

Dexter's Civil War Days The Beginning and The End



A historical view of Dexter's Civil War Days follows. As the American Civil War took place over a 5-year span, 1861-1865, 2011 saw the kick-off of the Civil War Sesquicentennial around the country. Following discussions with Civil War re-enactors from the 4th Michigan Infantry, it was decided that Dexter should host a Civil War Days event with all proceeds dedicated to the reduction of the Gordon Hall mortgage. In January 2011, Paul Bishop, Chair of the Gordon Hall Management Team, recruited co-chairs for an event committee. They traveled to many events throughout Michigan and Ohio, and began to form a plan for what Civil War Days in Dexter might be.

As a guide and focus, they set a mission for themselves: *The event should be as authentic as practical, affordable, educational, family oriented with programming for young and old, provide exposure for Gordon Hall and all proceeds should be dedicated to Gordon Hall mortgage reduction.* Thus, the planning began.

In June of 2011, the night before Civil War Days - 1861 opened, many wondered if the proceeds would even cover event expenses. They did and in addition, a sizable bite was taken out of the mortgage balance. The Society was on a 5-year plan.

We Hope to See You, your Family and Friends during Dexter's Civil War Days

Last summer saw the closing of the fourth event, Civil War Days - 1864. With an emphasis on the Battle of Spotsylvania, a display dedicated to

those from Dexter who served in the Civil War, and tours through both military and civilian camps. The event had once again raised a sizeable payment to apply to the Gordon Hall mortgage, which became doubly sizable with the generous match from Dr. Wallace and Bene Fusilier.

We have moved from having mortgage payments to fundraising dedicated to the restoration of Gordon Hall to the splendor of which we all dream. Civil War Days now moves into its fifth and final year, therefore, any profits from the event will now be dedicated to the fundraising campaign needed to meet the matching funds commitment of any restoration grants received.

Please join us in Dexter for the culmination of a 5-year observance of the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War from June 12-14, 2015.

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Annual Meeting – Important Election

This year's Annual Meeting of the Membership will be held at Gordon Hall on Sunday, June 28, 2015 at 2:00 pm. An important part of the meeting will be the election of a new 12-member Board of Directors. Any member of the Society is eligible for nomination as a candidate if their membership is current and they have been a member for at least one-year.

As per the revised Bylaws adopted in 2014, in the future, 4 out of the 12 Board positions will up for election. However, this year in order to establish staggered terms the election will result in 4 candidates serving a 3-year term, 4 candidates serving a 2-year term, and 4 candidates serving a 1-year term.

If you would like to be considered for nomination as a candidate for the Board of Directors please send a message to the Nominating Committee at dexterareahistoricalociety@gmail.com or call Jim Smith, Committee Chair at 734-426-8885.

A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Members,
We are sad to say that June Doletzky, one of our long time DAHS members passed away on May 7. At 97 years of age June was still one of our best supporters and a devout attendee at all our events. We will miss her smiling face at our future events.

The Doletzky families have been involved in the DAHS and Museum through the years. Neil (Doletzky) Frank was one of the first presidents of the DAHS. Nina (Doletzky) Rackham has served as president of the DAHS, as well as, director and curator of the Museum. Earl Doletzky (June’s husband) served as Dexter Township representative for many years. Julie (Doletzky) Knight has served as our treasurer for many years. Thank you to all the Doletzky’s for your many years of service to the DAHS.

Bene Fusilier, President DAHS

Dexter Daze Gordon Hall Raffle

Our Gordon Hall Raffle Committee is working hard selling tickets for our summer Gordon Hall Raffle. The lucky winner will be announced during Dexter Daze on August 15, 2015 at the Gazebo in Monument Park. Don’t miss out. Join in the fun with your purchase of a ticket! Tickets are \$10 each or a pack of 5 for \$40.

GRAND PRIZE \$10,000
2nd Prize \$1,000 3rd Prize \$500
\$500 Bonus added to Grand Prize if Winning
Ticket is present at Drawing
License # R-20673

Only 4000 Tickets Will Be Sold. If less than 1000 tickets are sold, a 50/50 drawing with a minimum Grand Prize of \$3000 will be conducted. All proceeds are used to support Gordon Hall. Winners will be responsible for taxes.

Society Receives State Grant

The Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) has announced that the Dexter Area Historical Society is one of seven nonprofit historically designated structures and neighborhoods throughout the state that will benefit from a collective \$600,000 in grant funding to rehabilitate historic structures. The Dexter Historical Society has been awarded \$75,000 to be used for the exterior rehabilitation of the National Registered Historic Gordon Hall.

“Historic buildings, downtowns and neighborhoods are key to maintaining a sense of place in our communities,” MSHDA Executive Director Kevin Eisenheimer said. “Historic structures and neighborhoods create character in small towns and cities alike. These Michigan communities will benefit for many years from the hard work of the neighborhood organizations that are taking on these rehab projects with the help of the Heritage Restoration Program.”

The Michigan Heritage Restoration Program was created by the legislature for the fiscal year of 2015 as a competitive grant program to assist with funding of restoration and preservation projects in historically designated neighborhoods. Organizations receiving the grants will contribute 40 percent of the project cost. The Dexter Area Historical Society will soon begin fundraising to meet their \$50,000 match requirement.

Nonprofit neighborhood organizations statewide were eligible to apply for grants. MSHDA’s State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) received 18 applications and was pleased to award Dexter one of the seven grants. “We know nonprofit organizations throughout the state work hard to preserve historic site in their communities and funding is often an issue. This was a great opportunity to provide support to much-needed rehabilitation efforts.”

The Dexter Area Historical Society paid off their \$1.5 million mortgage this past year and now is pleased to be awarded this grant and excited to start the restoration of Gordon Hall.

Heritage Guild News

The Heritage Guild Antique Appraisal Clinic was a success! The guild was booked with appointments and many beautiful and unique items came through the Museum doors.

Watch upcoming newsletters to learn when the next scheduled appraisal clinic will be held. It is a great time to find out the value of items you may have received from a distant relative.

Society Notes

- Please thank Paul Bishop, Jim Wheeler and Mike Williams for taking care of the grounds at Gordon Hall and at the Museum.
- If you enjoy being outside, drop by Gordon Hall some evening and take a moment to water the flowers. It is such a peaceful place and makes a nice escape from a busy day.
- Please recognize Jim Smith for his willingness to help with the newsletter whenever he is asked.
- Kudos goes out to Bene Fusilier for sponsoring and overseeing the spring-cleaning of Gordon Hall. Bene has done this for several years in anticipation of coming events. We appreciate you Bene!
- We are grateful for such lovely grounds at Gordon Hall. Thank you to Jan Lyons, Sharon Wheeler, and Bene Fusilier for assembling the beautiful plantings, and Ina Germain and Bev Hill who helped with the planting.
- Check in with Captain Donovan Hill, 734-664-9132, to find out season play dates for the Dexter Union Base Ball Team. They will present an exhibition on Sunday, June 14th, during Civil War Days.
- Sending many thanks to those contributing to the Society newsletter. Timely sharing of information helps to keep us connected and working together!

Gordon Hall, a Brief History

The stately Greek revival style mansion built by Dexter's founding father, Judge Samuel Dexter, in 1841 that stands just outside the Village was named Gordon Hall after his mother's family. It was officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972. In 2001 the Dexter Area Historical Society and Museum learned of the University of Michigan's plan to sell the Hall and in 2005 submitted a winning bid of \$1.5 million for the purchase of the 9000 square foot Gordon Hall and its surrounding 67 acres.

It is difficult for non-profits to secure grant funding for preservation and restoration of historic sites, if the site is under mortgage. And while the Society has applied for grants, developed a Master Plan, and has performed regular maintenance, until the debt was paid, it was difficult to envision and realize the renovations to come. In October of 2014, a dream came true. The Gordon Hall mortgage was paid in full, due to the generous donations of many and the Fusilier Grant Challenge.

Gordon Hall Tours

The 2015 Dexter Daze Tour of Gordon Hall will be on Saturday, August 15th from noon to 3 pm. We are looking for persons to serve as guides and we are hoping you might be interested in joining us. It is an opportunity to learn more about Gordon Hall and help out the Historical Society. Volunteers are needed throughout the house, some telling about the various rooms in the hall, and others simply guiding the guests between areas. We are hoping to hear from our past guides as well, but it would help us to find those interested early. If you can help, please let me know at DexMuseum@aol.com or call the Museum (734-426-2519) and leave a message.

Nancy Van Blaricum, Volunteer Coordinator,
Gordon Hall Tours

Dexter Area Museum

This year the Museum opening was a fundraiser for the Museum entitled, *A Night at the Museum*. As the Artisan Fair was not held this year, it was necessary to find other means to raise funds for the operation and maintenance of the Museum.

Thank you to all who attended, sent donations and contributed food or cookies to make this event successful. We would also like to thank our two local authors, Jim Parker and Nick Marsh, for being present to discuss their books.

If you were not able to attend, you may have missed the exhibit put together by our curators, Nina Rackham and Sue Behnke, with help from Jan Stagg. It is titled *Clothing Through the Ages* and displays numerous outfits accompanied by a descriptive narrative regarding each piece.

Please make plans to come during Museum hours on Fridays or Saturdays from 1:00 – 3:00 pm to see these interesting items.

Civil War Days - Volunteers

The success of this event is dependent on volunteers for various tasks. If you would like to participate this year, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Bene Fusilier, by phone at 426-8972 or by email at benefusilier@att.net. A place is available for all that are interested!

Civil War Days (Continued from page 1)

Some of the highlights planned for Civil War Days include tours through Union, Confederate and civilian Camps, period musicians, children's period games and stories, interactive Cricket, Horseshoe and Base Ball games, and our fundraising dinner, "An Evening of Fine Arts at the White House". Battery B will return for artillery displays and firings, the 4th Michigan has organized a reenactment skirmish.

Historical information regarding The GAR will be displayed in the south room of Gordon Hall. There will be a pie auction, storytelling with Barb

Locks and our traditional quilt raffle. This year's quilt might be the best ever with its soft, light hues and its intricate pattern.

CWD - Friday Evening Concert

This year's celebration will begin with Dexter's Hotel Hickman providing a Friday night barbecue for purchase. Meals will be available at 6:00 pm. Around 7:00 pm a patriotic concert begins, lead by Jenny Van Houten's second grade students, followed by the "Peace Jubilee Band" playing authentic civil war brass instruments.

Bring your lawn chair or blanket, have a delicious meal and relax for a fresh air concert. CWD Raffle tickets will be available. There is no entry fee and ample parking is available for your convenience.

Civil War Days**Saturday Fundraising Dinner**

Tickets for the final year of the Civil War fundraising dinner are available. This is our last dinner in the five-year observance of the sesquicentennial of the American Civil War. Titled, "An Evening of Fine Arts at the White House", it will be an evening of lighthearted entertainment. The ticket price remains \$135 with a sizeable amount being tax exempt. All proceeds are dedicated to Gordon Hall maintenance and restoration.

Ina Germain and Jan Lyons are working on setting a most elegant scene, a historical dinner menu is being researched by The Cedars and Abby Fisher has planned a delightful evening of fine arts performances. Why not organize a table of eight for Saturday, June 13, valet park at The Cedars beginning at 5:15 pm and sit down at 6:30 pm for an evening like no other?

Please call Donna Fisher at 734-649-5169 for reservations and additional information. Forms are in local businesses, at the museum or can be downloaded from the Historical Society web site, www.dextermuseum.org.

CWD - Historic Display Room

The "Grand Army of the Republic" was a fraternal organization composed of veterans of the Union Army, Union Navy, Marines and the U. S. Revenue Cutter Service who served in the American Civil War for the Northern/Federal forces. The Dexter Post was the 330th Post formed in Michigan and was named the H. H. Jeffords Post in honor of Col. Harrison H. Jeffords. He died in the Battle of the Wheat Field in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1863.

During Civil War Days at Gordon Hall, we will be displaying some articles from the Museum as well as the books we have from GAR Post #330. The membership book contains the names and vital information of each Veteran who lived in the Dexter area after serving in the Civil War.

Please come and see the display in the South Room of Gordon Hall on Saturday, June 13th from 9 to 5 and Sunday June 14th from 9 to 3.

CWD Quilt Raffle

Once again, Sharon Wheeler is chairing our quilt raffle and we are grateful. See her to get a single ticket at \$2 or 3 tickets for \$5. First prize is the quilt below, second prize is a scenes of Dexter comforter and the third prize is historical book about Gordon Hall.



The drawing will take place Sunday afternoon – you do not have to be present to win, but we sure would like to see you!

CWD – Pie Bakers Needed

We are looking for those fine pie bakers that are willing to provide items for the CWD Community Pie Auction. Pie Auction Chair Erin McKillen has great new ideas. Call her at 734-260-5093 if you are willing to bake or want additional information. This year she is asking you to include a recipe and its history when you drop off your pie.

CWD Sponsorships Available

Civil War Finance Chair Paul Bishop (he is also both parking and grounds chair and terribly busy) is feverishly looking for sponsorships for Civil War Days activities. Could you find someone to sponsor the following or would you consider sponsoring one or a portion of the following modestly priced items?

1. \$200 Banner downtown
2. \$185 Poet Bard – will be here two days and perform at dinner
3. \$85 Research – Family Connections to the Civil War
4. \$75 Printed ribbons for kids games
5. \$75 Sat. dinner favors men
6. \$75 Sat. dinner favors women
7. \$75 advertising signs
8. \$75 flyer printing
9. \$50 wet plate photography
10. \$50 Butter churning, etc. kids demonstrations.
11. \$40 Dairy Queen for 2nd grade patriotic choir for Friday night
12. \$35 per cannon firing Battery B, 1st Michigan Light Artillery

Please contact Paul at 476-0515 if you are willing to help.

Donations made to the Dexter Area Historical Society, a 501(c)3 organization, are greatly appreciated and typically tax deductible. For more information email us at dexmuseum@aol.com or phone 734-426-2519.

A large portion of the Civil War Days Dinner ticket price should be deductible.

CWD Tea/Family Meeting

We are looking for a few people willing to bake some cookies for the Tea during CWD. The following period recipes are favorites enjoyed in the past. If you can help out, please leave a message at the Museum (734-426-2519).

Sugar Cookies

- 1 cup butter or margarine, softened
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 5 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup milk

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and vanilla. Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with the milk. Cover and refrigerate for 15 to 30 minutes.
3. On a floured surface, roll out dough to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut out cookies into desired shapes (small round) and place 2 in. apart on a greased baking sheet.
4. Bake at 350 degrees F for 10 minutes or until edges are lightly browned.

Ginger Cookies

- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 3/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup molasses
- 1 egg
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/3 cup white sugar for decoration

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
2. In a large bowl, mix together the brown sugar, oil, molasses, and egg. Combine the flour, baking soda, salt, cloves, cinnamon, and ginger; stir into the molasses mixture.
3. Roll dough into 1-inch balls. Roll each ball in white sugar before placing 2 inches apart on ungreased cookie sheets.

4. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes in preheated oven, or until center is firm. Cool on wire racks.

Lemon Sugar Cookies

- 1 cup butter or margarine, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon milk
- 2 teaspoons lemon extract
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- Additional sugar

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. In a mixing bowl, cream butter, shortening and sugar. Beat in egg, milk and extracts. Combine the flour, salt and baking soda; gradually add to creamed mixture. Shape into 3/4 in. balls 2 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Flatten with a glass dipped in sugar.
3. Bake at 400 degrees F for 9-11 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Immediately remove to wire racks to cool.

Raspberry Almond Shortbread

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 2/3 cup white sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup seedless raspberry jam
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
- 3/4 teaspoon almond extract
- 1 teaspoon milk

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. In a medium bowl, cream together butter and white sugar until smooth. Mix in 1/2 teaspoon almond extract. Mix in flour until dough comes together. Roll dough into 1 1/2 inch balls, and place on ungreased cookie sheets. Make a small hole in the center of each ball, using your thumb and finger, and fill the hole with preserves.
3. Bake for 14 to 18 minutes in preheated oven, or until lightly browned. Let cool 1 minute on the cookie sheet.
4. In a medium bowl, mix together the confectioners' sugar, 3/4 teaspoon almond extract, and milk until smooth. Drizzle lightly over warm cookies.