

# Impressions

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY • NEWSLETTER

## Preservationist of the Year!

For 31 years, the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission has been recognizing and honoring work done by local residents and institutions to preserve the city's character and architecture. The "Preservationist of the Year" award is given to individuals who are committed to preserving local history. Congratulations to this year's award winner, Judy Chrisman, WCHS collections chair, recording secretary and past president.



Photo by Heather Douglass

Judy got her Master's in Historic Preservation from EMU with her thesis on Forest Hill Cemetery in Ann Arbor. As WCHS Collections Chair, she undertook the challenge of dealing with a jumble of artifacts stored at

Willow Run and re-catalogued them, using a state of the art system for inventory. She has researched, written and created several exhibits for the Museum on Main Street including the current one.

Judy also serves on the boards of the Ann Arbor Historical Foundation, and was on the board of Kempf House and Cobblestone Farm.

She is truly an outstanding asset to our community and we look forward to her continuing contributions.

The Historic District Commission gives awards every year to citizens or institutions who have done an outstanding job maintaining or renovating historic structures, or who have supported historic preservation over the years. For all of the 2015 award winners go to [www.a2gov.org](http://www.a2gov.org)

### Along The Boulevard

The photo at the top of the page of the hairpin turn on the road through the Cedar Bend Nature Area was taken in 1910 by A. S. Lyndon. (Read more about him on page 9.) Cedar Bend Nature Area is one of Ann Arbor's oldest city parks and was named for the tight turn in the Huron River. An October 1, 1897 article in the Ann Arbor Argus introduced a plan to the citizens that would give Ann Arbor its most beautiful park and lake, a park

that would rival Belle Isle in Detroit. The plan was to buy property from Cedar Bend to the Huron River, including the island in the river, which had become a popular destination – and turn it all into a park to be reached by Wall Street or Cedar Bend Drive. This included rustic bridges from the island to the mainland, picnic amenities and more. The lake would be created by building a dam to flood all of the land between the river and Fuller Street, making a 30 acre pond safe for boating and enjoyment.

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### *Impressions*

is published four times a year by the Washtenaw County Historical Society, a non profit 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are tax deductible

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT – ANNUAL REVIEW

The Washtenaw County Historical Society and the general public owe a large debt of gratitude to Leslie Loomans, immediate past President of the Society. His six years of focused leadership enhanced the quality and scope of the Society's collections, displays, and programs. The Society now has the Museum on Main Street (MOMS) and the large Argus Collection, housed in the Argus Building at 525 W. William St., which features products manufactured by the Argus Camera Company.

Exhibits in MOMS this past year, including the current exhibit, reflect first-rate research, detailed and ingenious craftsmanship, and overall high-quality work.

Seven programs last year included a presentation by Susan Wineberg and Patrick McCauley of their Historical Ann Arbor: An Architectural Guide, a talk by Brian Dunnigan of the Clements Library on "Agriculture in Early Michigan," and a tour of Hill Auditorium. In 2015-2016 the Society will present nine programs, including another tour of Hill auditorium, tours of the Michigan Theater and the Law Quad, and a history of J. L. Hudson Department Store. (See next year's programs on page 5.)

Standing committees accomplished much, enhancing the physical security of MOMS, developing a Disaster Recovery Plan, solidifying operations at the Argus Museum, and by employing copious amounts of artistic license to produce an outdoor exhibit next to MOMS of streetcar rails from Ann Arbor's streets.

All members were deeply saddened by Pauline Walters' death. For decades she diligently and effectively served the Society and the cause of history in the county via a wide variety of activities. Her love of Ann Arbor and its history bubbled up in all she did. We miss her greatly. On a celebratory note, the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission named Past President and current Board Member Judy Chrisman "Preservationist of the Year." Hearty and well-deserved congratulations, Judy!

The Society's core mission is "to educate and inspire our community to engage in the preservation and presentation of area history." The Society invites you to support this mission by making suggestions, donating artifacts, volunteering, visiting our museums, reading our website, becoming members, and taking friends to the 2015-16 programs.

As the new President of the Society, I heartily thank all the members who made last year a huge success. In 2012 my wife and I, both U of M graduates, moved "back home" to Michigan after teaching in Illinois since 1971. Our daughters' families and my closest cousin live nearby. We rejoice in living once again in Washtenaw County.

On behalf of the Washtenaw County Historical Society, I invite you to join us in fulfilling our exciting mission of inspiring our community in preserving and presenting our region's history!

*James Davis, President*

## Downtown Street Exhibit - Look Up!

Next time you are downtown, take a moment and stop in the Downtown Home & Garden store at 210 S. Ashley Street and look up. This historic building's history (formerly Hertlers) is tied to horses, buggies, and early transportation and agriculture. Built in the mid 1890s, it is home to one of the WCHS prized artifacts. Hanging from the rafters for all to see and appreciate is a carriage from Christian Walker's Ann Arbor Carriage Works on W. Liberty (now the Ann Arbor Art Center) where the buggy was manufactured. The panel beneath the carriage tells more.



# Annual Meeting at the Park



On Sunday, June 7 more than 65 members and guests enjoyed the 2015 Annual Meeting of the Washtenaw County Historical Society. We met under the Pavilion at County Farm Park amongst the beauty of the gardens and grounds.

After socializing and dining on Satchel's BBQ and potluck dishes supplied by board members, the meeting was called to order at by Vice President James Davis. He welcomed everyone and spoke about the past year's work and introduced the program schedule for 2015-16.

With no nominations from the floor, the slate of candidates was adopted as presented. Recording Secretary Judy Chrisman invited all to come see the current exhibit at the Museum on Main Street: "Capturing the County— The Art & Business of Early Photography". She also acknowledged contributors to the exhibit. See page 10 for those names. Following the adjournment, people explored the park, pathways, gardens and outdoor art installations.

## Thank You Patricia Creal!

Patty served as WCHS Treasurer from 1992-2008 and 2010- 2015. In between she served on the board and was just elected to Corresponding Secretary. Patty tirelessly performed the many duties of the treasurer in a truly excellent manner and contributes in multiple ways to the well-being of the Society. She is a remarkable woman with a beautiful smile and a passionate interest in her community. We thank her for her 20+ years of service to the WCHS and extend the deepest appreciation and gratitude.

## 2015 Election Results

### Officers

President.....James Davis  
 Vice President ..... Karen Jania  
 Treasurer.....Leslie Loomans  
 Corresponding Secretary ..... Patricia Creal  
 Recording Secretary .....Judith Chrisman

### Directors

#### 3-year term ending 2018

Dave Easterwood                  Jay Snyder  
 Dale Leslie                                  Anita Toews

#### 2-year term ending 2017

Deborah Kingery

### Endowment Committee

Kay Williams



### ANNUAL MEETING ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Les Loomans for his years of service as President of the Society
- Diana Mankowski for her service on the board and the exhibit committee
- The nominating committee, Emma Haldy and Cynthia Yao, for their work
- Satchel's BBQ and potluck contributors for the delicious lunch
- Tom Freeman and County Farm Park for the perfect location
- The Planning Committee and volunteers who helped clean up!



## Museum on Main Street

500 N. Main Street • Ann Arbor

Open Saturdays & Sundays  
 12 Noon–4 PM

Also open by appointment,  
 groups are welcome. Call 734-662-9092  
 or email: wchs-500@ameritech.net

WashtenawHistory.org  facebook.com/washtenaw history

### The Washtenaw County Historical Society

P.O. Box 3336 • Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3336 • 734-662-9092 email: wchs-500@ameritech.net

# WCHS Spring Programs - Talks & Walks



## May 15 – From Box, to Booth, to Bleachers

The tour of the Michigan stadium started at the North gate (#9). From there we were able to drive our own vehicles through the West grandstand structure and park at the South end. We then took the elevator up to the press box level. The tour started with the press box which also accommodates visiting coaches and player scouts.

We then went to the TV booth and the replay booth from which the television broadcasts are assembled with video from cameras placed throughout the stadium. Next was the referees communication booth where the audio from the referees on-field microphones are received. The tour then continued to the sound booth where the stadium announcers are located. The final location on the West structure was a typical suite. All suites are sold out for this coming season. Jim Harbaugh has been very good for sales.

*(Continued next page)*

## May 10 – Central Campus Walking Tour

The architectural tour of central campus began on schedule in front of the President's House on South University. There we learned that the President's House is the only surviving building from the original five University buildings of 1840. In spite of the light rain the tour continued on to the building next door, the red brick Tappan Hall. Only the modern 1985 addition to Tappan Hall can be seen from South University. Next was Alumni Memorial Hall which is now known as the Art Museum. This building was originally built as a memorial to the lives lost in the Civil and Spanish-American Wars. At Angell Hall we learned that when Albert Kahn first submitted his design to the Board of Regents they rejected it and said they wanted big Greek columns. We got columns.

Next we went on to the Natural Science Building and then to Hill Auditorium which was constructed with funds contributed by lumber baron and UM Regent, Arthur Hill. The following

point of interest was Burton Tower which was originally supposed to be significantly taller but, being built during the depression of 1930's, funds needed to be conserved so the height was considerably diminished. We then walked along Ingalls Mall to the diag and learned why the Undergraduate Library is no longer referred to as the UGLI. The Engineering Arch is undergoing restoration so the tour detoured through the West Engineering Building and got a nice view of the tow tank.

The Martha Cook Dormitory was our next stop. It was donated by William Cook (class of 1882) and was named after his mother. On to the Business School where the several hundred year old oak tree was recently moved. Then to the East side of the Law School where an addition was built underground so as to not block the view of the Tudor-Gothic Law Quad. The tour ended by going through the Law Quad and back to the front of the President's House. **By John Kilar**





We then returned to our vehicles and drove back through the stadium, around the North end and to the team entrance on the East side. We entered the Michigan locker room and saw the big roped-off block M on the floor that NOBODY ever steps on.

We also saw the legacy lockers of past notable players and were told that those lockers are being eliminated. The tour progressed out of the locker room through the tunnel on to the playing field. After frolicking around the playing field for a while we exited back through the tunnel and out to our vehicles

*By John Kilar*

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The WCHS extends a special thanks for an excellent job to Frederick Mayer for the UM Campus Walking Tour and William Austin for the UM Football Stadium Tour.

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## Save the Dates for Upcoming Programs Fall 2015 and Spring 2016

### **Sunday, September 20, 2-4 PM**

Dr. Mark Hildebrandt presents  
"The History of St. Andrew's Church"  
at St. Andrew's Church on S. Division

### **Sunday, October 18, 1:30-3:30 PM**

Talk & Tour of Kelsey Museum of  
Archeology

### **Sunday, November 15, 2-4 PM**

Russell Collins leads a Tour of the  
Michigan Theater on E. Liberty

### **Sunday, December 6, 3-4 PM**

Tour of the University of Michigan  
Museum of Art (UMMA)

### **Sunday, March 20, 2-4 PM**

Michael Hauser presents  
"The History the J. L. Hudson  
Department Store,"  
The Dexter Area Public Library

### **Sunday, April 17, 2-4 PM**

The Cobblestone Farm  
Barn and Farm Museum tours by  
George Taylor, Jane Carr, and Kevin  
Gilson. Talk by James Davis, "Under-  
standings of the American Frontier"

### **Sunday, May 15, 2-4 PM**

Margaret Leary's Law Quad history  
Tour & Talk.

***2016 Tours of Hill Auditorium and the restored William Clements Library will be announced***

WCHS members will receive postcards or emails with program details in early September. For more information call 734 662-9092 or email [wchs-500@ameritech.net](mailto:wchs-500@ameritech.net).

# A Piece of History Comes to the Museum on Main Street

Ann Arbor's first streetcar track was laid in the summer of 1890. By 1898, the interurban was operating from Detroit through Ypsilanti and on to Ann Arbor. The Packard-Huron Line, one of two streetcar lines in Ann Arbor, ran from the city limits near Burns Park, down Packard Street to downtown and then west along Huron / Jackson to the Fairgrounds (now Veteran's Park).

Eventually, the streetcars were discontinued and many of the old rails were taken up. In the 1950s, some of the old tracks were found during a repaving of South State Street.

At the time, the city's Department of Public Works said they were likely the last ones remaining in Ann Arbor. But a recent project by O'Neal Construction in downtown Ann Arbor, found that statement was premature. While digging in Huron Street for the new Residence Inn at the corner of Huron and Ashley, some old rails were found, covered by concrete and asphalt paving.

The Museum on Main Street had been looking for some of these old interurban railroad tracks and when they became available, we jumped at the opportunity. We were notified that some rails were uncovered and we could have them if we wanted.

O'Neal Construction removed the tracks from their location in the road to facilitate their work. Large pieces of the heavy steel were moved by Latvala Brothers to their warehouse, where brick, concrete and asphalt were chiseled off to expose the rails. Two six foot sections were reserved for our museum. Then Andy Chapman (O'Neal Construction) got to work, volunteering his own time to sand the tracks and remove much of the old rust and accumulated debris. Finally, the rails were sealed to protect them from further damage.

In May of this year, the two, six foot pieces of steel were delivered to the garden at our museum. Now they are



sitting on several pieces of old railroad ties and anchored by railroad spikes. The installation is seen as a work of art.

The rails are located in the garden because it was not possible to install them in an authentic location, nor to place them at the prescribed distance between rails. But they are a beautiful reminder of the old interurban railroad and the history of Washtenaw County. We hope to have flowers growing around and between the tracks as the summer unfolds. Be sure to stop by and see them on your next trip to the Museum on Main Street.

**By Anita Toews**

"The Boulevard" continued from page 1

The "Boulevard" matches Island Drive and its unpaved route through the nature area to Cedar Bend Drive. In 1916 an ordinance was passed making the route one-way from Cedar Bend down to river level. That road has been closed and re-opened at least once, and closed permanently a few years ago making the park accessible on foot.

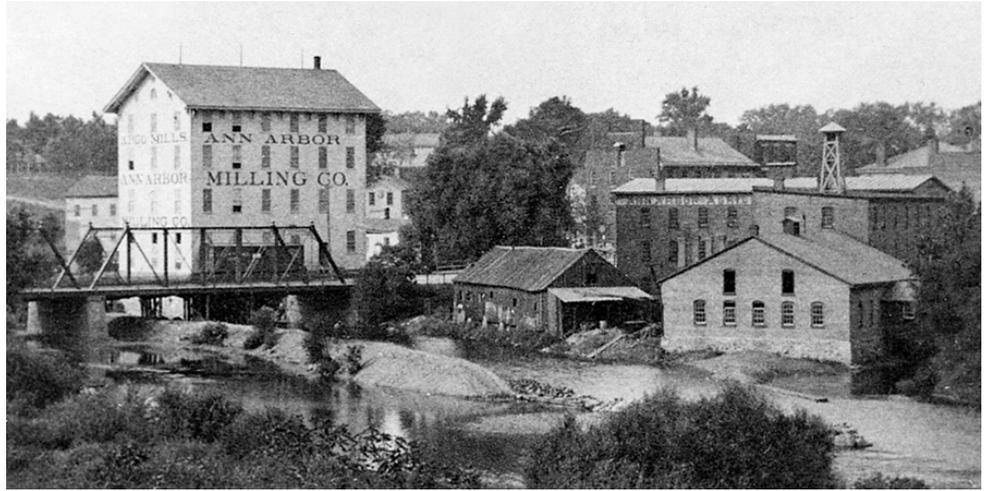
In 1905, the newly established Parks Commission approved the purchase of Cedar Bend Park along the river. Innovative landscape architect and UM (1878) graduate, Ossian Cole Simonds was hired to design the park. In a report to the Commission, Ossian wrote of Cedar Bend, "...one gets beautiful views of the city and valley of the Huron. The river banks and portions of the hillside are covered with attractive native trees and shrubs."

Simonds was a leader in the art of natural landscape design, and Cedar Bend Park was his showcase. He established the first professional program in landscape design at UM, the second of its kind in the nation. He would also design Nichols Arboretum.

Cedar Bend Nature Area is a 19-acre park. Parking is available in the main lot accessible from Island Dr, and there is pull-off parking on Cedar Bend Dr. off Broadway.



## Along the Tracks – Ann Arbor's Riverside Parks



Ann Arbor Milling Company at Argo and Broadway Bridge, ca1900-1919 (Bentley Historical Library)

In the late nineteenth century, the riverside industries that employed many of Ann Arbor's workers controlled the north side of the river, while the Michigan Central Railroad dominated the south river side. Fuel storage tanks, junk-strewn fields, slaughterhouses and overgrown lots all lay along the river.

Mayor Royal S. Copeland complained in 1902 that "to enter Lower Town it is necessary to cross the smoky Detroit Street bridge (now known as the Broadway Bridge), and traverse a long dusty street with the gas tanks on one side and foul smelling dump heaps on the other."

At that time, land around the Detroit bridge was occupied by commercial and industrial uses such as the Ann Arbor Agricultural Works, the Michigan Central Railroad, and the Ann Arbor Gas Company. Residents were beginning to think that parks would be a better use of the riverside.

The Michigan Central Railroad, Ann Arbor's, primary gateway to provided much of the motivation for constructing a riverside park system. Some citizens felt the area around the train station provided a negative first impression and petitioned the city to acquire and beautify the property along the rail lines.

### Building the Parks

The decision to construct parks along the Huron River was made and from 1902- 1911 the land was acquired and landscaped. A significant amount of work was required so the public could enjoy and make use of it.

Once the city decided to build parks along the river, many landowners began having second thoughts. Several made money by renting to local industries. Except for some land donated by the Michigan Central Railroad, the city could not reach agreements with most of the landowners. The city then condemned the property, claimed the land for public use and paid the owner what they thought was fair value. The Henning property acquisition is recorded in 1902 City Council proceedings. The Council wanted Mr. Henning's property because it bordered the Michigan Central Railroad and was highly visible to those traveling through Ann Arbor.

The result is the riverside park system that today consists of Cedar Bend Nature Area, Fuller Park, Broadway Park, Riverside Park and Island Park. Visitors can enjoy everything from soccer, swimming, waterslides and canoeing to walking natural trails and relaxing to the riverbanks. (Source: UM Arts of Citizenship)

**DOWNTOWN & LOWERTOWN STREET EXHIBITS** Take an online tour of the permanent sidewalk exhibits at sixteen landmark sites throughout downtown Ann Arbor. Learn about the places and progress of Ann Arbor by searching the hundreds of photos or just browsing the exhibits. [aastreet.aadl.org](http://aastreet.aadl.org)

# The Argus Corner

By Cheryl A. Chidester

The 14th Annual Argus Collectors Group (ACG) Spring Gathering was held this year in Eden, NC. ACG is a world-wide internet-based association ([arguscg@yahoo.com](mailto:arguscg@yahoo.com)) of 700-plus members interested in the use and collection of Argus products, particularly cameras. The group is also very supportive of the Argus Museum with donations of artifacts and funds, assisting in research, and writing articles and giving presentations on Argus-related subjects.

The Gathering is an international event as participants have hailed from not only across the United States, but also Canada, Australia and England. Since its founding, the Gathering has been co-hosted by Doug Wilcox of Martinsville, VA and Ron Norwood of Eden, NC. Both are dedicated, and generous, ACG and Argus Museum members and wonderful hosts. They are assisted by Bob Kelly of Seattle, WA, particularly with planning and executing the silent and live auctions and organizing the event's presentations.

Eden's Mayor Wayne Tuggle welcomed and addressed the group. Mayor Pro-Tem, Jim Burnett and numerous city employees also visited with attendees. Johnny Farmer, Director of Parks and Recreation and Cindy Adams, Tourism Director, coordinated and provided support from the City of Eden for the event. The Tourism Bureau also sponsored the farewell Sunday breakfast.

The Gathering includes presentations, demonstrations, and field trips. Each year, the Argus Museum/Washtenaw County Historical Society provides a large display of museum artifacts as well as a presentation, which is often given by the curator of the museum. Among the presenters were Earl English who spoke about pinhole photography, Wesley Furr who explained how he created a digital camera in an Argus camera body, Vaughn Martens who

demonstrated how to create a plastic focusing screen and Randy Sweatt who talked about dating turn-of-the-century photographs. The Museum displayed Argus twin-lens reflex (TLR) cameras (including a few very rare examples) and their accessories. Information presented included Argus TLR patents, Argus ads promoting TLR cameras, and parts and repair and owner manuals. Voted by event attendees, the winner in the large display category was Tom Heckhaus for his display of 44 variations of the C3 camera. Wesley Furr received the award for best mini-display of his "home-made" digital camera" housed in an Argus 75 with a remote and whose images are downloaded to a website.

A recent Argus Museum photography exhibition was also displayed in Eden's City Hall, where the conference was held. "Sextant – Navigating the Visual", work of the Renegades with an Argus Group (RAGS) was well-received by both event attendees and the general public.

Most attendees participated in the popular photography competition. Using an Argus (film) camera, they explored Eden and the surrounding communities while taking photographs. The film is developed and attendees vote for their favorite images during the event's award dinner. While there were many quality images, only three received awards; Joe Smith placed first, Ed Kowalski took second and Matt Johnson was awarded a third place. Funds for the Argus Museum are often generated during the event. This year's donations included monetary donations, several searchable DVD copies of *Argomania* and *Classic Argus Films* (which are for sale through the Argus Museum), as well as copies of last year's conference for the museum archives. Additionally, funds were



jointly raised to purchase equipment to conduct oral histories of former Argus employees, many of whom are elderly. (While the Argus Museum curator has a list of local former employees who are interested in participating in the project, if you know of anyone, please contact Cheryl Chidester).

The Argus Collector Group Gathering is held each year during the third weekend in May. You can find out more about the group at: [arguscg.org](http://arguscg.org). A portion of the event was generously recorded by Wesley Furr and will be available on DVD through the Argus Museum.

If you wish you could have attended this year's ACG Gathering, there's an event happening this fall in Ann Arbor that you may be interested in – The ACG A2 Fall Conference, being held this year October 22-25. The conference will include demonstrations and presentations (including a presenter from San Bernardino, CA, who will discuss Argus WWII radio equipment). Also on the agenda is lunch with former Argus employees, a dinner sponsored by ACG, an auction and award banquet, a photography competition, a field trip and attending the Michigan Photographic Society (MiPHS) annual Photographic Show and Sale.

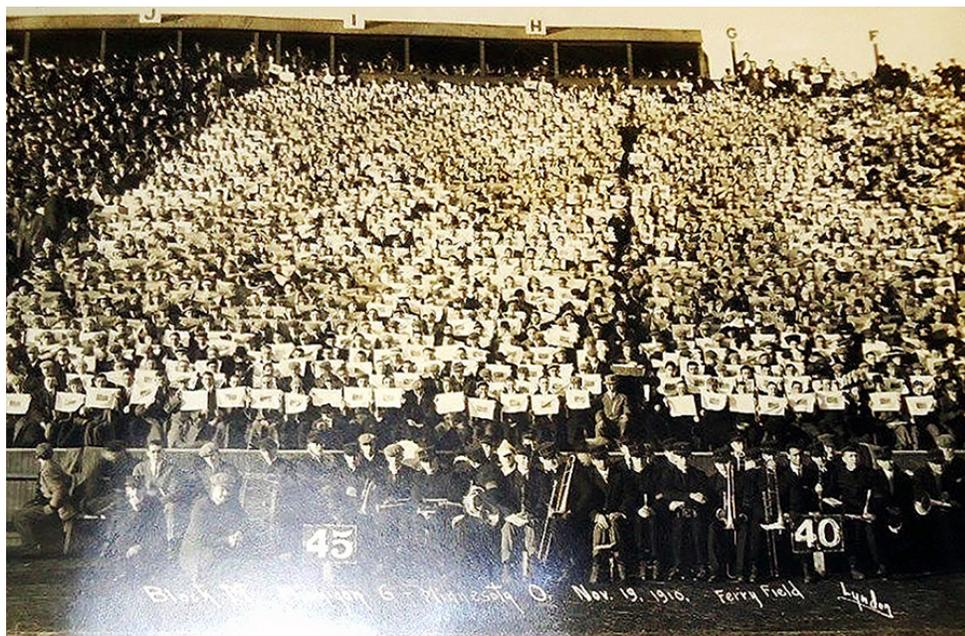
For more information, please contact Curator, Cheryl Chidester at: [cchidester@onealconstruction.com](mailto:cchidester@onealconstruction.com) or 734-769-0770.

## Alford Samuel Lyndon

Alford Samuel Lyndon was born in Plymouth, MI in 1875. He left the family farm after high school to race bicycles for the White Sewing Machine Company. He went to the University of Michigan Engineering School, earning his room and board and tuition by taking pictures of the University athletic teams and campus buildings. Lyndon decided he could make money taking pictures so he left school and opened a photography studio at 719 N. University in 1906 where he also sold photographic supplies.

He married Julia Francisco in St. Louis, MO in 1909 after a two month courtship. Lyndon employed Eugene J. Francisco, his wife's nephew, as a photographer from 1914 to 1918 and then made him a partner in 1920. Lyndon worked as a photographer until about 1926. In 1929 the company became Francisco-Boyce Photo Company and later Card & Camera Shop.

Lyndon travelled all over Michigan taking photographs, many of which

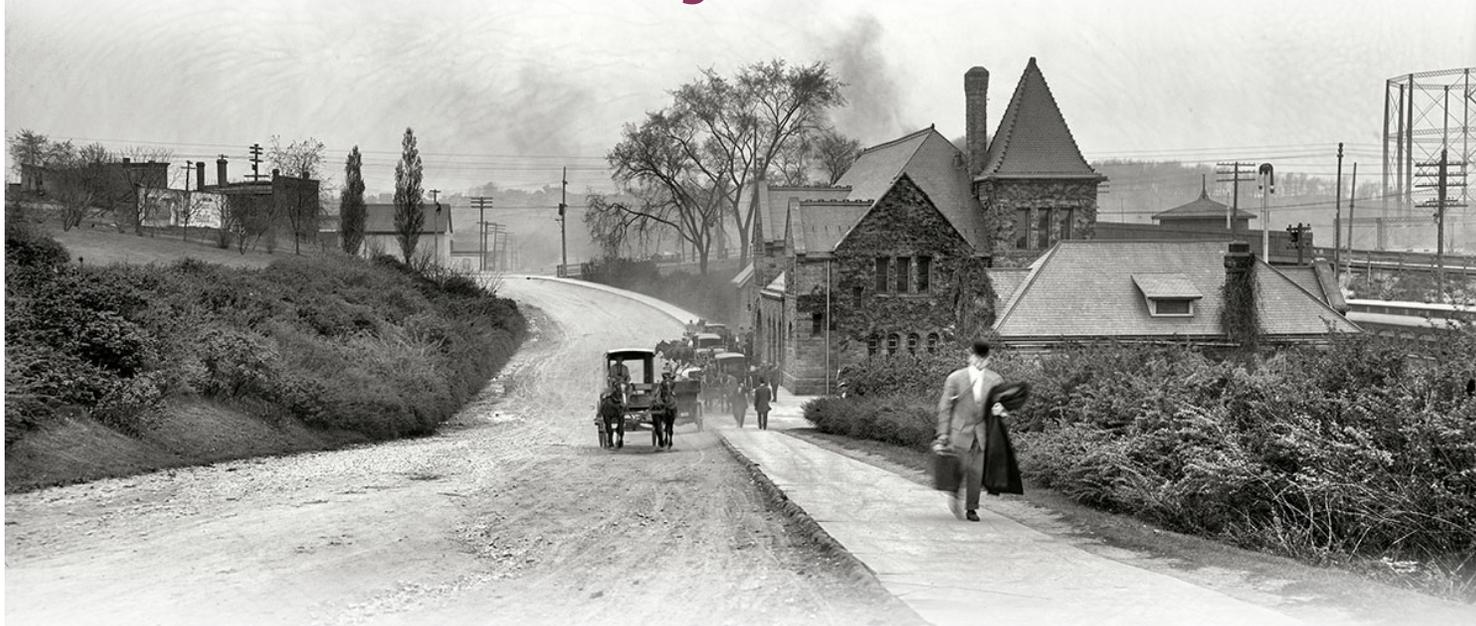


*Lyndon photo of Block M at Minnesota game, Ferry Field, Nov. 19, 1910*

were made into postcards. He was also well-known for his photos of University of Michigan sporting events and year-book photos for the Michiganian and local high schools. The studio provided photos for some of the illustrations in a ca1915 booklet "Ann Arbor: a Quiet Spot" for UM students. According to family lore, he was

responsible for "inventing" cards that students held up at football games so he could photograph the block "M". Lyndon also sold automobiles and real estate, founded an irrigation/sprinkler company, now Perfection Sprinkler Co./Michigan Irrigation Co. and developed a golf course near Canton, using goats to mow the grass. **By Judy Chrisman**

## The Commuter – Michigan Central Railroad Station



The year was 1910 – when somebody put his or her head under a photographer's hood to capture this scene. From where the unknown photographer stood on a hillside, the train can't be seen, but a cloud of smoke drifting away from the station can. This photo is titled "The Commuter" – His left foot is blurred a little by his passage, a man carrying a winter overcoat and wearing a summer suit begins climbing the hill from the station (which is now the Gandy Dancer restaurant).

# SHE Took the Picture!

By Susan Nenadic

If this were England, our story would have died stillborn. England required a license which was a long and apparently convoluted process. No such problem here in the USA. As soon as Samuel Morse told his brothers about his friend, Daguerre's, amazing new process, the frenzy for daguerreotypes, then tintypes and ambrotypes began. This technology, new in 1840, opened the door especially to women looking for an occupation beyond sewing or teaching. Nineteenth century Washtenaw County could boast of having five long term photographic "artists," for that is how they saw what they did and how they advertised their service to the public.

The earliest female photographers in Washtenaw County resided in Saline and Manchester. There is more documentation describing Lucretia Gillett who opened her Saline studio in 1860. Her brother probably introduced her to the art of the daguerreotype, but it was her skills that kept people coming to have their images preserved for posterity.



Lucretia Gillett (Saline Area Historical Society)

Less documented is Harriet Osborn/e of Manchester. Many cartes de visite with her colophon (a design with the photographer's name and address on the back) are photographs of Civil War soldiers. So Osborn/e's studio existed at the same time as Gillett's, but it did not last nearly as long.



Harriet Osborn took this photo in Manchester of Ella Louise Kief and family or friends in 1864. (Ray Berg & Alan Dyer, Manchester Mirror)



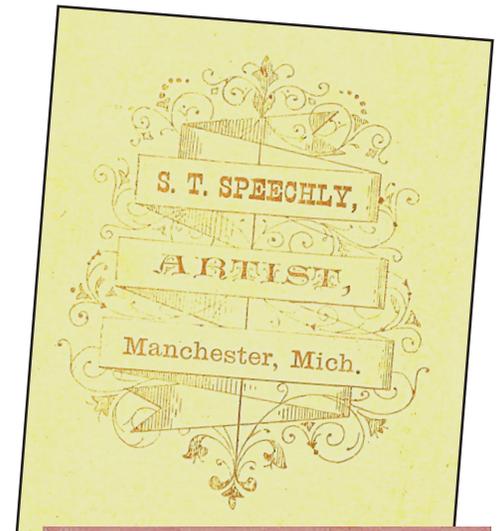
In Ann Arbor, Susan Speechley did so well in the 1870's that she opened a second studio in Manchester. The man from whom she bought the Manchester studio called her "a first class artist." She also copied old pictures and sold frames. Speechley did not close her businesses until she married in 1886 and moved away.



Mary Parsons, circa 1880 (Ypsilanti Historical Society)

Ypsilanti had its own female photographer. Mr. and Mrs. J. H Parsons had been teachers in Ohio before the Civil War. When they moved to Michigan, they purchased photographic equipment from J.A. Crane. The couple obviously worked together because, when Mr. Parsons died suddenly in 1871, Mrs. Parsons was perfectly able to continue and even expand the business which provided the income with which she supported her three children.

(Continued next page)



The fifth female photographer in Washtenaw County was a bit younger than Speechley and Parsons. May Clark had tried teaching but abandoned it, as so many young women did, in favor of emerging opportunities as office workers. She trained at Cleary College. Jefferson Gibson, who had just arrived in Ann Arbor, hired her to be his bookkeeper.

Soon she became his assistant, and finally they married. May was just opening a second studio in Ypsilanti when her husband was hired to be the official photographer for the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exhibition. After that, they innovated photographic studios in the large department stores which were becoming popular all over the U.S. When Mr. Gibson died in 1902, his wife continued the business for another decade.

Within four decades, the photographic industry exploded in the United States. By 1885 almost a thousand women were earning a living that way. As Mrs. Parsons wrote to Mrs. Rayne who was publishing a book about occupations for women, "...all [women who work] cannot be teachers, clerks or seamstresses."

Additional information can be found in *A Purse of her Own* by Susan L. Nenadic. It is available at the Museum on Main Street Gift Shop, Nicola's and Amazon. **WCHS Members save 15% on items from the Gift Shop**



J. J. GIBSON, Founder  
Official World's Fair Photographer, 1893



*Gibson* ART GALLERIES  
151-153 WABASH AVE  
CHICAGO.

MAY M. GIBSON, (Mrs. J. J. Gibson), President

## Early County Photography Exhibit at the Museum on Main Street

Now, at any and every opportunity, life's events are documented with smart phones, cameras and other digital devices. But at one time in our history, major life events were commemorated in the photographer's studio. Births, confirmations, graduations, team membership, army enlistments, marriages and more, were captured and produced by professional photographers at one of the many the local studios. The current

exhibit "Capturing Washtenaw County – The Art and Business of Early Photography" opened in May and has been popular with our visitors. We invite you to come see it during the summer and fall months. The Museum is open Saturdays and Sundays, from 12-4 PM and weekdays by appointment. Groups are welcome, call 734-662-9092 or email [wchs-500@ameritech.net](mailto:wchs-500@ameritech.net) so we can accommodate your needs.



### Thank You to the Exhibit Contributors

- Ann Arbor District Library
- Bentley Historical Library
- Burton Historical Collection,
- Cobblestone Farm Association
- Dave Easterwood of Dave's Cameras
- Dexter Area Historical Society
- Patricia Creal
- The Argus Museum
- The David R. Byrd Center
- The Family of Eglon Aray
- The Ypsilanti Historical Society
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- Wystan Stevens
- The Washtenaw County Historical Society Members and Artifact Donors



*Thank You for being a member!  
The Washtenaw County Historical  
appreciates and values your support*

## Dixboro Farmers' Market

**5221 Church Road, Ann Arbor  
Off Plymouth Rd. - Fridays, 3-7 PM**

Located on the eastern edge of the historic Dixboro Village Green. Sitting alongside a historic church and one-room schoolhouse on the Dixboro Village Green, local growers and producers have created a vibrant marketplace welcoming to all. Open now until 10/30.



THE KEMPF HOUSE

## Open House & Tours

**312 S. Division, Ann Arbor  
734-994-4898  
kempfhousmuseum@gmail.com**

Open Houses begin on April 12, and continue every Sunday through June. They resume September 27, 2015, and continue every Sunday (with the exception of Thanksgiving weekend) through December 13, 2015. Stop by for a guided tour of the Kempf House Museum between 1 pm and 4 pm. They are FREE! Donations appreciated.

DEXTER AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Gordon Hall Pays off the Mortgage

The Dexter Area Historical Society, with tremendous help from members of the community, has successfully paid off the mortgage on Gordon Hall. Built in 1843 by Judge Samuel Dexter, the founder of Dexter, is one of Michigan's most significant examples of Greek Revival architecture. See the Rehabilitation Master Plan at [www.dextermuseum.org](http://www.dextermuseum.org)

## Dexter Area Historical Museum

The museum is housed in the former St. Andrew's United Church of Christ, built in 1883. The museum contains a large display area, a genealogical library, a local history library, and Gift Shop. The museum is open now to mid-December on Friday and Saturday from 1-3 PM **3443 Inverness Street (734) 426-2519**  
[www.dextermuseum.org](http://www.dextermuseum.org)



YPSILANTI HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Ypsilanti Heritage Festival—New Walking Tours

The Ypsilanti Heritage Festival is **August 21-23**. This free community festival features arts & crafts, live music, family activities and entertainment, historical presentations, and so much more. This year there are three free walking tours:

### South Adams Street: A Historic Ypsilanti African-American Neighborhood

Friday, 6pm / Tour Forms at the YDL Between the Civil War and World War I, Ypsilanti's had the highest percentage of African-Americans of any Michigan city. Hosted by local historian Matt Siegfried

### A Brief History of North Huron Street, Saturday, 1pm / 3pm / 5pm / 7pm

Tour forms at the corner of Huron & Cross Streets, near the Community Food Tent. James Mann's walking tour will look into the history of some of Ypsilanti's oldest and most stately buildings.

### Explore Ypsilanti's Native Landscape and Indian History Sunday, 1pm

Tour Forms at the Water Street Trail Head, south side of Michigan Avenue just east of Huron Street. For thousands of years before there was an Ypsilanti, this area of the Huron River was home to a number of different cultures. Discover the past that is all around us as we walk the old Potawatomi Trail and learn about the landscape and history of the Ypsilanti area's Native American past. Join local historian Matt Siegfried on a walking tour along the Huron River, once home to numerous Indian villages, cemeteries, mounds, trails and fields. Find out about the last Native American village in Ypsilanti and the continuing impact that of that history on the City of Ypsilanti. [ypsilantiheritagefestival.com](http://ypsilantiheritagefestival.com)