

CHESTERFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SUMMER NEWSLETTER



June 2020

2020 Officers

President—Kathy Vosburg

Vice-President—Rick DeClaire

Secretary—Adam Mueller

Treasurer—Marsha Lathrop



23 Mile Road near the Koenig dahlia farm

Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

-George Santayana

Chesterfield Township History:

Focus on Springtime

At various times, Chesterfield Township has been home to two different, famous flower facilities.

The first was the Kaleb Tulip Farm, which was located on Gratiot, south of 22 Mile Road.



The Kaleb Farm Windmill on Gratiot at 22 Mile Road

It was marked by a giant windmill, which met an unfortunate end when a plane landed on it in 1960, killing its five passengers and scattering remnants over miles. The farm, which was known all over for its tulips, meandered out and sold the land in the mid-1960s.

The other major flower operation was located at the border of Chesterfield Township and New Baltimore at 23 Mile Road and Main Street. It was Lakeside Gardens, run by the Koenig family, and in the 1950s caused the area to be known as the “Dahlia Capital of the World.” They created their own type of dahlias!



Lakeside Gardens in the 1950s (Courtesy of Jim Genso)



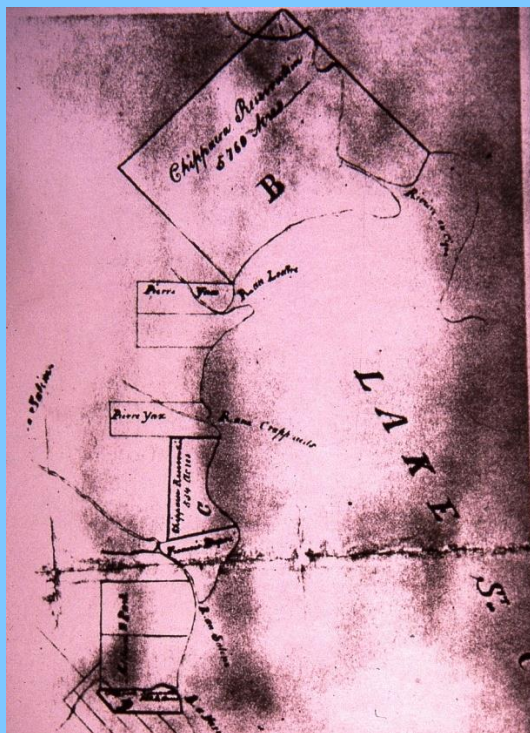
Lakeside Gardens (Courtesy of Jim Genso)

Did You Know?

What would your guess be if someone asked you what you thought the oldest road in the township was it Gratiot Avenue? 23 Mile Road? Beatrice Court?

The answer is Sugarbush, which has all the others beat by at least 5,000 years. Sugarbush has been known by many names, including “The Trail,” “The Indian Trail,” “Ridge Road,” and Sugar Bush Road, spelled as two words. The Sugarbush name commemorates the Sugar Maple Trees that were once in abundance on the road, used to make sugar and maple syrup.

Why was Sugarbush Road the first road in the area? It had once been the ridge of a glacier left over from the last Ice Age, and had been used as a trail by the Native Americans for the last 5 to 10,000 years.

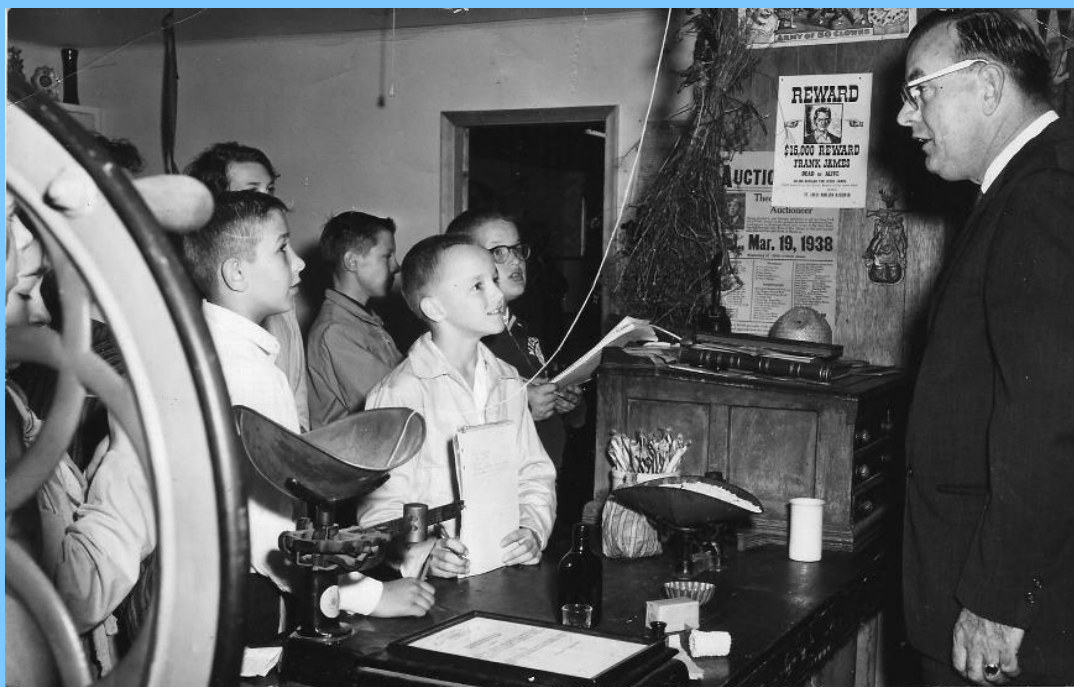


National Archives map shows early Indian reservations in Chesterfield Township and vicinity

A Look Back: Twenty Years Ago

What was happening in the historical society twenty years ago? The monthly meeting minutes from the May and June 2000 reveal many exciting projects.

- * The May 2000 treasurer's report revealed a balance of \$3,064.83.
- * Talk of moving a little barn or big barn to the historical village, the little barn was rotted at the base and deemed impossible to move.
- * The bell tower is complete! A video showing the installation of the bell tower was shown after the May meeting. It was suggested to show the video on channel 6.
- * Thanks to Burr and George a display case was added to the interior of the school. George has another picture of Weller, plus another and will frame them.
- * The pasta dinner was a huge success. 182 tickets sold, approximately \$400 profit, \$166 from 50/50 and \$60 for outhouse buttons, \$15 from shirt sale.
- * Mary Jane, Jerry, George, Tom, and Mary D. salvaged doors, window weights, electrical panel and breakers, hardware and latches, pieces of oak trim from New Baltimore houses.
- * Two sets of volunteers from Selfridge Marine Corps will do all the labor on a bridge over the creek, but no material and will not work on it until next year. The footings should be put in this year.
- * Jerry and Don are waiting for footings for the outhouse.
- * Bids were sent out for school windows, plaster, porch, electric.
- * Janet K. planted flowers in the memorial garden.
- * Mary Jane talked to Joe G. about putting pipes under the creek since the water level is low.



Bernard Trinity lectures at the Trinity Library and Museum

The first library and museum in Chesterfield was started by Bernard Trinity. Librarian and Society Secretary Adam Mueller has written a biography about Bernard Trinity.

INFO:

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Website: www.chesterfieldhistoricalsociety.org

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CHESTERFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

47275 Sugarbush Rd, Chesterfield, MI 48047

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2020

In consideration of possible impacts of Covid-19, all events subject to change.

AUGUST 8th, SATURDAY 10 – 4 pm, AUGUST 9th, SUNDAY 10 – 3 pm **A Time Line of History: Colonial to Vietnam Era**

Presented by the Michigan Military Technical & Historical Society.

Food and drinks will be available for purchase. Entrance fee is a donation of \$1 per person or \$2 for a family.

SEPTEMBER 19th, SAT. 10 – 4 pm HERITAGE DAYS

Enjoy horse rides, photos and games, a “Kids Tent” and candle making, rope making, corn grinding, scavenger hunt, craft show and classic car show. Food and drinks will be available for purchase.

Entrance fee is a donation of \$1 per person or \$2 for a family.

OCTOBER 22nd, THURSDAY 6 – 9 pm HARVEST DINNER

Held at the VFW Hall on 23 Mile Road in New Baltimore. 50/50 raffle, auctions & giveaways.

DECEMBER 4th, FRIDAY 6:30 pm TREE LIGHTING

The schoolhouse and log cabin will be open in conjunction with the township’s tree lighting ceremony. Enjoy hot chocolate and cookies served in the schoolhouse, and candy canes at the log cabin.