



Volume 4

Fall 2008

No. 2

## OMENA WOMEN DISENFRANCHISED AND SUBSERVIENT TO MEN !

In 1915, when the Omena Women's Club was founded, American women were disenfranchised. In fact, it was five more years before American women gained their right to vote. Most of our current knowledge was gleaned from a brief history prepared by its members as part of the Leelanau 2000 Project of the Leelanau Historical Museum. To commemorate the club's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1975, the Leelanau Enterprise carried this brief item: *WOMEN SUBSERVIENT TO MEN IN 1915*

*"Women's rights groups weren't around a few years back when one ladies' organization was founded in Leelanau County and two male passersby had to sign their names to allow a civic project to get underway.*

*The year was 1915, and the **Omena Women's Club** was brand-new, just organized by eight charter members with the assistance of Mrs. Jennie G. Scott of Northport. As a club project to better the community, the members decided to order 30 books from the State Library in Lansing. But at that time, club members now recall with a smile, women were not "full-fledged" citizens and thus could not sign papers necessary to obtain the books.*

*So the first two men who came in sight, **A. F. Anderson** and **Joseph Kalchik**, smiled and put their signatures to the proper places, and soon the books arrived in Omena.*

*While the women could not officially order the books, they were allowed to pay the postage for the shipment.*

*The club's eight charter members were **Mrs. George Anderson**, **Mrs. Frank Craker**, **Mrs. Delbert Joynt**, **Mrs. N. C. Morgan**, **Mrs. Horace Powell**, **Mrs. Frances Santo**, **Mrs. John Patrick** and **Mrs. George Steele**."*

Today the Omena Women's Club remains as one of the longest, continuously functioning women's Clubs in Michigan. The early days of the Club were horse and buggy days. The husbands would hitch up their horses,

and the women, dressed in their best hats and gloves, were delivered to the home where the meeting was to be held. Tea was served, complete with linen tablecloths and the best china. During the meeting, the men retreated to the **Southwell** barn with their horses and buggies where they enjoyed catching up on the day's events, until it was time to collect their wives.



*21st century ladies of the Club, as they imagined their predecessors.*

From the beginning, there was a strong commitment to the community. Even though many discussions had to do with childcare and the care and treatment of husbands, the group was also interested in events outside their small world. An intellectual member by the name of **Mrs. Dole** often brought state and world information to discuss.

During World War I, members patriotically supported the war effort by making bandages and dressings and knitting socks, sweaters and warm headgear for "our boys in the trenches." The frugal homemakers contributed to the war effort in their homes, using substitutes for scarce foods and avoiding waste. A familiar motto was, "Use it up, wear it out, and make it do or do without."

During the early 1930s, most of the Club's meetings began with a patriotic song such as "America," followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. There was strict adherence to proper parliamentary procedure. Top priority meeting topics were county and local community concerns as evidenced by the women's interest in local maintenance and beautification projects. Meetings featured programs

*continued on Page 4*

## OHS Timelines

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Annual Membership: \$25.00



*OHS Timelines Mission Statement:*

*Our purpose is to showcase Omena's  
past as we chronicle the present,  
with an understanding that today's news  
becomes tomorrow's history.*

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

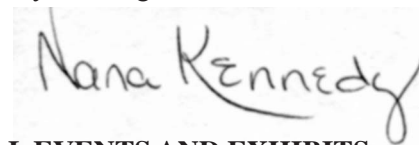
As we bask in the blazing colors of autumn and prepare to nestle into the cozy winter community that is Omena, it is pleasant to reflect on the joys of this past summer – the sunny days, the soft breezes, the lapping of waves upon the shore.

And it is especially rewarding for us in the Omena Historical Society to remember the exciting exhibits and outstanding programs we offered our friends and visitors at the Putnam-Cloud Tower House. We owe thanks to so many of our members for making this happen – to Joey and Larry Bensley, Amanda Holmes, Alice Littlefield, Jim Miller and Sally Viskochil who mounted the summer's incredibly informative and attractive exhibits and to Kathy Miller who arranged so many marvelous events and programs. Not least of all, we thank the dedicated docents who guided our visitors through the House each weekend.

At the Annual Meeting, Joey Bensley and Mary Tonneberger were recognized for their many years of contributions and accomplishments in making this dream a reality. Ed Oberndorf expressed our deepest gratitude to them both for “their tireless efforts, their outstanding leadership, expertise and devotion.”

It is time now for all of us to look to the year ahead and the challenges it will bring. We are delighted to have four new Board members to give us new vision and leadership: Judy Fowler, Kanda McKee, Alice Littlefield and Dennis Turner – a warm welcome to each one! And a very big ‘thank you’ to Betts Chisholm and Bob Lewis, who are leaving the Board after six years of dedicated service. In addition, I am happy to announce that Doni Lystra will take over the responsibility of leading the PCT House Docents. We urge anyone interested in joining that merry little band to contact her.

Success in the year ahead will require input from each of you. The Board and I hope you will continue your thoughtful and enthusiastic support. Please share with us your insights and ideas. We will be listening!



## A SUMMER OF SPECIAL EVENTS AND EXHIBITS

by Kathy Miller and Joey Bensley

Our Special Events were a huge success! Thanks go to **Joan Blount, Kathy Miller, George Anderson, Larry and Joey Bensley, and Ed Oberndorf** for their help, creativity and enthusiasm in putting it all together.

**Harold and Wyn Landis** returned to Omena on May 13 to perform again after a 56 year hiatus. Having once owned and entertained at the **Omena Inn**, they were welcomed with our version of a neon sign at OHS. Their performance was delightful, just as they are. In Wyn's words, “It was magical”.

On June 16, **Albert and Sue Van Slyke** educated the audience on the history of surreys, carriages, and buggies. Our own surrey provided



a beautiful backdrop as we listened and learned. They explained how American wheelwrights first developed the technique for bending wood making them stronger than their European segmented counterparts.

On July 15, Our “**Walk Down Memory Lane**” proved far more popular than we ever imagined. Three tours, with **Larry Bensley** acting as tour guide, were held that perfect summer day. About 20 historical sites were included as Larry made Omena’s history come alive. A box lunch at the Bensley farm concluded a wonderful old-time experience.

The annual meeting on August 7 found **Stephanie Staley** speaking on lighthouses, with emphasis on the **Grand Traverse Lighthouse**, which is going through a restoration. Although the original architecture was common to many lighthouses in the Great Lakes area, most have been modified over the years.

Our final event, on August 19, featured **Steve Kelsch** of Traverse City with a fascinating presentation on early schooners and steamships of our area. Among other things, we learned that during WWII passenger ships

The **Rails, Trails and Sails** exhibit features modes of travel to and from Omena during the period between 1850 and 1950. The exhibit includes photographs of the early trains and automobiles, and of the many steamships that regularly visited Omena Bay. We are grateful to **Sally Viskochil** for the expert design and placement of the exhibit, making it not only educational and historical, but artistic as well.

In addition to the photographs, two focal points in the exhibit are the beautiful restored **Sunset Lodge Surrey**, which served **Sunset Lodge** in the early days, and a large model of **The Mackinaw**, one of the earliest sailing boats to ply the waters of Lake Michigan. The model is on loan from the **South Haven Maritime Museum**.

The focus of the smaller exhibit is **Aghosatown**, the Indian settlement just north of Ingalls Bay. The exhibit depicts the history of the early Native Americans of Omena through photos, baskets and other crafts. Many of the baskets are from the **Doris Wick** collection and were loaned to us by her son, **Gordon Wick**. The exhibit was designed and built by our talented Archives/Museum Committee volunteers: **Amanda Holmes**, **Joey Bensley**, **Alice Littlefield** and **Jim Miller**.

Aghosatown no longer exists and a sign that once marked its location has disappeared. However, many descendants of the early Aghosatown residents still live among us.

Their history is important to all of us, and this exhibit represents the commitment of the **Omena Historical Society** to keep their heritage alive.

The Rails, Trails and Sails exhibit will be replaced soon, so if you have not had an opportunity to enjoy them, stop by the museum before the end of the year. ❖

## **HAROLD AND WYN LANDIS ON STAGE AGAIN** by Joan Blount

As Timelines went to press last Spring, we were eagerly anticipating the performance of the Landises at the Putnam Cloud Tower House. It was a smash hit!



*Harold and Wyn and their sons, Lenny & Dave, revisit Omena.*

*A highly amused audience enjoys a hearty laugh and the wit, humor and romance that define Wyn and Harold Landis.*



Harold and Wyn charmed the audience of over forty people who saw Omena’s “theatrical” history come alive with their songs and delightful narration.

For over an hour, they recreated their 1950s performances at the Omena Inn Playhouse, inviting us to imagine what we would have seen and heard if we had been Omena Inn patrons during those years. Lacking musical accompaniment, theatrical troopers Harold and Wyn “winged” it and sang a capella. Any of you who sing, will appreciate the difficulty of this, especially at the ages of 83 and 84 and what could be a weakening timbre to their voices. However, that was not the case! To our delight they sang with clarity, precision, and strength. ❖

### **DID YOU KNOW...**

...that The Oaks Lodge burned down under suspicious circumstances, and the cause remains a mystery?

*"Omena Women Subservient..." continued from page 1*

and discussions on the most beautiful spots in Leelanau county and how best to preserve them.

Near the end of the decade, the women's interest returned to world affairs, reflecting their concern about the gathering war clouds. The focus of meetings of the 40s was on patriotism and the national emergency. The Club maintained its traditional charitable work during the war years, such as Christmas boxes to the County Home, but also responded to Coast Guard appeals for furniture and games for the Great Lakes' stations.

In the 50s several of the women formed another club that held evening meetings, when husbands were home and could mind the children. It was rumored that some of the younger ladies did not want to smoke in front of their mothers.



*Dorothy Holmes and Ann Harper  
serve refreshments, c. 1986*

In recent decades the Club's focus has been on education, community affairs and social activities. In 1974, Omena Women's Club withdrew from the National Federation of Women's Clubs, thus making it possible to finance community projects. These included improving the landscaping near the **Omena Firehouse** and continuing annual payments for the site of the **Veterans Memorial**. By the 70s, the women had shed their hats and gloves and were known by their given names, although the charter members of 1915 were listed by their husbands' names in the club roster.

Since the adoption of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment to the United States Constitution in 1920, the members of the Omena Women's Club have regularly voted in local and national elections and have gained other legal rights and privi-

leges not enjoyed by their early Suffragette sisters. Many became career-women, and several held (and do hold) public office.

**Mary Foltz** was one of the first female architects in the state of Michigan. **Ernestine Freeland Johnson** developed the Nursing Degree program at Northwestern Michigan College. **Hazel Clark Taylor** had careers as a teacher, writer, radio personality, and as an information specialist for the United States Army. Other members had long careers as teachers, publicists, writers, and business women.

In recent years, club membership has increased, and new members have brought an infusion of new ideas and new projects to the Club, while traditional activities continue. There are currently 28 members; **Alice Hauske** is President for the 2008/2009 fiscal year. ♦

## GROWING UP IN OMENA, Part 2

by Larry Bensley

*Editor's note: Part 1 of this series appeared in the Spring, 2008, issue of **Timelines** and ended with various reminiscences of wintertime activities and the Christmas holiday season in Omena.*

**Betty Craker Armstrong** describes memorable and exciting Omena holidays. Each Christmas night began with anticipation as people made their way to the **Presbyterian Church**. "They came from around the countryside, bundled up against the cold with lap robes tucked around them. They came by cutter and two horse sleighs." Warmth in the church was supplied by two wood burning stoves. Under the big candle-lit tree were presents for every child, Indian and white. "After the program, sleigh bells were heard in the distance and no one who remembers those celebrations, as I do, will ever forget the excitement as the bells grew louder and louder until Santa's sleigh flew up the hill and stopped at the church steps." What a wonderful sight for the children as Santa threw open the door shouting, "Merry Christmas!"

As winter gave way to spring, children engaged in typical activities of swimming, fishing and boating. **Nancy Enyert** remembers that fishing for perch off the **Omena Traverse Yacht Club** dock was especially fun, as was playing Kick-the-Can by the Post Office and baseball in a field in front of the Manse. **Irving Ranger** recalled a Saturday event anticipated by children and adults alike. The horses were hitched to the wagon, the family climbed aboard and off they went to Omena. While the adults caught up on the latest news of the area, the children searched through the various brightly colored candies in



the many jars at the stores, before selecting the perfect ones to buy with the few pennies they had saved.

**Mary Stanton**, whose father was caretaker at **Villa Marquette**, recalls in **Omena A Place in Time** that, when the Jesuits arrived in May, she and her siblings would wait anxiously at the side of the road for the buses to turn in the drive, as seminarians waved and tossed candy from the windows. Another favorite memory is of baseball games between "the locals," and the Jesuits, followed by picnics on the Villa's baseball diamond.

The population, during the summer, more than doubled as the resorters arrived. The thrill of hearing the whistles of the steamships and racing to the docks to see them pull in was exciting for everyone. There was always plenty to see as the resorters, with belongings for an extended stay, disembarked and their belongings, which sometimes included horses, were taken ashore. Of course this did not end the spectacle, as produce, lumber, and other cargo needed to be loaded onto the ships before they slowly made their way out of the bay, headed for other ports.

Summertime in Omena was not all fun and games for children, especially as they grew older and were needed to help with the family income or provide their own spending money. For many, this meant working in the orchards picking apples, cherries, or other produce. **Ole Kiersey**, who grew up in the 1930s and 40s, recalls life on the farm being very busy and hard work. "Before school you'd clean the stables, feed the cows and milk them, care for the other stock, then eat breakfast. Then you got cleaned up and went to school. There were times we'd also be in the woods doing logging early in the morning before we went to school."

**Elizabeth Putnam** describes a similar experience as she worked many hours with her father in the fields, driving a team of horses, walking behind them from dawn to dusk. (Leelanau Enterprise, Thurs. April 4, 2002).

**Ruth Freeland Carmody** recalled a different sort of childhood. Although she and her siblings, **Paul** and **Ernestine**, enjoyed the fun of Omena in the early 1900s, they also helped run the **Freeland Resort** (now the Centner house at M-22 and Freeland Road). Daily jobs were making beds, cleaning rooms, setting tables, preparing meals and always washing dishes. In addition, the Freelands had a sizeable garden that needed tending, a responsibility the whole family shared.

According to Nancy Enyart, "a sense of community existed," and it was a time when kindness was shown toward the young. Nancy has fond memories of the tea



*Mary Freeland, mother of Ruth, Paul and Ernestine; charter member of Omena Women's Club, c. 1910.*

parties **Carrie Solle**, wife of the bookseller, **Gordon Solle**, used to give for the little girls of Omena and the books she gave to the children at Christmas time.

The absence of electricity, television, video games, the internet, paved highways, central heat, indoor plumbing and other modern amenities had little negative effect on children of earlier years. There were times that were difficult, but overall life was good. Growing up in Omena must have been a pleasant experience.

"Ideal," "magical," "fortunate" and "secure" are words Nancy Enyart used in summing up her life as a child in Omena. ❖

#### OHS WEBSITE FEATURES NEWSLETTER

When you visit the **Omena Historical Society** on the internet you will find recent issues of Timelines, including the Spring, 2008, issue containing Part 1 of the Growing Up in Omena series. You'll also find a delightful guest book with many interesting entries and lots of great Omena lore and photos.

Go to: <http://www.omenahistory.homestead.org>. ❖

#### MILESTONES

DECEASED: Long-time Omena resident, **Panfilo C. DiLoreto, M.D.**; born Dec. 12, 1913; d. June 21, 2008. His wife, Albina, preceded him in death. He is survived by his sons Robert (Susan) and Thomas. Dr. DiLoreto was instrumental in obtaining support for the addition of the Omena Community Room to the Firehouse and was a member of the Omena Village Preservation Association.

## FIRE! A CHILDHOOD RECOLLECTION

By Sharon McMachen Kalchik

We watched in awe as a mighty black flame climbed into the clear sky about two miles southwest of our place that afternoon in 1952. My mother soon found out through the family grapevine (via telephone) that it was Uncle **Ed and Terry Putnam**'s barn on Putnam Road. I was ten years old and my brother, Larry, was eight.

We knew it was a bad fire, and we waited anxiously for Dad to get home from his work with Comstock Construction Company in Traverse City so we could go with him to see the damage. Mom had prepared some food to take. On the way there we could still see the ugly, dark smoke lingering in the reddening sky above Uncle Ed's farm.

When we arrived at the farm, all that was left of the barn was a smoky, gaping hole with burnt and still smoldering boards and beams sticking out like giant, black pick-up sticks. I watched the somber firemen with sweat-streaked faces, grimly dragging their muddy hoses and equipment back to their trucks. I was acutely aware of the great sadness; the gray haze and pungent smells, all remnants of the terrible blaze. Dad took Larry to find Uncle Ed among a group of men standing near the back of the house. Mom took her casserole to the house where the other women were gathering. I was left alone. I was afraid to go any closer to the pitiful sight but my curiosity drew me to the edge of the foundation. I was warmed by the faint heat still radiating from the area below and aware of an unusual odor, much worse than any I'd ever experienced before. The stench was overwhelming.

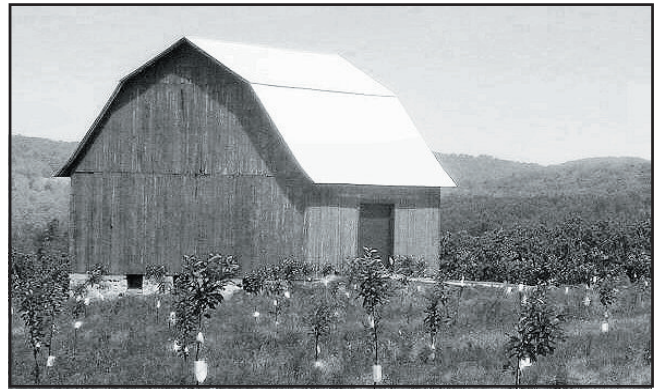
Blue smoke was rising in tiny geysers from piles of gray ashes with red embers aglow in the midst. A few people were milling around, shaking their heads and murmuring. Someone nearby told me that those blackened mounds of various sizes were all that was left of Uncle Ed's horses and cattle. I was shocked. It was hard for me to imagine that something as large as a horse or a cow could be reduced to such a small heap with no resemblance to an animal once alive.

I walked a bit farther along the foundation, and another adult pointed to a smaller raised knoll with little mounds surrounding it. Wispy miniature columns of smoke rose up from each one. "That," they told me, "was a sow and her piglets." I could see how the little ones had snuggled as close to their mother as possible. I felt nauseous and my heart ached. Tears fell as I thought of the suffering that poor mother and her tiny babies went through and the horrific death of the animals, especially the horses that Uncle Ed and little Mary had loved so much.

I ran toward the house looking for solace from my dad or mom. On the way back I saw Uncle Ed sobbing uncontrollably and a taller man with his arms around him. My father had tears streaming down his face, too. Other men huddled nearby were in various states of anguish and sorrow. It was the first time I had ever seen grown men cry. I stopped cold and did not approach them.

I sought out my mother at the house. She was busy helping others in the kitchen as they served the exhausted neighbors and firefighters. Sympathetic women hugged and comforted Terry on her porch.

I found an out-of-the-way place in the yard to console myself. I watched as a stream of people walked up from the road. Families came bearing food to share. I knew most of the new arrivals. Some were classmates or cousins and I was able to recover my composure and join them. That was probably my first inkling of how close and loving people could be toward each other when tragedy strikes any one of them.



*The original Ed and Terry Putnam Barn, Putnam Rd.*

Later, my dad acted as the reconstruction coordinator as he and many of Ed's friends and relatives brought another barn, piece by piece, from its location on the southern edge of Northport near the "Welcome to Northport" sign of today. Together they rebuilt that barn on the farm. Dad told me how they numbered every board and beam. A few years ago, my husband Chuck's uncle, **Frank Kalchik**, told me that he had bought a new crane at about that time, and he first used it to help erect Ed Putnam's new barn. The barn that stands there today represents the continuing spirit, strength, and value of a wonderful community, ♦

## WE HAVE WINNERS!

Our **Second Annual Trivia Quiz** was a huge success, with more prizes and more entries! Winners did not have to get all the answers right to be in the drawing. As you know, the questions were put together using information from our beautiful, **Omena A Place in**



book, by **Amanda Holmes**. We still have some left and when they are gone, they will probably not be printed again, so make sure you get your copy..

Most of you got all the answers correct so we may have to make it a bit more challenging next year. You are a very astute group of people, but of course, we expect no less, right? **Mike and Marcia Biskupski** won the grand prize of a free wine-tasting party for twenty on the **Leelanau Cellars** outdoor patio, next to their tasting room which overlooks Omena Bay. The value of this prize alone is over \$250! The \$25 gift certificate for the **Knot Just a Bar** went to **Alice Littlefield and Larry Reynolds**. **Hester Hull** won a limited edition print of **Jim Miller's Fall in Omena** picture and **Millard Mack** won a lunch for four at **Martha's Leelanau Kitchen** in Sutton's Bay. A big "thank you!" to **Martha Ryan, Judy and Bruce Balas, Jim Miller, Knot Just a Bar** and **Leelanau Wine Cellars** for their generous donations. ♦

### NEWS FLASH! OHS BUYS HISTORIC SURREY! by Ed Oberndorf

It is hard to believe that the beautiful "surrey-with-the-fringe-on top," gracing our **Putnam-Cloud Tower House** summer exhibit, was first purchased 110 years ago from the **Flint Wagon Works**. The **Sunset Lodge** utilized the surrey to meet their guests arriving on the steamships and trains making their daily runs from Traverse City to Omena and Northport.

It was discovered by **Don Shapton** in 1987, when he went to the barn to locate a matching brick for a chimney he was repairing. In a dark corner of the barn he spotted a dusty surrey that was in disrepair and convinced the owners to sell it to him.



Francis Newland, Lorelei Robinson,  
Janie Newland, Lela Robinson



He hired **William Bays** of Prudenville to restore it, and for a while Don used his driving horses to ride around the country roads in it. He decided it had historic value and put it into storage. Upon hearing of the development of our new museum, he kindly loaned it to us.

First displayed in August of 2006, Omena immediately fell in love with the surrey, as did the hundreds of visitors who posed by it for family and friends. In August the OHS Board agreed unanimously to purchase the surrey for the appraised value of \$5,000. Failing to add this turn-of-the-century vehicle to our collection would have been a major historical loss.

**Ed Oberndorf** has agreed to head up a fundraiser, tentatively scheduled for kickoff early next year, to help with the purchase. One thing is certain: the Surrey has been enjoyed by all who have had the pleasure of seeing her and we are fortunate to now call it our own. It will be stored off-site this coming year to allow for other uses and exhibits in the museum. ♦

### ANSWERS TO THE OMENA TRIVIA QUIZ TIMELINES - SPRING, 2008

1. The present site of the Tamarack Gallery was the original Anderson Store built in (B) 1883. - p. 251
2. In the 20s Omena Point cottagers could sit on their front porches and see cars drive by between them and the bay. (A) TRUE - p. 105
3. The building that now houses the Omena-Traverse Yacht Club was built in (C) 1911. - p. 252
4. In 1885 the totally renovated Old Mission School buildings were opened as the (C) LEELANAU HOTEL. p.118
5. Rinaldo Putnam built his farmhouse (now the Putnam-Cloud Tower House) on what is now known as (C) Villa Marquette. - p. 32
6. The Omena Presbyterian Church will celebrate its 150th Anniversary this year, NOT its 100th. (B) FALSE - p. 16
7. The old shore road around Omena Point was (B) Shab-Wah-Sung Blvd. - p. 105
8. Electricity first came to Omena in the year (A) 1906. - p. 252
9. In addition to the Rev. Dougherty's New Mission boarding school, three schools served the children of the general Omena community. Of the three, the only school building that still exists is (B) the Bass Lake School. - p. 51
10. From 1957 to 1972 St. Christopher's Episcopal Church held summer services at (A) the home of Mr. & Mrs. George Smith. - p. 91

### SPECIAL THANKS FROM EDITOR JIM

As an historical newsletter, the Timelines staff depends on others to provide new material and offer up obscure information hidden in memory banks and attics.

We thank all of you who come forward with articles and artifacts that add to the story of Omena's past. Pulling these bits of information back from the brink is truly exciting and rewarding for all of us.

My personal thanks to Dan Stewart, who jumps in to record our special events for future generations to enjoy.

Our members' input and enthusiasm is critical to our success as a society. The entire staff salutes you!

### OHS MUSEUM HOURS

November and December - 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.  
January through March: by appointment only  
April and May: Saturdays - 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.  
Summer hours to be announced.



Mark Your Calendar  
Today!  
December 30, 5:00-7:00  
**Holiday  
Open House**

Let's get together for a festive holiday gathering in our historic Putnam-Cloud Tower House. Join us for music, refreshments and great conversation with family and friends. The Omena Presbyterian Church will not be available for our usual Holiday Serenade, but we hope you will be with us at the PCTH for a Holiday Open House. The public is invited, and it's free! What better way to prepare for the New Year! If you were not able to see our summer exhibits, this will be an opportunity to do so before they are replaced. Hope to see you there!

**Happy Holidays!**

### TIMELINES

Omena Historical Society  
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### IN THIS ISSUE

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Fire! A Childhood Recollection  
We Have Trivia Contest Winners!  
and Answers  
OHS Buys Historic Surrey



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### 2008 EXHIBITS ARE BIG HIT!

by **Joey Bensley**

This past summer two interesting and informative exhibits opened at the **Putnam-Cloud Tower House**. The exhibit, **Rails, Trails and Sails**, in the education room, featured travel to and from Omena during the period between 1850 and 1950. The exhibit included photographs of the many steamships that entered Omena Bay as well as photographs of the early trains and automobiles. All the photos and the design of the exhibit were expertly put in place by **Sally Viskochil**, making the exhibit not only educational and historical but artistic as well.

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The smaller exhibit on **Aghosatown** was designed and built by our Archives/Museum committee volunteers; **Amanda Holmes, Joey Bensley, Alice Littlefield** and **Jim Miller**. The exhibit depicts the history of the early Native Americans of Omena through photos, baskets and crafts. Many of the baskets are from the **Doris Wick** collection and were loaned to us by her son, **Gordon Wick**.

Aghosatown no longer exists and a sign that once marked its location has disappeared. However, the

history of these people is important and must not be forgotten. The exhibit represents the commitment of the **Omena Historical Society** to keep this history alive. We hope you had an opportunity to stop by and enjoy them.

A special thanks goes out to all of our volunteers for the time and effort they put into making it all possible. ❖

**NEWS FLASH! OHS BUYS HISTORIC SURREY!**

It is hard to believe that the beautiful "surrey-with-the-fringe-on top," gracing our **Putnam-Cloud Tower House** summer exhibit, was first purchased 110 years ago from the **Flint Wagon Works**. The Sunset Lodge utilized the surrey to meet their guests arriving on the steamships and trains making their daily runs from Traverse City to Omena and Northport.

He had Mr. William Bays of Prudenville restore it and for a while Don used his driving horses to ride around the country roads in it. He decided it had historic value and put it into storage. Upon hearing of the development of our new museum, he kindly loaned it to us.

First displayed in August of 2006, Omena immediately fell in love with the surrey, as did the hundreds of visitors who posed by it for family and friends. In August he Board agreed unanimously to purchase the surrey for the appraised value of \$5,000. Failing to add his turn-of-the century vehicle to our collection would be a major historical loss.

We agreed to purchase it **Ed Oberndorf** has agreed to head up a fundraiser to help with the funding which is tentatively scheduled for kickoff early next year. One thing is certain, the Surrey has been enjoyed by all who have had the pleasure of seeing her and we are fortunate to have it. It will be stored offsite this coming year to allow for other uses and exhibits in the museum.



Francis Newland, Lorelei Robinson,  
Janie Newland, Lela Robinson

Francis Newland, Lorelei Robinson,  
Janie Newland, Lela Robinson





## THE MIGNON'S 1935 TRIP TO OMENA

William Marbach

Claude was born in Omena, worked at times for **Hector Carmichael**, owner of the motor-yacht *Mignon*. and was a longtime orchard farmer. His family lived on Craker Road in the original **George A. Craker** homestead (now the Bensley home) until his retirement.

Claude and **Archie Bond** went from Omena by car to Chicago. He didn't say who drove, but possibly it was Hector Carmichael. Claude and Archie spent two weeks in Chicago working on the *Mignon*, painting staterooms and in general readying the boat for the trip back north. When they were ready to depart Chicago, they started at 4 A.M. The trip from the boatyard on the Chicago River required that 14 bridges must be raised for the boat before they reached Lake Michigan. This was the reason for the early departure. Mr. Carmichael hired two sailors to run the boat; Claude and Archie were basically working below deck watching over the engines.

When they got out of the river and into Lake Michigan, a bad storm was moving in from the North. It was decided to remain in Chicago within the breakwater until the storm passed. The next day they set sail for Ludington, and it promised to be a very rough trip. At one point, Hector Carmichael came below deck where Claude was working and told him he thought he and Claude were the only ones on the boat who weren't seasick. The sufferers included four invited guests, occupants of the staterooms.

The boat arrived in Ludington in the late evening, and at midnight Claude and Archie had the task of bringing 50 gallons of gas to the boat from a gas station some miles away. The next day they proceeded to Frankfort, where they added gas from the fuel dock. When it came time to leave, it was found that the boat was aground! Some fuel was unloaded in the vain hope that lessening the load would allow her to float. The next day a U.S. Coast Guard cutter came to their rescue, and the trip continued to Omena without further incident.

*Information about the Mignon's refurbishing and her trip back to Omena from Chicago is the result of a conversation between Claude Craker and Bill Marbach on August 25, 2000, in Omena.*

## WE HAVE WINNERS!

Our **Second Annual Trivia Quiz** was a huge success! We nearly tripled last year's entries! There were more prizes than last year, and the winners didn't have to get all the answers right to be in the drawing. How can you lose? As you know, the questions were put together using information from our beautiful, **Omena a Place in Time** book, by **Amanda Holmes**. We still have some left and when they are gone, they will probably not be printed again, so make sure you get your copy before it's too late.

Most of you got all the answers correct so we may have to make it a bit more challenging next year. You are a very astute group of people, but of course, we expect no less, right? **Mike and Marcia Biskupski** won the big prize of a free wine-tasting party for twenty on the **Leelanau Cellars** outdoor patio, next to their tasting room which overlooks Omena Bay. The value of this prize alone is over \$250! The \$25 gift certificate for the **Knot Just a Bar** went to **Alice Littlefield and Larry Reynolds**. **Hester Hull** won a limited edition print of **Jim Miller's Fall in Omena** picture and Millard Mack won a lunch for four at Martha's Leelanau Kitchen in Sutton's Bay's. A big "thank you!" to **Martha Ryan, Judy and Bruce Balas, Jim Miller, Knot Just a Bar** and **Leelanau Wine Cellars** for their generous donations. Please give the merchants your business and thank them for their support. Make sure you submit your entry in next year's fall edition of Timelines and good luck!

## ANSWERS TO THE OMENA TRIVIA QUIZ - TIMELINES - SPRING, 2008

1. The present site of the Tamarack Gallery was the original Anderson Store built in (B) 1883. - p. 251
2. In the '20s Omena Point cottagers could sit on their front porches and see cars drive by between them and the bay.  
(A) TRUE - p. 105
3. The building that now houses the Omena-Traverse Yacht Club was built in (C) 1911. - p. 252
4. In 1885 the renovated Old Mission School buildings were opened as the new (C) LEELANAU HOTEL. - p. 118
5. Rinaldo Putnam built his farmhouse (now the Putnam-Cloud Tower House) on what is now known as  
(C) Villa Marquette. - p. 32
6. The Omena Presbyterian Church will celebrate its 150th Anniversary this year, NOT its 100th. (B) FALSE - p. 16
7. The old shore road around Omena Point was (B) Shab-Wah-Sung Blvd. - p. 105

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**GRIERSON'S RAID**

by Jim Miller

Most of us are aware that Omena was the final home of retired Civil War general, Benjamin Grierson. Many of us are aware that General Grierson built a summer cottage on Omena Point. It was here that he spent the last 15 summers of his life. The General died on August 31, 1911 at "The Garrison", the name he gave his summer home. Today "The Garrison" is known as the "Rule Cottage."

Many of you may not be aware, however, of Grierson's amazing achievements as a civil war officer. I recently read the account of Grierson's raid in a book by the same name, written by D. Alexander Brown (University of Illinois Press, 1962). Brown's well researched and factual account is based on diaries, letters to loved ones, military field reports, newspaper articles and other sources of first hand accounts. Brown eloquently tells the story of one of Omena's most historically significant residents.

In 1863, General Ulysses S. Grant ordered then Colonel Benjamin Grierson to take three cavalry regiments (1,700 men) and ride 300 miles south, into the heart of the Confederacy and then return via the route of least resistance. Little did they know that the route would be over double that and right through the middle of enemy territory.

His mission was to destroy the telegraph and railroad links between Newton Station and Vicksburg and thus choke off supplies and communications from Southern-held Vicksburg. Colonel Grierson's success would exceed Grant's expectations beyond his imagination.

What is especially noteworthy were the challenges and obstacles Grierson's troops had to overcome. Their innovativeness and quick thinking behind enemy lines was key to their unparalleled success. It has hard to imagine taking that many men, deep into enemy territory while having their actual whereabouts remain undetected by the enemy. Grierson did just that by feigning an attack or movement to one place while moving to another. Nowadays, this type of action is carried out by Navy Seals or Army Rangers.

To put their achievements into perspective, imagine taking a road trip from Tennessee, down the length of Mississippi and on into Baton Rouge Louisiana. This, in itself, would be quite a road trip, even today. Now, imagine going that distance on horseback. Add to that the fact that Grierson's men were in constant danger of being attacked and had no back-up support. They sustained themselves by taking from the enemy whenever possible and often with the help of sympathetic southerners. In an

era of rank and file battle tactics, Grierson's hit-and-run tactics were well ahead of their time and the precursor to today's modern guerilla warfare.

These young horse soldiers, most of whom were civilians a year prior, adapted to their environ and cleverly blended in with their surroundings. When necessary, they would mask their northern blue uniforms with dust and mud or even risk execution as spies for donning southern type uniforms. Some, wore the light brown, confederate uniform and referred to themselves as "the Butternut Guerillas". Some spoke with fake southern accents and convincingly gave misinformation to confuse their enemy and to throw them off their track. They even posed as southern cavalry scouts to other southern soldiers gleaning prized and critical military intelligence in the process.

Grierson's men were, above all, soldiers, and they were dedicated to their leader and their cause. But they were also sensitive to the needs of non-combatant civilians. They were usually courteous to these people and as a result, were occasionally offered meals in the homes of southerners. They often paid for the spoils they took from civilians, although they would frequently pay with liberated confederate money, tongue -in-cheek as they did so. In two cases, they would stop attacking a village and fight fires that were spreading to homes and businesses. It must have been an interesting sight seeing rebels and yankees working side-by-side for a common cause, only to go back to fighting once the task was completed.

Grierson's audacious raid was not without humor. On one occasion, they were charading as southern soldiers while eating dinner at a grand plantation. It went well until one of them accidentally referred to a northern city as home. Ooops. They no doubt found themselves hurriedly gulping down the remainder of their relished, home-cooked meal and then scurrying away with their previously welcoming hosts screaming epithets as they ran. Their saving grace was the southern men were away at war.

Slaves were often willing to give the troopers vital information as to rebel troop positions and numbers. In return, they would receive food, clothing, and liberated supplies, not to mention their freedom. On the final day of the march into Baton Rouge, there were hundreds of newly freed slaves following their liberators.

Colonel Grierson summed up the raid as follows: "*During the expedition, we killed and wounded about one hundred of the enemy, captured or paroled over 500 prisoners, destroyed between fifty and sixty miles of railroad and telegraph, captured and destroyed over 3,000 stand of*



*arms and other army stores and Government property to an immense amount; we also captured 1,000 horses and mules."*

*Our loss during the entire journey was 3 killed, 7 wounded, 5 left on the route, sick; the sergeant-major and surgeon of the Seventh Illinois left with Lieutenant-Colonel Blackburn, and 9 men missing, supposed to have straggled. We marched over 600 miles in less than sixteen days. The last twenty-eight hours, we marched 76 miles, had four engagements with the enemy, and forded the Comite River which was deep enough to swim many of the horses. During this time, the men were without food or rest."*

Grierson's audacious and brave endeavor will forever remain one of the civil war's most challenging and brave accomplishments. It demoralized the confederacy, exposed its many weaknesses and emboldened the union army. General Sherman referred to Grierson's achievement as "the most brilliant expedition of the civil war." ♦

**DID YOU KNOW...**

... that The Oaks Lodge burned down under suspicious circumstances and the cause remains a mystery to this day?

... that Mougey Lake was the most reliable and primary source for Kimmerly's store's ice supply?

... that More guests at the Hotel Leelanau came from Cincinnati than any other place?

... that of all the original summer cottages on Omena Point and Ingalls Bay, the only ones built with lath and plaster were the present day Rule cottage and the O'Connell/Jacobson cottage? (The latter was replaced by the Mulligan home in 1987.) ❖

My father was Donovan Egeler McMachen, the fourth son of Adelbert and Ida McMachen (he died in January of 2002). My mother is Carrie Adelle (nee Craker) McMachen. She was 90 years old on August of this year, 2008.

Ed Putnam was my father's uncle, but we children called him Uncle Ed, too. Ed's first wife, Anne (nee Egeler) Putnam was a sister to my father's mother, Ida (nee Egeler) McMachen. Ed and Anne's girls were adults and none were living at home in 1952. Anna had passed away and Ed was married to Terry at the time of the fire. In 1952, they had a ten year old daughter, Mary. We called Mary our "shirt-tail" cousin. Doris (nee Putnam) Wick was one of Ed and Anne's daughters. She and her husband Frank lived just north of Omena at Windy-Knob on M-22 with their little sons, Jimmy and Gordie. They must have been there that evening, too. ❖

**Time** book, by **Amanda Holmes**. We still have some left and when they are gone, they will probably not be printed again, so make sure you get your copy before it's too late.

Most of you got all the answers correct so we may have to make it a bit more challenging next year. You are a very astute group of people, but of course, we expect no less, right? **Mike and Marcia Biskupski** won the big prize of a free wine-tasting party for twenty on the

**Omena's Veteran Memorial**

Steve and Mary Stanton

*"Dedicated By The Community To Honor The Men and Women Who Served Their Country In The Armed Forces."*

These words were written almost 70 years ago on a bronze plaque, attached to a boulder and placed on a little slice of Omena immediately north of the Community Room/Fire Hall. If you have a minute sometime, stop by and take a look.

In 1947, **Anna B. Putnam**, widow of **Fred R. Putnam** and Great-Great Grandmother of **Sheila Lingaur**, gifted a piece of her property to the Township of Leelanau "*as a Perpetual Memorial to the "VETERANS", by the Omena Women's Club, and are to be used for this purpose only.*"

Anna and the ladies of the Omena Women's Club had wanted to do something for the Veterans. Anna decided they could use a piece of her property to set up a park and a Memorial. **Mrs. Carmichael** donated an American flag for this "glorious cause." After this was done, the ladies worried over who would actually take care of the park and so decided