



# History Matters



Fall 2011

Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society

Keego Harbor • Orchard Lake • Sylvan Lake • West Bloomfield

## Resolution of Objection to the Renaming of Green School

*Adopted by the Board of the Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society at the September 7, 2011 board meeting.*

**WHEREAS** the Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society recognizes the contributions of the Hartwell Green family as early settlers and founders of Green School, one of the first schoolhouses in West Bloomfield Township, where children could receive an education; and

**WHEREAS** Hartwell Green and his wife, Mary Annett, whose father purchased a half-section of land in West Bloomfield in 1824, established themselves as hard-working, successful farmers on their own property, growing more than 11 different varieties of apples and other crops; and

**WHEREAS** Hartwell and Mary Green, described as progressive and public-spirited, donated land and built a 20 by 34-foot log cabin schoolhouse on the corner of their property at Savoie and Green Road in 1866 and hired, paid the salary, and provided room and board for the teachers; and

**WHEREAS** a 150-pound bell, one of three used to call 70 children enrolled at Green School in 1870 and now on display at the Orchard Lake Museum; and

**WHEREAS** to honor the significant contributions of the Greens, the 80-year-old Green School name was retained to identify two additional schools, a four-classroom structure that housed K-6 built in 1948, then the present Green School constructed in 1956, both located on Walnut Lake Road;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society strongly objects to the June 2011 decision of the West Bloomfield School Board to erase the name "Green School," resulting in the distinct historical contribution of the Hartwell and Mary Green family to be discounted and forgotten.

GWBHS

### Annual Meeting & Luncheon

Tuesday, October 25, noon - 2 p.m.

Honoring the Hartwell Green family, Fr. Timothy Whalen of Orchard Lake Schools, Countryside Improvement Association and Westacres.

Dobski's Restaurant

6565 Cooley Lake Road, Waterford

(east of Lochaven Road)

No need to RSVP – just join us!



*More than 80 people attended Family Fun Day on September 11.*

*There were 1750s reenactors, live music, and spinning wheel and knife-sharpening wheel demonstrations.*

## *From GWBHS President Buzz Brown*

### **The Renaming of Green Elementary School**

Recently I was interviewed by a writer from *The Detroit News* regarding the renaming of Green Elementary School, part of the West Bloomfield School District. At the conclusion of the interview the writer asked why this issue should be so important. I could tell that to her my answer was not very convincing. It was not until I was preparing a speech to the Bloomfield Rotary Club that I could put the issue in context.

The Bloomfield Rotary speech coincided with the fifth day of Patriot Week – a commemoration that “renews America’s spirit by celebrating the First Principles, Founding Fathers and other Patriots, vital documents and speeches, and flags that make America the greatest nation in world history.” Each day of Patriot Week focuses on one of the first principles of the American Tradition. The fifth day celebrates Equality of Race and the suggested materials include the Gettysburg Address.

Abraham Lincoln was asked to visit the Gettysburg battlefield and say a few words to help dedicate the battle that had occurred there several months earlier. President Lincoln understood that he and his contemporaries could not dedicate that battlefield. Those that fought there had already done that. It was the closing comments of his now famous address that expressed his point, “It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced.”

I have found myself drawn to a battle – albeit not of the magnitude of the American Civil War but a battle just the same. In June, the majority of the West Bloomfield District School Board members decided to discard the Green Elementary School name after more than 100 years. The sacrifices of one of the Township’s founding pioneer families were removed from the school that they had personally donated, built and funded – a name that the District had transferred as new buildings were constructed to service increasing student enrollments. In their exuberance to surprise a retiring principal, the board renamed the school, feeling it was not necessary to consult the community, the Green family or the historical society.

Now I find myself on the field of this battle and realize that it is for us the living to be dedicated to the unfinished work of the Green Family and all the other Township pioneers who so nobly advanced the culture of this community. It is for this reason the Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society unanimously passed a resolution in protest of this name change. Personally, I will continue the battle until the Green name is returned to the elementary school on Walnut Lake Road.

### ***Almost 400 people tour Apple Island in May***

A rainy spring turned sunny on May 21 and 22 during the Society’s Apple Island tours for the public.

Saturday’s totals were held down because one of the school district’s pontoon boats was out-of-commission with a broken motor at the St. Mary’s docks. Having only one boat in service for part of the day led to more than hour waits at the museum but visitors stayed positive due to the many activities at the museum and the warm, sunny weather.

#### **Thanks for support from**

West Bloomfield School District, owner of the  
Marjorie Ward Strong Woodland Nature Sanctuary,  
as Apple Island is formally known  
Orchard Lake Village Department of Public Works  
and Police Department  
Jill Rosenthal, West Bloomfield High School  
Carvel Ice Cream, 3050 Union Lake Road, Commerce

**Presenters** Genot Picor and Jeff Vallender

#### **Planning Committee**

Buzz Brown, Carol Fink, Gina Gregory

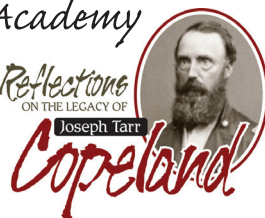
#### **WBHS Student Volunteers**

Sarah Berkley, Brittany Dunlap, Ryan Flechman, Ellis Fried, Leia Joyce, Rachel Joyce, Becca Miller, Max Miller, Erin Myers, Laura Sallen, Galina Vushaj, Britani Wallace.

#### **36 Adult Volunteers (the most ever)**

Sebrina Borth, Dave and Betty Bradbury, David Brodie, Amy Clarke, Jim Cherfoli, Elise, Paul and Rob Gregory, Ron Hanson, Carole Hovespian, Cara and Kristin Kazanowski, Linda Kidd, Glen King, Bill McIsaac, Helen McAllister, Paul Mellerowicz, Russell Meskin, Jeanne and Merrill Miller, Shirley Mohan, Don Newman, Helen Jane Peters, Anita Pinson, Molly Rozyski, Teddy Sailer, Nancy Salo, Sue Williams.

*Civil War Era –  
Michigan Military Academy  
Walk & Reflections*



SATURDAY, OCT. 22, 10 A.M.  
ST. MARY'S DINING HALL,  
BLDG. 15  
3535 INDIAN TRAIL, ORCHARD LAKE

Civil War-era history will be highlighted with a guided stroll around the former 1878 – 1908 Michigan Military Academy (MMA) on the grounds of the Orchard Lake St. Mary's campus. During the brief 30-year life of the school it was deemed the "West Point of the West."



Dave Finney, nationally recognized Civil War authority, also will give a presentation on Union General Joseph T. Copeland whose home, known as "the castle," later was part of the MMA.

Brunch included  
\$15; \$10 to GWBHS members  
RSVP by October 19  
to Carole, 313-929-3543

*Looking Back:  
the Scot & Irish Settlements  
in Greater West Bloomfield  
& Oakland County*

Sunday, November 6, 2 p.m.  
Barnes & Noble Lecture Room  
6800 Orchard Lake Road

Genealogist David Irwin of Your Ancestral Family will present the history of the Scot and Irish who settled in our area. Please join us for this wonderful and informative presentation.

Refreshments

\$5, free to GWBHS members

RSVP by November 3  
to Carole, 313-929-3543

***Take note – new phone number for GWBHS  
and the Orchard Lake Museum: 248-757-2451***

## Museum Sunday Open Houses' topics

Vernors Nov. 13, 1 - 4 p.m.  
Trains, Toys, Dolls and more Dec. 11, 1 - 4 p.m.

## Orchard Lake Museum chosen as subject for U-M preservation needs project

Preservation needs of the GWBHS collection at the Orchard Lake Museum are being evaluated this fall by a team of three graduate students from the University of Michigan's School of Information.

GWBHS was chosen by the students from an application submitted by President Buzz Brown. Through a general preservation survey and hands-on museum visits, the students will submit a report to their instructor and to GWBHS evaluating broad preservation issues such as storage conditions, and accessions and preservation aspects of collection policies.

## Membership Application

Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society

Individual	\$20	Family	\$30
Senior Indiv.	\$15	Senior Couple	\$25
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



*GWBHS*

Orchard Lake Museum  
3951 Orchard Lake Road  
Orchard Lake, MI 48323  
248-757-2451  
gwbhs.com

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Pontiac Mailing

### Board of Directors

Betty Bradbury - Corresponding Secretary  
& Orchard Lake rep.  
Buzz Brown - President & Webmaster  
Carol Fink - Apple Island  
Gina Gregory - Recording Secretary  
& West Bloomfield rep.  
Cara Kazanowski - Vice President  
& newsletter editor  
Bill McIsaac - Museum collections  
Helen Jane Peters - Historian  
& Sylvan Lake rep.  
Sue Williams - Treasurer



Twitter @gwbhs

## We're looking for...

Amy Clarke, teacher, researcher and author is working with GWBHS to publish a comprehensive history of the West Bloomfield School District. If you have any **school photographs or information**, contact Amy, [aclarke@inventerrific.com](mailto:aclarke@inventerrific.com) or 248-202-4100.

Wanted for demonstrations for Family Fun Day 2012: A working manual **typewriter**, with extra ribbons if possible. Also, a **washboard**. If you have either, please leave a message at the museum, 248-757-2451.

**Volunteers:** Our committees are looking for **new** volunteers with **new** energy. Is that you? Consider volunteering one year with these committees: fundraising, newsletter, program, publicity, museum collections and municipal displays. Contact Gina Gregory, [gbluejayway@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gbluejayway@sbcglobal.net) or 248-661-5345 for more information.

We are also looking to **hire a web designer** to update and manage the website, on an hourly basis. Contact Buzz Brown, [buzz@gwbhs.com](mailto:buzz@gwbhs.com), or 248-217-7979.

## Thanks to...

**John F. Marshall** who donated a CD of six West Bloomfield historical maps from the years 1838-41, 1857, 1872, 1908, 1927 and 1947 that is added to the GWBHS collection.

Keego Harbor resident and GWBHS photographer **Bill Bertakis** who, after the Apple Island Tours, took off the broken bearings on the knife-sharpening wheel. It took three months but he found replacement bearings and had them welded to the brackets so the wheel could be used at Family Fun Day.

### Family Fun Day

- City of Orchard Lake Village, Great Harvest Bread Company in Commerce and Kensington Metro Park.
- DuAnne Sonnevile, spinner; Bill Bertakis and Kevin Rahman, photographers; Picks & Sticks String Band, and Ed Milkowski and eight family members as 1750s reenactors.
- Chairs Carol Fink, Linda Kidd and Anita Pinson led volunteers Betty and Dave Bradbury, Buzz Brown, Jim Cherfoli, Cara and Kristin Kazanowski, Gina Gregory, Hannah Lazarus, Bill McIsaac, Paul Mellerowicz, Gary Pinson, Nancy Salo, Sue Williams, Ruth Yarrows and Helen Zenker.