



History Matters

Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society
Keego Harbor • Orchard Lake • Sylvan Lake • West Bloomfield



Spring 2014

Long-Time Volunteers Recognized at Annual Meeting

The 2014 GWBHS Annual Meeting was held January 25 on the campus of Orchard Lake Schools. It was an opportunity to update the membership about the past year's progress and also recognize volunteers who have helped to make it all possible. Three long-time volunteers received special recognition at the event.



Charles Martinez was the recipient a Distinguished Service Award "In appreciation for many years of service as an archaeologist and historian volunteering with local historical societies bringing many projects forward, especially Song of the Heron: Reflections on the History of West Bloomfield." Charlie has been sharing his interest in local history and archaeology for over 40 years. Upon receiving his award, he said that the "... preservation of the past for the enrichment of the future is my goal in life."



Betty Bradbury has been active with GWBHS since nearly the beginning in 1974. Betty organized children's games at July 4th picnics until 1982. She has helped maintain the Museum, wind the grandfather clock, change outdoor signage and care for the gardens. As an Apple Island and monthly Open House docent, she is always enthusiastic in welcoming guests and sharing local history.



Carol Fink has been active with Apple Island since at least 1977 and calls it "the crown jewel of Orchard Lake." She has led countless island tours and nature walks and has served as president of the Friends of Apple Island, Inc., board member of the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary and GWBHS board member.

Each of these volunteers have brought history to life. We appreciate the dedication, enthusiasm and volunteerism of these long-time volunteers!



Apple Island Tours

Saturday, May 17 & Sunday, May 18, 11-5 p.m., Orchard Lake Museum, 3951 Orchard Lake Road

\$15 adult, \$10 children (ages 5-12) \$5 Time Travelers and GWBHS members (includes new memberships) See gwbhs.org for details.

Living with History: Historic Homes Tour of Greater West Bloomfield Saturday, June 21, 10am – 4pm

Enjoy a summer day experiencing unique stories of greater West Bloomfield historic homes. This self-driving tour begins at Schulak Farm and ends at the Orchard Lake Museum, on the site of the former Orchard Lake Hotel. Docents will share history inside six homes.

Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 on event day. Make reservations at www.gwbhs.org/homestour, Orchard Lake Village City Hall or The Friendship of the West Bloomfield Library Main Branch. For information about sponsorship, advertising or how to volunteer, contact lwh@gwbhs.org or 248.757.2451. Read more in the latest issue of "West Bloomfield Today" at issuu.com/wbtoday/docs/wbtoday_v2n2.

Upcoming Events

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From the Desk of President Gina Gregory...

Awesome is a word I don't use often, but it seems appropriate to describe all our recent activities and planning: Wayside Exhibit Dedication and Trail Walk, WMU Apple Island Archaeology Project, Historic Homes Tour, Part II of Peal of the Bell and 40th anniversary activities. Plus GWBHS is being honored with a Community Achievement Award from the Michigan Week Committee. All of this is in addition to our regular monthly Open Houses and GWBHS events! Please show your support for events that interest you by attending or becoming a volunteer.

Volunteers are busy preparing for Living with History: Historic Homes Tour of Greater West Bloomfield on June 21. Each home on the tour has an interesting past, but we are also learning about the experiences of modern living in a historic home. There is so much that the docents can share on the day of the tour! This is a great event to increase awareness of GWBHS and local history in our community. Sponsorship and advertising opportunities are available and we need your support. Please consider purchasing a booklet ad, sponsoring a home or purchasing a Friend of the Tour sponsorship, which includes two event tickets and a name listing in the program booklet.

Finally, don't forget to renew your membership! Consider 40 for 40, an additional \$40 donation to help us in our goal to remain a vibrant organization for the next 40 years.

Museum News

New exhibits for the summer months include *Sylvan Lake Garden Club 75th Anniversary* by Helen Jane Peters and *First Women* by Sue Williams. New materials have also been added to the *City of Sylvan Lake* exhibit.

Recent changes at Orchard Lake Museum extend beyond the exhibit areas. Gina Gregory coordinated a reorganization of basement storage areas and the office in order to make better use of the space. The work of the team of volunteers has increased storage capacity and created a more pleasant Museum research experience.

Library Display Case

Look for displays by GWBHS in a display case near the lobby at the West Bloomfield Township Library - Main Branch.

SIGNS 40 OUR TIMES

MICHIGAN WEEK 2014 COMMUNITY AWARDS BREAKFAST featuring Wayside Exhibits

**Friday, May 16, 7:15 a.m. at Tam-O-Shanter Country Club,
5051 Orchard Lake Road**

The Michigan Week 2014 Community Awards Breakfast, featuring Wayside Exhibits, takes place Friday, May 16 at Tam-O-Shanter Country Club. The 2014 theme is "Signs 4 Our Times!" and the brief presentation focuses on the Wayside Exhibits in the greater West Bloomfield area. GWBHS will be honored with a Community Achievement Award for its part in the Wayside Exhibits project.

SAVE THE DATE - HANDS-ON HISTORY & 40TH ANNIVERSARY ICE CREAM SOCIAL

**Sunday, September 14, 1-4 p.m., Orchard Lake Museum,
3951 Orchard Lake Road**

Join us as we celebrate our 40th anniversary! Enjoy ice cream and hands-on activities inside and outside at the Orchard Lake Museum. A Wayside Exhibit sign dedication is planned as well. \$2 per person, free for GWBHS and Time Travelers members.



Thank You

...to The St. Francis Foundation of Michigan for a final \$10,000 grant to cover expenses for the WMU dig and GWBHS related projects.

...to our West Bloomfield Beacon media sponsors for February:
Coldwell Banker, Emerys Fine Jewelry, Regent Street and Otto A. Trzos Co.

Local History & GWBHS Inspire Students' Academic Pursuits

GWBHS provides great ways for people of all ages to explore and connect with local history. Here are some young people who have been inspired to learn more.

A teacher's assistant during the Apple Island archaeological dig, Skylar Bauer shared her research work at the Apple Island Spring Forum in April. Originally from Mt. Airy, Maryland, she is seeking a Western Michigan University Master's Degree in Anthropology and plans to write her thesis about the archaeology of lived religion at Apple Island.

Mark Hoock is an Anthropology PhD candidate at American University in Washington, D.C. He is considering a dissertation about how processes that reproduce and reinforce our social structure exist in many social spaces, including landscapes of recreation. He aims to use archaeological investigations from Apple Island to infer how the residents maintained or changed their behaviors. Hoock will lead WMU students in 2014 Apple Island summer field work.

Catherine Cangany, PhD, Assistant Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame, presented the March GWBHS event Detroit: "Detroit: Early America's Frontier Seaport." "This book began in 2005 as a doctoral dissertation at U-M, inspired by my work as a curator at GWBHS.

As I was completing graduate coursework about colonial America, I was also devising museum exhibits in Orchard Lake about nineteenth-century West Bloomfield...I realized that there must be some way to connect what I was reading in the classroom with what I was creating in the museum." Nearly a decade later, it became the book: *Frontier Seaport: Detroit's Transformation into an Atlantic Entrepôt*.



Catherine Cangany



Mark Hoock



Skylar Bauer

Thank You to GWBHS Volunteers!

GWBHS counts on the hard work of many dedicated volunteers throughout the year. Thank you to those who have recently helped out:

- Annual Meeting: Diane Eanes, Nora Feinberg, Melissa and Grace Gilbert, Rob Gregory, Cathy Hasse, Helen Jane Peters
- Detroit Immigration: Past to Present: Judy and Alan Kerr, Nora Feinberg
- Detroit: Early America's Frontier Seaport: Ella Baker, Alan Kerr, Anita MacSorely
- Apple Island Spring Forum: Catherine Cangany, Diane Eanes, Nora Feinberg, Carol Fink, Rob Gregory, Anita MacSorely
- Library Case: Sue Grifor, Helen Jane Peters, DuAnne Sonnevillie
- Museum office and basement reorganization: Scott and Grace Gilbert, Brian Granger, Gina and Rob Gregory, Paul Mellerowicz, Ron and Cameron Montgomery, Steve Saponis, Larry Weisman, Sue Williams

40 Years: *GWBHS & Apple Island*

CELEBRATING **40** YEARS
1974-2014



As Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society (GWBHS) celebrates its 40th anniversary (1974-2014), here is a look back at the Society's involvement with Apple Island.

Apple Island has always been a special place, first to the American Indians and then as a peaceful summer home. Today it is a place to experience nature and uncover the history beneath its surface.

Officially known as the Marjorie Ward Strong Woodland Sanctuary since 1970, the island has benefitted from wide community interest and support to sustain its natural habitats and maintain safe access. The West Bloomfield School District owns the island and students have visited to study its geography and ecology. GWBHS guided tours of the island for second graders each spring and fall are just one of the ways the Society keeps local residents connected to Apple Island.

GWBHS has made the study of Apple Island an important part of its activities for over 30 years. Since 1982, the Society has been coordinating annual tours of the island to give the public a chance to experience this place of natural beauty and its rich local history. The St. Francis Foundation of Michigan has long been a generous supporter of GWBHS's activities on the island. Most recently, its grants have funded archaeological digs that have led to the application for Apple Island to be added to the National Register of Historic Places.



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Timeline of Apple Island & GWBHS



1970
The Marjorie Ward Strong Woodland Sanctuary, commonly known as Apple Island (AI), is deeded to the West Bloomfield School District (WBSD) in a dedication ceremony attended by Governor Milliken.

1974
WBSD biology students walk across frozen lake to study the effects of winter weather on AI vegetation.

1977
WB Newcomers Club sponsors free AI tours, led by FOAI members. Girl Scouts gather trash.

1978
18 WBSD students receive a \$27,182 DNR grant to spend 40-hour summer weeks extending and improving trails. Trail markers, erosion-control landscaping and outhouses are built.



1982
GWBHS holds its first AI tours on the third weekend in May.

1994
Eagle Scouts complete a project that began in 1986 to construct a 64-foot walking bridge over AI pond.



1997
Orchard Lake Middle School music teacher commissions a musical tribute to AI history called "Apple Island Legend."

2001
Archaeology students from St. Mary's University & Cranbrook Institute of Science dig on AI, discovering a silver cross and tinkle-cone ornament.

2004
"Island of Time" (IOT) includes a Living History Encampment at Orchard Lake St. Mary's Schools, Michigan Week Community Awards Breakfast and AI tours.



2010
Archaeological techniques workshop students discover an American Indian campsite.

2013
GWBHS receives a \$10,000 SFFM grant to fund Drs. LouAnn Wurst and David Brose, along with a team of WMU anthropology students, to survey AI, collect artifacts and dig test pits.

1973
West Bloomfield (WB) Optimist and Countryside Improvement Association donate funds to purchase pontoon boats.



1976
HS Ecology Club students initiate the formation of the Friends of Apple Island, Inc. (FOAI), a community-wide organization for all ages.



1979
70 people cross-country ski to AI, sponsored by WB Parks & Recreation and FOIA.

1980
FOAI leads four seasonal events annually. It receives a DNR nature trails grant.

1983
WBSD high school biology students analyze AI ecology.

1996
GWBHS leads tours for WBSD second-graders of AI and Orchard Lake Museum. The tours continue to the present.

1998
An \$8,000 West/Media One grant funds a six-week WBHS cartology project using GPS to collect data, compile charts and develop AI maps.

1999
GWBHS receives a \$4,800 grant from the St. Francis Foundation of Michigan (SFFM).

2003
Cranbrook and Madonna staff lead Milford and Huron Valley students on an archaeological dig, finding a military button. Madonna University offers archeology and ecology summer workshops.

2008
U-M, Madonna University, WBSD and GWBHS offer a Great Lakes Archaeology course. Dr. David Brose leads excavation and testing of "Pontiac's Mound", found only to be a natural area.

2011
GWBHS completes AI improvements with Scotch School student donation funds.



2014
Another \$10,000 grant from The SFFM will continue the work of the WMU team. Dr. LouAnn Wurst submits forms for Michigan Historic Site and National Register of Historic Places designations.



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 our website.*



Membership Application

Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society

Individual	\$20	Family	\$40
Senior Indiv.	\$15	Senior Couple	\$30
Premier	\$50	Patron/Business	\$100
Lifetime	\$600	Donation	\$___

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Zip: _____ Phone: _____

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Yes, I support **40 for 40**, an additional \$40 donation to mark the 40th Anniversary of GWBHS, 1974 - 2014.

Membership year is January 1 to December 31.

Please make checks payable to GWBHS.
 Mail to GWBHS: 3951 Orchard Lake Road
 Orchard Lake MI 48323

Make sure to sign up for the
 GWBHS email list!
 Click the green
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GWBHS Mission Statement

The Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that collects, preserves, researches and stimulates public interest in the history of Keego Harbor, Orchard Lake, Sylvan Lake and West Bloomfield.

