



# DAHS SUMMER NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2022

## President's Letter:



Summer is almost over, but we are always busy at both buildings. There are new displays at the Museum and another parlor at Gordon Hall has had the carpet removed! We are also selling raffle tickets and it is nice to talk with many of you to tell you about our completed projects. We are presently preparing for our upcoming events - Gordon Hall Days and Christmas At The Mansion.

Thank you so much for your continued support for both of our buildings. Our Historical Society is very fortunate to have the backing of our great community. We hope you can visit and or come to some of our events.

Looking forward to seeing you,  
Beverly Hill, DAHS President

## 2022 Gordon Hall Raffle

This year, the Dexter Area Historical Society will conduct the 9th annual Gordon Hall Raffle on Saturday August 13, 2022 at the end of Dexter Daze. This is a 50/50 raffle, with the lucky winner receiving half of our total ticket sales. Tickets sell for \$10 each or \$40 for 5 tickets. The best thing about this raffle is that the dollars we keep are used for restoring Gordon Hall.

You can help us restore Gordon Hall by buying raffle tickets! Look for us selling them until Dexter Daze on the weekends at Busch's, the Dexter Bakery, Friday evenings at Monument Park and at Dexter Daze under the red Historical Society tent. You can buy tickets by calling the Historical Society at 734-426-2519, or emailing us at [dexmuseum@aol.com](mailto:dexmuseum@aol.com)



## 2022 Gordon Hall Days

Mark your calendars, and plan to join us September 10th and 11th for Gordon Hall Days! The Gordon Hall grounds will be open from 10 to 4 both days with the price for entry of \$5/person or \$20/car. Plans are in the works to gather many awesome attractions including live animals enjoyed by so many. So far we have the



following lined up:

**On both Saturday and Sunday** we will have: Tours of Gordon Hall (10 to 3), The Ann Arbor Model Railroad Club (10 to 4 in the tent behind Gordon Hall), tours of the newly renovated milk house, Children's games and

The "Milk House" activities, Craft demonstrations and more.



2021 Car Show

**Saturday only** special events include: The Antique & Vintage Car Show, The Gordon Hall Tea and Fashion Show "Suffragettes: Beyond the Corset" at 1pm (\$10), and the Dexter Dulcimer Group (11am).

*We always need more volunteers to make this happen as tour guides, parking attendants, set-up and/or clean-up help and many other areas. Call 734-426-2519 or email us at [DexMuseum@aol.com](mailto:DexMuseum@aol.com) to volunteer.*



**On Friday night, September 9th**, we will be holding a fundraiser to benefit ongoing restoration work at Gordon Hall. This event will feature the high energy, Americana band Billy Mack and the Juke Joint Johnnies. Gordon Hall will be open from 6 to 7 for you to explore the first floor. After a short program at 7 pm, the music will start and you can dance the night away with this fabulous band. Enjoy snacks and an open bar until 10 pm. Tickets are \$75 per person or \$300 for 6 people.

To buy tickets for the **Tea** or the **Friday night event**, call 734-395-4106 or visit our website at <http://www.dexterhistory.org/> **Advance purchase is suggested!**

## "Dexter's Main Street about 1900"



The small pictures of our displays above are the first ones of the Dexter Area Museum's two year effort to show downtown Dexter in about 1900. We have put together pictures from our collections as well as a written description of the building owners and shop proprietors. This year we have specialized on the South side of Main Street, divided by the alley. Next year we will be highlighting the Northside, divided by Broad Street.

### **Help Needed!**

Old age has caught up with the ladies at the Museum and we need help with weeding the flower beds and picking up sticks at the Museum. If you can volunteer some time, please call Cindy at 734-426-0973.

### The Dexter Heritage Guild

The Heritage Guild members have been fortunate to continue with their workshops, making items for the upcoming events at Gordon Hall and the Webster Fall Festival occurring in September.

If you have any of the following items and could donate them to the Guild, it would be appreciated. Please bring your items to the museum when the Heritage Guild meets on the 3rd and 4th Wednesday morning of each month OR during regular Museum hours which are Friday and Saturday from 1-3 p.m. Thank you for your help.



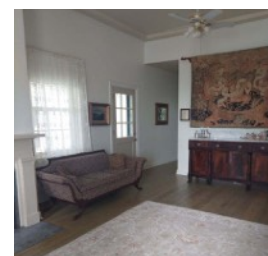
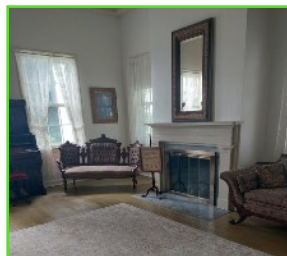
We could use:

- Sugar 'n Cream yarn
- Cotton fabric, both fall and Christmas themed
- Pillow forms (couch size) 18" x 18"
- Terra-cotta pots of any size.
- Mason jars, quart size and smaller
- Kitchen/bathroom cabinet handles and knobs
- Plastic or metal cookie cutters in these shapes: pumpkin, apple, leaf, Christmas Tree, snowflake and circle.
- Spice/coffee grinder
- Skeins of rug yarn
- Fall color artificial flowers, silk/fabric would be nicer than plastic

At both Gordon Hall Days and the Webster Fall Festival the guild will be selling tickets for a special drawing for two items: a quilted pumpkin design table runner and a fall harvest gift basket. The winning ticket will be drawn at the Webster Fall Festival September 24th, and you do not need to be present to win.

### Gordon Hall Renovations

The restoration of the original floor in the South Parlor was completed this spring. Many thanks to our wonderful volunteers who worked along with our hired contractors on this project.



There will be more opportunities for volunteers as we continue to find projects that can lead to the restoration of Gordon Hall. Please contact us at [DexMuseum@aol.com](mailto:DexMuseum@aol.com) or 734-426-2519 to volunteer.

### Seeking Historical Pictures

In preparation for the 2024 Bicentennial celebration, the DAHS is working on a book commemorating the 200 years of Dexter's History. We have quite a collection of pictures and information, but if you have pictures of the Dexter businesses or buildings to share, we would love to see them. We are looking for pictures of businesses and buildings in the 1900s. Email us at [DexMuseum@aol.com](mailto:DexMuseum@aol.com) or call the museum at 734-426-2519 and we will arrange to meet at the Museum and scan those pictures we feel will add to our presentation.

This is the fourth article on the large posters displayed at the 2021 Gordon Hall Days. Each article highlights an aspect of the Dexter Area, Gordon Hall or the Dexter Family. Caryl Burke and Jan Weaver researched the different subjects and added relevant pictures. Nancy Van Blaricum edited and reorganized the articles to fit into this format.

## Owners of Gordon Hall After the Dexter Family

After the death in 1899 of Millicent Bond Dexter, the third wife of Samuel W. Dexter, the Gordon Hall property entered a long period of decline and change. The grand house on the hill became a kind of ghost, watching benevolently over Dexter as the town grew and transformed during the 20th century.

### The Birkett Years - 1900 to 1916



THOMAS BIRKETT

Thomas Birkett was a prominent local businessman who owned a mill and estate in the hamlet of Dover on Dexter-Pinckney Road at Bell Road. He also owned what is now called Peach Mountain, so named because of the peach orchards that Birkett had planted there. In 1900, he purchased Gordon Hall and the 70 surrounding acres from the Dexter estate. It is not believed he ever lived there, and the house deteriorated badly.



About 1909

### The Crumrine Years - 1916 to 1939

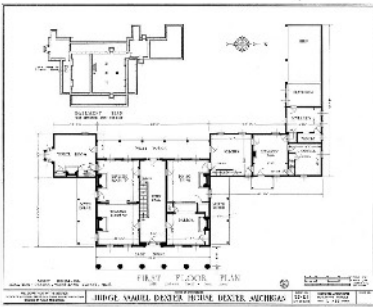


DR. CRUMRINE AND A YOUNG POINTER

Charles Crumrine, a physician from Detroit, bought the Gordon Hall property after Thomas Birkett's death in 1916 and developed it into a working farm. These pictures found in Flora Bostwick Smith's scrapbook were from an article in the Detroit Free Press in 1919.



After Dr. Crumrine's death in 1924, the house was rented or left empty and it fell into disrepair. Some Dexter old-timers can remember playing around the house as children.



Interior 1st Floor in 1934

In 1934, the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) documented the home. Because of this work as part of the CCC, we now have many very detailed architectural drawings which we hope to use to return this historic



1934 HABS picture

home to its former glory.



## The McCormick/Lorch Years - 1939 to 1950

In 1939, Katharine Dexter McCormick bought her grandfather's home and her birthplace, intending to restore it as a historical and community center for Dexter. She commissioned Emil Lorch, professor emeritus of the University of Michigan and founder and dean of the School of Architecture there, to restore the house.

Lorch stabilized the foundation, restored the east pillars, and removed the tower.



Steel beams support the house



Each pillar was placed on a pedestal.



Only base of tower was left.

He also re-supported the sagging roof, removed and repaired all four porches, and performed many other repairs needed after years of neglect.

The interior work is best displayed using some of the pictures from the 1934 HABS photos and 1941 Railroad Centennial which showcased Gordon Hall. Although Lorch still had much to do, in 1941 the main floor was available for tours. It was decorated using some family heirlooms as well as items brought in by merchants and others in the community. Two of the rooms are shown:

The South front Parlor



1934



1941

The Dining Room



1934



1941

Lorch continued working through the 1940s, but it was difficult to get help because of World War II. It is generally agreed that without Emil Lorch's passionate dedication, Gordon Hall would probably not have survived until today.

But in 1950, Katharine Dexter McCormick donated Gordon Hall to the University of Michigan, and everything changed . . .

From Voices of the Past: The Saga of Gordon Hall by James Baldwin Parker 2012 Thompson Shore

## Business Members

The Historical Society began a campaign to bring local Dexter businesses into the membership of the Dexter Area Historical Society. Businesses are offered a lifetime, non-voting membership in the society and in return they will receive the newsletter, a membership emblem and recognition in the newsletter of those who have joined. We are happy to have the following as DAHS Members:

Beacon Dental - Dr. David Traynor  
Chelsea Dexter Dental Group  
Cindy Strang Insurance Agency  
CMR Mechanical LLC  
Dexter Family Dentistry - Brent Kolb  
Dexter Oral Surgery and Implant Center  
Dexter Riverside Cellar  
Finn's JM&J Insurance Agency  
Hackney Hardware  
Hosmer-Muehlig Funeral Chapel

Huron Counseling Services  
Main Street Optometry-Vision  
Reed Barbering - Robin's  
Spring Valley Trout Farm  
St. Andrew's UCC Church  
The Lions Club  
The Rotary Club  
Village Animal Clinic of Dexter  
Wallace & Wallace Properties  
Whitetail Farm - Mary Baude

## Membership Form

On the next page is our Membership Form! Please print it out and use it to join or renew your Membership in the Dexter Area Historical Society! We always need volunteers of all ages and diverse skill sets, but one of the areas missing from the form is a place for you to indicate how you would like to volunteer to help us. Please let us know what you love to do by putting a note somewhere on the page!

Membership fees are due January 1st each year. We have indicated in the note in your email or on your letter the status of your account according to our records. Please use the form on the next page to renew or begin a new membership. Mail the form and your check made out to DAHS to Dexter Area Historical Society, 3443 Inverness, Dexter, MI 48130.

Thank you.

# DEXTER AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### OFFICERS:

**President:**

Beverly Hill

**Vice-President:**

Caryl Burke

**Secretary:**

Sharon Wheeler

**Treasurer:**

Carol Jones

### DIRECTORS:

Neil Adams

Sue Behnke

Ina Germain

Shawn Pierrel

Ceci Riecker

Nancy Van Blaricum

Gary Vander Haagan

Jan Weaver

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

NEWSLETTER - Nancy J. Van Blaricum [DexMuseum@aol.com](mailto:DexMuseum@aol.com)

WEBMASTER - Jan Weaver [weaver74@charter.net](mailto:weaver74@charter.net)

GORDONHALLSPECIALEVENTS - Bene Fusilier: 734-426-8972

HERITAGE GUILD - Pat Pudduck: [patpudduck@gmail.com](mailto:patpudduck@gmail.com)

MUSEUM DIRECTOR - Nina Rackham: [NDRackham@aol.com](mailto:NDRackham@aol.com)

### FACILITIES:

DEXTER AREA MUSEUM - 3443 Inverness, Dexter, MI 48130

GORDON HALL - 8311 Island Lake Rd., Dexter, MI 48130

PHONE - 734-426-2519 WEBSITE: [www.DexterHistory.org](http://www.DexterHistory.org) EMAIL: [DexMuseum@aol.com](mailto:DexMuseum@aol.com)

Museum Hours: Friday and Saturday, 1 to 3 PM, May through November



# Membership Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

(home)

(cell)

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Type\***       New member     Renewal

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Individual \$15 yearly

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Family      \$25 yearly

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Student      \$2 yearly

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Business      \$50

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Life              \$200

**Please indicate residence location:**

City of Dexter

Township: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Extra gift for Museum

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Extra gift for Gordon Hall

\$\_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL**

-----Make checks payable to: **Dexter Area Historical Society (DAHS)**-----

**Mail to:**

Dexter Area Historical Society  
3443 Inverness Street  
Dexter, MI 48130

**Contact:**

Phone: 734.426.2519  
Email: dexmuseum@aol.com  
Website: dexterhistory.org  
Find us on Facebook @dexterhistory  
Dexter Area Historical Society

\*All memberships except Life and Business are renewed each January.