence.

## Museum Windows Update

If you haven't seen the new protective coverings on the Museum windows on the parking lot side of the building, do make it a point to see these historic windows revealed in all their beauty. Minor repairs and painting of the sashes were finished. This project is possible because of the generosity of our members and supporters. The Museum received a most generous contribution in memory of our dear friend, Beatrice (Bea) Christopherson. This, along with very nice gifts from the Dexter Garden Club, the Heritage Guild and from individual Society members will make more window coverings possible.

The next ones to be re-done are the three at the front of the building facing Inverness Street. Finishing the project will depend on funding available. Any size donation would be greatly appreciated. Just indicate that your gift is to go to the 'window fund'. Thank you.

*The Museum Staff*

## Union Base Ball Club of Dexter

The Union Base Ball team will take the field on August 11 at 1 pm at Gordon Hall. They will be playing the Chelsea Monitors. Let's give them our support.

## Help with our Dexter Daze Events

We are still looking for volunteers for the Booth downtown, the Cemetery Tour and Gordon Hall Tour. Contact Nancy Van Blaricum at 426-2519.

## Heritage Guild Fall Event and News

The Heritage Guild will hold an antique appraisal clinic with DuMouchelles Art Gallery in September or October. Watch for the date. There is always a long waiting list so, if you are interested, schedule an appointment quickly. Contact Sue Schotts at 734-424-9998.

The Heritage Guild contributed funds as a memorial to Bea Christopherson. These funds, together with other donations in her memory, will be used to fund window protectors for the stained glass windows on the front of the museum.

Rusty Christopherson donated many of Bea's crafting supplies, including "Bea's Basket," filled with all the things that Bea brought to every Guild session. We will also be working on a shadow box to display some of Bea's past creations at our next bazaar.

The members of the Heritage Guild have been diligently working to create handmade items to be sold on December 1st, at the annual bazaar. We have been working on some traditional items as well as many new ones. One member has been learning to use a manual-knitting machine. We will be focusing on improving our display of items for sale at the bazaar and would appreciate donations of props that could be used to raise items off the table. Donations of craft supplies, yarn, and holiday fabrics would also be welcomed. Join our team, or donate completed craft projects if you are unable to attend the Heritage Guild meetings. If you have questions or items to donate, please contact Carol Ann Emerick at 734-426-0477 or [cemerick@umich.edu](mailto:cemerick@umich.edu).

## Mark Your Calendar for September 13

Mark your calendars! Peter from the Dexter Pub has agreed to donate 10% of Thursday September 13th sales to the Gordon Hall Fund.



Norma McAllister passed away on Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup> 2012. We are reprinting the article written by Nancy (Arnold) Van Blaricum that appeared in the Dexter Leader in 2009.

### *Dexter Historian Celebrates 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday*

The Dexter Area Historical Society and Museum is deeply indebted to Norma McAllister who has spent the greater part of her life discovering and recording the history of the Dexter Area. Norma Kolander was born on July 11, 1919 in Ann Arbor, the oldest child of Emil and Eva Kolander. The family moved to a home on Huron Street in Dexter Village in 1922 where Norma and her siblings grew up. Norma graduated from Dexter Union School in 1937. She met her future husband Joseph McAllister while working at the local ice cream parlor and they were married in 1940 and lived in Ann Arbor where their son George was born. By 1949 the family began their travels as Joseph's work as a civil engineer and superintendent of construction took them to Washington, DC, Massachusetts, New York and back to Washington. They then returned to Ann Arbor and by 1957 they had purchased a home on the Huron River, near Dexter.

Norma's return to the Dexter area began a new focus in her life. Her interest in history led her to search for and find information about the Dexter area. She saw the need for a place to house all the different information and articles that had already been accumulating at various places around Dexter. In a September 27, 2001 article in the Dexter Leader, Michelle Rogers states, "In July 1971, the Dexter Area Historical Society was founded with help from former Dexter High School history teacher Frank Wilhelm and McAllister. 'We decided something had to be done about our history in

this area.' McAllister says." Under their leadership and with a number of other interested persons, the Society came into being and acquired the St. Andrews Church building which was moved to its present location. Soon after the formation of the society, Norma helped organize the celebration of the Dexter Area Sesquicentennial in 1974. She was an integral part of the publication of that event.

In 1987 McAllister wrote a book about Dexter's founder, Judge Samuel Dexter, and his Descendants. Norma has also taped conversations with many of our older citizens, transcribed local cemetery tombstones and helped in cemetery cleanup. She has led walking tours around Dexter, written a number of informative articles for the Dexter Leader and other area publications, and been an active member of St. Andrews United Church of Christ. She was one of the first four Dexter High School graduates inducted into the high school Hall of Fame, was recognized by the American Legion for her efforts in organizing the historical society, and has been rightfully recognized as the Historian of Dexter. She has also taught classes at Greenfield Village on local history, was a guest lecturer at Eastern Michigan University, and in other ways shared her expertise with persons outside the Dexter area. All this and she continued to go through the old Dexter Leaders for information of area families as well as keep up correspondence with many persons who wanted to know about their ancestors or other area information.

Macular Degeneration has slowed Norma in her later years, although she has a wonderful memory and is willing to share her knowledge with all who ask. Grace Shackman, a noted local author has called her "a community treasure." We agree, Norma is truly a "community treasure" and we all thank her for her devotion to her family, church, and the people of Dexter and to the Dexter Area Historical Society and Museum.

Norma's legacy lives on with her collection of family histories and histories of merchants, buildings, cemeteries and other historical data she has shared with us. Thank you, Norma.

*Nancy VanBlaricum*

## Christmas Bazaar Bake Sale Note

Last Christmas there was not as many baked goods donated to the Bake Sale. "Tasty treats" are always so popular, and without the Pioneer Art Fair this year, those usual profits were truly missed. Your contribution this year will be so much appreciated!

## Christmas at the Mansion 2012

Christmas at the Mansion, Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>, is currently in the planning stages. Many local businesses have shown interest in decorating rooms once again this year. The 2 large rooms have been spoken for, as well as the front porch, front staircase and a prospective interest in the back porch. Our hope is our local schoolteachers and museum staff will decorate the schoolroom and Judge Dexter's quarters. We may possibly decorate with a theme this year.

Local businesses and organizations are being approached to use the festively decorated Gordon Hall for their holiday functions during the week of December 3-7, for a fee of course. Another idea is to hold a holiday tea on Saturday Dec.8, also for a fee. The Heritage Guild has graciously volunteered to sell their residual unsold crafts from their Dec.1 Bazaar at the Gordon Hall function on Sunday Dec.2. We are very aware of the cost to heat this great hall, so our efforts are being limited to one week. We are very excited about this project and looking forward to earning funds to apply to our mortgage. Please contact Julie Knight (426-4961) or Terry Stacey (426-2132) with questions or suggestions.

## Luther Boyden's Arrival in Michigan

Luther Boyden made a wagon with wheels whose hubs were 16" thick at the spokes and the tires 6" wide, which he brought with him from Mass. to Michigan in 1830. It was used mainly for drawing hay off the marshes to feed the livestock.

## Future Newsletters

This is the **last** newsletter to be mailed by "postal mail." Please make sure we have your correct e-mail address. Send to [dexmuseum@aol.com](mailto:dexmuseum@aol.com).

## **Board Members**

### DAHS&M 2012 Officers and Board of Directors

President	Bene Fusilier	426-8972
Vice-Presidents	Jim Smith	426-8885
	Bev Hill	426-4767
Treasurer	Julie Knight	426-4961
Secretary	Sharon Wheeler	878-3530
Past President	Gil Campbell	476-6263

## **Representatives**

Dexter Schools	Sybil Van Houten	426-8928
Dexter Township	Brian Diskin	323-3491
Lima Township	Neil Adams	426-5086
Scio Township	Ina Germain	426-2079
Webster Twp	Jon Russell	426-4347
GH Mgt. Team	Paul Bishop	476-0515

## Museum Co-Directors

Nina Rackham	426-2494
Alice Pastalan	810-231-2511

<u>Genealogist</u>	Nancy Van Blaricum	426-3341
Craft Coordinator	Carol Ann Emerick	426-0477
Heritage Guild Pres	Cindy Henes	426-0973



## Katharine Dexter McCormick Society

It is written in two books about Gordon Hall that Katharine Dexter McCormick's wishes were that her Grandfather's homestead be used for local women's clubs as well as other organizations. There is some interest in forming a local women's club or society to fulfill her wishes. We would meet monthly at the hall hosting speakers, lecturers and researching the history of the Dexter family. A monthly host could also serve refreshments. We would charge a membership fee. This is another way to add income to our needy Gordon Hall fund as well as having the hall utilized and visible in the community. Please contact Terry Stacey (426-2132) or Julie Knight (426-4961) if you are interested in this venture and/or have suggestions.

# ***The Dexter Area Historical Society and Museum***

*Presents*

## **VOICES OF THE PAST: THE SAGA OF GORDON HALL**

By James Baldwin Parker

*This hardbound book is 6" x 9" in size, 416 pages in length including an index, with more than 200 photographs and illustrations, and with numerous appendices including the Dexter family genealogical lineage.*



### **VOICES OF THE PAST: THE SAGA OF GORDON HALL**

**JUDGE SAMUEL W. DEXTER'S  
HISTORIC MANSION NEAR  
DEXTER, IN WEBSTER TOWNSHIP,  
WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

*Its Creation, Partial Destruction and Renovations  
between 1841 and 2011, with Future Plans;  
Including Biographical Accounts of the Dexter Family*

**James Baldwin Parker**

**Webster Township,  
Washtenaw County, Michigan**

Available at the  
Dexter Area Museum

\$25 each

Make checks payable  
to DAHSAM

Proceeds go to  
support Gordon Hall

To purchase by mail, please send a  
check to DAHSAM for \$30  
(\$25 + \$5 for shipping and handling) to:

Dexter Area Historical  
Society and Museum  
3443 Inverness  
Dexter, MI 48130

*Museum open  
Friday and Saturday 1:00pm to 3:00pm*