

# Catchmark

Newsletter of the Clare County Historical Society

Angela Kellogg, Editor

Volume 22 Number 2

Sharing Our Past With the Present.

Fall 2022

## Ideal Theater Receives Grant

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation announced Michigan Strategic Fund approval of \$83.8 million in grant funding across 22 statewide community development projects around Michigan through the Revitalization and Placemaking program.

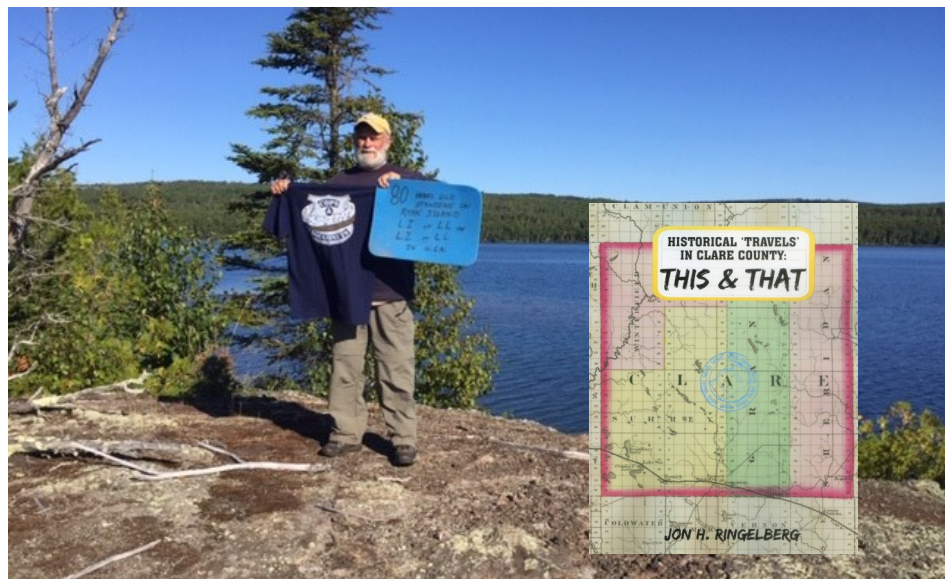
The Ideal Theater of Clare will receive \$988,045 for restoration of historic downtown theater. Renovations are already underway.



## Clare County Historical Society

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

Our Society oversees a History Park at Dover and Eberhart Roads northeast of Clare that includes a Museum, the Dover one-room schoolhouse, Ott Family Cabin, and a Blacksmith Shop. We also have photos, books, newspapers and documents. CCHS board meetings are the 1st Tuesday of each month at our museum May—Sept at 7 p.m. All are invited. Learn more at [clarecounthistory.org](http://clarecounthistory.org) or visit us on Facebook.



## New Clare County History Book

Local Historian Jon H. Ringelberg, author of several books on Clare County including *Clare County Murders*, has just released his latest effort, *Historical 'Travels' in Clare County: This and That*.

This paperback presents 31 items related to Clare County history that Jon has learned about, stumbled upon or researched and then traveled to within the county. The book includes a previously unknown Indian Mound (that might be one of the largest remaining in the state); an historic 1870 log cabin 'hidden' behind a beautiful but fairly conventional cut stone façade; the probable location of the villainous Jim Carr's Meredith house of ill-repute, the 'lost' Hinkleville dam, and more. While relating the history of each location and its im-

portance, Ringelberg adds information on how he happened upon each of them. The book shows that there is still a lot in our county yet to be found. The book is available from Amazon for only \$15. A few books may be available from the author.

Retired judge and Clare County Historical Society member Jon Ringelberg (above) at age 80 standing on Ryan Island with his Cop and Doughnuts swag. Ryan Island is the largest island in the largest lake in the largest island in the largest lake in the world. Siskiwit Lake is on Isle Royal in the Upper Peninsula and contains several lake islands, including Eagle Nest Island, Teakettle Island, Lost and Found Island, and Ryan Island.

## Future of Historical Mast Murals in Flux

In 1938, a set of four murals showcasing Clare County were installed in the auditorium of what was Clare High School. Students at the school raised money for the materials (nearly \$100) and the federal government, through the Works Projects Administration, paid Michigan Artist Gerald Mast nearly \$4,500 to paint and install them. Although painted on canvas, the murals were glued directly to the concrete walls of the auditorium. The installation decision is one that everyone has come to regret.

Today, the murals are the largest remaining set of WPA murals in the country and valued at approximately \$20 million. They are also a tourist draw. Although the murals are in a Clare School (now the Middle School), they belong to the federal government. That means they can't be sold, and any changes need to be done with permission from the federal government.

The school district would build a new high school and move the

middle school students to the current high school, then tear down the Middle School because the nearly century-old building is outdated for current student needs, and costs associated with maintaining, heating and cooling the building keep rising. Many areas also no longer meets the needs of disabled individuals.

However, before any demolition of the current Middle School is done, a decision on what to do with the murals must be made, including who will pay the costs associated with moving them and where they would go. While no firm estimates have been received, it's estimated costs could range between \$300,000 to \$500,000. The district is looking into grants and working with government officials on funding.

The Mast Murals are a national treasure and need to be protected. They also need to be kept in the county. Placing them in a more

accessible location could also make them a major tourist draw. However, district taxpayers should not be put on the "hook" to pay for a national treasure. As much as we at CCHS love art and history, taxpayer tax dollars should be used to



*Mast murals at Clare Schools.*

educated children, not pay for artwork owned by the federal government. We will be happy to work with the school district in preserving the murals. And if you know anyone who loves art and has an extra half million dollars, please let us know!

## Thanks to Our Resident Archivist

It's one of our prized collections in our Clare County Historical Museum, and it's one that is seldom seen. It's our archives: photos, documents, postcards, letters and more that tell the history of our county. The archives are extensive. However, there is one part of our archives that recently received an upgrade. Much of what was once scattered in books and boxes now rests in more than 100 binders, some with more than 100 pages in them, and all neatly categorized and indexed.

And we have one person to thank for it: Jon H. Ringelberg.

Jon is our resident archivist. He's

also our CCHS treasurer, handyman and go-to project guy (not to mention author or several books on local history). Jon took it upon himself to document our archives and create a 60-page index. The project that took untold hours and he did it unasked and didn't request recognition for his efforts. Well, he's getting a bit of long-overdue recognition.

"On behalf of CCHS, thanks, Jon, for your hard work."

By the way, the archives are available to the public conducting research. Items need to be viewed at the museum and by appoint-

ment. We ask that nothing be removed. Although Jon left a sticky note concerning removing items and we THINK it's written in jest, it's best not to take the chance.



*Book shelf at the museum*

*Clare County of Old. Simpler? Yes. Easier? No?*

## Old Fashion Day, Sept. 24

Each year, the Clare County Historical Society allows visitors to experience life as it once was at our Old Fashion Day event. We invite you to put away your cell phones (if you want) and imagine living in our county 150 years ago when steam locomotives had just started arriving in the county and huge pines covered much of the landscape. Back then, electricity, central heating and cooling, and even telephones could only be found in a few big cities. .

Local Musician Stephanie Terpening will provide some live music for your listening pleasure. Wendell Hoover, historian and interpreter will again educate and entertain us while he transports us back to

Michigan's lumbering era. His presentation last year was a great hit with people of all ages.

Old Fashion Day takes place from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at our Clare County History Park. Along with entertainment, there will be blacksmiths, farm equipment, tractor rides, good food and more. Visitors will have one last chance to tour the museum, historic one-room schoolhouse and small log cabin where the Ott family raised 18 children before all buildings close for the 2022 season.

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

## Historic Doherty Hotel for Sale

Built in 1924 and sitting on 3.45 acres the Doherty Hotel in Clare is for sale for \$6,250,000. The Doherty Hotel replaced the Calkins Hotel after it burned down. The Doherty has been a significant landmark business in Clare since it was built. Today it has 157 guest rooms, an indoor pool, restaurant, bar and banquet facilities.

Visit <https://www.marcusmillichap.com/> for more information and full listing.

## Join or Renew Your Membership

**M**emberships for active for the calendar year, although all memberships purchased now are **valid to Dec. 31, 2023.**

Please check your address sticker to see your "paid to" date.

**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 to mail in the form so we have a record of your interest).

Your support makes it possible

to run our museum complex; publish our newsletters; host our website; run events; educate residents and visitors on our local history; promote tourism; protect artifacts; and more.

In any event **we hope you'll join with us--or renew!**

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

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

**Address 2:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Total enclosed\***

**New**       **Renewal**

**I am 80 or older, live in Clare County and qualify for a free membership.**

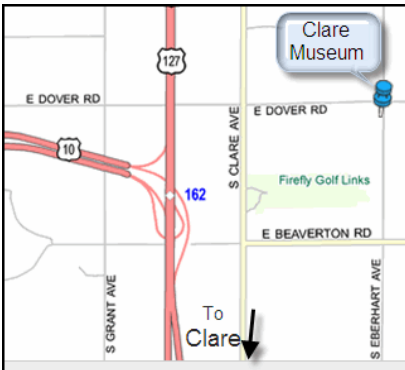
*Donations in excess of \$10 are greatly appreciated and will be used to improve our museum park and promote local history. The CCHS is a 501(c)3 organization and your donation may be tax deductible.*

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**



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



Our museum complex is at 7050 Eberhart Rd. at Dover, five miles north of Clare. It is open the first Sat. in May to the last Sat. in Sept. from 1-4 p.m.

Like us on Facebook!



Questions, comments? Email [museum@clarecountyhistory.org](mailto:museum@clarecountyhistory.org)

## Sons of the Civil War Rededicate Harrison Monument

### HONORING HARRISON'S DEFENDERS OF THE UNION CEREMONY

IN REMEMBRANCE OF ALL HARRISON CIVIL WAR VETERANS

**SATURDAY, 01 OCTOBER 2022 – 1 p.m.**

Maple Grove Cemetery, Harrison  
**RAIN OR SHINE**

The public is invited and highly encouraged to attend, and to bring chairs with them if they would like to be seated during the event.



Capt. Ferdinand Boughton  
1<sup>st</sup> Michigan Engineers & Mechanics



Charles W. Scott  
15<sup>th</sup> NY Heavy Artillery  
Harrison's Last GAR Veteran



Hiram W. Hughes  
24<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry (Iron Brigade)



SERVICES CONDUCTED BY:  
**GENERAL ORLANDO M. POE CAMP 444**  
DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN  
SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR

For more information contact: [commander@genompoecamp444.org](mailto:commander@genompoecamp444.org)  
[genompoecamp444.org](http://genompoecamp444.org) o [facebook.com/genompoecamp444](https://facebook.com/genompoecamp444)

The three-parts of the services conducted by the SUVCW on 01 October will include honoring Captain Ferdinand Boughton, Company F, 1st Michigan Engineers & Mechanics, paying homage to Charles W. Scott, Company M, 15th New York Heavy Artillery – the Last GAR Veteran of Harrison, and a rededication of the 1916 GAR Monument by ritual of the 1917 GAR Service of Dedication for Monuments in remembrance of all of Harrison's Civil War Veterans.



## Don't Miss Old Fashion Day!

Saturday, Sept. 24  
11 a.m. – 4 p.m.



- Living history demonstrations, food, tours, blacksmiths, kids activities and more.
- Popular speaker Wendell Hoover, **returns** to talk about life in early Michigan. Wendell is a former interpreter at the Hartwick Pines State Park and Higgins State Parks. (2 pm.)
- Live music by the talented local musician Stephanie Terpening. (Approx. Noon)
- Free wagon rides. (All day)
- All buildings open. (All day)
- Tour a modern day fire truck & ambulance\*

Cost: \$3/person. Children 12 years and under are free.  
Location: Corner of Dover and Eberhart Roads, northeast of Clare.