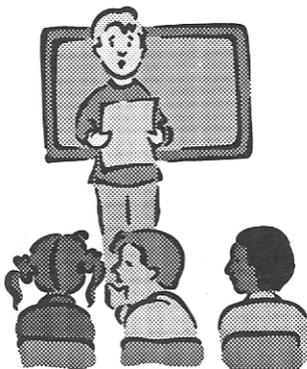


# The Milford Historian

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

## “Show & Tell”

“Show & Tell” will be the program for our January 19<sup>th</sup> General Membership Meeting. This program was so well received last year at this time that we plan to continue it this year. Just like show & tell in school, we ask that you bring something to share with your fellow Historical Society members. It could be anything. Perhaps it’s something you inherited and would like to explain. Perhaps it’s something you found and would like the group to help you identify or learn more about. Maybe it’s something you acquired at last year’s Granny’s Attic Sale. It might even be an object you want us to guess about as to its identity and function. Or, maybe, it’s a picture of something or someone with an interesting history. It could also be a person you know who has a story that could be shared with our group. There are no rules; the sky’s the limit.



The evening will begin with our famous potluck dinner at 6:30 p.m. The General Meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m., followed by our “Show & Tell” program at 8:00 p.m.

Remember, our meetings are open to the public and all are welcome. Please mark your calendar and bring a friend.

## From Your President...

Happy New Year!

As you make those 2006 resolutions, please remember to include volunteering your time at the Historical Museum when it is open to the public from May to December. Help your organization by serving as a docent at the museum from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Wednesdays or Saturdays (or both days!) The three hours will pass quickly, whether you are guiding tours, arranging artifacts or exploring the archives.

Granny’s Attic is desperately seeking treasures for this year’s sale. While you’re cleaning up, putting away and deproliferating your house remember this is an excellent way to donate your lightly used items to a good cause. Let Granny’s Attic serve as your attic to store the furniture, equipment and other items you no longer require. The Historical Society receives funds from this sale to support our work in the community. You receive a 2006 tax deduction. For more information contact David Chase at 248-421-3637.

This year’s elections will be held at our General Meeting on January 19, 2006. Those volunteering for the Board of Directors are: **Mary Lou Gharrity, Judith Reiter, Jeff Spoor, David Chase and Norm Werner.** If you would like to serve on the board, please contact David Chase at 248-421-3637.

We would like to thank departing board member Kelly Irwin for her enthusiasm and considerable contributions to the Milford Historical Society.

Also, please plan now to volunteer for duty on Home Tour 2006. If you are willing to support our biggest fund-raising event of the year, please contact any board member. Thank you.

*David R. Chase*

**January 2006 General Meeting  
& Potluck Dinner**  
**Thursday, January 19, 2006**  
**6:30 p.m.**  
**United Methodist Church**  
**1200 Atlantic Street**

<u><b>A-G</b></u>	<u><b>H-N</b></u>	<u><b>O-Z</b></u>
Dessert.....	Hot Side Dish	Salad

**Everyone: Table service & beverage (coffee provided)**

## Welcome New Members

We are pleased to announce that **Carol Watkins** and **Don and Beverly Deman** are the newest members of the Milford Historical Society. We hope they attend the January 19<sup>th</sup> General Membership Meeting so we may formally welcome them..

## How FDR Helped Fix Milford's Sidewalks

*To follow is a modified version of an interesting article contributed by member Norm Werner. Norm's complete article may be found on the Milford Historical Society website at [milfordhistory.org](http://milfordhistory.org). —ed*

When strolling the sidewalks of Milford you may have seen the imprint **WPA 1938** stamped into the concrete and wondered what it was all about. Well, here's the story.

From the late 1920s until the middle of World War II, the United States experienced the Great Depression. Herbert Hoover was President when it began and believed there was little the federal government could or should do to solve the problem. By contrast, his successor, Franklin D. Roosevelt, felt the national government should be very aggressive in trying to pull the country out of the Depression. Accordingly, he created a number of federal New Deal agencies offering publicly funded jobs. These included the Civil Works Administration (CWA), the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the National Recovery Agency (NRA). The largest and best know of these alphabet agencies was the Works Progress Administration (later the Works Projects Administration) or WPA. Established

in 1935, two years after the other agencies, the WPA was the funding source for a massive "make work" program designed to increase the purchasing power of persons on relief by employing them on local projects.

While the WPA primarily employed blue-collar workers on construction projects across the nation, it also employed some white-collar artists and writers, and even ran a circus. The WPA building sector constructed 116,000 buildings, 78,000 bridges, 611,000 miles of roads and improved 800 airports. At its peak the WPA had 3.5 million persons on its payroll. Altogether the WPA employed 8.5 million persons, and total federal appropriations for the program were almost \$11 billion. The WPA was sharply criticized in a Senate committee report in 1939. The same year the WPA appropriation was cut, several projects were abolished and others reduced. Rapidly rising employment due to WWII-related production caused further cuts in WPA

**This photo, while not taken during Milford's 1938 sidewalk construction, does show WPA laborers being sketched by an artist on another WPA project in Michigan.**



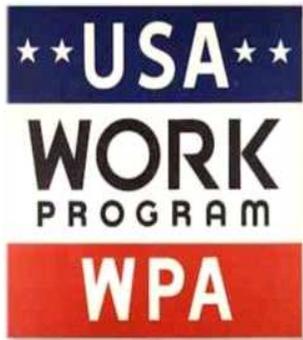
appropriations and payrolls. In June, 1943, the agency officially went out of existence.

Armed with this background, let's return to Milford, Michigan and learn specifically how **WPA 1938** came to be stamped on our sidewalks. Based on accounts in *The Milford Times*, Mayor W. S. Lovejoy advised the Village Council at their meeting on April 1, 1938 that "WPA funds are available now, and a project can be had if a worthy job is found." A sidewalk project was suggested whereby badly needed repair of village walks could be made. Whether this work qualified for WPA funds was not known, but a delegation was formed to find out.

The delegation wasted no time in contacting the WPA administration in Pontiac, which supported Milford preparing a formal submission to start through the rounds of regional, state and, finally, federal WPA authorization. This was done and the village was notified by Congressman George A. Dondero (for whom Dondero High School in Royal Oak was named) that President Roosevelt had approved an allotment of \$20,951 (over \$ ½ million in today's economics). The WPA funds were for labor and the village contributed \$3,850 for materials. It was estimated that 1,500 barrels of cement would be needed.

The project began in early July 1938 and was structured to employ 43 laborers and a superintendent and timekeeper (Fred Sands). It was scheduled to last five months, or 25,800 man hours. WPA workers put in 120 hours per month, divided up to include five working days one week and three working days the next. The WPA wage was \$60 per month (\$2 per hour). Village officials had no jurisdiction over who was hired by the WPA. According to regulations, WPA labor was to be taken from the relief rolls, and all applicants for work on the job in Milford were to apply at the relief office in Pontiac.

Since Milford's sidewalks were in "notoriously bad condition" this was a comprehensive undertaking. It involved replacing large sections of walks that had been "badly broken or raised by growing tree roots, slabs sometimes being heaved several inches to cause serious hazard to pedestrians." Also included was "the building of connecting links of new sidewalks where none now exists, between nearby sections already built of which there are several in the main part of town. Broken blocks will not be patched but torn out and replaced with new. In one or two instances stretches of new sidewalk will be put in, one along General Motors Road from the 'S' turn west; a section on north Hickory Street; and a section on north East Street."



As far as we know, the Milford WPA sidewalk project continued through the balance of 1938 as planned and was completed on time and on budget.

So now you know the history of how **WPA 1938** came to be stamped into Milford's sidewalks. Many sections of the sidewalks that the WPA workers built in 1938 remain in good repair. So you might say that FDR, by his WPA initiative, helped fix the sidewalks we still enjoy today.

## A Statehood Day Celebration

*Saturday, January  
28, 2006, 11-3p.m.*

*Michigan Historical  
Museum, Lansing*



When Michigan entered the Union on January 26, 1837, it was the country's fastest-growing territory. Find out what life was like in the early years of the 26<sup>th</sup> state at Michigan Statehood Day. The museum's second floor galleries will be humming with music and handicraft demonstrations. Other attractions include a rare display of significant documents including the 1835 Michigan Constitution and letters from President Andrew Jackson. The first 100 families to arrive will receive a free miniature state flag. The museum is located inside the Michigan Library and Historical Center, 702 West Kalamazoo Street, Lansing. For more information search the internet by typing "Michigan Historical Museum" and select the one in Lansing.

## 2006 Dues are Due

Dues renewal notices for 2006 were recently mailed to you.. Please respond promptly so we don't have to repeatedly print "dues are due" reminders here and Sue Bullard doesn't have to stamp "Past Due" on your newsletter mailing label. Most importantly, our Society depends on these dues to help maintain the Museum, publish this newsletter and execute events benefiting the community. If you haven't already paid, dues can be paid at the January 19th General Meeting...and you'll save 39 cents!

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Phone: 248-685-7308  
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Website: www.milfordhistory.org

## WHAT'S HOT

**General Meeting  
&  
Potluck Dinner & Program  
("Show & Tell")**

## DON'T MISS OUT!

### Upcoming 2005 Events

Jan 19.....General Meeting  
("Show & Tell")

Mar 16....."The Power of Myth"  
By Dan Piesko from the DIA

May 18.....Program by Tami Averill

July 23.....Picnic

Sept 7....."Chief Tipsico"  
The last Indian in Oakland  
County by Bill Schimmell

### The Milford Historian

–  
Newsletter of the Milford  
Historical Society  
published bimonthly  
(six times per year)

–  
**Editor:** Jay Qualman

–  
Submission deadlines:  
25<sup>th</sup> day of February, April,  
June, August, October &  
December

### Annual Member Dues

Student..... \$5  
Senior.....\$10  
Individual.....\$15  
Family..... \$25  
Lifetime.....\$250  
Small Business...\$50  
Corporation... .\$250+

*Please enroll me/us as a member(s) of the Milford Historical Society:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City-State-Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to:** Milford Historical Society, 124 E. Commerce, Milford, MI 48381