

JHA FOOTNOTES



JHA Update

The Holiday decorations are coming down, we hope you got a chance to come see some of the new decorations we had this year.

Our January Open house offered a bit of authenticity as the heat was out upon our arrival. Thanks to a quick call to Mike Mazure, Mazure Heating and Cooling, we were back up quickly, but the grand old house doesn't warm up from below 40 degrees very quickly. We imagined ourselves back in the early 1900's, keeping a few extra layers on as we visited with our guests.

We have a short winter break from regular open houses now while we pack up Christmas and get ready for our next display theme. Starting in March we will highlight Local Women of the Past. Many members have been busy researching details to look at these women that highlight our past. Be sure to catch this display which will be coming down at the end of April.

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www.jenisonhistory.org

New 2017 Association Meeting and Open House Schedule.

You can find our 2017 schedule for Association Meetings and Museum Open Houses posted at the end of the newsletter.

Along with the Open House dates are the scheduled themes for each quarter.

Be sure to join us, we are looking forward to an exciting year.

A Mournful Incident

The Trials and Troubles of Temperance Crusaders

Researched by Ronnie Angst

Our community appears to have been influence by the temperance crusade and Eliza Thompson. First, a little info on Eliza Thompson and then the news report of our own ladies attempts at ending saloons.

First some history of the Temperance Crusaders: A lecture by Diocletian Lewis on December 23, 1873[1] inspired Eliza Thompson (Eliza Jane Trimble Thompson; 1816-1905), daughter of Governor Allen Trimble, to begin leading groups of women into saloons where they sang hymns and prayed for the closure of the establishments. These direct, non-violent "Visitation Bands" were successful and quickly spread first across the state of Ohio and then to a total of 22 other states from New York to California. Dr. Lewis, a minister who had a drunken father which contributed to his desire for temperance and abstinence, believed that women needed to be educated on the social evils of alcohol.

"Mother Thompson" and others claimed often dramatic conversions by saloon keepers. In other cases, the retailers simply gave up after being picked on for weeks by the Visitation Bands.

Within several years the movement subsided. However, it was successful in stimulating the temperance movement, which had declined with the outbreak of the Civil War (1861-1865). The Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) traces its origins to the Women's Crusade against alcohol.

--Wikipedia

From an article printed in *The Weekly Kansas Chief, Troy, Kansas; May 23, 1878, pg. 1*

The temperance crusade in Georgetown, Michigan, which as carried on by the earnest women of the village last winter, was a great success. When the crusade began, there were five "saloons" at which various immoral beverages, from the mild lager-beer to fiery benzine whiskey were sold, but before Spring, only one of the "saloon-keepers" insulted female public sentiment, by continuing to prosecute his business. Of the others, three had sold out their entire stock to the crusaders, at a profit of nearly 200 per cent, and had removed to the next town, where they opened larger and more attractive "saloons;" while the fourth reformed rum-seller openly repented for \$750 cash, and became a temperance lecturer at \$50 a night, which, together with his income from a gambling house made him very comfortable. In fact, he was accustomed to say that, as between selling liquor for a profit of \$800 a year and practicing as a reformer at \$11,000 a year, no intelligent man could hesitate to chose the latter, and that he hoped, in the course of a few months, to find an opening as a reformed gambler that would make his fortune at one blow.

The one obdurate liquor dealer was, without doubt, one of the most exasperating ruffian on record. Night after night did the devoted women of Georgetown enter his "saloon" and hold a prayer-meeting of great size and strength, but he never once openly insulted them, so as to enable the male crusaders to smash his bottles about his ears. On the contrary, he provided a parlor organ, and six dozen hymn books, and joined in the singing with great ardor. When he was personally exhorted to give up his nefarious business, he always expressed a great desire to reform, but fixed his price at \$3,000, which was considered to be altogether too high. It was useless to labor with such a hardened reprobate, and after six months of unremitting effort, the earnest women shook his sawdust from their feet and abandoned the attempt to reform him. When he was told that no more prayer-meeting would be held in his "saloon," he expressed sincere regret, and offered to reform for only \$2,500, but even this offer was rejected, and then, for the first time, he lost his temper, and remarked that people who refused to save an immortal soul and put an end to drunkenness, at the price of \$2,500, were insincere, and should no longer polute his premises with their hypocritical prayers. In spite of this one failure, the crusaders had accomplished so much that, on the 23rd of November last, the anniversary of the formation of the "Earnest Woman's Anti-Rum, Beer and Tobacco League," they determined to celebrate the occasion by a public procession and a cold water festival in the Baptist meeting house. The procession was to march in front of the

(Continued)

obdurate liquor-seller's "saloon," with any quantity of banners —the Earnest Women singing temperance hymns, thus dispensing with the services of a beer-drinking German brass band. When the "saloon" keeper heard of the intended celebration, he smiled grimly, and announced, that if the procession did not halt in front of his "saloon," he should feel personally slighted.

Now, the sidewalk in front of that wicked man's "saloon" was wide, and was paved with a peculiar mixture of tar and gravel. It was slightly out of repair, and the liquor-seller remarked that he should show his respect for the temperance cause by having it put in complete repair. He, however, postponed the work from day to day, until it was generally thought that he had abandoned his design; but on the very night before the procession, a gang of men, with lanterns and tar barrels, appeared on the scene, and before daylight, the sidewalk was finished. In the morning, two sentinels were stationed to warn pedestrians not to step on the newly-laid pavement, which, however, the liquor-dealer asserted, would be perfectly hard before the hour fixed for the procession.

It was nearly 11 o'clock before the Earnest Women, singing a powerful hymn and carrying more banners than a torch-light political procession, turned the corner and advanced toward the "saloon." The two sentinels were hastily withdrawn, and the liquor-seller, with his hat in his hand, stood at his door to do homage to the reformers. As they neared him, they averted their gaze, and would have passed him without recognizing his existence, but, unfortunately, the procession, instead of passing his door, halted before it, and standing perfectly still, ceased singing, and remarked with great animating, "Good Gracious!" and other words to the same general effect.

Contrary to the predictions of the liquor-seller, the new pavement was not dry. The composition had been spread to the unusual depth of six inches, and the head of the procession, including twenty-six earnest women, was securely stuck in the adhesive compound. To lift their feet was an impossibility, and two ladies who rashly sat down with a view of removing their boots, and thus make their escape, found it impossible to rise again. The wicked "saloon" keeper at first pretended not to notice the misfortune which had befallen the procession, and assuming that the ladies had paused for refreshments, loudly begged the ladies "to name the poison, and he would be delighted to supply them." Of course, he was soon compelled to recognize the true cause of the stoppage of the procession, and he then professed to be so overwhelmed with sorrow that he felt unable to gaze upon the scene, and so put up his shutters and retired by the back door into an adjoining street.

The Earnest Women were ultimately pried out with fence rails, after hot crow-bars had been used to soften the tenacious tar, and they were then taken home in carriages, and scraped by their devoted husbands. The affair, however, cast a gloom over the reformers, and seriously injured the cause. The wicked liquor-dealer had a sudden increase of customers, and it is understood that two new saloons are to be opened before Christmas. This melancholy event may well fill us with sorrow, while it conveys the solemn lesson that reformers should take heed to their footsteps, lest haply they fall into the snares of the wicked. — *N.Y. Times*.



Saloon (across Mill Street from the Hotel) showing the DePuit home at the left on River Road between Main and Baldwin

Upcoming Open Houses

Local Women of the Past Open House,

In this theme we are researching the women of Jenison's past.

- March 7 (10 A.M. to noon)**
- March 18 (1-4 P.M.)**
- April 4 (10 A.M. to noon)**
- April 15 (1 to 4 PM)**

If you would like to schedule a private tour, please call Ken Williams (see Trustee list for phone)

Jenison Museum Souvenir's

Check out our Gift Shop for many Jenison History items and help support the Association.

Ornaments are \$15 each or buy both for \$25. These make great gifts,

Other items include pictures, stationary, pencils, Bend in the River Books, etc.



Find us on Facebook at Jenison History Association and become a friend.

JHA Trustee's

Chair

Liz Timmer (2019)
457-3708

Vice Chair/Curator/Tours

Ken Williams (2017)
772.6523

Treasurer/Editor

Ruth Lowing (2017)
540-4709

Social Secretary

Nellie DeLaat (2019)
457-1193

Recording Secretary

Linda Droog (2018)
457-3016

Archivist

Barb Semeyn (2017)
457-9343

Maintenance/Historian

Mike Timmer (2019)
531-1218

Trustee

Yvonne Williams (2017)
772-6523

Gene Kort (2019)
534-6769

Township Rep

Ron Villerius

(####) = year of term expiration

Contact Information: Members may contact the board at the above phone numbers or leave a message at 457-4398 or info@jenisonhistory.org

Organization Membership Historical Society of Michigan

Find us on the registry of the Historical Society of Michigan

www.hsmichigan.org

2016 Association Schedule

Museum Open House Schedule

Local Women of the Past

March 7 - 10 AM to Noon

March 18 - 1 to 4 PM

April 4 - 10 AM to Noon

April 15 1 to 4 PM

It's a Grand Ole Flag:

May 2 - 10 to Noon

May 20 - 1 to 4 PM

June 6 - 10 to Noon

June 17 - 1 to 4 PM

July 15 - 1 to 4 PM

August 1 - 10 to Noon

Working & Cruising on the River

September 5 - 10 to Noon

September 16 - 1 to 4 PM

Check out the web site for the entire 2017 schedule

Meeting Schedule

Meetings are all open to the public and held on the **3rd Thursday** of the month at **6:45 PM** at the Georgetown Library, unless noted. Dates of the 2017 year are:

January 19

February 16

March 16

April 20

May 18 (location TBD)

June 15 (location TBD)

July 20

August 17

September 21

October 19

November 16

>> No meeting in December

www.jenisonhistory.org

JENISON HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION

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