



History Matters



Spring 2015

Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society
Keego Harbor • Orchard Lake • Sylvan Lake • West Bloomfield



APPLE ISLAND TOURS

Saturday, May 16, 11-5 p.m. and Sunday, May 17, 11-5 p.m.

\$15 adults, \$10 children 5-12, \$5 GWBHS and Time Travelers members

Take a pontoon boat ride to Apple Island for a docent-led island group tour. Then, at your own pace, experience storytelling and traditional arts with Native American reenactors and 2013-2014 archaeological dig findings with Western Michigan University's Dr. LouAnn Wurst.

New for 2015! Visit with members of the group Surveying Michigan. This year is the 200th anniversary of the marking of the initial points of meridian and baseline in the state.

Tickets also include free admission to the museum, presenters and hands-on activities, including an archaeological dig experience, outdoor games and crafts.

Tours begin at Orchard Lake Museum with first come, first served in person signup beginning at 11 a.m. No phone reservations. The last tour group leaves the museum at 3:30 p.m. Allow 2.5-3 hours round trip. There are 15 steps to climb to access the island. Wear walking shoes and dress appropriately for the cooler temperatures at the lake.



Sponsored with City of Orchard Lake, Orchard Lake St. Mary's Schools and West Bloomfield Schools. Support from Civic Center TV, Detroit Center for Public Archaeology and Western Michigan University Anthropology Department.

Strategic Planning Session June 10

Members of GWBHS and the community are invited to a strategic planning session Wednesday, June 10 at 7 p.m. at Schulak Farm (6889 West Maple Road). Facilitator Brian Golden will lead the meeting and share his expertise on nonprofit historical organizations. Looking to the future, we will discuss ways to uplift and sustain the organization. We will brainstorm and prioritize plans to direct future GWBHS activities, especially focusing on a 3 year plan.

"Our 2005 and 2010 strategy sessions resulted in a number of new initiatives," said GWBHS President Gina Gregory. "We hope to hear from members and the community for a fresh perspective on our next five years." Please plan to attend. Contact Diane Eanes with questions at rsvp@gwbhs.org or 248.518.0870

From the Desk of President Gina Gregory...

*I believe that history matters.
Do you? Does our community?*

In these dynamic times, an appreciation for history is increasingly important to make people feel connected to treasured places, to traditions and to each other. Insight on the past is something we can share with young people that will open their minds and enhance their futures.

On a personal level, building an appreciation for history can be as simple as telling family stories and honoring family predecessors. At the community level, GWBHS offers an opportunity to understand where we started and the progress we have made. Are people today less interested in history? They seem to save “things” less and less these days. So much of what surrounds us is cheap and disposable and the next generation may never even touch a printed snapshot. Will historic objects and old photos that represent history to us also represent history in the future? In these changing times, how should GWBHS modernize and best use its resources?

• Join us Wednesday, June 10 for a Strategic Planning Session to consider these questions and develop future plans (see page 1 for details).

• GWBHS needs to be sustainable and lighten volunteers' loads. We are excited to welcome Karen Hughye as part-time position help. She is handling public relations and planning tasks. Her expertise and enthusiasm work well with the Society!

• We are looking for more volunteers to step forward to fill 2016 board leadership positions. Contact Diane Eanes, volunteer@gwbhs.org to learn more and volunteer.

So much in our world changes, but encouraging an interest in history is always rewarding. Get involved with GWBHS and share our local history with the people in your life!



Dedication of Roosevelt Bell Tower to Celebrate 95 Years

The dedication of Roosevelt's new bell tower will be on Friday, May 8th at 2:00 p.m. at Roosevelt Elementary School (2065 Cass Lake Road, Keego Harbor). Community members, alumni, parents, staff and students are invited to attend. The dedication of the bell tower is the culminating activity in celebration of Roosevelt's 95th birthday. GWBHS supports this project with a donation to the bell fund.



Children's Toy Exhibit at Orchard Lake Museum

A collection of toys from the 1930s, donated by Ann Harden, is the basis for the newest exhibit in the temporary display area. The museum is open on second Sundays from 1-4 p.m.

History Highlight: The Life of Louie Jane Lawton

by Charles Douglas McEwen

Louie Jane Lawton, a longtime community activist, environmentalist, history-buff & lawyer in West Bloomfield passed away January 4.

Lawton grew-up and lived nearly all of her 92 years in a cottage on Green Lake with her older sister Bessie Weatherston (who died in 2004). As children, Lawton and her sister made great use of Green Lake. During summer, they swam and fished in it. During winter, they skated and windsailed on it. As adults, they fought to protect it from loud motor boats, destructive algae blooms, and other forms of pollution (Green Lake is still a quiet lake).

Lawton, who never married, became a lawyer in the 1950's, after graduating at the top of her class from the Detroit College of Law. She and her sister, a math teacher and accountant, spent years working at Lawton-Ouellette, the family insurance agency their father started. They later worked for Weatherston's son, Colt, at his architecture firm.

In 2006, the sisters were honored by the Friends of West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation with a nature interpretive sign in the West Bloomfield Woods Nature Preserve. "Both the West Bloomfield Woods Nature Preserve and Trail Network were slated for development," the sign states. "The Lawton sisters became part of a larger team to help West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation acquire both parks." (Also, Marshbank Park and the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary) The sign talks about the sisters' persistence and commitment: "Commitment to community and the environment was a way of life for the Lawton sisters. Both helped establish and nurture the Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society. Their historic cottage once belonged to the early automobile mogul Walter Flanders. They worked especially hard to preserve other Flanders buildings on Green Lake and to transform the old Orchard Lake City Hall into the Historical Museum."



Young Louie Lawton



In 2005, a local newspaper reports on the efforts to honor Louie Lawton and her sister for their dedication to parks and nature. Pictured (l-r) Louie Lawton, Bessie Weatherston and Lorna McEwen.



Louie Lawton with the sign honoring her and her sister at the West Bloomfield Woods Nature Preserve.



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Historical Society



MAY-AUGUST 2015 EVENTS

Final details will be listed in the History Matters newsletter and at gwbhs.org

Apple Island Tours

Saturday, May 16 & Sunday, May 17, 11-5 p.m., Orchard Lake Museum, 3951 Orchard Lake Road Guided tours of Apple Island. First come first served. No reservations. Last departure at 3:30 p.m. Sponsored with West Bloomfield Schools. \$15 adults, \$10 children 5-12 years. \$5 GWBHS and Time Travelers members.

National Trail Day Walk*

Saturday, June 6, 8:30-11 a.m. Park at Walnut Creek Middle School, 7601 Walnut Lake Rd.; shuttle returns you to your car.

Celebrate National Trail Day by walking the West Bloomfield Trail from Walnut Lake Road, along the historic rail-to-trail path, to Sylvan Manor Park. Step off the trail to the Orchard Lake Museum for refreshments. See Pathways for more information. No charge.

Volunteer Opportunities Meeting

Saturday, June 13, 10 a.m., Orchard Lake Museum, 3951 Orchard Lake Road Are you looking for flexible, interesting volunteer opportunities? Come learn our needs -- from one-time to long-term commitments. 2016 events are being planned now!

Archaeology for Tweens*

Saturday, July 11, 18, 25, Aug. 1, 1-4 p.m., Orchard Lake Museum, 3951 Orchard Lake Road Learn about the science of archaeology through hands-on, interactive projects, outdoor activities, and visits to a local laboratory and an archaeological site with Detroit Center of Public Archaeology. Up to 18 students, ages 10-13. 1:6 ratio. \$40 per person. Prepayment required by July 6 at www.motownarchaeology.com/workshops. Information at registration@motownarchaeology.com or 313.887.5917

Archaeology for Adults*

Saturday, August 8, 15, 22, 29. 9 a.m.-noon, Orchard Lake Museum, 3951 Orchard Lake Road Detroit Center of Public Archaeology offers in-depth learning about archaeology in your community; the convergence of archaeology and historic preservation; including visits to archaeological sites. Up to 18 adults, ages 14+. 1:10 ratio. \$50 per person. Prepayment required by Aug. 3 at www.motownarchaeology.com/workshops. Information at registration@motownarchaeology.com or 313.887.5917

Monthly Open Houses

Second Sundays, 1-4 p.m., Orchard Lake Museum, 3951 Orchard Lake Road
Enjoy temporary and permanent exhibits interpreting area history and culture. Occasionally guest presenters share their interests. No charge.

*Sponsored with West Bloomfield Parks & Recreation Commission † Prepayment at www.gwbhs.org/events

Connect with Us!

gwbhs.org

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248.757.2451

RECENT EVENTS

2015 GWBHS Annual Meeting

The GWBHS Annual Meeting was held January 28 at Orchard Lake St. Mary's. The meeting included a review of the activities of the 40th anniversary year, information about the interurban from historian Brian Golden, recognition of volunteers and the presentation of awards.

The City of Orchard Lake Village Mayor and City Council members received the Distinguished Service Award:

"Distinguished Service Award presented to the City of Orchard Lake Village in appreciation for your continued support since 1987, for giving notable service in furthering the purposes of the Society, and for providing and maintaining a municipal building for the Orchard Lake Museum, home of the Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society."

Four volunteers provided leadership and commitment that shaped activities in 2014. President's Merit Awards were presented to Angela Cini, Hannah Dagg, Judy Kerr and Paul Mellerowicz for their outstanding 2014 volunteerism.



Members of Orchard Lake City Council and Mayor Jackie Beach accept the Distinguished Service Award at the GWBHS Annual Meeting

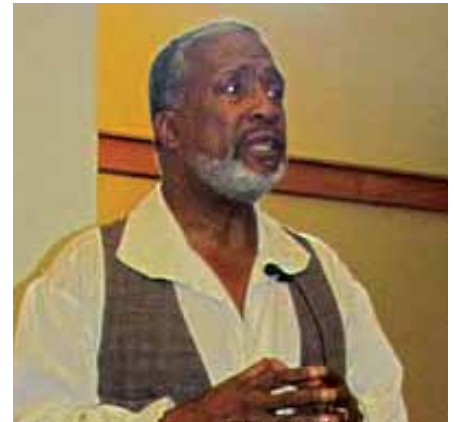
Angela Cini accepts the President's Merit Award from Gina Gregory



Paul Mellerowicz accepts the President's Merit Award from Gina Gregory

The Underground Railroad Michigan Connection

Former Pontiac Mayor Willie Payne's February 22 presentation at the West Bloomfield Library was well received by 110 people!



Dear Friend, A Romance Through Words

Twenty-five people enjoyed journalist Hildred Corbett's story of the 1913-1914 correspondence courtship of her grandparents.



Volunteers at the "Dear Friends" event (l-r) Tanya Sharon, Karen Faett, Ella Baker, Sue Murphy, Diane Eanes

Thank you to our recent volunteers:

Annual Meeting: Ella Baker, Diane Eanes, Grace Gilbert

Open House Docents: Ella Baker, Betty Bradbury, Diane Eanes, Gina Gregory, William Mclsaac, Jennifer Oram, Helen Jane Peters, Larry Weisman

Open House Set Up: Cameron Montgomery, Ron Montgomery

Underground Railroad Michigan Connection: Ella Baker, Diane Eanes, Nora Feinberg, Gina Gregory

Dear Friend, A Romance Through Words: Diane Eanes, Karen Faett, Carole Lynn Hovsepian, Sue Murphy, Tanya Sharon

Position Search Committee: Hannah Dagg, Oneil Franso, Gina Gregory, Sue Williams

April Spring Forum: Gina Gregory, Anita MacSorley, Sue Murphy, Tanya Sharon



Orchard Lake Museum
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 3951 Orchard Lake Road
 Orchard Lake MI 48323

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Helen Jane Peters	Historian
Bill McIsaac	Historian/Website
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Hannah Dagg	History Matters Editor
Diane Eanes	Volunteer Coordinator

Committee Chairs

Don Newman	Group Programs
Christian Sonnevile	Development Co-chair
Christy Forhan	Peal of the Bell, Part II

*Scan this QR
 code to see
 our website.*



Membership Application

Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society

Individual	\$20	Family	\$40
Senior Indiv.	\$15	Senior Couple	\$30
Premier	\$50	Patron/Business	\$100
Lifetime	\$600	Donation	\$___

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____

Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Membership year is January 1 to December 31.

Please make checks payable to GWBHS.
 Mail to GWBHS: 3951 Orchard Lake Road
 Orchard Lake MI 48323

Correction:

In the Winter 2015 issue, this photo from the 2014 Pine Lake Cemetery Tour was paired with the wrong caption. Here is the correction: Costumed docent, Robert Tarki, spoke about James Ralph Fuller, who died in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 to Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988.



GWBHS Mission Statement

The Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that collects, preserves, researches and stimulates public interest in the history of Keego Harbor, Orchard Lake, Sylvan Lake and West Bloomfield.