



# Podunk Pioneer Papers

News of the Pioneer Memorial Association of Fenton and Mundy Townships  
Issue 40 Spring 2004

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## NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

Membership fees are due May 1. If you have not paid your dues, please send them now. We welcome new members and encourage you to invite your friends and neighbors to join us. (Membership form printed on the back page of this newsletter.)

### DUES RATES:

Single: \$ 3.00  
Family: \$ 5.00  
Contributing: \$10.00  
Sustaining: \$25.00  
Life: \$100.00

### Send dues to:

Ramona Green  
14133 Torrey Rd.  
Fenton, MI 48430-1391

**SPECIAL NOTICE**  
As of March 2004, all meetings will be held at the **FENTON TOWNSHIP HALL** unless otherwise posted.



## Meeting Schedule

The Pioneer Memorial Association of Fenton and Mundy Townships meets on the second Monday of each month at 7:00P.M. at the **Fenton Township Hall** (March-October). The next meeting will be April 12.

## LOG ON TO

<http://www.addorio.com/podunk>

for the latest news about Podunk and the Pioneer Association. Thanks to Betsy Davidson for maintaining our Web Site.

## ANNUAL ELECTIONS

May 12, 2004 is the Annual Election of Officers at 7:00 P.M., at the **Fenton Township Hall**. If you are interested in serving as a trustee or as a member of the Board of Directors please contact Phyllis Yancy. All members are encouraged to attend the meeting.

## From the Editor

We need your help to insure that this year's Buffalo Dinner is profitable. Our purpose for putting on the Buffalo Dinner is to share an old-fashioned family-style dinner with family and friends while enjoying an evening of musical entertainment. At the same time, we are raising money for the preservation of the Podunk House and Pioneer Museum.

However, to continue with this 35 year tradition, we must be able to cover expenses. YOU can help by spreading the word and by selling tickets.

Cathy Worden will be posting flyers in area businesses. Please contact her if you can help distribute these notices or if you know of a good location to put new ones. If each member would sell two to four tickets, we would have a sell-out! We need to sell a minimum of 140 tickets. Will you help?

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 \*Please be sure to make note of the date, time and location of future meetings.  
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\*In this issue are samples of thank-you notes written to our volunteers who guided Lake Fenton Elementary School fourth graders through our museum and Podunk House last fall.

The motto of the Pioneer Association is to "Preserve Yesterday, Honor Today, Plan Tomorrow". By helping educate the youth of our community about local history we hope to continue all three. As you read these letters and see things through the eyes of children you gain new insight into just how important our mission still is.

Also included in this issue is a list of books suitable for helping children learn about family history and genealogy. (Actually, these books are quite interesting to read as adults!)



## NEWS FROM PRESIDENT VICTOR MOORE

Listed below are just a few of the tasks completed in 2003. **Many thanks to all our dedicated volunteers.**

- The **Buffalo Dinner** in May 2003 was held as scheduled. Unfortunately, due to rising costs and fewer ticket sales, our profits were down from previous years. As a result, ticket prices will increase this year to \$10.00. We hope our members and guests will understand and continue to support our efforts to raise money to support our historical site by buying tickets and encouraging others to join us.
- **Pioneer Day 2003** in September was a **great** success thanks to the renewed dedication of our diligent volunteers. All the extra effort to expand advertising and the



increased number of vendors and volunteers paid off. Approximately 300 people were in attendance which makes it one of the biggest crowds we have ever served. Thanks to the help of our volunteers and generous donations by members and community sponsors, our profit for 2003 was \$1297.86.

- **The windmill was in full operation for the first time.** Thanks to all who helped on the windmill project. Mrs. Esther Warzynski and her family were honored on Pioneer Day for their generous donations which allowed us to purchase and install the windmill in memory of her parents, William and Lydia Watkins, who donated the Podunk House to the Pioneer Association originally.
- **Thanks to Harland Nye, Shades of Blue band, and Brad Wright (bagpipes)** for sharing their musical talents with us. Thanks to **Ed Whalen** for sharing his knowledge of local Indian lore. Thanks to the **Boy Scouts and Dennis Weston** for participating in the opening ceremonies.
- **Thanks to Ramona Green** for her efforts to keep our membership lists up to date.
- **Thanks to Cathy Worden and her committee for doing such a great job securing advertisement.**
- The money raised on Pioneer Day and at the Buffalo Dinner are used to preserve our museum site. Last fall a new roof was installed on the pavilion. Projects for this year include more cement work (sidewalks, handicap ramps, etc.), treating the pavilion floor and upgrading our display areas and facilities. Informational brochures will be updated and reprinted.

## BUFFALO DINNER 2004

Our first fund raiser of the year is fast approaching. **April 24** is the date for our **Buffalo Dinner**. **Please call right away to volunteer and to also reserve tickets for your family and friends. Tickets are \$10.00 per person.**

- Volunteers are needed to help **set-up** the tables and chairs in the gym on Sat., April 24 at 3:00 P.M.
- Call Phyllis Yancy if you are able to donate pies and you have not been contacted yet.

### **ANNOUNCING:**

- **Buffalo Dinner:**
- **Saturday,**
- **April 24, 2004**
- **Lake Fenton High School Gymnasium**
- **Entertainment:**  
**"Banjos with Wayne and Friends"**
- **6:00 P.M.**
- **\$10.00 per ticket.**

Mark your calendar now and get your tickets from Joyce or Ramona.

## FOR PIONEER DAY 2004

Pioneer Day is the Saturday after Labor Day. This year the date is: **Sept. 11, 10:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M.**

**Volunteers are needed to:** make phone calls, donate baked goods (especially pies), pickles, jams, etc.; help in the kitchen, work at the gate or parking lot; help with house tours, help out at the Children's Corner, etc.

**Items are also needed for: the book sale, door prizes, rummage sale (NO CLOTHING, please) and the produce stand.** Donations can be dropped off at the home of Joyce Simmons prior to Pioneer Day and are tax deductible. \*\*\* **Please clearly mark prices on items that you are donating for the sale .**

Food donations for the Bake Sale can be brought on Pioneer Day from 8:30-10:00 A.M.

We also need: **VENDORS and CRAFTERS.** Art, jewelry, maps, note cards and stained glass works, embroidery and tatting have been for sale in previous years. We welcome our faithful participants as well as new and unique items. Bring your **HOBBIES and special COLLECTIONS.**

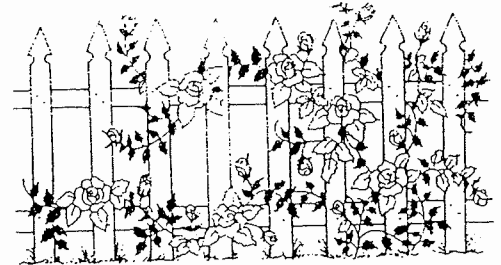
Examples of what we have enjoyed include displays of wrought iron pieces, antique jewelry, dolls, a miniature replica of our Podunk House, an antique buggy, wood splitters and other implements and tools. Please share your collection with our guests.

**Please call to reserve a booth.**



## Save your VG's Grocery Receipts

As a non-profit organization we earn money for each receipt we turn in. What we earn here with our VG's receipts helps to defray the cost of mailing and publishing our newsletters. We earn \$50 for every \$1500 in receipt totals by participating in the VG's Community Support Program. We have earned over \$550 so far. **(Thanks VG's).**



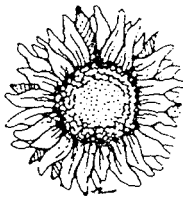
### SUMMER 2004

Visit our Pioneer Museum and Podunk House to learn more about the history of Fenton and Mundy Townships. Maybe you can locate your ancestors in a photograph or newspaper article in our archives.

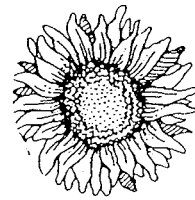
**SUMMER TOURS AND PAVILION RENTAL ARE AVAILABLE BY APPOINTMENT.**

**(Members: \$25,  
Non-members: \$50)**

**PLEASE CALL JOYCE AT  
810-629-7748  
IF YOU CAN ASSIST US IN  
ANY WAY WITH OUR  
PROJECTS.**



**A Sampling of Thank You Notes  
Fourth Grade Students, Lake Fenton  
October 15, 2003**



**Letters for Pioneer Museum Docents: Mrs. Joyce Simmons and Mr. Victor Moore and Cookie Maker, Mrs. Ramona Green:**

From Cameron:

Thank you for inviting us. If that was real history, I would like to hear more history because I watch history every day when I can. The Museum and introduction were cool. Oh yah, you were teaching us when you were telling us about history... The scythe was tremendous to me. I learned that you would never want to mess with the straight razor when it's not sharp.

P.S. Mrs. Green: no, offense, but I don't like "flower and sugar cookies".

From Katelyn,

Well, first of all, thank you Mr. Moore for taking your time off of your farming job to come to speak to us about how things are now and how things used to be back then. The coolest part was the ice cream maker and the buffalo head and its pelt. Oh, and thank you, Mrs. Simmons, for helping organize the museum- you did a wonderful job organizing it.

From Miranda,

...I admired all of the tools. I always come to Pioneer Day. My favorite thing was the shoe-last. If I lived there I would love it. If you would like, I could come the day before Pioneer Day and help get everything organized for Pioneer Day and come on Pioneer Day and help out.

From Josh,

...I like the picture of the log cabin, the buffalo head, the old tools and rakes and wrenches. I like the grave stone...I had a lot of fun. That is my story.

From Ellesa,

Thank you for the tour around the museum. Thanks for the history on the pioneers. The buffalo was awesome and weird!!...I learned a lot about the pioneers and the Indians - like they'd leave the door un-locked so Indians can come in on cold nights and leave really early so nobody would know, then [the Indians] would leave a turkey or something as a thank you note. Also the boats were so big they could hold over 800 people!! Please tell Mrs. Green her cookies were really y-u-m-m-y !! !!

From Jennifer,

... There are so many things I learned about back then. My favorite part was the buffalo. I have never seen a buffalo up close before or in real life - only on TV....My brain is filled with all of that stuff you taught us. There was nothing I missed. Thank you so much!!!!!!P.S. Please thank Mrs. Green for making those delicious, wonderful, home-made cookies. They were GOOD!

From Tyler,

...That was some speech you gave, Mr. Moore. ...Mrs. Simmons, you taught me a lot about some history back then. You also told me names of some of the stuff I've never seen before. I like that.

From Timothy,

Thank you ... for taking up your time and teaching us. I really like the scythe and the buffalo. I didn't know that there were wooden shoes. I didn't know there were two decker boats...I did know that there was a brander.

From Shelby,

...Thank you for setting up the field trip. It was very fun. My mom said thank you... Thank you for the introduction of the museum...

From Chelsae,

Thank you for showing us the museum. It was really, really great. I really enjoyed the pioneer tools and the buffalo. How did you organize all of that stuff? ...A lot of that history was really, really cool.

From Julia,

The Pioneer museum was fun. You did a good job teaching about it. Thank you for volunteering. I learned a lot. I thought the buffalo was amazing! But, there were many amazing things about the pioneer museum. My mom didn't know much about it. But I told her all you said. Thank you!

From Faith,  
Thank you for showing and letting us see the Museum. I really liked the old ice cream maker... The one thing that made me laugh was when a boy liked a girl, he would put her ponytail in the ink [well]. Thank you again guys!

From Rachael,  
Thank you... I really enjoyed the museum and I'll bet the kids next year will enjoy it too... My favorite thing is the desk... Please thank Mrs. Green for making those cookies. (Yum Yum)

From Marissa,  
I would like to thank you so much for the great introduction. I thought that it was even more fun that my best friend Jailen's own ancestors used those crops... I had a tremendous time. Thank you both!

From Emily A.,  
Thank you for teaching us some more about the pioneer museum. You guys have a big job putting all that stuff together. The big buffalo head was really cool. The history is really cool, too. It is weird about the razor and when it is not sharp, that's when it cuts your face. I think the safety razors were a good idea.

From Cullen,  
Thank you for the information. It was pretty good information. I forgot to ask you a question: were there any toys back then? Thank you for everything.

From Emily H.,  
Thank you... the pioneer museum looked nice and tidy and clean. When I walked in it looked really organized. The buffalo was really cool looking... I thought the shaving utensil was interesting... About the shoe-last—my grandpa had one of those... my dad's friend Kevin has two different sized shoe lasts in his garage for a decoration. I had a really great time.

From Elizabeth,  
I loved the museum and utensils you showed us. My mom loved everything – so did I. I am going to talk my mom into bringing my next door neighbors to go with me next time. P.S. My mom says hi.



From Jailen,  
Thank-you for the tour through the museum. It was very interesting. There were a lot of things there for you to show us like all the gardening utensils and the tools for taking care of the animals!

I also liked the school desk. I thought the thing about how the boys if they liked the girl in front of them, they would stick their hair in the ink. I would be pretty mad if someone did that to me now. My favorite thing was the buffalo head. Did you know that my great-great-great-grandfather\* (or something close to that) killed that buffalo? Your introduction was exciting. I learned a tremendous amount of local history! [Ed. Note: Jailen's great-grandfather George Hulet Judson brought this buffalo back from South Dakota in 1969]

Another thing that I thought was interesting was the steamboats, the Fenton and Flint boats. I was really amazed by how big it was and how so many people could fit in it like eight hundred people. Wow, that's a lot.

There were just so many cool and interesting facts. I was wondering how you know all this stuff and what you did to get all of this information.

Oh, and I would like to thank-you again for coming off your spare time to teach us more about Pioneers and the history of Lake Fenton!

### **Letter Samples for the Podunk House docent, Mrs. Phyllis Yancy:**

From Tyler,  
Thank you for showing us the Podunk House. It looked awesome. I've never seen a house built like that before. My favorite room was the parlor because it is the oldest room and it has the instruments. I like the harp guitar.

From Alyssa,  
Sorry, but I couldn't come. I was really looking forward to it... I got sick. My temperature was 103.5 F. We (me and my mom) went to the doctor's office. I got some medication. I got it in pills. Although I did learn about the Podunk House in Social Studies. I asked my mom to take me there. Next year I hope to come.

From Kaitlyn P.,

Thank you for putting your time in for us to come to the Podunk House. I enjoyed it very much. Oh, thank you for the cookies, too. Those were yummy and delicious, Mrs. Green. Thank you for teaching us all that great stuff about the Podunk House. It is such a cool place to live. I love it. I wish we could have another trip there. That was so fun.

From Jordan,

Thank you for giving us a tour of the Podunk House. It was so cool! My favorite part there was the parlor...I wouldn't want to do all those chores the kids had to do! (Especially the ones the boys did!) Do you give tours to other people? I forgot something. Thank you for those delicious cookies. Thank you again for inviting us! Hope that you like my letter.

From Connor,

Thank you for the tour. I liked the Podunk House. I wish I could go back. I have learned a lot. I used to live near the Podunk House before we lived in England. P.S. I love the cookies Mrs. Green made.

From Faith,

Thank you...The best thing that I liked was the dining room table. The design gave me the feeling that you made those plates and everything on the table. The "Podunk House" was very interesting to me because you get to see things that people made long ago. It was really funny when you said "the men had to dump the potty". I hope that I could someday see you again.

From Cameron,

...I learned that you have a lot of chores if you lived there...The volunteers were nice people. Thank you very, very, very much.

From Elessa,

Thank you for the tour and for letting us come. I learned a lot of stuff. Like the boys had to clean the bathrooms. They named the house "po-dunk" because it made a sound like "pu-dunk". Do they really need to drink that stuff if they are constipated? (GROSS!!). So the pioneers had to go outside and go to the bathroom. I had tons and tons of fun. P.S. Thanks for the cookies, Mrs. Green.

From Miranda,

...I liked the fainting couch the most.

From Emily,

...I really liked when you took us upstairs and showed me the baby's crib. Also when you took us in the bathroom. The tub was really different from my tub. In the kitchen, the table was really cool! How did they keep the food cold? I have another question: why did the Podunk House become famous and not some other old house? I had a great time at the Podunk House. I would like to come again to visit. Thanks.

From Brad,

Thank you for the tour of the Podunk House. The rooms are different than my room. I would like to go again. Tell Mrs. Green thank you for the cookies.

From Josh,

I had a good time. I learned that the boys had to take out the dirty water. I didn't know that they took a bath in the same water. They had to work a lot and the girls did men's jobs like mow the lawn and they did not have electric stuff.

From Cullen,

Thank you...It was interesting about the Natives leaving game animals. I also want to thank you for the cookies. Anyway, what's the recipe?

From Austin,

Thank you for welcoming us to the Podunk House...Thank you for teaching us so much...

From Katelyn B.,

Thank you for teaching us some more historical. I learned that boys have to do more work than the girls and women. The funniest part of the tour was the medicine called Castor Oil...

From Emily A.,

Thank you for teaching us a lot more about the history of Lake Fenton. You taught us a lot. It is kind of funny because the boys have to do a lot more work than the girls. The tour was very, very, very interesting. I really, really liked the fainting couch. It was cool. The fly swatter is also really, really cool. P.S. The cookies Mrs. Green made were delicious.

From Jennifer,

Thank you so much for the tour of Podunk House...I never knew that they lived like that. It is so different than TV. I love the rugs and it is really cool how they make them, too. I would like to make the rugs with all those colors. I

don't get to make rugs at home because we just buy them. You can tell the "somoshen" [sewing machine] is very old but I could tell it was a "somoshen" as soon as I saw it...

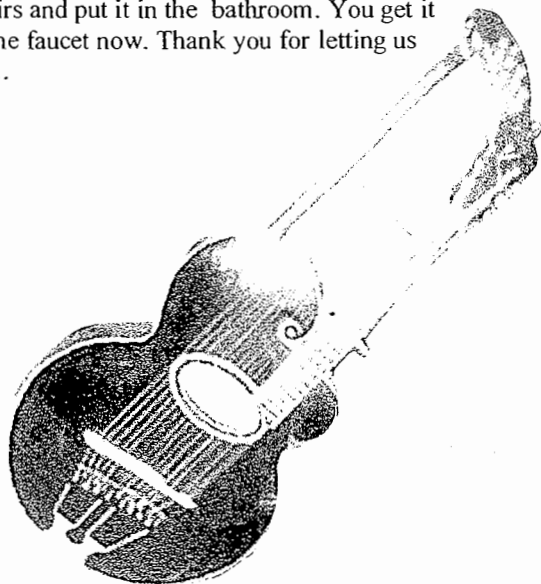
From Rachael,  
Thank you...My favorite room is the bathroom. What is your favorite room in the house? Oh, yeah, thanks for taking the time to tell my class and me about the history of that house.

From Tim,  
...I did not know that the Indians slept in the hallway and left fresh game for the people that lived there. I also didn't know that they had harp-guitars back then. I knew that they used castor oil. I did not know that men had a mustache cup.

From Shelby,  
...I liked the cradle room...I learned that the metal plates that were on the ground [floor] upstairs ...were put there because the wood rotted...

From Chelsae,  
Thank you for showing us the Podunk House. The tour was great. I also enjoyed seeing what they would use way back then. I also enjoyed holding the "sadd iron" and all that other stuff...I really enjoyed the carpet. It was great! How long would they play instruments?

From Elizabeth,  
...I had so much fun. I will talk my mom into going with my friend sometime. I wouldn't want to get spanked back then. I learned it wasn't so easy then. Now you don't have to haul water up the stairs and put it in the bathroom. You get it from the faucet now. Thank you for letting us come...



From Jailen,  
Thank you for giving us the tour in the Podunk House. It was very interesting even though I've been in the house like 100 times. I even learned some things. My favorite part was the cradle that my mom and uncle slept in when they were little. I also thought the job that the boys had to do back then was very funny. (The one when they had to take out the potty.)

I was wondering if you could tell Mrs. Green that the cookies were delicious.  
I'd like to thank you for inviting us to come and see the Podunk House and teaching us about its history. I was wondering if you knew who the people were that built it, and if where it is right now was the place where the Podunk House was about 100 years ago. It's very thoughtful of you to volunteer to give us a tour. You know a lot about the Podunk House and my family. What did you have to do to get all of that research? Oh, I almost forgot, another part that I liked was the medicine that was called Castor Oil. That was pretty funny. Thanks again for the tour and for coming and letting us into the house.

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#### REFERENCE BOOKS FOR CHILDREN:

1. *Dig Up Your Roots and Find Your Branches – A Child's Guide to Genealogy* by Susan H. Hubbs, 2000, ISBN 0-595-13162-X
2. *Climbing Your Family Tree, Online and Off-Line Genealogy for Kids* [The Official Ellis Island Handbook], by Ira Wolfman, c. 2002. ISBN 0-7611-2539-6
3. *Through the Eyes of Your Ancestors* by Maureen A. Taylor, c. 1999. ISBN 0-395-86980-3

#### HARP-GUITAR

Donated to the Pioneer Memorial Association by Marge Watters and Donna Marwede, daughters of John Williams.

**May 10, 2004 Election Results**  
**for**  
**Board of Directors and Trustees**

**PRESIDENT:** Victor Moore (989-277-7089)  
**VICE PRESIDENT:** Joyce Simmons (810-629-7748)  
**SECRETARY:** Mary Jane Pinkston  
**TREASURER:** Loretta Gauthier (810-629-5124)  
**PUBLICITY:** Cathy Worden (810-714-3998)  
**MEMBERSHIPS:** Ramona Green (810-629-9878)  
**EDITOR:** Phyllis Judson Heusted (810-631-4763)

**TRUSTEES:**

**Wayne Butts (2005)**  
**Mary Shepherd (2005)**  
**Frances Warner (2006)**  
**Alice Bristle (2006)**  
**John Judson (2007)**  
**Chris Worden (2007)**