



# DAHS Summer Newsletter

August 2021

## Welcome to Summer!

I am so glad to see the green grass and blooming flowers, but maybe a little less rain! We are excited to have you visit our buildings this summer - the Museum and Gordon Hall both have a new look.

We missed seeing everyone last year since we were not able to sell our raffle tickets as in years past. Well, we're back! However, rather than our customary \$10,000 raffle, **we will be selling 50/50 raffle tickets at our Dexter Daze Booth on Friday & Saturday, August 13th & 14th**. The drawing will be Saturday night at the Gazebo. Please stop in our booth and help us continue with our efforts to protect and preserve Gordon Hall. We hope to have our \$10,000 raffle return next year.

A special thanks to Nancy Van Blaricum for putting together our newsletter. In the newsletter you will find all of our up-coming events. I think that you will be pleasantly surprised with all of the work we have done in both buildings to get ready for our events. This year, we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Dexter Area Historical Society and we hope that you can join us in our celebration. So check out the dates and we hope to see you at the Museum and at Gordon Hall.

Beverly Hill, President of the Dexter Area Historical Society

## **“Gordon Hall Days” are coming in September!**

Location: Gordon Hall, 8311 Island Lake Road, Dexter Michigan



### **DAHS 50th Anniversary Celebration**

On Friday, September 10th, we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of our Historical Society with a fundraiser party at Gordon Hall with a little history, dancing and snacks! Many DAHS Board members past and present will attend along with all of our great supporters. Come and be part of the celebration!

Come early at 6 pm to have a guided tour through Gordon Hall and then join the party.

Tickets are \$50 per person and are available at our website: [DexterHistory.org](http://DexterHistory.org), call 734-395-4106 or at our booth during Dexter Daze on August 13th & 14th.

### **2021 “Gordon Hall Days”**

On Saturday and Sunday the 11th and 12th the grounds of Gordon Hall will be full of many interesting presentations. Our local train group will even be in the back tent with a full display!! There will also be tours through Gordon Hall - you will be impressed with all of our new renovations. You will find more information on page 3.



Blacksmith at work

We ask for a donation of \$5 per person or \$20 per car. All proceeds support the Dexter Area Historical Society.

We are so excited to have you join us on Saturday, or Sunday. Come help us celebrate our historic home!

## Save The Date

**The 2021 DAHS Annual Meeting - Sunday, September 19, 2021 at 2 pm  
at Gordon Hall, 8311 Island Lake Road, Dexter, Michigan**

**All members are welcome**

**Refreshments, a short program and election of Board members**

### The Dexter Area Museum

We have been busy putting finishing touches on our new displays in preparation for the 50th Anniversary Event that was held on July 25th. Come and see our displays of the historic items.

Each of our stain glass windows have recently been identified. Come in and enjoy their history and beauty. We are open on Friday and Saturday from 1 to 3 through November, so we hope you can come



to visit us. **For further information, email us at [DexMuseum@aol.com](mailto:DexMuseum@aol.com) or call us at 734-426-2519 and leave a message.**

### 50th Anniversary Open House July 25th



The first of two events celebrating DAHS 50th was held on Sunday, July 25th at the Dexter Area Museum. Refreshments included this delicious cake from the Dexter Bakery. Visitors saw a display of posters showing the history of our two buildings, the Museum and Gordon Hall outside on the lawn and once inside they found the Hoatlin Model Train being run by Richard Ashley in the basement as well as many displays of artifacts throughout the Museum. Our volunteers were there to answer questions. Thanks to all who helped as well as to all those who came to celebrate our 50th Anniversary with us.



### The Heritage Guild

In June 2021, the Heritage Guild began in person meetings in June and are back to their regular monthly meetings. Nine people attended the first meeting with 4 new members who learned the importance of the Heritage Guild events being fundraisers to support the Museum.

Sue Behnke has joined the Guild and showed us the many improvements at the Museum. Although we were unable to meet during the pandemic shutdown, Sue and Rhea Berry held a scaled down



Museum Gift Shop/Heritage Guild Sale in December 2020. The sale netted \$1218, which was donated to the Dexter Area Historical Society.

On June 3rd & 4th this year, Sue Behnke hosted a garage sale at her home, on behalf of the Museum. Sue Schotts and Carol Ann Emerick participated in staffing the sale. Other members of the Guild assisted by providing items to sell. Income from this sale was \$1051.50.

The group also plans to participate in the Webster Fall Festival on Saturday, September 25th, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. This will be an opportunity to sell fall themed items. Donations for the drawing from Judy Fike include: "Stacking Pumpkin Boxes" and a "Divided House Scarecrow" and from Susan Falcone a painting: "Harvest Run".



The Guild also voted to have the Holiday Bazaar December 4th. We will have more information in the Fall Newsletter.

Our Scrubbies

We look forward to having new members join us. If you are interested, or have any questions, please contact our president: **Pat Pudduck at: 734-426-8952, or send an email to her at: [patpudduck@gmail.com](mailto:patpudduck@gmail.com).**

# GORDON HALL DAYS, SEPTEMBER 11th and 12th

We are making plans for Gordon Hall Days and are hoping for good weather so we can have all of the proposed events. Our plans include activities for all ages. Demonstrations of blacksmithing, bee keeping, various crafts, handmade socks, chair



canning, a demonstration of a canon and more will occur at small tents around the grounds. You will also find musical groups performing at various times with the Dulcimers group playing on Saturday. We hope to have some live animals including llamas, sheep and other possible animals from the 4-H club.



Additionally you will find the Ann Arbor Model Railroad Club in the back tent both days, the Car show along the driveway on Saturday from 11 to 4, some Farmer's market vendors on Sunday from 10-4, tours of the newly restored Milk



House both days, historical posters around the grounds, a farm display, a Museum booth, the Doletzky tractor and the Tally-Ho out on the green. As we get closer to the date, we will have more exact times



and places for the various activities.

Nothing can happen without the help of many volunteers! Members, their children or grandchildren, and friends from the community are all needed to make Gordon Hall Days a success. The Rotary Club and the Lions Club have already agreed again to help us, but we need many more persons willing to help. We are seeking volunteers from High schoolers to Senior Citizens to help in many different areas. **If you are interested in helping, we ask that you call 734-426-2519 or email us at [DexMuseum@aol.com](mailto:DexMuseum@aol.com)** and we will get back to you. Please leave your name and contact information and using the chart below, indicate the days and times you would be available.

If you are interested in being a tour guide inside Gordon Hall, please let us know if you have any physical limitations as there are 3 floors and if necessary we can assign you to the main floor. For those interested in being Gordon Hall tour guides, use Nancy's email, [NancyVanB@aol.com](mailto:NancyVanB@aol.com) and she will get back to you.

Here are the suggested times for Volunteers:	
<u>Saturday 11th:</u>	<u>Sunday: 12th</u>
10 to 12	10 to 12
12 to 2	12 to 2
2 to 4	2 to 4

## **History of “The Dexter Area Historical Society” - Part 3, 2000 to 2021**

This is the third part of the history of the Dexter Area Historical Society which was formed on July 29, 1971. We left off in 1999 when DAHS had successfully maintained the Dexter Area Museum for 24 years. The Dexter Heritage Guild continued supporting the museum with events including the Pioneer Craft Fair, the Holiday Bazaar and the Antique appraisal clinic and everything seemed to have settled into a pattern. Receiving generous donations and additional monies for repairs when needed helped us develop a strong organization.

In 2000, word came that The University of Michigan had decided to sell Gordon Hall. The DAHS staff began research on the Hall and its history using records in our collection. With this information, we put together a short history of Gordon Hall which follows:



*Gordon Hall 1934*

***Judge Samuel W. Dexter, the founder of our Village, had Gordon Hall built beginning in 1841 and by 1844 the family had moved in. Judge Dexter died in 1863 and his wife, Millicent Bond Dexter in 1899. The Hall was then sold to Thomas Birkett who died in 1916 and then to Dr. Charles Crumrine who died in 1926 and his son rented parts of the house out, but it was often empty and became known as the “haunted house”.***

***In 1934, Gordon Hall was surveyed by the Historic American Buildings Survey who provided detailed drawings and pictures of Gordon Hall at that time. Katharine Dexter McCormick, a granddaughter of Judge Dexter, purchased Gordon Hall in 1939. She hired Emil Lorch to renovate the badly neglected hall and in 1941 Gordon Hall was opened to visitors during the Railroad Centennial Celebration. Katharine’s husband Stanley McCormick died in 1947, and in 1950 Katharine donated Gordon Hall to the University of Michigan who created four apartments to be used for rental to University staff and it continued to be rented until 2000.***



*Gordon Hall 1941*

So with the University’s decision to sell Gordon Hall, the community went into “Save the Hall” mode. A Gordon Hall organizational meeting was held on November 28, 2000 at the Dexter Area Museum and two committees were formed to lead the DAHS effort - the Financial Planning Committee and the Master Plan Committee.

Community members of all ages found ways to show their support from the Kindergarteners selling cookies to “Burma Shave” signs to writing letters to the Regents of the University in an effort to bring Gordon Hall back to the community! Donations came from individuals, businesses and organizations and talks began with Dexter Village and two townships, Scio and Webster.

A letter was drafted by University of Michigan Director of Public Relations Jim Kosteva requesting historical designation by the Washtenaw County Historic District Study Commission. A Historic District Committee was appointed to research the building and the property’s importance as a historic site, but when it came to a vote, the committee was tied 3 to 3. The final decision was made at the October 17, 2001 meeting of the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners who voted to include the hall and the entire 67.68 acres in the “Gordon Hall Historic District”.



*2006 Citizens of the Year*

In November of 2005, the University opened up bidding for the property and DAHS’s bid was accepted. In March of 2006, DAHS became the owners of the “Gordon Hall Historic District”. There were many people, businesses, and organizations who made this possible and we are forever grateful to them.

Continued on the page 5



*2016 Christmas at the Mansion*

In July of 2007, The United Methodist Retirement Community purchased 14.78 acres of the Gordon Hall property from DAHS for a senior citizen retirement community called “The Cedars of Dexter”. This partnership had been under discussion for a long time and their downpayment was put towards our Mortgage payments. The residents of the Cedars formed a “Gordon Hall Friends Committee” to provide assistance and support to the Gordon Hall project.

Since then, the DAHS has successfully paid off the mortgage, repaired and put new shingles on the roof, replaced the porch decks, taken off the siding and restored the original clapboards, put in bathrooms in the North wing, restored the Milk House, and the DAHS is working on many other projects including recovering the original flooring. Funding for all improvements has come from grants and many activities including “Civil War Days”, “Gordon Hall Days” (normally held in June, but because of Covid, it will be held on the 11th and 12th of September). “Christmas at the Mansion”, Special Dinners, rentals for Weddings and other events, and of course the many donations made by local philanthropic groups, businesses and the wonderful individual donors are other sources of support! The ultimate goal is to return the interior of Gordon Hall to about 1865, near the time of Judge Dexter’s death in 1863.



*Gordon Hall 2020*

For the last twenty years, our concentration has been on Gordon Hall, but nothing could have been successful without a strong base and that was the Dexter Area Museum! From being a source of information on Gordon Hall to being collateral for the Gordon Hall mortgage, things wouldn’t have progressed without the Dexter Area Museum. The Museum continued providing tours to different school groups, a few special events such as the “Night at the Museum”, and hosting the Washtenaw County Consortium of Museums and other groups. Although the Annual Pioneer Arts Fair was canceled by the Dexter Tornado in March 2012, the Dexter Heritage Guild continues to sponsor the December Holiday Bazaar, the Antique Appraisal Clinic and other events to support the Museum.



*Dexter Area Museum  
2021*

The Museum continues to need maintenance both inside and out, but much has been done by our super volunteers with funds from the Dexter Heritage Guild. When larger problems like repairing the steeple came up, there were special events like the “Bats in the Belfry” fund raiser which not only repaired the steeple, but also funded the painting of the entire museum. Thanks go out to the many volunteers who have kept DAHS going with their willingness to be there when needed and keep the dream alive for 50 years. Also, thanks to the many supporters who have donated generously and continue to help whenever the need arises. DAHS is proud to continue to fulfill our purpose which is to:

“Preserve our history and inspire our community  
to connect the past with the future”.

*The Dexter Area Museum is open from May through November on Friday and Saturday from 1 to 3pm. The Museum is set up with displays highlighting items from the collection and the Genealogical collection is available for research through Email at [DexMuseum@aol.com](mailto:DexMuseum@aol.com) or in person when the Museum is open. Gordon Hall is open during Gordon Hall Days in late June and Christmas at the Mansion in early December. The Gordon Hall site is also available for Weddings and other special events. Tours of both facilities are provided for school groups and are available by request for interested parties. For information on DAHS, please visit our website: [DexterHistory.org](http://DexterHistory.org).*

## **Business Members**

Recently the Historical Society began a campaign to bring local Dexter businesses into the membership of the Dexter Area Historical Society. Businesses are offered a lifetime, non-voting membership in the society and in return they will receive the newsletter, a membership emblem and recognition in the newsletter of those who have joined. Below is a list of our Business Members:

Beacon Dental - Dr. David Traynor  
Chelsea Dexter Dental Group  
Cindy Strang Insurance Agency  
CMR Mechanical LLC  
Dexter Family Dentistry - Brent Kolb  
Dexter Oral Surgery and Implant Center  
Dexter Riverside Cellar  
Dexter Rotary Club  
Finn's JM&J Insurance Agency

Hackney Hardware  
Hosmer-Muehlig Funeral Chapel  
Huron Counseling Services  
Main Street Optometry-Vision  
Reed Barbering - Robin's  
Spring Valley Trout Farm  
St. Andrew's UCC Church  
Village Animal Clinic of Dexter  
Wallace & Wallace Properties  
Whitetail Farm - Mary Baude

## **Membership Form**

On the next page is our Membership Form! Please print it out and use it to join or renew your Membership in the Dexter Area Historical Society! We always need volunteers of all ages and diverse skill sets, but one of the areas missing from the form is a place for you to indicate how you would like to volunteer to help us. Please let us know what you love to do by putting a note somewhere on the page!

Membership fees are due January 1st each year. We have indicated in the note in your email or on your letter the status of your account according to our records. Please use the form on the next page to renew or begin a new membership. Mail the form and your check made out to DAHS, to Dexter Area Historical Society, 3443 Inverness, Dexter, MI 48130. Thank you.

# **DEXTER AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**Preserve our history and inspire our community to connect the past with the future**

### **OFFICERS:**

**President:**  
Beverly Hill  
**Vice-President:**  
Caryl Burke  
**Secretary:**  
Sharon Wheeler  
**Treasurer:**  
Carol Jones

### **DIRECTORS:**

Neil Adams  
Sue Behnke  
Ina Germain  
Shawn Pierrel  
Ceci Riecker  
Nancy Van Blaricum  
Gary Vander Haagan  
Jan Weaver

### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

NEWSLETTER - Nancy J. Van Blaricum [DexMuseum@aol.com](mailto:DexMuseum@aol.com)  
WEBMASTER - Jan Weaver [weaver74@charter.net](mailto:weaver74@charter.net)  
GORDONHALLSPECIALEVENTS - Bene Fusilier: 734-426-8972  
HERITAGE GUILD - Pat Pudduck: [patpudduck@gmail.com](mailto:patpudduck@gmail.com)  
MUSEUM DIRECTOR - Nina Rackham: [NDRackham@aol.com](mailto:NDRackham@aol.com)  
**FACILITIES:**  
DEXTER AREA MUSEUM - 3443 Inverness, Dexter, MI 48130  
GORDON HALL - 8311 Island Lake Rd., Dexter, MI 48130

PHONE - 734-426-2519 WEBSITE: [www.DexterHistory.org](http://www.DexterHistory.org) EMAIL: [DexMuseum@aol.com](mailto:DexMuseum@aol.com)

Museum Hours: Friday and Saturday, 1 to 3 PM, May through November



## Membership Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

(home)

(cell)

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Type\***       New member     Renewal

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Individual    \$15 yearly

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Family        \$25 yearly

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Student       \$2 yearly

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Business      \$50

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Life            \$200

**Please indicate residence location:**

City of Dexter

Township: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Extra gift for Museum

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Extra gift for Gordon Hall

\$\_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL**

-----Make checks payable to: **Dexter Area History Society (DAHS)**-----

**Mail to:**

Dexter Area Historical Society

3443 Inverness Street

Dexter, MI 48130

**Contact:**

Phone: 734.426.2519

Email: dexmuseum@aol.com

Website: dexterhistory.org

Find us on Facebook @dexterhistory

Dexter Area Historical Society

\*All memberships except Life and Business are renewed each January.

Dexter Area Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

26 July 2019