



# History Matters



Winter 2015

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



Interurban car #7164 showing stops at Oak Grove, Orchard Lake, Pine Lake, Cass Lake, Sylvan Lake and Pontiac.

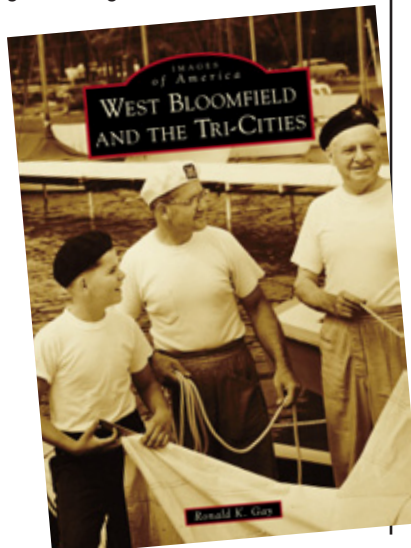
## Annual Meeting and Presentation: Farmington Junction - A Trolley History

Saturday, January 31, 10 a.m.-noon. St. Mary's Dining Hall,  
Bldg. 15, Commerce Rd.

Annual meeting and presentation by historian Brian Golden about the Detroit United Railway interurban system. \$15 with brunch, no charge for meeting only. Prepayment by January 27 at [www.gwbhs.org](http://www.gwbhs.org). Contact [rsvp@gwbhs.org](mailto:rsvp@gwbhs.org) or 248.518.0871 with questions.

## New Area History Book Available Soon

A new book of historic images of the area is available soon. A part of the "Images of America" series by Arcadia Publishing, "West Bloomfield and the Tri-Cities" by Ronald K. Gay, will be available for purchase at the Annual Meeting and at Orchard Lake Museum.



## Museum Updates

### Open Houses

The Orchard Lake Museum is open the second Sunday of each month from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. Special guest presenters will be appearing at selected museum open houses in 2015:

February 8

New local history book "West Bloomfield and the Tri-Cities" by Ron Gay (signed copies will be available for purchase)

April 12

Curling by Jeanne Miller

### Ice Harvesting

In the days before modern refrigeration, ice was harvested from Orchard Lake and Pine Lake each winter to keep ice boxes cool throughout the year. Orchard Lake Museum is currently displaying an ice harvesting saw that was used in West Bloomfield by Robert Hanson and his sons.



### Soo Line Model Trains

GWBHS Board Member Bill McIsaac has shared his collection of Soo Line Railroad model trains. In addition to various train cars and books about the Soo Line, his collection includes an authentic Soo Line lantern.



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## *From the Desk of President Gina Gregory...*

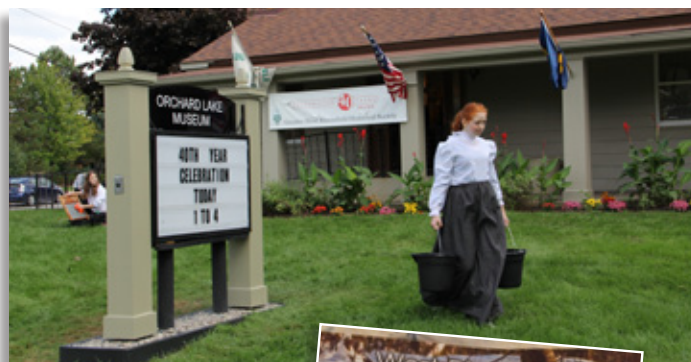
### **Happy New Year!**

As we move forward into 2015, I look back and see that 2014 was an amazing year for GWBHS. We celebrated our 40th anniversary and were recognized with a resolution from West Bloomfield and a proclamation from Orchard Lake Village. We presented a successful historic homes tour – the first one in 28 years! In early 2014, GWBHS received a \$10,000 grant from the St. Francis Foundation of Michigan, allowing Dr. LouAnn Wurst and WMU students to again conduct an archaeological dig project. Their 2014 findings will support the 2015 nomination of Apple Island to the listing of Michigan State Historic Sites and the National Register of Historic Places. New volunteers stepped up to help, leading to some unexpected opportunities and the creation of a more functional museum!

We will keep up the momentum in 2015. Events this winter and early spring include a variety of interesting topics and dynamic speakers, including: prior area light rail, the Underground Railroad, traditional baskets, personal correspondence letters, and Apple Island. The Peal of the Bell project will install school history signage in all West Bloomfield School buildings. More feature articles about our local history will appear in "West Bloomfield TODAY" and other local publications.

More volunteers are needed to research, write, file, docent at open houses and group programs and help with exhibit cases, materials distribution and web maintenance. With all of this activity, board members have found that there are consistently more opportunities available than volunteers are able to fill. Plans are underway to hire part-time help to fill in the gaps. If you are interested in getting involved, let us know at [volunteer@gwbhs.org](mailto:volunteer@gwbhs.org) or 248.757.2451.

Another way you can help is to promptly submit your 2015 membership, either by mail or online with PayPal (at [www.gwbhs.org](http://www.gwbhs.org)). Remember to indicate if you want only an electronic copy of the History Matters newsletter. We appreciate your support to keep local history alive for the community!







# Greater West Bloomfield

Keego Harbor • Orchard Lake • Sylvan Lake • West Bloomfield

## Historical Society



### JANUARY–APRIL 2015 EVENTS

Final details will be listed in the History Matters newsletter and at [gwbhs.org](http://gwbhs.org)

#### Annual Meeting and Presentation: Farmington Junction - A Trolley History†

*Saturday, January 31, 10 a.m.-noon. St. Mary's Dining Hall, Bldg. 15, Commerce Rd.*

Annual meeting and presentation by historian Brian Golden about the Detroit United Railway interurban system. \$15, includes brunch. Prepayment by January 27. Contact [rsvp@gwbhs.org](mailto:rsvp@gwbhs.org) or 248.518.0871 with questions. No charge.

#### The Underground Railroad Michigan Connection

*Sunday, February 22, 2 p.m., WB Library Main Meeting Room, 4600 Walnut Lake Road*

Former Pontiac Mayor Willie Payne highlights southern fugitive slaves and the Michigan abolitionists and free Blacks that assisted them via the Underground Railroad. Sponsored with West Bloomfield Library. No charge.

#### Volunteer Opportunities Meeting

*Saturday, March 7, 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. Planning begins now for Apple Island Tours and Vintage Fashions.

#### Heart Basket Class\*

*Saturday, March 14, 10-12:30 p.m. & 1 - 3:30 p.m., Schulak Farm, 6889 West Maple Road*

Participants will make an 8" reed heart basket with professional crafter DuAnne Sonnevile and learn techniques involved in making a spoked basket. Class size limited to eight. \$20 includes materials. Reservations by Feb. 10 to DuAnne, 248.683.1542 or [duannesonneville@hotmail.com](mailto:duannesonneville@hotmail.com).

#### Dear Friend, A Romance Through Words

*Sunday, March 29, 2 p.m., WB Library Main Meeting Room, 4600 Walnut Lake Road*

Journalist Hildred Corbett recounts the 1913-1914 correspondence courtship of her grandparents and how this became a book. Sponsored with West Bloomfield Library. No charge.

#### Apple Island Spring Forum\*

*Wednesday, April 15, 7-9 p.m., Orchard Lake Community Church, 5171 Commerce Road*

Anthropologist LouAnn Wurst, Ph.D., shares 2014 Western Michigan University Apple Island Archaeological Dig Project findings and MI and National Register of Historic Places designation progress. Sponsored with West Bloomfield Schools. \$5 donation.

#### Spring Nature Walk

*Sunday, April 19, 2-3 p.m., Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary,  
on 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. Sponsored with Orchard Lake Village. No charge.

\*Sponsored with West Bloomfield Parks & Recreation Commission † Prepayment at [www.gwbhs.org/events](http://www.gwbhs.org/events)

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**Recent Event**  
**A Civic Celebration**

The bi-annual GWBHS hands-on history day took place Sunday, September 14, 2014, and was the official celebration of the GWBHS 40th anniversary and the City of Orchard Lake Village's 50th anniversary. The City provided ice cream and cake. presented a proclamation to GWBHS, a proclamation from Oakland County was presented to the City and GWBHS unveiled the Wayside Exhibit that is now on display outside Orchard Lake Museum. Activities included vintage toys and dress-up, old car displays, an archaeological dig and spinning demonstrations. Entertainment by Vintage Strings of Michigan and The Josh & Roy Show rounded out the afternoon.



Oakland County Commissioner, John Scott, presents a proclamation in honor of Orchard Lake Village's 50th anniversary.



Orchard Lake Village Mayor, Jackie Beach, presents a proclamation to GWBHS in honor of its 40th anniversary.



Guests pose for complimentary photo in front of a 1912 Flanders "20" Roadster, 4 cylinder, 20 horsepower.



**Thank You to GWBHS Volunteers!**

Our volunteers allow GWBHS to provide various opportunities for the community to connect with local history. Thank you!

**A Civic Celebration**

Linda Kidd (Event Co-Chair), Anita Pinson (Event Co-Chair), Ella Baker, Bill Bertakis, Susan Boyd, Betty & Dave Bradbury, Gwynne & Jim Cherfoli, Liam Collins, Diane Eanes, Carol Fink, Gina & Rob Gregory, the Kidds (Aleta, Michael Jr. & Michael Sr.), Helen McAllister, Bill McIsaac, Anita McSorley, Ron Montgomery, Nancy Perkins, Helen Jane Peters, Susan Phillips, Gary Pinson, Sherri Solomon, DuAnne Sonnevile, Dr. Bill Spencer, Emily Stern, Jennifer Wyatt, Shelby Zenkertage

**Cemetery Tour:**

Sue Williams (Event Chair), Mari Bem, Betty & Dave Bradbury, Cindy Bryda, Gwynne & Jim Cherfoli, Angela Cini, Diane & Jacob Eanes, Annie Hunt, Melissa Gilbert, Gina Gregory, Linda Kidd, MaryAnn Lisac, Paul Mellerowicz, Jeanne & Merrill Miller, Rick Mickley, Don Newman, Nancy Perkins, Bob Tarki, Rachel West

**Autumn Nature Walk:**

Carol Fink (Event Chair), Gina Gregory

**Fall Group Programs:**

Gwynne and Jim Cherfoli, Larry Weisman.

**Open House Docents:**

Ella Baker, Gwynne & Jim Cherfoli, Diane Eanes, Elinor & Ron Montgomery

**Museum Gardens:**

Betty Bradbury, Sue Williams



## Recent Event

### Of Grave Concern: Tour of Pine Lake Cemetery

On a beautiful Saturday morning in October 2014, more than 50 people enjoyed a GWBHS docent-led tour of Pine Lake Cemetery. In addition to the many prominent residents who are buried in this 184 year old cemetery, there is a section for indigents and the downtrodden, called Potter's Field.

The following is an excerpt from volunteer

Rick Mickley's poem "Potter's Field":

Not much is known of those buried in Potter's Field,  
There are no markers showing their names.  
No Lindbergh or Cash's, McManus's or Strong's,  
None that would ever achieve such fame.  
Every year since 1885,  
The Association has held a meeting How to maintain  
and better this humbled land.  
To honor the deceased for God's greeting.



*Docents Don Newman and MaryAnn Lisac, descendants of West Bloomfield's first postmaster, John Ellenwood, shared their family bible.*



*Dave Walls, descendant of Jedekiah Durkee, shared historic photos at the Durkee memorial.*



### Featured Object - Bryce Spinning Wheel

The Museum's recent acquisition of a Victorian pram from a historic DeConick farm came with a little something extra. A great, great-grandson of early area resident John Baptiste DeConick donated the pram, along with what GWBHS Board Member, DuAnne Sonnevile, believed to be a type of charkha, or table-top spinning wheel in 2014.

DuAnne cleaned up the piece, identifying the name "Bryce" in the cast iron. A Bryce spinning wheel is a small, light framed, six-spoke wheel, designed to clamp to a table or bench. The spinner turns the handle on the wheel with his/her right hand and drafts the wool with the left.

John Bryce of Grand Haven, Michigan, applied for both US and Canadian patents for the Bryce spinning wheel in 1872. According to the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Bryce spinning wheels were in use from 1873-1900. According to Bryce, "The object of the invention is to improve the construction of such spinning-wheels by making them run with less noise, by rendering the working parts more perfectly adjustable, and by diminishing the cost of construction, while at the same time making the machine more durable and neater in appearance than heretofore."

The Bryce spinning wheel is currently on display at Orchard Lake Museum.





Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society  
Orchard Lake Museum  
**Phone 248.757.2451**  
3951 Orchard Lake Road  
Orchard Lake MI 48323

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### Board of Directors

Gina Gregory	President
Anita Pinson	Vice President & Recording Secretary
Sue Williams	Treasurer
DuAnne Sonnevile	Membership
Carol Fink	Corresponding Secretary
Helen Jane Peters	Historian
Bill McIsaac	Historian/Website
Melissa Gilbert	Museum Committee Chair
Hannah Dagg	History Matters Editor

### Committee Chairs

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

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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

A new version of the GWBHS logo has been developed as part of the work to increase awareness of our organization in the community.  
Look for it in local publications and at community events!



### 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.*

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