

## A While Ago In Franklin

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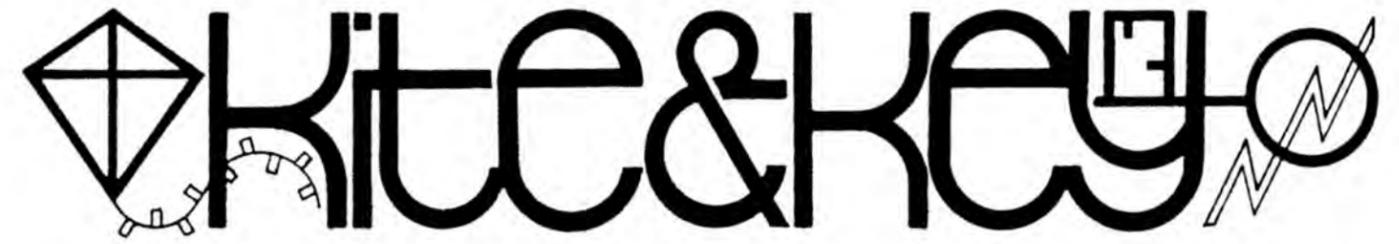


## Civil War Project

Next year marks the 150th year since the start of the Civil War. Oakland County is collecting information about soldiers who served in the war.

We have submitted the names, rank, enlistment location and any stories of veterans that served from Franklin and are buried in our cemetery. Did you know that you might be residing in a home where a Franklin soldier once lived? Stay tuned for updates on the project.

And, watch for the next Civil War Veteran tour of the cemetery next spring!



Franklin Historical Society Newsletter

November 2010

## Close the Door. . .Do You Think We Live In A Barn?

If you were Norman and Jean Currin, your answer would be "YES!"

They lived in an 1880's two story barn with a gambrel roof. It was remodeled into a house in 1930 by John and Elsie Currin for their son Norman and his wife Jean to live in as newlyweds. The Currins owned the Brick Store, 32652 Franklin Road, as well as the two barns behind it.

They sold large quantities of farm tools. Freight was delivered by electric line to a freight house at 14 Mile and Orchard Lake. The first gas for automobiles was pumped at Currin's store. Gas was brought over from Birmingham by a team of horses and wagons about 500 gallons at a time!

Whoa! Let's stop here and rewind to learn the chain of events that brought this family to the village of Franklin.

Norman's great grandmother, Harriet Forman, left England in 1853 with her six children. She was meeting her husband William who had traveled to America months earlier. They boarded the ship Emma Fields. The dreaded happened. Cholera broke out on board. Four of the six children would die within a few days of each other.

William and Harriet settled in Bloomfield with the two surviving children. They would have four more children. Norman's grandmother, Lottie Forman, would marry George Pickering. Their daughter, Elsie, would wed John Currin. And, John and Elsie would give birth to Norman.

Norman would marry Jean and they would move into the barn. . .the barn that Dad converted.

The story of the barn didn't end here. It would undergo further renovation. Country Coiffures, a beauty salon, would take residence in the 1970's. A shop called Gift People and the Blue Lotus, a yoga apparel shop, would reside here.

In 2010 Mark and Angie Hanke opened the Farmhouse Coffee and Ice Cream shop. Their morning coffee and breakfast treats start your day and their ice cream offers a sweet ending.

Plan a visit to the farmhouse. . .just make sure that you close the door!



[www.franklin-history.org](http://www.franklin-history.org)

FRANKLIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 250007 Franklin, Michigan 48025

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## What's In Your Attic?

We are gathering information about past Franklin business establishments and creating an exhibit at the museum. If you have a napkin, a receipt, a clipping, a photo, a menu or a memory of these places, please contact us.

The Brickstore (Wood store, Currin, Golfdale Market, Bingham), Franklin Hardware, Hunter's Whip, Village Tea Room, Village Barn, Fred Van Every Store, Poor Richard's Bookstore, Irv Ashen Jewelry and Watch Repair, Congleton Buggyworks, Broughton Buggyworks, Mrs. Lovill's Tea Room, Ranier Pastry and Ice Cream Shop, The Rocking Horse, Gerald's, Country Coffiures, Town Crier Antiques, Barber Shop, Broughton Store. . .or any other business that we have missed!

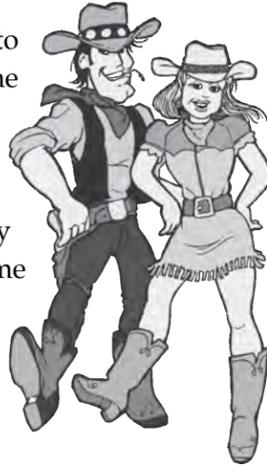
We would love to hear from you!  
Bill and Ann Lamott 248-538-0273

## Museum Acquisitions

Vintage photos of Franklin – Jan Seror  
Milk bottle – Jane Polan  
Newspaper clippings – Carmina Tuksal  
Civil War membership records – Franklin Church

## Back to Back Events

Two fund raising events to support the renovation of the Franklin Community Center occurred in September. On the 25th was the second annual barn dance. There was plenty of grub and we learned some line dances! On the following afternoon there was an art show featuring local artists, Max Altekruise and David McCall Johnston.



Thanks to everyone who participated in these community events.

## Deja Vu!

It had been snowing all day. Now, the flakes were floating down lazily and glistening in the moonlight. The warm glow of lights in the windows beckoned travelers to come inside. Upstairs, the tables and chairs were in place. The smell of roasted turkey and all of the trimmings would lure visitors to their seat.

Henry Spicer, whose farm is now the Oakland Hills Country Club, was picking up people along Maple Road in his bobsled. Everyone huddled under a blanket to fend against the chill of the night. As the sled glided through the snow, there was laughter and anticipation for the evening ahead of them.

There were other sleds in route. Passersby waved and greeted one another as they made their way by the Van Every Grist Mill and mansion. Spicer would board his team of horses at the Van Every carriage house after dropping off his passengers.

The bobsled came to a halt in front of the Franklin Community Hall. People were gathering to celebrate Thanksgiving and remembering how it all began.

The Community Hall, at the site of the fire station, was "raised" through a bee. It was built so fast, that they forgot to put in a stairway! It was built on the outside of the structure. One hundred sixty shares for the new hall were sold to residents at five dollars each. The shareholders were the German family, Hugh McCrumb, the Bigelows, Grinnels, Rueben Adams, Dr. Julian Buel, George Lee, Otto Berger, the Gravelin and Midgley families. The Franklin Public Hall Association, which built the community center, was active from 1903-1920.

Sometimes sixty women, children and Democrats attended political meetings held in the hall. There were meeting and courting parties. Young people came from Birmingham, Walled Lake and other communities to dance. There were square dances with professional callers. The children slept on benches which were pushed back against the wall. There was no such thing as a babysitter then. Children and babies were gathered up when it was time to go home.

The Community Hall was the hub of the village. It was the scene of dances, parties, plays, festivals and meetings. The Village Players presented "East Lynne" and "You Can't Take It With You" to a delighted audience using the hall as their theater.

On Tuesday, January 28, 1958 an absence would be felt. The Community Hall that welcomed events had burned down. For fifty years, there was no gathering place.

On December 18, 2008 all of that would change. The Kreger farmhouse, shed and barn were moved from Scenic Drive to Carol Street next to the Village Hall to become the new Franklin Community Center. Through the efforts of volunteers and donations, the project is nearing reality. We are very close to having two of three of our community center buildings operational.

Once completed, ALL VILLAGERS will have access to year-round public restrooms and a converted farmhouse that YOU can use for volunteer organization meetings, business meetings, social gatherings and more!

Plans also call for complete renovation of the barn which will provide even more space and conveniences for larger activities such as birthday parties, wedding and baby showers, family reunions, dances and teen parties.

The first community center was built through the commitment of villagers who invested in the future. We have an opportunity to do it once again. Please send your tax deductible contribution to FHS Kreger Fund, P.O. Box 250007, Franklin, Michigan 48025.



## Franklin Historical Society Financial Report

Beginning Balance June 1, 2009 .....	\$14,424
<b>Income</b>	
Donations .....	\$870
Membership .....	\$6,207
Plant Sale Profit .....	\$1,837
Interest .....	\$31
Total Income .....	\$8,945
<b>Less expenses</b>	
Building maintenance .....	\$3,209
Lawn .....	\$695
Utilities .....	\$2,385
Misc .....	\$549
Printing & Postage .....	\$2,116
Web and Software .....	\$522
Total Expense .....	\$9,476
Ending Balance May 30, 2010 .....	\$13,893
Reduction in Funds .....	\$531



**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 provide for accessibility for 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.

The **Kite & Key** and the Society welcome mail at  
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Our phone is 248-538-0565.  
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