

**NEWSLETTER NUMBER FOUR - FEBRUARY-MARCH, 2003**  
**HUBBARDSTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**Box 183, HUBBARDSTON, MI. 48845**  
**WWW.HUBBARDSTON.ORG**

**Future Citizens, Parents, Professionals, and Friends from the Class of 1942-Five are HAHS Members**



First Communion Class, St John the Baptist, 1942- Sister John Dominic and her precious cargo of little ones. Left to right: Catherine Donehue, Dorothy Dwyer, Priscilla Fox Schafer, Mary Ellen Williams Osborne, Katherine McKenna Kussmaul, David Bennett, Shirley Bennett Burns and John Matthew Burns. This picture was sent to me by John Burns with the explanation that he distinctly heard Sister John Dominic say, "Look at me!"

Priscilla married Gene Schafer and they have a beautiful family. Mary Ellen married Dick Osborne, who died recently of cancer. They lived on the Maple River near Matherton and raised a very nice family. Katherine married RJ Kussmaul and is retired in Lansing. Their children reside in the east. David is retired and living in Dewitt with his wife Jeanne, near their children and grandschildren. Shirley and Johnny were inseparable friends all of their lives and are now living in Dimondale and Lehigh Acres, Florida as the weather dictates. John is a retired foreman from Oldsmobile and Shirley retired from the State Department. They will celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on October 22, 2005. The site where the children are standing is now a shrine to "The Holy Innocents". The convent in the background was razed in the late

1970's. The parish complex is now a State and National Historic Site and is listed on the National Register of Historic sites.

**Members of the Esch family-June, 2001**



**Top Things Only Women Understand:**

A salad, diet coke and hot fudge sundae make a balanced lunch! Fat Clothes! The inaccuracy of every bathroom scale ever made! Why discovering a designer dress on the clearance rack can be considered a peak life experience!

**Detailed Calendar of Events Forthcoming**  
**January 23 - General Membership Meeting**  
**Celtic Path-7:00PM**  
**February 27 - General Membership Meeting**  
**Celtic Path-7:00PM**  
**March 27 - General Membership Meeting-**  
**Celtic Path-7:00 PM**

### **New Website up and Running**

[www.hubbardston.org](http://www.hubbardston.org) is on line at your service and growing as we speak. Duane Fahey and Jennifer Churchill, our media consultants, have coordinated their efforts and we now know how fortunate we are to have these talented young people with us.

“Although our focus is the past, the Hubbardston Area Historical Society (HAHS) is definitely taking advantage of present-day technology. The site is still undergoing construction, but the society is working on including historical photos and genealogy links. Currently you can find membership information, a few historical photos, and all of the society’s newsletters which are chock-full of fascinating historical tidbits about the area.” (Jennifer Churchill, Gazette 12/02/02) The November meeting was a “pay your own way dinner” at Pewamo, and so was not vigorously promoted. There was no meeting in December due to the holiday schedules. The next meeting will be at 7 p.m. January 23 at “The Celtic Path” in Hubbardston. Throughout January, February and March we will be working on the calendar for the year, securing a nominating committee and candidates for the May election of officers at the **first annual general membership meeting**, and volunteers interested in participating in the on-going research on two possible sites for historical designation. **The public is welcome and encouraged to attend all of our regular meetings without exception.** Questions, historical data and/or concerns can be addressed by calling Pat at 989-981-6066, Joanne at 989-584-3803, or any member of the HAHS staff. E-mail queries are also an option.

We owe so many thanks to you our members for supporting us so enthusiastically from the very first meeting and your many contributions to our research projects. We now have 175 members nationwide and still growing. Can you imagine?

Pete Burns and Bud and Joanne Howard are diligently attempting to have “First Families” material ready for publication in 2003. If you have stories, facts, data, etc. that you wish to add, please send it to us. We love these wonderful stories you tell us. Plan to attend the meetings whenever you are in the vicinity and join your neighbors in reminiscing our history!

### **An Irishman’s Philosophy**

**There are only two things to worry about,**

**Either you are well or you are sick. If you are well, there is nothing to worry about, but if you are sick, there are two things to worry about. Either you will get well or you will die. If you get well, there is nothing to worry about. If you die, there are only two things to worry about. Either you will go to heaven or you will go to hell. If you go to heaven there is nothing to worry about. But if you go to hell, You’ll be so ‘dern’ busy shaking hands with friends, you won’t have time to worry! (purchased in Waterford, Ireland, 1996)**

### **Naming Lansing As the State Capital Was Done As a Joke**

Lansing (AP) When Constitutional Convention delegates recently approved a declaration that Lansing would remain as Michigan’s capital city, few were aware of the location of that seat of government 115 years ago. Lansing’s selection all started more or less as a joke originally. After the first 12 legislatures had convened in Detroit, lawmakers attending the 1847 session decided that some other site should be selected because, as one man put it: “Np poor man could be governor in Detroit, his salary of \$1500 being insufficient to support him in the gay (I think they mean, lively) city.” But choosing another location was not a simple task. Marshall was first proposed in a bill, but words flew thick and fast, suggesting a score of other sites. When the measure came out of committee, Lyons in Ionia County was recommended. Historical files disclose that a “Joker” then was inserted into the bill, naming Lansing Township as capital. As one report declares, “Howls of laughter swept across the floor. The thought of placing the capital in the wilderness of Lansing Township was so ludicrous that everyone in the house voted for it.”

“Before the surprised members realized what had taken place, the measure had been transmitted to the Senate.” After more than 50 ballots in the Senate, the action of the House was approved. But not before one outraged lawmaker shouted: “Why should we take the capitol from a large and beautiful city and stick it down in the mud on the banks of the Grand River, amid choking miasma, where the howls of wolves and the hissing of massasaugas (rattle-snakes) and the groan of bull frogs resound to the hammer of the woodpecker and the solitary note of the nightingale?” Even after Lansing was selected officially, the protests continued. One investigator, sent to look over the location, reported: “It’s one of the worst, in point of health, that could be adopted. You have dead water on each side of you and chill fevers would be as sure to the state officers as their salaries.” But the 13<sup>th</sup> legislature convened in Lansing in 1848 in the midst of the dense wilderness. The capitol was built of hewn timber. “Serious mined, homespun garbed men came afoot or in jolting, horse-drawn vehicles over rough trails,” said one description, “to grapple with the familiar problems of taxation, highways and growing governmental expenses.” (Lansing State Journal, March 1962) sent by Ken Schafer

**The best way to dress up is to put on a smile.**

**When Mother Teresa won her Nobel Prize, she was asked, “What can we do to promote world peace?” She replied, “Go home and love your family.”**

**Worry is like a rocking chair: it gives you something to do, but doesn’t get you anywhere. (Mary Caris)**



**Remember the Michigan Produce Company in Carson City?  
Today an apartment complex graces the spot.**

**The following news items are taken from a 1988 Ionia County paper.**

**A Look Back 100 Years Ago-April 20, 1888**

The supper and festival given at Central Hall last evening by the ladies of the church of St. Peter and Paul for the benefit of the parochial school of the society was largely attended and was socially and financially a grand success. The spacious hall was crowded with members of the society and their many friends...The event of the evening was the drawing of the handsomely framed life size portrait of the Rev. Father Bolte. The prize was secured by Alderman Edward Gallagher, who held the lucky number.

James McDonald was the fortunate holder of the number which drew the ten dollar prize, which was a choice between a Persian shawl, and a lunch set with table cloth and napkins to match. ...The net proceeds were upwards of \$150.

**A Look Back 50 Years Ago-April 19, 1938**

Ten Ionia County residents were admitted to citizenship in the United States and four others made application for second papers in Ionia County Circuit Court Monday. They are: Martin Glynn, Hubbardston; Michael Rooney, Hubbardston; Katherine Salik, Ionia; Charles McCarry, Ionia; Sister M. Aurelia, Ionia; Anna McKelvey, Ionia; Jacob Visser, Portland; John T. MacKinzie, Saranac; Joseph Walintelis, Ionia; Quintilia Guidi, Portland. All were admitted to citizenship. The four Ionia County residents filing for second papers were Lovisa Eleanor Gonnella, Ionia; Soren Christian Nielson, Ionia; Pauline Allen, Ionia; Anna Durak, Ionia.

**A Look Back 25 Years Ago-April 20, 1963**

Happy Birthday Terry Shiels is the greeting which will come from nearly 200 members and guests of the Ionia Tabletop Association next Monday evening. For Shiels, Michigan's oldest tavern owner and one of central Michigan's senior businessmen, will be the guest of honor as the association holds the first of what is hoped to become an annual banquet. Terry is a native of Hubbardston and operator of a business operated by his father and his uncle well before the turn of the century. The Hubbardston landmark, the third building on that site, where Shiels is in business, is one of the few area taverns

never to have had bar stools. Their absence is taken for granted by Shiels customers, but a six-year-old brought the unique feature to attention not long ago when she remarked to her mother, "Look, Ma, a cowboy bar." Terry was 50 when he purchased his first new car, a 1928 Peerless, which he still has in the garage next to his antique-filled home. Retirement? "I might retire some day but not right now," says Shiels. (I found this yellowed fragment of paper in my mother's prayer book in February of 2000. Michael Rooney was her mother Maria Rooney Welch's brother. Called 'Tipper,' he claimed to have worked all his early life in County Tipperary, Ireland, before immigrating to Michigan.

**A Look Back 10 Years Ago-May 1978  
"Joins Education Society"**

Joanne Burns Howard of Grand Ledge is among 30 new members recently initiated into the Michigan State University chapter of Phi Delta Kappa. Mrs. Howard, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Burns, is an MSU doctoral degree candidate as an educational specialist and a 1951 graduate of St. John the Baptist School in Hubbardston. She presently teaches sixth grade at Pleasant View Elementary School in Lansing and received a master's degree from MSU in 1970. Phi Delta Kappa is an international professional education society comprised of members dedicated to a teaching career. Membership is based on an individual's leadership, research, and service in the field of education. Women educators were admitted into membership of the previous all-male society for the first time last year. (*This doctoral candidate finally published her research in 2001 called; St. John the Baptist Parish on Fish Creek, the Beginnings. No PhD. was recorded*)

**. "For he will give his angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways. (Psalm 91:11)**

**You didn't know you were special?**

If God had a refrigerator, your picture would be on it. If he had a wallet, your photo would be in it. He sends you flowers every spring, and a sunrise every morning. If you want to talk, he's there to listen. Out of all the places he could live, he chose your heart. Fact is; he's crazy about you. And say, doesn't it look a little brighter out there right now? (sent by Jack Billings)

**Life is a coin. You can spend it any way you wish, but you can only spend it once.**

**The grass may be greener on the other side of the fence, but it still has to be mowed.**

**I don't know the secret to success but the key to failure is to try to please everyone. (sent by Mary Caris)**

**"May you always have these blessings...A soft breeze when summer comes- A warm fireside in the winter- And always- the warm soft smile of a friend." (R. Tewlin)**





We are all aware of the culinary talents of Norma Falor <Fitzpatrick. But did you know that her husband Tom just <loves to help out in the kitchen? We caught him in the act

And doesn't he look happy to be there! It was a very happy occasion with over 500 people enjoying a delectable meal, the local office holders roasting Father Reitz unmercifully, the children's choir and adult choir performing and everyone enjoying a wonderful day. People from both parishes thoroughly enjoyed a beautiful day. Patrick and Janet Burns of St. Mary's Parish and Bud and Joanne Howard of St. John the Baptist Parish were co-chairmen. We were so fortunate to have Father Jim Cusack, Bishop Brietenbeck and dozens of priest friends of Father Reitz with us to participate in a solemn, glorious celebration of the liturgy. In 1986 when Father Fox retired, Father Reitz was assigned to fill very large shoes after a reign from 1938-1986 by Father Fox. He stepped in, the two were great friends and the situation couldn't have been more perfect. And life at St. John the Baptist completes another chapter in its colorful history.

Tom and Norma are still doing all of the funeral dinners at St. Mary's and helping out whenever there is any need whatsoever. Why are our communities so great? We have so many nice people like Tom and Norma to keep us on track.

#### **A look back 82 years-Simplicity Marks June Wedding**

Simplicity was the keynote of the wedding of J.W. McCrackin and Miss Marie Welch which was solemnized June 1, 1920 at St. John's church in Hubbardston. Promptly at eight o'clock to the strains of Mendelsohn's wedding march rendered by Simplicity was the keynote of the wedding of J.W. McCrackin and Miss Marie Welch which was solemnized June 1, 1920 at St. John's church in Hubbardston. Promptly at eight o'clock to the strains of Mendelsohn's wedding march rendered by Walter Brunn, violin and Miss Katherine Shiels, accompanist,

the bridal party proceeded to the altar where nuptial high Mass was sung by Fr. Welch of Coldwater, a cousin of the bride, assisted by the pastor, Fr. McCormick, and the ceremony was performed on the altar. The bride was handsomely gowned in embroidered net over white satin and carried a shower bouquet of bride's roses. The maid of honor's dress was robin's egg blue georgette crepe and the bridesmaid looked charming in a pink georgette crepe and both carried bouquets of pink and white carnations. The bride and her attendants wore picture hats. A sumptuous wedding breakfast was served to the bridal party and immediate relatives at the bride's home. Mrs. McCrackin is a daughter of Mrs. John Welch and a graduate of St. John's High School, Hubbardston, and was a successful teacher in Clinton and Ionia counties for several years. The groom needs no introduction to our readers being the oldest son of Mrs. Mary McCrackin and one of the rising young farmers of this section. Mr. and Mrs. McCrackin left on a wedding trip to Milwaukee and Chicago and on their return will reside on the Neumann farm which was recently purchased and awaiting them. Their many friends bespeak for them a long and happy life. The out of town guests were Mrs. Welch, Mrs. Frank Dailey and children of Lansing, aunt and sister of the bride, Kenneth McCrackin of Sandwich, Ontario and Mr. and Mrs. John White of Clare. (Carson City Gazette, June 1920)

*Bill and Marie had five children: Joseph (Irma), Mary (Cotter), Patricia (Wood), Peggy (Sr. Marie Kathleen), Billie (Proctor) and lived to celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on their farm on Highway 57 west of Carson City. Their family tree is firm and strong. The style of writing about weddings is indeed very personal as compared to today. (Ed.)*



**Agnes Donehue Mckenna and Raymond Donehue - two staunch supporters of the HAHS with multiple members in their families.**

**George McGinn Sr.**, well known and loved Ionia County officer for 40 plus years was a natural comedian. Going to buy hay for his cow, he asked John Burns on O'Brien Road, "Do you have a sandwich for my cow? She's hungry for lunch."

Approaching the welfare official in Ionia for funds for 'Julius Caesar,' the magistrate said, "Julius Caesar has been dead for years. Why would he need money?" "Well, I'm getting flowers for his grave," replied George. (Jerry Burns)



**Meet Margaret Dollar Schafer, Rose Cunningham Clark and Nita Herald Heppard** as they produce 'Gourmet Delights' for our Michigan Historical Dedication celebration on June 24, 2001, the feast of St. John the Baptist. Today the parish complex in Hubbardston is registered on the National Historic Sites Register as a result of the efforts of the early Irish and German immigrants. A few other nationalities made profound contributions also. We'll hear about them in an upcoming book to be published by Peter Burns and Joanne Howard (and many helpful contributors) on the First Families of the North Plains, Ionia County area.



**Borden Road west of Hubbardston**

This road was constructed by farmers who had the option of working on county projects in lieu of tax assessments. Peter McKeone in the black hat, George Parks, Pat Cunningham and Bill Rogers are a few of those who are identifiable in the above photo. Jack Stoddard brought the photo to our attention and gave us the story behind it. The work ethic today is comparable to yesteryear? What do you think? Would you grab the shovel or write the check?

**It is good to remember that the teakettle, although up to its neck in hot water, continues to sing.** (Mary Caris)

<b>Membership Information</b>	
Those interested in Membership in the H.A.H.S. should complete the form below and send it with \$15 annual membership fee made payable to Hubbardston Area Historical Society. <b>All persons joining prior to September 1, 2002 will be Charter Members.</b> Send to: H.A.H.S., Box 183, Hubbardston, Mi., 48845. Memberships run June through May.	
Membership Information:	
Name:	_____
Address:	_____
City:	_____ State: ___ ZipCode: _____
Home Telephone:	_____
E-mail Address:	_____
List	surnames you are researching:
_____	

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

**True Story (1920's?)**

During a solemn "Forty Hours Devotion" service, **Ford Burns (Jim Burns's son) and Frank Burns (John Burns's son)** were being less than attentive acolytes. With their burning candles tipped ever so slightly, they were able to 'weld' the vestments of the priest's kneeling in front of them, to their shoes. Just as gentle accidental tilt of the melting candle made the perfect glue. Their dads were carefully watching the proceedings from the pews behind the boys. When the priests tried to stand at the end of the sermon, they couldn't get their cassocks loose to hang properly. The quiet, saintly, solemn boys enjoyed a terrific prank! That is until the service was over and they got home!!! (Jeremiah Burns, tongue in cheek, Nov. 2002)

**Classic Irish Proverbs**

**"Your feet will bring you to where your heart is."**  
**"Burning embers are easily kindled"**

**Letters from readers**

Just received you book from my sister yesterday and I'm already finished reading it. Father Fox was right in picking you. What a great job you did! My great grandfather was James Herald. Ned Herald was my grandfather and I am the youngest son (52) of Rode Herald Dyke, favored nephew of my aunt, Billie Herald Cunningham. God, I love Hubbardston. I stayed with my cousins in the summer. I was raised in Detroit, a totally different life. I just wanted to say thank you for your book. It brings back my childhood. **Dennis J. Dyke, Phoenix, Arizona**

I just saw the message from Duane Fahey about the new web-site. Betty just woke up and I told her about this web-site. I told her, and I believe emphatically, that there is no other town in the U.S. quite like Hubbardston. Of course, it takes people like you and all the others who keep coming up with all these ideas that will, I'm sure, some day be a feature story on the national news. I tell people out here about the things you townspeople get into and they just give me that, "Yeah, we know that you're just bragging," but then I show them the stuff I've printed off the net and they turn into believers! Say "Hi" to everyone-love to all. **Ray Burns, Gladstone, Oregon.** *(Ray is the oldest son of Joe and Eva Burns. His wife, Betty had a massive stroke in 1996) News from Hubb he loves)*

Thanks to all of you for initiating the HAHS. It's awesome. I can't believe what I am finding in the newsletters. Pete, Ford does look like a young 90. Philip, didn't Orville Cotton live around the corner from you? Joanne, the last time I was in Hubbardston, I introduced my son to your dad, just after we had toured the cemetery finding names of many relatives. Mike is still in awe of Joe. I will be in Michigan in June this summer, the first time in almost a decade. When I'm there, I would like to see you and some of your work. It's always a busy time visiting ten brothers and sisters, But Pam and I, both being History majors, love genealogy. We have lived here in Boulder, Colorado since 1969. Iretired from teaching in Boulder Valley Scools two years ago, and now Pam and I teach together at Montbello School in Denver, my 40<sup>th</sup> year of teaching...Let me know what I can do to help you with your great project. **Bill Burns**

**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 operaton of a local historical museum.**

**Philip McKenna and Julianne Burns-Co-Chairmen,  
Pat Baese-Treasurer  
Mark Stoddard-Vice Chairman,  
Jennifer Churchill, Duane Fahey-Media  
Peter Burns-Genealogy, Helen Hoskins-Artifacts,  
Randy Riley-Archives  
John Stoddard, Shaun and Beth O'Grady-Name  
Marie Sweet-By-Laws,  
Bud and Joanne Howard-Sec.-Editors, Mary Caris-Co-Editor.  
Committee Members: P.Quint Cusack, John Fahey,  
Allen and Janet Kelley**

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**A Special Gift**  
When Virginia Wohlfert Harlow died in 2001, Kim and Ron Falor, her daughter and husband were given the job of settling the estate. They found boxes and boxes of pictures, scrapbooks and memorabilia with nothing to identify them. Ron's sister, Norma Falor Fitzpatrickl told them to "take them to Pat Baese at the Celtic Path". They did, and I was ecstatic. As box after box arrived from week to week, gorgeous wonderful pictures of families, weddings, reunions, school groups emerged and none with identification. Who were these people?  
Via the grapevine, I learned that Rita Cunningham Huhn had been a good friend of Virginia Wohlfert's through the years. Many of them, even Rita could not identify. But when she saw one particular photo she said,"O my gosh! That's Henry and Magdalena Bozung's wedding picture." Some pieces of the puzzle were coming together.  
Beatrice Bozung, Alvin's widow came to the store to view the pictures and she was thrilled. I made several copies of the wedding picture for each of her children for Christmas. Mary Ann Wohlfert Grant (a relative) and her sister Betty came in to look through the photos They were in awe of the huge number of pictures they had never before seen. I made copies and then gave the originals to a very appreciative Ann and Betty Wohlfert.  
Some of the pictures had the names: Thome, Hafner, Haas and Barker on the back. There were also a few pictures of Westphalia, circa 1907.  
My next call was to Michael Thome, owner and veterinarian of Animal Care Center of Carson Vcity. He remembered that some of the Thome's lived in Westphalia about a hundred years ago and so he came in to view the collection.He found a picture of Joe Thome and Mrs. Nicholas Thome, his great, great, great aunt. Now what?  
One of my very good sources for local history is Gene Bozung. He thought I should contact Aloysius Hafner from Westphalia. When I finally got the correct phone number and called him, I was so enthusiastic that he thought I was a telemarketer and almost hung up on me.  
On January 2, 2002, Al Hafner visited The Celtic Path. We had a wonderful visit and he told me about each building pictured in a 1907 photo of Westphalia. Most of the pictures he didn't recognize. They were of his parents era. But when he came upon the picture his dad, Joe Hafner, I could see the memories and love soften Al's eyes as he spoke about his father. This made all the tracing worthwhile. Later Gene Bozung came in to visit with Al. They sat down in the comfy

rockers in front of my cozy wood cook stove, which I use for additional heat on very cold days, and chatted for three hours. Thanks Ron and Kim...you helped make a difference in several people's lives.(sent by Pat Baese) *Pat McCormck Baese is the owner of The Celtic Path in Hubbardston.. Hubbardston Area Historical Items are stored at The Celtic Path. I predict that a visit to her store will be most enjoyable You can survey the collections she has been given shop for all of the neat Irish gifts she has on view, and there is always someone to talk to about whatever. Small towns are wonderful for that alone! (Ed.).*

