



DAHS NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2020

Welcome to Fall!

Primarily due to Covid19, this year has been very difficult and therefore the Historical Society has only been able to hold two fundraisers. Fortunately, our many friends turned out in full force. We are so very fortunate to live in the Dexter area.



Our "Save the Belfry" campaign raised enough money to not only repair the belfry, but also paint the entire museum. Our Harvest Dinner on October 11th served 119 guests which resulted in significant income for our many ongoing projects. Many additional contributions were also received in support of these events.

We are saddened to not be able to hold some of our favorite events such as "Christmas At the Mansion" this year, but are looking forward to the possibility of holding these and all of the other events next year. We are excited to be able to show off the work we have done at both the Museum and at Gordon Hall. At both buildings we have been painting, restoring and even adding new areas.

I want to personally thank all of you who have supported the Dexter Area Historical Society. Whether it be working on the grounds, making repairs, sorting and storing, painting, and/or assisting with our fundraisers, your support is so important and so appreciated. I thank you so much for your generous time and donations.

Thank you,
Beverly Hill

President of the Dexter Area Historical Society

A Harvest of Hope for Gordon Hall - October 11, 2020 Fillmore Drive Through Dinner

The DAHS Harvest of Hope for Gordon Hall fundraiser at the Fillmore of Dexter was a great success, earning over \$15,000 to support the continued restoration of Gordon Hall!



Coley O'Brien and his Fillmore staff prepared 119 carryout dinners which were then served by costumed DAHS volunteers. Jan Lyons graciously designed a stunning Fall display to greet supporters as they arrived for their carryout dinners and you can still see it at the side entrance of the Fillmore.

We want to extend a very sincere thank you to our event sponsors, The Bob and Jan Lyons Foundation, the Dexter Lions Club, the Cedars of Dexter and the Fillmore of Dexter. The Dexter Area Historical Society members and the Dexter community have been so generous with their continued support of the restoration efforts at our local historical treasure, Gordon Hall!



We also want to thank the members of our Fall Fundraiser committee: Jan Lyons, Ina Germain Bev Hill, Caryl Burke, Nina Rackham and Dick Lundy. Their efforts made this successful event possible.

Summer Fun with Bats in the Belfry Fundraising Campaign



Much to our delight, we raised almost \$25,000 from over 100 donors to fix the church belfry and paint the outside of the Dexter Historical Museum with our "Bats in the Belfry" Fundraising Campaign this summer. What started with fixing a hole in the belfry of the museum building became an all-out building refurbishment and paint job thanks to the community's support. We even had donations from as far away as San Diego, CA, from a loyal Dexter history fan!

To add to the fun, donors of \$50 or more received a hand-made face mask with a bat design to commemorate their involvement in this amazing campaign. Board member Caryl Burke sewed all the masks for us, and found beautiful bat printed fabric to use for the gifts. Thanks to those who made the eye catching masks!" Thanks also to Richard Brothers Painting for repairing and painting the Belfry and the entire Museum.

Thanks to all that made this campaign such a huge success!

Successful Garage Sales Benefit The Dexter Area Museum

This picture is from the recent yard sale at Sue Behnke's home on Huron River Dr. It was great having the sale there with a steady flow of traffic going by. We would like to thank all who have donated a wide variety of items and those helped with the setting up, sales and cleanup. Proceeds totaled \$2800! Watch for another sale in the Spring.



Heritage Guild Report & Special Sale

Pat Pudduck, President of the Heritage Guild reports that they will not be having the Holiday Bazaar this year. Contributing towards this decision is a reduced membership, health issues and COVID 19. We are going to miss seeing all who have supported the Holiday Bazaar.

However save the date for the **Museum Gift Shop Sale** on Saturday, December 5th from 10am to 3pm at the Museum. We will be featuring Christmas Gift items, scrubbies and other guild items. Social Distancing and Masks are required and we will have someone at the door limiting the number of patrons inside at any given time.

WANTED: ITEMS FOR OUR MILK HOUSE AT GORDON HALL

We are getting our Milk House ready for tours in the spring. Thanks to Neil Adams and Gary Vander Haagen we now have electricity and lights!!

If you would like to donate any of these items I would so appreciate filling the milk house with late 1800's items.

I am in need of

1. metal milk cans
2. metal pails
3. old apple crates
4. old bushel baskets
5. old cheese boxes
6. milk churn
7. feed sacks
8. corn sheller
9. plastic vegetables and maybe even a plastic carcass to hang on the meat hooks in the basement (yes the milk house has a basement!)
10. any other items that you think might work well in the milk house.

If you have any of these items please give Bev Hill a call at (734) 426-4767. Thank you!

Flooding Repairs at the Museum



Every spring we have flooding in the basement at the Museum and we finally took action to repair it. The cause is obvious in this photo. With the sidewalk holding water and the downspout emptying out at the front of the Museum, the water had no other place to go but the basement!

Repairs were made by JR Services with help from Chet Hill and Neil Rackham. They took out the bushes on the side of the Museum, removed the sidewalk and then rerouted the water from the downspout, funneling it underground so it comes out in the alley on the other side of the Museum.



Then began the repairs and we thank Phil Jackson, Chet Hill and Jack Germain for repairing the flower beds and Cindy and Richard Henes who planted day Lillies and Coneflowers.

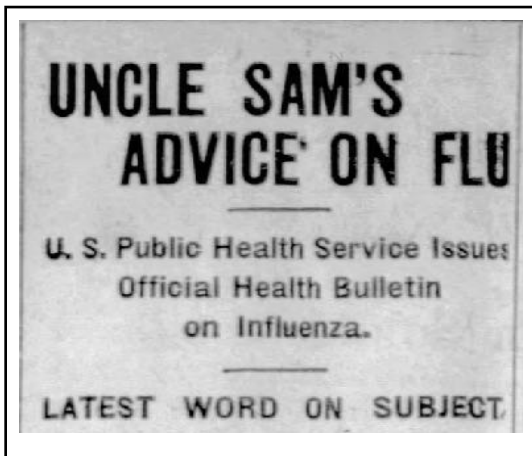
The final results are beautiful and our basement is dry! Thank you to all who helped.

***“Cover up each cough and sneeze,
If you don’t you’ll spread disease”***

The Baptist Record, November 22, 1917

Dexter and the 1918 Influenza Pandemic by Jan Weaver

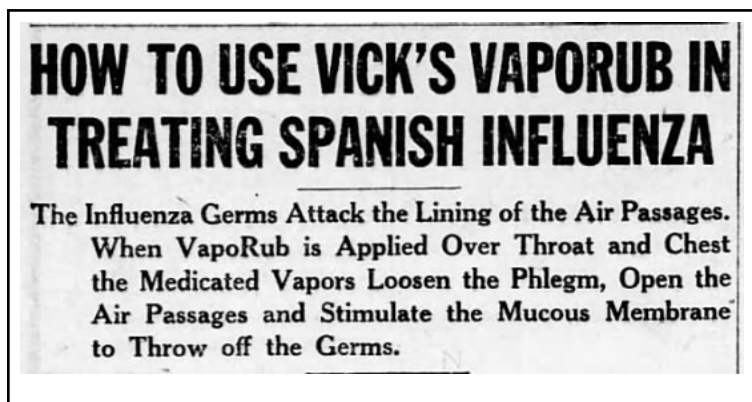
Just over 100 years ago the Dexter area and the world experienced a pandemic much like the coronavirus pandemic of today. It was referred to as the Spanish flu but its origins are not certain even to this day. The pandemic occurred during WWI and most countries censored the news to avoid a panic. Spain was neutral and so the disease was reported there first. Newspapers all over the country including The Dexter Leader published the governments recommendations on fighting the flu.



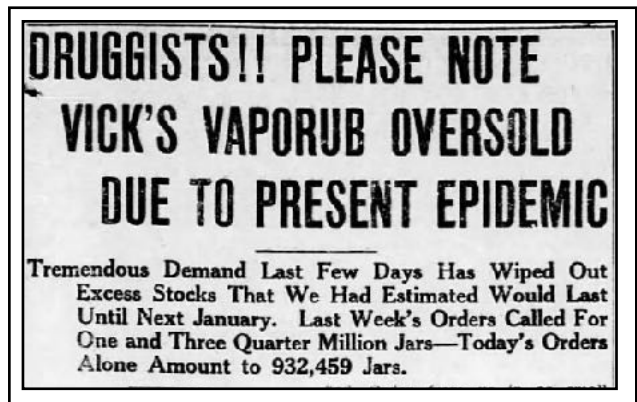
“In guarding against disease of all kinds, it is important that the body he kept strong and able to fight off disease germs. This can be done by having a proper proportion of work, play and rest, by keeping the body well clothed, and by eating sufficient, wholesome and properly selected food. In connection with diet, it is well to remember that milk is one of the best all-around foods obtainable for adults as well as children. So far as a disease like Influenza is concerned, health authorities everywhere recognize the very close relation between its spread and overcrowded homes. While it is not always possible, especially in times like the present, to avoid such overcrowding, people should consider the health danger and make every effort to reduce the home overcrowding to a minimum. The value of fresh air through open windows cannot be over emphasized. “

Besides the government advice, other theories and suggestions for fighting the pandemic abounded. Michigan Agricultural College issued a statement that the spread of influenza could be lessened if people took measures against the housefly. Products such as Boschee’s Cough Syrup, Foley’s Honey Tar and Turpo a remedy combining turpentine, camphor and menthol were advertised.

Vick’s VapoRub was advertised as a treatment for influenza and a shortage soon ensued. According to the company’s history timeline, VapoRub sales skyrocketed from \$900,000 to \$2.9 million in a single year because of the pandemic. The company urged druggists and wholesalers to buy in small quantities and areas hard hit were prioritized for shipments. The Vicks plant in Greensboro operated around the clock, and salesmen were pulled off the road to help at the manufacturing facility in an effort to keep up with demand. By March 1919, the company announced that the shortage was overcome and the company was producing 143 jars per minute day and night.



This appeared in the Dexter Leader on 11/7/1918.

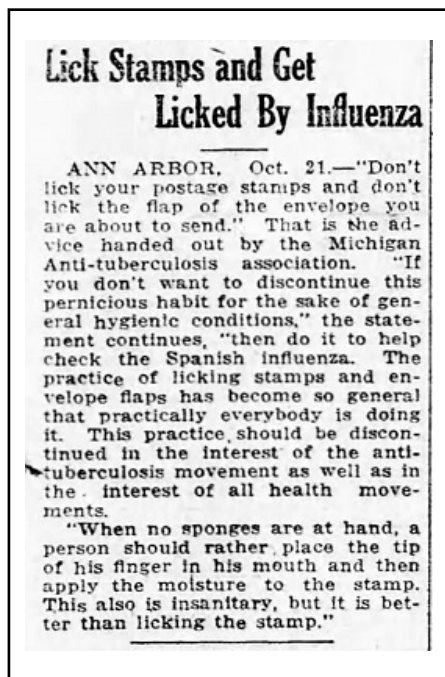


The Dexter Leader followed with this on 11/14/1918.

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In October of 1918 Michigan's Governor Albert E. Sleeper issued an executive order closing nonessential business and public gatherings including churches and theaters. Schools were exempt from the order, leaving the decision to local communities. Dexter did close schools for a time in the fall of 1918 and again in the winter of 1920. The Governors ban was lifted a few weeks after it was issued.

Many sports contests were cancelled or postponed. The University of Michigan only played 5 of its 8-game schedule in 1918 due in part to the flu pandemic and in part due to travel restrictions caused by the war. The Michigan Agricultural College Aggies (forerunners of the Spartans) had games postponed but were able to complete an 8-game schedule, highlighted by a victory over Notre Dame.



Michigan Anti-tuberculosis Association warned against licking stamps and envelopes.

The Dexter community had its share of the disease and suffered many losses. In the US influenza first appeared in military camps and Dexter's first war casualties were victims of influenza at Camp Custer near Kalamazoo. **George Belfanz** was the 28 year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Belfanz of Dexter. He died at Camp Custer on Sunday October 13 of pneumonia following Spanish influenza. **Private Clay Arksey**, 26 year-old son of Mrs. B. F. Arksey died on Monday October 14 also of pneumonia following influenza. Clay's body was brought to Dexter under military escort. As a show of respect, all businesses in the village were suspended during the funeral hour. His brother William was sick of influenza the following February but survived.

The same week **Rozella Catherine Flynn** aged 14 died of influenza at her home in Ann Arbor. She was the only child of John and Emma Loeffler Flynn. She was buried in St. Andrew's cemetery in Dexter. **Henry Schulz** a 33 year-old Webster farmer also died that week leaving a critically ill wife and two small children. Henry is buried in Webster Cemetery. Thankfully, Mrs. Schultz recovered.

The Shields family was particularly hard hit. **Edith Ann Shields** died on October 25. She was 25 years old and a graduate of Dexter High School. She was a rural schoolteacher near Dixboro and was engaged to Ezra Foltz. He remained single and died in 1945 at age 52. Edith's sister 18 year-old **Helen Shields** died a week later and is buried with her sister in St. Joseph's cemetery. Four other Shield children were seriously ill but recovered.

Mrs. Louis Ernst was a 38 year-old mother of six also died in late October. **Oscar Jedele**, 27, died after visiting his sick brother at Camp Custer. His brother survived, but Oscar returned home and became ill. **Irving Whiteman** aged 33 died on November 3, 1918 leaving a wife and three small children. **J. Melvin Gardner** died in December. He was the 18 year-old son of Robert and Theresa Pidd Gardner, Dexter farmers.

During this time Ann Arbor was hard hit as well. There were over 120 influenza deaths recorded in the fall of 1918. Many of them were participating in the Student Army Training Core or SATC which allowed young men to enlist in the military while simultaneously taking courses and training for the army. The program lost over 35 men as well as a doctor who treated them. Nurses and student nurses at the hospitals were also vulnerable and several students also succumbed. On October 17 University President Harry Burns directed students and faculty to wear masks at all time. The Red Cross volunteers assembled in the president's home to sew masks for distribution on campus. Ann Arbor closed public schools for the last two weeks of October.

Peter McGinn a Dexter township farmer contracted the flu in the fall of 1918 and never fully recovered. He died in July 1919 and is buried in St. Joseph Cemetery. **Alfred Charles Drew** age 19 suffered from TB and died after contracting influenza in April of 1919.

The flu resurfaced in the area in 1920. Milan was particularly hard hit and the health department was dispatched there to help with the situation. In Dexter **Isaac Savery** (76), **Edward Harkins** (33) and **Minnie Wenger**(20) all died in February. Five-year old **Janet Call** died in April and **James Hoey**, son of Dan Hoey died in June.

In March of 1920 the State Health Commission declared that the epidemic had ended.

In Memory:

James Baldwin Parker became a member of the Dexter Area Historical Society in the 1970's. He has done a great deal of research at many places including the Bentley Library and our archives for his 6 books. He donated some of the his books for sale in the Museum Gift Shop.

James "Jim" Baldwin Parker died October 10, 2020 at age 83 in Dexter, Washtenaw County, Michigan. He was born June 30, 1937, at home in Wayne County, Michigan and was married to Barbara Ann Obermeyer, August 29, 1959, in Ypsilanti, Michigan. He was employed by the Ford Motor Company as a Quality Control specialist from 1961 until 1992. Jim was active in a number of organizations including the Dexter Historical Society and Museum, the Washtenaw County Historical Society, and the Webster Township Historical Society. His passionate interests included reading, mostly history and biography, and authoring six books about local Webster Township history which are listed below.

Jim's Books:

"THE THIRD MARKED TREE", Paths Through The Wilderness, John Williams of Webster Township and His Descendants, by James Baldwin Parker and Osbert Oliver Williams Webster Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan, December, 2008.



BROOKWATER FARM OF WEBSTER TOWNSHIP, 184 YEARS OF AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP; A Nationally Renowned Farm, 1826-2010; The Story of the Boyden, Mumford, Zeeb and Alexander Families; Featuring the Biography of Professor Herbert W. Mumford, by James Baldwin Parker and Jeannette Mumford Straub - Published July 2010.



BURR OAKS FARM, THE KLEINSCHMIDT FAMILY OF WEBSTER TOWNSHIP AND WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICHIGAN;

Featuring Paul & Alvin Kleinschmidt's Memories with those of their sister, May Mast, by James Baldwin Parker, Webster Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan, July 2011.

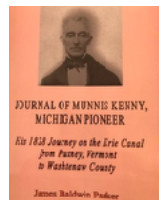


VOICES OF THE PAST, THE SAGA OF GORDON HALL; Judge Samuel W. Dexter's Historic Mansion near Dexter, in Webster Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan; Its Creation, Partial Destruction and Renovations between 1840 and 2011, with Future Plans: Including Biographical Accounts of the Dexter family, by James Baldwin Parker, Webster Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan, May, 2012.



JOURNAL OF MUNNIS KENNY, MICHIGAN PIONEER,

His 1828 Journey from Putney, Vermont to Washtenaw County, With James B. Parker's illustrated Journal of his May 1985 automobile trip retracing Munnis Kenny's trip from his farm home in rural Vermont, and his passage along the Erie Canal, Edited by James Baldwin Parker, Webster Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan, July, 2013.



"SKY BLUE PINK WITH ORANGE POLKA-DOTS",
The Wheeler Family and the Community in Which They Lived by James Baldwin Parker and Thelma Wheeler Tucker, Webster Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan, August, 2014.



The Dexter Heritage Guild lost two members last spring. These two delightful women were a positive accent to the Heritage Guild and DAHS, always having beautiful smiles for all. We will miss having them with us!

Lois Joan (Willison) Ledbetter (1931 - 2020)

The Ladies of the Guild will miss Lois being with them! She was tenacious, always cheerful and a good friend to us all! She was great at bringing in ideas and patterns for new projects; always thinking of new ideas. Whenever we had our events, the Pioneer Art Fair, the Bazaar or DuMouchelles Antique Appraisal, Lois was very willing to help. We loved how she was always sharing photos and stories about her family and their pets. Family was very important to Lois!! When Gordon Hall had their special teas, Lois enjoyed helping. She was a kind, gentle and lovely Lady and a great member of the Guild!

Sybil J. (Salsbury) VanHouten (1938-2020)

Sybil was an active and wonderful member of the Heritage Guild. During the times the Heritage Guild held the Pioneer Art Fair, Sybil had a special table especially for children. She had a variety of materials so the children could make something special and take home. An elementary teacher, Sybil had started a patriotic music program with her students. The students would perform this music program on the front stairs of Gordon Hall during the summer program. Sybil also served on the Board of the Dexter Area Historical Society and after her retirement from teaching, she served as a guide to 2nd graders visiting both the Museum and Gordon Hall.

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. 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

WEBMASTER - Jan Weaver weaver74@charter.net

GORDONHALLSPECIALEVENTS - Bene Fusilier: 734-426-8972

HERITAGE GUILD - Pat Pudduck: patpudduck@gmail.com

MUSEUM DIRECTOR - Nina Rackham: 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 EMAIL: 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 History 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.

Dexter Area Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

26 July 2019