



Weller School

# Chesterfield Township Historical Society

Vol. 1 Issue 2

March 2005

**March Meeting Update-See Page 2!!**

## Reverend Rickard Oral History

Those attending the January meeting of the Chesterfield Historical Society were able to view the first two oral histories recorded with Reverend William Rickard, who attended the Weller School from 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade circa 1924-1931. Blessed (as only a reverend can be) with an excellent memory, Rev. Rickard was able to relate many bits of information we had not previously known regarding the Weller School, or Chesterfield Rural #1 as it was known back in the day.

For instance, Rev. Rickard indicated where a woodshed once stood (in proximity to where the school was) as well as a water pump that was in front of the school. Thanks to Rev. Rickard, we now know that the teacher had her desk on the platform in the front of the school by the bell. The student's desks faced away from her desk and she would go to the other side of the room (where the blackboard and maps were) to lecture or listen to the student's lessons. And we have finally established which entrance was the boy's and which was the girl's. (Using the above photo, the boy's entrance was the left one.) He also filled in details regarding the outhouse. Because of its brick appearance and easy-cleaning back, it was considered very modern for the day.

Reverend Rickard was the honored guest at the February 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Chesterfield Historical Society. After the regular meeting (which included the information that the cabin plans are coming to fruition soon, hopefully to be moved within the next few months), Reverend Rickard answered questions about himself, the Weller School, George F.'s building (which he once lived in), and other questions about the area. We were all impressed not only

with Rev. Rickard's memories of the area in bygone days, but also the professional manner in which he speaks. It is obvious that the reverend is no stranger to talking before large groups. The event was recorded and will be added to the oral history the society has done with Rev. Rickard.

In other February meeting action, it was decided that George Deebe will check with the township to find out if it would be acceptable to move the two smaller buildings from the Trinity property to the historical area by the township hall.

### Former President Don Howitt Honored by Chesterfield Twp. Board

Don Howitt, the esteemed president of the Chesterfield Historical Society for over 10 years, was honored with a plaque by the Chesterfield Twp. Board of Supervisors at their Jan. 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. (See picture on page 3!).



## Local History Links

Mt. Clemens History and Library Resources: [www.geocities.com/michhist/mtclemensland.html](http://www.geocities.com/michhist/mtclemensland.html)

American Local History Network-Michigan: [www.usgennet.org/usa/mi/state/](http://www.usgennet.org/usa/mi/state/)

Macomb Co. MIGenWeb-Michigan Genealogy on the Web (Part of the USGenWeb project):  
[www.online-isp.com/~maggie/macomb/](http://www.online-isp.com/~maggie/macomb/)

Macomb Co. History: [www.online-isp.com/~maggie/macomb/history.htm](http://www.online-isp.com/~maggie/macomb/history.htm)

InfoMI.-Macomb Co. History: [www.infomi.com/county/macomb/](http://www.infomi.com/county/macomb/)

Mt. Clemens History: [www.geocities.com/michhist/mtclemens.html](http://www.geocities.com/michhist/mtclemens.html)

Mt. Clemens Map: Land Claims & Plats Recorded Prior to 1875-  
[www.geocities.com/michhist/mapmtclemens.html](http://www.geocities.com/michhist/mapmtclemens.html)

Mt. Clemens Land Claims prior to 1875 (text version) -  
[www.geocities.com/michhist/mtclemensland.html](http://www.geocities.com/michhist/mtclemensland.html)

Mt. Clemens Historical Commission:  
[www.libcoop.net/mtchis/frame\\_main.htm](http://www.libcoop.net/mtchis/frame_main.htm)

Centennial History of Mount Clemens, Michigan, 1879-1979; Electronic edition:  
<http://offserv.libcoop.net/mtc/centhist.htm>

Suburban Library Co-Operative Digital Media Archive Search Engine:  
[www.macomb.lib.mi.us/mountclemens/local.htm](http://www.macomb.lib.mi.us/mountclemens/local.htm)

Mt. Clemens Pictures: [www.willett.org/michiganhistory/mtclemons.htm](http://www.willett.org/michiganhistory/mtclemons.htm)

Macomb Co. Ancestry Tracer: [www.michiganancestry.com/macombco.html](http://www.michiganancestry.com/macombco.html)

Macomb Co. History Resources: [www.michiganancestry.com/macombco.html](http://www.michiganancestry.com/macombco.html)

Macomb Co. Poor Farm Picture: [www.poorhousestory.com/MI\\_MACOMB\\_PF.htm](http://www.poorhousestory.com/MI_MACOMB_PF.htm)

Chesterfield Township History: <http://chesterfieldtwp.org/history.asp>

1838 History of the Clinton and Kalamazoo Canal in Clinton Twp.-  
[www.clintontownship.com/histcanal.htm](http://www.clintontownship.com/histcanal.htm)

Clinton Township History- [www.clintontownship.com/History.htm](http://www.clintontownship.com/History.htm)

Eastpointe History: [www.ci.eastpointe.mi.us/Hist.html](http://www.ci.eastpointe.mi.us/Hist.html)

Romeo Historical Pictures: [www.willett.org/michiganhistory/romeo.htm](http://www.willett.org/michiganhistory/romeo.htm)

Armada History: [www.ole.net/~maggie/macomb/armada.htm](http://www.ole.net/~maggie/macomb/armada.htm)

New Baltimore History: [www.newbaltimorehistoricalsociety.org/](http://www.newbaltimorehistoricalsociety.org/)

Sterling Heights History:  
[www.shpl.net/histcom.html#Sterling%20Heights%20Historical%20Collection](http://www.shpl.net/histcom.html#Sterling%20Heights%20Historical%20Collection)

Warren History: [www.hsmichigan.org/warren/](http://www.hsmichigan.org/warren/)

History of Washington area: [www.hsmichigan.org/washington/](http://www.hsmichigan.org/washington/)

Shelby Twp. History (contains many links): <http://shelbyhistory.tripod.com/>

Roseville Brief History- [www.ci.roseville.mi.us/](http://www.ci.roseville.mi.us/)

Utica History: [www.cityofutica.org/history.htm](http://www.cityofutica.org/history.htm)

Richmond History: [www.usacitiesonline.com/micountyrichmond.htm#history](http://www.usacitiesonline.com/micountyrichmond.htm#history)

Richmond History: [www.cityofrichmond.net/history.htm](http://www.cityofrichmond.net/history.htm)

## March 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting Update:

Topics discussed at the March meeting included a bridge update-there are still some wetland issues to resolve. Also, we will be unable to move the log cabin until winter weight restrictions on the roads are lifted. The township has added footings on the property. George will consult with the director of the Troy Village regarding placement of historical buildings and subsequent security issues.

Other topics discussed were: **Spaghetti Dinner in April!!** and possibly another fund raiser in March. Also mentioned at the meeting was possibly building a church (because it would be cheaper and easier than moving one) on the historical property to be used for weddings, etc. Also discussed were the money canisters to be used in local businesses.



## President's Report

### History Trivia

1. What was the best land deal ever in the United States?
2. How much money did the new township of Chesterfield receive for operating expenses in its first year of operation?

(See answers elsewhere in issue)

Please send any additions or corrections to:

[alan.naldrett@yahoo.com](mailto:alan.naldrett@yahoo.com)

or call:

(586) 948-0604

Stories and pictures about the local history of the area are greatly appreciated!!

*Congratulations* are in order for past president Don Howitt who received a plaque at the January 18<sup>th</sup> township meeting for his years as president of the Chesterfield Historical Society. The award was presented by Supervisor Jim Ellis and Commissioner and Society Secretary Kathy Vosburg.

#### *Good News:*

The footing is in for the addition to the Weller School, so as soon as the weather gets better, we can start building. We hope to finish the addition this summer.

#### *More Good News:*

The paperwork is finished regarding the log cabin that we are moving to the historical village. The movers are ready and the engineering is being completed. So we should also have the log cabin in our village by this summer!

#### *Rough Life?*

Our vice-president Roy Rivard and his wife Eileen are back from Florida (welcome back!) while Leo and Virginia Furton are still having to put up with the warm Florida weather!

### School Desks for Sale!!

We have a number of school desks that we will not be using at the Weller School for sale. You can pick up a desk and chair for the amazing, one-time only low price of **\$2.00!!** Call George Furton at (586) 949-3230 to reserve yours now!

Next Meetings of the Chesterfield Historical Society:

**Tuesday, 7 p.m.  
April 5, 2005**

**Tuesday, 7 p.m.  
May 3, 2005**

Kathy Vosburg, Kelly Jo Smolnarek, Don Howitt, Jim Ellis



## Upcoming Events

**Bob Mack**, local historian, will be at the **Richmond Historical Society** on March 3, 2005 at 7:00 pm to present a slide show on Gar Wood and other interesting historical notes. Richmond Historical Society meets at the Richmond High School in the library. Bob has presented many slide shows for Chesterfield and always has something new. No admission, donations accepted.

**The Octagon House** was a refuge to slaves en route to Sarnia, Ontario, Canada, it was recently confirmed. Members of the Friends of the Octagon House traveled to the WISH Center of the Chatham-Kent Black Historical Society following the same trail that fleeing slaves used over a century and a half ago. Once in Chatham, Ontario, the group met with Director Gwen Robinson who showed them the Center's extensive collection of resources. Within these tomes is confirmation that Loren Andrus, owner of the Octagon House, was a strong and active abolitionist whose home was a stop on the Underground Railroad.

**The Friends of the Octagon House** will present "The Octagon House, A Stop on the Underground Railroad" on Feb. 27, noon to 4 p.m. as a special program honoring Black History Month. Guest speakers include Chapman, representing St. Clair Co., U.S. Park Service, and Freedom Trail Commission. Her topic will be "The Underground Railroad in Our Area. " Phyllis Hamilton of Richmond, historian and former curator of the Octagon House, will discuss her book "The Octagon House, Washington, Michigan: Diary of Phyllis Hamilton. " Eva Black, actress and storyteller will present "Patches of Harriet Tubman. " Rosie Chapman, multi media artist and storyteller, will present "From Royalty to Slavery, "a dramatic presentation. The public is invited. The Octagon House is located at 57500 Van Dyke, Washington. For more information, call (586) 586-781-0084. Admission to this program is \$5 for adults, \$3 for students.

Our esteemed president, **George Furton**, was the guest of the New Baltimore Historical Society on February 24, 2005. He talked about early Chesterfield and New Baltimore. George's book is available for check-out at the Chesterfield Library-check it out if you haven't already done so, or buy a copy from George!



### Trivia Answers

1. The Alaska purchase in 1867-Approximately 1.9 cents per acre!
2. In 1812 the fractional township of Chesterfield was organized. It was taken from Macomb Township. An election was held and the state gave \$100.00 to the township to operate for one year.