



# History Happenings

October, 2021

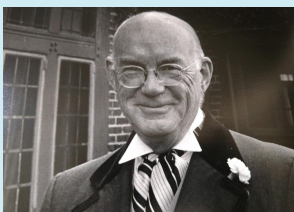
at the Grosse Pointe Historical Society



*The foundation in place; awaiting dry weather to pour basement walls -- 13 trucks of cement on the way!*

## Bob the Builder

Yes, it's true, the contractor for our new building really is named Bob! As in Bob Ross of Ross Construction Co. He joined us in the vision for the new building several years ago and is as eager as we are to see it come true. Drive by the site and watch the progress!



## Dr. Frank Bicknell Lecture Series

This long-running series of lectures is supported by a generous endowment named after the eponymous honoree.

Lectures have covered a wide range of topics and interests over the years, and during the pandemic, went online! Now you can attend the lectures in person at the historic Cook Schoolhouse in Grosse Pointe Woods, or online at the GPHS YouTube channel, where you will also find many of the past lectures as well. The lecture for October is "Becoming the Motor



*Leslie Wagner, President*

## Grosse Pointe's New History Hub

**New** (current and future) and **old** (history) are merging together on Kercheval near Moross. For more than 75 years the Grosse Pointe Historical Society has preserved and shared Grosse Pointe's history. Today we're building a new administration and collection resources building for present and future times. This is the next milestone in a long journey.

The Society was founded at a lunch table in 1945. Over the years, it was headquartered in several locations including libraries, schools, and the War Memorial. Part of the collection was stored in an enthusiast's home for 19 years. Curator emeritus, Jean Dodenhoff, created the archives and initiated the software that form the backbone of our research materials and collection today.

In the 1980s, visionary historians realized that under the skin of a

City: A timeline of Detroit's Auto Industry". Find out more about the live and virtual lecture:

[Bicknell Lecture 21-22 schedule](#)

## Virtual Visit: The Joseph Berry Exhibit



*Joseph Berry found "Johnny Bear" as a cub chained outside a store up north and had compassion for the animal. He brought Johnny Bear to Edgemere, where he is being visited by Mr. Berry's granddaughters Valeria and Laura Sherrard. Eventually, Johnny Bear became too large and difficult to handle and was donated to the Detroit Zoo.*

Visit the online exhibit [HERE](#)

## Join the Grosse Pointe Historical Society!

With all the possibilities of our new building, there has never been a better time to join and support the Grosse Pointe Historical Society! Read about membership and join [HERE](#).

Members at the Family Level and above enjoy the benefit of an hour of research by our archivist in the collection (a \$75 value). And the "inquiry" fee is always waived for memberships at and above the Family level!

## Research

People always have questions . . . about their home, their family, the community, schools, you name it. Learn about our research services [HERE](#).

## Where are the scarecrows?

Last year's "Scarecrow Project" was a hit with the community. However, this year the scarecrows in are quarantine for the pandemic – and because construction of the new building is taking up all our time!

Watch for their return when the dust settles. Meanwhile, if you bring your scarecrows out this

private home on Kercheval was hidden a c. 1823 ribbon-farm house. They contracted with the owner to acquire it and undertook an ambitious restoration and makeover, resulting in the Provencal-Weir House (PW House). When a c. 1836 log cabin became available, volunteers moved it to our site. As one historian remembers, "It took 4 hours to take it apart and 4 months to reassemble and restore."

The administrative offices and collections resided in rented space next to Jerry's Party Store for 20 years. It was never adequate for storage and collection needs. While it was important to remain close to the PW House, there was no obvious place to expand. When the former Stover home became available GPHS took the leap of faith for this once-in-lifetime opportunity and acquired it.

After exhaustive exploration, it became apparent the home could not be adapted to our needs. A plan for a new building was developed and vetted with the Farms leadership and the community. Visionary and generous donors supported a fundraising campaign to purchase the property, develop plans and begin construction. We anticipate completion in Spring 2022.

When complete, the campus -- including the new building, the Provencal-Weir House and the Log Cabin -- will become the "hub" for historic Grosse Pointe. The community will be able to use state-of-the-art technology to research the past, while enjoying the resources and accessibility of a contemporary space.

The work is never done! And neither is our fundraising. GPHS does not have a vast endowment -- the mostly volunteer-led team depends on membership revenue, donations, and sponsorships from events and activities for the regular operating budget.

Undertakings like the new building require special support. We'd like to open the facility "debt free",

year, send a snapshot to [development@gphistorical.org](mailto:development@gphistorical.org) and we'll publish it an upcoming newsletter.

### What's YOUR Pointe?

We exist because of and for the community, and we want to hear from you. Tell us your story, share pictures and more [HERE](#).

which will take support from the community. Help us preserve and share the unique history of the Pointes with current and future generations in a purpose-built environment. Please contact: [development@gphistorical.org](mailto:development@gphistorical.org).

**Forward this e-newsletter to a friend!**

**Grosse Pointe Historical Society | [www.gphistorical.org](http://www.gphistorical.org) | [development@gphistorical.org](mailto:development@gphistorical.org)**

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