



# History Matters

Winter 2016

Keego Harbor • Orchard Lake • Sylvan Lake • West Bloomfield

## Unveiling of 'Our School History' Informational Panels Scheduled for March

A major milestone for *Our School History* will be reached in March, with the unveiling of school history informational panels that will be displayed in all of the school buildings of West Bloomfield School District. A special event to unveil the panels will take place at West Bloomfield Township Library on March 30, 2016 (more information below).

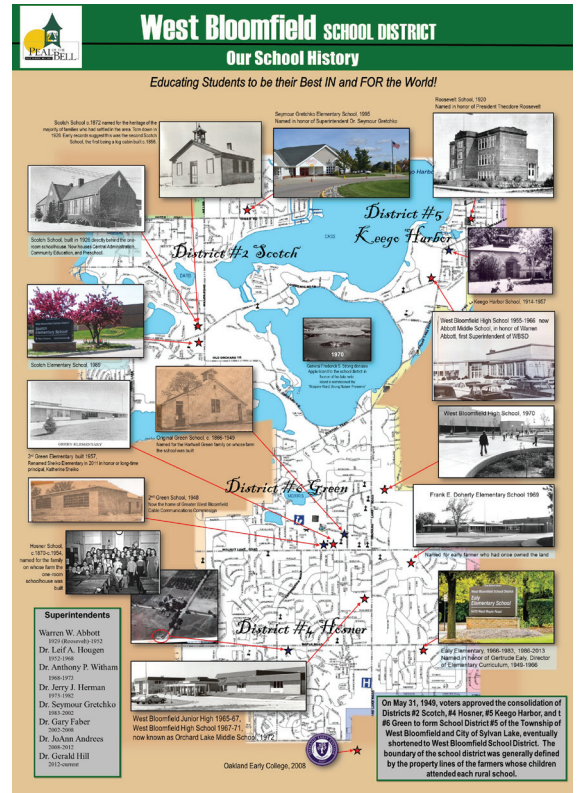
*Our School History* is an ongoing project of GWBHS to document the history of area schools. In 2011, the Board of West Bloomfield School District requested that GWBHS gather information in order to help it better understand the individual histories of the schools in the district. Formerly known as *Call of the Peal of the Bell*, the project has required countless hours of work from a team of dedicated volunteers.

Some of the results of the project so far include the online publishing of school history reports and outreach to gather information from the community. Increased interest in school history has led to the mounting of historic school bells at Scotch and Roosevelt Elementaries.

Thank you to Amy Clarke, Dennis Zembala, Bill Bertakis and Alex Turczynski for their work on *Our School History* and to these GWBHS volunteers: Brian Bohnett, Buzz Brown, Helen McAllister, Helen Jane Peters, Molly Rozycki, Ellen Simmons and Sue Williams. Also, thanks to all of the schools' PTOs for contributing financially.



Christy and Greg Forhan promote the project in 2014.



A draft of an informational panel

A special thank you goes to Christy Forhan who championed Phase 2 to look for additional information, conduct interviews, and plan panel layout and fabrication.

### Celebrating Our School History with West Bloomfield Schools

Wednesday, March 30, 2016 7 p.m. WB Library Main Meeting Room, 4600 Walnut Lake Road

Celebrate the unveiling of each of the West Bloomfield Schools historical information exhibit panels with WBSD. Brief presentation. Sponsored with West Bloomfield School District and West Bloomfield Township Library. No charge.

### RSVP for Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will take place at the St. Mary's dining hall on Saturday, January 30, 2016 at 10 a.m. There will also be a presentation of 1900s West Bloomfield area photos by Dave Walls. Find more information on the 2016 Events page.

## From the Desk of President Gina Gregory...

I hope your holiday season was filled with good times creating happy memories. Celebrating memories is a part of the GWBHS mission and as we move into the new year, I hope you renew your membership or become a member. Please also consider volunteering with GWBHS. Your membership, additional donations and volunteerism are vital to the health of GWBHS! Memberships are available online. Sign up online for email updates to learn the latest. Follow us on Facebook!

Looking back, 2015 was an active year. Highlights will be shared at the Annual Meeting and Presentation on January 30. The event includes a 2015 review, brunch and a 1900s Photo Presentation by Dave Walls. The annual review and volunteers slideshow will then be available online.

2016 promises to be a dynamic year as we look for ways to increase funds and appreciate GWBHS members and volunteers, while offering robust community presence through print and social media, numerous events, Apple Island Tours, an active website and Open Houses. Accession records are being transferred to Past Perfect for better management. Finally, the *Our School History* panels will be installed (see page 1 article) and the Apple Island nomination will be submitted to the Michigan State of Historic Preservation Office.

## Thank You to Departing Board Members

Bill McIsaac is a volunteer who has done it all. Over the years, he has been a board member, chaired the Museum Collection and Open House Committees, and served as webmaster and graphic designer. While Bill has stepped down from these roles, he will continue to share his extensive local history knowledge as a docent at Open Houses.

Melissa Gilbert has served on the board since 2013. She will continue with accession work and continue providing her museum archives expertise.

GWBHS is a better organization because of Bill's and Melissa's service. Board members play a vital role in leading the organization. Their committee work is greatly valued as well. We appreciate their commitment to GWBHS. Thank you.

## Recent Events

GWBHS could not provide so many great programs without the help of our wonderful volunteers. Thank you to those who have recently given their time and helped out!

### Michigan Military Academy Morning

Chris Concidine, Gina Gregory, Helen McAllister

### Autumn Nature Walk

Carol Fink

### Open Houses

Gwynne Cherfoli, Jim Cherfoli, Diane Eanes, Gina Gregory, Jennifer Oram, DuAnne Sonnevile, Lila Titus



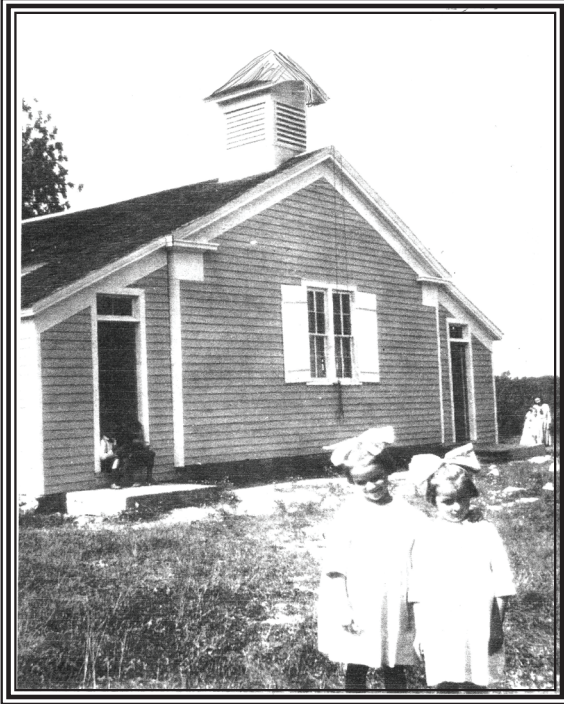
DuAnne Sonnevile demonstrates a spinning wheel during the December Open House at Orchard Lake Museum.



Mementos of World War I, on display during the November 2015 Open House.

# 'Our School History' Highlights

The *Our School History* project began with research and community outreach with the goal to create as complete an archive as possible of the history of West Bloomfield School District. The informational panels will be unveiled at the event on March 30, but here is a preview of some of the highlights.

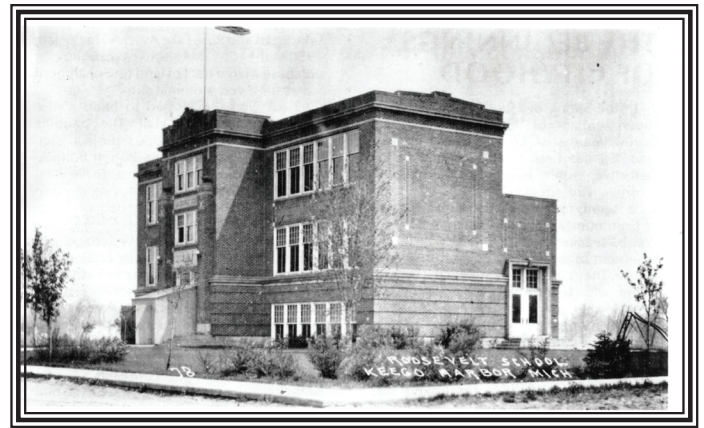


From *Our School History*: In 1866, Hartwell Green donated a portion of his land on Green Road and Savoi Trail for a one-room schoolhouse, complete with a bell. The classroom measured 20' by 34.' One teacher taught all eight grades. The students ranged in age from five to eighteen years old. (pictured: Green School, 1920)



Scotch School, 1951

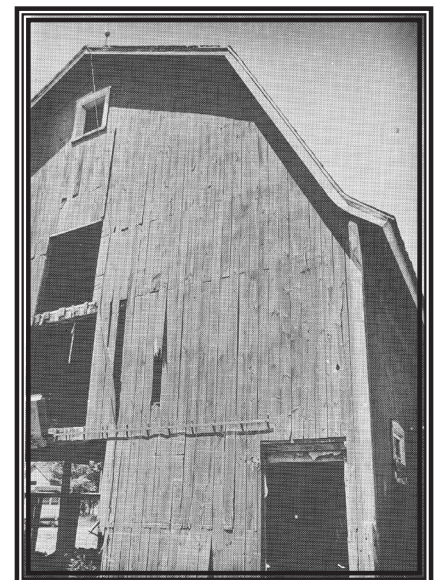
From the *Eccentric*, 1970: An old farmhouse on Orchard Lake Road at Green Road is going down to make way for the new West Bloomfield High School. Meanwhile *Eccentric* photographer Barbara Peters captured the rustic air of the place, the weathered old beams in the barn among other scenes. The West Bloomfield Board of Education offered the wood for sale and received a high bid of \$311 from Kenneth Estes of Holly, Mich.



From Wilma Webb's *This I Remember*: By 1920, the school was bursting at the seams and it was decided to build a new school on Cass Lake Road. It was named the Roosevelt School. I believe they opened the doors in September of 1920, with only one grade per room. During 1920 and 1921 there were only eight grades. In 1922 they added the ninth and each year after, they added another grade. The first graduating class was in 1925.



Scotch School bus, 1944



# 2016 EVENTS



Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society hosts and sponsors programs covering a wide variety of local history topics throughout the year. Visit [gwbhs.org](http://gwbhs.org) for more information and final event details.

## Annual Meeting & Historic Photos Presentation

*Saturday, January 30, 10 a.m.-noon.*

*Orchard Lake Schools, 3535 Commerce Rd., Dining Hall, Bldg. 15*

Annual meeting and photo presentation of 1900s West Bloomfield area by Dave Walls. \$15 includes brunch. By January 26, prepay at [gwbhs.org](http://gwbhs.org) or make reservations to [rsvp@gwbhs.org](mailto:rsvp@gwbhs.org) or 248.518.0871. Call with questions. No charge for annual meeting only.

## The History of African Americans in the US Marine Corps

*Sunday, February 28, 2 p.m., WB Library Main Meeting Room, 4600 Walnut Lake Road*

The Montford Point Detachment, a Detroit-based, nonprofit veterans' organization with the first African Americans to serve the Corps, share their history. Sponsored with West Bloomfield Library. No charge.

## Volunteer Opportunities Meeting

*Saturday, March 5, 10 a.m., Orchard Lake Museum, 3951 Orchard Lake Road*

Are you looking for flexible, interesting volunteer opportunities? Come learn our needs -- from one-time to long-term commitments. Learn about Apple Island Tours volunteer opportunities.

## Celebrating Our School History with West Bloomfield Schools

*Wednesday, March 30, 7 p.m., WB Library Main Meeting Room, 4600 Walnut Lake Road*

Celebrate the unveiling of each of the West Bloomfield Schools historical information exhibit panels with WBSD. Brief presentation. Sponsored with West Bloomfield School District and West Bloomfield Township Library. No charge.

## Spring Nature Walk

*Sunday, April 17, 2-3 p.m., Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary, 4700 Pontiac Trail*

Join Naturalist Carol Fink for a guided tour. Walk through rolling terrain and explore the breathtaking spring flowers. Sponsored with City of Orchard Lake Village. No charge.

## History LIVES in Grandma's Button Basket

*Wednesday, April 27, 7 p.m., WB Library Main Meeting Room, 4600 Walnut Lake Road*

Michigan Button Society garment fastener collector-historian Chris Parham shares her buttons and extensive knowledge. Q&A. Bring your family buttons for identification and care suggestions. Sponsored with West Bloomfield Township Library. No charge.

## Docent Training

*Wednesday, May 18, 7 p.m., Orchard Lake Museum, 3951 Orchard Lake Road*

Would you like to lead a tour on Apple Island or guide a 2nd grade class through the Orchard Lake Museum? Come see what it's all about. RSVP by Tuesday, May 17 to Gina, [gina@gwbhs.org](mailto:gina@gwbhs.org) or 248.622.7570

## Apple Island Tours

*Saturday, May 21 & Sunday, May 22, 11-5 p.m., Orchard Lake Museum, 3951 Orchard Lake Road*

Semi-guided tours of Apple Island. First come, first served. No reservations. 3:30 p.m. is last departure. \$15 adults, \$10 children 5-12 years (no kids under 5). \$5 GWBHS and Time Travelers members. Sponsored with West Bloomfield School District, West Bloomfield Library, City of Orchard Lake and Orchard Lake Schools.

## Join Us In a Memorial Day Parade

*Monday, May 30, 9 a.m. - noon, Keego Harbor and Sylvan Lake*

Walk or bike in the Monday Memorial Day parades! Or bring your vintage car! To participate contact DuAnne, 248.683.1542 or [duannesonneville@hotmail.com](mailto:duannesonneville@hotmail.com).

## National Trails Day Walk

*Saturday, June 4, 8:30 - 11 a.m., Walnut Lake Road entrance of WB Trail*

Celebrate National Trail's Day by walking the West Bloomfield Trail's scenic and historic rail-to-trail path beginning at the Walnut Lake Rd. entrance. Step off the trail to the Orchard Lake Museum for refreshments. See Parks and Recreation Brochure for more info. Sponsored with West Bloomfield Parks & Recreation. No charge.

## Volunteer Opportunities Meeting

*Saturday, June 11, 10 a.m., Orchard Lake Museum, 3951 Orchard Lake Road*

Are you looking for flexible, interesting volunteer opportunities? Come learn our needs -- from one-time to long-term commitments. 2017 events are being planned now! No charge.

## Appreciation Reception

*Wednesday, July 13, 6 - 8 p.m., Orchard Lake Museum, 3951 Orchard Lake Road*

Members and volunteers are invited for refreshments to this GWBHS appreciation reception. Complimentary drawing ticket included for choice of multiple prizes. RSVP by July 10 to [rsvp@gwbhs.org](mailto:rsvp@gwbhs.org) or 248.518.0871.

## Kit Homes in Michigan

*Wednesday, September 28, 7 p.m.*

*WB Library Main Meeting Room, 4600 Walnut Lake Road*

Join Sears kit homeowners and enthusiasts Andrew and Wendy Mutch as they explore the fascinating history of kit and catalog homes. Learn about Michigan's role in the kit house industry and see examples from vintage catalogs. See a photographic tour of the many kit homes located in West Bloomfield area communities. Sponsored with West Bloomfield Township Library. No charge.

## Pine Lake Cemetery Tour

*Saturday, October 8, 10 - 11:30 a.m., northeast corner of Lone Pine & Middlebelt Roads*

Visit Pine Lake Cemetery and learn about prominent local residents buried there, from pioneer John Green to football hero Nick Pietrosante, and Detroit Tiger Norm Cash. \$5. Optional restaurant stop following. Contact Sue Williams to docent at 248.757.2451.

## Autumn Nature Walk

*Sunday, October 16, 2 p.m., Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary, 4700 Pontiac Trail*

Join Naturalist Carol Fink for a guided tour. Walk through rolling terrain and explore seasonal autumn beauty. Sponsored with City of Orchard Lake Village. No charge.

## Monthly Open Houses

*Second Sundays, 1-4 p.m., Orchard Lake Museum, 3951 Orchard Lake Road*

Enjoy temporary and permanent exhibits interpreting area history and culture. Hands on activities. Occasionally guest presenters share their interests. No charge.



Orchard Lake Museum  
**Phone 248.757.2451**  
 3951 Orchard Lake Road  
 Orchard Lake MI 48323

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**Board of Directors**

- |                   |                                       |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
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| Anita Pinson      | Vice President<br>Recording Secretary |
| Sue Williams      | Treasurer                             |
| DuAnne Sonnevile  | Membership                            |
| Carol Fink        | Corresponding Secretary               |
| Helen Jane Peters | Historian                             |
| Hannah Dagg       | History Matters Editor                |
| Diane Eanes       | Volunteer Coordinator                 |

**Committee Chairs**

- |                     |                                  |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Don Newman          | Group Programs                   |
| Christian Sonnevile | Development Co-chair             |
| Christy Forhan      | Our School History Project Chair |



The *Our School History* project is reaching a major milestone. Read more inside!

Pictured: Scotch School teacher, Lena Eva Langdon, 18, and several of her students, 1916

**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.



**Membership & Donation Form**

Membership Year: Jan. 1 to Dec. 31     New Member     Renewal

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

- I prefer to receive my newsletter by email link.
- Please contact me about volunteering with GWBHS.

*Please make checks payable to GWBHS. Credit card payments are accepted through PayPal at gwbhs.org. GWBHS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible according to IRS regulations.*

Membership includes access to Time Travelers reciprocal membership network  
 Mail to: GWBHS 3951 Orchard Lake Road Orchard Lake , MI 48323.

- Senior Individual    \$15
- Individual    \$20
- Senior Couple    \$30
- Family    \$40
- Premier    \$50
- Business    \$100
- Life    \$600

Donation    \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount    \$ \_\_\_\_\_