



HUBBARDSTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
NEWSLETTER NUMBER TWENTY, MARCH 2007  
BOX 183, HUBBARDSTON, MI. 48845

[WWW.HUBBARDSTON.ORG](http://WWW.HUBBARDSTON.ORG)

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- Bud Howard, Jack Stoddard, Allen Kelly, Shaun O’Grady-Nominations



Hubbardston Community Center

The Hubbardston Area Historical Society was instrumental (thanks to Mark Stoddard, Treasurer) in obtaining a \$750 tax free donation from Sam’s Club in Lansing through the efforts of Geri Hengesbach from the Fowler area. The check, received by Joanne Howard (HAHS membership and newsletter), was presented to Janet Dailey (Village President) to be used for tables and chairs for the new Community Center.

**When specific mandates have been completed and subsequently approved by Ionia County inspectors, the Historical Society will take up residence in the Community Center. Until that time, the HAHS will continue operating at the Parish Hall in Hubbardston where all are welcome to stop by on Tuesdays for coffee, snacks, conversation and aid in your research projects.**

Tentative Schedule of Events

- HAHS “Open to the Public”–Parish Hall-Tues. &Wed. 10:00-2:00 p.m.
- Coffee Hour –Brunch 12-1:00 p.m.
- March 11-St. Pat’s Celebration American Legion Post 182
  - “Irish Dinner” Noon-3:00 p.m.
  - Hubbardston Irish Dancers 3:00 p.m.
  - Music for dancing 4:00-8:00 p.m.
- March 22-HAHS General Meeting-Parish Hall – 7:00 p.m.
- April 26- HAHS General Meeting-Parish Hall- 7:00 p.m.
- May 26 HAHS Annual Meeting, Membership Drive- Election
  - St. Johns Parish Hall 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
- May 27-28 Flea Market and Food-Community Center both days
- May 28 Annual Memorial Day Celebration all day
  - Chicken Dinner at Tuscan Lodge 11:00-1:00 p.m.
  - Hubbardston Irish Dancers Noon
  - Garden Club Plant Sale all day
  - Hamburgers Post 182 Noon until sold out
  - Annual Memorial Day Parade 1:30 p.m.
- Tractor Pull following the parade

The prospective Father-in-law asked his daughter’s fiancé, “Young man, are you able to support a family?” The surprised groom-to-be replied, “Well, no. I was just planning to support your daughter. The rest of you will have to fend for yourselves.”

Joanne Burns Howard (HAHS) and Janet Dailey (Village President) receive donation from Geri Hengesbach (Sam’s Club).

Many thanks are due to Jack Fahey, Mary Caris, and Marie Sweet for their faithfulness each week in ‘manning the store.’ First Families applications are available for those interested and directions available. Thanks to Janet Dailey for a donation of furniture, and Nick Geller, Barbara Billing, Shirley Allen, Rosie McMillan, Jack Stoddard, Helen

Kavanagh, Jane Dailey and Patrick Donahue for recent donations to the HAHS. Memberships, monetary donations and sales of our genealogy and recipe book continue at a healthy clip. We are so grateful to all of you loyal supporters of our efforts. Thanks also to the Legionnaires of Post 182 for their \$500 contribution to the Community Center. The SALS (Sons of the American Legion) donated \$500 for sports equipment necessary to operate the gym at the Community Center for the youth of the area. It will take the cooperation of everyone to meet the challenges we face in order to begin daily operation of the center.

The purpose of the Hubbardston Area Historical Society shall be to promote the preservation, understanding and appreciation of the historical and cultural heritage of Hubbardston and the surrounding area by (1) encouraging genealogical and historical study and research, (2) collecting preserving, interpreting and exhibiting historical and cultural objects, artifacts and sites, (3) encouraging public participation in the activities of the society through publications, programs and the preservation of archives and historical collections and to encourage the establishment and operation of a local historical museum publications, programs and the preservation of archives and historical collections and to encourage the establishment and operation of a local historical museum

### Congratulations to Mr. Richard Wiener- New Pres. of the Historical Society of Michigan

Among his accolades and recent interests was chairmanship of election campaigns of various notables including the first term Governor Jennifer Granholm. He was also her first term Chief of Staff. As a long time friend (early 1970's) of our current Co-Chairman Phil McKenna, we have special reasons to wish him well in his new endeavor and keep him informed of our efforts in this little "Irish Haven of Patriots." "Failte!" Richard and success in abundance!

### Personal Notes

Congratulations to Alyssa Schafer, granddaughter of Jean Ann Burns Schafer for being Carson-City Crystal High School's Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Good Citizen Recipient 2006-2007. She was nominated by the high school faculty and the final vote was made by her peers. The DAR recipients are nominated by the high school faculty and the final vote was made by her peers. The DAR recipients are nominated for demonstrating qualities of dependability, service, leadership, and patriotism. Her essay on "Our American Heritage and Our Responsibility for Preserving It" will be sent to the state level for scholarship recommendation. *Alyssa has been a member of the Choir since she was in primary school. A wonderful and talented young lady she is and the daughter of Daryl and Bonnie Schafer.*

Cudos to Matthew Howard son of Russ and Cindy Howard and Paula Voisinot for being named to the Michigan Interscholastic Golf Coaches Association all-state Academic Team from East Lansing High School. He is the first student from East Lansing High ever to receive this award. Matthew has also been notified of his acceptance at Texas University as recipient of a 'full scholarship.' He plans to pursue a career in medicine. Perhaps 'golf' will provide a perfect recreation for him in his efforts. Congratulations and Success!

**"We are born naked, wet, and hungry. Then things get worse."**

### Drinking From the Saucer

When I was a little girl and often stayed with my grandmother Maria Rooney Welch, I was always fascinated at meal time to see her pour her boiling hot (always green tea) tea into her china saucer and without spilling a drop, lift it to her lips and drink the scalding liquid She would look at me and smile (I loved my Grandma Welch and she knew it) and say, "It's too hot to drink from the cup." Well, I heard this poem at Mike Kelly's Choir Christmas party and it explains the theory at least. Drinking From the Saucer

I've never made a fortune, and I'll never make one now. But it really doesn't matter, 'cause I'm happy anyhow. As I go along life's journey I'm reaping better than I've sowed; I'm drinking from the saucer 'cause my cup has overflowed.

We don't have a lot of riches and sometimes the goings tough. But while we've got our kids and friends to love us, I think we're rich enough. I'll just thank God for the blessings that His mercy has bestowed. I'm drinking from the saucer 'cause my cup has overflowed.

If He gives me strength and courage when the way grows steep and rough, I'll not ask for other blessings, I'm already blessed enough. May we never be too busy to help bear another's load. Then we will all be drinking from the saucer. All our cups will overflow.

**A cat died and went to Heaven. God met her at the gates and said, "You have been a good cat all these years. Anything you want is yours for the asking."**

**The cat said, "All my life I lived on a farm and slept on hard wooden floors. I would like a real fluffy pillow to sleep on." God said, "Say no more." Instantly the cat had a huge fluffy pillow.**

**A few days later, six mice were killed in an accident and they all went to Heaven together. God met the mice at the gates with the same offer. The mice said, "Well, we have had to run all of our lives: from cats, dogs, and even people with brooms! If we could just have some little roller skates, we would not have to run again." God answered, "It is done." All the mice had beautiful little roller skates.**

**About a week later, God decided to check on the cat. He found her sound asleep on her fluffy pillow. God gently awakened her and**

**asked, "Is everything okay? Are you happy?" The cat replied, "Oh, it is WONDERFUL. I have never been so happy in my life. The pillow is so fluffy, and those little "Meals on Wheels" you have been sending over are delicious!"**

### Iva Hillbrandt Rogers Diary

On October 11, 1980, Iva Rogers at the request of her daughter Barbara Jean Rogers Billings, sat down to write her memoirs. She was 93 at the time and finished this spectacular historical document at the age of 94. An excerpt follows:

"When I was 90 -years-old, I fell and broke my left hip and was in Greenville Hospital for 90 days. I have had to use a walker since then. Now I am 94 and it is November, 1981. I am living alone in my apartment and have one meal a day brought in from Ionia for 5 days a week. It is a project called, 'Meals on Wheels.'

My grand daughter Rosemary had her 34<sup>th</sup> birthday on November 7 and BJ (Barbara Jean) had us all for dinner at her

place for a roast turkey dinner with all the trimmings. Sara made the birthday cake. This coming Sunday, November 15<sup>th</sup> will be Margaret's 85<sup>th</sup> birthday. Now only three of us are left and I miss them all as the years slip by. The Hillbrandt name will still carry on for some time as I have several nephews (and she lists over a dozen names).

This is a remarkable and detailed chronology of the family starting with Jacob Hillbrandt in 1790. Along with her story are copies of a 160 acre land purchase in September 2, 1834 signed by President Andrew Jackson, a land purchase of 240 acres on November 2, 1837 signed by President Martin Van Buren and a Clinton County certificate of Holy Matrimony between Peleg A. Corey, 24 years old from Ionia County and Eliza McVeigh, 22 of Clinton County, dated September 11, 1853, signed by Rev. A. Sutton and witnessed by A. McVeigh and Nancy McVeigh. All of these documents are available at the HAHS for your perusal on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10-2:00 p.m.

The name Hillbrandt has an interesting history. The name originated when there was a large fire in Holland. After it was over a baby boy was found on a hill and the people could find no trace of the parents. They were most likely burned in the fire. The burned settlement was called Burnt Hill, so they gave the baby the name Burnt Hill. It was later changed to Hillburnt and still later to Hillbrandt. The Lobdells came from Wales and settled in Canada. Grandmother Eliza Lobdell Hillbrandt's father and brother were captured by the Indians. One died, but Joseph Lobdell was freed by a French lady who found him on an Indian reservation. He later married a French lady. The grandfather of these boys was a Welch nobleman, considered in the line of the Duke of Windsor. Eliza came to the USA when she was 3 years old. This and much more await your reading pleasure on your next visit to the HAHS.

## Kavanagh Schrauben Histories

On December 28, 2006 my good friend and HAHS member Helen Schrauben Kavanagh sent me a treasure. She has titled her family history, "Hidden Memories." It is wonderfully written and chronicles a terrific family who yet today spend so much quality time together enjoying each other and good times reminiscing. Helen's husband Lawrence "Tunk" Kavanagh edited down a series of "Thoughts and Meditation" from 1980-1984 which are fascinating reading. On your next visit to the HAHS, I would gladly let you share the joy of reading these interesting books. Thanks to Helen for sharing her precious memories with us.

**Friendship is like a bank account. You cannot continue to draw on it without making deposits.**

## Colonel Walter (Nick) Geller Autobiography

In November, just before he left for Florida, I talked with Nick and his wife who had sent me some family genealogy. He told me he had done an autobiography at the request of his family and I asked him to share a copy with me for the Historical Society. Nick by the way is a Charter Member of the HAHS.

Nick was born in Carson City. In his papers he cites 43 moves in his lifetime and very exciting career. "After graduation in June of 1943, I hitchhiked to Detroit and ended up joining the Air Force." He tried the Navy first and then the Marines, but he was looking for an immediate assignment, so he hopped a bus and went out to the Air Force recruiting station and got signed up. He was sworn in to the Enlisted Reserve Corps on July 27, 1943. "Got my orders for active duty on December 9, 1943, (my birthday present) and went to Fort Sheridan, Illinois." Nick graduated as a Navigator in September, 1945 and served with the Military Airlift Command, including the Berlin Airlift. In 1950 he graduated from Pilot school-twin engine qualified. He received Aircraft Observer Wings which qualified him as a Navigator, Bombardier, and Radar Operator. Then an assignment to the Strategic Air Command (SAC) allowed him experience flying the T-39, B-25, B-29, B-47, B-50, B-52, C-47, C-123, and KC-135. He attended Command and Staff College, and the Air War College. Nick was promoted to Colonel in 1967 and was assigned to Loring AFB, Maine as Deputy Commander of Operations of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Bomber Wing. He was assigned later to Strategic Air Command (SAC) headquarters as Director of Data Processing. In 1971 and 1972 he was in Vietnam as Chief of Data Processing at the 7<sup>th</sup> Air Force headquarters. He finished his career as Assistant Director of Command and Control with Commander in Chief of the Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii. He retired in 1974, after 31 years, and took a position with the Defense Department in Santa Monica, California. He finally returned home to Carson City and in 1979 and worked as Director of Personnel at Carson City Hospital until his retirement in 1986. Spending his time between Carson City and his winter home in Florida, he finally decided it was time to sit back and enjoy life. He lost his wife Mary Sweet Geller (he met her in 1942) and he and his friends accompanied her body to Arlington National Cemetery where she is entombed. Recently remarried to Rosie Frye; they are enjoying their new home on Garlock Road, their friends at Post 380, and their association with friends at St. Mary's Church. Zephyr Hills, Florida is their residence in winter where they can sit back, enjoy the sunshine and "read about" the Michigan weather.

We are so grateful to Nick and all of our wonderful members who bless us with these family treasures.

*Attention all you HAHS members past 50 years of age. Have you written your memoirs yet? Your family and the HAHS Community will bless you for your efforts. If you need ideas on getting started stop by our HAHS Museum Room and we will be happy to work with you. Getting enrolled in "First Families of the Four Corners" is a good way to start and then fill in the personal stories as you venture down memory lane.*

## Bagpipes Invade Grand Ledge-March 16 and 17<sup>th</sup>

St.Paddy's Day is big in Grand Ledge where a small neighborhood parade developed into a total community celebration. The "Opera House" features a 'bagpipe concert' on Friday March 16. "The Irish Grand Parade on Saturday March 17<sup>th</sup> features floats and two bagpipe bands, one from Canada. The evening "Pub Crawl" completes the celebration of the 'Irish and Friends' in Grand Ledge. The 'Blarney and the Green' will dominate. All are invited to join us for the "Grand Affair." (John Dwyer)

## Billie Remembered

Billie Herald Cunningham was always proud to be Irish. Her great-grandparents were born in Ireland as were the ancestors of her husband Albert and many of her Irish friends. Billie was born the youngest of nine children in Hubbardston in 1926. She lived her entire life in the house where she was born. Billie died in that house on November 30, 2006. She was 80 years old. Now, for a bit of family history:

Her grandfather, James Herald enlisted in the army in 1864 at the age of 20. Only four months later he was captured by Confederate soldiers at Stoney Creek, Va., and taken to Camp Sumpter in Andersonville, Ga., where he was a prisoner of war for 10 of the 14 months the military prison was in existence. Almost 13,000 soldiers died there from disease, malnutrition, poor sanitation, overcrowding and exposure to the elements. After the war, he returned to his hometown in New York and later moved to the area now known as Hubbardston and made it his permanent home. He met his future wife here and bought several dozen acres of virgin timberland from the state. Herald was one of Hubbardston's first settlers. One of his sons, Edward, married Georgia "Georgie" Gilleo and Billie was their youngest child. Billie met Albert "Puss" at St. John the Baptist School where they both graduated in 1944. Albert joined the Navy and Billie attended County Normal where she earned a teaching degree. Albert returned home three years later and on Christmas Eve 1947 he gave Billie a diamond ring. They were married May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1949 at St. John the Baptist Church. They were blessed with seven children and ten grandchildren. Albert died suddenly on November 11, 1989 of an aneurysm. Billie's only sibling, Betty Herald Colorado lives in Arizona. Billie was involved in the village of Hubbardston as a member of the American Legion Auxiliary for many years, the church choir, the election board and the parish council. She was a Charter Member and dedicated volunteer for the Hubbardston Area Historical Society and spent two days every week at the Museum Room filing, labeling, charting donations, or putting together the newsletters. In May, 2006 she was honored as 'HAHS Volunteer of the Year and Most Faithful Member.' She never missed a day. Dan Herald, Billie's nephew said, 'She's a sweetheart. Nobody's better. She always gives to the community and to her family. She seems to be always involved with everything. She's very big in the church.'

'Everybody's proud to be Irish. I guess it's because of the hardships they went through. On St. Patrick's Day, everybody's Irish,' she told Gazette editor Elizabeth Waldon. Active to the very end: Billie sang with the choir on Sunday, November 26, attended choir practice on the 27<sup>th</sup>, Communion Service and Coffee Hour at HAHS on Wednesday the 28<sup>th</sup>, the Advent Liturgy Party on Wednesday the 29<sup>th</sup>, had her hair done at the beauty shop on Thursday morning, the 30<sup>th</sup> and was planning to attend the Spaghetti Dinner at the Parish Hall on Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. However, she was found at her home on Friday morning, December 1, 2006, beyond the help of anyone. Besides the hundreds of friends who mourn her loss, Billie is survived by seven children: Rick of Grand Ledge, Mike of Titusville, Florida, Tim and Denny of Portland, MI., Julie of Charlotte, North Carolina, Bill of Hubbardston and Lori of East Lansing, Mi. A funeral Mass by Fr. Tom Thompson was held

on Tuesday, December 5, at 3:30 p.m. at St. John the Baptist Church with the church "filled to capacity" including the choir loft where her friends especially mourned her loss. But – she had made known her funeral song choices and she was loving her funeral "from above," I'm sure. It was a wonderful celebration of her unique and hospitable life. How we miss her! Memorial contributions in her name can be made to the Hubbardston Area Historical Society, Box 183, Hubbardston, 48845 or to the Hubbardston Community Center. Lux Funeral Home in Carson City was in charge of arrangements.

### *"A Woman"*

*"Be very careful if you ever make a woman cry,  
Because God counts her tears.  
The woman came out of a man's rib,  
Not from his feet to be walked on;  
Not from his head to be superior;  
But from the side to be equal.  
Under the arm to be protected,  
And next to the heart to be loved."  
(from the Hebrew Talmud)*

**Home Rules:** If you sleep on it...make it up. If you wear it...hang it up. If you drop it...pick it up. If you eat out of it...put it in the sink. If you step on it...wipe it off. If you open it...close it. If you empty it...fill it up. If it rings...answer it. If it howls...feed it. If it cries...love it.

### Donations to H.A.H.S. in Billie's Memory

Fan McKenna, Lansing, Mi., John and Ann Morton, Dearborn, Mi., Melissa Devine, Portland, Mi., Patrick McKenna, Lansing, Dave and Julie Shay, Dewitt, Mi., Mary Caris, Hastings, Mi., Terry Burns, Dimondale, Mi., Mr. and Mrs. Ted Cusack, State Library - Friends of Randy Riley and the many, many others who contributed unsigned cash donations to the family members for us. Special Thanks to all of our friends who honor Billie in this contribution.

Patrick L. McKenna

Age 84 died peacefully at home on January 6, 2007 surrounded by the love of his family. He has now been re-united in Heaven with God and his beautiful and beloved wife Helen to enjoy their eternal dance. He was born October 17<sup>th</sup>, 1922 to George and Margaret Smith McKenna, in Hubbardston, MI where he attended St. John the Baptist School and continued his secondary education at Lansing Community College. He was a World War II veteran, having served as an MP in the Philippines. He was a very dedicated and loyal employee of General Motors, Oldsmobile Division, for over forty years. He was a devout Catholic and loyal member of Holy Cross parish. God gave him such a unique gift of making everyone he touched feel special and loved. He loved life and enjoyed many activities including: family (he loved his girls), church, sports (especially Notre Dame), and was an excellent craftsman, mechanic and musician. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus Richard Council 788, American Legion Post 182 and VFW Post 701. He was a very loving, gentle and caring

father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, uncle, son and friend. He was preceded in death by his mother and father; wife of fifty-eight years Helen; daughter Suzanne; three sisters and five brothers. He is survived by his five daughters (Colleen, Steve) Hubble, Julie (Dave) Shay, Kristine (Jim) Wagner, Patricia (Patrick) Ley and Laurie (Rob) Corwin; eleven grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren with 2 on the way; two sisters and four brothers. The Funeral Mass was celebrated at Holy Cross Catholic Church with the Reverend Father Maurice Hayes as celebrant. Rite of Committal followed in Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to: Memorial Masses at Holy Cross Church or St. Mary Cathedral and Sparrow Hospice Services. We would like to express our sincerest thanks to Dr. Mark Ensberg, Dr. Michael Brown and the staff at Ingham County Medical Care Rehabilitation Center for their loving care and support.

We are so blessed and proud to have had you for our father; you gave us the gifts of laughter and silliness with your Irish wit. Dad, we will always love you with our whole hearts, minds and souls. You and mom will always be our "Sunshine"! Jeremy Schneider and Kelly Shay performed a beautiful rendition of "The Prayer." Jeremy also sang the "Ave Maria". The recessional was a touching solo of "Galway Bay." Immediately prior to the Mass, the children gathered round for a last good-bye and sang their favorite, "You are My Sunshine." The whole church was hushed as the quiet melody touched everyone's heart. The daughters added their thoughts as a final tribute; the "Celtic Circle of Life" and the "Irish Blessing" among other things. The Honor Guard and SALS from Post 182 where Pat was a 50 plus years member saluted the casket and were honorary bearers throughout the ceremony. I'm sure Pat and Helen up in heaven enjoyed seeing the church filled with their friends, family, relatives and co-workers from their very active life. Pat and Helen were regulars at all the festive celebrations at Post 182. The McKenna family has suffered many losses in the past few months and the adjustment is a courageous journey through 'memory lane' to sustain them. We know when we truly love our family and friends that one sad day, eventually; we will have to bid them good-bye. That is the cycle of life. But it is never an easy task. Rest in Peace, good friend!

That person is a success who has lived well, laughed often and loved much; who has gained the respect of intelligent people, and the affection of children; who has earned the appreciation of honest critics and endured the betrayal of false friends; who appreciates beauty, and finds the best in others; who leaves the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; who knows that even one life has breathed easier because he or she lived. This is to have succeeded. (R.W. Emerson)

*I am always reminded of Ed Bradbury whenever I read this perfect description of so many of our own departed citizens. Eddie included his reading with so many of the veteran's funerals when he was adjutant and/or chaplain over his 50 plus year's tenure at Post #82 Eddie was also a member of our adult choir and if he were still with us I'm sure he would be an active promoter of HAHS. Ed.*

**Hubbardston Genealogy 1780-1930** and **Hubbardston Heritage Recipe Collection and Lore** make perfect gifts anytime. **Purchased together, they are \$15 each while our very limited supply of recipe books remain.** The genealogy book provides almost 500 pages of genealogy, family histories, and interviews with local seniors, village settlement, cemetery data and sequence of arrivals by ship to our shores. Separately it sells for \$29.95. **Special price for multiple copies.** Call **989-584-3803** or e-mail [mjh655@pathwaynet.com](mailto:mjh655@pathwaynet.com).

**"Never test the depth of the water with both feet."**

### **Carson City Editor to Pursue Missionary Work**

Our very best wishes to Gazette Editor Elizabeth Waldon as she leaves us to train for an overseas missionary assignment. Elizabeth has attended our meetings, given us front page coverage numerous times, publicized our activities on a regular basis, and provided space for our special feature articles on every occasion. We can't thank her enough for assisting us as we started our fledgling society with eleven people in January, 2002 and covered us as we grew and expanded to close to 300 members and our own independent location. Our Museum Show Room and our twice weekly 'brunch-coffee hours' at the state and national historic site - St. John the Baptist Parish Complex - are open for all of our visitors both near and far as we again plan an expansion in the new year. You've been wonderful to and for us, Elizabeth and we wish you well. Your talent and your smile will get you - everywhere!

**"True friendship comes when silence between two people is comfortable."** (Dave Tyson Gentry)

### **Congratulations Jack and Barbara Rogers Billings on their 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary**

#### **The Fire of Love**

The fire of love in youthful blood,  
Like what is kindled in brushwood,  
But for a moment burns;  
Yet in that moment makes a mighty noise;  
It crackles, and to vapor turns,  
And soon itself destroys.  
But when crept into aged veins  
It slowly burns, and then long remains,  
And with a silent heat  
Like fire in logs, it glows and warms 'em long;  
And though the flame be not so great,  
Yet is the heat as strong.  
Charles Sackville 1638-1706  
(sent by Jeanne Laird, Lowell, Mi.)

**"Never mess up an apology with an excuse."**

**"I'd live life in the fast lane, but I am married to a speed bump!"**

## Holocaust Speaker Is Great Entertainer

Recently, Joan Bursleson spoke at our HAHS general meeting. She was born and raised in Dambstat and Hoham, Germany near Wiesbaden and lived through the 1942, 1943 bombings of World War Two in Germany with her mother and brother. One terrible night, the bombings started at midnight and 36,000 people were killed before it ended. Her father was a German SS officer. Unknown to the children at the time, their mother was really Jewish and if discovered would have been transported to the concentration camps from which few survived. Her story ends happily with marriage in 1964 to a career GI and some of the family immigrating to America. Her parents were reinterred in the Westside Cemetery in Hubbardston in 1982.

When inquiring of relatives still in Germany about her mother's family in 1981, she was told that they were Jewish and for protection during the war did not dare let anyone know this fact. However, the country of our birth stays in our hearts and one of her uncles, living in Chicago, determined that his remains must be buried in his homeland-Germany- when he died. To save costs, the surviving relative in Chicago shipped his cremated remains in a Maxwell House coffee can with no label.

When the holidays came, the families exchanged their usual Christmas goodie boxes and the usual thank you notes followed. When Joan Bursleson thanked her Auntie for the delicious Christmas cookies she had sent, she was to receive a surprise. The Auntie replied to the thank you note saying, "I could think of no other way to make very good use of that nice can of 'flour' I received from Chicago prior to Christmas!" By the way, Joan said the cookies were delicious! (True story!)

*'sn't it wonderful that so many of these courageous people with such tales to tell end up to be our neighbors in Hubbardston. We may be a tiny little "Burg" but we have residents with worldwide experiences in 'small towns' across the nations. What a treasure to record their stories. Ed.*

## The O'Connor History by Katie Burke

(First published in the late 1980's)

Matthew O'Connor was born in County Louth Ireland in 1802. He married Julia Carney who was born in the same place in 1803. They were married in the parish of Kilsarm, County Louth when he was 20 years old. Three girls and three boys were born to them: Bridget, Patrick, James, Mary, Richard and Rosie. They also raised a niece who had been orphaned as a baby. Matthew worked for a merchant (a gentleman in Ireland) until he died in 1843. Julia and her family (Bridget was the oldest) heard that money was being found in bushes in America. So when a cousin was leaving for America, Bridget asked her mother for permission to go with her. She arrived in New York in 1848, got a job and earned the grand total of \$1 a week. The first \$5 she saved, she sent home to her mother in Ireland. Her mother invited all the neighbors in Ireland in for tea and told them how rich Bridget was getting in America. Bridget worked for two years in New York for a dollar a week and sent money home to her mother. She then moved to Leroy, New York where she worked for a farmer's wife for two dollars a week until she married. Brother James bought grain

from a farmer and drew it to market with an old donkey hitched to a cart. He made a bit of a profit this way. With this money and any other he could earn, he helped his mother while still saving enough for passage to America. He sailed in 1850 from Ireland and landed in Leroy, New York where Bridget was living. There he found work at \$18 a month. He and sister Bridget saved for a year all they could and finally managed to send for the rest of the family. The family was nine weeks at sea in crossing. Arriving in New York, they didn't have enough money to travel on to Leroy, so they waited until Bridget and James could send them enough cash for their travel on to Burgin, New York, about six miles from Leroy.

The first to marry was Bridget. She married Patrick Rogers from County Louth, Ireland. They had nine children: Mary and Johnny who died in infancy, Elizabeth, Julia, Thomas, Patrick, Matthew, Richard and William. Bridget and Patrick lived in Leroy New York for twenty-eight years prior to their move to the Baker farm near Hubbardston, Mi. with their seven remaining children. They lived out their lives at this location.

When Matthew O'Connor passed away his oldest son Patrick took his place, so he did not come to America until the whole family came. Here he worked for a farmer. Five years after he came to New York he married Catherine Kavanagh from Canada. Three weeks after he married, his horse ran away with him and his wife and he was thrown clear and killed.

James married Ann Keary from County Meath Ireland. They lived in York State about two years after they were married. Then with their son Matthew they moved to a farm in the town of North Plains (later Hubbardston). Here eight children were born: Mary, Ann, Patrick, James, Richard, Charles, Julia, Rosie and Johnnie. The mother of the family died when Johnnie was fifteen months old. Later he married Bridget Hayes of Tipperary, Ireland. To this union, one son was born. James lived on the farm for several years and then moved into town. James was the first of the O'Connor's' to come to Michigan.

Mary worked in one place for five years and then she married James Kavanagh from County Louth. They lived in York State for eleven years after they were married, then with their four children; Mary, Julia, James and Matthew, they moved to Blackmer Road near Hubbardston, Mi. Six more children were born here: Thomas, Patrick, Richard, Catherine and William. They later moved to a farm near Carson City.

Richard O'Connor married Bridget Keenan of New York. One child, Matthew, was born and Bridget died when Matthew was nine days old. The grandmother took care of the baby until Richard married again. Richard came to Michigan and lived with his brother James until he married Mary Berrigan from New York. They lived on Blackmer Road for a few years and then moved to Gratiot County. They had nine children: Julia, Dennis, Rosie (she died at age six), Nellie, Richard, Mary, Johnnie, Annie and Rosie. They lived in Gratiot until his wife died and then he moved to Montana where he remained until he died.

Rosie married William O'Connell from County Cork in about 1864. They lived in New York for a year and then moved to Blackmer Road where ten children were born: Patience, William, Matthew, Julia, Mary, Rosie, Sarah, Elizabeth, Nellie

and Richard. They eventually moved to a farm near Carson City where they remained until they died.

Bridget O'Connor, the adopted daughter, was the daughter of Matthew O'Connor's brother and Julia Carney's sister. Her parent's died, leaving her an orphan when she was a baby. She married William Anderson and had six children. The mother of his family came to Michigan with her daughter Rosie and lived around with her children until her death forty-five years ago. She is buried in her son, James's lot in the cemetery in Hubbardston.

Some of the children of the third generation live in the states of Montana, North and South Dakota and New York. But most live in the vicinity of Hubbardston and Carson City, Mi. (by Katie Rogers Burke as told to her by Julia Rogers)

*Katie Rogers Burke died in 1987 but there is no date cited on his paper. Ed.*

### Doberman Locates Civil War-Era Bones

Copper, a 6-year-old red Doberman pinscher, worked an unkempt cemetery in Portland Twp. On Oct. 27, 2006. The location of the graves had been forgotten, the trees had taken over. In this setting, the dog's handler set him loose to find Civil War era remains. "Get to work," said handler Pam Burns of Sanford. "Go find." And the dog did, locating 66 bone fragments in about an hour. Copper and Burns are member of the Michigan Search and Rescue in Muir, in Ionia County. The 14 member volunteer group aids police, rescuers and historians in finding the living and the dead. Burns and her dog were among the searchers in September who helped find the bodies of Jeffrey Lynn Brice and his 3-year-old son, Grant, of Charlotte, both of whom had gone missing during a fishing trip...Bernie Russell helps care for the once-forgotten Union Burial Ground in Portland Twp. And had hoped that Burns and Copper would bring order to what has become a hodgepodge of toppled, half-buried, scattered headstones. Unfortunately, Copper's search found that there was no organization to the 1860's era burials. At least they can say he tried to do the right thing. *If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, you may contact Christine Rook at [clrook@lsj.com](mailto:clrook@lsj.com) (Lansing State Journal, December, 2006) sent by Jack Stoddard*

**'Your friend is the man who knows all about you and still likes you.' (Elbert Hubbard)**

### From the Archives

The Hubbardston community honored Patience McGinn as she celebrated 44 years of teaching in 1927. She was the daughter of John and Ann Love McGinn who were married in Rochester, NY on December 9, 1860. She had two sisters, Sarah and Anna; and three brothers, John, James and George.

She started teaching at age 17 in the County Line School. At the Bower School east and north of Pewamo. In 1886 she started teaching at St. John the Baptist school. After two years the Racine Dominican Sisters arrived (1888) and she went back to the Daniels School. After teaching

in various areas of Michigan and Indiana, she returned to the Hubbardston Public School in 1902. She remained there until she finally retired after a career of 50 years. The amazing and ironic fact is that she had to take breaks in the school year in her early life for reasons of poor health. And yet she had the stamina to stay with it an amazing length of time.

Anna and Patience lived together for many years and everyone labeled them the "A and P" sisters (Anna and Patience). The family vowed that they made the best apple pie in the world, and entertained the family often with their enthusiasm, quick wit and vital interest in everybody and everything. On this 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary of teaching, over three-hundred and fifty friends and former students representing each decade of her teaching career were present to honor her. Ending the tribute were two 'little ones' Buddy Tabor and Dick Langdon, ages three and a half years, carrying the banner, "We Are Next, Class of 1928."... "Seldom is there a teacher who causes concern for fear she will stop teaching... Miss McGinn has the reputation as being one of the finest nature study teachers in the state."

Thankfully, Patience held strongly to her family ties and stayed in the area giving the local children the benefit of her expertise. After years of living together; attending all of the family and social functions together; irony steps in again with the loving sisters dying only eighteen days apart. Patience, on December 10, 1957 and Anna, on December 28, 1957. On hand at the HAHS Museum room is the complete article from the local paper for your reading pleasure.

**The most I can do for my friend is simply to be his friend. I have no wealth to bestow on him. If he knows that I am happy in loving him, he will want no other reward. Is not friendship divine in this? (Henry David Thoreau)**

### Potter's Field Obsession

When he was young, Chuck Fuller says his grandmother used to bring him to Lake Forest Cemetery in Grand Haven and she would stand in front of its Potter's Field and stare at it for a long time. He later discovered that some of his grandmother's family had been buried there in unmarked and unknown locations. "And she would stand here and she was just upset with 'This is what you've got.' These people immigrated here. They're just as important as anyone else." ... Fuller said that it has been speculated that up to 1400 people were buried in Grand Haven cemetery's Potter's Field, but records of the burials may have been lost in a late 19<sup>th</sup> century fire... After spending four years researching county, cemetery, newspapers and obituaries at Loutit District Library, he has been able to identify the names of about 850 people that were buried at the field. Potter's Field was part of the original plat of Lake Forest Cemetery which opened in 1873. The city's first cemetery was where Central Park is today and most of the remains were exhumed and relocated to Lake Forest over a 25 year period. (Lansing State Journal, December, 2006)

**"If you write in the dust...please don't date it!"**

## ‘Student Computer Fixers’ Revel in Popularity

Bradley Osborne (grandson of Pat Stoddard Osborne) conquers all the high-tech challenges you might expect: viruses, faulty network connections, software bugs, etc., but once in a while, a nonkey wrench is thrown into the works. Or a fork is lodged in the printer. It's enough to slow the Aquinas collage junior and resident tech-assistant on his appointed rounds...but not for long. "Their printer wasn't working and I couldn't figure out why," he said. "After some investigating, I looked inside and saw some sort of object that looked foreign. I don't really know how a fork got there. And she didn't know either." Osborne has no formal training in eating-utensil retrieval, but he solved the crisis nonetheless...The unsung heroes of modern academia, these youths are hired by universities to respond to the proliferation of electronic emergencies.

At Stanford, University of California-Berkeley and local colleges such as Aquinas and Kendall College of Art and Design, they are the first line responders to tech-trouble. Neither Aquinas nor Kendall charge students for these computer services...Computer lab printers heat up to a scorching 500 degrees, so if a student loads the wrong kind of paper, the result can be a gunked up, gooey mess... "They are paid by the hour, but the experience they gain is invaluable and it is also a great resource for us to be able to handle a wide variety of needs students have at anytime of the day or night," says Joyce LaFleur, Director of Information Technology and Services at Aquinas. (Grand Rapids Press, 11/27/06)

*Brad Osborne is the nephew of Charter Member Jack Stoddard and an alumnus of Hubbardston Elementary and Carson City-Crystal High School. Brad is a quiet, talented and quick-witted young man who is a pleasure to know.*

## Letters from readers:

Oh, how I love keeping up on everything by the newsletters. I would love to get the genealogy books from you also. Thank you for all the hard work you put into making all your projects a success. Lots of love, (Barbara Burns Olson, Snohomish, Washington.)

Sorry I am so late sending in my dues. I appreciate the newsletters. Everyone is doing such a great job. (Dorothy McKenna Fox, Muskegon, Mi.)

Thank you so much for sending me the cookbook package. I treasure those. Thanks for taking time and effort to bring our history alive. (Rosemary Burns Blashill, Sault St. Marie, Mi.)

Thank you for sending the books. The two books are wonderful! Lots of hard work and time involved in this project. (Kyran and Kathy Mulvihill, Walker, Mi.)

Thanks for helping me in my search for the Shiels family. I am still very interested in learning more, particularly how they entered the country and from where. (Marie McErlean, North Caldwell, New Jersey)

Thank you for kind words for Mary Sue and Vicki. We miss them so much. I wanted to share with you this poem. Terry's son Kevin was having a tough time with his daughter Grace trying to understand all of this that's happened. So his wife

Stacy sat down with her and said, "Let's just talk about "B" Grandma (Burns)" When they had finished Stacy wrote this poem with all of Grace's feelings expressed. I loved it. It's so Vicki. Hope to see you all during the holidays. Isn't it great that our relatives happen to be our friends! (Joanie Burns Christides, Grand Ledge, Mi.)

### My "B" (Burns) Grandma

My Grandma was always ready  
To sit and play with me.  
Whether Barbie's on the floor  
Or sharing a cup of tea.  
She was always kind and gentle  
With a smile on her face.  
And a warm hug to give  
Anytime...anyplace...  
She would sit while I painted  
All kinds of colors on her toes  
And let me play "dress up"  
With all her shoes and clothes.  
She would knit me a blanket'  
Then cuddle up with me.  
Together we would talk about  
All the things that I might be.

My Grandma is now my angel  
And watches from above.

I can almost feel her arms around me  
But mostly I feel her love. (Stacey Burns)

**When two friends part, they should lock up each other's secrets and exchange keys. The truly noble mind has no resentments. (Diogenes)**

For membership, complete the form below and send it with \$15 annual fee for one year or \$60 for a 5 year (one year free) membership, made payable to HAHS. Send to: H.A.H.S. c/o Joanne Howard, Box 183, Hubbardston, Mi., 48845. **Memberships run June through May.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E mail: \_\_\_\_\_

List surnames you are researching: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: All information may be published in upcoming newsletters unless you indicate in writing otherwise.

Bud and Joanne Howard

Hubbardston Area Historical Society

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