

Ypsilanti GLEANINGS

YHS Museum & Archives

Official publication of the Ypsilanti Historical Society, featuring historical articles and reminiscences of the people and places in the Ypsilanti area.



FALL 2007

Mellencamp's – The Center of My “Village”

By C. Tino Lambros

I kept telling myself that last day, “It’s just a clothing store.” I stood in line with my new clothes. It was a strange feeling. I looked around the store. The shelves were almost empty. The bare, creaky wood floors - the stairs to the basement – the now empty display windows. My sales friends cashed me out for the last time. The day Mellencamp’s closed.

waterproof match holder. I wasn’t a camper or a smoker or an arsonist. But, I remember feeling pretty cool possessing those two things.

Next came Little League. My coaches were the Goodsmans brothers. They were a terrific combination of personal skills, integrity, and baseball knowledge. Harold was my first



Mellencamp's clothing store in 1953.

My mind wandered back to an earlier time, over three decades before. My relationship with Mellencamp’s began when I became a Cub Scout. Mellencamp’s was the place in my “village” to get scouting supplies: down the stairs, back in the corner - uniforms, camping equipment, handbooks, merit badges. There were two Scout items I just had to have – a canteen and a waterproof match holder. The canteen was before carrying a water bottle was fashionable and I have no idea why I needed a

principal in my teaching career. Clarence was part owner of Mellencamp’s. My relationship with Mellencamp’s grew even more.

The “Village” was never far away. Whether riding my bike, or driving the family car, a trip downtown included a stop at Mellencamp’s. Mostly these stops were personal in nature and not shopping. My good friend Ron Seamans and I would visit together. We
continued on page 3

In This Issue...

Mellencamp’s – The Center of My “Village” _____ 1

C. Tino Lambros describes the impact Mellencamp’s Clothing Store had on him and others while growing up in Ypsilanti.

The John N. Goodsmans Family ____ 4

John Harold Goodsmans provides a family history and describes many places and events that occurred since the family moved to Ypsilanti in the early 1900s.

Margaret Ryan Butman, In Her Family’s Words! _____ 13

Family members describe what it was like growing up in the Gene and Margaret Butman home and the unforgettable “Irish Eyes” and the “lilt of Irish laughter” of Margaret Ryan Butman.

The YHS Archives – You Will Never Know What You Will Find! _____ 14

Katie Dallos provides a brief look at some of the information in the YHS Archives related to early Ypsilanti streetlights and moon towers, Ypsilanti mineral waters, and inventor Elijah McCoy.

World War II Veteran Series _____ 18

Veterans included in this issue of the Gleanings are Frank Kildau, Joe Salcau, Ellis Freatman, and Gordon Cahours.

Jack’s Marvels of Extraordinary Oddities around the Museum ____ 22

Jack Livisay provides pictures of artifacts in our museum collections including a Civil War officer’s desk, bird collection, and figurines.

Society Briefs:

From the President’s Desk _____ 2

Society Board Members _____ 2

Fundraising Agreement _____ 9

Advertising Application _____ 21

New Museum Acquisitions _____ 24

Fletcher White Archives _____ 27

Museum Board Report _____ 27

Membership Application _____ 28

Gleaning’s Sponsors _____ 28

Gleaning’s Advertisers _____ 28

From the President's Desk

By Alvin E. Rudisill

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Renovation and maintenance projects on both the Museum and Carriage House continue but progress is being made. On July 26th we moved the Archives into the basement of the Museum and on August 14th our renter moved into the first floor apartment of the Carriage House. We have applied for a building permit from the City of Ypsilanti to expand the first floor apartment into the Carriage House basement. Also, the handicapped entrance to the Archives on the north side of the Museum is nearing completion and we are applying for grants to purchase the wheel chair lift that will be installed in the entrance.

Beginning in September the hours for the Museum and Archives will be greatly expanded from six hours per week for the Museum and nine hours for the Archives to 18 hours for both operations. Beginning in September the hours both the Museum and Archives will be from 2:00 to 5:00 pm from Tuesday through Sunday. These expanded hours will require additional volunteer docents for both the Museum and Archives so if you would like to be trained to do volunteer service in either of these facilities please contact me at 734-476-6658 or al@rudisill.ws.

The multi-purpose room in the basement of the Museum has been designed so that it can be used for classes, programs, meetings, and lunches and dinners. Nancy Wheeler is re-

sponsible for group program scheduling and has already scheduled lunches and dinners in conjunction with tours of the Museum and board meetings for local organizations. Arrangements have been made for lunches and dinners to be catered by several local restaurants. Contact the Society at 734-482-4990 from 2:00 to 5:00 pm from Tuesday through Sunday to schedule the room.

Our Fundraising Drive will be moved into high gear in the fall. Our goal is to raise \$400,000 over the next five years. The funds will be used to pay off our debt to the City of Ypsilanti for the purchase of the property as well as cover the many maintenance and renovation projects completed, underway and planned.

Our new intern, Katie Dallos, started working July 2 and provided considerable assistance in setting up the Archives in the new basement location. We are looking forward to her leadership as we strive to organize, expand and preserve our collections.

Thanks to Margaret Porter for her work in proofing this issue of the Gleanings. We are always in need of volunteers. If you would like to become involved in some of the many activities of our Society please give me a call at 734-476-6658 or email me at al@rudisill.ws. ■

2007 Schedule of Events	
Jan	Museum Closed in January - March
Jan 10	Archives Advisory Board Mtg (7:00 pm)
Jan 12	Endowment Advisory Board Mtg (7:00 pm)
Feb 6	Museum Advisory Board Mtg (3:00 pm)
Feb 9	Board of Trustees Mtg (3:00 pm)
Feb 19	Quarterly Membership Mtg (3:00 pm)

Mellencamp's –
The Center of My "Village"
continued from front page

would drop in on Clarence Goodsman and Al Walton. They had a way of focusing on you and only you when talking to them. Mr. Goodsman could look you square in the eye, not wavering from you, and make you feel like you were the only person in the world. He had a warm, friendly, welcoming smile, a twinkle in his eye, and a handshake as strong and as powerful as any. Clarence was sincere and had a wonderful sense of humor. Trusting. Loyal.

Mellencamp's was the place to buy high school athletic apparel - sweaters, varsity jackets, and accessories to go with them. Clarence set me up with my YHS jacket. I picked out several additions to make it really neat. He allowed me to work out my first experience with credit and time payments. I must have been 16 at the time. He had faith in me that I would be able to pay for the jacket.

My source of income was cleaning Dad's bar, The Ypsi Tavern, once a week. This was after closing on Saturday night, or more technically, Sunday morning after 2:30 am. I would restock the coolers, take the empty cases downstairs, sweep and mop the floors, clean the tables and counters, clean the restrooms, and other odd jobs. For this I was paid \$4.00. Monday I would make my \$2.00 payment at Mellencamp's. I still had \$2.00 spending money for the rest of the week. Eventually the jacket was paid off and I felt great pride and personal satisfaction in the accomplishment. Thinking back, this was an incredible gesture of trust and support from Mr. Goodsman.

Twice a year Mellencamp's had their amazing "Clearance Sales." Ron and I always called them "Clarence Sales". Most items were half

price or better. Name brand quality suits and sport's coats, shirts, ties, sweaters, everything was on sale with no limits. I especially took advantage of it when I began my teaching career. Clarence would take care of me in fine fashion and often added more discounts. He knew my sizes better than I did. He chose wonderful combinations for me. It was a

And yet, we went back time after time - for over thirty years - from junior high school well into adult life. It was inevitable that sometime during our visit one of us would be on the hot seat. As difficult as it may have been, it was o.k. When we were talking with Clarence we were the most important person in the room. He cared about you. He truly

"With my last purchases all packaged up, I turned and looked around one last time. Mellencamp's! This was the center of my downtown village. It kept me coming back. So many memories. So many talks. We had been through so much together - high school, athletics, graduations, college, marriage, divorce, remarriage, families, careers."

positive shopping experience. Although there are those of my family and friends who believe Clarence set aside a personal pile of hard to get rid of clothes, just for me. They knew I would wear and buy any combination, especially if Mr. Goodsman said so.

Ron and I knew our friendly stops would not always be surface chats with "Hi, how are you's" and light talk. Clarence, at any moment, could give you that deep, penetrating look, a serious expression would come across his face, and out would come a thought-provoking, in- depth question. If you were on the receiving end, there was no place to hide or look. Your eyes were locked to his. There was no floundering or avoiding a response.

How's school? College? Your grades? Aren't that good? Why? Your athletics? Why aren't you in the line-up? How's your marriage? Divorce? Family? Do you have job choices? Why? Where? Explain!

wanted to know about you and what was going on in your life. He wasn't judgmental or nose-y. Clarence wasn't preaching to you. He was being a friend, a confidant, someone we could trust. Ron found a way out and moved to Holland, Michigan and left me to fend for myself.

Ron and I golfed with Clarence and Al on many occasions. We took our mighty, youthful swings and put our impressive drives well off the tee. Clarence and Al took their easy, controlled, mature swings, even disposition, and generally beat us badly.

Nothing lasts forever. The closing of Mellencamp's is one of those things. With my last purchases all packaged up, I turned and looked around one last time. Mellencamp's! This was the center of my downtown village. It kept me coming back. So many memories. So many talks. We had been through so
continued on page 26

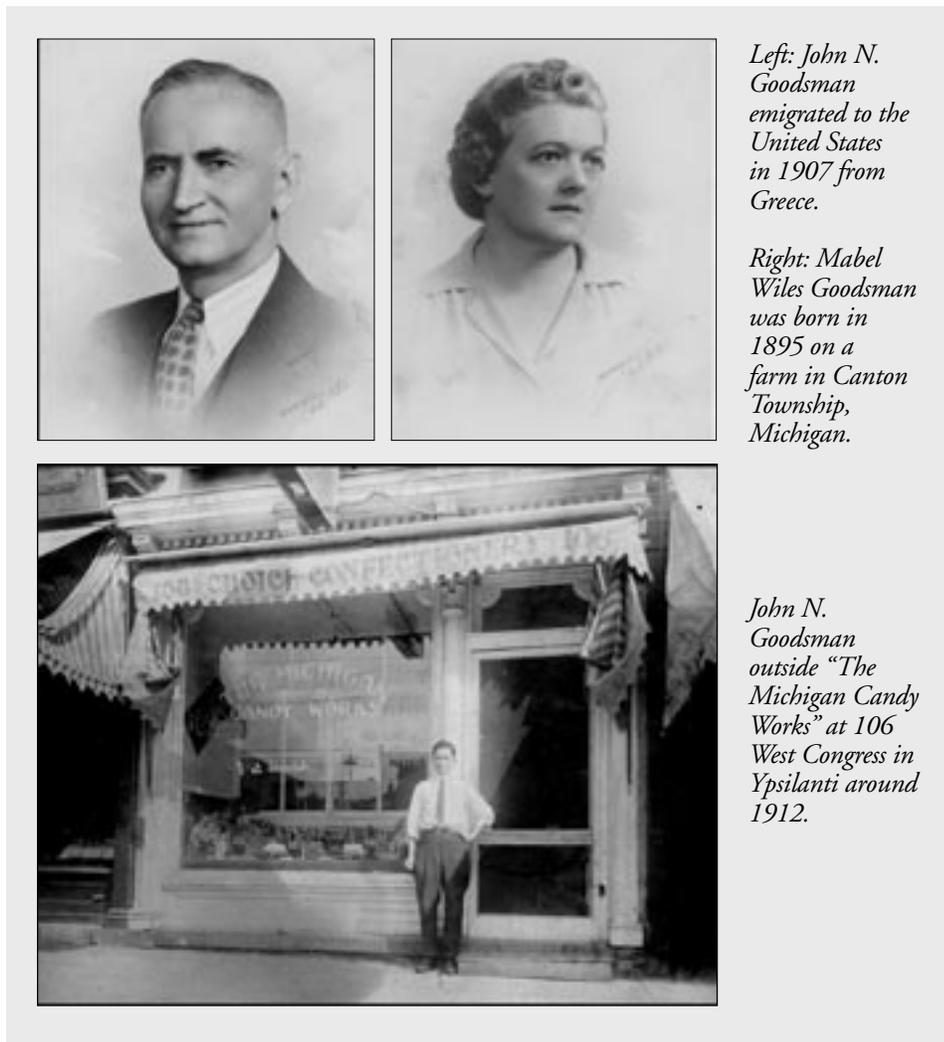
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The John N. Goodzman Family

By John Harold Goodzman

John N. Goodzman was born January 5, 1883 in Exarhos, Macedonia, Greece, the son of Nicholas and Katherine Goutziamanis. Mabel Lottie Wiles Goodzman was born September 30, 1895, on a farm on Lilley Road, Sheldon, Canton Township, Michigan, the daughter of George E. and Millie Corwin Wiles. She was the fourth of five children. Other siblings were Corwin Wiles, Emma Wiles Brown Snow, Bertha Wiles Alban, Ray E. Wiles and Roy G. Wiles.

John N. Goodzman emigrated from Greece to the United States April 20, 1907 through Ellis Island. After his arrival, he worked as a construction laborer and witnessed the death of a brother, Tony, by a falling crane in an industrial accident. John settled in Ypsilanti, Michigan where he joined a brother, George N. Goutziaman, in the Goutziaman Brothers Ice Cream Parlor and Candy Store at 106 W. Congress (now Michigan Avenue). His brother, George returned to Greece and John took over the business and renamed it Candyland. As a child, Mabel L. Wiles attended Sheldon School on Michigan Avenue. She and her brothers and sisters walked the two miles to and from school each day. Mabel was a good student and in 1910 received honors in a Wayne County Sunday School countywide essay contest. At home she was expected to take care of her younger brother, Roy, who was the spoiled child of the family. Mabel L. Wiles, having graduated from Wayne High School, was accepted as a student



Left: John N. Goodzman emigrated to the United States in 1907 from Greece.

Right: Mabel Wiles Goodzman was born in 1895 on a farm in Canton Township, Michigan.

John N. Goodzman outside "The Michigan Candy Works" at 106 West Congress in Ypsilanti around 1912.

at Michigan Agricultural College (Michigan State University), came to Ypsilanti looking for work and found a job at Candyland as a waitress working for John N. Goodzman, who had Americanized his name. She commuted by interurban from the Lilley Road farm and later she roomed with her Aunt Lottie Wiles Welch on Sheridan Street.

Mabel and John married on May 1, 1916 in Detroit, Michigan. Mabel lost her citizenship

because of her marriage to John who was not yet a citizen. They were both granted citizenship on July 13, 1927. The marriage bore two sons, both born in the flat above Candyland at 106 W. Congress (now Michigan Avenue). I, John Harold Goodzman was born December 4, 1917 and my red hair was said to be similar to Mabel Goodzman's Aunt Lottie's auburn locks. Clarence J. Goodzman was born on July 20, 1919 and his hair and features seemed to resemble those of his

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father. My brother and I were the apples of our parents' eyes and were proudly pushed in their perambulators up and down Congress Street. On nice summer days, Mabel Goodsmen often pushed them up Congress Street Hill to Recreation Park. Martha Richter, a high school student, was hired as a baby sitter. Martha's sister, Rieka, was a good friend of Mabel. Rieka married Nicholas Gotos and the families remained good friends throughout their lives.

In the early 1920's, John sold Candyland and bought a small lunch room in the 600 block of W. Cross Street, near Pease Auditorium. Our family rented a house at 211 Perrin from Mr. Waidner. The house was heated by a potbellied stove situated in the living room.



John N. Goodsmen inside "Candyland" at 106 West Michigan around 1917.

We had no washing machine so Mom used a washboard and washtub to do the laundry. At Christmas, we would awaken to find our stockings filled with apples, oranges, walnuts and a candy cane. A memorable Christmas morning found a yellow auto next to the little tree in the parlor. Countless hours were spent by Clarence and me pedaling our pride and joy up and down the Perrin Street sidewalk. One summer Dad brought home a toy cannon which made a wonderful loud noise when fired on the Fourth of July. James R. Goodsmen now has the cannon. We played with neighbors Fred Burrell, Neal Webb and Rose Wilson. Besides the usual fun and games of youngsters growing up, especially memorable was the climbing in

and out of Fred's father's Flint touring car as we imagined ourselves driving it. Milk was delivered to homes' doorsteps by horse drawn wagons. On cold days, the cream would expand popping up the bottle tops. Snow was removed from the sidewalks by horse drawn V-shaped plows.

Aunt Bertha and Uncle Will Alban lived around the corner at 514 Ellis Street (now Washtenaw Avenue). They had a player piano and a radio. It was fun to sit at the piano and pump the pedals to make music. Our earliest recollection of radio was the Little Orphan Annie and Jack Armstrong programs sponsored by Ovaltine and Ralston in the afternoon. On wintry, slippery days, we would sit in the parlor's bay window and watch

for cars coming down the Ellis Street (now Washtenaw) hill. As they came around the curve, they frequently went out of control and crashed against the curb breaking their (then in vogue) spoke wheels. It was great fun!

Our first car was a 1924 dodge bought from Joe H. Thompson whose dealership was on East Cross Street at River Street, which is presently Jack Miller's Hudson showroom. Dad drove us in the car to Dayton, Ohio where he visited his cousin, John Koromilas. We stayed in a park by the river with other tourists. Families hung blankets or sheets between their cars for privacy as they slept on cots or the ground. On the way home, we stopped by *continued on page 6*

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The John N. Goodsmen Family

continued from page 5

Lincoln Consolidated School which had just been dedicated as a new concept in education organization, the consolidated school.

In 1929, having his Cross Street lunch room taken over by Michigan State Normal College, John Goodsmen built a restaurant adjacent to the home at 309 Brower Street. It was an exciting experience watching the horses pull the huge scoops as they dug the basement for the building which was built by Harvey Woodbury. The horses were supplied by our uncle, Ray Wiles, who had a farm on Cherry Hill Road.

The restaurant was an immediate success serving students from the Normal College and Roosevelt High School. However, when the college built McKenny Hall and the King and Goodison dormitories, which served meals, business began to fall off. Mabel Goodsmen began to rent room to students. John Parindas, a good family friend, became a roomer who stayed with us for some 60 years.

Betty Fenker worked at our restaurant while a high school student. She took Clarence and me to witness our first basketball game after which Clarence reported to Mom and Dad that Betty got so excited that she lost her gum. Betty, her family and our family remained close friends until their deaths. Betty's father, Hugo Fenker, pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, annually arranged for Dad to make candy for the church's Christmas celebration. Dad would cook the ingredients in giant copper kettles and pour the molten mass onto a marble slab to cool. The taffy was repeatedly thrown over a hook and pulled. The red, white and green batches were rolled together and formed into candy canes. Peanuts were freshly roasted and used in making peanut brittle. The sight and smells of the candy making still linger in my memory.

How our parents kept their patience and still could manage the restaurant with two active boys underfoot and demanding attention is difficult to imagine. We were constantly behind the counter mixing a "coke" or making ice cream sundaes. On an evening when no customers were in the restaurant, Clarence and I were chasing each other when Clarence



Above: John N. Goodsmen inside the restaurant he built in 1929 at 311 Brower Street adjacent to his home.



Left: Clarence and Harold Goodsmen in new suits about 1928 or 1929.

hid under the back booth. At that instant, four people came in and sat in the booth. For the next half hour, Clarence had to remain curled up motionless while our parents and I hoped against hope that he would not be detected by the customers. After what seemed to be an eternity, the customers left without noticing him, much to the relief of all of us. Needless to say, Clarence and I were on our good behavior after that incident.

Growing Up

Growing up at 309 Brower Street was an exciting experience for us. Living across the

street from Michigan State Normal College provided us with the opportunity to observe college life, participate in its activities and accumulate heroes. Some of the students who worked as wait persons and dish washers became almost big brothers and sisters to us. The Chi Delts and Arm of Honor fraternities were our favorites and what greater thrill could there be than to have that great All American lineman, Andy Vanyo, greet you with his familiar "Hi Peanuts". The College Circus, Inter fraternity/sorority Comedy, Homecoming activities, intramural boxing and wrestling tournaments, and all of the athletic events

provided a continuing parade of exciting learning experiences.

Our mother drove us to the Sears Roebuck store on Oakman Boulevard and Grand River in Detroit to buy us each a used Elgin bicycle. We constantly rode our bicycles in Recreation Park, downtown, and around the neighborhood. We also roller skated around the neighborhood and the sidewalk of the college, which provided an excellent place to play skate tag. On Saturday afternoons we would

was considered a bonanza. Time between the arrivals of street cars was spent by playing games, such as, spelling the names of cars. We didn't know it was educational.

Each fall, we eagerly anticipated the evening when the University of Michigan boys would arrive from Ann Arbor on the Ypsi-Ann Interurban to court the Normal College coeds, who were considered more attractive than the U of M coeds. As they alighted from the interurban at the stop at Cross and

“The taffy was repeatedly thrown over a hook and pulled. The red, white and green batches were rolled together and formed into candy canes. Peanuts were freshly roasted and used in making peanut brittle. The sight and smells of the candy making still linger in my memory.”

go to the 10 cent matinees at the Martha Washington or Wuerth theaters to view our heroes, such as, Tom Mix, Harold Lloyd and “Hoot” Gibson.

During the winter, the city would block traffic on Pearl Street from Normal Street to Ballard Street so the kids could sled down the hill. We would spend hours sledding down the hill and pulling our sled behind us up the three blocks for another run down the hill. We were envious of “Wordy” Geer who had an expensive Flexible Flyer. Ashes and clinkers from coal furnaces would be scattered at the end of the run to stop the sleds from entering Ballard Street. At the end of a fun-filled day of sledding, we would come home with rosy cheeks, runny noses and wet clothes. Our socks, pants and long johns would be hung on the backs of chairs over the heat registers to dry.

The beginning of each college term brought an influx of students. Most of women arrived on the Interurban across the street from our house. As enterprising entrepreneurs, we, along with Frank and Bob Baker and John and Rob LaRue, would gather at the corner as the coeds stepped off the street cars and offer to transport their suitcases to their rooming houses in our wagons. We were usually rewarded with a tip. A tip of twenty-five cents

Summit Streets, a group of Normal College boys would greet them. A battle royal would ensue with most of the participants eventually being dunked in the fountain just east of Welch Hall. Fatigue and the four or five man Ypsilanti Police Department, including motorcycle patrolman, “Joe” Sackman, usually brought a cessation to the activity. What fun it was while it lasted!

We were a constant thorn in the sides of custodians as we would attempt to get into the college gym to play basketball and along with “Bunny” Ross, sneak into the Roosevelt High School gym and swimming pool. Playing duck on the rock in the alley, attending John LaRue’s magic shows on the LaRue porch and playing touch football in the Baker yard were all part of our neighborhood fun. On a fall evening, we would fill two soup cans with water and place them on opposite sides of the sidewalk connected by a string. As unsuspecting coeds tripped the string, the cans would splash their silk stocking with water much to their exasperation and our delight.

On days when the weather discouraged outside activity, Clarence and I would find ways of amusing ourselves indoors. We tacked a one pound coffee can above the door in our bedroom and spent hours playing one on one using a tennis ball as a basketball. Tiring

continued on page 8



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The John N. Goodsmen Family

continued from page 7

of that, we would wrestle on the bed until fatigue, hunger or Mom halted our heated competition. It is miraculous that the mattress did not split apart and that the ceiling plaster in the dining room below did not come crashing down.

The Normal College constructed a toboggan slide in the area know as the "Pines," north of the science building. From the elevated launching platform, the runway ran for at least a quarter of a mile. We would hitch rides from college students and tucked snugly between them would be hurtled down the icy runway at breathtaking speeds. The toboggan run is long gone, replaced by The Rackham School and Olds Recreation Center, but the memories of the thrilling rides still remain.

Walking along Cross Street to old Central School with other neighborhood children was an enjoyable part of the school day. On inclement days our mother would take us to and from the school in our 1924 Dodge and later in our beautiful blue 1932 Dodge resplendent with its yellow wire wheels. A car bought in the depths of the Great Depression, which I feel Clarence and I talked our father into buying against his better judgment. Payments were \$7.00 per week and sometimes difficult to meet.

We would often spend a Sunday driving in our beautiful car to Belle Isle, along with John Parindas, where we would have a picnic lunch prepared by Mom and enjoy the sights on the island. It was fun wading in the Detroit River, watching the freighters on the river and viewing the animals in the zoo. The Ray Wiles family occasionally accompanied us on these

delightful trips. When the family went for a drive, Clarence and I, always competitive, would excitedly shout "Front seat, outside, start the car," in vying for those privileges.

Our family was very close to the Ray Wiles family, our mother's brother. We visited each other frequently. Clarence and I had fond memories of spending a few days each summer at their Cherry Hill Road farm. We often would be at the farm during threshing time. Mom would help Aunt Nora and the neighborhood women prepare the delicious and ample meals for the threshers. Donald

Clarence and I would also spend a few days each summer at the farm of Carl and Emma Wiles Brown, our mother's oldest sister. There we enjoyed playing in the hay mow of their huge barn with our cousins Ina, Clifford and Earl. The farm, located on Fosdick and Bemis Roads, offered many exciting experiences for two young city dwellers. Observing the farming chores involved in raising chickens, pigs, horses and milk cows, and playing in the orchard, provided hours of fun.

Our mother and father sacrificed in every way to provide Clarence and me with worthwhile



Red Goodsmen and his U of M favorites Orchestra. Left to right: Don Whitman – piano, Elmer Ross – bass, Eddie Morhous – drums, Bob Tabor – sax, Clare Saltz – sax, Atwood McAndrew – sax, Louis Fleuelling – trumpet, Bob Gooding – trumpet and Harold Goodsmen – trumpet. Picture was taken at McKenny Hall at MSNC in 1938 or 1939.

and "Johnny" Wiles and Clarence and I would watch the men pitching bales of wheat from the horse drawn wagons onto the belt carrying the wheat to the thresher, which was powered by a huge steam engine. In the evening after a long, hot, dusty day, we and some of the neighbors would pile into the bed of Uncle Ray's Model T truck and he would drive us to a creek just off Canton Center Toad where we would go "skinny dipping." It felt good to get rid of the day's sweat and grime. What a way to end a perfect day!

educational experiences. In the 4th grade, I was allowed to begin playing the trumpet. This was before the schools had an elementary instrumental program. By the seventh grade, John Barnhill allowed me to play in the high school band. One Christmas morning, I found a silver plated Buescher trumpet under the tree. A couple of years later, Clarence received a clarinet for Christmas. He also played in the high school band throughout junior and senior high school. Band Practices were before school in the mechanical drawing room

continued on page 10



in our backyard

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Fundraising Contribution/Pledge Agreement YHS – “A Matter of Trust”

The Internal Revenue Service has designated the Ypsilanti Historical Society an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

AMOUNT OF CONTRIBUTION/PLEDGE: On this _____ day of _____, 20____,
I agree to contribute and/or pledge to the Ypsilanti Historical Society the sum of \$_____.

CONTRIBUTION CATEGORIES:

- Demetrius Ypsilanti Circle..... \$50,000 or more
- Benjamin Woodruff Circle \$25,000 - \$49,999
- Mary Ann Starkweather Circle..... \$10,000 - \$24,999
- Elijah McCoy Circle \$5,000 - \$9,999
- Daniel Quirk Circle..... \$1,000 - \$4,999
- Friends of the Society up to \$999

Donor Recognition: A permanent plaque will be placed in the Ypsilanti Historical Museum identifying donors to the Property/Facilities Fundraising Program by name and category.

METHOD OF PAYMENT (please initial):

- _____ **A.** An immediate cash payment of \$_____ .
- _____ **B.** An immediate cash payment of \$_____ with annual cash payments of \$_____ in each succeeding year for a period of _____ years.
- _____ **C.** An immediate cash payment of \$_____ with the balance of \$_____ payable through my estate upon my death. I have consulted a lawyer and I understand the balance is an irrevocable pledge that my estate will be obligated to pay to the Ypsilanti Historical Society. This Deferred Pledge Agreement may also be satisfied in part or in full by payments made by me at my discretion during my lifetime.
- _____ **D.** I pledge that the total amount of my contribution to the Ypsilanti Historical Society will be payable through my estate upon my death. I have consulted a lawyer and I understand this is an irrevocable pledge that my estate will be obligated to pay to the Ypsilanti Historical Society. This Deferred Pledge Agreement may also be satisfied in part or in full by payments made by me at my discretion during my lifetime.
- _____ **E.** Transfer of “other assets” such as securities, other personal property or real estate interests. *(Note: The Society reserves the right to accept or reject gifts of other assets pending a due diligence review of the assets, their transferability and the appropriateness of acceptance of such other assets by the Society. This review will be conducted by legal counsel for the Society.)* Donor to provide description of assets being transferred.

EXECUTION: Executed this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Donor: _____ Signature: _____ Donor Address _____
 Witness: _____ Signature: _____ Donor City, State & Zip _____
 Witness: _____ Signature: _____

ACCEPTANCE: The undersigned, being a duly authorized officer of the Ypsilanti Historical Society, does hereby accept the within contribution/pledge.

Ypsilanti Historical Society Officer Signature: _____ Date: _____

INTERPRETATION: This Agreement shall be interpreted under the laws of the State of Michigan.

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The John N. Goodsmen Family *continued from page 7*

and in the cafeteria. Upon the completion of the auditorium in 1932, the band rehearsals were held on the auditorium stage.

High School Years

The Ypsilanti High School Band was directed by Professor John F. Barnhill who taught mathematics at Michigan State Normal College. He was a former band director and school superintendent in Paola, Kansas. He volunteered his time to organize and direct the high school band. He purchased much of the music with his own funds. The band was very active and was noted for performing concerts and parades from Grand Rapids to Detroit. We annually marched in the J. L. Hudson Thanksgiving Day Parade in Detroit. Few activities were held in Ypsilanti that did not include an appearance by the band. The band even performed on a moving ferris wheel during a downtown festival. Its Prospect Park concerts were a tradition. People would sit in their cars and honk their car horns in appreciation for the listenable music.

John Barnhill was a quiet, distinguished gentleman, who instilled a spirit of loyalty, integrity and community service in us all. After his death in 1941, his spirit was kept alive by "his boys" who formed the John F. Barnhill Band dedicated to community service in music. I served as its first director as the band continued its summer concerts in Prospect Park and participating in parades. The band continued under several conductors including George Cavender, Nathan Judson, Jack Bittle, Allan Townsend and Lynn Cooper until the early 1970's.

Our high school careers were busy and happy times. Besides the band, we both played on the tennis and basketball teams as well as participating in other activities. We were both members of DeMolay and sang in its choir under the direction of Harold Koch, Dad of the Ypsilanti Chapter. One year our chapter attended the National DeMolay Convention in Kansas City, Missouri.

Traveling by high school teams to away basketball games was done by private auto. In 1935, Malcolm Chubb, a good friend who also played on the team, volunteered to



Clarence and Harold Goodsmen home on leave from the military in 1943.

drive his family's Essex car to the Dearborn game. The team left from the high school gym with Clarence, "Dick" Harner and me riding with "Mac." Shortly after we got under way, "Mac" remarked that he knew a girl in Plymouth and he thought he would drive there and take her to the game with us. We picked her up. As we proceeded east on Plymouth Road toward Dearborn, the car sputtered and stopped. It wouldn't start again so the four of us pushed the old Essex, with the girl steering, for what seemed like miles before we came to a little garage. The mechanic repaired the faulty distributor and we made our way to Dearborn. We arrived at the gym late in the game which Dearborn eventually won. It was a game we should have won, and I believe the loss forced us to tie for the league title rather than becoming undisputed champions. Coach Harold Lindsay was furious and called us on the carpet to read us the riot act and to mete out some discipline but fortunately did not kick us off of the team.

On Good Friday in 1935, "Bunny" Ross, "Bill" Horner and "Mac" Chubb and I decided to skip fourth period study hall, since school was to be dismissed following that period. We left school by the back door and climbed into "Bunny" Ross's car. He had been given permission to drive his parents' Pontiac to school that day. Unfortunately, the Principal, Mr. Wiltse, had been visiting an industrial arts class and saw us leave the

building by the back entrance. As we rolled up Cross Street, "Bunny" noticed Mr. Wiltse following us in his car. "Bunny" tried to elude him by driving into an alley behind some stores which proved to be a dead end. Mr. Wiltse drove into the alley behind us. He came up to the car and instructed us to report to our class back at the school. We were all terrified at what dreadful punishment would be meted out by the notorious Mr. Wiltse. He never said anything to us about the incident, although we all lived in fear of the day the other shoe would drop. In 1977, at my retirement banquet, during my remarks to the audience, I reminded Mr. Wiltse that I was still awaiting my punishment.

College Years

Upon graduation from high school in June of 1935, I had no future plans. I had been helping John Parindas in his fruit store since the 8th grade. It was a great experience and helped me to overcome my shyness by meeting all types of people. On the opening day of school in September, 1935, I went to the high school to help Professor John Barnhill get music ready for the high school band. Prof. Barnhill asked what I planned to do. When I responded that

A college activity of great fun was freshman hazing concluding with the freshman-sophomore games held in the area of the campus called "The Pines." Various events such as races and a tug of war culminated with the pole rush in which the freshmen attempted to get one of their class atop a greased telephone pole which was defended by the sophomores. If successful in getting up the pole and retrieving a flag from the pole's top, the freshmen could throw their green pots (beanies) into the homecoming bonfire. If not, they had to wear the pots for the remainder of the school term. The battle royal, in defense of or attacking the pole, was part of the fun and spirit of college life which remains as a cherished memory.

I played on the varsity tennis team for three years and was elected as a co-captain for two years. I played in the college band during times when I wasn't involved in other activities. I also led a dance orchestra, "Red" Goodsman and his U of M Favorites, which played for U of M fraternity and sorority parties and for high school dances. In the summer of 1938, the dance band including "Bunny" Ross, "Bob" Gooding, Clare Saltz, "Bob" Tabor, Atwood McAndrew, "Eddie"

"Various events such as races and a tug of war culminated with the pole rush...The battle royal, in defense of or attacking the pole, was part of the fun and spirit of college life which remains as a cherished memory."

I hoped to get a job at Ford's, he suggested firmly that I should get up to Michigan State Normal College and register for classes. Mom and Dad agreed in spite of the short range loss of family income my not going to work in the factory would mean. This is another example of our parents sacrificing for their sons' benefits. Upon Clarence's graduation in 1936, he also attended Michigan State Normal College. While in college, he was named captain of the freshman football team. He and I also participated in intramural sports as members of the Arm of Honor fraternity. After about two years, Clarence left school to work. He was a natural athlete and could have made the college football, basketball, baseball and tennis teams.

Morhous and "Don" Whitman played at Van Ettan Lake Lodge at Oscoda, Michigan. We were furnished a sparsely outfitted cabin, one meal a day and a small salary which dwindled to nothing as Labor Day approached. When I went to collect our last pay, the manager became irritated and took a revolver from his desk and fired a shot into the ceiling. We left for home immediately. In spite of the financially unprofitable situation, we enjoyed the experience of playing nightly for dancing and frolicking in Van Ettan Lake or lake Huron during the day. During vacation periods, "Bing" Brown, Dean of Men, arranged for me to be part of the student work gang which cleaned the college buildings, for which we

continued on page 12

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The John N. Goodsmen Family

continued from page 11

were paid 30 cents per hour. College life was busy but filled with enjoyable activities. I marvel that I found time to study enough to be successful in my classes.

Upon graduation, I was unable to find a teaching position, so I took the entrance exam for the University of Michigan graduate school. I auditioned with William D. Revelli and was admitted to the Michigan Band. Playing in the band was a great thrill. The band traveled to Chicago for the last game played with the University of Chicago and to Philadelphia for the game with the University of Pennsylvania featuring All American Frank Reagan. Upon arrival in Philadelphia, we marched down Broad Street to our hotel to the applause of thousands of spectators. The headlines in the Philadelphia Enquirer proclaimed "Michigan Band Arrives Accompanied by Football Team." The Michigan team featured Harmon, Evashevski, Westfall and many other stars.

John Harold Goodsmen

In February, 1940, Metamora, Michigan Schools hired me to teach 7th and 8th grade English and mathematics, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, biology and chemistry as well as coach basketball and baseball. The school had about 40 pupils in grades 7-12 and 3 teachers. I roomed with the Hallenback family, paying \$5.00 a week room and board out of my \$100 a month salary. On Saturdays, I would go to Lapeer to the movie and have a tin roof at the Rexall drug store. Mom and Dad allowed

me to use their 1940 Ford while I taught in Metamora.

During the summer of 1940, Prof. Barnhill informed me that there was a mathematics vacancy at Ypsilanti High School. I applied and was hired by Earnest H. Chapelle, Superintendent of Schools, to teach 7th and 8th grade mathematics and general business.

In the fall of 1941 Norris Wiltse, Principal of Ypsilanti High School, assigned a new teacher, Alice O'Neil to share my classroom. Since she was to have one class in the room, I graciously allowed her the use of the bottom desk drawer. One day I accidentally opened the drawer and saw some student work sheets

"On cold days, the cream would expand popping up the bottle tops. Snow was removed from the sidewalks by horse drawn V-shaped plows."

which were not graded. Perhaps as a mischievous, sadistic prank, or in a desperate effort to be noticed by this attractive "room mate," I placed a note in the drawer stating that the school superintendent would like to see her after school. Later in the day, after allowing her to worry a while, I confessed my prank. I'm certain that she thought of me as a devious, conniving prankster rather than an admirer.

In February, 1942, I left teaching to work at the newly opened Willow Run Bomber Plant, where I was assigned as an inspector in the outer wing section. In addition to inspection, I was responsible for assigning new employees in the department to training classes before assignment to their jobs. People from all walks of life and all parts of the country came to work at the bomber plant. It was not unusual to see Charles Lindbergh around the plant. I worked with "Wally" Pipp, whose place "Lou" Gehrig took as the New York Yankee first baseman, and "Danny" Litwiler, Phillies outfielder. Alice O'Neil also left teaching and was one of the first women employed at the plant where she was a secretary in the transportation department. We both knew Glen Miller's brother who also worked at the plant. We shared backstage libations with "Herb" when his dance band played at McKenny Hall ballroom. "Herb" proudly showed us a telegram he had received from his brother, Glen, wishing him success at this dance engagement.

On September 14, 1942, I was drafted into the army. After processing at Camp Custer, Michigan I was sent to Camp Robinson, Arkansas for basic training. At Camp Robinson, I visited Richard O'Neil, a high school friend and future brother-in-law, who was chief cook in the officers' mess hall. Needless to say, "Dick's" chow was much better than that being served in our mess hall.

After basic training, I was sent to Camp Carson, Colorado Springs, Colorado. The 89th Infantry Division was being activated and my heart sank as my name was called for the 89th Infantry Division. However, when the troop

continued on page 25

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Margaret Ryan Butman, In Her Family's Words

"When Irish Eyes are Smiling" is a song that could have been written for Margaret Ryan Butman. When you first meet her you are immediately drawn to her sparkling green eyes that seem to smile, making you feel comfortable in her presence. If you are fortunate enough to get to know her you may even be privileged to have her share a limerick she recalls from her younger days. Those days began in Marinette, Wisconsin where she grew up with her older sister, three younger brothers and her parents, Joseph and Jenny Naismith Ryan. Margaret was a daughter of the Great Depression. The Ryan family got by on the meager wages her father, plagued by illness, made doing odd jobs. Jenny took in laundry and worked in a factory. Margaret's stories about those difficult days are rarely told with sadness, but with a sense of pride at having overcome the hardships her family experienced and an appreciation for better times.

Margaret often relates what life was like during World War II. Her brothers were called to their country's service and Margaret began working in a factory that made special gloves for the soldiers overseas. Pearl Harbor, DDay, VJDay and other historical events come alive with her vivid personal accounts. There are also stories of romance. The war had ended. The boys were coming home. Margaret's sister, Eleanor, was convinced that she'd found the perfect man for her. She arranged a meeting between Margaret and Captain Eugene Butman, who had just returned to Marinette, his

"When the E.G. Wiedman Ford dealership on Pearl Street in Ypsilanti became available for purchase in 1957, Margaret and Gene moved the family of one son and three daughters from Dearborn to Ypsilanti. Gene Butman Ford Sales, Inc. was a dream that they had shared and a goal that they had finally achieved together."

boyhood home. The details of that "love at first sight" introduction to the strikingly handsome young man are a favorite of her daughters. Gene soon realized that Margaret was the girl for him. They were married in 1946 in Madison while Gene was attending the University of Wisconsin.



Captain Gene Butman soon realized that Margaret was the girl for him.



Those "Irish eyes" are still smiling.

Opportunities in the automobile industry eventually brought the young couple to several Michigan cities. When the E.G. Wiedman Ford dealership on Pearl Street in Ypsilanti became available for purchase in 1957, Margaret and Gene moved the family of one son and three daughters from Dearborn to Ypsilanti. Gene Butman Ford Sales, Inc. was a dream that they had shared and a goal that they had finally achieved together.

The white colonial on beautiful, tree-lined Cambridge Road became home to the Butman family of six and their collie, Charlie Brown on March 10, 1957. They became active members of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church and the children attended St. John's school until graduation. Gene became involved in community business and civic groups, and charitable organizations. Margaret joined the Ladies Literary Club, where she eventually served as head of the knitting booth at their annual Christmas bazaars. She had a reputation for her fine knitted sweaters, hats, and mittens. She made friends with every neighbor and began her love for the Ypsilanti Community. This loyalty to community has been instilled in her four children, three of whom continue to live and work in Ypsilanti with their families.

Friends often asked Margaret what it was like having Gene at home when he reluctantly retired well into his seventies. Her answer? "A retired husband is like having a piano in your kitchen." An empty nest made it easier for them to travel to warmer weather in Florida during the winter months and to the "Red House" in Bellaire, Michigan. However, Margaret would much rather stay at home in Ypsilanti in the company of her children and grandchildren. Her fondest memories of life in Ypsilanti involve family and friends. With their home beautifully decorated for the holidays, she and Gene would host a "Hair of the Dog" brunch for many years on New Year's morning. Guests looked forward to

continued on page 23

YHS Archives - You Never Know What You Will Find!

By Katie Dallos,

Graduate Assistant - YHS Archives

Did you ever wonder when street lighting came to Ypsilanti or if the tap water you drink has healing powers? Who do you think is the "Real McCoy?" You can answer all of these questions and more at the Ypsilanti Historical Society Archives.

Ypsilanti in the Moonlight

In 1887 Ypsilanti residents were treated to a new technological advance – the street light. The village of 5,000 people saw five "arc lamps" attached to seventy-five foot towers installed in each ward and "arm lamps" stationed at major intersections. Together they cast a soft bluish-white light which resembled a moonlit night. Residents were no longer plunged into darkness after the sunset or left to rely on scattered gas lamps, Ypsilanti residents and young lovers strolled under a beautiful artificial moonlight sky.

The five arc lamps were purchased from the City of Detroit and were often referred to as "moon towers." The City of Ypsilanti decided to supply its own power and built a power plant at 14 West Forest Avenue which supplied electric power to the lamps using a boiler, steam engine and generator. By 1896 the city had constructed a water works plant on what is now the Ford Plant and moved all electrical operations over there. Detroit Edison took over operations in 1905.

The Ypsilanti Department of Public works is now housed in the red brick building on West Forest Avenue that served as the first home of the power plant. A stone plaque reading "Ypsilanti Electric Light 1887" is set atop the front wall.

Arc lamps were the most common method of illumination and the best way to light large city areas. Eventually regular street lighting



Light towers in the City of Detroit included "arm lamps" (to right of walkers) at major intersections and "moon towers" (background at right) in residential wards.



Above: The red brick building at 14 West Forest Avenue was the first home of the Ypsilanti power plant.



Above: The stone plaque on the Forest Street side of the building used for the first Ypsilanti power plant.



Right: The City of Austin, Texas purchased 31 of the used "moon towers" from the City of Detroit in 1894.

became more popular and the large towers were removed. The City of Detroit also sold 31 of these lighting towers to Austin, TX in 1894; today 17 of the original 31 arc lamps in Austin have been restored and were added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.

The Healing Powers of Ypsilanti Mineral Water:

Did you know that Ypsilanti was once a popular healing center? People from all over the world traveled to or ordered water and various products from Ypsilanti in search of the mysterious curative powers of mineral water found below the city.

About 1882 the Cornwell Paper Company of Ypsilanti bored a new well for the purpose of finding pure water to aid in the manufacturing of paper. At a depth of 800 feet the well struck a water vein that emitted water with an odd smell and similar taste. The Cornwell Brothers, Clark and Cornelius, thought they had stumbled upon a successful business venture in healing mineral water and immediately had the water tested by Dr. Lewis McLouth – a professor of Physical and Natural Sciences at

Michigan State Normal College (now Eastern Michigan University). In January, 1883 Dr. McLouth released his findings stating there was little to be excited about. The tests revealed the water contained only sodium chloride (salt) and magnesium sulphate (epsom salts). The brothers, not willing to give up, began to espouse the curative powers of their water and compared it to that of the popular Mt. Clemens' Sanitarium's medicinal water.

The City of Ypsilanti jumped on the mineral water bandwagon and offered \$5,000 "...to anyone who would start a suitable establishment where persons suffering from diseases could receive treatment from this water." Clark Cornwell entered into a joint business venture with George Moorman and constructed the *Ypsilanti Mineral Bath House*. The opening in January 1884 was a sight to behold. Speeches were given, the Ladies Literary Club served refreshments, and music was supplied by the Ypsilanti Quartet Club.

The *Ypsilanti Commercial* printed this poem whose author was only known as "A Farmer" on January 19, 1884:

Ypsilanti Water

Come all ye weary, sick and sore,
Who want to suffer pain no more,
And take a drink of Cornwell's bore,
Beside the Huron River.

Let Smith and Sampson keep their drugs,
Fetch on your glasses and your mugs,
Your barrels, bowls, and your jugs,
And get the healing water.

If you are sick, just try our cure,
Drink Ypsilanti's water pure,
That health and life may long endure,
And all of your friends rejoice.

Moorman's put down another bore,
For water, gas, and something morn,
They say it's better than before,
To drive woe and pain away.

If you are sad, with sickness worn,
And have the headache every more,
Just come and drink a healing horn,
Of Ypsilanti's water.

continued on page 16



Top: The back of this envelope, mailed in 1891, gave prices for jugs, bottles, gallons kegs, and barrels of Ypsilanti mineral water.

Right: Tubal Cain Owen sold mineral water under the names "Atlantis" and "Paragon."



Ypsilanti water was once touted as "Nature's Greatest Remedy for Disordered Blood."



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YHS Archives - You Never Know What You Will Find!

continued from page 15

There's forty new baths agoing,
And all the healing waters flowing,
Better days and health bestowing,
On many a weary one.

If you are growing weak and lean,
Just come and try our healing stream,
And splash till you are pure and clean,
And your troubles washed away.

They will bathe you either cold or warm,
It will do you good and never harm,
And it may come o'er you like a charm,
And double all your joy.

You need not travel far and long,
To drink Saratoga's water strong,
We have the real thing at home
Down on the books of Moorman.

It's true, it has a woeful smell,
But if your stomach don't rebel
It's just the thing to make you well
And praise up Ypsilanti.

Soon several other wells were dug and with them came claims of even better healing water. Tubal Cain Owen, owner of the Forest Avenue Mineral Well, boasted that his mineral water had exceptional curative powers, even more so than that from the Cornwell-Moorman well. In addition to bottling his mineral water which he named "Atlantis" and "Paragon," Owen also began making soap, salts, ointments and other products.

Hotels, Sanitariums, and boarding houses were constructed to house the growing number of ailing and afflicted persons flocking to Ypsilanti. Many of these establishments had water from the wells pumped directly into their facilities. The *Ypsilanti Commercial* on July 26, 1884, stated:

"...These wells are rendering Ypsilanti famous the world over. The healing waters flowed free from these wells seem destined to be an untold blessing to affected humanity...Ypsilanti has already come to be the center of attraction for the halt, the lame, the blind, the palsied, the paralytics. It is by no means a crippled city, but

a city of cripples. The cry is every day, 'still they come.' Let them Come! The Hawkins House, The Follette House, the Barton and all other hotels and numerous nice boarding houses are full. Ere another season a mammoth hotel may be in the process of erection."

In June 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt signed the Federal Pure Food and Drug Act, (becoming law January 1, 1907), which required honest labeling. This turn of events sounded the death knell for Sanitariums and businesses promoting curative mineral water and other unsubstantiated "miracle" cures. Samuel Hopkins Adams wrote a series of articles in 1906 for *Colliers Magazine* entitled "The Great American Fraud" which exposed the deception. Eventually "common sense forced them [the public] to realize that no quick cure salts or waters would replace medical drugs as a cure."

"People from all over the world traveled to or ordered water and various products from Ypsilanti in search of the mysterious curative powers of mineral water found below the city."

Elijah McCoy... The Real McCoy:

Elijah McCoy was the son of George and Millie McCoy, slaves from Kentucky who fled to Ontario, Canada via the Underground Railroad. The McCoy's returned to Ypsilanti in the 1850s; this being a familiar place to them for it was one of the last stops they made when fleeing across the Detroit River into Canada.

Young Elijah had a knack for repairing or developing machinery and was therefore sent to an engineering school in Glasgow, Scotland. At the end of the Civil War, Elijah returned to Ypsilanti and began work as a fireman for the Michigan Central Railroad. It was here that Elijah honed his engineering talents by inventing practical devices which allowed for easier locomotive maintenance.

On July 27, 1872 Elijah McCoy registered his first patent for an “automatic lubricator” which eliminated the need for frequent parts-lubrication stops. Of course as with most inventions soon after come cheaper, lower quality “knock-off’s” and this time was no different. When train operators set out to purchase products developed by Elijah they would say they wanted the “Real McCoy” so as not to receive a substandard piece of equipment.

Elijah went on to develop several more patented devices. He passed away in 1929 at the age of 85. A historical marker was erected in his honor on June 12, 1994, at the Ypsilanti Public Library. ■

Resources:

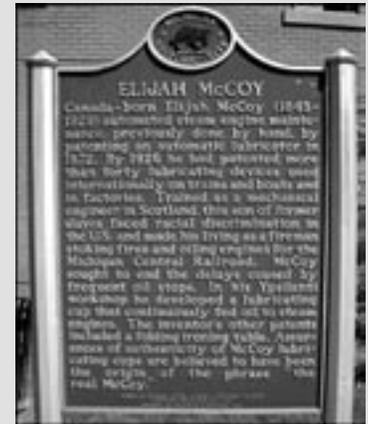
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- Woodruff, Laurence N. “Ypsilanti Electric Light 1887”
- Ypsilanti Historical Society Archives



Above: Elijah McCoy was the son of George and Millie McCoy, slaves from Kentucky who fled to Canada via the Underground Railroad.

Top Right: In 1994 a historical marker was erected in Elijah McCoy’s honor at the Ypsilanti Public Library on Michigan Avenue.

Bottom Right: McCoy’s first patent was for an “automatic lubricator” that continuously fed oil to railroad steam engines.



Margaret Ryan Butman In Her Family’s Words *continued from page 13*

Margaret’s egg dishes and Gene’s legendary bloody Marys. Their children would serve the friends and neighbors who dropped in for holiday cheer.

Gene’s death in October 2002 was a huge setback for Margaret. They had been married and best friends for 56 years.

While Margaret’s family always ranks number one in her top three reasons for living, a close second is her dear circle of friends, fondly named the Higgins Lake Hussies. These eight ladies shared loves, losses, happy times, and sad times during most of their lives. Three of the original Hussies have passed away but the remaining five continue their close friendship. Each year they travel North to one of their vacation homes to spend time reminiscing, eating, shopping and just being together. This past September, just before the Hussies’ annual Northern adventure, Margaret broke her hip in a fall on the wet pavement. With the help of great doctors, caregivers and her strong determination she has recovered and is so happy

to be back in her own home on Cambridge. The best evidence of Margaret Butman’s amazing sense of humor and congeniality is her relationship with her eight grandchildren ranging in ages from 17 to 42. Each genuinely enjoys her company, visits her regularly and calls her often. They insist that the only place to celebrate Christmas is at Grandma’s and have done so every year since each of their births. They are delighted when she quotes her own mother, which she is known to do regularly.

On any given Tuesday, late in the afternoon, you’ll find Margaret doing the third of her top three reasons for living. Five friends (one lucky gentleman and four ladies) come together to reminisce about days gone by and share a glass of wine. They bring jokes and Margaret is said to be the best joke teller of the group. When she’s unable to attend the “Tavern on the Green” her friends agree that their meetings just aren’t the same without her.

It’s a sure bet that Margaret will tell you that Ypsilanti has been good to her and her family. Those in her community who are fortunate enough to know this lovely lady will agree they will never forget the “Irish Eyes” or the “lilt of Irish laughter” of Margaret Ryan Butman. ■

World War II Veteran Series

By Philip Barnes

Frank Kildau

Is a smile always friendly? In the case of Frank Kildau's war experiences, the smile he got from a German pilot as he flew over after strafing Frank's gun placement wasn't friendly at all, but more of a smirk. Frank's battalion was in the process of taking the town of Pisa in Italy and they were dug in on one side of the Arno River and the pilot had just come within feet of hitting the center of the 40 MM gun placement. The bullets hit on both sides of the gun as Frank and other American troops hit the dirt. As the pilot flew over he smiled at Frank and the others as if to say, "I missed you, but watch out next time." Frank could see the pilot's teeth as he flew over. This was Frank's closest call of the war. However, there wasn't a next time as Frank and his battalion advanced and took Pisa.

Frank Kildau was a farm boy from Mayville, a small town near Saginaw. He had married his late wife Dorothy before entering the



Frank sent this picture to his parents from Italy on January 15, 1945.



Frank and Dorothy on their wedding day in May of 1942.



Frank and his late wife Dorothy in 1995.

Army. They moved to Ypsilanti and raised two children, Bonnie and George. Dorothy worked at Central Specialty while Frank was gone to war.

Frank's battalion was sent to Africa late in '42. On the way over the troop ship he was on was attacked by a submarine. The men watched as two torpedoes approached. The men scattered to safety as the torpedoes narrowly missed the ship. The convoy then outran the sub and made it in to port safely.

How would you like a trip to Morocco, Algiers, or Casablanca? In Frank's case it wasn't much fun as they traversed the upper part of the continent against strong resistance from the Germans. Soon they were the first to land in Italy and began the long trek north up the peninsula. At every turn they met resistance as they fought their way north. Frank's 40 MM Guns received plenty of action as they traveled. Winter complicated matters and the German Luftwaffe provided plenty of opportunity for targets. Frank wasn't sure of any definite kills but he was sure they made hits on opposing aircraft. When they were attacked by ground troops his Captain took a hit which struck his belt where his pistol hung. Miraculously the Captain was not hurt. Frank complimented the hospitality of the Italian people who were very cordial and were constantly bringing the American troops food. The battalion moved toward Pisa and when the city was taken Frank was given the honor of raising the American flag on the tower of Pisa. At every city taken the troops raised the American flag. They carried a generous supply of flags with them to raise in captured cities.

Frank returned from the war to settle in Ypsilanti. He eventually became the Electrical Union Business Manager, a position from which he retired.

John Salcau

The USS Grayson, a Destroyer, was heading back to the states through the Pacific immediately after the war when the Captain contacted the bridge from his quarters and said, "What is happening up there? We seem to be zig zagging." The Officer on duty said he would tend to the matter immediately. It was 2:00 am in the morning and an 18 year old fuzzy-cheeked kid had been given the wheel of the ship by the officer on duty. It was the first and only time he had steered the ship, and he had sent the ship on a serpentine course. The fuzzy-cheeked kid was John Salcau, a signalman who was hanging out on the bridge during a boring voyage back through open seas. The duty officer had given him the chance to steer the ship for the first time. The seas were a little rough, thus the shaky steering. No one got in trouble, but that was John's last chance at steering the ship.



Johnnie Salcau in 1945 at 19 years old.



Jane Bartlett and John Salcau in 1951.



Jane and John Salcau in June of 2007.

John's parents came over directly from Romania. His grandparents were peasants and his father wanted more for his family. His father started at the local bank in Sharon, Pennsylvania as a janitor and worked his way up to the position of Vice President. He had been a gardener for the President, who was impressed with his intelligence, and offered to send him to business school. He continued working hard and was eventually made Vice President. John's Mom had taught in Romania. The local Bishop in Romania recognized her mental capabilities and paid her tuition to high school and college. Upon arriving in the U.S. she began to work with teens in the community, teaching them Romanian songs and dances. John was sent to Quebec to a boarding school to have advanced studies. During his freshman and sophomore years John had seven classes per day, all difficult subjects.

When Pearl Harbor was attacked and the U.S. went to war, John's parents wanted him home so he finished high school in Sharon. He was drafted in September of '44 and given his choice, Army or Navy. He chose the Navy and did his boot camp in the Finger Lakes near Rochester, N.Y. He became a signalman and stayed for training. In the Spring of '45 he headed for Seattle by troop train. John was impressed by the many older ladies who waited at every small station and gave the boys cookies along the way.

He then boarded the U.S.S. Grayson, D.E. 435, and headed for San Francisco, San Diego, and eventually Pearl Harbor with the rookie crew training all the way. The Grayson had already been at war since '42 and had suffered damages which required repair in Seattle. The new crew was uneasy as they approached Pearl Har-

bor because they knew the fighting was furious in the Pacific and they would soon be in it. They got orders to report to the front at Okinawa and headed out. None of the men knew that the U.S. had the Atomic Bomb or was about to drop it. Finally a message came, the bomb had been dropped at Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the Japanese had surrendered. Thousands of American lives were spared with this news. An invasion of Japan was being planned and a long fight loomed ahead. The Grayson turned around and headed back to Pearl Harbor. The war was over. The ship ended up in Charleston, South Carolina, coming through the Panama Canal. John was reassigned to a Destroyer Escort in Norfolk and was eventually discharged in July of '46.

College was his next goal and he enrolled in John Carroll University in Cleveland, which ended his 52/20 club money and started his G.I. bill support. Every serviceman, when discharged, got \$20 per week for 52 weeks. Then if they started college, the G.I. bill took effect. After graduation from John Carroll University he came to Ann Arbor and enrolled in graduate school at the University of Michigan. That is where he met Jane. She was actually dating another guy when John met her. Jane saw how broke John was and she suggested he give blood at the clinic where she worked and he would get money for it. He then offered to take her to dinner and that is how it all started. They settled in Ypsilanti and had two children, Christopher and Jill. John eventually became an Elementary Principal and subsequently Assistant Superintendent of the Ypsilanti Public Schools where he retired. He and Jane enjoy relaxing in Arizona during the winter months.

Ellis Freatman

With the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the war was almost over. Ellis Freatman found himself in Okinawa where there had been a furious battle just days before. His job as a Lieutenant in charge of an American platoon was to *continued on page 20*



Ellis Freatman (in uniform) with family members and friends in 1945.

World War II Veteran Series



Marilyn and Ellis Freatman in 2006.

route the Japanese out of extensive caves throughout the island of Okinawa. He had a Japanese assistant from Osaka who helped by telling the Japanese soldiers in Japanese that the war was over. Some believed, some did not. They were dug in and it made the job very difficult. Ellis and others scoured the caves for Japanese soldiers. Had the bomb not been dropped, Ellis would have been part of an invasion force of the Japanese islands.

Perhaps Ellis Freatman's success in tennis had a bit to do with his success as a foot soldier. He was always a winner in tennis and was one of the best players to ever come out of Ypsilanti. His high school achievements included being State Champion two times. Academically, he was always outstanding and was the President of his class for three years. He found himself drafted in the Army in January of '43 and was sent to Camp Maxie in Texas for training as a foot soldier. His academic side came out, he took tests and was sent to Virginia Tech for Officer Training. There he met his best friend, Howard Gray, who became a fighter pilot and was wounded. They still see each other today in Florida. He was then sent back to Maxie for additional training as a platoon leader. He went from Corporal to Lieutenant and was shipped to Okinawa in '45. During his spare time there he built a tennis court and a basketball court for the men and devised a shower system which was very popular. These efforts were completed in addition to the cave routings. His direct superior, Frank Linsky, who played college basketball and was an All American, made sure he got the materials necessary to build the courts.

He was discharged in '46 and entered Michigan State Normal College where he played tennis on the MSNC team and was named Captain. Two years later he decided to transfer to the University of Michigan and study law, concentrating solely on his studies.

Happiness came his way as he was introduced to Marilyn Begole by Jim Burrell of Burrell Monuments and they were married in 1952. She was a teacher in Milan for several years in English and Speech. When they started their family she retired and was a stay-at-home Mom. They raised two children, the late John, and Ellis Jr. who were both tennis stars like their Dad.

Ellis's law practice flourished and he built his first office at 108 N. Huron in 1953, the site of the old A.C. Walker Store. The law practice still exists even though Ellis has retired. Ellis and Marilyn now enjoy retirement and live in Florida during the winter.

Gordon Cahours

Imagine never getting seasick despite making countless trips overseas on Merchant Marine ships, and never getting hit by a torpedo, even more important. Gordon Cahours was a tough kid who didn't fear anything. He signed up as a high school graduate on a coal ship in 1940 to take a voyage. He liked it so well that when the war was imminent in 1941, he went to New York to join the Merchant Marine. His first trip was on a cargo ship with war supplies on board. It was a fast ship with a fast crossing of seven or eight days. The U.S. Maritime Service utilized volunteers like Gordie to man ships for delivery of war goods to Europe and the Pacific. Gordie did this for 36 months and decided that he

Gordon Cahours in 1945 in Buenos Aires.





Gordon and Virginia at Gordy's 50th class reunion.

was tired of being just a seaman and enrolled in Officers Training School in the U.S. Coast Guard in London, Connecticut.

From that time on, Gordie would eat in the Officer's Mess on white tablecloths. These men were the backbone of the war effort, taking vital supplies to Europe. Gordie became a navigator and helped command many Merchant Marine ships on the Atlantic crossings. On one crossing his ship, the Moses Cleveland got shot up while they were headed for Egypt to pay the oil workers. Aboard they had many boxes, filled with silver coins which were

to be used to pay the men. Gordie and his Captain were anxiously awaiting the possibility that the cranes might accidentally drop one of the boxes so that they could get a souvenir. However none were dropped. His Captain chose him for all his trips because he liked the way Gordie worked as Navigator. Usually the Captain did most of the navigating. On one run they had 100 ships in the convoy and were loaded with bombs and explosives, headed for Port Said. They made it safely. On the return trip, they took 300 oil well drillers.

Fog complicated the crossings. As they zig zagged to avoid submarine attacks, they came close to colliding. Visibility was very limited and space between ships for turning was also limited. This gave Gordie some anxious moments. Other destinations were Casablanca, Italy and the Indian Ocean.

Gordie got the sea out of his system at war's end. He completed college in 1947 and got his first job in teaching from Ernest Chappelle who was Superintendent in Ypsilanti. Two years prior he had married his high school sweetheart Virginia, who he knew as a child growing up. After several years teaching in Ypsi he was offered a job in industry, serving a seven year stint with Ford Motor Company. He decided to return to teaching and took a job as a fifth grade teacher in Livonia. This led to an opportunity in Southgate in elementary school administration as a Principal, a position he held until his retirement in 1980. ■

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Jack's Marvels of Extraordinary Oddities...

By Jack Livisay

...from around the Museum

Field Desk from the Civil War

The field desk came to Mr. Lewis White, Historian for the City of Ypsilanti in 1961. It had belonged to Henry Pinckney, who enlisted at Whitmore Lake, September 17, 1861 as a Sergeant of Company G, Third Michigan Cavalry. He became Second Lieutenant December 20, 1862 and a First Lieutenant August 13, 1863. He became a Captain on October 24, 1864. He commanded Company I, Third Michigan Cavalry, and was mustered out of the army on February 12, 1866 with an honorable discharge.

Mr. White received this desk from Mr. Erwin Saunders, a local photographer, who received it from Harry Pinckney. Desks of this type typically were used to hold maps, military documents, forms, ledgers, quill pens, ink, a folding writing desk, and perhaps a drinking cup and small tray.



*Top and Below:
A Military Field
Desk from the
Civil War.*



Jack's Marvels of Extraordinary Oddities...

By Jack Livisay

...from around the Museum

Renwick-Rorabacher Bird Collection

Mr. Spencer J. Renwick was born in 1831 near New Hudson, Michigan. From his early years he had an intense interest in wildlife, and when he was eighteen to twenty years old, he caught or shot and had mounted this unusual collection of birds and animals. The collection passed to the family of Ora Renwick, then to the family of Mrs. Bruce (Renwick) Rorabacher, who about 1975, entrusted it to the family of Carroll E. Caldwell then living near Ypsilanti.



An unusual collection of birds and animals from the early 1800s.

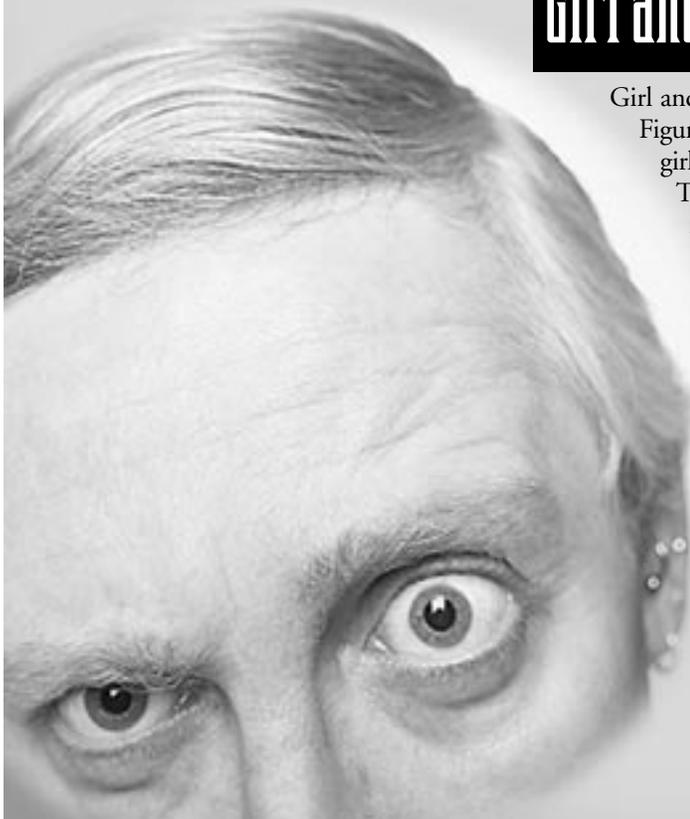
Girl and Boy Figurines

Girl and boy figurines appear to be more than likely German-made? Figurines of this type were popular from around 1870-1880. The girl has a butterfly on her arm and the boy has a bug on his arm. The figurines were given to the museum in 1973 by Mrs. Allen from the E.E. Trim and McIntyre-Allen families.

The Ypsilanti Historical Society Museum collects items related to the history of the people and places in and around Ypsilanti. These three oddities were chosen to illustrate the range of unique items that can be found throughout the museum. ■



Figurines of this type were popular from around 1870 to 1880.



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New Museum Acquisitions

The Acquisition Committee

We have been fortunate to receive some new acquisitions!

Mrs. & Mrs. Shaw brought in a **pillow top** that was **signed and embroidered** by the members of the 1898 graduating class of Michigan State Normal College. A number of the graduates also added where they were from. It is hard to believe that so many were from the upper part of the State of Michigan. A pillow will be placed in the pillow top and it will be on display soon in the Museum.

Ms. Pat Spriggle was kind enough to donate a **measuring marker**. It is a wooden piece about 8 inches long with a tiny nail for marking a piece of wood. It is very interesting and it has been placed in the tool room on the second floor. ■

We are always glad to get donations for our collections.



left: Marking gauge with tiny nail for measuring and marking wood.

Below: Pillow with the embroidered signatures of the 1898 graduation class of Michigan Normal College.



The John N. Goodsmen Family *continued from page 12*

carrier dropped me off at the 353rd band barracks the feeling of despair began to leave. I soon adjusted to the band routine which consisted of infantry training, band rehearsals, and playing for formations and concerts. I also was a member of the dance band which played for dances at the PX's and officers' clubs. Keeping busy day and night helped soothe the drudgery of army life. Mom and Dad came out on the train to visit Clarence and me. Clarence and I were able to get together in Camp Carson and in Denver a couple of times. Colorado Springs was a good town for the troops with good restaurants, theaters and a civic center where we played for GI dances. The scenery was beautiful and the weather acceptable. I was fortunate to advance to the rank of staff sergeant within three months and miraculously never served a day on KP duty.

In 1943, the 89th Division was downsized and the 353rd Infantry Band was sent to Camp Crowder, Missouri. The band was appreciated more in Camp Crowder and more of our time was devoted to performing as

“People from all walks of life and all parts of the country came to work at the bomber plant...I worked with “Wally” Pipp, whose place “Lou” Gehrig took as the New York Yankee first baseman, and “Danny” Litwiler, Phillies outfielder.”

a band rather than infantry training. I was pressured to go to officers' school, but I successfully avoided being reassigned.

Early in 1944, we were sent to Camp Butner in Durham, North Carolina where we were reassigned to the 89th Division. This was a downer after our satisfactory experience at Camp Crowder. Musicians from four bands were brought in and tryouts were held for the positions in the fifty-six piece band. Fortunately, I passed the audition and eventually was made lead cornet in the band. As we readied for movement overseas, our field training was changed from that of stretcher bearers to working as military police. The band was composed

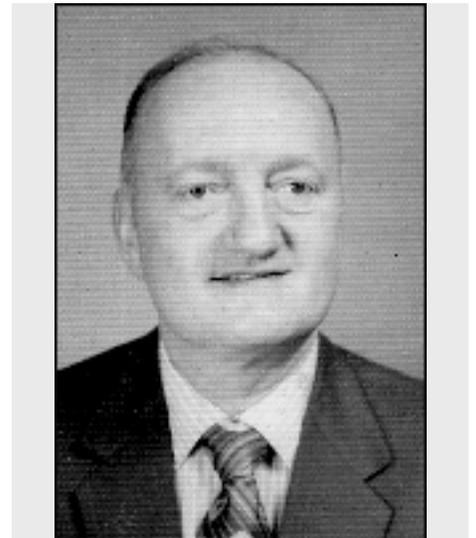
of many fine musicians under the direction of two fine conductors, Chief Warrant Officers Paul W. Larson and Victor H. Steg. Under their direction, the band developed into an excellent military band. Several smaller groups were kept busy playing for dances in the camp and at Duke University.

In January, 1945, the division embarked from Boston. After a perilous 10 day trip, we disembarked at Le Harve, France. As the Battle of the Bulge ended, we went into action. The band acted as MP's and directed traffic for the troops as they advanced. I was made cartographer for the MP's and worked with the Provost Marshall in mapping the position of our division's units, as well as, the enemy's positions. This enabled me to keep track of our segment of the war.

The close of the war with Germany found us waiting at the Czechoslovakian border while the allies allowed the Soviets to advance on Berlin. During the final weeks of the war, the band left its MP duties and organized into military government units. Our responsibilities were to administer the captured cities until civil governing units could be organized. One of the places captured by our division was

Ordurf, a concentration camp. The brutality of the Nazis was graphically brought home as we viewed the naked, emaciated bodies, each with a bullet hole in the back of the head, piled high in the streets and sheds. The haunting look of the piercing eyes staring from the shriveled faces was unforgettable. The acid vats and the grated ovens where bodies were disposed of gave unbelievable testimony to the inhumanity of the Nazis.

Upon the cessation of hostilities, our division was sent in 48 railroad cars to Normandy, France where we managed the redeployment camps which were processing the men with the highest number of points for their return to



John Harold Goodsmen in 1973.

the USA. It was while we were billeted in Mt. St. Aignan that Clarence visited me. One day, as he and I were walking down a road toward Rouen, we met a French couple. Clarence gave them a friendly “Bon Jour” and we struck up a conversation even though neither knew the other's language. We soon found their names to be M. and Mme. Georges David. We were invited to their home to share a bottle of wine. Thus began a friendship with a wonderful couple who appreciated America's assistance in liberating France. Alice and I visited the Davids' in France in 1963, and they visited us a few years later in New York.

The band members with insufficient points to return to the USA were reassigned to the 83rd Division and endured another train ride in box cars to Linz, Austria. We were housed in barracks formerly used by the German army. Graphic evidence of the inhumanity of war was demonstrated daily when East European refugees, who were housed in displaced persons camps near our barracks, would line up and beg for scraps from our mess kits as we prepared to empty them into the garbage can. While in Austria, my friend, Roger Behlke, met fraulein, Hermine “Mink,” who he would later marry by proxy, via the telephone, in 1946. I left shortly after our arrival in Linz for redeployment to the USA. I sailed from Bremerhaven, Germany and was discharged from the Army March 17, 1946 from Camp Atterbury, Indiana.

Upon my discharge from military service, I was asked to finish the school year teaching
continued on page 26

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Mellencamp's –
The Center of My "Village"
continued from page 3

much together - high school, athletics, graduations, college, marriage, divorce, remarriage, families, careers.

I felt badly walking out that last day. One last Clarence smile, eyes twinkling, and a very firm handshake to put his finishing touches in place. It was eerie, a little because a great downtown institution was closing, but it was more. It wasn't right. It was like taking advantage of an old and loyal buddy in his time of despair. You don't do this to friends. Al and Clarence were Mellencamp's to me. Two friends. Two class guys. They gave themselves

to their job - care, attention, genuine interest in you.

It was my "village" center. Everything else radiated from Mellencamp's. As we grow older we experience change. We move on. I don't think I've been to a clothing store on my own since my Friend closed. My wife does my clothes shopping for me. It's not the same. Different sales people every time.

I walked out on to Michigan Ave as the door closed behind me. Another chapter in my life in the "Village" completed. I walked to my car, put my purchase away, and told myself - "It's just a clothing store." We are always glad to get donations for our collections. We are always glad to get donations for our collections. ■

The John N. Goodsmen Family
continued from page 25

mathematics at Ypsilanti High School for Viola Milks, who was on sick leave. In September 1946, with no job in sight, I enrolled in the University of Michigan Graduate School and completed my M.A. Degree. During the spring term, I interviewed with FBI recruiters on campus and was accepted as a Special Agent. After a twelve week training period in Washington, D.C. and Quantico Marine Base, Virginia, I was assigned to Portland, Oregon. I was then moved to Seattle, Washington and later to Pocatello, Idaho and Butte, Montana. One of the interesting people I met was a sheriff in Joseph, Oregon, who fit the image of the old time gaunt, weather beaten western lawman. He told me the story of a young boy, who in the early 1900s acted as a lookout for a bank robbery in which the robbers fled by horseback into the hills. Years later the boy lookout became president of the bank in Joseph that he helped to rob. Tiring of constant travel, I resigned from the Bureau. The experience of working in such a well run and respected organization and dealing with people from all walks of life was invaluable.

Alice L. O'Neil had served with the Red Cross during World War II in New Guinea, the Philippines, Japan and China. After the war, she signed up for an assignment with the Red Cross in the Panama Canal Zone. Upon her

return, she worked as secretary to the head of transportation at Kaiser Frazer Motors.

On January 2, 1952, Alice L. O'Neil and I were married in Angola, Indiana. Attending the ceremony were Mabel Goodsmen, Clarence and Arnita Goodsmen and their children James and Sandra. On the way home, Clarence encountered a savage snow storm and icy roads but made it home safely. The same storm prevented Alice and me from reaching our destination of Niagara Falls necessitating that our honeymoon be spent in Cleveland, Ohio at the Terminal Tower Hotel. Upon our return to Ypsilanti, we resided in the upstairs apartment at 945 Sheridan. Alice subsequently left Kaiser-Frazer to teach at Cleary College. When Willow Run established its high school program in 1954, she was hired to teach shorthand and typing. She taught at Willow Run until she retired in 1973.

In September, 1949, I was hired as seventh grade teacher at Ypsilanti High School. In the early 1950's I assumed the directorship of the Adult Evening Classes in addition to my daily teaching duties. In September 1956, I was appointed the first principal of the brand new Erickson Elementary School. In 1957, I was re-assigned to Ypsilanti High School as assistant principal in charge of the junior high school division. In September, 1959, West Junior High School was opened with me as principal and Ronald Isbell as half-time assistant principal and teacher. I remained in that position until my retirement in June, 1977. ■

Report from Fletcher-White Archives

By Gerald Petty, Archivist

In our Spring 2007 report, we informed you of our plans to move into the new space prepared for us in the basement of the YHS Museum. On Thursday, July 26th, after weeks of packing and the pre-positioning of items - WE MOVED! What we all had dreaded for several months actually turned into a rather enjoyable program of exercise which most of us needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Al, in effect had arranged for all of us "couch potatoes" an exercise program similar to what Bally's or Fitness USA might dish out. The

weather which up until that time was very humid, relented for the day, and made for a cool, breezy trek from the carriage house to our new digs in the museum. Everything went exceptionally well, the place is absolutely marvelous! You will be amazed!

Even though we are still putting away the last vestiges of file folders and atlases, we are open for business on a new schedule. The Museum and the Archives, for the first time since the early years, will be open on a coordinated schedule of Tuesday through Sunday from 2 pm to 5 pm. Please note we are closed on Mondays and on major holidays. (Real easy to remember, and for that, even I am thankful!) We wish to thank all of the volunteers and regular patrons that cheerfully helped knowing that moving an archive would be difficult. Luckily our efforts were rewarded with a great lunch provided by the Society.

On July 1st Ms. Katie Dallos joined our staff in the archives. She is a student in the Historic Preservation Program at Eastern Michigan University and our intern here at the archives for the next year or two. Katie has been great during this transition by making it almost seamless and literally turned this into a "turnkey" operation on our first official day, July 30th, when we first opened for business in our new location. Thanks Katie!

A special thanks to Jane Schmiedeke for a bound edition of the "History of Michigan State Normal College" on its 100th anniversary. Several other items were also included and we are grateful for all of them.

We are open for business so look for our new entrance that is just to the left of the front of the museum. Get your running shoes on and skip on down! ■

Museum Advisory Board Report

By Virginia Davis-Brown, Advisory Board Chair

I hope your summer hasn't gone as fast as mine. Here at the Museum it seems things have been moving so fast we are having a hard time keeping up. It is hard to believe that the Heritage Festival is over and we are looking for Fall to be here in a few weeks.

One of the new changes, starting September 1, will be the hours of the Museum and Archives. We will now be open six days a week, Tuesdays thru Sundays from 2-5 pm. Yes, we will have docents to take you on a tour of the house. Don't forget to stop and see the completely restored Tiffany Window.

"Final plans are being made for the Quilt Exhibit which will run from September 27 thru October 14...The Underground Railroad Exhibit is still up. If you have not seen it, now is the time, as it will be coming down in October until next summer."

Final plans are being made for the Quilt Exhibit which will run from September 27 thru October 14. We are planning on having about 100 quilts in the exhibit. There will be many kinds, vintage, new, traditional and some very modern and unique ones. We are suggesting a \$3.00 donation to help with the expenses. Why not put this on your calendar and get a group together and come on over.



The Underground Railroad Exhibit is still up. If you have not seen it, now is the time, as it will be coming down in October until next summer.

We had about 275 visitors visit the Museum during the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival. We had a couple of visitors from California and another couple that came from Boston just to see the Tiffany Window.

We are still in need of docents. If you, or anyone you know, would like to spend three hours a month in the museum, please call 734-484-0080 and we will set up a time for you to be trained. I think you would enjoy meeting the visitors as well as working with great docents.

Hope you stop by to see all the changes. If you have any question or suggestions, please call me at 734-482-4990 or 734-484-0080. ■

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