



## ~ Memories ~

Newsletter of the Jenison Historical Association & Museum

[jenisonhistory.org](http://jenisonhistory.org)

28 Port Sheldon, Jenison, Michigan  
49429

### JHA Board Members

Chair - Liz Timmer [2023] 457-3708

Curator/Tours - Ken Williams [2023]  
772-6523

Treasurer - Ruth Lowing [2023] 540-4709

Social Secretary - Nellie DeLaat [2022]  
457-3708

Recording Secretary - Linda Droog [2021]  
457-3016

Archivist - Barb Semeyn [2023] 560-6383

Maintenance/Historian - Mike Timmer [2022]  
616-204-5833

Trustees =  
Yvonne Williams [2023] 772-6523

Gene Kort [2022] 534-6769

Township Rep - Becky Steele

Editor - Ronnie Aungst [ ] 780-1056

### Contact Information

Museum phone: 457-4398 to leave a message

Email: [info@jenisonhistory.org](mailto:info@jenisonhistory.org)

Facebook: Jenison History Association

### Monthly Meetings

April 15, 2021 -Meeting:  
Due to COVID-19, our meetings are being held on Zoom. If you wish to participate, please contact Liz Timmer @ 457-3708



### Membership & Volunteering

Support the local history and museum by becoming a member. A year's dues is just \$10 [Jan. to Dec.].

We are always excited to have new people volunteer. Come to a meeting or open house once we re-open. We will be happy to show you what we do and how you can join in.

## Calendar of Events

### Museum Open Dates - Free Admission

**COVID precautions [including mask wearing] will be enforced consistent with current guidelines from the CDC and/or Ottawa County Health Dept. If you have questions before your visit, please contact us.**

Tuesdays - 10 am to Noon	Saturdays - 2 pm to 4 pm
— — —	April 17
May 4	May 15
June 1	June 19
July 6	July 17
August 3	August 21
September 7	September 18
October 5	October 16
November 2	— — —

### - Christmas at the Jenison Museum -

December 4, 2021 - 1pm to 4 pm

January 8, 2022 - 2 pm to 4 pm

*Also by appointment for individuals or groups: Call 616-457-4398 or [www.jenisonhistory.org](http://www.jenisonhistory.org) to schedule.*

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If you are interested in preserving Jenison/Georgetown history, the Jenison Historical Association meets at 6:45 pm at the Georgetown Library on the following Thursdays during 2021:

April 15	May 20	June 17	July 15
September 16	October 21	November 18	December - No Meeting

\* **NOTE:** Our meetings at this time are on Zoom, please contact Liz Timmer if you wish to be included.

## West Michigan's Early Beginning

In 1820, the America Fur Company chose **Rix Robinson** to be their central fur trader in west Michigan when **Madeline La Framboise**, a half breed Ottawa woman, retired to Mackinac Island. He took over her trading post located where the Grand River meets the Thornapple River in what is now known as Ada. By 1827, Robinson was successfully managing twenty trading posts along the shores of Lake Michigan. Robinson gave Grand Haven its name in 1835. The biggest impact to the fur industry in Michigan was that Robinson facilitated the Treaty of 1836 which gave half of the lower peninsula of Michigan to the federal government. In return he received \$23,000. This treaty allowed for the wholesale development and settlement of the state and also had a devastating effect on the Native Americans. During this time he persuaded many of his relatives to settle in Michigan. By the time Michigan joined the union in 1837, Robinson, who was a wealthy man, had closed all his trading posts. **Ottawa** [Odawa] Indians occupied the western half of Michigan as did the **Ojibwa** and **Potawatomi**, known as the **Council of Three Fires**.

*Source: Treaty of Washington [1836]; Rix Robinson —From Wikipedia*

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## Historical & Business Compenium of Ottawa County, by Potts & Conger, Publishers, Grand Haven, Mich., copyright 1892

### Georgetown Township, Volume 1, pages 46 - 48

In 1839, Georgetown, consisting of four townships - 5 and 6 north, 13 and 14 west - was authorized to organize by the state legislature. However, it seems that it must have failed to take advantage of the authority granted, as in 1840 the legislature authorized the attachment to Ottawa in case it was not organized. In the early history of Georgetown its limited were changed almost every year. Georgetown was an extension of the Grandville settlement. Grandville, in Kent county, and Jenisonville, just over the line into Georgetown, are really one village. They are one settlement divided by a county line. It is said that the first settler over the line in Georgetown was an old bachelor, **Lorenzo French**, who settled in 1835. The first family was that of **Lemuel Jenison**, who came with his wife and children the same year. Lemuel Jenison was killed by a fallen tree in 1837. His wife died in 1840. They were the parents of the Jenisons whose large and successful business operations have long since made their names familiar to the public generally. The early history of Georgetown is a history of lumbering operations. The leading lumbermen were the **Jenisons**; others were **Galen Eastman**, **John Haire** and the **Weatherwaxs**. Georgetown contributed a vast amount of pine to the lumber trade of early days. There was for a long time but a sparse population in the township. In 1845 there were but 133 persons, and in 1850 but 196, which proves that the township was not building permanent homes very fast.

Among the prominent residents of Georgetown in 1843 the following names appear: the **Jenisons, Freman Burton, Charles Corey, E. F. Bosworth** and **Stephen L. Lowing**. At that time there were but two homes in Jenisonville, **Seymour Cunningham** and **Francis Spear. Booth Perry, Jonathan Scott** and **Andrew Rowles** came soon after. The first school was number 1, on section eight. It was organized in 1845. The building was a frame one and cost \$112. **Miss Ann Evarts**, now **Mrs. Wm. N. Angell**, of Grand Haven, was the first teacher. The second school was organized soon after and taught by **Miss Bemis**, afterwards **Mrs. Avery Brittain**, of Grandville.

In 1838 the first mills, a gang saw mill and a grist mill, were built at Jenison, by **George Ketchum**. He bought a large tract of land and embarked in an extensive business, but his grist mill was destroyed by fire; he failed and went to California. The Jenisons bought the waster power and 1,200 acres of land. **Hiram Jenison** ran the first lumber raft down Grand River.

Blendon Landing was quite a thriving little burg for some years, located on the river in the north-west part of the town. A mill was located here and a ship yard. The following schooners were built at Blendon: Wright, Eveline, Lumberman, George W. Wescott. Jenisonville lies in the north-east corner of the town on Grand river, and was platted by Dorr Skeels and L.& L. Jenison, May 20, 1885. The plat of L & L Jenison's addition was recorded August 20, 1890. Hudsonville was plated April 3, 1890. - End -

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Be safe, stay well and we look forward to seeing you at the Museum!