



# History Matters

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



Winter 2012

## GWBHS Honors Residents, Groups at Annual Meeting

*The Society honored local residents and organizations at the Annual Meeting and Luncheon on October 25 at Dobski's restaurant in Waterford.*



The first-ever Recognition for Outstanding Community Service honors were given to four individuals and groups “in appreciation for notable service to the communities of Keego Harbor, Orchard Lake, Sylvan Lake and West Bloomfield.”

Donald and Ivy Green accepted the award for the Hartwell Green family, honored for notable service since the mid-1860s when Hartwell Green, Donald Green’s great-grandfather, donated land for the first Green School. Subsequent generations of family members continued nurturing the school through the decades.

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**Donald and Ivy Green with the Green School clock they donated to the historical society. The couple represented the Hartwell Green family who were honored with an Outstanding Community Service award.**



*read about the Green School Memory Tablecloth inside*



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Fr. Timothy Whalen, former Chancellor of Orchard Lake Schools, was honored for overseeing the creation of a master plan for the historic campus, on the site of the former Michigan Military Academy, and for renovation of historic archives and other collections on campus.

**GWBHS President Buzz Brown, left, with Fr. Timothy Whalen, former Chancellor of Orchard Lake Schools.**



**Buzz Brown with Margaret Johnson, left, and Mary Lee Gwizdala of the Countryside Improvement Association, honored for 100 years of notable service.**

Countryside Improvement Association, represented by former presidents Margaret Johnson and Mary Lee Gwizdala, was cited for 100 years of notable service beginning in 1911. The first project of improving the unpaved roads around Pine and Orchard Lakes has been followed by a wide variety of projects positively impacting life in the area.

Six residents of Westacres accepted the award for the subdivision founded as a low-income project for “qualified” industrial workers in the 1930s that has become a model community with a rich tradition and cohesiveness that make it “a community where it has always been a privilege to live,” as a resident wrote.



**Representing Westacres, recognized for 75 years of service to the West Bloomfield community, were, left to right, Meghan Galbraith-Crowe, Theresa Afflen-Michand, Bob Afflen, Doug Bond, Joanne Jensen and Kyle Staulter.**

Board member Helen Jane Peters received the society’s highest honor, the GWBHS Distinguished Service Award, “in appreciation for many years of collecting, preserving and sharing the history of Sylvan Lake.” Mrs. Peters is the City of Sylvan Lake historian as well as GWBHS historian and membership chair.

**Board members Helen Jane Peters, left, who received the GWBHS Distinguished Service Award.**



### **GWBHS begins “Called by the Peal of the Bell” project**

“Called by the Peal of the Bell,” a new undertaking by GWBHS, will describe and interpret the history of the West Bloomfield Schools.

“Since its earliest settlements the residents in the West Bloomfield area have been deeply committed to education as the key to passing on their heritage and preparing their children to shape the future,” said Dr. Dennis Zembala of Linkedge Consulting and former director of the Detroit Historical Museum, who has been hired as project manager.

In its first phase, “Peal of the Bell” will create a digital database of text and images about the stories of the children living in this area and the history of the school buildings they attended, past and present.

“This project will benefit the schools, students and community by showing residents’ continuing commitment to education and, we hope, inspiring them to preserve and create significant new chapters in the story of West Bloomfield schools,” Dr. Zembala said.

Those with photographs and information on the history of the West Bloomfield schools up to today should contact Dr. Zembala at dmzembala@gmail.com or 810-300-3045.

**Green School Memory Tablecloth at Annual Meeting** A tablecloth that was a fundraiser for Green Elementary School in West Bloomfield some 60 years ago was displayed and described at the Annual Meeting by Board member Helen Jane Peters. According to Mrs. Peters, in the 1950s families living in the Green School area were each given a handkerchief-sized square of fabric and asked to sign their names, which were then embroidered with green embroidery floss. The squares – with about 316 names – were joined together with crochet work making a tablecloth about 54 inches by 98 inches with 66 squares. Funds for the maintenance of Green School were raised by raffling off the tablecloth. Mrs. Jean B. Clark, who won the raffle, donated the tablecloth to the GWBHS on March 24, 1995.



## Winter - Spring Events 2012



The F. A. Emmendorfer House located on Pontiac Trail in Orchard Lake.

### *Underground Railroad*

Wednesday, February 29, 7-9 p.m.

West Bloomfield Main Library Meeting Room  
4600 Walnut Lake Road

Metro-Detroiters will share their knowledge of local history about the Underground Railroad: Bruce McIntyre on his Orchard Lake house; Hildy Corbett on the Macomb County entry point Beacon Tree in Shelby Township; Susie DiPace on the underground stop at the 1860 Andrus Octagon House in Washington Township. No charge. Co-sponsored with the West Bloomfield Library.

A spindle is a wooden spike used for spinning wool, flax, hemp, cotton, and other fibers into thread. It is commonly weighted at either the bottom middle or top, most commonly by a circular or spherical object called a whorl, and may also have a hook, groove or notch.

source: wikipedia.org



### *Drop Spindle 101*

Saturday, March 10, 10:30 a.m-noon

Schulak Farm, 6889 West Maple Road

Participants will prepare sheep's wool and turn it into yarn using a low-whorl drop spindle. Along the way, you will hear history and trivia involving this ancient craft. For ages 12 and older. Class limited to 8 participants. Instructor: DuAnne Sonnevile. Reservations by Monday, March 5 to Carole, 313.929.3543 Co-sponsored with West Bloomfield Parks & Recreation.

### *Fire House History*

Wednesday, March 28, 7-8:30 p.m

Orchard Lake Museum, 3951 Orchard Lake Road

Please join us for a look back at our early fire department. Retired Fire Chief Dan Miller will share memorable stories and history of how the Tri-City Fire Department was founded and grew.



Walnut Lake Volunteer Fire Department letterhead. Incorporated on October 24, 1950 by Roscoe C. Banker. Absorbed by West Bloomfield Fire Dept. on March 10, 1952.



## Winter - Spring Events 2012



Artist interpretation of Chief Pontiac  
by John Mix Stanley

### *Friends of Apple Island Spring Forum*

Wednesday, April 18, 7-9 p.m.

Orchard Lake Community Church Presbyterian  
5171 Commerce Road

Presented by archaeologist Dr. David Brose.

- Update on the National Historic Place nomination.
- Chief Pontiac: This controversial Ottawa leader challenged British rule in the Midwest 250 years ago. He led a rebellion that failed to oust the British from Fort Detroit in 1763. Legend has it he was buried on Apple Island after assassination in 1769. Who was he? Why the controversy?



A Bridle Trail - Nature Park, Orchard Lake  
Photo courtesy of West Bloomfield Lakes  
Association. Circa 1915

### *Spring Wild Flower Walk*

Sunday, April 22, 2-3 p.m.

Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary  
Pontiac Trail west of Old Orchard Trail

Join Naturalist Carol Fink for a guided tour.  
Walk through rolling terrain and explore the  
breathtaking spring flowers.

No charge. Co-sponsored with the Orchard Lake  
Nature Sanctuary.



Orchard Lake House built in 1854  
Harvey Weston, Proprietor  
Now the site of the Orchard Lake Museum

### *Orchard Lake Museum Open Houses*

Orchard Lake Museum, 3951 Orchard Lake Road  
Join us the 2nd Sunday of every month from 1-4 p.m.  
for exclusive themes about our local history.

### *Apple Island Tours, May 19 & 20*

Free to GWBHS and Time Travelers members or  
\$15 adults and \$10 children 12 years of age and under.





*Near the bridge on Sylvan Lake*



*Fresh Air Camp of Sylvan Lake*



*Having fun on Sylvan Lake*

## New to the Collection

### *Callahan Family Photographs*

*Do you have old family photos we might view?*

Last June Sylvan Lake's Hank and Esther Callahan invited GWBHS board member Helen Jane Peters, also Sylvan Lake Historian, to look at a family photo album from 1916 to 1921. The photographs show the family fishing, swimming and boating in Sylvan Lake. Several photos show Mr. Callahan's father, Charles, as a boy, along with his parents and sisters. The Detroit Free Press Fresh Air Camp, the bridge over the canal and Tower Beach can be found in the backgrounds.

Thanks to the Callahans, Mrs. Peters scanned the photos, now on display at the Sylvan Lake Community Center. They also will be in the [gwbhs.com](http://gwbhs.com) digital collection.

The Society is always looking for historic photos of our area. Please call the museum at 248.757.2451 to schedule a meeting.

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### *GFS Holiday House on Pine Lake*

Thank you John Hartwig for your recent contribution pertaining to the Girls' Friendly Society Holiday House retreat on Pine Lake. Your 27-page research document is greatly appreciated and will be shared with our members and the public on the [gwbhs.com](http://gwbhs.com) website along with other Holiday House records.



*Holiday House on Pine Lake  
Circa 1895*

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### *U of M Preservation Assessment Survey*

Thank you again, Sara Sterkenburg, Jeff Nash and Paul Wentzell, University of Michigan, School of Information, graduate students for compiling an incredibly comprehensive report for the GWBHS digitization of [gwbhs](http://gwbhs.com) records. This follow-up report to the Preservation Assessment Survey will help guide our organization both in short and long-term needs. Your recommendations are now being implemented.



*Jeff, Paul and Sara*





Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society  
 Orchard Lake Museum  
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Helen Jane Peters	Historian / Sylvan Lake rep.
Bill McIsaac	Museum Collections / Newsletter
Carol Fink	Apple Island

*Scan this QR code to see our mobile website.*



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**Membership Application**

Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership year is May 1 to April 30.

Please make checks payable to GWBHS.

Mail to GWBHS: 3951 Orchard Lake Road  
 Orchard Lake MI 48323

*Stop by Bellacino's restaurant, 2465 Orchard Lake Road in Sylvan Lake, 248.682.4522, to see the wall of historical Sylvan Lake photographs.*

**Things We Need...**

**Volunteers needed:** The Society needs new volunteers for one-time or continuing commitments, both a great way to learn about our area's past and to keep local history alive for the entire community. For more information or to volunteer, contact Gina Gregory, gina@gwbhs.com or 248.661.5345.

**Here are projects we need help with:**

- Docents for Apple Island and the Orchard Lake Museum. Apple Island training is at the Orchard Lake Museum on Wednesday, May 16, 7 p.m. for the tours on May 19 and 20.
- Events: Staff 2012 events or help plan 2013 programs.
- West Bloomfield Historic Homes Tour 2013: The first planning meeting is Wednesday, February 22, 7 p.m. at the museum.
- Fundraising: Chair or assist with a fundraiser. Contact businesses for financial support.
- Museum collections: Set up municipal displays or help out at the museum.
- Publicity: Electronically send out news releases, post events online or deliver flyers.

**Open House Sundays:** If you have an interesting hobby or collection and would like to be featured at a museum open house, please email William McIsaac, at wmcisaac@gwbhs.com

