Our Mission
The Waterloo Area Historical Society's mission is to foster an understanding and appreciation in children and adults of the pioneer farmers of Michigan, their family life, and their children's schooling.

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What’s Next:
Volunteer Appreciation Social
Sunday, May 19th

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Christmas on the Farm

The Log House was crowded with guests all day. The warmth of the fire and friendly hosts, Tom Bertrand and Roger Kerr, “Bloodworth and Kerr Toymakers”, and Brian and Sue Dewey, as Pioneer family, cooking and homemaking, brought smiles to everyone.

Dewey School teemed with school children most of the weekend. These students took time to learn about 1800’s lessons and enjoyed the Christmas decorations created by Stockbridge Heritage Elementary School students.

The Ice House was once again filled to the brim with wreaths, wall and table decoration for sale. Many hours were spent creating these works of art by over 15 volunteers on Greens Day, the first Saturday after Thanksgiving. If you are interested in this fun and creative day let someone on the board of directors know.

The Silent Auction was a great success with donations from individual and many, many businesses in the Chelsea, Stockbridge, Jackson and Lansing areas.

Beverly Larsen was in Mary’s Room, in the farmhouse, crafting her beautiful socks on her 1870’s sock machine. The artistry and quiet elegance of her work add authenticity to the house.

Samantha Huber from the Capital Area District Library, Stockbridge Branch, read the Night Before Christmas to children, throughout the day, on Saturday of the event. She enjoyed herself to the point of not being sure who got more out of the experience, the children or herself. She requested to be invited again.

Ladies from a lace making guild filled the sitting room with lace bobbins and lap pillows for guests to try their hand at making lace. With careful instruction they were able to work a few rows. Maybe a new desire to creative arts was born.

Mary Minnie set up her spinning wheel in the Parlor giving demonstrations of just one of her many talents. Mary is an accomplished weaver, spinner and many, many fiber arts. Look for Mary at Blacksmith-Soldiers and Log Cabin Weekend and Pioneer Day.

Continued on page 2
Lesa Patow, the Museum newest weaver, gave demonstrations and allowed folks to try their hand at weaving on the large loom. Lesa has taken the loom and the museum under her wing and is a joy to work with.

The farmhouse, decorated for the holiday by Henry and Dena Crawford and Earlene Landis, as it would have been in the 1870’s, welcomed guests by way of the “front” door. The door that faces the East is the door where special guests would enter. Only on special occasions could visitors be in this part of the house. They were greeted at the door and escorted into the parlor. This is where the experience of the “formal” parlor ends for our guests, as they then can go to the bedrooms in the hall and upstairs, where a guest of the 1800’s would never venture unless they were from far away and spending a day or two with the family.

Our guests enjoyed the Loom Room, Mary’s Room, then up the stairs to the Children’s Room, Toy Room and Parent’s Room where guides explained how and by whom the rooms were used. Then on into the Attic where either Krampus or the poet Will Carlton, (Dan Hovator) would greet them with stories and tales of old. You may recognize our Attic host as the resident Flint Knapper of the summer and fall events.

The guests then navigated the back stairs, or “itinerant farmhands’” stairs, down to the dining room where Dena Crawford explained the treats and foods displayed on the table and how an open house was a common way for neighbors to get together to celebrate Christmas. The Realy family were always welcoming to visitors and planned a holiday event every year.

From the dining room they traveled through the Pantry where pies were being made and on into the kitchen where bacon, cut fresh for the slab was being fried up on the cookstove, ready to be sampled. Bob and Sandy Motice were cooking and immersing themselves in the era and the holiday.

The Woodshed, as usual, was the Bake Shop with sweets for sale. Thanks to all who donated and to Cathy Porszolt for pricing and displays.

It was a cold and wet weekend, but it didn’t dampen the spirits or deter the visitors. They stayed and enjoyed all the Museum had to offer. From the concession’s yummy soup, the Silent Auction, to the Blacksmith Shop where Chris St. Charles crafting iron, or to the Ice House full of greens for sale, to the Log House, and then to the Farmhouse filled with music and diverse sights to enjoy, it was a successful and beautiful way to celebrate Christmas with friends, old and new.
2019 Docent Training

April 13th 9:30-3pm at the Waterloo Farm Museum

Fantastic Lunch Provided

For more information phone Arlene Kaiser 517-851-8745

“Don’t let yesterday use up too much of today.” J. Benjamin
In Memorium

**Vivian Elizabeth May**, age 90, passed away peacefully at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Chelsea, MI, on Friday, November 23, 2018. She lived on the May family homestead (built in 1860) in Gregory, MI, where she lived for the rest of her life. Vivian was a long-time member of the Unadilla Presbyterian Church. She was a member of the Hillsdale Historical Society and the Waterloo Area Historical Society. She was also one of the original members of the Chelsea Kitchen Band and served as treasurer until it disbanded after 25 years. Vivian’s interests and hobbies included cooking, attending church, reading newspapers and religious novels, playing cards, gardening, watching sports (especially the University of Michigan and her beloved Detroit Pistons), keeping up with local news, and spending time with her loving family.

Vivian was an integral part of the Waterloo Farm Museum for over 24 years. The last time I remember Vivian being at the Museum, she was giving her family a tour of the Farmhouse. I was house docent that day, upon my asking if she wanted a tour for herself and her family, she replied, “I can give it, I given tours here for years.” So she did. She was 88-89 at that time. I followed along and took notes. Typical of Vivian, not wanting to put anyone out, she instructed her family, “if I die in the winter, I don’t want people to have to come to my funeral in bad weather, so plan my memorial for the spring.”

A memorial service/celebration of life for Vivian will be held in the Spring of 2019. More information will be announced in the future. Until then any questions or expressions of sympathy can be directed to her daughter Christine Berry (erijas@umich.edu). Memorial contributions can be made to the Unadilla Presbyterian Church.

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**Cheryl Greaney**, age 62, passed away peacefully at her father’s home in Tecumseh, MI, January 16, 2019. After several years of battle, Cheryl passed with her sister and father at her side.

If any of you have been to an event in the last 5 years you have seen the results of Cheryl’s hard work in the Concession area. On many occasions we worked together to set up and take down the concession. It quickly became evident to me I could step away from most of the responsibility of this part of the event. She was so organized and ready to “get things done”. Cheryl and I worked closely on many projects in the few short years she was a part of the Museum, during that time we became friends, which wasn’t hard to do. She volunteered in the Education Program as a Shepherd. It is here she would educate the children on the outdoor life on a farm. Occasionally a friendly snake would appear, and this would give her the opportunity to show the school kids, “do no harm” to the wildlife and wild lands. Carol Strahler, a good friend of Cheryl’s for over 35 years, said “While Cheryl was a Park Ranger, Cheryl had many stories to share about the visiting school groups and the antics of the children and sometimes adults, some of whom had never been in the woods. Whatever responsibility Cheryl had, she approached it with gusto. Over the years we worked together at many special events held at Waterloo Nature Center, now the Eddy Discovery Center. While Cheryl was employed, she did not have much free time, but upon retirement she wanted to become involved in the community. For several years she was on the Board of the Waterloo Natural History Association, the non-profit which supports the Discovery Center. I thought she would enjoy volunteering at the Farm Museum, and before long she was an integral part of WAHS. Cheryl was a warm, loving person, dedicated to her pets and the people in her life.”

A group of volunteers worked together updating the inventory of the Farmhouse. Cheryl diligently took pictures, made notes and helped organize. At Christmas on the Farm, she organized the “Greens Making Day”. This started about a week after Pioneer Day. When she came on the Board of Directors as a trustee, she volunteered to be the Secretary which means taking notes of the monthly meeting, presenting to the board for corrections and sending official reports before the next meeting.

This doesn’t sound difficult, but she did this during her last year on the board while undergoing chemotherapy. Her determination to continue in all her varied capacities at the Museum, even when she didn’t feel like, it is one of the reasons she lived beyond the few years the Doctor’s gave her. Determination and grit. Cheryl and many museum volunteers became close friends over the years. We all appreciated her hard work and her determination to see excellence in all aspects of the Museums.

As you can see in the photo (Cheryl center), she liked to have fun too. She will be missed by us all.

Arlene Kaiser and Carol Strahler
It’s that time again!!!

We will be cleaning the Museum on April 6th cleaning  9:30 am - 3pm

Come one, come all!

Farm Gourmet Lunch Provided!

Waterloo Wisdom
from John Benjamin

Good Day Neighbor,

Down at the mill fellas were discussin’ the strongest drink ever imbibed.

Says Otto, “I had somethin’ brought up from West Virginia by a cousin. So clear when held up to light, it had a blue halo, much like the flame over wood alcohol on fire. So powerful it would take the hair off deer hide, but as sweet as raindrops on high corn. When I wiped my mouth afterwards, it burnt a hole in my sleeve.”

“Ain’t nothin,” says Willie, “had some from East Tennessee was so strong, couldn’t be bottled, had to be kept in a jug with a corncob plug so’s it could breathe. Fella said when drawin’ some off his still, spilled some on his boot, ate the uppers clean off down to the sole. Said you'd better cut it ten to one with branch water, but still swallow a good mouthful of o’ bacon grease to coat your stomach.

Well, them’s good stories alright says I, but I go a real eye witness ‘count of an episode with witnesses. We was playin’cards, four of us, when ole Chephus brings out this bottle of somethin’ looked like lamp oil, kinda cloudy and heavy. He says, “This is something, like you’d never had before, and probably never see again. Been in my cellar for nigh on twenty years. Always been ‘fraid to touch it, let alone have a sample.” Old Will speaks up, “Let me have a little sample of that, I’m always a good judge of quality of licker, specially that’s been seasoned.” “I don’t know,” says Chephus, “don’t rightly recall where it come from, but think I got it in trade for some corn from some southern fella. Never had the nerve to try it.”

Well, old Chephus draws off a sippin’ glass, hands it off to Will, who looks at it thru the light, then takes a big long swaller. He sits real still for quite a spell, then gets real stiff, face redder than a fresh painted barn. Then all color drains from him, eyes open wider than you ever seen, a grin so big it musta’ hurt. We all watched him in disbelief for nigh on three hours, he liked to never took a breath in all that time, nor blinked. Well, he commenced to come around, hands shakin’, then quakin’ all over, throws his head back and lets out a yelp that musta’, riled neighbors’ dogs for over two miles. Finally, he comes around, stands up straight like a statue, grinnin’ like a baked possum, and belts out, “I’ve seen Armageddon, light so bright, like a thousand stars, burnin’ out all to once.” We all decided that Chephus should put that bottle back in the cellar for some fool to find twenty years from now.

Well, seems like those boys had some en-lightnin’ experiences. I think I’ll stick to the Realy’s cider, strong enough for me. Been times couldn’t feel my legs, but no long-time afflictions, and I vow to never die of thirst.

Best Regards,

John Benjamin
NAME
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Please make checks payable to:
The Waterloo Area Historical Society
Mail to:
WAHS Memberships
P.O.Box 37, Stockbridge, MI 49285

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CHOOSE ONE:

☐ - $18.00 SINGLE
☐ - $25.00 COUPLE
☐ - $25.00 FAMILY (Two adults + children under 18)
☐ - $50.00 CONTRIBUTING MEMBER
☐ - $60.00 BUSINESS
☐ - $250.00 INDIVIDUAL LIFE MEMBER

Ages Sixty-two and over:
☐ - $12.00 SENIOR SINGLE
☐ - $18.00 SENIOR COUPLE
☐ - $175.00 SENIOR INDIVIDUAL LIFE MEMBER

☐ - I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE AN ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION TO SUPPORT WAHS IN THE AMOUNT OF $______________.

NAME ____________________________
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Please make checks payable to:
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☐ - I AM INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING AT THE MUSEUM, PLEASE CONTACT ME.

Waterloo Area Historical Society Membership Form

A private nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, the Waterloo Area Historical Society works to fund all the operation expenses for the Farm and Dewey School. Donations are fully deductible to the extent of the law.

WAHS Officers and Trustees

Office | Name | Phone | e-mail
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President | Brian Dewey | (734) 498-2201 | chuckwagon_cowboys@hotmail.com
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"It’s not flies that bother me it’s just that I don’t know where they’ve been," J. Benjamin
WAHS Events for 2019

Annual Meeting and Volunteer Appreciation Social - May 19th
Blacksmith, Soldier, and Log Cabin Weekend - June 22nd and 23rd
14th Annual Antique Truck, Tractor, and Farm Equipment Show - August 10th and 11th
Pioneer Day - October 13th
Christmas on the Farm - December 7th and 8th

WAHS Board Meetings - 7pm on the third Monday. Location posted on website.

“A mother’s love is an unequaled force of nature.”
Mrs. J. Benjamin