



"Preserving the heritage of Ferndale for future generations"

The Crow's Nest

Newsletter of the Ferndale Historical Society

Spring 2006

For Those Who Served: The Machpelah Memorial

Ferndale has a long tradition of honoring veterans in its public places. In 1919, nearly a decade before the city was chartered, a Ferndale Memorial Society raised funds for a bronze plaque listing residents serving in World War I. For years this small plaque rested on a large boulder situated on the northeast corner of Nine Mile Rd. at Livernois. Subsequent memorials to veterans have appeared in prominent locations throughout Ferndale: the World War I obelisk on Livernois erected in the early 1920s; the MOMS monument to World War II veterans built on the Woodward median in the 1950s; the large mural, with its background depiction of Washington's troops at Valley Forge, painted by Vince Lipovsky in 1976, at City Hall; and Ferndale's largest veterans memorial, the Memorial Mall, Livernois at Nine Mile, dedicated in 2004.

But one outstanding commemoration not so visibly seen in Ferndale is the Veterans Memorial in Machpelah Cemetery, 21701 Woodward. Forcefully impressive in its arrangement, eloquent in its silence, this area, designated by three special markers, is the final resting place of almost four thousand veterans. Among them are a Congressional Medal of Honor winner and members of the elite Flying Tigers.

The centerpiece of the memorial site is a 6-ton Howitzer (range 3.8 miles) used in Vietnam, the only cannon in Ferndale. At one of side of this heavy piece of artillery is a bronze plaque, honoring all veterans, that is inscribed with insignias of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard. And directly in front of the cannon is a small bronze plaque, its inscription reading:

This 155mm howitzer is dedicated as a memorial to the men and women of Jewish descent who have served in the United States Armed Forces and are buried in this cemetery. We gratefully acknowledge the City of Ferndale



Ferndale's only cannon,
Veterans Memorial, Machpelah Cemetery

Photo by Victor Paul

*and the Department of the Army
for their help in obtaining this
memorial.*

Because the Army customarily donates artillery only to VFWs, cities, and large national cemeteries, it was necessary that the City of Ferndale act as the intermediary for Machpelah Cemetery to acquire the cannon.* After three years on the waiting list, the Cemetery received the Howitzer in February 1994. Costing some \$800 to ship from
(Cont'd. on next page)

(from the front page)

a Pennsylvania storage facility and then lift into place, it now stands in solemn honor of the veterans of many conflicts. Its massive presence directs immediate attention to the memorial site, commands focus on the meaning of its profound message, and adds an immeasurable dimension to the long tradition of honoring veterans in Ferndale.

Note: A special service honoring veterans is offered annually at Machpelah Cemetery on the Sunday before Memorial Day, 10am. Call for information, (248) 542-1146.

* Cannon acquisition information summarized from Beverly Hatcher, "Ferndale Cemetery Rolls in the Big Guns for Veterans' Memorial," The Daily Tribune, February 13, 1994.



Photo by Victor Paul

Memorial Plaque, Machpelah Cemetery Veterans Memorial

THE LINCOLN MURAL: UPDATE

The large rolled-up canvas mysteriously left at the museum a year ago is proving to be a special gift for Ferndale. Students are the most immediate beneficiaries. Restoration of the badly damaged mural is set to be a unique educational project for students from two high schools. The administrators and art teachers from Ferndale Public Schools and the Royal Public Schools have agreed to join forces to implement mural restoration projects in both districts. This cooperative venture is an outgrowth of a proposal from Dayton Spence, nationally known mural restorer, and Gary Briggs, owner of Briggs Gallery, Royal Oak, and the arts professional who inspired the successful project to restore Dondero High School's massive WPA murals last year.

Dayton Spence has just completed the restoration of murals at the Midland (MI) Courthouse and recently restored WPA murals in Marquette Public Schools. Under his supervision, art students in the Ferndale-Royal Oak schools project will have a unique opportunity to learn professional methods of mural restoration, and students from other classes will have a rare chance to see such meticulous work in progress. Tentative plans call for the project to begin later this year.

Once completed, restoration of the Lincoln mural—the mural painted in 1929 by five Lincoln High students and familiar to generations of Lincoln High School students—will be displayed in a prominent location in Ferndale, probably at Ferndale High School, as a graphic reminder of Ferndale's and the nation's past.

The Crow's Nest, Spring 2006

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Ferndale MI 48220
USA

Editor: Jean Spang
Other contributors are noted.
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Officers of the Ferndale Historical Society

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THEY ALSO SERVED ...

Ferndale's "civilian troops"



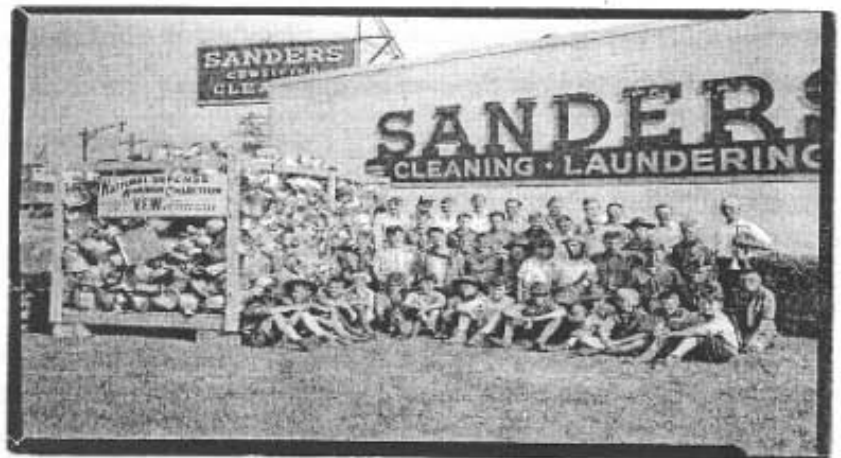
World War II, 1942, War Bond Bunker, Woodward at Nine Mile.

By 1943, Ferndale was honored by the U.S. Treasury Department as the first city in the U.S. to have all of its plants and institutions which employed 25 or more persons participating in War Bond purchases under the pay-roll deduction plan.

Photo by Barth Studio

**World War II Ferndale VFW
Aluminum Collection Drive,**
collection point, south lawn
of the U.S. Post Office, Woodward

Undated photo:
Ferndale Historical Museum Collection



ATTENTION LOCAL MEMBERS OF THE FERNDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY:

PHOTOGRAPHERS NEEDED!

Would you help *Project: Ferndale Architecture*, an effort of Ferndale Historical Museum volunteers to record, in photographs, Ferndale's architecture?

Ferndale is fast approaching truly historic status, a fact emphasized by the number of homes and business structures in the city that date to the teens, 1920s, and 1930s. To build an archival record of Ferndale's unique housing stock, business buildings, and public structures, museum volunteers began last year to photograph structures on all Ferndale streets. To date, all structures on both sides of Hilton Rd. (Eight to Ten Mile Roads) and Livernois (Eight to past Nine) have been photographed.

This architectural record is intended to complete the comprehensive listing of Ferndale home/business ownership records begun in 1997 by museum volunteer Diane O'Neill. The O'Neill Collection now encompasses 100 volumes and is available as a community resource for museum visitors. It has proven to be the museum's most used research source. Photographs to accompany each of these records will complete this collection.

Local members of the Society can help immeasurably to complete this project by volunteering to photograph all structures on their own block. If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact Phyllis Hill at the Museum (1-248-545-7606) for further information. Spring is coming—an ideal time of year to take some pictures of your Ferndale neighborhood for the historical record!

WHO DOES WHAT AT THE MUSEUM: MONDAYS AND/OR SATURDAYS

It takes volunteers and many skills to keep the Museum operating. Those volunteers who have dedicated their time and efforts this past year are due grateful acknowledgment for their efforts. A heartfelt thank-you is extended to:

<u>Volunteer</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Volunteer</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Jane Billecke	Photo Archives project	June Kotlarek	Historian in Residence*
Betty Blank	Clipping file	Victor Paul	Maintenance, displays
Georgette Daly	Historian in Residence*	Roger Schmidt	Research
Marion Euwo	Photo Archives project	Vladimir Shutov	Photo Archives project
Frank Flores	Building Consultant	Jean Spang	Research, displays
Katia Grozhan	Photo Archives project	Carolyn Steger	Historian in Residence*
Phyllis Hill	Historian in Residence*	Sherry Wells	Research, displays
Marian Kangas	Clipping file	Mary White	Historian in Residence*
Miriam Kellman	Photo Archives project	Ray White	Historian in Residence*

David Lungu--for years of past work: newsletter editing & layout, tech. support and purchasing.

* *Historians in residence: do everything—manage resources, host, file, research, oral histories, etc.*

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT THE MUSEUM

Maintaining a local history museum as a viable community resource for residents, the public, and researchers alike requires the talents and interests of many people. Do you have clerical skills, computer expertise? How about interests in historical research projects, including oral history? Are you a photographer?

By volunteering only a few hours a week or a month, you can help immeasurably to provide a responsive information resource for the preservation of Ferndale history. For further information please visit the museum Saturdays 2-4pm or call 1-248-545-7606 Mondays 10am-2pm (leave message other times and staff will return your call later).

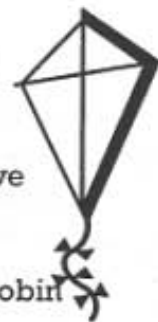
FIRST ANNUAL KITE DAY A SUCCESS!

More than 50 people came to make old-fashioned kites out of yardsticks donated by Scheer's Ace Hardware, newspaper, flour-and-water paste, string, and tails made of old sheets and rags. None of the 27 households were current members of the Historical Society but at least one said she planned to join. Photographs of the event appeared in five newspapers, the Free Press, Mirror and Daily Tribune gave us advanced publicity.

Thank you: Marsha Mellert and Mike Jenkins of the Ferndale Recreation Dept., Dick Muller, Phyllis Hill, Ray White, Frank Flores, Bob Steele, Gary and Leslie Maynard, Robin Wright, Amanda K. Diehl, Don Bolton, and, in memoriam, Don Daly who inspired it.

Prizes (copies of *The Mullers from Missouri*) went to Linda Berry, Madeleine Knopf and Madilyn McKinnon for being the oldest and youngest (two) kitemakers.

Sherry A. Wells



OVER THE BOUNDARY: A VICTORY GARDEN IN AN UNLIKELY PLACE

During World War II, I watched Victory Gardens being planted on St. Louis on land people thought belonged to the city. However, it really belonged to Machpelah Cemetery. I recall Machpelah's fence that was originally out by the St. Louis sidewalk. Somehow, I'm not sure how it happened, the fence was moved back and the city was allowed to use and maintain this land for a park for over 40 years ...

Fred Mack, in Old Timers Tell It Like It Was, compiled by Ruth Rodgers Elmers, June Waugh Kotlarek and Terry Kulick (Editor) (Ferndale, MI: Ferndale Historical Society, 1987): 165-6.

THE RULES

Little Farms Subdivision, a large area southeast of the Woodward and Nine Mile intersection and extending almost to the present Eight Mile Rd., was one of the first areas platted for residential use in Ferndale. It was formed in 1912 when the former Porter farm was subdivided into "Little Farms," in which the lots originally had a width of one hundred feet each, suggesting that the lots in this new subdivision were actually to be "little farms." From Woodward Avenue eastward to Campbell Road what we know today as Nine Mile Road was named Little Farms Boulevard.

An abstract of a title to property in this new subdivision, an address on Academy, provides intriguing insights into the history of the whole region. [*Abstract on loan to the Museum*] The title abstract dates to February 4, 1834 when the U.S. government sold 40 acres of land to Horace Cooley, and subsequent ownership records document the accumulation of acreage added to this portion. By 1917, requirements for the development of Little Farms Subdivision had been set forth. Among the restrictions:

- 1) No building shall be placed nearer than 15 feet from the street line.
- 2) No house shall be erected there to cost less than \$1,000.
- 3) At no time shall any part of the said land be used or occupied for the manufacture, brewing, distilling or sale of spiritous or malt liquors, nor shall the said lot or any part thereto of any building erected thereon at any time hereafter be used or occupied as a tavern, drinking saloon, bone boiling establishment, tannery, slaughter house, glue, soap, candle, starch or gun powder manufactory or for other offensive or dangerous purposes, nor for the keeping of pigs . . .

Source of information on Little Farms Subdivision:

Maurice Cole, Ferndale of Yesteryear (Ferndale, MI, Emefcee Publications, Printing, 1971): 42, 89.

WINTER → SPRING IN FERNDALE

The most beautiful time of the year in old Ferndale was the spring. After a long winter of battling ice and snow, it was so refreshing to see violets bursting through and covering the fields. Then, about the first week in May, blocks would be removed from the cars, wheels would be put on, and the blouk-a-clink, blouk-a-clink sounds of the engines and the familiar ah-ooga of the horns would fill the air.

Sheldon Damon, in Old Timers Tell It Like It Was, compiled by Ruth Rodgers Elmers, June Waugh Kotlarek, and Gerry Kulick (editor), (Ferndale, MI: Ferndale Historical Society, 1987):61

Support the Ferndale Historical Society and get the quarterly newsletter.

Learn what's happened in the past and what's coming up to honor it in our town.

Tax deductible* dues are a mere \$5 a year; only \$50 for life (save your bookkeeping and ours!)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Phone No. _____ Email: _____

*The Ferndale Historical Society is 501(c)(3). [Our mailing list is not available for non-Historical Society purposes.]

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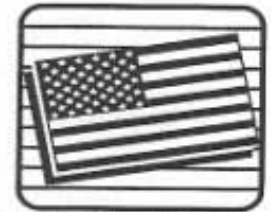
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Winter --> Spring in Ferndale

Membership / renewal form just for you!



Remember Our Country's
Heroes on MEMORIAL DAY

Coming events:

Saturday, May 27, 1:00 to 2:00 sharp! Board Meeting
2:00 - 4:00 Regular hours

Monday, May 29, 10 AM; Memorial Day Parade; Brief Program and Museum Open House.
See what's new. Visit the Museum Shop. Renew your membership.

Saturday, June 3, 9:00 - 3:00, Trunk and Treasure Sale. *Help staff our booth!*

[June and July--No Board Meetings but Museum open as usual]

Ahead: Crow's Nest dedication--TBA; Dream Cruise--August; Heritage Days--October 6 and 7]

Current Museum Hours: Saturdays 2:00-4:00 PM or by appointment

New longer hours! As soon as you call to offer 2 hours every other month.

No experience necessary! Learn your way around from our experts (listed inside)

Call Sherry to schedule yourself in: (248) 543-5297--day, evening, machine.



Ferndale Historical Society

1651 Livernois

Ferndale, Michigan 48220

(248) 545-7606

**FIRST
CLASS
MAIL**

"Preserving the heritage of Ferndale for future generations"