

Old News

Watrousville-Caro Area Historical Society

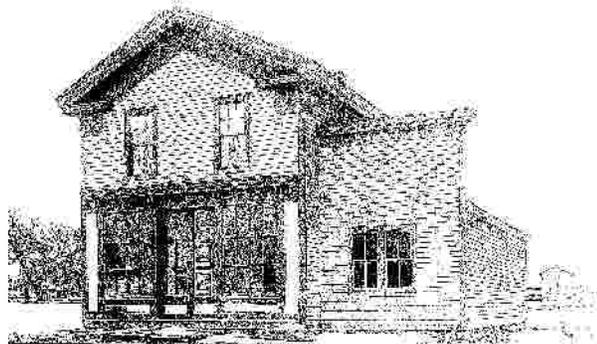
PO Box 15 Caro MI, 48723

Our 40th year of Preserving Local History

May 2012

Editors, Jo Ann Gray & Esther Gorashko

Published by Dave Celani



Watrous General Store

A Note from Cathy...

Happy Spring! Let me give you a recap on what has happened since our last letter. Our Christmas Dinner was on December 14th at Old City Hall Restaurant in Bay City. We had a wonderful time, and the food was delicious. The restaurant was really decked out for the holidays and we had a great turnout.

Update on windows. As you know, the 2nd set of hand crafted windows has been installed, so now the first and second floor front is finished. The new hand-made front door completes the south side of the house. The 3rd set of windows is being built and will be delivered to my house for painting and staining this summer.

I sent in paper-work to the State of Michigan in June of 2011 regarding a Historic Marker for the Leonard House. Well, in April we received a letter to let us know that we are eligible for a Michigan Historic Marker and also to inform us that we will be contacted by Mr. Siegfried who will work with us to begin writing the text for the marker.

Keep this date open, September 18, 2012 for the Founder's Day Dinner. This year, the dinner will be on the 3rd Tuesday of September. The music will again be performed by Robert Eastham and Paul Vanston who always do a fantastic job. And we can't forget the wonderful food that the KofC Hall in Caro puts out.

Spring Cleaning at the Museum took place on Saturday, May 19. The Museum will officially open in June.

Director, Dave Celani updated the By-Laws and Constitution. Nothing had been changed on these documents since 1989. We had Membership classifications that are never used; student and business memberships were removed. We also changed the number of members needed for a quorum and eliminated the term limits for officers and directors. Dues were NOT increased. If you would like a copy of the revised By-Laws and Constitution, contact Esther Gorashko.

Cathy Celani

**This year Marks our
40th Anniversary of Preserving
Local History**

What we have been doing...



Christmas Meeting 2011

We had a large turnout at our annual Christmas Meeting/Dinner. The Old City Hall Restaurant in Bay City was a festive venue with good food; good service and nicely decorated for the season. The photo above shows part of our crowd. The photo on the upper right is some of the officers and below that is Kristen Teschendorf.



February Meeting 2012



Thirty-two members and guests were present at our February meeting for guest speaker Bob Tamlyn of Fairgrove. His presentation was about railroad service across the Straits of Mackinaw and about the railroad car ferry Chief Wawatam where he was employed for 20 years.



April 2012 Meeting

Twenty members and guests attended our April Meeting. Our guest speaker was Gerald Burkland. He spoke about the pioneers moving into the Northwest Territory after the Revolutionary war, and some of the pioneers that moved into the Tuscola County area, including Aaron Watrous, his 5th cousin 8 times removed.

Also at the April meeting, Dave Celani (L) and Cal Jewett (R) celebrated their 71st birthdays.



March 2012 Meeting

At our March meeting, Sharon Cash from the Human Development Commission (HDC) gave an interesting program on Senior Services available such as "Meals on Wheels", "Homemaking Services & Personal Care".

We Pause to Mark the Passing of our Fellow Member

MARCIA F. BASSFORD

Passed away Saturday, March 3, 2012 at Heritage Hill Assisted Living in Caro, following a period of declining health, at the age of 87. Marcia was born Sept. 10, 1924 in Mayville, the daughter of the late Marvin and Beulah (Titus) Gohs. She was united in marriage with Joseph D. Bassford on Sept. 7, 1946 in Bay City. He preceded her in death on Dec. 8, 2009. Marcia was employed at Caro State Hospital as a receptionist for more than 35 years, retiring in 1983. Marcia and her husband Joseph were longtime members of the Watrousville-Caro Area Historical Society.

About the special supplements in this edition of O L D N E W S ...

Enclosed with this newsletter is a group of pictures of the progress we have made in the restoration of the Leonard House, two more pages of the History of Watrousville by Al Gorashko and a reprint of the 1902 Credit report of Tuscola County Merchants.

Dr. Bliss Continued

Last year, the Historical Society reproduced a pamphlet advertising cures of the health and mind by magnetic physician, Dr. Bliss of Watrousville. His home was advertised as a fine, beautiful dwelling, in the center of Watrousville. Through marked photographs we have found that store owner E.W. Leonard once owned a fine house located at 5425 M-81 behind the present day Watrousville store. At the time, the gravel road in front was narrow, the property was slightly higher than the roadway and three large trees graced the front lawn. At that time, it could be considered as a large, light airy mansion as advertised. Through the years and with various owners, the doors and windows have been changed, so today you had to look close to see if it was the same dwelling.

E.W. Leonard's sister, Cora A. was married to Dr. Bliss and it is believed that Dr. Bliss and his wife Cora used this dwelling as a sanatorium for healing people with minor ailments of the body and mind. The pamphlet states that if notified in advance by mail or telegraph, a horse and buggy would be waiting at the Watrousville train station to convey the patient to the sanatorium to be treated.

**We are collecting
cash register receipts
(Community Share Points)
from VG's Supermarket
Be sure to turn them in to Esther.**

Watrousville-Caro Area Historical Society Officers

President – Cal Jewett
Vice President – Cathy Celani
Secretary – Esther Gorashko
Treasurer – Jo Ann Gray

Board of Directors

Alexander Gorashko
Henry Sugden
Robert W. Gray
David Celani
Neil Jackson (Juniata Township Supervisor)

The Historical Society meets monthly on the second Tuesday of each month (with a few exceptions) at 7:30 p.m. at the Juniata Township Hall, 1971 S. Ringle Road in Watrousville. The Township Hall is a red brick one-room schoolhouse dating back to the 1890s. The Historical Society has the Museum at 4607 W. Caro Road in Watrousville and is currently restoring the Leonard - McGlone House at 4592 W. Caro Road, also in Watrousville.

Additional information is available from -
Jo Ann Gray, 989-823-3638 or
Esther Gorashko, 989-823-2360

Also advertised was a spring with magnetic healing waters located off highway M-81 two miles east of Watrousville. Historical Society member, Paul Nagy, as a boy remembers a spring located two miles east of Watrousville near the intersection of M-81 and Sheridan Roads (once called Coleman's Corners). It was on the South-East corner of the intersection. The owner, Ance Coleman had a trough at the flowing well for the watering of horses and everyone was welcome to water their horse and have a drink of the supposed magnetic water. There were other springs located at the bottom of the hill on south Kirk road, and on Dixon, and Gilford roads. They have all dried up. It is said that as the area became populated and every property owner sinking a well, the water table went down to the point that springs ceased to flow. *(from Al Gorashko)*

The 1902 Credit Rating Booklet came from an auction on eBay. It gives an insight into the type of businesses in operation at the turn of the century in Tuscola County. Caro, Cass City and Vassar all had two Jewelers. Akron, with a population of 500, also had a Jeweler. Most villages had a bicycle dealer. What few automobiles the area had, were probably serviced at the blacksmith or wagon makers shops. Even the smallest of small villages had a General Store or Grocery Store. Colling and North Grove did not have Post Offices, but they did have General Stores.

The Historical Society has other interesting articles that can be reprinted and passed along to our members. Unfortunately, the cost of postage and printing is holding us back. Most of our resources are being used to restore the Leonard-McGlone House. Your Tax Deductable donations to our "postage and printing" fund would be appreciated.



visit us on the web

www.watrousville.com

The **Watrousville Museum** at
4607 W. Caro Road
in Watrousville,
is open June thru September
on Thursday's from 1-4 pm
and by appointment