



the **CHRONICLE**

The Almost Monthly Publication of the Ionia County Historical Society



A Message from the ICHS President, Kathleen Cook

As we prepare to go off exploring other museums this weekend, I wanted to give you some quick updates on what is going with the historical society.

We have had some interesting programming already this year. In May, in honor of National Nurses Month, I presented on Julia Wheelock. She is considered Michigan's Florence Nightengale for all she did to help with soldiers, particularly Michigan soldiers, during the Civil War. In June, Linda Ciangi taught us about John Lombard, who was a graduate of Ionia Public Schools and fought with the Flying Tigers during WWII. Her talk was fascinating, and I am still hearing people praise her lecture. As Linda said, "There are Ionians everywhere!"

As tradition has it, the July meeting is a potluck. It is on July 3 at 7:00 but generally, people start to arrive around 6:30 for some social time. Feel free to bring your own beverages and we will do what we can to ensure that



the house is cool.

We have the house open for tours on Sundays from 1-4 and we are always looking for help hosting. If you are interested in learning more about how to give a tour, we have docent guides available or you can learn by following a tour guide. Please keep in mind that there will be some Sundays that we will be closed due to an event rental or due to heat.

We had our second tour bus roll in yesterday to see the house. Thank you to all the volunteers that helped as it was extremely warm inside. The thermometer downstairs read 86 degrees! Once the weather cools, it will take a few days for the house to cool down. Please keep an eye out on our website and on Facebook for closures. When it gets this hot, it is no longer safe to have our "Working Wednesdays" or Sunday tours. I would suggest calling ahead.

We continue to get lots of donations. Our latest treasures came from Ionia Sparrow Hospital and the boxes contained things related to Ionia Memorial Hospital and the hospital before on Jackson Street. Once given items, I get ideas and I asked Dan Balice to present on the history of the hospitals in Ionia. He agreed to be the speaker at the August meeting.

Of course, we will be involved in the Free Fair this year. We are donating a book to be given out in a drawing at the Ladies Day program. We will have display at Antique Village, and we will be hosting the Queens Reception at the Blanchard House prior to the parade.

I just heard, "Are you ready?" so I must finish for now. Off to the museums!

— Kathleen Cook, ICHS President

Recent ICHS Goings-On"

There has been plenty of activity at the Blanchard House over the past few months as Kathleen reports in her article. Plenty happening behind the scenes as well, with continuing activity in the Accessions Department, the Maintenance



Department, and the Rental Department. In addition, the Gift Shop is looking better than ever.

(Here's the Accessions ladies looking a bit overwhelmed. But it's all good!)

We welcome some new members to the Society and had many Ionia locals stop in for tours and meetings. We hope you all can stop in, too! (Check the calendar on page 3 for the dates.)



The "Spring Into The Past" event was a success for us on May 5th. I created a graphic for the event which will remain on display all summer. It's a large map of Ionia with notations explaining how many of Ionia's streets got their names. (There's also a supplemental document about parks and buildings.)

Hope to see everyone again soon!

Train Wrecks!

Our latest addition to the gift shop - News stories and photos of Ionia area train wrecks, compiled by John Palmer for the Historical Society. Just \$10.



Historic DVD Videos

The ICHS Gift Shop includes copies of several historic films on DVD, some professionally produced and others are copies of vintage footage donated by individuals.

The gifts include a video documentary on the history of Ionia's major employer for nearly 100 years, produced by students at Ferris State University. Only \$10!



Other DVDs featuring local history are available for \$10 each!



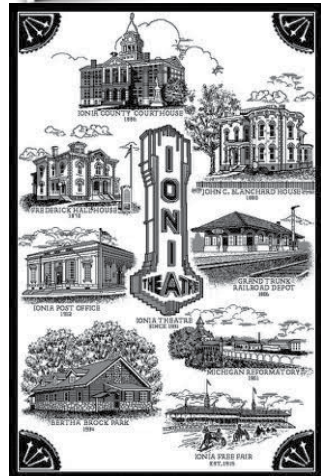
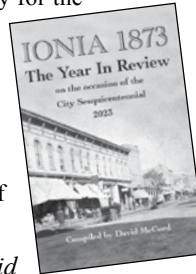
Hudsons in Ionia

A booklet about the famed retail magnate and his early business ventures in Ionia. Written by David McCord. \$6 each

Ionia 1873—The Year In Review

Compiled especially for the Sesquicentennial of the City of Ionia in 2023, this 40-page booklet presents a summary of life and events in the City of Ionia during the year of its incorporation.

Compiled by David McCord. Just \$10 each

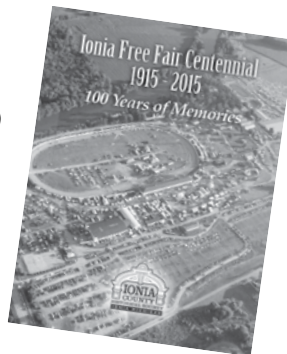


Ionia Free Fair Centennial 1915-2015

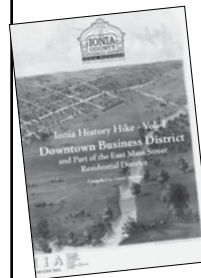
100 Years of Memories

Compiled by David McCord with the help of many contributors, this 8.5 x 11 inch book contains 328 pages of history and over 1,000 photos and graphics.

Softcover: \$29.95 / Hardcover: \$44.95 (add \$10 for postage)

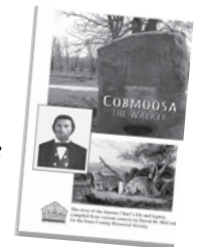


Do you have your souvenir Ionia History blanket yet? This attractive heavy throw is large, warm, and looks great in anyone's home. Available in shades of gray or burgundy with artwork by David McCord. \$75 for this unique souvenir of Ionia. (\$65 for ICHS Members).



"History Hike - Vol. I" a walking Tour of Historic Downtown Ionia including a map and many colored pages of history by David McCord. \$10 each

Cobmoosa: The Great Walker — A biography of the last Great Chief of the Grand River Indians. by David McCord. \$6 each



Who Was John C. Blanchard? A biography of one of Ionia's leading businessmen. by David McCord. \$6 each



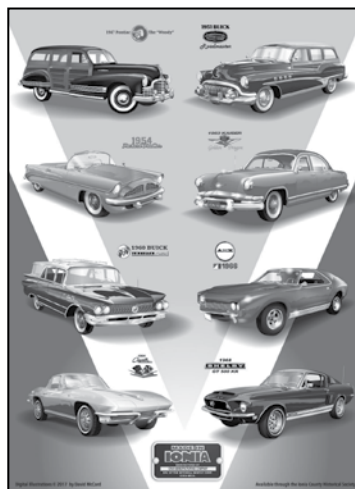
ALSO AVAILABLE:

Reproductions of historic Ionia publications:

- 1887 "Headlight Flashes" Special Ionia Edition
- 1907 Ionia Souvenir Book
 - 1973 Ionia City Centennial Program Book
- Antique Ionia Postcards and Photographs

AND MORE!

IONIA-MADE AUTOMOBILES



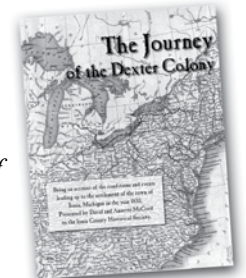
Exclusive to the ICHS Gift Shoppe, the 18x24-inch poster on heavy gloss paper sells for \$15, and the packet of NINE "Made in Ionia" automobile post-cards are just \$10. (Artwork by David McCord; proceeds go to the ICHS.)

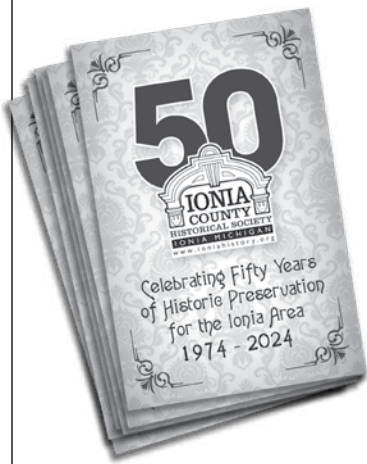
A History of Bertha Brock Park on its 80th "Birthday" by David McCord. \$6 each



The Journey of the Dexter Colony, 1833, by David and Annette McCord. A detailed history of the settling of Ionia, fully illustrated.

\$12 each (\$15 with postage)





If you would like to help spread the word about the Historical Society's 50th this year, we have some hand-outs that you could share.

Take some to hand out at meetings, public gatherings, and bulletin boards. You can put them on a counter at your place of business - whatever you like.

Pick some up at the Blanchard House next time you're there!

50 YEARS AGO — SUMMER 1974

A non-profit corporation was officially formed as "the Ionia County Historical Society", and Lynn Morris was elected the first President. (The previous Grand Valley Sequestors group had been fully absorbed into this new organization.)

Members George and Caroline Vance and Lynn and Ariel Morris signed loan papers to purchase the old Lockwood home on behalf of the new organization.

When the keys to the "John C. Blanchard House" were handed over, the members immediately got to work cleaning the place up. This would prove to be a multi-year task—a never-ending task, as the toll of time never stops being a challenge to an old house no matter how beautiful it might be.

While the crews worked in the house, the administrators of the Historical Society filed papers to add the Blanchard House to the National Register of Historic Places - a designation that would open the door to official recognition of its historical value and grant money.

And that was only the beginning!

*Thank You to our
"Business Buddies"*

Thomas Classrooms & Modulares LLC

Wilson's Plumbing & Heating

Bredice Electric LLC

Cooks Creamery

Lake Funeral Homes

Sid's Flowers

Just Like Home Adult Day Center

COMING UP:

To verify current details, please visit our website or Facebook.

SUMMER SUNDAYS at the Blanchard House continue through September 1st (Labor Day Weekend) from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. *PLEASE, if you can spare a few hours, extra volunteers are always welcomed!*

- Wednesday, June 26, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House.
- Wednesday, July 3, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Annual **Independence Day Pot-Luck Dinner** - the public is very welcome!
- July 11 thru 20, the **Ionia Free Fair!** ICHS will have a display at the "Antique Village" in the Floral Building. If you'd like to help or can staff the display during the Fair, *please contact Kathleen Cook!*
- Wednesday, July 31, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House.
- Wednesday, August 7, 7:00 p.m. — Special presentation by somebody about something. I'm sure you won't want to miss it!
- Wednesday, August 28, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House.
- Wednesday, Sept 4, 7:00 p.m. — Special presentation by somebody about something. I'm sure you won't want to miss it!
- Saturday, Sept 15, TIME — **ICHS "Ice Cream Social" to celebrate our 50th year** serving the Ionia area with historic preservation!
- Wednesday, Sept 28, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House.
- Wednesday, Oct. 2, 7:00 p.m. — Our **Annual Meeting, Election of Board Members**, and a special program TBA.
- Sunday, Oct ?, our annual **"Spirits of Ionia"** Tour at Highland Park Cemetery

NOTE: If you have any ideas or suggestions for programs or presentations of historical subjects, collections, or local information, **PLEASE let us know.**

Meanwhile, be sure to keep in touch at our monthly meetings, public events, and (if you are online) watch the Facebook page!





the CHRONICLE

www.ioniahistory.org

The Chronicle is the official publication of the Ionia County Historical Society. It is written, edited, and published by David McCord, Secretary. Any comments, corrections (of course), or contributions should be directed to the editor c/o the ICHS at P.O. Box 176, Ionia, MI, 48846 or via www.ioniahistory.org.

Ionia County Historical Society
P.O. Box 176
Ionia, MI 48846



JOIN TODAY!

If you'd like to help us preserve the area's heritage, please fill in the form below and send it, with check or money order, to the
ICHS Treasurer, P.O. Box 176, Ionia, MI 48846.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, St., Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please Check Your
Membership Type:

- Regular Membership = \$20 Per Person
- Business Buddy = \$40
- Corporate = \$250
- Life Member = \$1000
- Student (under 18) FREE
- Enclosing an additional Gift = \$ _____

I am a:

- Renewing Member
- New Member

If you're a new member, how did you hear about us?

Send my newsletter by US Mail.

Send a link to get my newsletter by email.



MEMBER

Be sure to monitor our Facebook Page & Website for current information!



Ionia County Historical Society 2021-22 Board of Directors and Officers

- Kathleen Cook, President — 616-527-2626
- David McCord, Vice President — 616-902-0033
- Bryan Kimble, Director — 616-897-6592
- Stacy Tchorzynski, Director — 517-763-1770
- Dave Cusack, Director — 517-763-1770
- Linda Ciangi, Secretary — 616-527-4945
- Mary Kimble, Treasurer — 616-897-6592
- Barb Ehlert, House Rentals — 616-522-0844

For information on your long-lost relatives in Ionia, please contact the Ionia County Genealogy Society
<http://ionia.migenweb.net/ICGS/icgshome.htm>



Visit us at www.IoniaHistory.org and find us on Facebook, too!

Thanks!