

IONIA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

MISSION STATEMENT

The Ionia County Genealogical Society is a non-profit volunteer group whose mission is to create awareness and preserve family histories within the Ionia County area. The focus of this group will be to develop genealogical resources and to assist all those seeking local history.

Volume 7 - Number 3

July - September 2002

On Sunday, June 30, 2002, I said good-bye to a person I felt fortunate to know and call my friend -- Leora Hazel **TUCKER SLOSSER**. You may remember Leora as our Past Editor of the ICGS newsletter and, since that time, a contributor to the newsletter. I have many other memories of Leora and I would like to take the liberty to share those with you today and dedicate this newsletter in her memory.



Belding Library and would often e-mail me with details about her "finds" there.

When I asked Leora to take over my duties as editor of our newsletter, she wasn't sure she could do it. She had never done something like that before, but it wasn't long before she handled the task with ease. I often chuckled later when she would correct me on an item I had left out or when I forgot to put the names in capital letters as we had agreed we would do. Leora never forgot a technique or procedure. She handled my last-minute submissions with ease, although letting me know that she would have appreciated a little more time. I loved her straightforwardness - I never had to guess what she was thinking. She would tell me. Leora has been a great

support to Dottie **PIECHOCKI**, our current editor, and she eagerly helped out when Dottie was experiencing personal tragedies in her life. She loved to be "in the know" with the newsletter. It was one of the most difficult things she did when she had to give it up due to health issues. She missed knowing what was going to be in the newsletter and being one of the first to get news that we would be passing on to you, our readers.

Leora loved animals and we often shared "pet" stories. She had bird feeders around her beautiful A-frame home, which is nestled in a fantastic wooded lot in Greenville, MI. When the squirrels would get into the feeders, she would shout "VARMIT!" and her dog would chase the squirrels away from the feeders. She had trained her dog to do that.

Leora was a member of First Families of Ionia County Society and never missed a banquet. She would always arrive in a brightly-colored dress with Allen, her husband of 37 years, on her arm. She was a gracious lady who loved the color purple and looked great in it.

When I walked up to the casket Sunday, I noticed first that she was wearing her favorite color, purple. She would be happy about that. Beautiful bright-colored flowers surrounded her. She looked beautiful and at peace. No longer

would she have to struggle in order to get enough air into her lungs. She would suffer no more from the deadly disease of emphysema.

Leora was an ex-cigarette smoker – so am I. We talked many times about that. She said, "I was so STUPID!" Unfortunately she found out too late the effects smoking would have on her. She didn't mind telling others, though. If she saw young kids smoking, she would go right up to them and ask them if they wanted to be like her. I saw her do it! She said that maybe if someone had told her, she would have quit sooner, or better yet, never have started.

Leora was excited about her 50th class reunion, which was held this year. She had worked hard on that project and was excited about attending. Her granddaughter tells me that she was able to attend the reunion, just before her death. I am glad about that. She never wanted to miss a party.

Family was the utmost important part of Leora's life. She loved her children, stepchildren, and grandchildren. She attended their school events, rarely missing a one. Leora loved to brag about her husband's great cooking abilities. She told me that she rarely cooked because she could not cook as well as he could. I had the opportunity to enjoy one of Allen's feasts and I can attest to the fact that he is indeed a great cook!

Leora Hazel Tucker was born November 24, 1933, in Saranac, Michigan. She died June 27, 2002, in Greenville, Michigan. Funeral services were held on Sunday, June 30, 2002, and interment was in Otisco Township Cemetery in Belding, Michigan. Pallbearers were Kevin Slosser, John Slosser, Carl Slosser and Steve Slosser.

The world lost two great women this past month...Ann **LANDERS** and Leora Slosser. Ann's daughter

asked the *Chicago Tribune* to leave a blank space in where Ann's column once was in honor of her. I am asking Dottie to do the same in honor of Leora Hazel Tucker Slosser.

Goodbye, my friend, and may God welcome you with open arms into His home. We all will miss you.

(Note: Memorial Contributions may be made in Leora's name to ICGS, as per the request of her family. Cards of sympathy can be sent to Allen Slosser & family at 10136 Connelly NE, Greenville, MI 48838)

APRIL SPEAKER

by Jim **MOSES**

April's speaker at the ICGS meeting was Sharon **CARLSON**, who gave us a lot of information about the Western Michigan University Archives in Kalamazoo. You might think that a university archives only deals with things connected with the university, and while they do have a large collection of material on that subject, they have much more to offer. One thing that Sharon talked about was their large collection of manuscripts – papers written by students and staff about a variety of topics, including some pertaining to our hobby, such as life stories, histories of various places, and various cultural studies.

[continued on p. 5, col. 3]

~ from the *Carson City Gazette*,
1923:

CIVIL WAR VETERAN PASSES AWAY

Jonas K. **ACKLEY** was born in New York City, April 26, 1841, and died March 12, 1923.

When three months old he came with his parents to Michigan where he spent most of his life, living in Portland, Mich., and Carson City.

He was a Civil War veteran, enlisting in Co. H., 9th Michigan Infantry, Aug. 16, 1861. Mustered out Oct., 1863. Re-enlisted Dec. 7, 1863, at Chattanooga, Tennessee. Mustered out at Nashville, Ten., Sept. 15, 1865.

He was married to Miss Lovina **EMMONS** at Portland, Mich., in 1866. His widow survives him.

There were five children: David Ackley, of Grand Rapids, Mich.; Mrs. Harriet **DAUGHERTY**, of Detroit, Mich.; Mrs. Mae **EVEY**, of St. Johns, Mich.; Mrs. Lovina **SKINNER**, of St. Charles, Mich. and one son, Gara, who died in California, 1908. There were also five grandchildren, three of whom are living, and one brother Jacob Ackley, who lives in Iowa.

Mr. Ackley was a member of the Methodist Episcopal church.

Funeral was held at the home Thursday afternoon, conducted by Rev. F. G. **DUNBAR**. Burial in Carson City cemetery.

Lines composed by Wm. Ackley:
Glory, honor and salvation,
To the Lord of all creation.
He fixes the destiny of the people
of every nation,

And we want to live in close
relation;

To be prepared in every way.

To meet our redeemer in the
judgment day,

With him forever and ever to
stay.

As we get older, it is not the things
we did that we often regret, but
the things we didn't do.

The History of the Founding and Naming of Past and Present Ionia County Post Offices

from: *Michigan Place Names* by Walter ROMIG, L.H.D.; Wayne State University Press; Detroit 1896

NEW BERLIN; See **BERLIN**;

NICKLEPLATE; Julia A **JONES** became the first postmaster of this rural post office, six miles north of Ionia, on Nov. 20, 1897, the office operating until Sept. 13, 1902.

NORTH PLAINS; it was first settled by Hector **HAYES** and Hiram **BROWN** in 1836, the latter becoming the first postmaster on March 31, 1846; the town was named after its township, which was organized in 1844, with Nathaniel **SESSIONS** as its first supervisor, and named at the suggestion of H. B. **LIBHARD** from its occupying a broad stretch of level land north of the Maple River; its post office operated until Nov. 11, 1878.

ODESSA; it was named after its township which had been named after the Russian city; Myron **TUPPER**, of Monroe Co., N.Y., entered the first land here in 1839; he became the first postmaster on Dec. 30, 1849, with the office named South Cass, for Odessa was then a part of Cass Township, named for governor Lewis **CASS**; the post office operated until March 7, 1899.

ORLEANS; the first settler here was Guy **WEBSTER**, from Lorain County, OH, in 1837; it was in a wheat-growing region and was given a post office as Wheatland on Sept. 7, 1844, with Joel C. **GREEN** as its first postmaster; many of its settlers came from Orleans County, N.Y., and the name was changed to Orleans on

June 22, 1868; in 1870, Asa **PALMER** gave land to the Detroit, Lansing, & Northern Railroad in return for a depot on his land here; in 1871, he had the village platted and named Palmer; but the post office remained Orleans and the village is now also known as Orleans.

OTISCO; See **KIDDVILLE**;

PALMER; See **ORLEANS**;

PALO; the village began on land owned by Matthew and John **VAN VLECK**; the latter suggested the name of the town in honor of General Zachary **TAYLOR**'s victory in the first battle of the Mexican War on May 8, 1846; Doctor Orla H. **TYLER** became the first postmaster on July 14, 1857; the village was first platted and recorded by William H. **FREEMAN** on May 12, 1867.

PATTERSON'S MILLS; See **BELDING**;

PEWAMO; the Detroit & Milwaukee Railroad built a station here in 1857; it was surveyed by a local landowner, A. F. **BELL**, in 1857, but not recorded until 1859 (officially the village takes 1859 as its founding year); it was named at the suggestion of another pioneer resident, J. C. **BLANCHARD**, for an Indian chief with whom he had hunted along the Grand River; Hiram W. Blanchard, the first postmaster, served from July 14, 1857, to 1870; incorporated as a village in 1871.

PLAINS; See **HUBBARDSTON**;

PORTLAND; the first government land purchase here was made by Elisha **NEWMAN** in 1833, but before he took possession in 1836, other settlers had arrived; Joshua **BOYER** became its first postmaster on March 11, 1837; platted by A. S. **WADSWORTH** in 1838;

incorporated as a village in 1869; located at the mouth of the Looking Glass River, it was named from its fine loading for boats.

PRISON SIDING; a station built on the Detroit, Grand Haven & Milwaukee Railroad, near the Ionia House of Correction, in 1856.

RICHMOND CORNERS; this post office in Sebewa Township was opened on July 14, 1857, with Samuel **BRETZ** as its first postmaster; the office was renamed Lake City on Aug. 18, 1858, closed on Jan. 16, 1860, restored on Feb. 27, 1871, renamed Rosina on Jan. 25, 1877, closed on Nov. 5, 1894, and restored again from Jan. 7, 1895 to April 30, 1904.

RIX; Joseph W. **SPRAGUE** became the first postmaster of this hamlet in Keene Township on May 1, 1851, the office operating until April 24, 1868; named for Rix **ROBINSON**, pioneer Indian trader.

RONALD; George **YOUNGER** and Joshua **SHEPARD** became the first settlers here in 1837, upon organization of the town in 1845 it was named by state representative A. L. **ROOF** after the hero in a novel he was reading; Freedom **GATES** became its first postmaster on Feb. 21, 1850, the office operating until April 19, 1853.

RONALD CENTRE; this rural post office, named from its location in the township, was opened on Feb. 16, 1851, with Ralph **ELY** as its first postmaster, and operated until March 17, 1870; see Ronald for the name.

ROSINA; See **RICHMOND CORNERS**;

RUSSELL SETTLEMENT; See **BONANZA**;

SARANAC; Judge Jefferson **MORRISON** bought government land here in 1836; he sold part of it to **DWIGHT & HUTCHINSON**, of Detroit, and they platted the village; Cyprian S. **HOOKER** became its first postmaster on March 14, 1839; the office was closed on June 24, 1841, but on Feb. 12, 1859, the Boston post office was transferred to and renamed Saranac; incorporated as a village in 1869; it was named after the New York resort town to attract settlers from that state.

SEBEWA; the first permanent settlements in the area were made by John F. **TERRILL**, Charles W. **INGALLS**, and John **BROWN**, in 1838; Sebewa Township was organized in 1845 and named by Rufus **GODDARD** after Sebewa Creek, meaning little river; Benjamin D. **WELD** became its first postmaster on Jan. 24, 1851; Pierce J. **COOK**, as agent for Elizabeth **CORNELL**, of New Jersey, platted and named the village Cornell in 1867, and the post office was changed to Cornell on July 8, 1880; but the name of Sebewa was restored from Feb. 16, 1881, until the office was closed on Nov. 15, 1913, and the village is still known as Sebewa.

SHILOH; a station on the Ionia and Stanton branch railroad, in Orleans Township, it was given a post office as Smith's Crossing on Jan. 15, 1877, with Charles **HOYT** as its first postmaster; the name was changed to commemorate the American Civil War battle at Shiloh, on Dec., 31, 1877, and the office operated until April 30, 1935.

SKIPPERVILLE; See **CLARKSVILLE;**

SMITH'S CROSSING; See **SHILOH;**

SMYRNA; on March 16, 1848, Dr. Wilber **FISHER** obtained a

rural post office named, at his suggestion, Smyrna; the first settler on the present village site was Calvin **SMITH** in 1853; on Sept. 14, 1853, George W. **DICKINSON** platted and recorded the village as Mount Vernon, after the Virginia estate of George **WASHINGTON**; the village was also known as Mount Vernon Mills, but its post office has remained Smyrna; the county was named after an ancient Greek province and Smyrna was a Grecian city, though now Turkish and called Izmir.

SNELL; this rural post office was named for George **SNELL** who became its first postmaster on Oct. 10, 1894, the office operating until Jan. 9, 1895.

SOUTH BOSTON; Riley J. **HESS** became the first postmaster of this rural post office on Aug. 16, 1849, the office operating until April 23, 1875; see Boston for the name.

SOUTH CASS; See **ODESSA;**

SOUTH IONIA; across the Grand River from the city of Ionia, G. W. **ARNOLD** surveyed and mapped the hamlet in 1876.

STANTON JUNCTION; a station on the Detroit, Lansing & Northern Railroad in 1878.

STONEY CREEK; Archibald **WILCOX** became the first postmaster of this rural post office on Aug. 2, 1852, the office operating until Nov. 19, 1856.

STROTHER'S CORNERS; See **ALGODON;**

WATERVILLE; in 1836, Robert **HILTON**, of Grand Rapids, made large land purchases here on Lake Creek in Boston Township, including a mill site, and platted a village which he named Waterville; James H. **HOAG** opened the mill as well as a store

in 1838, and was made postmaster on April 5, 1838; but the village did not prosper and its post office was moved to Saranac on March 14, 1839.

WEBBERS; a station on the Detroit, Grand Rapids & Western Railroad opened in 1869.

WEST CAMPBELL; storekeeper Isaac **GIBSON** became the first postmaster of this rural post office in western Campbell Township on Dec. 16, 1867, the office operating until Aug. 30, 1902; see Campbell for the name.

WEST SEBEWA; a post office in western Sebewa township opened on April 14, 1871; with Nathaniel **STEWART** as its first postmaster, succeeded by Andrew C. Stewart on Nov. 14, 1871, the office operating until April 30, 1904; see Sebewa for the name.

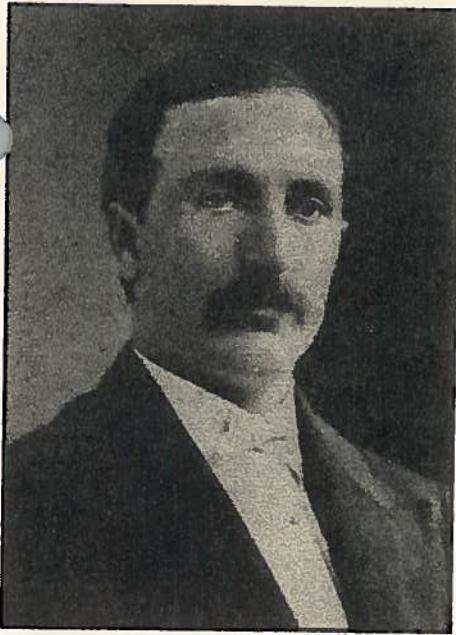
WHEATLAND; See **ORLEANS;**

WOOD'S CORNERS; Jesse **WOOD**, from Washtenaw County, first moved here in Orleans Township in 1841; travel over the town-line road moved John **LANSING** to build a tavern in 1865; the next year, Daniel **BENNETT** also opened a tavern and on April 15, 1869, his son Jefferson E. **BENNETT** became the first postmaster; a railroad station by 1876; its post office operated until May 15, 1905.

WOODVILLE; having tried unsuccessfully to found a village of his own named Woodville, E. L. **MORSE** moved his stock of goods two miles west to Pewamo and opened his store there in 1857.

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~ Many thanks to Jane (MUTCH) COOK of Lake Odessa for sharing this information with us!



A special thanks to Bill Post who sent us this photo of his great-grandfather, **William Henry POST**. Mr. Post was an early pioneer of Orleans Township. He was born in 1816 in Kingston, New York, and came to Michigan about 1841 with his wife, Elisabeth **NICHOLS**. Elisabeth was born in Pennsylvania. They had four children, twins, Eugene and Imogene, born in 1850 in Michigan, Edward, and Henry, born 1845. Henry died in 1901.

MAILBAG

Regarding the Bertha **BROCK** article from the last Newsletter, Joan **McCORD** writes:

"We asked Dexter **ARNOLD** about the family Bible that was mentioned in that letter. He says that they do not know what ever happened to it for sure. . . . a relative out of state got it and where it is now is anybody's guess. . . . [By the way] Bertha Brock Park is on M-21 west of Ionia and not on M-66."

~ Thank you, Joan, for this follow-up and for the correction!

Jan **CORTEZ**, List Mom" for Ionia County at rootsweb.com passes along this query she received:

"I have been trying to locate any descendants of Clara **SNELL**. I believe Clara Alma Snell who was married to George Washington **CURRIE** is the Clara that I'm looking for. George and Clara were married on Sept. 27, 1885, in Ionia, Michigan. The photo album I have is very old and the following is written in the front cover:

Clara Snell
Ionia City Michigan
April 29th 1882.

The photo album contains 20 pictures that are very old and many of them have the following on the front or back: Ionia Art Gallery, Sharpsteen Ionia Mich (one is dated March 7., 1886 on a baby picture), Clark and Millard Art Gallery, Philley, Lowell, Mich.

Any assistance you could provide would be appreciated.

Thank you!
Rob Erickson
<robsue@dellepro.com>

"I am looking for information on the Barnard (1833 – 1883) and Anna Barbara **ECKARDT** family and their children:

1. John Jacob Eckardt, born Sept. 12, 1853, died July 14, 1916, of Lake Odessa
2. Frederick Eckardt
3. Eugene Eckardt
4. Arthur Eckardt
5. Harry Eckardt
6. Ette Eckardt
7. Blanche Eckardt

Can you help me? Thank you
Marion **LEWIS**
<mlewis@platinum1.com>

APRIL SPEAKER, continued from p. 2

Located in East Hall, off Oakland Drive on Western's East Campus, the Archives boasts the fact that the Michigan Historical Commission has chosen Western as the repository of public records for twelve southwestern Michigan counties. These records include county, township, city and village-level records, such as tax records, court records and minutes from town meetings. Barry County, to our south, is one of the counties represented in this collection. There are many manuscripts on the local and regional histories of these counties, as well as yearbooks, scrapbooks, photographs, etc.

Sharon gave a good description of the holdings and I am sure that those who went on the field trip to the Archives on April 20 found that the staff was helpful and that there was a lot of material to see.

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then is not an act, but a habit."

~ Aristotle

A habit is the coming together of *Knowledge, Skill and Desire*. Knowledge involves the what to do and the why we're doing it. Skill is the how to do it. And desire is the want to do it. In order to develop a habit, we have to have all three.

WELL WISHES

A special note is made here to Cindy **BRYANT** (a charter member and frequent newsletter contributor) and her family. Cindy has been seriously ill and our thoughts and prayers go out to them.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Jean R. **BOORAS**
360 E. Tuttle Rd Lot 229
Ionia, MI 48846
(616) 527-5864
... and her son
- George T. **BOORAS**
P.O. Box 504
Lake Odessa, MI 48849-0504
They are researching: **BROOKS, HAIR, MACOMBER, HARRISON**
- Greta **ENDRES**
29 Mandy Lane
Lake Odessa, MI 48849-9762
(616) 374-8551
No email. Researching: **ENDRES, COGSWELL, LESLIE**
- Sue **IRVINE**
4215 Northgate Ave NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525
(616) 364-9629 or (616) 889-0042
Email: <sjirv@yahoo.com>
Researching:
Mac(Mc)NAUGHTON, COLLAR, HOLMDEN, LINK, BETTES, CHAPEL, SCHWARTZ, SHAW
- Donis M. **WARREN**
124 A Shady Lane
Eustis, FL 32726
(352) 357-7759
Email: <dormil@aol.com>
Researching: **MILLS, HOPKINS, GILLSON, MILLER, RASEY, GATES, RHODES, LINK, WARREN, BROWN**
- Thomas **PATTERSON**
4418 Tuscany Lane
Holt, MI 48842
Email: <ampegirth55@aol.com>
Researching: **ST. JOHN, WHEELER**
- Elaine **WEBSTER**
6521 Reeder Road
Lyons, MI 48851
(517) 647-6942
Email: <pwebster@power-net.net>
Researching: **PATTERSON, QUICK, KING, SIMMINGTON, STEVENS**
- Kathleen **WOODROW**
3100 S. W. 41st Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73119
(405) 685-4829

No email listed.
Researching: **ADGATE, WITT, HARRINGTON**

WELCOME BACK:

- Thomas **VANDERSKE**
7325 Goodwin Road
Lyons, MI 48851
(517) 647-7419
Researching: **GOODWIN, GREEN**

EMAIL ADDRESS UPDATES:

- Ellen **WILLEMIN**
<ellenwillemin@yahoo.com>
- Mary **MILAN**
<tilly11641@aol.com>
- Cheryl **THORNE**
<CThorne104@aol.com>

The Ionia County Genealogical Society is sponsoring, compiling and publishing a **FAMILY HISTORY OF IONIA COUNTY, MICHIGAN**. The book will include sections for family biographies and the history of communities, churches, schools, businesses, etc. We are very excited about this project and would like to invite you to be a part of this history-making effort. If you would like to help, please contact me at pkswiler@voyager.net and we will find something that you can help us with! There are jobs for everyone who wants to help, so please contact me ASAP! We will be sending out information soon on how you can contribute your family information. Thank you in advance for your support! Pam Swiler, President, Ionia County Genealogical Society

DID YOU KNOW?

Only two people signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4th — John **HANCOCK** and Charles **THOMSON**. Most of the rest signed on August 2, but the last signature wasn't added until 5 years later.

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REUNION NEWS

The Ionia High School Class of 1972 is having their reunion on Sept. 28, 2002, at the Shadow Ridge Golf Course (the old country club) in Ionia with a 9-hole golf scramble Saturday AM, 6:00 cocktails and 7:00 dinner. If anyone knows of someone that may have graduated from this class, please let them know and have them contact Teresa Leak Sweet at tree@pathwaynet.com. Any help would be appreciated.

~ thanks to Teresa **LEAK SWEET** for this information!

MAY SPEAKER

by Jim **MOSES**

We had a different kind of meeting in May. At the suggestion of one of our members we went around the room and introduced ourselves. The stipulations that were with the introduction, though, were that we had to tell a little about ourselves, and then tell how we received the name we were given. There was a lot of laughter at some of the reasons, and there were also some very serious reasons that a name was given. Primary among these reasons was that the person was named after some other relative. Sometimes these names have been carried on for several generations, but many people were named for a grandparent or an aunt or uncle. Some people claimed their name was given to them because the parents did not want anything that could be shortened — nicknames were not wanted in some families. A

few people were named after someone famous, while a few had no idea why they were named as they were. There were also a few revelations of names that most of us never knew.

When we were finished going around the room, Virginia (Ginny) **FORSTAT** spoke on the publishing of pictorial histories and family books. She told us about the differences in these types of books – in content as well as price, time to complete, and other features, like what types of articles are to be included. Turner Publishing, the company Ginny represents, has over 900 titles to its credit, specializing in county books.

We will have to do some work to get this project completed, but it won't cost us anything because they take care of the expenses. We will get paid for each book sold, so this is a great fundraiser for us. I am sure that some of you saw the article in the Ionia Sentinel-Standard about our project, and there will be a lot more information forthcoming.

BRAVO!!

Congratulations to Shirley J. **HODGES**, who was the 1st genealogist to receive the Eaton County Heritage Award on 1 June 2002 for 30 years of service! Kudos to Shirley and many, many thanks for your wonderful contributions!



Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.

IN DEEPEST SYMPATHY

We extend condolences to First Families members, Gene & Bernadine **CARR**. Gene lost his brother, Edward J. "Jack" Carr, on March 17, 2002.

Our sympathy is expressed to First Families members Claud and Phyllis **SHELLENBARGER** and their daughter Diane who recently lost her husband unexpectedly. The Shellenbargers reside at 1424 Fourth Avenue, Lake Odessa, MI 48849.

Marjorie Gibson's husband, Martin **GIBSON**, Jr., 75, died Saturday, March 30, 2002. Memorial contributions may be made to the Alvah N. Belding Library or the American Cancer Society. Our prayers are with Marjorie and her family.

Helen Salzman lost her son, Charles H. **SALZMAN**, 57, on Thursday, April 11, 2002, at St. Joseph Hospital. Interment was in River Ridge Cemetery, Belding, MI. Memorial contributions may be made to the Belding Museum or the Kidney Foundation of Michigan.

Debra **EDDY's** grandmother, Eleanor **MEYERS**, died June 3, 2002, in Barry County, Michigan. Our sympathy is expressed to Debra and her family.

First Families member Eleanore Potter lost her sister-in-law Ruth E. **POTTER**, aged 90, of Clarksville, who went home to be with her Lord on Saturday evening, June 29, 2002. She married Adrian Potter on January 1, 1942, and together

they farmed in the Clarksville area for 45 years. Ruth had been a life-long member of the Gateway Community Church in Clarksville, and had attended the West Berlin Wesleyan Church for the past several years. She is survived by her daughters, Carol **COPELAND** and Marsha Potter; five grandchildren; six great grandchildren; and many other relatives and friends. Ruth was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Adrian; her daughter, Elsie May; and four sisters. Burial was in Clarksville Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to the Gateway Community Church or the West Berlin Wesleyan Church.

Helen B. **NOSTRANDT GRAY**, aunt of Dottie Piechocki, died 3 July 2002, one day after her 84th birthday, in Frankfort, MI.

Iiah May "Susie" (**KLINE**) **ROSENBAUM** died July 9, 2002, in Sturgis, MI, unexpectedly at her home from a heart attack. We extend condolences to Pam Swiler on the loss of her cousin.

Our condolences are sent to Lori **FOX** and family - her cousin, Pam **RICHARDSON**, from Clarksville, died in a tragic automobile accident on Saturday, July 13, 2002.

Lyons came within one vote of being chosen by the Legislature in 1846 as the capital of the State, and they do say that if it had not been for the obstinacy of somebody the project would have succeeded.

~ from *History of Ionia and Montcalm Counties*, John **SCHENCK**, 1881, available in reprint from the ICGS.

PLEASE POST

Ionia County Genealogical Society Presents

Know Your "Junk"
Antique Heirloom
Appraisal Fair

Find out what those family heirlooms are really worth!!

Saturday, September 7, 2002

12 noon til 4:00 p.m.

Lake Odessa Community Library
Fourth Avenue (Main street of town)

Lake Odessa, Michigan

Guest Appraiser

Glen Rairigh

From

Americana Auctions

Fee: \$2 per item

Only bring items you can carry in.

Valuations will be oral only - No written appraisals

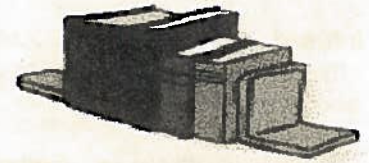
*Proceeds benefit the Ionia County Genealogical Society
Library or ICGS will not be responsible for lost or damaged items
Contact ICGS for more information (616) 374-3141*



Kenneth TOWNER of Portland writes: The log house pictured [above] was built in 1855 or shortly after. The three people sitting are, from left to right, Harriet (BECK) Towner, Alfred Towner and his brother William Towner. The frame house [below] was built the summer of 1885 - the photo was taken sometime in the 1920s. Kenneth Towner has lived in this house his entire life. He and his wife, Christine AVES Towner, still live there (11155 Okemos Road, Portland, MI) today.



To forget one's ancestors is to be a brook without a source,
a tree without a root. – Chinese proverb



LIBRARY NEWS

These books are missing from our library. If you have any of them, please return them so others may use them, too:

MICHIGAN CEMETERY ATLAS;
Library of Michigan; donated by Pamela Swiler (We do have the Companion Volume for this book.)

MICHIGAN DEATH INDEX 1867-1882, volumes I – V

DUTCH IMMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION RECORDS, 1820-1880;

by Robert P. Swierenga

First Family Book #25

First Family Book #130

When Lumber Was Gold

...an emotionally charged journey into Michigan's pioneering past...

Take a journey to the past. Immerse yourself in the pioneering spirit of real people who carved lives out of the Michigan landscape during the Lumbering Era (mid 1800s to early 1900s). It was a time when lumber was as good as gold. Lumber barons built empires and mansions, while immigrant peasants labored to build better lives. *When Lumber Was Gold* is a compelling collection of twenty historical narratives. They offer readers an intimate view of common, yet rarely discussed, experiences, events, and struggles of individuals and families during the settling of the rural midwest. Vivid imagery is brought to life by emotionally charged poetic verse,

infused with highly evocative, often deeply personal insights and anecdotes.

Renee J. **BROWN** [a member of ICGS] is a 6th-generation Michigianian. She has been housebound due to illness since 1994. She composes and edits entirely in her head, as her energy levels often prevent her from writing more than a couple of lines of text per day. The background research for this book was done prior to her convalescence and was referenced from memory. Renee has a B.S. from Central Michigan University and attended graduate school at Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville. She has published two book-length genealogies, as well as articles in historical and genealogical society journals. Her narratives have been featured in literary publications and online poetry journals. She is a member of the International Women's Writing Guild. An accomplished artist and photographer, Renee had a month-long exhibition of photography and verse in the healing arts gallery of the MidMichigan Medical Center in Midland, Michigan. "Ticket to Yesterday" showcased historic Michigan railroad depots. Other original photographs and paintings by Renee have appeared in the Great Lakes Regional Art Exhibition at the Midland Center for the Arts in Midland, Michigan, as well as in art fairs and exhibitions throughout the state.

Author: Renee J. Brown

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Author website:

www.geocities.com/reneejbrown

JUNE SPEAKER

by Jim **MOSES**

I would like to thank Bonnie **JACKSON** for taking notes for me during the June meeting (I was Best Man in a wedding that day, and couldn't figure out how to slip away for two or three hours to attend the meeting, especially since the wedding was at 1:00). This report is directly from her notes:

"We were fortunate to have as our speaker this month Carol **CALLARD**. Her topic was 'Ontario Genealogy - Records and Research'. In addition to giving us a considerable amount of information on researching, she also updated us on what the Library of Michigan has on Canadian research. Her first bit of advice was to get a good map of the townships in Ontario. They are available at the Library of Michigan. She told us that many of the records are done by Townships rather than Counties or Provinces. She also pointed out that there are many Townships and Counties that have the same name, i.e., Perth County and Perth Township. It would be frustrating to be looking in Perth County records, when the person you were looking for was in Perth Township.

Another tip she gave was information contained in the Canadian Census. Canadian Census takers always asked the age of the person at their next birthday, so if the age of the person you are looking for does not quite match, this may very well be the reason. She also said that they asked what religious denomination the family belonged to. This would help you in finding church records for the family you are researching. Ethnic origin is helpful in placing where your family may have settled in Canada. The Lot and Concession number is a valuable tool in finding where your family may have owned land or lived. Carol told us that armed with these numbers you can then go to the book '*The Index of Historical Atlases*' at the Library. This index lists people of Ontario from 1600 to 1900. A good percent of people are located using this tool. She told us that the 1871 and 1881 Canadian Censuses are now out on CD. The 1901 census was the last one to be released. It is still unknown if the Canadian Government will release the 1911 census. They first said that they would not release it, but there has been such an outpouring of letters, cards and emails from genealogists and other concerned people, that they may reconsider.

The cemetery lists in Ontario are being updated on a daily basis. Carol said that when she wants information on Canadian cemeteries from the Internet she uses <http://www.google.com> and enters OCFA or Ontario Cemetery Finding Aid. She has gained a lot of information from this site.

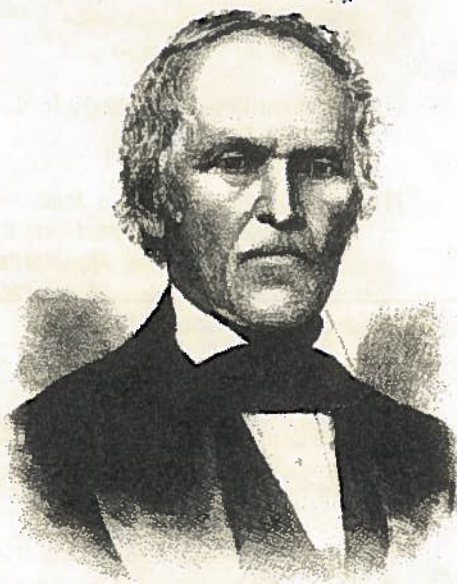
One of the confusing things about Canada is what is considered Upper and Lower Canada. Quebec was once Lower Canada, or Canada East, and

Ontario was Upper Canada, or Canada West.

Carol told us that the Library of Michigan has a large collection of resources that relate to Ontario genealogy research. The titles may be found by searching ANSWER, the Library's online catalog. You can access ANSWER through the Library of Michigan's web page at <http://libraryofmichigan.org>. When searching ANSWER use the following keywords to retrieve the greatest number of citations: ontario genealogy, ontario cemeteries, ontario census, ontario biography, ontario passenger links and ontario atlas. If you add a geographic location you can narrow your search, such as ontario genealogy and toronto. She was excited about the new research tool called Ancestry Plus. The Library of Michigan has purchased this tool for three years. At the present time it can only be accessed through your local library, but in about a month it will be available to people with personal computers. You may use it without cost for a three-year period. All that is required is for you to enter your Michigan driver's license to access it. This site has as much or more information than the LDS Library. As always, we enjoyed Carol's visit. She always presents a program filled with useful and beneficial information. We look forward to hearing from her again."

THE FOUR STAGES OF LIFE:

- 1) You believe in Santa Claus.
- 2) You don't believe in Santa Claus.
- 3) You are Santa Claus.
- 4) You look like Santa Claus.



HON. ERASTUS YEOMANS was born in Lebanon, Conn., Aug. 11, 1791. His parents' names were Daniel and Esther Yeomans. At the age of sixteen he removed with them to German Flats, Herkimer Co., N. Y. The ensuing year he engaged as teacher in one of the public schools of the county. Evidence of his efficiency in this capacity at the early age of seventeen is given in the fact that he continued in the same school for nearly three years, with an advance of salary each year.

Soon after this, in the war of 1812, he demonstrated his fitness to be a citizen of the Republic by taking his place in the ranks of her defenders.

March 19, 1815, he married Pbebe ARNOLD, of Fairfield, N. Y. His parents being advanced in years their care devolved upon him and his wife, which duty was conscientiously discharged. Discerning that the future of his young family would be improved in the West, he emigrated with five

other families to the then Territory of Michigan. The magnitude of such an undertaking can, at this time, hardly be estimated. The party, having chartered a canal boat, put on board all their goods and embarked for the West, April 20, 1833, arriving at Buffalo on the 7th of May. Here the heavy household goods and farming implements were shipped by sailing vessel to Grand Haven, and the party went by steamer to Detroit. After the necessary preparation for a trip across the Territory the company started, passing through Pontiac and other settlements in their course. On the eighth day out they took a guide to lead them through the wilderness, in which they had to cut their way slowly and painfully. When about thirty miles from their destination they were detained by an event distressing and mournful in character - the sickness, death, and burial of a child of one of the families. Resuming their march, they reached the present site of Ionia City on the 28th of May. The purchase from the Indians of little patches of clearing with crops of corn and vegetables planted having been effected, the party exchanged their tents for bark wigwams.

The Indians, well satisfied with the bargain, moved on a few miles to be ready for a similar transaction with the next newcomers. A number of the most able-bodied colonists were now sent to convey to their settlement on flat-bottomed boats, propelled by poles and strong arms, the goods which had been landed at Grand Haven. This accomplished, the erection of more suitable dwellings was begun. Not the least of the discomforts endured by them at this time were the

mosquitoes. The season being so far advanced, only the corn and vegetables purchased of the Indians could for that year be grown. They had no provision for grinding the corn, consequently had to prepare it for food in the Indian fashion. The large stumps of trees yet firmly fixed in the ground were hollowed into mortars, in which the corn was crushed until by obtaining a large coffee-mill it could be coarsely ground. This source of supply served to bridge over the times of sharp necessity caused by scarcity of breadstuff, which could be obtained only from Detroit by the way of Grand Haven. In 1835 a run of small mill-stones was procured and put in the basement of the saw-mill which had been erected. With the official organization and administration of the affairs of his county and town Mr. Yeomans was closely identified. He was appointed first postmaster of Ionia County, receiving his commission from Amos Kendall, Postmaster-General under President Jackson, which position he held for six years. In 1841 he was elected associate judge of the county, continuing to serve in that capacity for eight years. He has always been active in advancing the best interests of humanity and of the community. He is the only surviving one of the five pioneers who, with their families, constituted the colony. He is now in his ninetieth year, and, without departure from truth, it may be said of him that "the silvery radiance cast athwart his locks by the sunset of life" is not dimmed by a single charge of wrong to his fellow-men.

[This article is also taken from Schenck's History of Ionia and Montcalm Counties, page 149, and features the husband of Phoebe YEOMANS, whom we highlighted in the last issue.]

The Vintage Voice

~ news & notices from early Ionia newspapers

[The following article is a follow-up to the photo we printed in the January issue of the Newsletter. Although the newspaper is unidentified, the year was 1914.]

TRIBUTE PAID TO BOY VICTIM OF THE GRAND

Classmates of Lynn Remalie Scatter Flowers Over Watery Grave Sunday Afternoon.

MEMORIAL SERMON BRINGS MANY TEARS

A Community's Sympathy Goes Out to Bereaved Family as Sad Tragedy of Last March is Recalled.

Grand River, pitiless custodian of the body of Lynn REMALIE, was virtually beseeched to give up the remains of its prey for burial Sunday afternoon, when with heavy hearts classmates of the young river victim, both at the central school building and Methodist Sunday-school, gathered on the upper bridge at the conclusion of the memorial service to scatter flowers on the boy's watery grave. The impressive service lamentably brought to mind the sad fatality of March 7th last, when young Remalie sank to his death in the icy waters of the Grand.

Rev. W. W. SLEE's memorial sermon, delivered to a large and sympathetic audience that thronged the new Methodist church Sunday afternoon, brought tears to nearly every eye as the sad tragedy, which has cast a pall over the entire community, was recalled. Rev. John

H. STEWART, of the Baptist church, read the scriptures and offered prayer. The Methodist choir furnished music.

The abundance of floral offerings, sent by friends and local societies of which the bereaved parents are members, were silent tokens of the sincere sympathy that has continually gone out to the stricken family since the lamentable fatality of that Saturday afternoon in March, when the pitiless Grand swallowed up the body of one of the brightest little chaps in the village. Knowledge that a united community is with them in their bereavement has proved a source of great comfort to the stricken family, who find words unavailable to express their gratitude for the many of acts of kindness bestowed upon them since the tragic death of their son.

Members of the Odd Fellow and Rebekah lodges, of which Mr. and Mrs. Remalie are members, were in attendance in a body at memorial service Sunday. At a time in the history of Portland has the spirit of fraternity been better recommended than during the fruitless search for the Remalie boy's body, when the Odd Fellows turned out almost to a man to lend their assistance to a stricken brother, and the Rebekah ladies served free meals to the volunteers during the progress of the search. Any man or woman should indeed be proud of their membership in either of these fraternities.

Those from a distance who were here for the memorial service Sunday were Mrs. Sarah Remalie, grandmother of the young river victim, and her daughter, Prudence, Mr. and Mrs. Orrin TUBBS, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis LAMB and Mr. and Mrs. Claude HAYWOOD and daughter, Greta, all of Vermontville.

•••••

A PRETTY HOME WEDDING.

With Remarkable Developments
as to
Intimacy of Ancestry.

A pretty home wedding was solemnized at the home of Mr. and Mrs. George LITCHFIELD, in Ionia township, on Wednesday, Dec. 27, when their daughter, Elsie G., was united in marriage to Mr. Ralph H. SNOOK of Lansing.

The house was prettily decorated with holly and chrysanthemums. The bride was attended by Miss Lola Snook, sister of the groom. The groomsman was Mr. Noran Litchfield, brother of the bride; Rev. W. D. ELLIS of South Boardman officiated. After congratulations, a dainty luncheon was served. The guests from away were Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Snook of Lansing, Mrs. John HICKS and Ernest and Leland Hicks, of Ionia, and Miss Mabel GOODRICH of Vestaburg.

The happy couple left the same evening on a trip to Big Rapids and Marion. They will be home, after June 30, at Big Rapids. Many friends wish them a long, happy and prosperous wedded life.

A somewhat singular development, when the wedding guests met, was the discovery that the great-grandmothers of the bride and the groom were intimate friends, that their grandmothers were neighbors and friends, and that their mothers were playmates in childhood. The families, however, had drifted far apart, and all this intimacy in a long line of ancestry had not been known until the guests met for the wedding.

Today, an eighty year old grandmother in Lansing and a seventy-eight year old grandmother in Ionia are rejoicing

because their grandchildren are united in marriage, and are finding much pleasure in recalling incidents of their own friendship of sixty years ago.



~ from the *Daily Nevada State Journal*, 1 October 1875, page 2.

NINETEEN IMPOLITE THINGS

1. Loud and boisterous laughter
2. Reading when others are talking.
3. Reading aloud in company without being asked.
4. Talking when others are reading
5. Spitting about the house smoking or chewing.
6. Cutting fingernails in company.
7. Leaving church before worship is closed.
8. Whispering or laughing in the house of God.
9. Gazing rudely at strangers.
10. Leaving a stranger without a seat.
11. A want of respect and reverence for seniors.
12. Correcting older persons than yourself, especially parents.
13. Receiving a present without a statement of gratitude.
14. Making yourself the hero of your own story.
15. Laughing at the mistakes of others.
16. Joking others in company.
17. Commencing talking before another has finished speaking.
18. Commencing to eat as soon as you get to the table; and
19. Not listening to what any one is saying in company.

~ thanks to Pam Swiler for contributing this item!

Sometimes happiness is doing what you like. But just as often, it's liking what you do.

~ Mort CRIM

Each king in a deck of playing cards represents a great king from history:

- ♠ Spades - King David
- ♥ Hearts - Charlemagne
- ♣ Clubs - Alexander, the Great
- ♦ Diamonds - Julius Caesar

~ more tidbits from the *History of Ionia and Montcalm Counties*:

A "BOGUS" BAND.

For a little time previous to 1857 the manufacture of bogus Mexican dollars was carried on in the village [of Boston], but so secretly did the counterfeiters conduct their operations that knowledge of the matter was not made public until after the business had been suspended for a year or so. The information came out in 1857, when, upon the arrest of some housebreakers who had been depredating the villagers' homes, it was learned that they had before that figured as a counterfeiting band in the town, although upon their own confession the money they made was so very bad that but few people could be deceived with it.

Lyons' first Fourth-of-July celebration occurred in 1834, on the hill now occupied by Henry HITCHCOCK's residence. There were not many in attendance, because the people of the town were but a handful. The LIBHARTs, MOOREs, McKELVEYs, HUNTs, and BELCHERs were there, and, besides, there were some Indians who enjoyed the fun quite as much as did anybody. What they lacked in numbers, however, they supplied with enthusiasm. H. V. Libhart was the orator; a liberty-pole was raised; patriotic songs were sung; a feast was digested; and a hollow stump, in lieu of a cannon, awakened the loud echoes.

Highlight on First Families of Ionia County Society, Member No. 12

Lori Piercefield Fox



Lori Lynn **PIERCEFIELD FOX** was born in Lansing, Ingham County, Michigan, the daughter of **Gordon Lyle Piercefield** and **Cleo Marie DOWNING**. She has lived in Portland, Ionia County, Michigan, her entire life, within a two mile radius of her ancestors who first settled in Ionia County in 1852.

Lori married **William E. Fox, Jr.**, on September 18, 1971, and they have three children, **Jamie, Lisa** and **Mark**. Together they run the family business, Portland Iron & Metal, which is just down the road from the family home.

Lori chose to follow her maternal line to qualify for First Families of Ionia County Society membership. Her mother, **Cleo Marie Downing** married **Gordon Lyle Piercefield** on June 18, 1949. Cleo is the daughter of **Homer Downing** and **Mamie Lucille WILLIAMS**.

Homer and Mamie were married June 7, 1919, in Ionia. Homer, born February 10, 1901, is the son of **Ezekiel John Downing** and **Maud(e) Ella ESTEP**. Homer died of lung cancer on February 14, 1984. **Mamie Lucille Williams** was born February 22, 1900, and died April 25, 1989, from pneumonia and septicemia. Both Mamie and Homer are buried at East Sebewa Cemetery. Mamie is the daughter of **Lewis Williams** and **Maria Theresa SINDLINGER**.

November 10, 1886, was the wedding day for **Ezekiel John Downing** and his bride, **Maud(e) Ella Estep**. They were married by the Presbyterian Clergyman at his home in Ionia, Michigan.

Maud was the daughter of **William Estep** and **Rebecca SHAFFNER**. She was born November 18, 1866, in Sebewa Twp., Ionia County, Michigan. Her husband, **Ezekiel John Downing**, was born January 3, 1861, in Randolph, Indiana.

Ezekiel John Downing was the son of **John Downing** and **Sarah GULLETT**. **John Downing** was the son of **Dr. Samuel Downing** who was the first in his line to settle in Ionia County. He first appears in the 1870 census with his wife, **Elizabeth (BAIRD) Downing**, and his grandson, **Ezekiel**.

More information on Lori's family history can be found at the Lake Odessa Historical Society Depot Museum where the ICGS library of genealogical materials is housed. Lori is fortunate to have the original documents, such as the family Bible, diaries, etc. Thank you, Lori, for sharing this wonderful history!

2001 – 2002 Calendar of Events - Ionia County Genealogical Society

August 2002

- 6 7:00 p.m. First Families of Ionia County Society Committee Meeting at the Depot
10 1:00 p.m. Shirley Hodges will be speaking on "Church Records: The Tie That Binds".
Mary Milan and Genny Read are greeters
Lori Fox and Genny Read will provide refreshments
Genny Read will be at the library until 5:00 p.m.
22 7:00 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting at Swilers'
31 10:00 - 2:00 Depot Museum open to public for research – **Pam Swiler will hostess**

September 2002

- 1 **Deadline for First Families applications**
3 7:00 p.m. First Families of Ionia County Society Committee Meeting at the Depot
7 12 Noon until 4:00 p.m. Know Your Junk Antique Appraisal at the Lake Odessa Library
Volunteers 12-2:00 Bonnie Jackson, Gary Veale, Dick Heaven and Janis Kenyon
Volunteers 2:00-4:00 Bonnie Jackson-Jackie Gilliland-Ellen Willemin-Janis Kenyon
14 1:00 p.m. Jim Lyons: "Researching the Revolutionary War Soldier"
Ellen Willemin & Ford Wright are greeters
Ruth Burt and Joan McCord will provide refreshments
Elaine Garlock will be at the library until 5:00 p.m.
26 7:00 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting at Swilers'
28 10:00 - 2:00 Depot Museum open to public for research – **Elaine Garlock will hostess**
Teresa Leak Sweet signed up for data entry

October 2002

- 1 7:00 p.m. First Families of Ionia County Society Committee Meeting at the Depot
12 1:00 p.m. Marilyn Steward & Pam Swiler - Family Tree Maker Workshop
Gary Veale is greeter – need someone to join him!
Donna Rogers and Sharon Kisela will provide refreshments
Who will be at the library until 5:00 p.m.?? We need a volunteer!
24 7:00 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting at Swilers'
26 10:00 - 2:00 Depot Museum open to public for research - **Bonnie Jackson will hostess**
Grace Wedderburn signed up for data entry
26 TBA Annual First Families of Ionia County Society Awards Banquet

November 2002

- 5 7:30 p.m. First Families of Ionia County Society Committee Meeting at Swilers'
9 1:00 p.m. Joni McCord – "The History of the City of Ionia"
Sue Castro and Sharon Kisela are greeters
WE NEED SOMEONE TO PROVIDE REFRESHMENTS! (2 people please)
Merrilee Morrison-Cotter will be at the library until 5:00 p.m.
21 7:00 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting at Swilers'
30 10:00 - 2:00 Depot Museum open to public for research **Lori Fox will hostess**

December 2002

- No meetings**
28 10:00-2:00 Depot Museum open to public for research **Bonnie Jackson will hostess**

** All regular membership meetings are held on the second (2nd) Saturday of each month, except December, at 1:00 p.m., in the Community Room of Lake Manor on Emerson Street, Lake Odessa, just west of the Depot Museum. The public is welcome and refreshments will be served. In addition, the Depot library will also be open following each monthly meeting until 5:00 p.m.

Editor: Pamela Swiler

Asst Editor: Dottie Piechocki

NEED TO REACH US? ICGS, 13051 Ainsworth Rd., Route #3, Lake Odessa, MI 48849, PH: (616) 374-3141

FAX: 616-374-8424 or email: <pkswiler@voyager.net>

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**First Families Applications
Are Due September 1, 2002
Time Is Running Out!**

.....
Those interested in membership of the I.C.G.S. should complete the form below and send it with \$15.00
annual membership fee made payable to *Ionia County Genealogical Society*. Send to: I.C.G.S.; 13051
Ainsworth Road, Route 3, Lake Odessa, MI 48849-9406. Memberships run January through December.
.....

This is a renewal _____

This is a NEW Membership _____

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Zip Code: _____ Home Telephone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

List surnames you are researching: _____

Are you interested in becoming a member of the First Families of Ionia County Society? _____

NOTE: All information may be published in upcoming newsletters or placed on the internet GenWeb Project unless you indicate in writing otherwise.