

# Kite & Key

Franklin Historical Society Newsletter

DECEMBER 2018

## 1911: A FRANKLIN SNAPSHOT

(recollections from the 1860 catalpa tree)

The Women's Auxiliary of the Cemetery Association published a cookbook in 1911. Sarah (Sadie) Sly was the driving force behind the endeavor. Her younger sister, Addie, shared numerous recipes. Several ladies of that era included many of their prize meals. As an observer, what I found interesting in the entries was the credit given to the authors.

With exception of the Sly sisters, all of the other women's individual identities were hidden. Let me give you some examples. . . Mrs. Otto Berger, Mrs. Andrew Bowden, Mrs. Ezra Bristol, Mrs. William Clemons and Mrs. Will Spicer. These ladies were identified as their husband's wives not as their own entity. The men made the "bread" and the women baked it.

Hm-m-m, that's just the way that it was. The cookbook gives a glimpse into the life and times at the turn of the 20th century. I have had the unique opportunity for fifty years now to observe the people and the changes taking place in Franklin Village. Within my rings is history that I want to share so here goes another yarn or two. . .

In 1911, William Howard Taft was President of the United States. There were 45 stars on the flag. The life expectancy was 47. Ninety-five percent of all births took place at home. Women did not have the right to vote. Two out of every ten adults couldn't read or write. Eighteen per cent of households had at least one full time servant or domestic help. So, what was life like here, who were the people living here, how was Franklin changing? I will tell you how it was.

The Peter Van Every grist mill (Franklin cider mill) was still in operation. Peter Sr. died in a buggy accident when I was a mere sapling. Peter Van Every Jr. and his wife Jane lived in the mansion on the hill at 14 Mile and Franklin Roads. Part of their residence operated as the Temperance Hotel. It was also a stagecoach shop. You see, the automobile had not yet come to our village.

Just east of the mill was the Warner Cheese factory. Warner had 11 cheese and milk depots in Oakland County. He was a former governor of Michigan and also served as state senator and secretary of state. Ken Bristol, our future watercolorist who captured tidbits of Franklin on canvas, was born here. The next time that you're in the library, take a gander at the watercolor above the fireplace. It is a Bristol depicting Franklin Road about 1875. How does his Franklin Road compare to ours today?

The reins of the Congleton Buggy Works (the current Franklin Grill) had been handed over to Richard Cummings, an Englishman. Cummings specialized in building buggies and sleighs, but as time moved forward he also built bicycles.

Adna Dunbar was the new merchant at the Franklin House (hotel). He lived upstairs with his wife. On 22 May 1911, there was a commotion here. I couldn't figure out what was happening, but later learned of Dunbar's fate. Later, the Pontiac Gazette would confirm that Dunbar contacted his daughter Nettie that he had taken dope and would be deceased soon. Nettie's husband Dr. Frank German attended him, but to no avail.

Next to Dunbar's establishment was Herbert Broughton's grocery store. You would recognize the structure as the Just for Men store. Herb was the son of Daniel Broughton, the carriage maker.

The Community Hall (current fire station location) held social events. Helen Pickering who descends from a long line of farmers, remembers that there was an easy sociability between the "come heres" and the "were heres." The old and the new were integrated. George Bingham sold his Brick Store to John Currin. The store, currently Fitness Driven, was still the heart and hub of the village. Not only did customers purchase products and pick up their mail, but they also shared gossip. People were privy to your business even before you were!

Around the corner on German Mill was the Methodist Church built prior to the Civil War. The wooden horse sheds where you hitched your mare while attending service were still standing behind the church. After all, we were still mainly a horse and buggy community.

Unfortunately, we lost other prominent villagers about this time. Daniel Broughton who lived where our Village Offices are now, passed away. He made excellent quality buggies for the wealthy. Albert A. Rust, who lived in the Howard Hanna real estate office building on Franklin Road, was an active member of the Methodist Church, Cemetery Society, school board member and merchant met his fate. We lost Ebenezer Raynale, our first doctor and Dr. Julian Buel. Our medical needs were now addressed by Henry Cox, Frank German and Charles Raynale, son of Ebenezer. About one third of the Civil War veterans that returned home had passed on as well. Many are buried in our beloved cemetery.

Sammy Green, a Civil War vet, had a dairy farm on the village green. Every 4th of July I would watch with excitement the horse races down Franklin Road and my branches would shake as the fireworks were set off in the evening. I had a ring side seat!

I frequently saw the children walking up the hill to go to school. They no longer congregated in the red school house. They outgrew the building and moved into the brick one built in 1869. Spelling bees were important social events. As youngsters, I recall Otto Berger's children, Lillie and Artie, Samuel Green's son, Joey and Henry Cox's niece Clara spewing out letters in hopes of spelling the words correctly.

Phone lines were installed in Franklin about 1908. Not everyone had a phone. The Brick Store was still the "go to" place to make a call. If you did have a phone, you shared it with eight to ten people. When the phone rang, you would sit there and wait to see if it was your "ring" before you could answer. Sometimes you would hear a "click" on the other end and someone would be listening to your conversation. Milo Bowden, a descendant of a long line of blacksmiths, would say "If you'll just hang up, I'll call you back and tell you what I said." It would be another

1911...continued page 3



## AWHILE AGO IN FRANKLIN

Every other Sunday morning, Seba Bristol, who lived with his wife and family in rooms at the cheese factory, cut cheeses which Franklin people came to buy. Bristol's son Kenneth was born at the cheese factory located on 14 Mile Road just east of the Van Every grist mill (cider mill.)

## FOR RENT

The Franklin Community Center, Kreger house, as well as the barn and patio area are available to rent for parties and meetings. We have recently had rentals for graduation parties, wedding showers, wedding receptions, book signings, holiday and birthday parties.

Book your next event in this charming 1850's home. Your guests will be in for a treat!

For information on securing a date, call the village hall at 248-626-9666 or you can e-mail the clerk at epulker@franklin.mi.us Hourly and daily rates are available.

## THE FRANKLIN HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Barb Louie, our archivist, continues to sort through our files, organize them and create an index. Finding materials is becoming an easier task.

At the same time, we are continuing to scan historic documents. We recently scanned the handwritten Cemetery Society minutes dating back to 1852. The Franklin Church loaned us the original 1859 contract to build the church on German Mill Road. It was signed by Thomas Bigelow, the carpenter. We have a wealth of information waiting to be scanned. It is a laborious endeavor that needs to be done to preserve our history for future generations.

## 4TH ANNUAL BUILD A SCARECROW EVENT

Whimsical scarecrows hung out along Franklin Road to signal another fun family event. And, it was a blast! Clotheslines were drooped with shirts, jeans, dresses, aprons, gowns and robes to help make a scarecrow come to life. And, they did!

Scarecrows were carefully stuffed with straw to create each character. And, they were!

Families posed happily for photo shoots grinning from ear to ear. Scarecrows appeared throughout the village to welcome in the fall. And, next year on the last Saturday in September, we will do it all again!

BE PREPARED TO BE SCARED, CROWS!

**Kite & Key** is a publication of the Franklin Historical Society. The Franklin Historical Society seeks to preserve such material, structures and artifacts that help to establish the history of the Village of Franklin and to make it accessible to those who wish to study it. The Society maintains a museum and archival area at the Derwich House, 26165 13 Mile Road (at Kirk). Volunteers and donations are most welcome. **Kite & Key** and the society welcome mail at:

P.O. Box 250007

Franklin, MI 48025

Email: info@franklin-history.org

Contributors: Bill & Ann Lamott



## LOOK THROUGH ANY WINDOW, YEAH, WHAT DO YOU SEE?

You'll see history reflecting back at you! All twenty-one windows in the Broughton house (village offices) were taken apart, stripped and re-glazed by Detroit's Turner Renovations. Some panes were replaced as needed and new hardware was added.

Because Franklin's historic district is part of the State Historic Preservation Office certified local government program, the entire project was funded by the state.

As you gaze out of one of the windows, realize the eyes that have peered out before you.

Daniel Broughton, an Englishman, bought the home in 1866. He made fine buggies for the wealthy in his shop located diagonally from his home. He was always a glance away from his employees at work as well as his valued customers. A hundred years later, his great grandson, Herbert Broughton, would marry in this same house. As he and his bride listened to the wedding chimes played from the tower of the Community church, do you suppose he sensed his ancestry staring back at him?

Imagine Cora Johnston (Kreger) skipping down school hill to see her grandmother, Jane German. Grandmother watched for her. She always had warm cookies fresh from the oven and a glass of milk to delight her. Cora's grandparents operated a mill on the street that bears their name.

Government officials, employees and all who walk through the doors of the village hall, may now view their glances out of the windows differently.

Go ahead, look through any window, yeah, what do YOU see?

FRANKLIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
OPERATING FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2017 FY (JULY1, 2017 TO JUNE 30, 2018)

	FHS	KREGER FUND	TOTAL
BEGINNING BALANCE 7/1/2017	\$9,077	\$22,465	\$31,542
REVENUE			
MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$5,630		\$5,630
GRANTS	\$5,413		\$5,413
DONATIONS	\$1,780	\$1,335	\$3,115
KITE MAKING PROFIT	-\$114		-\$114
CATALPA PROD. PROFIT	\$1,032		\$1,032
SCARECROW PROFIT	\$386		\$386
TOUR REVENUE	\$460		\$460
INTEREST	\$8		\$8
MISC SALES	\$623		\$623
TOTAL REVENUE	\$15,218	\$1,335	\$16,553
EXPENSES			
MUSEUM UTILITIES	\$2,192		\$2,192
MUSEUM INSURANCE	\$1,308		\$1,308
YARD MAINTENANCE	\$1,400		\$1,400
BUILDING MAINTENANCE	\$1,390		\$1,390
BUILDING SECURITY	\$409		\$409
SUBTOTAL - BUILDING	\$6,699		\$6,699
PRINTING & POSTAGE	\$1,804		\$1,804
MISCELLANEOUS	\$686		\$686
TECHNOLOGY	\$6,415		\$6,415
LANDSCAPING		\$10,066	\$10,066
REPAIRS		\$3,860	\$3,860
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$15,604	\$13,926	\$29,530
ENDING BALANCE JUNE 30, 2018	\$8,691	\$9,874	\$18,565

## 1911: A FRANKLIN SNAPSHOT continued

fifteen years until electricity would embrace our village

The old timers who once walked the streets are now the footsteps of their descendants. An old timer visiting the amphitheater that encompasses the heart of our village, would recognize it. Yes, today our streets are paved, we drive cars not horses, we have electricity, indoor plumbing and phones. We don't have a need for the blacksmith, cooper, tinsmith, mills, hotel keepers, shoemakers and so forth. We do still have many of the structures that housed these trades. We have kept the integrity, charm and rural character and continue to be caretakers of our rich heritage.

Franklin's modest growth and development was due to

our commercial enterprises. We had a post office, school, church, cemetery, mills, shops, hotels and taverns as well as an agricultural center. When the railroad repeatedly by-passed our village in favor of Detroit, Birmingham and Pontiac, we became forgotten in time. People have come and gone, businesses have changed yet the rural character has persevered. And I have experienced it all!

P.S. The true identity of the women who shared their delicious recipes are: Mary Bowden Berger, Mary Clemons Bowden, Addie Bingham Bristol, Mary Lamphere Clemons and Caroline Durkee Spicer.

## CONNECTING WITH THEIR PAST

Three descendants of early Franklin settlers contacted the Franklin Historical Society and generously shared family trees, photographs, stories and artifacts. Most of all, they linked the present with the past. All of the settlers had one thing in common. It was the Franklin River.

Mills were spaced every mile or so along the river. The Abel Bigelow brick mill was located at 14 Mile and Inkster Roads in Farmington Township, down the river was the Frances Xavier Stehle sawmill followed by the Peter Van Every grist mill.

Bob Ladner is the great-great grandson of Abel Bigelow. Bigelow left New York and in 1825, he bought land from the Harrington tract at 14 Mile and Inkster roads in Farmington Township. A huge portion of the farm was under laid with clay of excellent quality for brick manufacturing. This discovery was the impetus for the Bigelow brick mill. In 1829, the first brick house in Oakland County was built across from the old church on German Mill. It was torn down in 1956. Photos of the Bigelow family and a brick from the mill have found a home at the museum.

Thomas Bigelow, Ladner's great grandfather was a carpenter. He signed a contract with the church in 1859 with specs to build the structure located on German Mill. Today it is a private residence.

Frances Xavier Stehle is the great-great grandfather of Jeff Stehle. Frances left Germany and arrived in New York on 2 July 1849. Ten years later a census lists him as a sawyer. Stehle earned the reputation as one of the best millwrights of his era. His home on 14 Mile Road (still in existence) and sawmill were between the Bigelow

brick mill and Van Every grist mill.

Evelyn Robey, Frances' daughter and Jeff Stehle's great aunt, hand-painted a tobacco jar that was gifted to our historical museum. The tobacco jar is a work of art. It is intricately adorned with dice and playing cards. On the bottom of the jar, it is signed Evelyn Robey and dated 1917. Check out the exhibit that dates back over 100 years ago!

The great-great grandfather of Kay Stauff is Peter Van Every. The Van Every grist mill, our current cider mill, was built around 1838. Three generations of Van Everys operated the mill until 1914. Wagons loaded with corn and wheat came from as far as Howell to get their crops milled. The Van Everys paid cash which encouraged farmers to trade here.

Peter Van Every Jr. and his wife Jane, are Kay's great grandparents. They operated the Temperance Hotel in their home near 14 Mile and Franklin roads. You'll recognize it today as the white house on the hill with pillars.

The Rosemond Inn was located on Inkster Road north of Northwestern. Rosemond Van Every is Kay Stauff's grandmother. Kay shared the guest book from the inn as well as her grandmothers 1911 Franklin recipe book. Not only is it loaded with delicious recipes, but also the contributors from our past. It's worth taking a look!

The Historic Society is grateful to the descendants of these settlers for caring and sharing their histories so that future generations can learn about their contributions and understand the early development of our village. Visit the museum located at 26165 Thirteen Mile at Kirk Lane to view these exhibits for yourself.

## FRANKLIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2017 – 2018

### PRESERVATION:

- Family research on early Franklin settlers
- Application for an historic marker at the Broughton house
- Restoration of historic marker on the village green
- Added a wooden bench and swing to the Franklin Community Center (Kreger house)
- Continued archiving of materials (Barb Louie)
- Continued scanning historic materials
- Provided background material to the Historic District Study Committee
- Museum maintenance and landscape work

### FUNDRAISING:

- Annual membership drive
- Sale of catalpa wood products and FHS items
- Build a Scarecrow Workshop (next one is the last Saturday in Sept. 2019)
- Make a Kite Workshop (next one is the last Saturday in April 2019)

### EDUCATION:

- Annual meeting
- Published two Kite and Key newsletters
- Cemetery and Franklin on Foot tours (Love, crime and mischief!)
- Secret Life of an Object and Who Dat? exhibits at the museum

FRANKLIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 250007 Franklin, Michigan 48025

[www.franklin-history.org](http://www.franklin-history.org)

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## ONE OF A KIND EVENT!

**WHAT:** FHS Merchandise Sale  
catalpa tree products, prints, fleece, glasses,  
stationery, post cards, wooden toys, books and  
biscuits for that special canine!

**WHERE:** FHS museum 26165 Thirteen Mile  
at Kirk Lane

**WHEN:** Saturday, December 15, 2018  
10 A.M. - 1 P.M.

### *Special Features*

crafts for kids  
music, cookies & punch  
check out the exhibits

