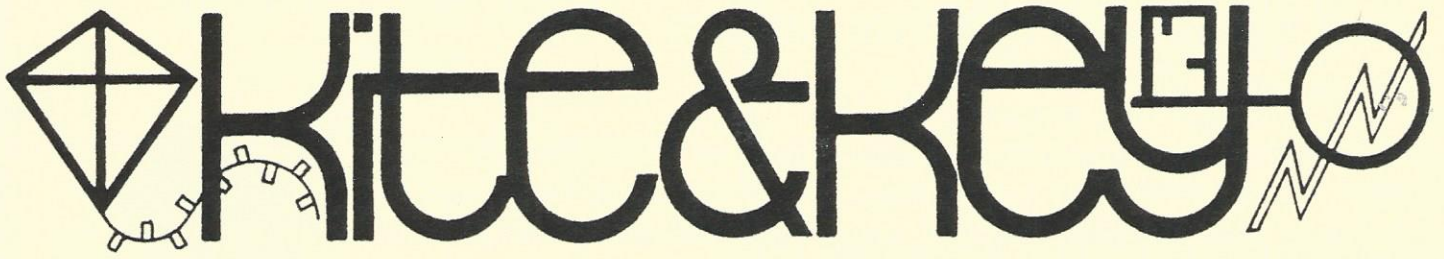


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Franklin Historical Society Newsletter

MAY 2017

## WITHIN MY RINGS

Spring has arrived in our village. I can hear the woodpeckers hammering away in nearby trees. The robins, chickadees and nuthatches have found their niche in my branches and are entertaining us with their songs. Soon my white flowers will be blooming and the hummingbirds will come calling. Ah-h, spring at last!

The road in front of me, Franklin Road, is rid of ice and snow and is now filled with muddy ruts. It is a struggle for a team of horses to negotiate the steep hill going up to the cemetery. The trip back down is also a challenge as the horse's hooves and wagon wheels sink into the mud.

Animals are coming out of hibernation. One notable sign is the odor of the skunk. It was a welcome aroma to young Arnold Bingham. Now, I'm getting ahead of myself in the timeline because Arnold wasn't school age for some time, but I just can't resist to share this story even though it didn't happen concurrently with the rest of this text. On his journey to school, Arnold would attempt to startle the striped creature. In his efforts, he would be sprayed and consequently sent home to rid himself of the smell. I'd say that Arnold used some drastic measures to avoid a day in the classroom!

I can hear the buzzing of Frances Xavier Stehle's sawmill on 14 Mile Road in Bloomfield. With spring in the air, there is work to be done and there will be plenty of it. Down the road is Peter Van Every Jr. getting the grist mill in order. His father, Peter Sr., passed away recently in a mysterious buggy accident. Seems he headed out of town with a large sum of money which was missing when he was found. Now, there's another story to be explored at some point. The John German mill is in full swing. The Bigelows at 14 Mile and Inkster are busy making bricks. Villagers are beginning to use his building materials in their homes. George Congleton keeps constructing and repairing carriages as well as making household utensils in his blacksmith shop. The village is participating in a spring awakening.

I awake to the roosters crow at sunrise and I hear the hens cluck all day. The livery stable is just north of me about where your jewelry store is now. The horses stomp their feet and give out an occasional howdy with their neigh. Dairy farms are all around me.

Young and old bustle about doing their shopping, tending chores, going to school and exchanging gossip. Sometimes I wonder how they can even understand one another. You see, not only did people arrive here from New York and New England, but they also came from other countries like Germany, England and Ireland. So, you have Otto Berger and Frances Xavier Stehle speaking in a German dialect while trying to converse with Henry Cox or John German or Cooper Pickering with an English accent and then there's Michael Burns and Samuel Beatty with an Irish brogue. I overheard some rather colorful encounters.

Most families were large. It's not uncommon for me to see a mother with eight to ten of her brood following along behind her. Of course, infant mortality was high. Mothers died during childbirth or from complications afterward. Henry Cox, a native of England, lost his wife with the birth of their daughter Grace.

Families were plagued by disease. I well remember the Beatty family, Irish immigrants. Within a month, they lost five of their children to diphtheria. What a tearful time it was for all of us.

Boys from Franklin/Bloomfield continue to enlist in Father Abraham's Army. The Hollingshead brothers enlisted on the same day in the 22nd Michigan Infantry commanded by former governor, Moses Wisner. Unfortunately, John would contract typhoid fever. I recall the day that he was put to rest in our beloved cemetery. Other soldiers would join John and his brother William.

On the home front, woman are making care packages to send to loved ones on the battlefield. Rachel Van Every and other young girls are writing letters to their beaus and flocking to the post office in hopes of getting them answered. You can bet that wedding bells will be ringing in the village when the young men return home. More about that in my future reveals.

So, that is a spring in our village. People going about their business, kids going to school, boys going off to war. The birds are singing, the crops are growing and we are making the best of what we've got. And, yet there is more to tell, after all, we are still a young village.

## THE SECRET LIFE OF AN OBJECT

Do you want to hear a story? We've got plenty to tell!

We've been pulled from museum exhibits, dug up on village grounds, discovered in archival files and hidden in boxes. We're excited to get our day in the spotlight because we have some remarkable stories to share.

We all have our secrets and together we've made history. . .Franklin history!

Stop by the museum on Thursday, June 8th at 7 P.M. for the opening of the exhibit at our annual meeting to unlock our secrets!

You won't be disappointed!



## FRANKLIN FARMS BARN RESTORATION

Franklin's Historic District Commission has nearly completed a study justifying the preservation of the barn at the Franklin Farms condominium property located off Telegraph between 13 and 14 Mile Roads. The next step is gaining Village Council approval and working with the condo association to save the barn. The Franklin Historical Society enthusiastically supports this effort to retain this notable structure.



*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](mailto:info@franklin-history.org)  
Contributors: Bill & Ann Lamott

## FRANKLIN COMMUNITY CENTER PROJECT

The Franklin Community Center project is in its last phase. The barn floor has been reinforced and a new overhead beam will be installed this spring. The doors will also be repaired. When this work is completed, the barn will be done.

A revised landscape plan has been developed and is currently making its way through the Village site plan approval process. Major changes include replacing the gravel pathways with exposed aggregate concrete and adding a flagstone patio behind the house. With some luck and a little more money, the entire project will be done this year!

## AWHILE AGO IN FRANKLIN

Through the double doors, Congleton may be seen working on a lightweight buggy. Curved pieces of hickory wood hang over his head, drying. Congleton makes buggies for farmers who can afford to keep a fast trotter in the barn next to their team of work horses or oxen used for heavy hauling.

## WHO "WOOD" HAVE THOUGHT. . .

that our circa 1860 catalpa tree that provided a spreading canopy, uniquely twisted branches, profuse spring flowers and cigar shaped seed pods would continue to provide the gift of giving to our village!

Located behind the Franklin library, the tree has offered a habitat for the sphinx moth, birds and squirrels and provided sustenance to passing hummingbirds. A tea from its bark has been a treatment for malaria and whooping cough. Flowers and seed pods have been used as a light sedative and the leaves have provided a poultice for wounds and abrasions.

The stories within the catalpa's rings give us insights into the people, their daily life struggles and successes.

And now, after its demise, it's value continues! The bowls of history were just the beginning of its offerings. Catalpa wood makes beautiful furniture. You can own a table, coasters, spoons, picture frames and candle holders all made from Franklin's historic tree.

Check out the small table and children's stepstool at the circulation desk in the Franklin library. They were made from the catalpa tree!

## DONATIONS

- 24th Michigan Infantry book (Edgar Oren Durfee, buried in the Franklin cemetery was a member of this unit)
- Photo of Frances Xavier Stehle who owned a sawmill on 14 Mile Rd. and family history information donated by great great grandson, Jeff Stehle
- Letters written by Josiah Barkley who is buried in the Franklin cemetery. The letters were written in the early 1800's. Donated by Marian Mallinger, a descendant

## FRANKLIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY CALENDAR

- **Monthly meetings the 2nd Thursday of the month excluding July and August** at the FHS museum 26165 Kirk Lane
- **April 13th** - Daisy troop visit to the historical museum
- **May 18th** - Plant sale by preorders - Download order form from [www.franklin-history.org](http://www.franklin-history.org) Pick up at FHS museum 26165 Kirk Lane
- **TBA** - walking/cemetery tour
- **June 8th** - Annual meeting The program is The Secret Life of an Object at FHS museum 26165 Kirk Lane
- **June 10th** - Franklin Community Center Events to benefit restoration of the Kreger barn and complete landscaping Franklin Community Center (Kreger house) 26225 Carol 5K run, walk, strut your mutt, kid's dash and pancake breakfast. **Register at [www.a2racemanagement.com](http://www.a2racemanagement.com) and for more details check out [www.franklin-history.org](http://www.franklin-history.org)**
- **September 30th** - Scarecrow building workshop at Franklin Community Center 26225 Carol

## INVEST IN THE NEXT GENERATION

The existing playground equipment at the Franklin Community Church has entertained our kids for years. Now it is time to update the aging playground for the next generation.

You can help with this project by making a donation to the Franklin Community Church Playground - 26425 Wellington Road - Franklin, Michigan 48025.

For more information, visit their website:  
[www.GoFundMe.com/Franklin-Playground](http://www.GoFundMe.com/Franklin-Playground)

## MUSEUM GROUNDS FACELIFT - 26165 THIRTEEN MILE AT KIRK

Tree trimming, weeding and mulching at the FHS Museum has spruced up the landscape.  
Check out the new look!

[www.franklin-history.org](http://www.franklin-history.org)  
Like us on Facebook!

FRANKLIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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## PLANT SALE!

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

Orders must be  
received by **May 14th**

Plants available  
**Thursday, May 18th**

### FRANKLIN COMMUNITY CENTER EVENTS SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 2017

#### ARE YOU READY FOR THE 9TH ANNUAL EVENT?

Registration forms for Ben's 5K bolt, 5K frolic, strut your mutt and kid's dash are available at the Franklin Village Office or [www.a2racemanagement.com](http://www.a2racemanagement.com). You can also register the day of the event beginning at 7 A.M.

All events begin in front of the Franklin Community Center at 26225 Carol St. The kid's dash starts at 8 A.M. Ben's 5k bolt, 5k frolic and strut your mutt begin at 8:30.

The pancake breakfast at the Franklin/Bingham fire dept. is held from 8:30 - 11 A.M.

**BEN'S 5K BOLT** - Stay the course up hill and down in scenic Franklin.

The varied terrain can be a toughie for the beginning runner and no "piece of cake" for the seasoned ones.

register at [a2racemanagement.com](http://a2racemanagement.com)

The cost is \$35 and includes a T shirt and pancake breakfast. Fees are \$5 less if you choose a vintage shirt rather than a new one. Prizes are awarded for first, second and third place males and females.

**5K FROLIC** - Mosey through the tree lined streets one step at a time.

Escape the concrete jungle and enjoy the up north feel as you walk in the village of Franklin.

register at [a2racemanagement.com](http://a2racemanagement.com)

Cost is \$35 includes a T shirt and pancake breakfast

**STRUT YOUR MUTT** - Are you gonna strut your mutt or what?

Round up your four-legged friend and strut your stuff. The first twenty five strutters receive a doggie bag.

Register at [a2racemanagement.com](http://a2racemanagement.com)

The cost is \$15 per dog and includes one breakfast

**KID'S DASH** - Get ready, Get set, DASH the one third of a mile course!

Register at [a2racemanagement.com](http://a2racemanagement.com)

The cost is \$15 and includes one breakfast and a kite

**PANCAKE BREAKFAST** - Enjoy breakfast at the Franklin fire station from 8:30 to 11:00 A.M.

Can't find your sneakers to run, walking not your thing, don't have a four-legged friend, not feeling like a kid anymore? No worries! Stop by the Franklin fire station on June 10th for some pancakes, sausage, orange juice and coffee prepared by Franklin Boy Scout troop 1699.

**No registration necessary**

**Adults \$8 Children (4 - 12) \$5 Children 3 and under FREE**