

Kite & Key

Franklin Historical Society Newsletter

DECEMBER 2024

WAS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE?

(recollections from the circa 1860 catalpa tree that grew behind the Franklin library)

Yes, as I recall, our village had several doctors. In fact, many of their houses are hidden in plain view. Journey with me as I help you discover them and unveil the stories hidden within.

Our first doctor was a feller named Ebenezer Raynale who hailed from Pennsylvania. He came to the Stoughton-Bullock Settlement in 1827 and lived in the loft of his cousin Phema, her husband Doras Morton and their four children for a year and a half. He probably would have stayed with them longer, but when the couple was expecting their fifth child, there just wasn't room for him.

The Morton home was built at 26210 Evelyn Court. Of course, there were no street names back then. The "streets" were dirt, mud in the spring and ruts in the winter. In fact, there were just a handful of other structures at the time, mostly centered in the same area.



Raynale's medical education was primitive compared to today's training. His first patient was Naomi Gage on May 12, 1828. She was the daughter of Elijah Bullock, the second landowner in the settlement. He made his rounds on horseback through Southfield, Bloomfield, Farmington and West Bloomfield. He relied on beech leaves for poultices, saffras for boils, boneset for fevers and tansy plants as an antidote for medicine. His fees were paid with food and labor. Families were plagued with sickness. Cemetery markers attest to family members that passed away within days of one another.

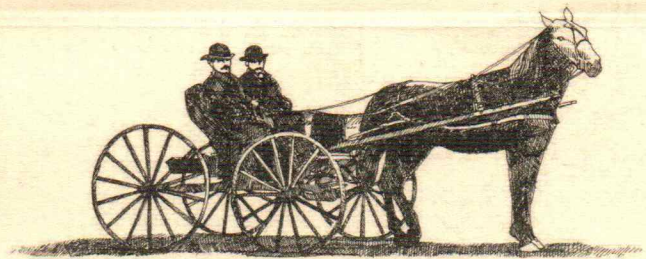
No doctor was in the village from 1838 to 1842. Villagers relied on rural doctors from other communities for their health needs. After nearly 20 years, Dilucenne Stoughton, the first landowner in the settlement, vacated his brick house and moved to Phelpstown, Michigan which we know as Williamston. Then ole Doc Buel began his practice in the village and moved into Stoughton's home, the first brick home built in Oakland county. Some said it was built with Bigelow bricks from the family business on 14 Mile and

Inkster. I suspect that was a fair assumption because of the Bigelow brick proximity to the village. Henry Buel practiced homeopathic medicine. He was just down the road from the first doctor. His buckboard and horse were well-known for miles around.

Now, I won't encourage you to find this structure because, well, it no longer exists. It was the only one of the earliest doctor's homes that is no longer with us.

Buel did his own compounding. He would get out his case and lay out little squares of tissue. On the point of his knife, he took the desired amount from each vial and would mix them together. "Turn one of these powders on your tongue every two hours, he would say. And stay in bed for two days. If you thirst, take a little crust and coffee." His instructions were direct.

In 1879 Buel turned in his buckboard for a Phaeton! I still have a vision of this four-wheeled open carriage pulled by a single horse making house calls in the rural villages.



Just around the corner from Buel on School road, lived another doctor named Henry Cox. You're probably scratching your head and wondering where in the world was School road?! It was just another name for Carol Street.

On a wintry evening in 1859, there was a mysterious buggy accident and suspected robbery of Peter Van Every. He operated the grist mill back in the day before it became the Franklin cider mill. He was seen leaving for Pontiac with a large sum of money and in the company of strangers. He was later found pinned under the wheels of a buggy penniless and left for dead. Doctors Buel and Cox unsuccessfully tried to revive him. Rural doctors often relied on the expertise of one another.

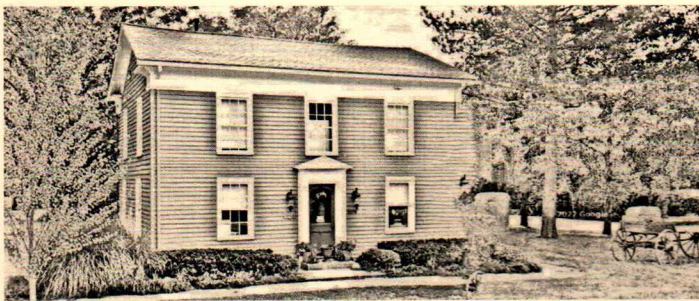
Henry Cox studied medicine in England and at the University of Michigan. He served four years in the First Michigan Cavalry in the War of the Rebellion and when discharged, he was an assistant surgeon. Much of his medical learning was on the job training.

After he returned from the Civil War, he lived at 26111 Carol Street.

WAS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE? (cont'd)



Dr. Henry Buel, had an only son named Julian who followed in his father's footsteps. Around 1866, he started practicing medicine in the village at 32710 Franklin road. His home was a bit north of his parents. Comerica bank was not separating them back then! He married Malintha Durkee, daughter of prominent citizen Stephen Durkee..



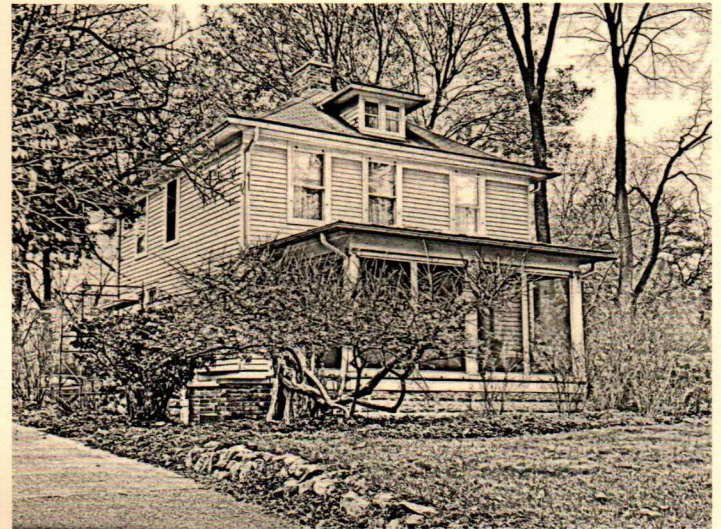
Just as Henry Cox partnered with Henry Buel in the mysterious incident involving Peter Van Every, Cox also joined Julian Buel in a tragedy involving three cousins.

The incident occurred in 1871 on the Darwin White's farm. Two of Darwin's nieces, Jeanette (14), Lillie, (19) and his son Marion (13) were hanging out together. Marion left to feed the pigs. The two girls wandered off. After completing his chore, Marion stepped inside the house and noticed a rifle. He picked it up and walked outside to do some harmless shooting. He aimed at the outhouse, not knowing that the girls were inside and hit Lillie in the neck. She was paralyzed. Dr. Henry Cox and Dr. Julian Buel attended the young girl who later passed away and is buried in the Franklin cemetery.

Frank Durkee German graduated from Ferris State. I would wager a bet that the name German is a familiar one to you. German Mill road lead to Frank's great uncle, John German, who operated the mill there! Dr. German lived at 32663 Franklin road. He was married to Nettie Dunbar. Ironically, Nettie's mother was Jeanette White that experienced the tragic

shooting of her cousin Lillie Hammond by their cousin Marion White.

Franklin village was a small, rural town and everybody knew each other and many were related to one another. This incident was a prime example!



Nettie's father, Adna Dunbar, lived in the Franklin hotel 32751 Franklin road. He kept a store in the old Bullock Tavern next door 32731 Franklin road. Times were tough for Dunbar. He faced insurmountable debt. He was not able to cope with his stress and took his life on 22 May 1911. Dr. Frank German, his son-in-law, was the attending physician.

Around 1894, there was just one doctor in town, Edward Andrew Smith. His office and residence were in the Temperance Hotel 32800 Franklin Road, also known as the Van Every home. Some of you may recall that Peter Van Every Sr. built the home for his wife Amy Deer and their children. Dr. Smith was a graduate of the University of Michigan. Of all of the other doctors mentioned, he had the most years of medical education.



So, now you have it! Of the six doctors described, five of their residences have been preserved. On your next walk through the village, I challenge you to find them and stop for a spell. Take in the history these homes hold. You only know a fraction of it for now. Should the doors open, you will be flooded with the sounds and stories waiting to escape and be shared. Look, listen, appreciate what the past has given us and what their future holds.

Kite & Key is a publication of the Franklin Historical Society. The Franklin Historical Society seeks to preserve such material, structures and artifacts that help to establish the history of the Village of Franklin and to make it accessible to those who wish to study it. The Society maintains a museum and archival area at the Derwich House, 26165 13 Mile Road (at Kirk). Volunteers and donations are most welcome. **Kite & Key** and the society welcome mail at:



P.O. Box 250007

Franklin, MI 48025

Email: info@franklin-history.org

Contributors: Bill & Ann Lamott

MAKE A HOUSE CALL!

Back in the day, doctors in rural Franklin made house calls. Sometimes they traveled on foot, or horseback with a saddlebag filled with medical supplies or by a horse drawn carriage.

Although house calls are a thing of the past, that shouldn't keep you from making one to the doctor's exhibit at the Franklin Historical Museum!

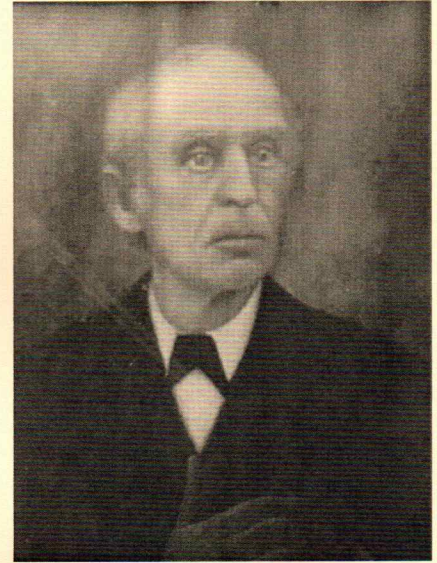
You'll meet Dr. Ebenezer Raynale, our first doctor, and find out why he wanted to come to the Michigan Territory, how he traveled here, why he left only to return and begin his life here.

Check out an early stethoscope like the one he might have traveled with on his house calls.

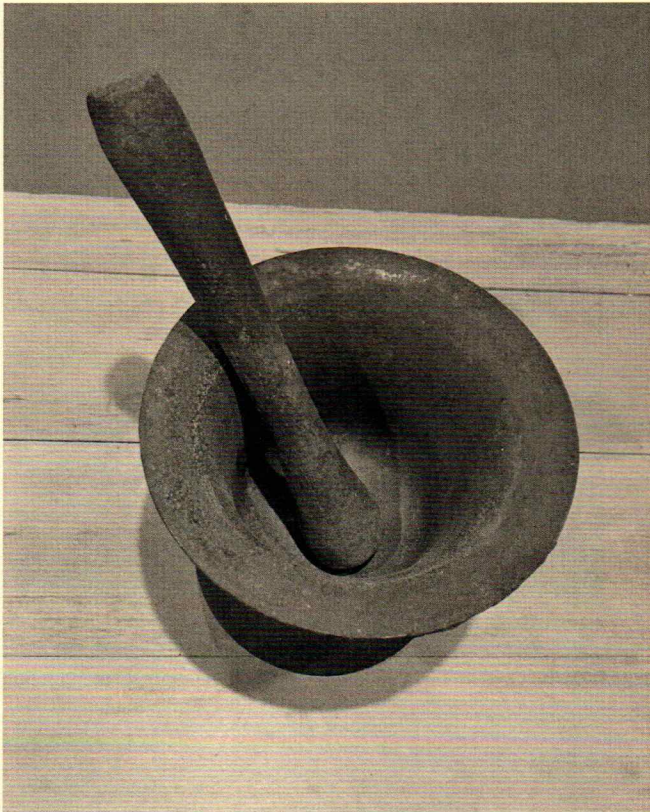
Dr. Frank German's family arrived from Bideford, England just about the time that Michigan became a state. He practiced medicine up until his death in Pontiac in 1945. A medical bag donated by Bart Kreger, his great nephew is believed to belong to Dr. German.

Dr. Henry Cox served as an assistant surgeon during the Civil War. His metal box once complete with his medical supplies is a part of our exhibit. There are detailed stories of his time spent during the war as well as some souvenirs that he brought home after the conflict.

The museum is open on Saturdays from 1 to 3 P.M. Stop by and rub elbows with our past. Check out our website at franklin-history.org



MORTAR AND PESTLE



A mortar and pestle crush and grind substances into a fine paste or powder. This set of tools belonged to Dr. Solomon Sampson Spencer who was born in Vermont in 1788 and passed away in 1859 in Oselola, Livingston County, Michigan.

He was the great great grandfather of Elsie Riddle Bigelow who married into the infamous Bigelow brick family! Elsie was Bob Ladner's grandmother. Bob donated the mortar and pestle to the Franklin Historical Museum. It has found a home in our doctor's exhibit.

FRANKLIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. Box 250007 Franklin, Michigan 48025
www.franklin-history.org
Like us on Facebook!

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 694
SOUTHFIELD, MI

DONATIONS

The Franklin Historical Society is thankful for artifacts that Franklin descendants and villagers have shared with us. They reveal the stories of who traveled here, why they came, how they came and what contributions they made to the village.

It is important to remember our past, the struggles, the vision and foundation created. We are truly a unique place to live. It didn't happen by accident!

Robert Ladner is a Bigelow descendant. He has contributed numerable family artifacts to the Franklin Historical Society including the mortar and pestle from Dr. Soloman Spencer.

Rachel Hook Mortenson donated two of her baseball jerseys that she wore during games on the ball fields. The Hook family lived for a number of years in the red school house near the bottom of the hill.

A WHILE AGO IN FRANKLIN

Dr. Henry Cox kept journals from 1900 to 1906. He recorded the daily weather, who visited him, items he purchased from the Brick Store, how much wood he chopped and what he ate for dinner.

He also wrote about the health of his patients and listed the deceased. Here is his comment about Albert A. Rust, a prominent citizen in the village.

September 6, 1903



Sunday, September 6

*a a Rust died
buried 9/6*



Beginning at 5 P.M., join the Franklin Historical Society at the Slade house during Mainstreet's Sip, Shop and Stroll event on December 6th. You can purchase roasted chestnuts and warm yourself by the fire!



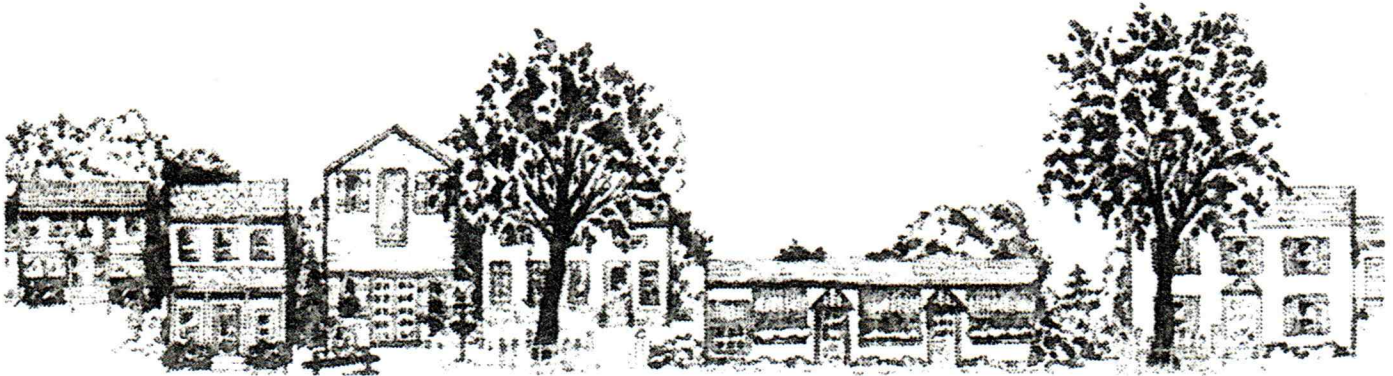
AND THEN, AT 6 O'CLOCK, JOIN US FOR THE CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING AT THE LIBRARY!

AROUND THE VILLAGE

When Bicentennial Ben learned that Flat Stanley, a character in a children's book, could slide under a door, fly like a kite and mail himself anywhere in the world, he was excited about the adventures ahead of him!

Take Ben with you wherever you go, snap a picture and send it to franklin-history.org for everyone to experience his escapades.

Bon Voyage!

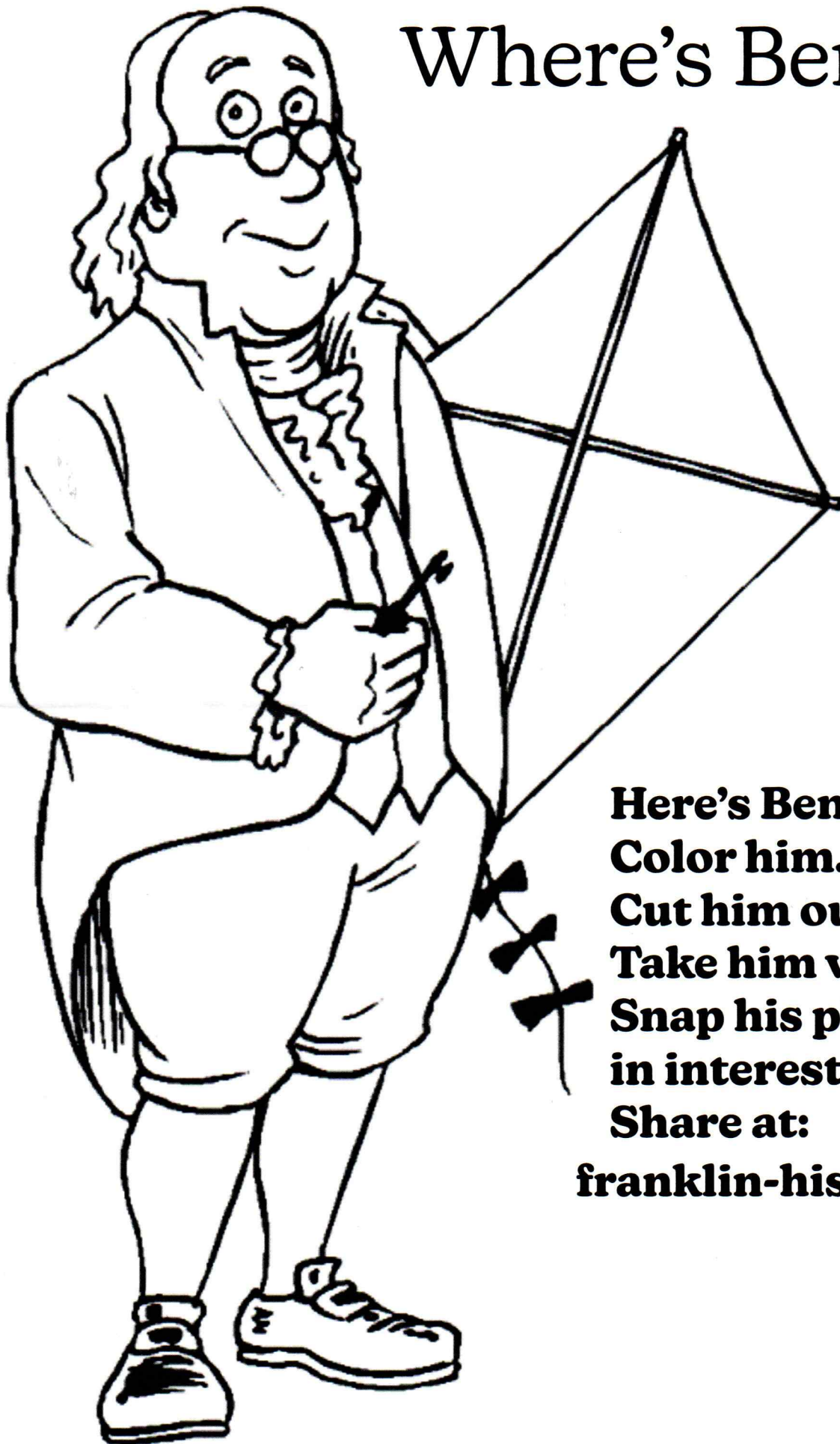


Several years ago, the Franklin Historical Society launched the Horseshoe Caper! A golden horseshoe, a nod to our rural past, was hidden in plain view in and around the village green. The person who found it, hid it again and the caper continued.

Wanna Play?



Where's Ben Been?



**Here's Ben Franklin.
Color him.
Cut him out.
Take him with you.
Snap his photo
in interesting places.**

Share at:

franklin-history.org/ben

FRANKLIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2025 MEMBERSHIP

We need you!

The Franklin Historic Society is a non-profit organization with a purpose of enhancing the understanding of Franklin history, including its character and sense of community. The society's activities include, but are not limited to:

- Operating the Franklin Historical Museum
- Collecting and archiving historical materials
- Disseminating historical information
- Encouraging historical preservation in Franklin

The museum has recently been totally renovated and is open for you to come see our new twist on Franklin history. We've developed new exhibits about Franklin's past cooper shop, shoe maker and taverns. You'll also be able to visit the general store and school as well as the Pickering exhibit and more.

Please support our efforts and join in 2025 by completing this membership form and sending in your contribution. You can also join online at www.franklin-history.org.

I want to become a 2025 member of the Franklin Historical Society.

Family/Individual Membership \$50 Business Membership \$75

Life Membership \$500

I have photos or artifacts to contribute. Please contact me.

I would like to contribute my time to work on Society projects. Please contact me.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____ Please mail this form and your tax-deductible contribution to the Franklin Historical Society, P.O. Box 250007, Franklin, MI 48025.

Headquarters and Museum: 26165 Thirteen Mile Road at Kirk Lane.