



~ Memories ~

Newsletter of the Jenison Historical Association & Museum

jenisonhistory.org

28 Port Sheldon, Jenison, Michigan
49429

JHA Board Members

Chair - Liz Timmer [2023] 616-457-3708

Curator/Tours - Ken Williams [2023]
616-772-6523

Treasurer - Ruth Lowing [2023] 616-540-4709

Social Secretary - Nellie DeLaat [2022]
616-457-3708

Recording Secretary - Linda Droog [2024]
616-457-3016

Archivist - Barb Semeyn [2023] 616-560-6383

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

Trustees =
Yvonne Williams [2023] 616-772-6523

Gene Kort [2022] 616-534-6769

Township Rep - Becky Steele

Editor - Ronnie Aungst 616-780-1056

Contact Information

Museum phone: 616-457-4398 to leave a message

Email: info@jenisonhistory.org

Facebook: Jenison History Association

JHA Monthly Meetings

Our meetings are once a month on the following dates at 6:45 p.m. at the Georgetown Township Library. For further info contact: Liz Timmer @ 616-457-3708

April 21-Thursday

May 19-Thursday

June 16-Thursday

July 21-Thursday

August 18-Thursday

September 15-Thursday

October 20-Thursday

November 17-Thursday

No meeting in December

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. We will be happy to show you what we do and how you can join in.

Calendar of Events

Museum Open Dates - Free Admission

Current Covid guidelines will be followed.

Tuesdays	Saturdays
-	April 16 - 2 pm to 4 pm
May 3 - 10 am to Noon	May 21 - 2 pm to 4 pm
June 7 - 10 am to Noon	June 18 - 2 pm to 4 pm
July 5 - 10 am to Noon	July 16 - 2 pm to 4 pm
August 2 -10 am to Noon	August 20 - 2 pm to 4 pm
September 6 - 10 am to Noon	September 17 - 2 pm to 4 pm
October 4 - 10 am to Noon	October 15 - 2 pm to 4 pm
November 1 - 10 am to Noon	—

Also by appointment for individuals or groups: Call 616-457-4398 or www.jenisonhistory.org to schedule

SPECIAL EVENTS

Free admission unless otherwise indicated. Questions, call 616-457-4398

GRAND LADY BOAT RIDE SATURDAY, JULY 23 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. Tickets required - \$16.00 per person	JHA 50TH ANNIVERSARY OPEN HOUSE SATURDAY, AUGUST 20 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. at JENISON MUSEUM	BLISSVELDT ROMANCE [MELODRAMA] & 1916 INTERURBAN PICNIC MOVIE TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 1:30 p.m. at the GEORGETOWN TOWNSHIP LIBRARY
CHRISTMAS AT THE MUSEUM SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2022 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. JENISON MUSEUM	*	CHRISTMAS AT THE MUSEUM SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 2023 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. JENISON MUSEUM

Local History Room, Georgetown Township Library

Beginning in March, all visitors to the Local History Room can place their name into a drawing for a commemorative ornament of the Jenison Mill. Drawings will be held at the end of March, April and May. [*non-members only*]

Open hours for the History Room are 11AM - 1PM every Wednesday; members of the Jenison Historical Association are available to answer questions and help facilitate research.

CAN YOU HELP?

We have a nice-sized collection of Georgetown Township school Yearbooks and Class Pictures and are looking for missing years. Every newsletter we will be featuring schools with the years we still need. If you have any of these [or others], and are willing to donate them, you may drop them off at the Library History Room on Wednesdays, between 11am and 1pm or at the Georgetown Library's Main Desk.

Bauerwood/Consolidated School
Before 1958; 1975 - 1987 and 1991-2002

Jenison High School
1993

Grandville High School [*Jenison students attended Grandville until 1970*]
1929 - 1930; 1932 - 1933; 1938 - 1969 [all years]

Thank you for your help.

Can You Help??

We are trying to identify some photos.
If you know who this young lady is,

please drop me a note at
gmira@yahoo.com

or call 616-780-1056.

Thanks for your help.



In our collection is a book about Haire school by Dorothy Hubbard Skinner. In researching Mrs. Skinner we discovered the Grand Rapids Public Library has a collection of her work. An account of her work is at the end of these stories.

MEMORIES of DOROTHY E. [HUBBARD] SKINNER

Part One

OLD TOBY

Our horse, Old Toby, was bought soon after father purchased the farm in the spring of 1895. He was a well established part of the family when most of us were born. From the high-stepping alert and speedy horse, we saw his age and become the slow and reliable animal that was perfectly safe for all the children to drive. He soon became as much a part of the community as the rest of the family. He was our means of contact with the rest of the community.

He took us to school, he brought us groceries from the stores and grain to the mill. He took me to the music teacher; a trip to Bauer on Saturday nights for the boys; on summer Sundays he took as many to the Disciple Church as mother could coax out of the river. Father canvassed Georgetown with him when he took Supervisor Assessments, as well as the Masonic Lodge in Grandville. He went to Grange, both for the meetings and the dancing, to the Gleaners and Macabbees at Bauer, to every family picnic and funerals. Old Toby and the 4th of July were synonymous. He was put into the stable in Jenison on every interurban trip into Grand Rapids for shopping. Heavy old Toby and that topless carriage wasn't always the most stylish method of traveling but he certainly was dependable, and did get us to places we would never have made otherwise.

On rainy or stormy days Toby took us to school and was so trusty we merely turned him around and he returned home with no driver. The neighbors all knew that Toby would return, but one day a stranger met him and hoping to aid the owner tied him to a telephone pole. Another neighbor untied him and sent him on his way home.

There was a flash flood in the early spring of 1911. Toby had crossed the bridge in the "Big Gully" to graze in the east lot. When he tried to return, the bridge was under a foot of water, he missed the bridge and slid into the creek with its steep banks. Father tried to pull him out with ropes and a team of horses, they were _____ handicapped by the fast rising water. Toby soon became so weakened, chilled and weary, that they realized they could not save him. To end his suffering, Father shot him.

SPOKEN WORDS BY WIRE!!!

Amazing! — that was how we felt when telephones arrived. The First Citizen's Automatic telephone was established in Grand Rapids in 1903; but it was about 1908 that the first country lines reached Georgetown, and the same year when the poles and wires were strung down to our farm.

Central or the Exchange was put in the L. & L. Jenison store at Jenison. The first phones with their old fashioned boxes hanging on the wall, the bell you rang with a crank to call a neighbor or Central were wonderful but sadly misused.

The ten or twelve party lines were better than the daily paper for gleaning the local gossip. The women used the phone constantly and each and every one thought any ring was theirs to answer or listen to depending on the number of rings. All news was public property and people conscientiously opposed to any other type of digression felt the ring of the telephone and the payment of their bill, entitled them to all the privileges and that of *rubbering* was foremost.

L. & L. Jenison was a busy store, and if the clerk was counting eggs or filling kerosene cans, his position as "Central" was secondary. To him the switch board, the antics of the children, the long drawn out gossip on the phone was a nuisance, and he often let it ring until the caller's persistency wore him down. To get Central before the seventh or eight ring was unusual. This indifference was a great exasperation to the women but I can remember when to father it was nearly a disaster. One of our work horses had out an artery in its leg and was fast bleeding to death. Father and the boys were putting on tourniquets, while Mother was frantically trying to phone for the veterinarian, Dr. Woolston, through Central. Well, Central didn't answer, and Grandfather Luke drove up to Jenison for him. There was much indignation among the patrons of that line, as everyone had listened and knew the Hubbard's were in trouble, and that Central didn't answer. So many confronted the storekeeper and his clerks, for neglecting their duty that for a long time the service was very good. Soon the glamor, newness and excitement of a telephone wore away, and the patrons became more sensible in its usage.

Part Two of Mrs. Skinner's stories will be in the July newsletter.

Grand Rapids Public Library listing of Mrs. Skinner's work:

Dorothy E. Hubbard Skinner (1897-1979) compiled typescripts of various resources that documented Michigan history. She completed this work during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Topics relate mainly to West Michigan, such as the Grand River, Lamont, Fallasburg, Grand Rapids, interurbans, Byron Township, Alpine Township, Georgetown Township, Plainfield Township, Haire School and lumbering. The collection also contains transcripts of a handful of Civil War letters from West Michigan Soldiers. Skinner also compiled a Lowing family genealogy and wrote a history of the Lowing family. The scrapbooks deal with many history topics. Grand Rapids History Center Repository, Dorothy E. Hubbard Skinner, Collection 110

NOTE: Dorothy E. Hubbard Skinner was the daughter of George Skinner and Nettie Lowing; wife of Almond V. Skinner.

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