

# Otsego County Historical Society Newsletter



May 2006

## MUSEUM HOURS

10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Monday & Tuesday  
Thursday-Saturday  
June 1-September 2, 2006  
**989-732-4568**

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Like always, here at your Museum, BUSY, BUSY, BUSY as we are on the countdown for our re-opening on June 1st!

An Open House so you can preview all the improvements will take place on Wednesday, May 31 from 10—2 pm.

Ann Wright, along with Roberta Hudson, Doris Schulz and Doris Miller get a big “Thank You” for all the work they do in making all the changes and additions to the displays in the Museum.

There’s lots going on at the Museum that you won’t want to miss so please read your newsletter thoroughly.

*Ginny*

## Gift Store

What a wonderful addition to our Museum! We have a wide variety of inexpensive gifts for visitors to purchase as mementos and gifts. These are primarily Michigan made products and, where we could, we stocked the store with local items. Perhaps you will find that perfect gift for your family at the Museum’s gift store.



Our thanks to Sandy Allison for setting up the store and selecting the items to sell. She did a great job!

## OPEN HOUSE

Wednesday, May 31  
10:00 a.m.– 2:00 pm.

Come see the new displays and our new Gift Store.



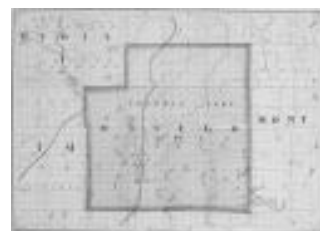
Mike Reling will entertain us with his live radio broadcast direct from the Museum.



The first 40 people who attend the Open House will receive a coupon for a free slice of pie and cup of coffee at Arlene’s Diner on the 31st. The pies will be made especially for us! Thanks, Arlene!

## Plat Book Map

A new addition to our historical books this year is a reproduction of the 1910 Plat Book of Otsego County! It is very interesting and shows how much the area has changed. Many long time family names appear in the plat book...this would make a very unique gift for someone on your shopping list. They will sell for \$10.00 each.



## PROJECTS

### Pioneer Cemetery Project

In an effort to locate the gravesites of the early pioneers of our communities Margaret Albert is spearheading a committee to identify these sites. The ultimate aim is to place special markers at the graves of the early pioneers.



Bagley township cemetery at the corner of US 27 and Wisconsin St. was the first cemetery for Gaylord. Later Fairview cemetery was added. In addition many of the small cemeteries within the county have graves of early settlers.

Margaret will start with Bagley cemetery and the list of early pioneers that we have at the Museum. If anyone would like to help with this project please give her a call.

### Cataloging Artifacts

In September we will start cataloging our artifacts using the new computer system. A training on the new system will be arranged for sometime in August. Again, if you are interested in helping with this project please let Ann Wright know. You can call her at home or leave a message for her at the Museum.



### Fall Classes



The heritage food classes taught by Sandi and Rudi Edel were such a big hit that we decided to expand our selection of classes in the fall. Classes on various home crafts such as soap making and Ukrainian egg painting will be offered as well as more food classes.

If you have an idea for a class or know someone with a special skill please let us know. We hope to have the classes in place by the end of June.

## DORIS SCHULZ

Doris Schulz has been on the Otsego County Historical Society Board of Directors since 1992 when the Museum was opened. Doris became acquainted with the Museum when she donated her father's carpenter ox to the collection. From that first encounter she was invited to volunteer at the Museum. Since then she has done everything from A to Z at the Museum! She is our window display expert and very knowledgeable about the Museum's collections.

Doris served as President of the Board for six years and is now Vice-President. With the end of her term coming up in June, Doris has decided to retire from the Board. However, we are thrilled that she still plans on volunteering as she has done in the past!

When Doris and her husband, Harry, retired in 1989 they moved to Gaylord. They have three children, one of whom lives in Gaylord. Doris also volunteers at the Peace Lutheran Church and is an avid flower gardener.

### Cooperative Extension Display...Library

Beginning May 22 look for the exhibit on the Extension Service at the Library. The display shows the impact Extension has had, and continues to have, on Otsego County.

It includes interesting pictures from the 40's and 50's of area residents, the story of the potato harvest during the war years of the early 40's and Extension staff at work today.

On May 31 Keith Widder, winner of a 2006 Michigan Notable Book Award, will be at the library and give a free program on his book Michigan Agricultural College: the evolution of a land-grant philosophy. Call the library at 732-5841 for more details.



**DAYTON LAST BLOCK WORKS (DLBW)  
1898-1931**

Dayton last Blocks Works was a very large factory that extended from present day Wilbur's to the Bagley Township Cemetery on the west side of Otsego Avenue. The factory produced shoe lasts. These were wooden forms used to shape leather so it could be hand stitched into a shoe. These shoe lasts were in demand all over the world since this is how shoe were made in this era. Many considered the DLBW in Gaylord to be the largest factory of its kind in the world.

CD Picture # 13

In addition to the shoe lasts they also made the rough golf heads and ten pins for bowling.

The founders, Crawford, McGregor and Canbey, from Dayton, Ohio, set up this plant to take advantage of all the hardwood trees in the area. The original loggers were after cork pine, a popular building lumber, not the hardwoods. So the area still had large stands of hardwood trees to harvest.

Women were employed at the ten pin building to do the finishing work on the bowling pins.

With changes in the economic climate due to the depression and the change in how shoes were made, and the desire by the remaining owner to retire, the factory closed in 1931.

One building remains today. That was one of the drying kilns. It is now used as an office building and is called the Bavarian Centre.

The factory was vital to the economic health of the area. They employed both full time and part time help at the plant and in their logging camps. Their payroll ran between 40 and 150 people, primarily men.

Shoe Last Float

July 4th Parade Float in form of a shoe

## **MUSEUM STAFF**

President - Ginny Brozowski  
Vice-President - Doris Schulz  
Secretary - Jan Pearson  
Treasurer - Maureen Ballenger  
Coordinator - Ann Wright  
Deed of Gifts - Roberta Hudson  
Memorials - Rhoda Kelso  
Membership - Darlene Olund

### **GINNY'S GEMS**

There are lots of non-profit organizations - they don't mean to be but they are!

Otsego County Historical Society  
P.O. Box 1223  
Gaylord, MI 49734