



Dexter Area Historical Society and Museum

JANUARY 2011

Dexter Area Museum -- 2010 in Review

The Museum opened in May, 2010, with a colorful, artfully arranged quilt show designed by Susan Behnke. It was well attended and enjoyed by all.

According to the guest book, the Museum has been visited by people from across the country and even a few coming from Europe. All have favorably commented on the interesting displays and contents of our Museum. There have been approximately 850 visitors this year.

School tours continued this fall and spring with the majority of second graders and other grades supplementing their classroom study with the visit guided by a trained docent. Sybil Van Houten arranged the tours through the schools which included 13 classes and teachers, 361 students, 75 parents, plus four docents per tour.

The two fund raisers in support of the Museum, the Spring Pioneer Arts Fair chaired by Virginia Ryan and the Holiday Bazaar chaired by the members of the Heritage Guild were quite successful. We thank all those involved in these two huge projects so much. The Heritage Guild also sponsored the popular Antiques Appraisal Clinic in May. The Heritage Guild generously contributed the funds needed for a new gas water heater to replace the heater original to the building. Thank you ladies for keeping us in hot water!

Volunteers helped, too, with yard work, Mike Williams with the mowing and the Dexter Garden Club with the landscaping.

Among the acquisitions over the year are numerous papers and files, two large spinning wheels, a wooden trunk, a 1860's vintage child's bed, several portraits from early families, and a water color of Gordon Hall done by noted artist Peter Bailey in the early 1940's.

Upon reading this you see how vital volunteers are to the operation of the Museum and the fulfillment of its purposes. As the records show, over 1685 hours were given by loyal volunteers plus undoubtedly many more uncounted. To each and every one of you our deepest thanks.

The Museum is now closed but will reopen on May 6 for regular hours, 1-3 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, with special tours by appointment. If you have questions or requests before that date, please call the Museum, 734.426.2519, leave a message and a staff member will return your call.

The Museum Staff: Nina Rackham, Alice Pastalan, Nancy VanBlaricum

DEXTER AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

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NEWS RELEASE:
Special February 20th Speaker

Frank Wilhelme, former Dexter High School teacher, co-founder and former president of the Dexter Area Historical Society will present an illustrated talk entitled, *The Dexters of Massachusetts: Washtenaw County's Connection to a Prominent American Family*. The program sponsored by the Dexter Area Historical Museum will be held at the Dexter District Library located at 3255 Alpine, Dexter, MI on Sunday, February 20, 2011 at 2 p.m.

From their arrival in Boston in 1642 through the mid 20th Century, multiple generations of Dexters have left an indelible mark on America and eventually the world. Primarily through a combination of business acumen and a zeal for public service, the Dexters have made significant contributions to numerous events and movements in American history, including the Revolutionary War, the establishment of the Republic, settling and developing the Michigan frontier, abolition of slavery, the rebuilding of Chicago and the 20th Century struggle for women's rights.

In addition to highlighting the early generations that settled in New England, Wilhelme will focus on three generations whose roots were primarily in Michigan and the Midwest. These include Judge Samuel W. Dexter, a Michigan pioneer and founder of the village of Dexter, his son, Wirt Dexter, a prominent businessman and noted attorney who led the rebuilding of Chicago following the Great Fire of 1871 and his daughter, Katharine Dexter McCormick, a leader in the struggle for women's rights.

Gordon Hall Awarded Grant

Gordon Hall has been awarded a \$10,000 grant! Carol Knight-Drain, President & Chair of the James A. & Faith Knight Foundation informed Gordon Hall President Gil Campbell of a ten thousand dollar grant awarded to Gordon Hall in a letter dated December 20, 2010. Campbell happily contacted Gordon Hall grant writers Caryl Burke, Beverly Hill, Shirley Jackson and Alice

Ralph who were ecstatic about the news. "The grant committee is excited that Gordon Hall is getting financial recognition from such a significant foundation. This award not only allows current projects to move forward, but it also sets the stage for grants to be awarded from other sources," reported grant writer Shirley Jackson.

Gordon Hall, owned and operated by The Dexter Area Historical Society and Museum, has also received a federal grant along with significant private donations in the recent past.

"Every amount helps," said grant writer chair Beverly Hill. "The museum's board of directors has given the grant committee a prioritized list of projects that need funding for Gordon Hall with the attainment of a master plan at the top of the list."

With the addition of The James A. and Faith Knight Foundation grant money, the master plan is now fully funded. Architectural bids have been solicited and the process has begun!



Alice Ralph, Shirley Jackson, Gil Campbell, Caryl Burke, and Bev Hill with check outside of Gordon Hall.

It's NEVER TOO EARLY to THINK CHRISTMAS:

We need help in preparing for the Christmas Bazaar! Please join us at the Museum the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 9:00am. No special skills needed.....just come and join the fun!! Everyone is welcome!!!

A bit of history SCIO TOWNSHIP:

The Township of Scio was first organized by an act of the legislature and approved March 25, 1833. It was probably named after Scio Township in Allegany County, New York. The first township meeting was held at the home of Horace Leek located in section 9. Early township records were destroyed by fire. Hiram Putman settled on section 18 in 1825 and the following year he moved his parents there. He sold in 1835 and moved to Ingham County. Elias Smith came in 1826, settling on section 15. The following year he built the first log shanty, located near Honey Creek between Dexter and Ann Arbor. He was called "watermelon and potato Smith" for he raised so many of them. Later on this property became the John Tremper farm. Hiram Arnold located land in Scio in 1825 but did not settle there until two years later when he brought his wife Lydia and settled down to farming. About 1850 he built a mill in Dundee. He was a director of the First National Bank in Ann Arbor for many years. At the time of his death, in 1880, he owned 340 acres of land. Hiram's son, Captain Eugene Arnold, owned 280 acres on section 14. He sailed the Great Lakes for twenty-eight years, six years as a Captain. He was on board two vessels that were destroyed by fire and on five vessels which were sunk by collisions. Other settlers in the 1820's were Rufus Knight and George W. Peters. The Peters family came to Scio in 1826. George W. Peters and his wife, natives of Berkshire County, Massachusetts, moved to Orleans County, New York when their son George A. Peters was born. When George A. was eleven months old they came to Scio Township where his father built a log cabin.

Dexter's PIONEER ARTS FAIR

Saturday, March 19 - 10:00AM to 4:00PM
Creekside School on Baker Road
Admission: \$3 Adults \$0.50 Children
Over 55 Demonstrators
Bake Sale

Pioneer Art Fair scheduled for Sat. March 19. PLEASE, we are in NEED of items for the BAKE SALE!! Please drop off your baked goods at Creekside School Friday evening from 4 to 6:00pm or Saturday morning by 8:00am. Help.....help!!

Once again Ginny Ryan is chairing the committee for the Pioneer Arts Fair fundraiser for the DAHSAM. If you have any questions, or are willing to help, please contact her at nanook521@charter.net

2011 is the 40th ANNIVERSARY of the Dexter Area Historical Society

Our first meeting was held on October 14, 1971 at the Dexter Library on Baker Road.

The first D.A.H.S. Board consisted of:

President	Frank Wilhelme
Vice-President	Tom Marcom
Treasurer	Marie Lefsted
Corresponding Secretary	Rose VanAken
Recording Secretary	Norma McAllister
Directors	Laverne Laubengayer Joanne Hoef

Our Annual Meeting for 2011 will be held on Sunday, February 20 at 2PM at the new Dexter Library. Frank Wilhelme will be our guest speaker with his program on the Dexter Family. Please, be sure to attend. Also, please be sure your membership dues are up to date.

Dexter's Living History Tour – October 2010

On a cold and rainy day in October, Dexter's Living History tour was held at Forest Lawn Cemetery. Many volunteers portrayed personalities from the past that helped shape Dexter. George Wilkinson portrayed Francis Clark, a Civil War soldier, and Ed Coy told about Henry Wirt Newkirk's life. John Mann shared his family history of Vrelon Bates. Nick Jones read about Samuel Copeland and Sandra Smith Matsco shared details about her grandmother, Flora Bostwick Smith. Mark Olexa portrayed Henry Vinkle while Kandie Waggoner shared the life of her mother, Doris Wagner Waggoner. Karl Fink and Carol Jones played Judge and Millicent Dexter. Jack Clark explained about Dr. William Wylie. Kevin Hoatlin portrayed his grandfather, Keith, and Bev Hill shared the life of Mary Steinbach.



Nancy VanBlaricum served as the genealogist, Joanne Wiertella worked on publicity, Bene Fusilier collected donations, Leslie Hoeft passed out programs at the end of the tour, and Eric Woodra helped park cars.

Guides were: Sharon Wheeler, Marion Manners, Erin McKillen, Kelley Jones, Joe Semifero, and Ann Woodra. Stephanie Bell and Jim Smith co-chaired this event. About forty people attended the tour and approximately \$200 was collected for this event held during Apple Daze. Another tour is planned for the future as some of the guest speakers, and guides, asked if they could do this again!