

Kite & Key

Franklin Historical Society Newsletter

December 2019

Pontiac  Gazette.

HAVE YOU HEARD?

(a story told by the recollections of the 1860 catalpa tree)

Times are changing. Villagers, accustomed to getting the news through gossip at the general store, are now "hearing" it from the newspaper. The Pontiac Gazette publishes a weekly paper. It is filled with tidbits concerning all of Oakland County. Of course, the interest here is all about Franklin.

Some is old news. We are a tight knit community and are attuned to most goings on; however, we do miss a few goings on now and then. There's nothing like first-hand knowledge, but there is intrigue for further details which the Gazette offers.

So, I offer you a few tidbits that I've ascertained through my years. I will try my best to give you the facts and not embellish, but I'm not making any promises.

Almost every farm had sheep. It was common in the spring to see farmers herd their sheep to town and corral them in the river for a good washing. Clean wool was worth much more. The Gazette highlighted several stories of our farmers and their sheep.

City Markets especially at Christmas were held to showcase fine animals. One such market was held in Pontiac in 1881. "A lamb, the finest exhibited in Pontiac for many years was raised by Cooper Pickering. It was a Southdown dressed 66 pounds. George Pickering showed five choice Cotswold lambs."

Cooper Pickering was from Lincolnshire, England and a sheep farmer there. He bought farmland in Michigan in 1879. George was his son. They had a 200 acre farm on Franklin Road just north of 14 Mile Road.

In July 1883, the Gazette highlighted Henry Grinnell. "He sold his clip of fine wool, weighing 1,647 lbs. at 33 cents a pound. It is pronounced by competent judges the finest lot of wool sold this season." Grinnell raised Rambouillet sheep. Although his 300 acre farm was at Maple and Telegraph, he considered his home Franklin.

"In May 1889, Daniel Broughton, an Englishman, and son had 17 pairs of twins out of 26 ewes. Their lamb, Sampson, 2 months, old weighed 51 1/2 pounds. An application has already been received to show him at the Chicago Exposition next fall. Broughton specialized in Shropshire sheep."

Although Broughton raised sheep, his main business was building carriages. As you know, his home is the Village Offices and his buggy shop is the location of the post office.

Cotswold, Rambouillet, Shropshire and Southdown sheep roamed the pastures. I want to impart my knowledge to you on the varying breeds. Ba-a-a with me.

A Cotswold is a domestic sheep from the United Kingdom. It is a large, white-faced sheep used for cross breeding. It provides both meat and wool. The Rambouillet is a domestic sheep from France. It is a large animal. Both rams and ewes have horns. It is well known for its superior meat and wool production. The Southdown is a small domestic sheep from the United Kingdom. It is highly valued for its meat and fleece and for the improvement of other sheep breeds. And, the Shropshire is a medium-sized, black faced sheep crossed with a white-faced sheep like the Cotswold or Southdown. This breed is raised for its wool and meat.

There were always notices in the paper of people tying the knot. Some of the events had a twist. A marriage listed in the Gazette on 31 December 1882 is one example. "Arthur Bowden and Miss Roberts of Franklin were married by Reverend J.P Gibson on New Year's Eve and just as they were taking the train going west on New Year's Day, Bowden was arrested by his father-in-law for running away with the young lady. Upon examination by Squire Bodine, it was discovered that the contracting parties were both of age and legally married and the old folks went home and the happy couple went on their way rejoicing."

The father-in-law was Noble Roberts, the tinsmith in town. He lived at the corner of German Mill and Kelvin. The Bowdens lived a stone's throw away. He was also the director of the Franklin Band which Arthur Bowden and his brother were members. The couple was married for ten years when Arthur passed away. Three years later, Dellie Roberts Bowden married Arthur's brother Frank. This is small time life.

Another wedding was highlighted in an 1887 article. "The wedding of Mr. Sam Slade and Miss Kittie Buel of Franklin took place at the residence of the bride's father, Dr. J.A. Buel, on Tuesday evening last at 7:30 o'clock. A few personal friends from Detroit and relatives of the family were the only guests. Rev. John Hamilton officiated, and one of the most notable guests was the venerable grandmother of the groom, whose 83 years rest very lightly upon her venerable head. The presents were numerous and costly. The newly

"Have you..."Continued on page 2

HAVE YOU HEARD?

married couple took the 9 o'clock train from this place the same evening for their new home in Detroit, accompanied by the best wish of many warm friends in the vicinity."

This event had less drama than the previously mentioned nuptials. Sam Slade was a music teacher. The couple would have a son, Samuel Buel Slade. He would invent the dry roasted peanut at the very location his parents were married. The next time you walk by the Buel/Slade home at 32712 Franklin Road, you may just view it differently!

The newspaper was full of advertisements, everyday activities, who was in town, who was visiting elsewhere. Seems like there were no secrets. I heard it all! But, the worst news was the passing of our villagers. Here are two accounts of boys who left too soon.

"Guy Van Every, a son of Peter Jr., aged 17, died suddenly. Inflammation of the lungs followed by an attack to the brain. So sudden a death has not occurred in this vicinity for years. The funeral was attended by a large assembly. The school of which he was a member was adjourned by the teacher and marched in procession to the house, thence the church." Gazette February 1881

Guy attended the Brick School at the top of the hill on Franklin Road. The somber procession of family members and students as they trudged down the hill to the Van Every mansion on the east side of Franklin Road at 14 Mile Road is imbedded in my memory. It was a sad day indeed.

Peter Van Every Jr. followed in his father's footsteps as a miller at the family grist mill at 14 Mile and Franklin Roads. He and his wife, Jane, were keepers at their home referred to as the Temperance Hotel located diagonally from his place of work.

Gazette November 1886

"Eddie, son of Mr. Mrs. Daniel Broughton passed away on the evening of 1 November. He had been sick for two months and rapidly failed under a severe attack of typhoid fever. All that medical skill and good care could do was done, but death marked the young man for its victim and there was no remedy. The deceased was 21 years and 6 months lacking 5 days. He was born and always lived in the community. Eddie had endeared himself to a large circle of friends by his generous, jovial disposition. Funeral services were held at the Broughton house. One hundred five carriages were in the sad procession that bore the mortal remains to their quiet resting place in the Franklin Cemetery."

Oh-h-h, it was difficult to read or hear some of the news. It was hard to put people to rest. The cemetery on the hill was growing. Yet, there was still joyful news to share of weddings, good crops, baseball games, socials and such. This wasn't just our small town life. It was life.

DANIEL BROUGHTON HOUSE HISTORIC SIGN DEDICATION

At last, the words for the historic sign in front of the Broughton House have been approved by the Michigan Historic Commission.

The Franklin Historical Society diligently researched the history of the house and its historic significance.

The sign is funded by the descendants of Gini Rodgers, her daughters Ann and Dana Debenham. Gini was the major force in saving the Broughton house from demolition during the 1970's.

The sign has been made and will be shipped shortly. There will be a dedication sometime in the Spring. Stay tuned for details.

RESTROOMS



Franklin Historical Society board members with scrapers, paint brushes and rollers in hand, revitalized the Kreger barn doors and restroom this fall. The 1840's barn and

former pig sty deserved to be preserved.

The restrooms will be further defined.

Typically, an outhouse had a crescent moon on the door. The symbol served a dual purpose. It not only provided ventilation, but also defined the gender use.

In the early days, many people were ill literate. An outhouse with a crescent moon indicated a women's facility; a star was indicative of a men's room.

Now you know! Which symbol tells you where to go?



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:



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HATS OFF TO BEN!

(Ben Franklin, of course!)



This program is a cooperative effort between the Franklin Historical Society and the Franklin Library.

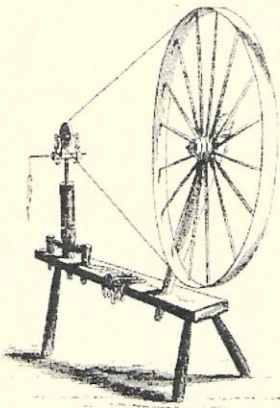
It is a hands on event for elementary age children on Saturday, January 18th (one day after Ben's birthday) at the library from 2 P.M. – 3 P.M. Registration information will be coming soon.

There is a printing project, making a bookmark, solving proverb puzzles, creating a colonial hat, folding a letter into an envelope forming a bucket brigade and much more. Franklin wore many hats. Try one on for size!

A WHILE AGO IN FRANKLIN

In 1940, in a shed behind the Buel /Slade house, Samuel Buel Slade, grandson of Dr. Julian Buel, developed the first dry-roasted peanuts ever made. His business was called Franklin Foods Incorporated.

FAMILY ACQUISITIONS



Through the generosity of Franklin descendants, we have collected a number of items that tell our history. Barb Louie, our archivist, has been busy cataloging all of these acquisitions. She assigns a number to each item, describes it and takes a photo. The information is then logged into Past Perfect software on our computer.

This gives us a record of our archives and artifacts.

A huge thank you to these families who have shared their treasures so we can tell their story.

Berger, Bigelow Bowden, Dunlavy, Forman, Green, Kreger, Pickering, Stehle, Tibbits and Van Every.

THE END OF AN ERA

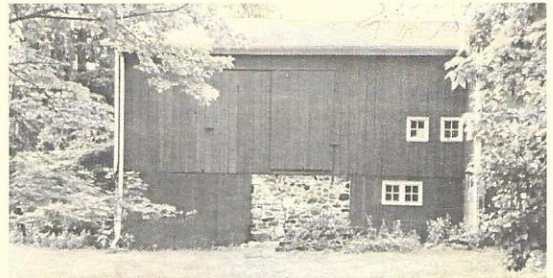
The familiar red barn and white farmhouse on the east side of Franklin Road just north of 14 Mile may soon be just a memory. The 200 acre farm has been sold off in parcels since 1955. It looks like the remaining acreage will be sold to a developer.

The land is rich in history! Cooper Pickering emigrated from Lincolnshire, England and purchased the first 166 acres of Michigan farm land in 1879. Garden crops, grain and hay were grown. Oxen and horses were used to pull the plows. Chickens, cattle and sheep were raised.

Because there were few people who settled in the area, Cooper was able to drive his cattle down the middle of the street to a stockyard on Detroit's west side to be sold.

Life wasn't easy. In the winter time, the house was cold enough to freeze water in a pail. George, Cooper's son, would walk a mile to a one room schoolhouse at the corner of Wing Lake and Maple Roads. At that time there were 30 children and one teacher that taught all six grades. The stones used to build the school were cleared from the neighboring farmer's fields. The original schoolhouse, which still stands, has been designated an historic monument.

Four generations of Pickering's farmed here. In later years, they had an apple orchard. They not only marketed the apples, but also made apple cider.



AND THE BEGINNING OF ANOTHER ONE

The absence of the house and barn and the memories attached to them will be missed. However, their stories will live on at the Franklin Historical Museum. Through the generosity of the Bill and Laura Pickering family and FHS purchases, we are recreating the Pickering Parlor. It will include a Victorian sofa, tables, chairs, lamps and other household treasures related to the Pickering family.

We are excited to share their stories and our history with you!

FRANKLIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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FRANKLIN DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE

The Franklin Village Council is beginning the review of plans for changing the village center streetscape. It's time to fix the somewhat shabby appearance of the village center right of way. A special committee appointed earlier this year has developed a recommendation which is the basis for this review. Potential things that could change include sidewalks, trees, plantings and lighting. The Historical Society Board will be providing input as the process continues. A proposed timeline includes two public meetings to get ideas from Villagers. While no dates for these meetings have been set, interested people should watch for village announcements and get involved. The Historical Society supports upgrading the appearance of publicly owned land while preserving the historic integrity of our downtown.



FAMILY COCOA AND CRAFT GATHERING

The Franklin Historical Society is hosting an old fashion family cocoa and craft gathering on **Sunday, December 15th from 4 P.M. – 6 P.M.** at the Kreger Community Center.

The split rail fences will sparkle with white lights and red bows. Wreaths will make the barn doors festive. A raised fire pit and hot chocolate will warm your soul. Decorate a cookie, do a tin punch project, make a snowman, top, whirly gig and ball in a cup. Admission is an item to be donated to Haven of Oakland County. Check their web site for their needs.

Please join us for some old time fun and comradery! Please register by sending a note to info@franklin-history.org.