



Chesterfield Township Historical School

# The Journal

Chesterfield Historical Society



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JULY 2021

## Weller Schoolhouse Gets New Bell Tower

The Chesterfield Historical Society celebrated the installation of a new reconstructed bell tower on June 2, 2021. The original bell tower was removed in 2018 in preparation of a new roof. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the schoolhouse being moved from its original location at Gratiot Avenue and 22 Mile Road to the historic village on August 8, 1996. The bell, forged in 1886 was donated by the Allemon family to the historic society in 1996 and was used on their family farm as a dinner bell. Now when they visit, children will once again be able to pull the rope to ring the bell.



### *Chesterfield Twp. Historical Society*

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# Ste. Claire Voyagers and History Alive!

The Chesterfield Historical Society hosted Ste. Claire Voyagers and History Alive! A timeline of historical reenactors on June 5 and June 6. 364 guests attended with 260 on Saturday for the highest single day attendance ever.



## Family Movie Nights

Chesterfield Township Library hosted Family Movie Nights in the historic village Tuesday evenings June 22— July 27, weather permitting.



# World War II Reenactment!

The Michigan Military Technical & Historical Society participated in a World II reenactment at the historic village on July 10 and July 11 with displays and battles. 264 guests attended with 216 on Saturday. Over 85 re-enactors participated.



## New Brick Path

A new brick path was installed on June 30 from Kolping Chapel to the paved walk in front of the bridge. The historical society will continue to raise money by selling personalized 4 x8 bricks with 3 lines of text for \$100 per brick.



## Art in the Village

The Detroit Institute of Arts displayed three reproduction paintings at the Chesterfield Township municipal complex. One painting was placed in the historical society historic village between the log cabin and Kolping Chapel. The painting is titled “The Hazelnuts (The Nut Gathers)” by William Adolphe Bouguereau. An information sign accompanies the painting. The reproduction will be on view through October.



## 25th Anniversary of Kolping Chapel State Register of Historic Sites

2021 marks the 25th anniversary of the Weller Schoolhouse move and also the 25th anniversary of Kolping Chapel's registration as a Michigan state historic site in April 1996. In the April 24, 1996 *Bay Voice*, Secretary of State Candice Miller, Michigan's official historian said, "This unique building attests to the skill and devotion of the Catholic Kolping Society of America, an organization committed to providing fellowship and education for journeymen. "

The Kolping Chapel was moved to the historic village on September 28, 2016.



The Red Hat Ladies Society toured the historic village on July 22.

## Remembering Salt River School Part 2



Salt River School was located in Section 14 of Chesterfield Township, north of 23 Mile Road and East of Salt River and was built around 1844. It was part of the Anchor Bay Rural Agricultural School District, which existed from May 19, 1948 to July 20, 1955. Afterward, it was absorbed into the Anchor Bay School System.

On the preceding pages, "Mrs. K" shares her memories of teaching at the Salt River School, beginning in 1844. This was originally printed in the *Mount Clemens Monitor* in 1885.

## School Keeping in Macomb County Forty Years Ago. – No. 2

The Salt River School was not my first attempt to “teach the young idea.” I had kept two quarters before, one in the summer of '42 at the “half-way house,” now Roseville, and one the summer of '44 at “Satan’s Corners” on the turnpike north of Mt. Clemens. But Salt River was my first winter school. I had been accustomed to hear the French—lake shore French—spoken of disrespectfully. The first day I taught I had two bright little French boys, and going home to my boarding house was asked how many scholars I had. I told the number and names and added, “Who are these B’s, are they white folk, or lake shore French?” “You can judge whether they are white folks or not,” said the lady sharply, “the woman is my sister.” I was thunderstruck. I thought the sky had fallen. The first time I had opened my mouth, I had put my foot in it, as the saying is. However, Aunt Victoria was a good, Christian woman and she forgave me the sin of ignorance. How was I to know she was French herself? It taught me a lesson of prudence though that was worth a great deal to me in that neighborhood.

D. A. Ross and brothers, the great lumber dealers of Detroit, were among my pupils, and were very good little boys. Their mother was one of the sweetest Scotch ladies I ever met. The hardships and privations of a pioneer life told heavily on her.

Old Mr. Fishpool kept a little store in a log cabin between the lake and river, where he and his son Tom exchanged thread and calico for straw hats, for all the French women and children braided straw hats continually. He brought very fine braid from Ohio which some of the women sewed into hats.

In those days there were no overshoes, or rubber cloaks. We wore about calf skin shoes, not high boots, laced up in front with leather strings. Big Dennis was a shoemaker, and he made a very neat fitting shoe and was proud of it. I seem to see him sitting there on his shoe bench in the corner by the ladder, “laying down the ground works.”

We took long sleigh rides on the ice, going down the river, across the bay, then up the Clinton to Mt. Clemens. On one occasion the young folks went to Frederic to spend the evening at Uncle Robert Little’s and got back home before daylight, nearly frozen. ‘Vester remembers it, for he drove.

(Continued on next page)

## School Keeping in Macomb County Forty Years Ago. – No. 2 Continued

There was one very young lady who was called by some the Belle of Salt River. She was given to weeping when she fancied she was slighted and some of the boys loved to plague her. I do not think there was a paper taken on the river. There was no post office nearer than Mt. Clemens, 12 miles away. Theodore had "Audubon's Book of Birds" which was a treat to read and Uncle Jerman had a big pile of old almanacs. They helped to dispose of the long Sundays.

I never believed much in corporal punishment, either in the family or school, and less than ever when one little boy came into school late on Monday morning with a gash across his cheek from the corner of his mouth to his ear. "Why C—" I cried "what is the matter?" "My daddy licked me" was the curt reply. Of course I could say no more, but when school closed four weeks after the wound was not yet healed. He used a rawhide and I supposed accidentally struck higher than he meant to. I never could forget it.

One of the school inspectors for years was Mr. Mathews, who lived on the turnpike near where the churches now stand. They asked a few questions, mostly from the "fore part," of Webster's spelling book, gave a sentence to parse from Kirkham's grammar, asked to see our "hand write," and then gave a certificate of "learning, moral character, and ability."

I presume most of my pupils of those days who are left on earth are gray-haired grandparents; many I know are gone. Some I have kept in sight; they are strong, intelligent men and women. I am glad to know in these later years that I helped if ever so little in shaping some of the minds in various parts of this county. Sometimes I meet men who look at me and say "Didn't you use to me Miss--? Why I went to school to you.

K.

(originally printed in the *Mt. Clemens Monitor* February 20, 1885 p. 4)

Next newsletter: "Remembering Salt River School Part 3"

Warren Parker shares his memories of  
teaching at Salt River School in 1848-49.

## **CHESTERFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2021 SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

**JUNE 5<sup>th</sup>, SAT. 10 – 4, June 6<sup>th</sup> SUN. 10 – 3 pm**

### **STE. CLAIRE VOYAGEURS & HISTORY ALIVE**

Come see the Ste. Claire Voyageurs, 1750 era French fur trade reenactors and History Alive! “A Timeline of Historical Re-enactors.” Historians in period clothing, encampments and displays will tell the story of Macomb County’s history, from the early days of the fur trade through the war on global terror.

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

**JUNE 27<sup>th</sup>, SUNDAY 1 – 4 pm**

### **MICHIGAN LOG CABIN DAY**

**JULY 10<sup>th</sup>, SATURDAY 10 – 4 pm, JULY 11<sup>th</sup>, SUNDAY, 10 -3 pm**

### **WORLD WAR II REENACTMENT**

We will host the Michigan Military Technical & Historical Society in a World War II reenactment of Operation Cobra. The event will feature both an Allied & Axis encampment for public displays with two public battles. (11 am & 2 pm) on Saturday, and one (1 pm) on Sunday. Military vehicles will be on display. Food and drinks will be available for purchase. Entrance fee is a donation of \$1 per person or \$2 for a family.

**AUGUST 14<sup>th</sup>, SATURDAY 10 – 4 pm, AUGUST 15<sup>th</sup>, SUNDAY 10 – 3 pm**

### **VIETNAM ERA REENACTMENT**

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 18<sup>th</sup>, 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.

**DECEMBER 3<sup>rd</sup>, 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.

### **Contact us**

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