Clinton County Historical Society
CELEBRATING
50 Years
CCHS 50th Anniversary News

Volume 1 Issue 4 May 2024

Spring Fling Event

DeWitt History Walk

The CCHS is partnering with the DeWitt District Library to offer a historic walking tour of downtown DeWitt on June 6th at 10am with a rain date of June 13th.

The 1 mile walk will be led by Wayne Summers who is a CCHS Board member and has been involved in DeWitt local history projects for a number of years.

The tour will visit historic sites and buildings including: New Albany hotel and mill site, interurban grade, Native American village site, first county jail, and many downtown historic business buildings.

Online registration for this event is available at this link: DeWitt District Library. Or call 517-669-3156.

Upcoming Events

July 11— The Enduring Farmers of Clinton County

Scott Piggott will be the featured speaker. A bucket auction will also take place. Event will be held at AgroLiquid, St. Johns, at 6:30pm.

July 14—Tornado Walk

Alice and Pete Murphy will give a history of the 1920 tornado as participants walk from the museum to the St. Johns depot.

August 9-11 — Mint Festival

September — Museums and Archive Tours

The CCHS will sponsor bus tours to visit our county's local museums and the CCHS archives.

Additional Events to be Announced

The CCHS will be participating in Spring Fling, which is also known as "Touch-a-Truck", on May 11th from Noon until 4pm in downtown St. Johns.

This annual event includes food, crafts, family fun, and the chance for kids of all ages to check out a variety of trucks. The CCHS will be having facepainting, selling cups, and handing out information packets.

The CCHS 50th Anniversary committee met on May 1st at the St. Johns Depot to assemble information packets which will be distributed at various events throughout the summer.

Clem Sohn Marker Dedication

A ceremony to dedicate a marker for Clem Sohn, famed bat-winged flyer from Fowler, was held on April 25th near the Fowler depot. This date also marked the 87th anniversary of his tragic last performance when his parachute failed to open and he plunged to his death at Vincennes, France, in 1937.

The ceremony, witnessed by Fowler school students and a number of community members, was led by Dean R. Feldpausch who purchased the marker and made arrangements for it to be placed near the depot building. Video of the ceremony can be viewed here.



CCHS ARCHIVES

16101 Brook Road, Lansing 48906
https://opennet.us/cchs

Archives Expands

The archives is expanding after DeWitt Charter Township gave the CCHS use of an additional adjoining room. The staff has been busy preparing to move into the new area which once it has been renovated and items will have more space for our ever growing collection along with additional room for researchers.

If you have a Clinton Co. plat book, published by the Clinton Co. 4-H Council, and dated after 2011, the Archives would make good use of it.

Congratulations to Rowlan and LaRene Smith on their 68th wedding anniversary. They were married on Apr. 8, 1956, in the First Methodist Church in St. Johns. He is the treasurer of CCHS and volunteers at the Archives every Monday.

Did you know that lower resolution photos of much of our photograph collection can be viewed online at https://hub.catalogit.app/3003/folder? Also on this site hosted by the DeWitt District Library are many DeWitt area photographs from their collection.

Digital copies of CCHS photographs are available in high resolution for a minimal cost upon request.

Clinton County Newspapers

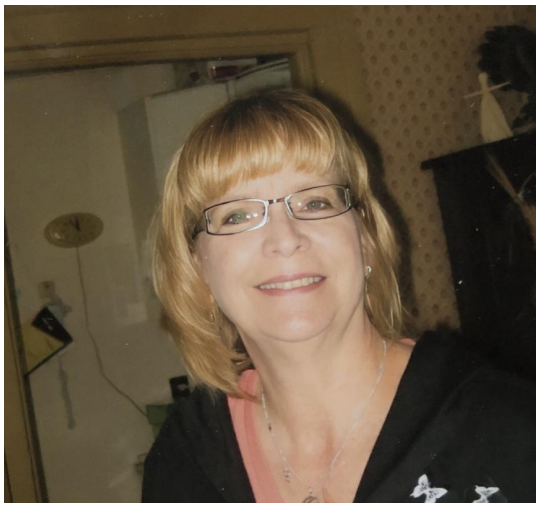
The CCHS recently received a donation from Chris and Debbie Horak which will allow us to digitize *Elsie Sun* newspaper microfilm (1943-1954). Digitization by the Clarke Historical Library is expected to occur later this year with the images available for free searching and viewing by late fall.

The CCHS thanks the Horak's for helping with our goal of digitizing all available Clinton County historical newspapers.

CCHS MUSEUM

106 Maple St., St. Johns 48879
CCHistoricalMuseum.org

Diane Carlson Tribute



It is with great sorrow that we acknowledge the passing of Diane Carlson (1958-2024).

Diane came to the Clinton County Historical Museum shortly after moving to St. Johns. She had been a docent at the Biltmore Estate in Ashville, NC and was interested in local history. She served as the Director for 5 years prior to resigning for health reasons.

She was a delightful person, worked hard, and was able to get younger volunteers to pull the Calendar Hall project together and perfect the exhibit of Military medals, badges and ribbons, among other concepts to advance the Museum. She was very instrumental in planning the 5 years of beautiful tea parties for fund raising purposes which took many volunteers and teamwork.

We all became close friends and did so enjoy her involvement in the Museum.

A memorial service will be held at 1pm on May 11th at Park Place in Pentwater, Michigan. Her obituary can be found here.

The CCHS Museum opens for the season on May 15th. Come check out our new exhibits. The museum is open Wednesdays 2-5 and Sundays 1-4 at 106 Maple St., St. Johns, west of the courthouse.

Centennial and Sesquicentennial Farmers Wanted

We're making plans for the July 11th event at AgroLiquid in St. Johns to honor the county's centennial and sesquicentennial farmers, but we are still lacking a mailing address for the present owner of the farms listed below. If you can help, please email or call the Archives 1-517-482-5117

Original Farm Owner	Twp.
Samuel McKibben	Bath
Charles Ernst	Bengal
August & Helen Miller	Bengal/Dallas
Jesse C Owen	Bengal
Rosina & Joseph Schneider	Bengal
Edgar Walker	Bengal
John & Mary Sleight	Bingham
George Yallup	Bingham
William Charles Bauerly	DeWitt
Benjamin Cater	DeWitt
Fred Geisenhaver	DeWitt
Phillip Cook	Dallas
John & Anna Fedewa	Dallas
Ignatz & Anna Koenigsknecht	Dallas
Conrad & Sophia Martin	Dallas
Frederick & Caroline Miller	Dallas
Mathias Simmon	Dallas
Henry & Elizabeth Theis	Dallas
John Peacock	DeWitt
Levi D Jenison	Essex
Hiram F Jones	Eagle
Frederic Richard	Eagle
Samuel J Jury	Essex
Albert Baker farm	Duplain
Abner Kelly	Duplain
Lemuel & Edith Smith Farm	Duplain
Theodore Fedewa	Lebanon
John McMillan	Lebanon
Pliny Moore	Lebanon
Mary Mueller	Lebanon
Almon Townsend	Lebanon
Levi W Sibley	Olive
Frank & Beatrice Nichols	Riley
William H H Aldrich	Victor
Henry Covert	Victor
Robert & Helen Morrison	Victor
Charles & Jane Garlock	Watertown
Levi & John Garlock	Watertown
Martin Powl/Pohl	Westphalia
Peter Pohl	Westphalia
Peter Pung	Westphalia
Theodore Schafer	Westphalia
Peter Simmons	Westphalia
Morris Snyder	Westphalia
John & Mary Thelen	Westphalia
Nicholas & Elizabeth Thorne	Westphalia

CCHS Receives Donations

On April 1st the CCHS received two checks from the St. Johns-Ovid Masonic Lodge #105. CCHS President Lynne Gregory accepted a $300 donation for the CCHS Museum and $250 for the CCHS.



Lynne Gregory accepts checks from Mark Crosby, Worshipful Master of St. Johns-Ovid Lodge #105. On right is Glenn Ernst.

Clinton County Oral History

The CCHS oral history project, which began in the 1970's, interviews people and puts the recordings and transcripts online. Check them out here!

The most recent interviewees were with Carl and Geri Jastram who live on a sesquicentennial farm in Riley Township. They told of the history of their farm along with harvesting maple syrup, Geri's embroidery business, Forest Hill, and more.

