

The Catchmark

Newsletter of the Clare County Historical Society

Marty Johnson, Editor

Volume 15 Number 3

Sharing Our Past With the Present.

Fall 2016

Prepping to Close



Saturday, Sept. 24 is not only Old Fashion Day, it's our final day of the 2016 season. That means if you want to tour our exhibits, see a working blacksmith, find out about Spikehorn, play at the new children's table or just sit on our porch and talk, you only have a few Saturdays left!

C'mon out between 1—4 p.m.

Clare County Historical Society

Our mission is to preserve, advance, and disseminate the history of Clare County.

The Society oversees a complex located at the corner of Dover and Eberhart Roads northeast of Clare, which includes the Dover one-room schoolhouse, Ott Family Log Cabin, Blacksmith Shop and a Museum.

The complex is open Saturdays from 1—4 p.m. through September. We also have photos, books, old newspapers and documents in our archives. Access to these is by appointment. Visit us on clarecountyhistory.org or on Facebook.

Join Us For Old Fashion Day



Go back in time for a day. The Clare County Historical Society is hosting its annual "Old Fashion Day" on Saturday, Sept. 24, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at its Clare County museum complex at the corner of Dover and Eberhart Roads, north of Clare.

It's a great opportunity for the family to experience life in Clare County when many things we consider necessities (like electricity, automobiles and telephones) were luxuries and televisions and computers were still the item of science fiction, according to Society President Joe Bradley. There will be blacksmiths, farm equipment, animals, tractor rides, good food, butter making, games and more. Visitors will have one last chance to tour the museum, the historic

one-room schoolhouse and the small log cabin where the Ott family raised 18 children.

Gene Bodnar, shipwright, whose skills were recently shown on a special segment on TV 9 & 10 News, will be there working on one of his custom ship models and talking about his craft. At 12:30 p.m., local historian Angela Kellogg will take us on a pictorial tour of Clare, Harrison, and Farwell over the years, while at 2 p.m., Paul Lapham will talk about surveying early Michigan. How it was done and what surveyors found. Music at Old Fashion Day will again be provided by the Sunshine String Band.

Admission to the event is only \$3 per person. Children 12 years and under admitted free. Proceeds benefit the museum.

Cleaning, Measuring and Telling a Tower's Story



Many hands make light work, is

an old saying and that was the case when Clare County Historical Society took the lead in assembling local partners to improve the coal tower and surrounding grounds in Lake Station. The tower is one of only 15 in the state and one of two accessible to the public.

Individuals from Garfield Township, the Department of Natural Resources, and Friends of Clare County Parks & Recreation cut and removed

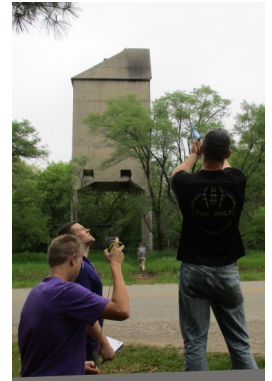
vegetation from around the tower that stands alongside the Pere Marquette State Rail Trail.

CCHS has installed temporary interpretive signage to tell the tower's story and permanent signage will be installed this to tell the story of the tower and how it operated.

To create the signage, it was necessary to first determine the tower's height. For that, CCHS contacted Farwell Math Teacher Ben Bryant who brought out 52 high schoolers. They learned a bit about the history of the tower, its importance to the community and then used formulas learned in math class to deter-

mine its height. A mention of their achievement will be part of the interpretive signage.

"Including others, be it townships or local school kids, in projects like this gives them a stake in local history," said CCHS member Marty Johnson who helped set up both projects. "It's a great way to raise awareness and interest in history that can be found around us."



Clare Depot May Open by Year End

Thanks to the generosity of nearly 200 donors, a summer fundraiser for the depot raised nearly \$41,000, exceeding the \$25,000 needed and providing a \$25,000 match from the Michigan Economic Development Corp. This total will

be enough to side the depot (in white) and complete the first floor interior so the building can again be used by the community.



While the depot will not be completely finished and more funding will be needed for landscaping, the caboose and more, the depot may well host a grand opening before January, making for a great Christmas gift to Clare County.

Pick Up Books for Fall/Winter Reading

If you are looking to pick up some reading material this fall and winter (or Christmas gifts), include local history. The new Arcadia Publications pictorial history book on Farwell is now available; it joins similar books on Clare and Harrison. There is also a new booklet celebrating Harrison's 125th anniversary as a city. Among its contents is a collection of photos of Harrison never before seen in print. The Harrison books and Farwell was co-authored by Angela Kellogg and the Clare book by Robert Knapp.

All books are available at our museum, along or

at the Harrison and Pere Marquette libraries. Most are also available online at Amazon.com

And don't forget other books focusing on Clare County History, including "Cut & Run," by James Hannum, about logging railroads in the county and "Mystery Man," also by Robert Knapp, which looks at Isaiah Leebove, who was murdered in Clare's Doherty Hotel in 1938.



History is Still Here to be Discovered

Those who think everything historical about our county is public knowledge are wrong. For example, it was recently learned the 1875 Harrison railroad depot, long thought gone is being used for storage on a Hatton Township farm. Another

CCHS member found that a restaurant, built the same time as the Clare depot and once located near there, is now part of a house in Clare.

While these owners knew of their buildings' history, no one else did. Until now. We're

hoping a lot more of our past will turn up—perhaps a photo of the Lake coal tower in operation or a photo of Jim Carr.

So, what's hiding in your shed, garage, basement or attic that is part of Clare County's history? Take a look and let us know!

Scout Documents Barns and Stone Houses

Scout Adam Torr has photographed and documented old barns and stone houses in eight southern Clare County townships as his Eagle project.

Originally, Adam's project was just going to include barns, but the project expanded to include the beautiful stone houses he and sponsor Jon H. Ringelberg saw as they drove all the townships' roads.

Why not do all 16 townships?

"When we expanded the scope of the project we also greatly expanded the time and money needed for it. I felt that 70 hours Adam invested was enough, especially with school and band practice starting," Ringelberg said. He hopes another Scout will complete the northern townships.

A CD of Adam's work can be

purchased from CCHS for \$5.



Join (or Renew) With Us!

If you are not a member, we invite you to join. Membership is only \$10 per calendar year—unless you are 80 or older in which case your membership is free! (but we still ask you mail in the form). **Join or renew now and your membership is**

valid through Dec. 2017.

Your support allows us to run our museum complex, publish our newsletters, host our website and run events and promote our history within our county and around the region, tell its stories and protect its artifacts.

Providing your email address, will make it possible (in the future) to share information on a more frequent basis and also send our newsletter. Your email address is NEVER shared and you can always opt out.

Name: _____

☐

New

☐

Renewal

Address: _____

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Qualify for a Free Membership

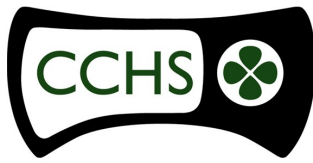
Address 2: _____ Email Address: _____

City/Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

\$ _____ Total enclosed*

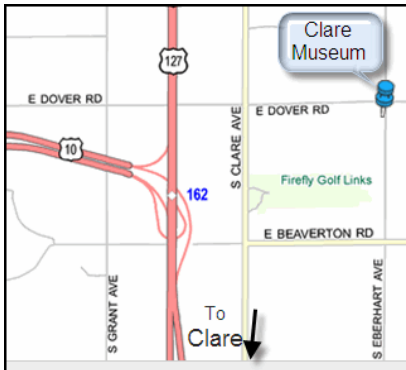
Make checks payable to: Clare County Historical Society
and mail them to
CCHS, c/o Jon H. Ringelberg, Treasurer
3062 E Colonville Rd
Clare, Michigan 48617-9448

*Donations over \$10 will be used to improve our museum complex and promote local history. CCHS is a 501(c)3 organization and your donation may be tax deductible.



CLARE COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

c/o Jon H. Ringelberg, Treasurer
3062 E Colonville Rd
Clare, Michigan 48617-9448



Our museum complex is at 7050 S Eberhart Rd. at Dover, five miles north of Clare.

Like us on Facebook!



Questions, comments? Email
museum@clarecountyhistory.org

Adams v Adams: A Knock Down, Drag Out Divorce

The following is based on a court case synopsised by CCHS Treasurer Jon H. Ringelberg, an attorney and former judge. Jon has synopsised cases filed in the county between 1871 and 1900. Copies are available for purchase. What makes this case interesting is not only the claims of defendant, but the fact that he ran a lunch room near the Clare depot. That building was recently rediscovered serving as part of a Clare house (see article on page 3).

This divorce of Minnie and William Adams began in 1895, and took five years to settle. In reviewing the documents, Jon feels that Minnie saw in marrying and divorcing William the opportunity for her to make money. Records show William traveled the state setting up lunch rooms (including one in Clare).

In her filing, Minnie alleged William to have committed adultery with one Lottie Dunnigan in Durand, Mt. Pleasant and Clare and requested support of her daughter who required

“constant attention.” (Whether the daughter who was one year old in 1895 was William’s is not clear.)

In his defense, William alleges adultery by Minnie with John Ford in Toledo, Ohio; with one Jackson of Ewart, and “with diverse other persons.” Further, he alleges Minnie lived with her sister and they were considered “lewd woman (sic)”, who “very often visit Variety shows and other places of amusement, where no woman of any respectability or character would be seen.”

In his testimony, William says he was ‘tricked’ into marriage. “She [Minnie] is a Sportinghouse Keeper. I had rooms at Clare and she used to come there to my rooms like any other woman of her kind...I had illicit relations with her for about seven years before we were married.”

Despite William’s evidence that included depositions and testimony about Minnie’s character (or lack there-of), the judge felt she was more credible and granted the divorce and gave her alimony of \$5 week but for only two years.