



FLAT RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FRHS LogMark

Summer, 2024

Board of Directors:

Keith Hudson, President; Robin Walter, Vice President & School Liaison; Jean Hudson, Secretary; Lee Beard, Treasurer; Trustees: Judy Gager/Logmark, Larry Alman, Steve Kemp, Bill Garlick, Cory Smith, Susan McDonnell, Ryan Schlehuber

MAKE NOTE OF THESE COMING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES AT THE MUSEUM:

August 10th -2-4:30 Another **Sandy the Pony Birthday Party** is coming soon. Put it on your calendar and bring the kids to the party for fun and games and prizes and Meijer birthday treats. We had a great time last year and look forward to another!



August 16/17/18th – Look for our mascot, “Jack, the lumberjack” in the Danish Festival Parade as we celebrate our Danish heritage and the Festival Anniversary. **Extra open hours during Festival: Friday noon-4:30, Sat.1-4:30, Sun 2-4:30**, so plenty of time to bring your family & friends to visit and learn more and share the history of our community.

******The Flat River Museum will be CLOSED LABOR DAY WEEKEND so everyone can enjoy a break ******

September 8th 2-4:30 will be **Grandparent Day** at the Museum. We invite grandparents, grandchildren and EVERYONE in-between for a day of creating cherished memories with their loved ones while exploring the museum’s many exhibits. Bring your phone/camera!



October 25, 26, 27 – Haunted Museum Fright Nights for the whole family---BOO!!!!
October 31st- Trick or Treat at the Museum as you meander the neighborhood.
Ghosts and goblins, spooks and more- and candy handed out on all three floors!

Coming soon: A brand new website full of information and photos of our wonderful museum and exhibits!

In the works: A Podcast of interviews to learn more about our past from people of the present!

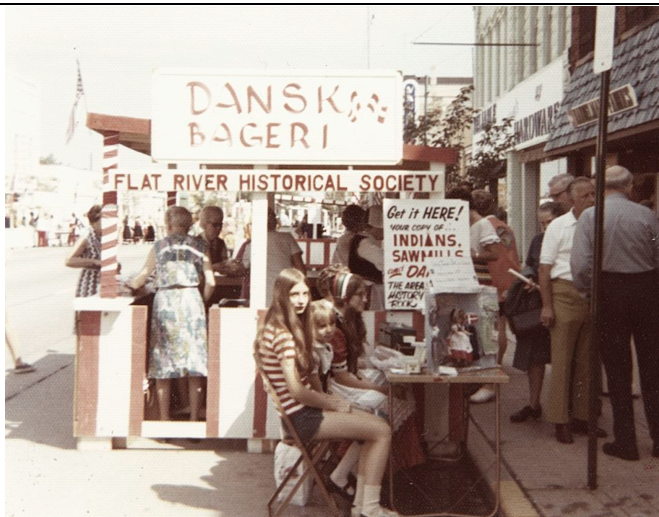
Being planned: Posted QR codes on our displays so you can seek more information about each exhibit.

Grateful for: Our volunteer greeters, docents, student activity assistants, gardeners, researchers- who help with all aspects of the museum. Contact Char Lothian, 616-894-0550, to offer YOUR time and assistance!

Letting you know: That your membership in the Flat River Historical Society provides you with all kinds of historical programs and workshops of the Historical Society of Michigan! “History Hounds” online are hour-long programs on all kinds of interesting people, places and events. Workshops are available on a variety of topics. Go to hsmichigan.org to check out all the benefits you can receive THRU YOUR FRHS MEMBERSHIP!!!

Thanks for the many loving donations given to the museum to honor/remember these friends and loved ones:
H.O Williams, Shirley Vining Neumann, Audrey Olsen, Jayne Johnson, Sue Diehl, Marshall Walter, Ken Gager
We appreciate all of your support.

Happy Anniversary, Danish Festival! We share some of your history!



From the very early days when our Historical Society was raising funds to start a museum. One project was to have a Dansk Bageri (Danish Bakery) booth during the Danish Festival. (The bakery sign has since been donated to the Danish Cultural Center for their new museum.)

In 1968, fundraising for a museum was discussed since artifacts were being donated and displayed in local store windows to get interest in a museum. They decided to have a bake sale during Festival and “members were to donate Danish items like rye bread, coffeecakes, dill bread, Kliener and others.” Early minutes indicated “Chairman Betty Saeger reported \$116.62 from the Danish Festival bake sale in 1968.” In 1968, it was reported that there would be nine Danish food booths, plus the Danish Sisterhood brunch. By January, 1971, a museum fund nest egg of over \$1400 was accumulated from membership dues of about 110 members plus proceeds from the food booths at Danish Festival.

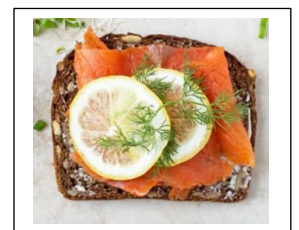
(Later historical society notes report the ladies decided it was easier to donate money than to spend all that time making baked goods and working the booth!)

A historical personal recollection about Danish Festival Food Booths:

In the 1980s I recall, several ladies were contacted by the Danish Festival committee who felt there should be more Danish food available during the Festival. They offered to set up a food booth in front of the Chapter III store (corner Cass/Lafayette). The First State Bank on the opposite corner offered its breakroom kitchenette as a staging/storage area.

The food committee decided to sell open face sandwiches, Danish meatballs, Danish pastries and iced tea, lemonade and coffee. Several older ladies (probably Danish) offered to make the meatballs ahead of time and freeze them. Pizza Hut donated pizza boxes so sandwiches could be made a day ahead and layered in the boxes to put in the refrigerator. A few card tables with red/white décor were set up inside the “café” booth for customers. We wore Danish outfits and were quite proud of our Danish food booth and enjoyed doing it for several years.

One year a Danish furniture company from Grand Rapids had a booth and the owners visited our booth to check us out. They suggested ways we might be more “authentic” and invited us to visit them in Grand Rapids to learn more. That fall, several of us visited their home where, along with their Danish friends, we learned how to properly make several kinds of open face sandwiches using typical foods like fish and even caviar and how to garnish them with chopped vegetables etc. Our samplings after each lesson included a glass of wine! MMM! We used some of the tips the next year, although the caviar type was beyond our budget!



After several years, the ladies making the meatballs decided not to continue, so we purchased frozen meatballs and just added them to our sauce in the slow cooker. Several patrons remarked how they appreciated our “homemade” Danish meatballs instead of the frozen ones others made. If they only knew!

JG

**We congratulate the Danish Festival planners on their anniversary of this celebration of Danish heritage!
Come and visit the museum to see the special exhibit of Danish artifacts and memorabilia on display.**



Bock, Bells, Bicycles and Baldwin Lake



Wyman Bock (1886–1968) was an early historian and antique collector in Greenville. The Flat River Historical Society is grateful for the records he kept and his historical items donated to the museum.

Long before newspaper articles were electronically scanned and digitized, Wyman Bock used his eyes to scan old newspapers and records ... and his own digits(fingers) to type lists of dates and historical items that were in the paper. We have pages and pages of his typed lists that form a summary of our town's history and are the backbone of much of our archives and research.

WYMAN BOCK COLLECTION	
DATE	DESCRIPTION
1854	First newspaper published in Greenville
1867	First ball game played in Greenville
1869	First railroad reached Greenville
1870	First telephone in town
1878	First bicycle shown in town
1890	First tornado hit Greenville
1895	First bicycle bloomers and knickerbockers made their advent in town
1904	Roy Fries had a leg broken when Stanley Kemp ran into his bicycle with an automobile and knocked him to the ground
1904	J.T. Ridley Egg Emporium burned and was then rebuilt into the present museum building

They tell of many “firsts”: first newspaper 1854, first ball game 1867, first bicycles shown in town 1869, first railroad reached Greenville 1870, first telephone in town 1878. Even this: “May 24, 1890 Tornado hit Greenville - damaged ConG.Church-Hydes Gro. Tower Fdry-and Belknap Lumberyards.” *(Wonder if Wyman remembered this, as he would have been about 4 years old at the time?)*

In 1895, it was noted that “bicycle bloomers and knickerbockers had made their advent in town!” In November, 1904 “Roy Fries had a leg broken when Stanley Kemp ran into his bicycle with an automobile and knocked him to the ground.” (This was the same week the J.T. Ridley Egg Emporium burned and was then rebuilt into the present museum building!)



Speaking of bicycles, one of the artifacts in our “Postcards from Baldwin Lake” exhibit is an Eagle bicycle manufactured c.1888-1900. It has wooden rims and belonged to Wyman Bock. It was purchased in 1899 when he was 13 years old. One can picture him cruising up and down the streets of old Greenville and perhaps even enjoying a ride around Baldwin Lake. In later years, he may have commuted on his bicycle from his home at 300 W.Washington Street to his position as mayor at City Hall from 1930-34 and again in 1940.



Some of the antiques donated to the museum by Wyman Bock's son and daughter were a bicycle and the fire bell. Robert Augustine, VP of the historical society is in the center of the photo.

Another of the many artifacts Bock's family donated to the museum shortly before his death was the fire bell from city hall. It was used from 1876 to 1941 to announce fires, election victories, major news events! And even severe weather. *(Wonder if it announced the aforementioned tornado?)*

The bell had been given to outgoing mayor Wyman Bock in 1941 as a gesture of appreciation for his service. It now sits in a prominent place behind the museum.



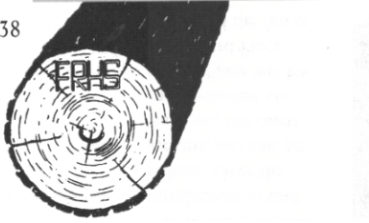
Besides the bell there are many other artifacts in our Victorian Garden that tell their stories. Come at any time to visit and enjoy this beautiful oasis!

LOGMARK

FLAT RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 188

Greenville, MI 48838



Museum is open Saturdays
and Sundays from
2-4:30 pm
Longer hours for Danish
Festival weekend
Closed Labor Day weekend

Flat River Historical Society

P. O. Box 188 • Greenville, MI 48838 • 616-754-5296

APPLICATION FOR NEW or RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP

Dues payable at the beginning of the calendar year – pay online at flatrivermuseum.org – click “donate”

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Phone _____

Email address _____ Logmarks will be emailed unless checked: _____

(**Emailed newsletters are in color and save postage costs**)

___ Single - \$15.00 ___ Family - \$25.00 ___ Annual Business - \$50.00

___ New ___ Renewal Date _____ Additional Donation _____

Would you like to be a volunteer? _____ The Flat River Historical Society needs you!

Fill in this membership form and return it with your check to the above address or pay online at flatrivermuseum.org.
Dues are payable at the beginning of the calendar year. If you have already paid your membership dues for the year 2024,
we **thank you** and want you to know that your membership is the lifeblood of the society.