



FLAT RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FRHS LogMark

Newsletter- Spring, 2021

Board of Directors:

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**The Museum
Is Opening
in June!!!**

THE MUSEUM IS OPENING SOON...

Members of the Flat River Historical Society will be given first priority on visit times as a thanks for their support! The first Open House weekend JUNE 5 and 6 will be for MEMBERS ONLY from 2:00 to 4:30. The museum will open to the public beginning June 12 and 13, Saturdays and Sundays from 2:00 to 4:30 pm.

Since we must limit the number of visitors at one time, please reserve your visit time by calling the museum, 616-754-5296 or President Keith Hudson at 616-894-1783. (If no one answers, leave your name and phone number, the date and time you wish to visit the museum and how many visitors there will be. Someone will contact you to confirm your time.) We will be observing current Covid guidelines for museums and appreciate everyone's compliance.

Meet Miranda Drow, our new intern!

Miranda will be learning and doing a variety of museum duties throughout the summer to gain museum experience and earn CMU academic credits.

Miranda was born and raised in Gowen and attended Lincoln Heights, Greenville Middle School and graduated from GHS in 2000. She grew up in a second-generation family-owned business, Greenville Steel Sales, where she has worked for 22 years. She has a 16-year old daughter, Alyson, and a beautiful granddaughter, Sophia, almost 8 months old.

With the encouragement of her husband, Darrell, Miranda went back to school at Montcalm Community College and in December, 2020, graduated with honors, earning a certificate in Liberal Studies with an Associates Degree in Science and Arts. She transferred to CMU and just signed her museum studies minor and major in anthropology.

She currently resides in Gowen, but plans on moving to Prescott, Michigan, where they purchased a house last summer. Besides working in her family business AND working part time at MCC 's Greenville campus when needed, Miranda loves to read, swim and bike – and learn about history, which is why she is interning at Flat River Historical Museum! Welcome!

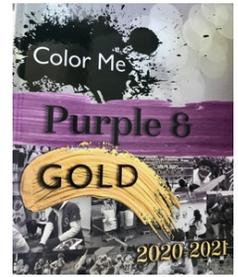


Welcome, Miranda!

Have you checked out our newly revised webpage at www.flatrivermuseum.org
Leave us a message in the Contact section to let us know you visited it!



OUR THANKS TO GREENVILLE HIGH SCHOOL for donating a new 2021 yearbook, as well as 26 past yearbooks for our Collection! Yearbooks can be helpful when doing genealogy or other research! **These are the Hi-Life issues we STILL NEED:** 1920 and 1922 (tho not sure both were published); 1937, 1939. 1941, 1942, 1949, 1960, 1972, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2013, 2019.



We cleared out a storage room from headto..... toe!
and discovered these Fabulous Finds...

A whole collection of Hair Braids from John Green family members accompanied by quaint poems:

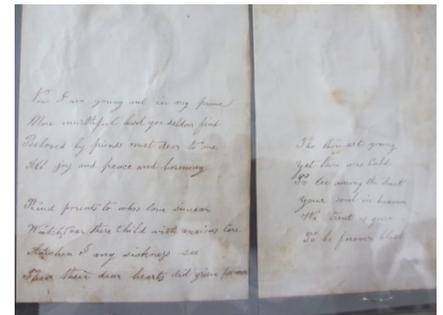


John Green (son)
age 20 1861.

Susannah M Green
aged 13 1853

*Now I am young and in my prime
More mirthful heart you seldom find
Beloved by friends most dear to me
All joy and peace and harmony*

*Kind parents to whose love sincere
Watch oer their child with anxious love
And when I any sickness see
Then their dear hearts did grieve for me.*



(Hair braids were emblems of love that acted as personal records of family and friends, both living and deceased. Since they didn't have photography, they would snip some hair off a person (living or dead) and make something from it to remember them by. Because hair does not decay, it was a way to make loved ones immortal. Some women even saved hair from their hairbrush to use. The practice was most popular from 1840-1870. Although most hair braids have lost their stories, the Green family hair braids are taped to paper with names and dates and a poignant original poem written on the back to remember them by.)

Have you joined Flat River Historical Society or renewed your membership yet?

If not, use the form on the cover of this newsletter – or go to our new website and click on the “Support Us” tab to see all the ways you can participate. Since being closed, our donation box at the door has also been empty, so your support is very important to us as we strive to make the history of our community exciting for all to experience. **When you shop on Amazon**, you can also benefit us by using Smile.Amazon and selecting Flat River Historical Society as your charity to support. Thanks so much!

In return, you'll get all the first information about openings, activities, events and programs and, as a member of FRHS, you also have free access to many programs of the Historical Society of Michigan (hsmichigan.org). Join or renew today by using our website: www.flatrivermuseum.org



**Holland is the TULIP CAPITAL –
Greenville to be PETUNIA CITY???
AT LEAST THAT WAS THE PLAN IN 1933 !!!!**

In the fall of 1932, the Greenville Federation of Women's Clubs met and proposed to select a city flower for Greenville. Many flowers were discussed, their values and disadvantages, and finally the petunia was chosen, "because the petunia will grow with very little encouragement and blooms all summer long with little care" (unlike the tulip, which blooms and is gone!) They could envision beds of petunias forming showy displays all over town, with a profusion of blooms shading from white, thru pink to deep purple.

To provide some encouragement for their plan, the Federation would buy seed and distribute it free in the spring of 1933. "All that is needed is a little public pride and a portion of ambition to prepare the flower bed", the newspaper said. "Citizens should plant these seeds in a prominent place in their yards. In that manner passersby will also enjoy their beauty." Full directions on planting and growing were given in the newspaper.

Seed was available at the Daily News office and at City Hall. Two pounds (!?) of the seed was available to be given to everyone who will plant and care for it in order that "our city flower may be blooming everywhere in conspicuous places in the city." The goal was to plant petunias along every street where there is a curb to make "Petunia Lanes of Beauty".

A few days later, the Daily News reported "The appeal a few days ago for cooperation in making Greenville the Petunia City... is meeting with whole-hearted response." People were even buying MORE seed and enlarging their flower beds. "Midsummer will surely see a profusion of flowers."

There was to be a contest in August of 1933 for the "best" petunias plantings, with three prizes in each category: Best curb display and Best window box on Lafayette Street - and on Washington Street - and on "any other street"! Best bed of petunias visible from the street; Best backyard bed NOT visible from the street; Best hanging basket; Best display at Baldwin Lake (within city limits); Best display at an oil station; Any other attractive display not covered by the list; AND a sweepstake prize! (How could you NOT win??) However, you had to register to compete so the judges would know where to look – and it didn't matter if you used the free seeds or got your own.

The next year [1934] twice as much seed was bought and distributed both by the Federation and the city council. The contest ran again the following year with the same judges – and some of the same winners!

In 1935 a mention in the paper about the city of Cadillac planting a lot of zinnias brought the editorial comment "Wonder how long it will be before Greenville will get to work in earnest on its projected Petunia program? Aren't we passing up a good bet?" A May 1935 report of a city council meeting only said "Greenville's petunia planting project was discussed but no action was taken."

Apparently Greenville would never become "Petunia City"!

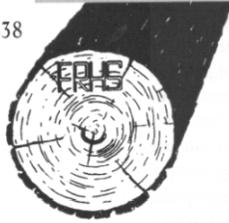
(The Victorian Garden at the museum will soon have some petunias – and has plenty of other lovely plantings. The historical exhibits now have panels of information by each artifact, so you can learn about the brick pavers that form the walkway, the importance of the firebell, the millstone and other items. There's also historical information about the museum building as you walk up the ramp to visit. See you soon!)

LOGMARK

FLAT RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 188

Greenville, MI 48838



MUSEUM IS OPENING

For Members Only

June 5 and 6

Reserve your time!

Open to the public as

of June 12 and 13

flatrivermuseum.org

Flat River Historical Society

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

APPLICATION FOR NEW or RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP

You can now use our new website to join, renew, support or volunteer: www.flatrivermuseum.org

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email address _____ Logmarks will be emailed unless checked: _____

Phone _____

___ New ___ Renewal Date _____

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

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 use the form on our website.

Dues are payable at the beginning of the calendar year. If you have already paid your membership dues for the year 2021, we **thank you**, and want you to know that your membership is the lifeblood of the society.