

The Milford Historian

Mission Statement: We are organized exclusively for educational purposes. We bring together those people who are interested in history, especially the history of the Village of Milford and Milford Township.

July Picnic in Wixom

Pack up your picnic basket we're hitting the road for our picnic this year. The Milford Historical Society accepted a gracious invitation from our neighbors in Wixom. Our afternoon will begin at 2 p.m. at the Gibson Home located at 49805 Pontiac Trail. The two-story Italianate style farmhouse was built by Matthew Gibson who, along with his brother, came to America from Ireland in 1830. They landed in Philadelphia, moved to Southfield and then to Wixom. Matthew purchased the original 168-acre parcel of land in Wixom at a public auction in 1861. Just married, Matthew and his bride, Mary Jane Morrison, built a log cabin south of the current home site. The family remained in the log cabin until the completion of the farm house in 1872. The Gibson House experienced few changes over the years. The last renovation was in 1964 when Mildred Gibson, granddaughter of Matthew, moved back to the home after retiring from teaching. At that time the plaster was removed from the walls so they could be insulated and the kitchen and heating system were updated. The home stayed in the Gibson family until the death of Mildred in 1995. Most of the original acreage was sold over the years. When the City of Wixom purchased the home in 1995 it was sold with 3.31 acres. The City of Wixom plans to use the site as a historic farm and park for all to enjoy. Please be flexible regarding parking which will either be at the Gibson Home on Pontiac Trail or off K-Tool drive south of the home and west off South Milford Road.

Lucy Wixom, widow of Ahijah Wixom, one of Wixom's founding fathers, built this home in 1855. The Reverend and Mrs. Samuel Wire were the first residents of this Gothic Revival house, which was used for church and funeral services. Caskets rested in an alcove in the parlor, whose wide door on the north was added so caskets could be easily moved to the cemetery across the street. The home remained in the Wixom family until the deaths of Rev. Wire and his wife. Since then, the home has had only a few tenants. In 1975 the city of Wixom purchased the home from the estate of the Tiffin family. It was then leased to the Wixom Historical Society. The Wixom-Wire House is located on the southwest corner of Wixom Road and Maple Road.

Our picnic will begin at 2:00 p.m. at the Gibson House. In case of rain, we will set up inside the home. Our meetings are open to all. You don't have to be a member to have a good time with people who enjoy history!



Gibson Park House

After we have enjoyed our meal and have had a short informational business meeting, we will travel north to the Wixom –Wire House. George Woodward, a member of both the Milford Historical Society and the Wixom Historical Society, has offered to open up the home and give us a tour of another of Wixom’s historical landmarks.



Wixom-Wire House

***Please note that maps for the picnic are available at the MHS Museum or on our website (www.milfordhistory.org).

July Picnic
Sunday, July 17, 2005
2:00 p.m.
Gibson Park House
49805 Pontiac Trail, Wixom
A-G H-N O-Z
 Main Dish Salad Dessert

From Your President...

The 4th of July Parade was well organized by Kathy and Russ Rheaume. They were able to secure over 40 entries for the parade including floats, bands, dancing and marching groups. Sue Bullard did an amazing job of developing the Society’s float on extremely short notice. There was also an exciting fly over by F-16 aircraft from the Michigan Air National Guard

Home Tour 2005 is off to a great start. We have 5-6 homes committed for the event. Major sponsors have shown their commitment by sending in their checks already. Watch for more on this in the weeks ahead.

Our new computer software, “PastPerfect Software for Museum Collections,” is now being utilized at the Historical Society office. We are fortunate to have the help of Sharon Jensen, a CMU graduate, to assist us by imputing historical pictures

based at Selfridge.
[\(see Dave's photo essay of the parade\)](#)

Preparations for our Granny's Attic Sale are going well. The basement is almost full of low-priced items. We could still use some donations of higher priced items. I would like to thank Duane Freitag for his sweat equity in carrying items down to the basement. Duane has also been a great help in pricing items for sale.

into the appropriate files.

Norm Werner, our Webmaster extraordinaire, has been enhancing and updating our website. Look for the latest information on the Powerhouse. He also has a current map to the July 17th picnic. We look forward to having all members there on that date.

David Chase



Powerhouse Exterior Almost Completed

Judith Reiter advises that exterior restoration of the Milford Powerhouse is nearing completion.

The photo on the left shows how far the project has come and why those involved are so pleased with its

Home Tour 2005 All Systems are Go!

House Captains and Docents are Needed.

Based on the number of historic homes and locations that have committed to Home Tour 2005, this should be a very successful fundraising event for the Milford Historical Society.



<p>All Milford Historical Society members are encouraged to visit the Powerhouse and see the improvements for themselves.</p>	<p>progress.</p> <p>Masonry repair is finished and all of the art deco glass blocks have been replaced in the tower. The huge faceted windows on the east and west sides of the building are expected to be installed in August along with the doors. Inside, quarry tile has been laid as part of this initial construction phase.</p>	<p>Mark your calendars! Tour dates are Saturday, September 17th (10-5 p.m.) and Sunday, September 18th (Noon-5 p.m.)</p> <p>Special Home Tour 2005 sponsorship packages are still available. For details, contact Judith Reiter at 248-684-0684.</p> <p>The magnitude of this year's tour requires more house captains and docents than ever before. If you would like to volunteer, by all means, please contact Kelly Irwin at 248-684-2348.</p> <p>Other featured weekend events are the Tractor Show (details are provided in the following article) and the Car Show. These two events are free and are on Sunday, September 18th only.</p>
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Remembering "Johnnie" Centner

Mrs. Johnette "Johnnie" Centner passed away May 22, 2005. Johnnie was an active and longtime member of the Milford Historical Society and served many years as a docent. She lived a rich, interesting life which included meeting Charles Lindberg. Johnnie will be missed by all who knew her.

Welcome New Members

We are pleased to announce that **Vaughn and Stella Koshkarian** and **Clay and Deb Thompson** are our newest Historical Society members.

Tractor Show 2005



The Society's annual Tractor Show will again be held in conjunction with the Home Tour. Get your tractor ready, or just come and enjoy the hardware. All tractors are welcome: old, new, restored, or those in regular use ("working clothes"). Pre-registration

is not required; just show up, then register. See you there on **Sunday, September 18th, 10-4 p.m., Johnson School, 515 General Motors Road**

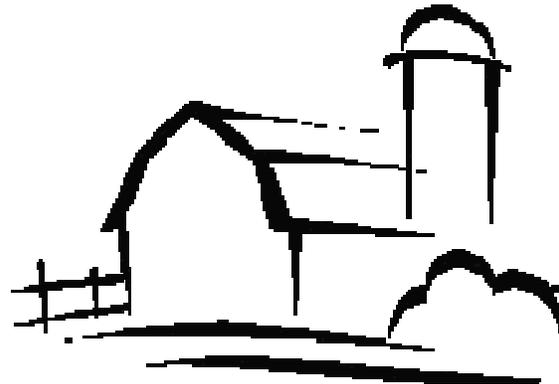
What's up at the log cabin? By Tami Averill



Have you passed by South Side Park recently? If so, you may have noticed some activity and changes around the Log Cabin. There is an effort afoot to turn the Log Cabin from a storage facility into an active, educational, period-appropriate site. Throughout the summer, structural repairs will be made to make the building more weather tight and less accessible to local fauna.

Long-term goals include adding a fireplace, a loft and reproduction furnishings. Also in the works are workshops and training sessions on historical interpretation, period clothing and traditional 19th century crafts and skills for society members interested in working at the Log Cabin during special events, such as the annual Home Tour.

Kelly-Fisk Farm Festival



Society member Marge Sawruk advises that the White Lake Historical Society will present their 20th annual Kelley-Fisk Farm Festival on **Saturday, September 10th and Sunday, September 11th, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., at 9180 Highland Road (M59), 1 1/2 miles west of Williams Lake Rd.**

Visit the historic 1855 farmhouse and barn and 1876 one-room school. There is something for everyone starting with crafts at 9 a.m. Other events begin at 11 a.m. and include: pony rides, bake sale, Parlor Players, dulcimer player, guitar, line dancing, corn roast, craft making for the children, door prizes, used book sale, magic shows and storytelling, encampments, old cars and tractors, trades people demonstrating their skills, ice cream sundaes and slices of homemade apple pie made on the premises

Plans for the site include a period vegetable and herb garden, complete with heritage plants appropriate to the early 19th Century. Eagle Scout candidate, Wes Wenger, and Boy Scout Troop #172 have worked to make that plan a reality. This resourceful Scout organized several bottle drives and raised money to purchase the necessary supplies for a split rail fence and wood treatment for both the fence and the flagpole. He then organized and supervised his fellow Scouts and several Scoutmasters and parents to erect the fence and refurbish the flagpole. They moved along so quickly that they also had time to remove the sod from the garden area.

Accolades and many thanks to all those who generously contributed to the project:

- **Wes Wenger and Troop #172:** They were a pleasure to work with! We hope to work with them much more in the future.
- **MHS members Don Sleek and Jeff Spoor** - project preparation and supervision: They will also be completing the gate and north side of the fence.
- **Iverson Lumber:** Furnished the fencing at cost.
- **Home Depot:** Furnished assistance in locating the proper wood treatment and donated a gift card toward the purchase of the treatment.

The next time you pass by South Side Park, stop in and take a closer look at the Log Cabin and the new fence and garden plot. Keep an eye out for more changes throughout the summer as we work to get it ready for September's Home Tour.

If you are interested in learning about the life during the settlement era and learning to demonstrate traditional crafts and skills such as fireplace cooking, candle making, woodworking and blacksmithing, think

during the day. Only a \$1 donation is requested for those aged 5 years and over.



Last Chance to Pay 2005 Dues

The year is now half over and we simply can't afford to continue sending newsletters to those who have not paid their 2005 annual dues.

If the address label on this newsletter is marked "unpaid" our records indicate your membership dues have not been received. Your dues can be easily paid at the July 17th Picnic, at the Museum or mailed to the Milford Historical Society at 124 E. Commerce Street

MHS Volunteers for History

In this issue the Society wishes to recognize and thank the following members for enriching the Society and the Milford Community:

- 4th of July Parade and Float: **Kathy Rheume, Sue Bullard, Tami Averill, Donn Sleek, Judith Reiter, Bill Crawford, Norm Warner, MaryLou Gharrity, Russ Rheume, Jeff Spoor, David Chase, Duane Freitag, Nancy Trivisonno, Marlene Gomez.**
- South Side Park Log Cabin Project: **Tami Averill, Donn Sleek, Jeff Spoor.**
- Granny's Attic Sale: **David Chase, Dean Freitag**
- Museum Porch Painting: **Bill Schimmel, David Chase, Russ Rheume, Kathy Rheume, Larry Horvath, Judith Reiter**

about joining the “Log Cabin Crew.” For more information, please contact Tami Averill at (248) 685-9289 or taverill@voyager.net .