



DEXTER AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

SPRING 2012

Letter from the President

As your new President, I have enjoyed talking with most of you over the past couple months, and I look forward to trying to move our Historical Society forward to meet the many challenges that lie ahead. Our Museum remains our real "gem" and we need to keep it running. Thanks to the Heritage Guild for the dollars they raise and the volunteers that keep things going there.

Gordon Hall is now a BIG community resource and exciting things are happening in 2012. It feels good that we have been able to save this valuable property. Our biggest challenge is to pay off the \$300,000 mortgage. We are making strides in the right direction. With more fundraisers and help from our supporters, we will achieve that goal. We now have a Master Plan for Gordon Hall, and once our mortgage is paid off, we can move ahead with its restoration.

Bene Fusilier, President DAHS&M

Museum Notes

The Museum opens for the 2012 season on May 4th. It has been cleaned and various displays have been polished and updated. Special events for the summer include the Antiques Appraisal Clinic on May 5th sponsored by the Heritage Guild, Museum Tours for Society members on May 6th, during the August Dexter Daze a quilt show and a 'garage sale' on the Museum lawn (*Any member who wishes may bring a table and set up their sale items. Please donate 10% of the day's sales to help the Museum.*)

With the Pioneer Arts Fair being canceled due to the Dexter area tornado, expected Museum funds are diminished. At the same time, it is a priority that the Museum building and its historic elements be kept in repair. Anything you can do to help is appreciated. The

next big Museum project is renewing the protection of the historic stained glass windows. From the St. Andrew's United Church of Christ history book, we learn that the "plain glass windows in the church building were removed in the summer of 1915 and replaced with art glass windows donated in memory of departed loved ones and bearing their names." When visiting the main room of the Museum, you may read the family names on the windows--one of the nicest historic remnants of those families of early Dexter. Over 30 years ago, protective material was put over the windows on the outside to prevent breakage but, over the years, it has darkened and its protection against breakage most likely weakened, and it needs to be replaced. There is a new product that does not yellow over time, will give more light in the display room, and will greatly reveal the beauty of the windows. We are seeking estimates to remove the old material, do the necessary refurbishment of the window frames once they are uncovered, and install the new material. With the generous assistance of the Heritage Guild it is hoped the project can be done. This may be by doing the windows on one building wall at a time or all the windows at one time. If you are able to contribute to this special cause please send your donation to the Museum earmarked for window covering fund. As thank you, each donor name will be displayed appropriately in the Museum.

Please check our web site for further updates on Museum activities.

Voices of the Past:

The Saga of Gordon Hall

James Baldwin Parker is a resident of Webster Township and author of three books on Webster Township families, as well as one on Webster Church. He is now working on a new book titled above. He has done extensive

research at the Bentley Library, in the files here at the Museum and has interviewed various persons at the University of Michigan or other local experts on Gordon Hall and the Dexter Family. Norma McAllister's book on Judge Samuel William Dexter has been quoted, with her permission, and Frank Wilhelm has added his expertise on the Dexter Family. Through the pages of the book, we learn the history of the Dexter Family and the three houses built for Judge Dexter, but he concentrates on Gordon Hall through its different owners from 1840 to 2011. Plans are to publish the book this spring or early summer through Thompson-Shore here in Dexter.

We are hoping to purchase a quantity of the books at cost that we will then sell at \$25 each, with the proceeds going to the Gordon Hall Fund. We are seeking donations to enable us to purchase sufficient books to sell at our various events as well as through the Museum Gift Shop. Donations should be made to the "Dexter Area Historical Society and Museum" (a nonprofit organization) so that you will be able to use it as a deduction on your taxes. There will be more information later, but we thought you would like to know about this project. Contact Nancy Van Blaricum at nanvanb2@yahoo.com or call the Museum (734) 426-2519 and leave a message.

The Union Base Ball Club in Dexter

We're getting ready to begin our first season of vintage base ball in Dexter. We have a roster of 12 gentlemen eager to get out in their historic uniforms and play the game of base ball (*yes, two words*) the way it was played during the 1860's. With the support of the Dexter Area Historical Society, we are very excited to immerse our fans in this game the way it was played when it was just becoming a popular organized sport.

We still have supporting roles that we are looking to fill for anyone interested. The game is about recreating a historically accurate game and as a result is great for anyone interested in sports or history. We will need helpers to direct traffic and spectators, and to hand out programs; and maybe an umpire.

We hope to see many spectators out at our games in front of Gordon Hall. It will be a free, family-friendly activity unlike what most people have known as baseball. We have 14 games

throughout the summer, with many of them in Dexter or a short drive away. We cannot wait for the season to start and hope that the Dexter community enjoys the game as much as we do!

Contact: Donovan Hill

donovanehill@gmail.com>

Home Schedule

6/2 Royal Oak, 6/10 Chelsea,
6/23 Wyandotte, 7/29 Kalamazoo,
9/8 Walker Tavern

Pioneer Arts Fair

In the past thirty-nine years, the Pioneer Arts Fair has survived snowstorms, ice storms, and rainstorms, but the show always went on. However, a tornado is a different challenge. It succeeded in causing us to cancel altogether, definitely a FIRST! Our hearts and prayers and donations go out to the many people who lost homes and possessions, as well as those who had extensive damage and downed trees. The people of Dexter have proven themselves to be a close-knit community of people who care about each other.

Special thanks and apologies to all the artists who had packed up and were ready to come to the Fair, but then had to unpack which is not a small task. Special thanks to all of the fine cooks who prepared goodies for the Bake Sale! We imagine that you shared them with someone who was helping with the cleanup or an unfortunate family that lost all household goods.

We will be back in 2013 to celebrate our FORTIETH YEAR! The Dexter Area Museum is a village gem, and we want to continue to support the maintenance of this fine collection. So, do come and see us in March 2013. The exact date will be announced in the fall.

Ginny Ryan, Chair, Pioneer Arts Fair

Upcoming Events

May 4 - *Museum Opening*

May 5 - *Antique Appraisal Clinic*

Saturday from 10:00am to 3:30pm

To schedule an appointment call 734-424-9998

May 6 - *Special for Society Members & Family*

Sunday from 2:00pm to 4:00pm Guided tours of Museum. The Train Engineer will be there.

Refreshments will be served.

June 8-10 – Civil War Days at Gordon Hall

August 11 – Dexter Daze Gordon Hall Tours

**WANTED
GORDON HALL EVENT COORDINATOR**

The DAHS&M is looking for someone with experience in promotions, public relations and weddings to serve as Event Coordinator for Gordon Hall. Those interested should contact Paul Bishop (BisIns@yahoo.com), chair of the Gordon Hall Management Team.

2012 Gordon Hall Tours

We will be doing the tours again this year. Save the date of Saturday, August 11th. Nancy Van Blaricum is rewriting some parts of the script to include new information from the Master Plan and the research James Parker has done for his new book (see *information elsewhere in this Newsletter*). We are considering beginning at 1:00pm instead of noon (so we won't start until after the lunch hour). More information on the times will be coming later.

Please email: DexMuseum@aol.com indicating your interest in volunteering to help us. Thank you in advance.

Nancy J. Van Blaricum

DAHS&M 2012 Officers and Board of Directors

President	Bene Fusilier	426-8972
Vice-Presidents	Jim Smith	426-8885
	Bev Hill	426-4767
Treasurer	Julie Knight	426-4961
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Representatives

Dexter Schools	Sybil Van Houten	426-8928
Dexter Township	Brian Diskin	323-3491
Lima Township	Neil Adams	426-5086
Scio Township	Ina Germain	426-2079
GH Mgt. Team	Paul Bishop	476-0515

Museum Co-Directors

Nina Rackham	426-2494
Alice Pastalan	810-231-2511

Genealogist Nancy Van Blaricum 426-3341

The spring annual Antique Appraisal Clinic will be held Saturday, May 5th from 10:00am to 3:30pm at the Dexter Area Museum. The appraisers are from DuMouchelle's Art Gallery in Detroit and have knowledge covering many categories. Their expertise covers paintings, carvings, coins, watches, Chinese artwork, dolls, old toys, collectables, china, firearms, swords, small pieces of furniture, and more. Admission is free. Fifteen-minute appointments allow for a verbal appraisal with an asking donation of \$7.00 per item appraised.

Proceeds and donations benefit the operation and preservation of the Dexter Area Museum. Due to the stairs entering the Museum, hand-carried items are best. Please call 734-424-9998 to schedule an appointment or for additional information. On Saturday, May 5th please call the Museum at 734-426-2519. Appointments are going fast due to an ad in the April Courant magazine.



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SOCIETY AND MUSEUM**

**3443 Inverness St.
Dexter, MI 48130**

(734) 426-2519

DexMuseum@aol.com
<http://DexterMuseum.org>

The cost of mailing our Newsletters is getting very expensive. Soon we will need to do this by e-mail only. Please make sure we have your up-to-date e-mail address. Please send e-mail addresses to: Dexmuseum@aol.com

Civil War Days at Gordon Hall

In commemoration of the Civil War's 150th anniversary, the DAHS&M will present **Civil War Days at Gordon Hall** on Friday - Sunday, June 8th - 10th.

On Friday evening there will be a free concert performed by a local band on the front lawn of Gordon Hall. Please bring blankets and chairs for seating. The group will wear period dress, and perform 1860's music. The St. Patrick's Boychoir, a group returning by popular demand, will join them. A historical narrative will accompany the music.

Saturday and Sunday the military and civilian encampments will be open for visits. In addition to the troops, there will be quartermaster's wagons and artillery firings. This year there will be a Confederate representation with a visit from Confederate artillery. Activities in civilian camp and around Gordon Hall will include the demonstrations, children's games, storytelling and a scavenger hunt. The reading of the "roll" of local GAR soldiers will take place both days. Sons of Union Veterans members will assist families researching their connections to Civil War soldiers.

Saturday includes living historians, minstrel music, a poet/bard, a bones workshop and a period fashion review and tea. Available lunch and supper reflect period fare. President and Mrs. Lincoln will arrive, coming through town via horse and carriage, where from the front porch of Gordon Hall he will address the crowd, bringing greetings from Washington and posing for photos with guests.

Sunday begins with a morning service at Forest Lawn cemetery. This is followed by a gospel sing back on the lawn of Gordon Hall. Activities of the day

include a pie auction, a pig roast, an old time base ball game and horseshoe contest. The day will conclude with announcing contest winners and a mock mortgage burning.

1862 "Experience" – An Evening with President and Mrs. Lincoln

The fundraising dinner will take place on Saturday, June 9th. This experience will include: A Period Quintet, Conversation with the President and First Lady, An 1862 White House Menu, Lantern Tours of Military and Civilian Encampments and an Evening Farewell. Tickets, \$125 per guest must be purchased in advance.

Reservation request forms are available from Society board members, or on the home page of the DAHS&M website. Mail request forms and payment to Donna Fisher, 3035 Inverness, Dexter, MI 48130. Phone inquiries: 734-649-5169. All proceeds to go toward Gordon Hall mortgage reduction. Please sell a table of eight or combine with others to fill a table. DAHS&M is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization and tickets may be tax deductible.

DAHS&M Civil War Days Raffle

Thanks to Society member, Sharon Wheeler, we will again raffle a beautiful handmade patriotic theme quilt. Tickets are available from Sharon or Donna Fisher and it is hoped that each Society member will sell twenty-four tickets. Ticket prices are \$1.00 per ticket or \$5.00 for 6 tickets. Prizes: 1st Patriotic Quilt, 2nd Dexter History Coverlet, 3rd Hardbound Biography of Judge Dexter. The drawing will be held Sunday, June 10th on the front porch of Gordon Hall. Parties need not be present to win.

Volunteers Needed for a Successful Civil War Days Event

Volunteers Needed: Plans are well underway and we are beginning enlist and place volunteers. We need your help. Please contact Carol Jones at 734-426-8114 if you can contribute a couple of hours or more.

Pie Baking Volunteers: We need you to bake and donate a pie or two for the Pie Auction. For further information contact Donna Fisher at 734-649-5169.

Items Needed for Civil War Days Fashion Review and Tea

Many service items are needed to create a period setting for our guests. We would like any kind of white, flowered or pastel "period" looking item. We plan to keep all donated items out at Gordon Hall so they may be used for future functions.

Items needed:

- any size table cloth (white or pastel, flowered is ok)
- cloth napkins (white or pastel, flowered is ok)
- tea cups and saucers
- teapots
- "silver" tea spoons and serving utensils
- sugar bowls and creamers
- quart size mason jars, the older the better
- service items- platters, tea trays, tiered servers

If you are able to permanently donate any of the above items, please contact Bev Hill at 734-426-4767 or hillb@dexterschools.org.

Items Needed for Civil War Days Fundraising Dinner

A few items are needed to complete the décor for Saturday evening.

Items needed:

- old time looking oil or kerosene lanterns
- 6 gas lamps
- 3 long runner rugs
- large pictures in antique looking frames
- large portrait/bust of President Lincoln
- 10 ground mount flood (spot) lights
- old chandelier
- loaned outdoor benches
- cut flowers.

If you are able to loan any of the above items, please contact Donna Fisher at 734-649-5169 or donnadlf@gmail.com