



The Crow's Nest

NEWSLETTER OF THE FERNDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Fall 2013

WHO PUT FERNDALE TOGETHER?

Garry Andrews

The U.S. government's passage of the Two-Dollar Act in 1818 is the true beginning of what would become Ferndale. The Act allowed the U.S. Land Office in Detroit to sell 160-acre parcels of land, including those in what would become Oakland County, at \$2 per acre—with a down payment of one-quarter of the purchase price. (Fruit trees cost an extra 60 cents apiece per acre.) By 1830 most Indians had been removed from the area by federal edict, and by the mid-1800s Detroit was already famous for its picturesque Victorian style buildings and successful business ventures. But the land on Detroit's north border, across Baseline (now Eight Mile Rd.), and along the ancient Saginaw Trail (Woodward)



Southeast section of Ferndale just east of railroad at 8 Mile, c. 1910-1915. Courtesy: Mrs. Leonard Schnell; *Ferndale of Yesteryear*.

leading into Michigan's interior, was still known for its peat bogs, marshland, forests, bugs, and wild animals.

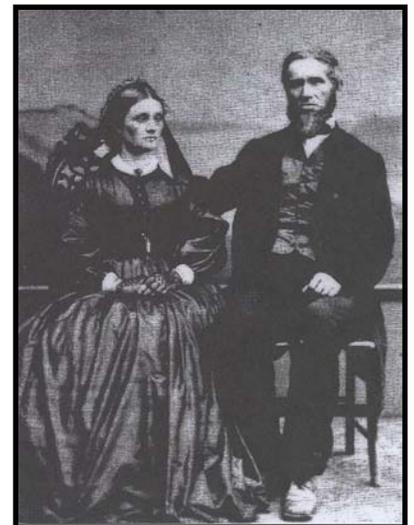
At this same time in the 1800s, immigrants from Europe's poverty-stricken countries such as England, France, Italy, Germany, Ireland, and Scotland were increasingly looking to America as a new land of opportunity. Most earned their living with their hands; the area north of Detroit, therefore, was of increasing interest to self-reliant pioneers who wished to settle close to a large city. Soon the drier land on the east and west boundaries of the large cranberry bogs, situated immediately north of the Detroit border, became a major focus for development. With the exception of two of Ferndale's earliest residents, Welcome Campbell, whose

family had come to the colonies (most likely from Scotland) in the 1600s, and Willis Hough, the son of a Russian immigrant, most of the first settlers in what would become Ferndale immigrated to the area in the mid-1800s as part of the mass exodus from Europe. By 1907 these early arrivals, through their land purchases and key business enterprises, had set the rough geographical boundaries and entrepreneurial focus that would lead to the incorporation of the Village of Ferndale in 1917.

William Fulton, an immigrant from Scotland, became one of the first local settlers, choosing in the early 1850s a corner site extending both north and south of Baseline (including the State Fairgrounds) and on the east side of the Saginaw Trail, to build a log cabin for his family. He fended off bears and other wild animals that attacked his meager crops and few livestock, and made his living by selling the wood from his forested surroundings to the Detroit & Pontiac railroad, whose tracks had run through nearby property since 1838.

Benjamin Parker, an immigrant from England, came to the area in 1856, purchasing a large tract on the east side of what is now Pinecrest between Leroy and Pearson. Benjamin detested cows, so established a profitable sheep farm. His wife Mary Ann, however, loved cows and chickens and soon "took the farm by the reins." She sold her dairy products—milk, butter, cream, and eggs—at weekly markets in Detroit, a venture that earned her the distinction of being the "first woman not widowed to head a successful dairy and a thriving business in the area."

By 1859 Welcome Campbell, once a cooper (barrel-maker) and mercantile shop owner in Pontiac, had amassed 750 acres on the east side of Woodward near what is now East Nine Mile (near present Hilton). This property was later



Mary Ann and Welcome Campbell. Courtesy: Mrs. Mildred Campbell; Ferndale Historical Museum archives.

Page 2

divided among his children—who then acquired additional tracts initially for farm and orchard cultivation but was land that by 1890 had become “Urbanrest,” a small community planned by railroad syndicate investors as a “summer home” area for Detroit residents. This venture, instead, soon attracted additional inspired entrepreneurs to invest in new housing and business subdivisions that would later become the center of a community named “Ferndale.”

Canadian Arthur C. Porter, in the 1860s, purchased large tracts of land located on both sides of Woodward on the south side of Nine Mile, and became a successful farmer. He later donated property for Ferndale’s first school, and by 1898 had granted a strip of land that became a right-of-way for the local part of the Detroit & Pontiac’s new interurban line development. It was his farm’s chicken coop that, when moved to the corner of Woodward and W. Hazelhurst in 1919, became the first meeting place of St. James Catholic Church.

Frenchman Adolphous Granger in the late 1860s opened a sawmill in a wooded area on the west side of Woodward just north of the 8 Mile-Baseline at the site of what is now Machpelah Cemetery. He and his son Philip built a successful business there that provided wood materials for homes, planks for roads (including Woodward) and even wood planks for the first bridge to Belle Isle. Many of Ferndale’s earliest houses were built of wood from the Granger sawmill.

Another Englishman, wealthy Charles Silman, who arrived in the area in 1879, made his heavily forested land, located on Woodward across from the Granger mill, work for him. He sold the wood from his trees to the local mill and used the healthy profits to acquire land adjacent to his property and, later, to actively support the development of the local school system. A “man of politics,” Silman was to become a major force in the growth of the Village of Ferndale.

German-born Anthony Grix arrived in the area in 1884 and purchased a large tract on the south side of Nine Mile between what is now Wanda and Hilton. His acreage was later to become a center for the industrial development area of Ferndale that was to peak during World War II.

In 1890, German immigrant John Reich (he preferred the American spelling “Rich”) purchased a 20-acre tract at the corner of Baseline and what is now Pinecrest and built the area’s first grist mill. He ground local farmers’ grain for cooking, baking, and animal feed. At the time, Ferndale’s early settlers grew grain only for their family use; most had no large cash crop acreage ready for cultivation. But by the late 1890s, as steam-powered machinery became popular, and larger grain fields were sown, Rich purchased a steam-powered threshing machine and for a fee would thresh local farmers’ fields at harvest time, building a thriving business.

Willis Hough, the son of a Russian immigrant, was a wealthy self-made harness-maker in Detroit, when he, in 1907, bought property on Nine Mile at the northwest corner of Pinecrest. He built an imposing country estate there and dedicated himself to the improvement of the infrastructure of the growing local community. He bought up additional property for a major housing development on Pinecrest, which became instrumental in the establishment of a permanent residential community in west Ferndale. Included in his many subsequent philanthropic endeavors was the establishment of a Baptist church and active support of local schools, including the construction of Lincoln High School, Nine Mile at Livernois, in 1921.

The settlers who came to Longitude 83°13'W / Latitude 42°46'N (Ferndale) between the mid-1800s and 1907 laid the earliest foundations of what would become a thriving community. In the days before Henry Ford and his \$5/day offers to workers at his Highland Park plant in 1908 forever changed American culture, these early immigrants in an as-yet risky terrain built successful farms, created profitable small businesses, and nurtured schools, churches, and a basic government structure. Their efforts ensured that this fledgling village—and then city—of Ferndale would prevail into the 21st century. Their legacy as residents dedicated to hard work, investment, and pride in the local community abides to this day.

Note: This article is based on a public lecture given by Garry Andrews at the Ferndale Public Library, May 14, 2013.

Sources consulted: Maurice Cole, Ferndale of Yesteryear (Ferndale Historical Society, 1971). Ancestry.com was consulted for the family history of individuals mentioned.



Silman Home, Woodward & Silman. Courtesy: *Ferndale of Yesteryear.*



Willis Hough, age 28.
Courtesy: Ferndale Historical Museum; Garry Andrews private collection.

THE NUREMBERG TRIALS, 1946: THE LOCAL STORY

Jean Spang

World War II touched every Ferndale resident in the 1940s. Many local men were drafted into the armed forces—or enlisted, as did many women. Other men and women worked tirelessly at the many nearby factories, large and small, that produced the armaments that helped establish Detroit as the “Arsenal of Democracy.” Almost all residents, kids included, stomped metal cans, preserved cooking grease, and accumulated old silk stockings for government collections of items vital for production of weapons, ammunition, airplane parts, and even parachutes. Local enthusiasm for supporting government war efforts won Ferndale the distinction of being the first city in the U.S. to meet national war bond campaign goals. The Radio City, Ferndale’s largest movie theater, was packed weekly with crowds awaiting the latest war newsreels—as eagerly as they anticipated the main-feature movie. Rationing and air-raid black-outs were part of life. And all Ferndale residents waited anxiously for daily radio and newspaper accounts of war news—and worried constantly about family and neighbors who were actively part of the unprecedented scope of the ongoing conflict.

Beginning in 1946, the Nuremberg Trials that brought the German high command to justice, therefore, provided a dramatic conclusion to the war’s end in Europe and was of keen local interest. Ferndale resident Virginia Von Schon, a June 1938 graduate of Lincoln High School, later graduate of Hillsdale College and the University of Michigan, played an important role in these trials as a translator and interpreter. As a child, she had traveled extensively in the U.S. and Europe because of her father’s job assignments in the auto industry; the family finally settled in Ferndale. But speaking the several languages, including German and French, that she learned in her early years was to shape her subsequent life and career.

From 1942 until the end of the war she was a translator with the Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service, Washington DC, monitoring German broadcasts, then was transferred to an Oregon “listening post” to monitor broadcasts from Tokyo in German. She began work with the U.S. Army in 1945 and, then in 1946, because of her knowledge of languages, served as translator and interpreter at the Nuremberg Trials, a position she held for three years. Her first assignment was as interpreter for Adolph Hitler’s officers, including Joachim von Ribbontrop (Prime Minister), Hermann Goering (Leader, Nazi Party), Rudolph Hess (Deputy Fuhrer), and other members of the high command. Her second assignment was as interpreter at the trial of the German doctors, and especially the I.G. Farben Chemical Co., involved in Germany’s manufacturing of drugs and high explosives.

Her role at Nuremberg, she said, was a constant strain because of the attitudes of the people where she lived as well as those who were involved in the trial—“courteous, and apparently friendly, [but] you could always feel their resentment against you” (*Daily Tribune*, December 23, 1948). She noted that “the war [was] still very much in evidence and the people suffer[ed] acutely from the lack of fuel, shelter, clothing, and food” [*Tribune*, December 19, 1947]. From her experience at the time, she concluded that “the German people are sorry they lost the war and they feel it is regrettable that they are today in such a tragic plight, but apparently they feel no guilt or responsibility for the situation”[and] “Of the 23 war criminals tried, she recalled only one who expressed regret for his actions” [*Tribune*, December 19, 1947].”

Some 105 Ferndale residents gave their lives in combat during World War II; 7 more died of non-combat injuries.. Still others were injured, some never to fully recover. Others served lengthy time as prisoners of war. For countless Ferndale residents and their families and neighbors--and for Virginia Von Schon--the Trials marked a resolution of the war in Europe—but was only one aspect of a continuing search for a meaningful recovery from the chaos of a world at war.

By 1950 Virginia had returned to Ferndale to live at 752 W. Oakridge and began work as a member of the *Daily Tribune* editorial staff. By 1951 she had been appointed editor-in-charge of social activities news for the *Tribune*. (Her last address, 1953, was in Royal Oak; after that she seems to have disappeared from the local public record.)

As for Ferndale, by 1954 residents saw increasing signs of major changes in their post-war city. Example: the nation’s first “shopping center” had opened in Southfield, an innovation that was to forever change Ferndale’s business district, open a new chapter in Ferndale’s development, and indicate a new horizon of possibilities for southeastern Michigan. But for residents who had lived in Ferndale or actively served in the military during World War II—or served as a translator at Nuremberg—memories of the darkest days of the 1940s remained forever in stark memory.

Today, the Nuremberg Trials Collection in the Donovan Archives, Cornell Law Library, contains Virginia Von Schon translations, which remain a primary historical record of World War II.



Virginia Von Schon.
Courtesy: *Daily Tribune*.

Sources consulted: Daily Tribune: “Virginia Von Schon Serves as Interpreter at Crimes Trial,” November 10, 1945; “War Trials Translator Hears Few Nazis Say They’re Sorry,” December 19, 1947; “Editor,” December 28, 1951. [All of these Daily Tribune clippings are in the Ferndale Historical Museum collection.] Personal recollections of World War II, by the author of this article who was a Ferndale “kid” in the war years, 1941-45. Cornell Law Library, Nuremberg Trials Collection, The Donovan Archives, Index (has reference for Virginia Von Schon) at: <http://library2.cornell.edu/donovan/show.asp?id=458>.

THE FERNDALE QUIZ:
HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT LOCAL HISTORY? *(Answers, p. 5)*

1. What were the seven names of Pinecrest before the 1920s?
2. What was the name of the first President of the Village of Ferndale, 1917?
3. Where was Higgins Pontiac, one of Ferndale's best-known car dealerships, finally located?
4. Which Ferndale-born movie actor appeared in more than 40 Hollywood films and several TV series?
5. Where was Ferndale's first post office located?
6. Where is Ferndale's only cannon displayed?
7. Rockwell was the previous name of what street in Ferndale?
8. What was the earliest business (1820s) built on the site occupied for years by the Ethyl Corporation?
9. What school is built on property that was once used as a source of sand used for making auto glass?
10. What was the name of Ferndale's first newspaper (1921-22)?

NEWS FLASHES FROM THE PAST: *FERNDALE GAZETTE*

May 9, 1935, LIVERNOIS BATTLE RAGES AGAIN: Consideration of the State Senate Highway Constitution of a bill that would empower the Highway Commission to open Livernois Avenue through Pleasant Ridge without that city's consent reopened afresh the 11-year-old fight against the movement in the Ridge. Although Ferndale officially favors the proposed movement, residents of the northwest section through which the highway would run are strongly opposed

October 22, 1936, PAVE HILTON, SHORT ROAD TO THE THUMB: Make Hilton Road into a 120-foot superhighway! It is the only direct route from Eight Mile Road to the Thumb district. It is THREE MILES shorter than the Livernois route upon which the people of Ferndale will take a STRAW vote at the election November 3. Three miles shorter even if Livernois cut through Pleasant Ridge. That is the suggestion of the *Ferndale Gazette*. It is offered in the sincere belief that improving this long-neglected road would be a gigantic step forward in the progress of our city—to the best interest of every man, woman and child . . . Expanding Hilton road into a wide sweeping highway, properly landscaped and beautified, would be the salvation of the Eastside section of Ferndale that has been sadly neglected by our city commissioners . . .

September 9, 1943, HOSE COLLECTED HERE: Ferndale has shipped 1,411 pounds of old silk hose, or a total of 26,200 pairs, to the Defense Supplies Corp., Mrs. L.L. Evans, Salvage Chairman, Fats and Silk Hose, reports. The cast-off hosiery is used in making parachutes and powder bags.

NEWS FLASHES FROM THE PAST: *THE LINCOLNIAN* (Lincoln High newspaper)

December 1931, TRAGIC DEATH OF WILLIE BUTT: Lincoln High School's mascot, Willie Butt, met a tragic death on December 4, when a large police dog grabbed him by the throat. The dog did not kill the goat instantly and the Pleasant Ridge police were called to relieve the poor goat of his agony. All the school mourns the death of Willie.

November 17, 1932, CIVIL WAR VETERAN SPEAKS TO HISTORY VIII CLASS: Mr. [Francis] Sockman, 87-year-old Civil War veteran, spoke to Carl Forsythe's fifth hour History VIII Class [Lincoln High School, Ferndale] on Tuesday, November 8. Mr. Sockman said that he entered into the war at the age of 18 and served for a year and a half as a soldier in the Union Army. He described many of the battles in which he fought . . . Mr. Sockman's home was on the border line in Virginia, dividing the Union and Confederate forces, so he had his schooling in a slave state. He told of many interesting things that happened near his home, and on their own property during this time. [Note: Francis Sockman, 1844-1938, was Ferndale's last Civil War veteran. He lived at 235 W. Cambourne. Carl Forsythe later served as Mayor of Ferndale, 1941-1949)

April 15, 1948, 2 LINCOLN GRADS AT NAZI TRIALS: Two former Ferndale girls, both graduates of Lincoln High School, worked at the Nurenberg, Germany, war guilt trials just concluded. Margaret Urmey, January '36, did stenographic work at the Nazi trials, while Virginia Von Schon, June '38, was valuable because of her knowledge of several languages, including fluent mastery of German. In spite of the hard work the girls had to put in during the trials, they have found time to get together and talk over old times and old friends back home . . .

ANSWERS TO THE FERNDALE QUIZ

1. Present Pinecrest was the Saginaw Trail (branch, 1816), Pontiac Trail (1820), Rochester Rd. (1822), Mill Rd. (1895-1898+), Livernois (branch, 1911), Ridge Rd. (early 1900s), Brock Ave. (1920, for two months), then Pinecrest (1920+).
2. Lovell G. Turnbull served as President of the Village of Ferndale, 1918-1920. He lived at 270 W. Saratoga. The village's first fire trucks were stored in his garage.
3. George Higgins, who served as State Senator (4 terms), State Representative (3 terms), and ran for Governor against George Romney, opened his Pontiac dealership at the Woodward/Ardmore corner in 1931, later moved to the Woodward/W. Lewiston location.*
4. Dana Elcar (1927-1972) starred in some 40 movies, including "The Sting," and various TV series, including "The Rockford Files," "Baretta," and "MacGuyver."***
5. Ferndale's first post office was on the north side of Nine Mile, in the building which later housed the former Kresge's, then the Dollar Castle, and now is being divided into several small businesses.
6. The city's only cannon is displayed in the veterans' memorial area of Machpelah Cemetery on Woodward near Eight Mile.
7. Nine Mile Rd. was formerly named Rockwell (1920). Kleber P. (or F.) Rockwell was a former Oakland County Circuit Judge. The use of his name was meant as a memorial to him, but was used only for a short time before the road was permanently named Nine Mile Rd.
8. A tavern was run by Jabez White, a squatter on the property. His business became a landmark for early settlers heading north out of Detroit.
9. Ferndale High School was built on property that, during the Depression, was leased to a company for the removal of sand, which was most likely used for auto glass production.*** Filling in the hole was a major problem when the location was chosen for the building of the school.
10. The *Ferndale Enterprise* was Ferndale's first newspaper. George Williams began publishing in 1921-22. Soon Robert Moyland began printing the *Village* (or *Ferndale*) *News*. Both wanted to be approved for the publication of the Village's official minutes and legal advertisements. By 1923, Harvey S. Jacobs began publication of the *Ferndale Gazette*, which was soon bought out by Holmes S. Kimball and combined with the *Ferndale Enterprise*. The *Gazette* remained in publication until the 1970s.

Answer sources: Maurice Cole, *Ferndale of Yesteryear*, (Ferndale Historical Society, 1971): *passim*. Exceptions: * Author recollections; **Elcar film history summarized from MacGyverOnline: <http://www.macgyver.com/pages/97.html> [retrieved 2-26-09]. *** Robert L. Nicholson, in *Old Timers Tell It Like It Was*, June Waugh Kotlarek, Ruth Elmers, and Jerry Kulick (ed.), Ferndale Historical Society, 1987: 89.

FOND FAREWELLS

Patrolman Donald W. Geary (1952-2013). Lifelong Ferndale resident. Retired in 1995 after 25 years with the Ferndale Police Department, then worked for the Oakland County Sheriff's Department as a Security Officer for the Madison Heights 43rd District Court. A talented artist and a musician who loved playing and composing music. A founding member of the local band, Yesterday's Children.

Pamela S. McCullough (1953-2013). Mayor of Ferndale, 1994-96; Council member, 1990-94. First and only (to date) female mayor in the city. A 1970 Graduate of Ferndale High School. Strong business background. Her central concerns during her public service career: building a strong business community, improving city's aging schools, sewer systems, and buildings.

Robert J. Paczkowski (1926-2012). Longtime Ferndale resident. Mayor of Ferndale, 1973-79. Four years as a City Council member. Active in Ferndale politics for 30 years. Served in the mid-1970s with a focus on the declining downtown and the end of the Radio City Theater and Federal's Department Store, and city charter and human rights ordinances.

Lieutenant James Dayton Watts (1937-2013). Member of the U.S. Air Force, Korean War. Joined the Ferndale Police Department, 1959, promoted to Sergeant, 1969, Detective Sergeant, 1973; and Lieutenant, 1974. Retired in 1983 after 24 years with the Department. After retirement a sales manager, Morse Tools, then a worker on golf courses at Rattle Run Country Club (St. Clair, MI) and Black River Country Club (Port Huron).

FERNDALE'S ANSWER TO VULCAN: FIRE CHIEF DOYNE EASTERWOOD (1930-2013):

Roger Schmidt, Fire Chief (Ret.)



Chief Easterwood. Courtesy:
Ferndale Fire Department.

Chief Easterwood, one of Ferndale's most "colorful" fire chiefs, passed away July 13, 2013. Doyne, at age 21, joined the Ferndale Fire Department, August 1, 1952. With barely six months more than the required five years of seniority to write for a promotion, he came out at the top of the list of sergeant prospects when new Fire Chief William McMurray promoted him to this position on February 15, 1958. Ten years and two months later, on April 16, 1968, he was promoted to lieutenant and put in charge of "equipment and supply" in addition to his normal shift duties. Captain George Evans retired in February of 1974, and once again Chief McMurray had his man in Easterwood, promoting him to captain on March 1 of that year. His steady advancement to these positions testify to his commitment and skills in all aspects of firefighting.

Easterwood was a graduate of Lincoln High School, June 1948, and for a time worked for Cole & Erwin Jewelers as a salesman. He married Ruth MacKay of Royal Oak; they had two daughters, Deborah and Sandra. Some years later he and Ruth separated; he then married Joan Mitroff.

I first met Doyne when I joined the department in 1977 and was assigned to his shift. I found him to be a no-nonsense, highly competent, dedicated and extremely knowledgeable officer, physically fit, mentally sharp and a walking textbook on the science of fire and the business of putting it out. Answers to formulas for water flow, nozzle pressure, engine pressure, discharge pressure and friction loss he could calculate in his head faster than most men could with a calculator. It soon became apparent that he didn't have much use for people who weren't dedicated to the fire service: if you wanted

his acceptance, you had better prove yourself.

I know of two occasions when Doyne had a brush with death. The first was at a commercial fire in 1975 at 23322 Woodward, five blocks north of Nine Mile, on the east side of the street. It was known as the "Muskie Bay" fire. Muskie Bay was one of three stores in the building. A basement fire had spread throughout the building and, while Easterwood was working on the roof of a one-story section in the back, it collapsed. He saved himself by grabbing a roof beam before plunging into the fire. In a similar event, just as he started down the stairs at a residential basement fire, the stairs collapsed. He managed to save himself by grabbing a handrail and pulling himself back. Two examples of his courage and skills!

In January 1981 Assistant Chief Ted Sonner retired and, with Chief McMurray's recommendation, the city council appointed Easterwood to fill the position. As it was his ambition to become chief, he was one step closer to his goals. Two and a half years later McMurray stepped down and Easterwood had the top spot. It was to be a bittersweet position.

As assistant chief and then chief, Doyne watched helplessly as the economy took a downturn and the city's resources plunged. As the department's budget was slashed, manpower dropped through layoffs and attrition. The new chief was brimming with ideas and there was no money. To his credit, he made the best of the situation; the belt was tightened and the quality of service remained high. Doyne made improvements whenever possible, including introduction of the department's first computers, acquisition of large diameter supply hoses (now the industry standard), and laying the groundwork for a mutual aid Hazardous Materials Response Team. His last improvement was the purchase of a 100-foot Seagrave aerial ladder truck to replace the department's aging 1957 truck.

After thirty-six years of service, his retirement became effective August 2, 1988. At the time he said, "I've been contemplating this for quite some time. It's a little traumatic, how 36 years can go so quickly. The memories are so vivid of the big fires in the city, the lifesaving efforts of the firefighters and my association with fellow city employees and residents."

This past July 13th, after a long illness, the alarm bell sounded the last time for him as we bid a final farewell to a dedicated, infinitely capable and well-respected Ferndale firefighter. And as you may recall, Vulcan was the God of Fire.

Source consulted: Roger Schmidt, Tough as Nails: A History of the Ferndale Fire Department (Ferndale Historical Society, 2004).

From our President/Director

Dear members,

I hope that you all have enjoyed your summer and that this note finds you all happy and well. Great things continue to happen at the Museum and we are very busy with our continued global inquiries and research work on behalf of former and present citizens of Ferndale alike.

Our ongoing relationship with the Ferndale Public Library continues to grow and our Lecture series on early Ferndale continues to garner interest, providing a full house for our quarterly talks at the library. Young and old together gather to learn interesting facts about our great city.

Our membership is now again up over 150 and still growing. We have been closed for the month of August due to major construction work on West Nine Mile Rd. We will reopen to the public the third week of September 2013.

At this time, I would like to thank the volunteer staff of the Historical Museum for their continued support and great work, from our website designer to our photographers. It is through all of their efforts and working together that makes the Museum the success it is today. I also would like to take this time to thank our city government for their unwavering support of the Ferndale Historical Society and all they do to ensure our success.

Please check to be sure that your dues are paid so you do not miss your next newsletter. On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Ferndale Historical Society we want to wish you the best of the upcoming holiday season and we want you to know that we are always here to help you with your historical inquiries and needs.

Regards, Garry Andrews

DONATION TO THE MUSEUM



Thanks to Lenore Good’s generous donation of items from the estate of her mother, Dorothy M. Webb (Ferndale City Council Member, 1975-79), the Ferndale Historical Museum now has an invaluable collection of information on one of Ferndale’s most respected community-dedicated residents.

Fondly recalled as “One-Vote Webb” because of her distinction as the first woman ever voted to the City Council by one vote, Dorothy (1917-2010), a life-long Republican in a largely Democratic region, accumulated an ever-expanding record of community service: member, Oakland County Commission; board member, Area Agency for Aging; implementer of the Oakland County Meals on Wheels program; delegate, Republican Party Convention (1966); and candidate for Mayor of Ferndale (1980s). Special awards included: recognition by city, county, and state officials for her community service, and appointment by Gov. John Engler as delegate to the White House Conference on Aging. She also was a lifetime member of the VFW Women’s Auxiliary and the Daughters of the American Revolution.

An oak table from her home is now one of the first displays a visitor to the museum sees, and museum archives for the first time contain valued primary materials that document in detail Dorothy’s long career. These donations serve as a fitting memorial to Dorothy’s commitment to Ferndale and the larger community. On behalf of all Ferndale residents, the museum staff gratefully acknowledges her family’s donation of these reminders of a much-respected Ferndale resident.

Source consulted: Obituary, Daily Tribune, February 24, 2010. Photo of Dorothy Webb: Ferndale Historical Museum collection.

...from the Lincolnian, May 23, 1940:



Please Look Inside!

Page 1 Who Put Ferndale Together?

Page 2 Who Put Ferndale Together? (continued)

Page 3 The Nuremberg Trials, 1946: The Local Story

Page 4 Gazette Headline: Hose Collected Here; The Ferndale Quiz; News Flashes from the Past: Gazette & Lincolnian

Page 5 Answers to the Quiz; Fond Farewells

Page 6 Ferndale's Answer to Vulcan: Fire Chief Doyne Easterwood

Page 7 From the President/Director; Donation to the Museum

Calendar of Events:

Thursday, September 26, 2013 6 pm Board Meeting, Historical Society, held at the Museum, public is welcome

Thursday, October 24, 2013 6 pm Board Meeting, Historical Society, held at the Museum, public is welcome

No Board Meeting in November

Thursday, December 5, 2013 6 pm Board Meeting, Historical Society, held at the Museum, public is welcome

The Crow's Nest, Fall 2013

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“Preserving the Heritage of Ferndale for Future Generations”