



# WASHTENAW IMPRESSIONS

## KAREN'S COLUMN: FIRST PIANO IN MICHIGAN WEST OF DETROIT FEATURED AT MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE

We are looking forward to the Open House, "Meet the Museum on Main Street—A Sneak Preview" on Sunday, May 23. Preparations are being made! We will be cutting the cake with the cake knife used by Edith Staebler Kempf in 1982 when the Society celebrated its 125th anniversary.

Although the "Sneak Preview" will focus mostly on the restoration of the museum house, we do plan to have a few interesting artifacts on display. One will be the Chapin piano. This piano came to Washtenaw County in May of 1827, the first piano to be brought west of Detroit. It was donated to the  
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(1) Upper picture: Joseph F.C. Lam, director of the Stearns Collection of Musical Instruments, shows Ann Arbor's first piano which will be at museum opening May 23. The piano came by ox team in 1827.

(2) Lower picture: Members of the Professional Volunteer Corps are shown painting the Museum's picket fence recently.

## WCHS HAS 50% OF KNAPP'S POINTS TOWARD GOAL

WCHS has now collected 10,184 Bill Knapp's Restaurant points toward more acid-free materials to safely store textiles thanks to members and friends. That is 50% of our goal of 19,125 points.

Anyone who eats at Knapp's may request a yellow points slip from the cashier each time. One point is given for each dollar spent. Please give or send to Alice Ziegler, 537 Riverview Dr., Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

## WCHS ANNUAL MEETING POT LUCK WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16

WCHS will gather at the Pittsfield Union Grange, located at 3337 Ann Arbor Saline Road. It is situated on the east side of the road, just south of the intersection of Ann Arbor-Saline and Oak Valley Roads, approximately ¼ mile south of I-94 interchange.

Beverages and table service will be provided for the potluck. Please bring a dish to pass for 8 to 10 persons.

Dr. Elizabeth Brabec will present a talk on "Historic Landscapes: Protecting Our Heritage and Our Quality of Life."

Urban sprawl is the number one land use issue in America today. The Ann Arbor region is experiencing the brunt of its effects, leading to a loss of character and sense of place in our communities. The presentation will review success stories from other communities who have preserved their historic resources in the face of urban sprawl.

## DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY:

We hope you have marked your calendar to plan to attend the Sneak Preview Opening of the Museum on Main Street.

Our May General Meeting will be the Sneak Preview of the Museum on Main Street.

Members, friends and the public are invited. Refreshments will be served.

A tent will be erected in our parking lot.

We have permission on Sunday, May 23, to park on the west side of North Main Street (the side opposite to our Museum) between 1:30 and 5:00 p.m.

Permanent exhibits will be installed in the Fall; we will have special items on display for this special occasion.

ALL ARE INVITED TO ATTEND  
THE SNEAK PREVIEW  
OF OUR  
MUSEUM on MAIN STREET  
500 N. MAIN STREET  
at BEAKES  
SUNDAY, MAY 23, 1999  
2 TO 5 PM  
RIBBON CUTTING AT 2:30

razor blades in half, then in half again, to work on model airplanes made of balsa wood. "The Japanese have come up with a better idea: a little blade that you can snap off as many times as you like."

Continuing with the inventory of his pockets, he said, "I have a pencil here that one who deals with antique materials would use. It has a number two lead. It's virtue is that if you make a mark on something, you can erase it. We discourage pens."

He next showed a tool called a bone folder. "Its name comes from the good old days when they made books by hand. The printer printed on the largest sheet of paper his press would take, then folded it into smaller sheets, as desired. They used this tool to make the crease."

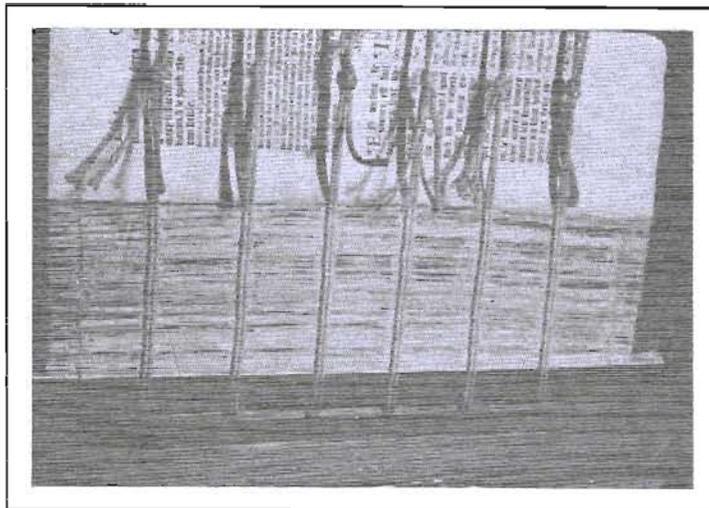
Starting the slide presentation of the restoration of a book belonging to the University of Michigan Law Library, Jim recalled his conversation with the librarian in charge of it. "By way of warning me to be careful of it, this is a 17th-century law book, Coke's Commentary on Littleton.

"Talk about value! I was assured that if this book came to misfortune, the whole of Judeo-Christian civilization would come tumbling down around our ears!

"The first thing we do is examine the book and document its condition. We take pictures, candid shots, of what we do.

"We can see that the back of the book is pretty well missing except for a little bit here and a little bit there. It is sewed over a number of raised bands.

"Of the headbands or end bands on top and bottom, one is missing, one partly there. You will notice that the cover is nothing really special. It is calfskin. It has no special



Restoration under way.

decoration or ornamentation, plus it has suffered from application of various kinds of adhesive tapes: some plastic, some cloth. We make note of all of that."

Mr. Craven then presented a detailed, step-by-step slide show of the restoration of this law book. The slides told the story.

"This particular book has what is called laced-on boards. That is the sewing part, the hemp cords that the book is sewn over, attached to the boards of the book. We're beginning to decide the book will have to be re-sewn. The boards are more or less attached but, as a bookbinder would say, the slips are broken.

"We have a kind of a motto--I guess it was stolen from the medical profession. When we work on things like this, we try to 'Do No Harm.' We also have a little prayer: 'Deliver me from the thing that somebody else has fixed.'

"From the 1940s or so, we have repairs made with adhesive tapes, both plastic and cloth. One of the problems of using cellophane tapes is that they have what is called a slow-flow adhesive. It differs from an Elmer's Glue, animal glue, or wheat paste, which are static; they stay there. Sticky tapes are susceptible to capillary action and the adhesive can soak into the paper.

"There was also a lot of brown paper tape, lick and stick, that was also used by previous repairers.

"One of the things we do is count pages to make sure they sent us everything. We want to send back everything we received. Of course, pages are usually consecutive, but we found an anomaly where there was a discontinuity in numbering.

"Some of the pages of this 1628 book are a bit damaged and certainly a little bit brittle.

"There are some torn pages and there is a nip out of the corner of the title page.

"For page repair we are going to do what we call leaf casting, a form of making or remaking paper.

"We use quality papers in our shop. We throw off-cuttings into a box. Every once in a while, we make little snippets of them, boil them up for a period of time, put them into a blender and turn them into a paper slurry.

"We lay the paper to be repaired on a window screen in a tray of water. We pour our slurry over that. Water filters through the screen, going every place that is not occupied by the paper. Where the water goes, it deposits paper fibers on the screen. We are rather proud of how this came out.

"It was decided to wash the pages of the book, that is, to immerse them in water and gently, gently move the sheets up and down a little bit. It is more soaking than agitated washing.

"On occasion, one would put a drop or two of detergent to act as a surfactant and help the water penetrate a little better. Mainly, it is soaking. We use water filtered for particles and chemicals and softened.

## KAREN'S COLUMN

(Continued from page 1.)

Society in 1940 by Lucy E. Chapin, the great-granddaughter of Mrs. Hannah Clark.

Mrs. Clark was the early settler who brought the piano west by ox-cart, for her daughter, Lucy Ann Clark. The piano has been in the care of the University of Michigan Stearns Collection of Musical Instruments since 1940, as the Society did not have a place for it. In 1972 the Society restored the piano. It was returned to storage with other Stearns instruments.

Those who come to the open house will have the opportunity to see and hear the piano, (though it is not in very good tune!). This November the Stearns Collection will celebrate its 100th anniversary. It seems an appropriate time to bring out this rare and historic musical instrument, as we celebrate the restoration of our museum and as we become more aware of another special collection in our community--The Stearns Collection.

On May 1, the Professional Volunteer Corps painted our picket fence. This group's members volunteer for a wide variety of one-day projects for charitable causes in the greater Ann Arbor area and participate in regular PVC socials.

A singles group, it meets regularly at the NEW Center the second Friday of each month. At these meetings they decide which projects they will undertake. We were lucky they were able to help us out. About ten of their members worked steadily from 9:30 AM to 1 PM, and got the job done. If you would like to know more about this group, the phone number is 734-747-6801.

Karen Koykka O'Neal  
734-665-2242

## CORRECTION: MIX-UP OF THE TWO LAURAS

In the March 1999 Impressions the editor mistakenly referred to Laura Greiner Marz as having lived in the MoMS museum house when it was at 1015 Wall Street. Actually, two Lauras lived there.

Laura #1 was Laura Greiner. The Greiners bought 1015 Wall Street about 1890 and lived there until about 1915 according to city directories.

Laura #2 was the daughter of Fred and Anna Bauer who bought 1015 Wall Street about 1915. After Laura Bauer married John Marz on May 12, 1920 the Bauers shared the house with the Marzes.

The Bauers and Marzes continued to live there the rest of their lives. Laura, the last of the two couples died in 1988. The Marz's son, Kenneth, sold the house to the University of Michigan.



## THREE RUTHRUFF SONS SERVED IN CIVIL WAR

Civil War news must have been eagerly awaited in the Ruthruff home because three of Samuel's sons served in the war.

Edwin the 8th child, was in the Second Michigan Infantry and John, the 11th child in the Twentieth Michigan Infantry according to the *Washtenaw County History*.

Samuel, Jr., the second child, served in the Co.C of the 17th Kansas Infantry Post 424 GAR.

The Second Infantry is said to have participated in "many of the most desperate battles of the war." The 20th, composed of about half Washtenaw men, participated in 30 battles and skirmishes. The unit left Jackson for Washington September 1, 1862, and was disbanded at Jackson June 9, 1865.

## CHRONOLOGY 1015 WALL STREET

1837 – 1844

Kellogg and Warden families

1853 – 1877

Ruthruff family

1890 – 1915

Charles G. Greiner family

1915 – remainder of their lives

Fred and Anna Bauer

1920 – 1998

Laura Bauer married John Marz

The Marzes shared the house with the Bauers and Laura died in 1988. The Marz's son, Kenneth, sold the house to the University.

## CERTIFICATES OFFERED

Hand lettered certificates, framed if desired, are offered free of charge, by WCHS to organizations, businesses, churches, schools etc. for milestone anniversaries. Information: 663-8826.

## WHAT'S IT? GAME, LOANBOXES OFFERED BY WCHS

WCHS offers traveling exhibits of small artifacts, set up as humorous "What's It?" games to schools for children and another for adults. They are available free for classes and meetings.

Loan Boxes, "Life Before Electricity" and "From Hats to Spats" are available to teachers for a \$15 rental charge. Information: Sally Silvennoinen, Education Chair, (734) 971-5086 or (734) 662-9092.

## ARTIFACTS TO DONATE?

Anyone wishing to donate an artifact to WCHS may contact:

Judy Chrisman, collections chair,  
at 734-769-7859 or by mail,  
1809 Dexter Ave., Ann Arbor, MI  
48103.