

Oceana County

Historical & Genealogical Society Newsletter

Web: oceanahistory.org

December, 2025

Email: info@oceanahistory.org

A Note from President Paul Erickson



Snow and Cold is Ripe in the Land of Mears.....

Well the winter of 2025-26 is off to a chilly start. Cold has set in, and we are seeing the snow pile up.

In the winter, I plow out our properties in Hart and in Mears. I like plowing as it gives one some quality think time. Trustees from the jail do a nice job of clearing the sidewalks, leaving me our new paved parking lot to have ready Wednesdays. When I plow the Chadwick-Munger house, I am reminded of playing hide and seek in the courthouse lawn and

having it spill over to the Mungers' and Mrs. Ostensacken's back yards. We had a big group of town kids who met every night to ride bikes, fly kites, fish and play games. I recall Mrs. Munger's stuffed birds in the third story windows and our calling it the "Castle." Mrs. Ostensacken knew every one of us, and kept an eye on us. Living in town had its rewards, and walking Mrs. O's poodles was one of them.

The Old Town Hall in Mears is another good memory reminder. I always think of the Town Board when I moved to Mears. Edwin Johnson, Carl Fuehring, Dick & Don Walsworth, and the ever faithful Carl Wiegand. It is good to have new life in the Old Town Hall, and the *Echo/Mirror* has been an important contributor to our society and our community. Now we have the Little Golden Park across the street to the east, creating a pleasant corner from which to report the news. Our newspaper collection is in the vault, and the upstairs is full of artifacts. Mort's School Room will be open this summer as well as our Publishing Exhibit.

The Main Museum Complex has a very unique memory jog for me. I always say good morning to Swift's Bronze Statue. On his walkabout reading as he goes. My Grandma Mae was a good friend of Swift, and she always had the *Mears Newz* in the house. And then Bill Lathers: Who could not remember Bill's Thrill Ride and all he has done for our little town. We have a beautiful Transportation Building full of Golden Memories. Mac Wood: No one could pass by the sand dunes and not remember Mac in his Sailor's Cap. Kenny Robinson: We have the Robinson Building with wonderful exhibits of our past. The Boynton Cottage: The Boynton Family has been very generous to us and having their Honeymoon cottage on our grounds is a step back in the history of Little Point Sable, and the families who settled it. And then Trapper Ralph Fenton: I visited Ralph in his little cabin one evening forty years ago. Ralph was a Mears staple, who always knew the weather, and where the hunting and fishing were good. The Swedish Church stands proud on Fox Road. I recall watching it go by on wheels, being move from west of town to exactly where Edwin Johnson wanted it. On a new basement, it is a vital part of our complex. [go to p. 3]

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WELCOME

Open Wednesdays
10-5

If you would like to do research
at the Chadwick-Munger House,

We will be happy to assist you.
Closed Dec. 24 & 31

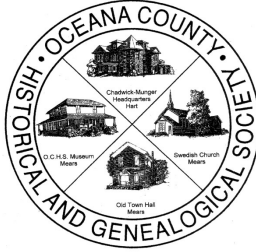


OCEANA COUNTY HISTORICAL & GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Nomination Committee 2026

- ♦ Paul Erickson
- ♦ Dean Gentel
- ♦ Carmen Osborne
- ♦ Ron Rash
- ♦ Jan Lathers

If you are interested in serving on our board of directors in the future,, please contact one of these people.



WREATHS ACROSS
AMERICA
PENTWATER &
NORTH WEARE
OCEANA COUNTY

UPDATED OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

Current Officers

President: Paul Erickson (2024-2026)
Vice President—Carl Wiegand (2025-2027)
Rec. Sec.—Sharon Hallack (2024-2026)
Cor. Secretary—Claire Marshall (2025-2027)
Treasurer—Dennis Gale (2025-2027)
Past President—Walt Urick

Board Directors

Georgia Dennison (2025-2028)
Carmine Osborne (2025-2028)
Ron Rash (2025-2028)

Karen Urick (2024-2027)
Mort Wiegand (20-24-2027)
Brad Moul (2024-2027)

Tina Kinsley (2023-2026)
Dean Gentel (2023-2026)
Jeff Lathers (2023-2026)

STATISTICS

QUERIES
GUESTS

WILL UPDATE IN THE SPRING!

NEW MEMBERS

Will update in the spring!

CORRECTION # 1 Oceana County Fair Exhibit

The last newsletter, September, 2025, stated that the Oceana County Fair Exhibit for OCH&GS was submitted by Sharon Hallack.

It should have read that the OCH&GS exhibit was submitted by
R.J. Coon!

CORRECTION # 2

The article regarding the OCH&GS yard sale was cut off. It should have read:

The OCH&GS held a yard sale on 14 June, 2025 during the annual Asparagus Festival in Charlotte Lindstrom's Courtyard. It was a beautiful day and there were lots of customers walking from the court house sales to the food court in the Historic District.

We made \$200 in sales.

Quiz Question: Answer: See page 6

Why are barns traditionally painted red?

OCEANA COUNTY HISTORICAL & GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

CALENDAR OF EVENTS, 2025

December 13



Wreaths Across America, Pentwater Twp Cemetery

12:00 Noon



[continued from p.1]

Today we have the Lathers' Family renovating Red's House to our new Welcome Center. Jan and Jeff have taken it right down to the studs, placed new windows and doors, and have turned the old home into a centerpiece of the Complex. We are anxious to see what the new season will bring to a new layout and traffic pattern for our visitors. We shall have parking to the west, and it will serve as a welcoming place to start your visit. I enjoy the responsibilities given me and feel this small role I play will help our cast of characters grow and prosper.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Sincerely,
Paul





WREATHS — across — AMERICA

★ **KEEP MOVING FORWARD** ★

**On December 13, 2025
at 12:00 pm**

(Wreath Placement Immediately Following Ceremony), Wreaths Across America will be at Pentwater Township Cemetery to Remember and Honor our veterans through the laying of Remembrance wreaths on the graves of our country's fallen heroes and the act of saying the name of each and every veteran aloud.



**To sponsor a wreath, contact Friends of the Pentwater Cemetery
or the Village of Pentwater Township Office.**

Wreaths are \$17 each.

You are welcome but do not have to be present on December 13.

Volunteers were on hand to receive the wreaths!

**It's a go! If you want to help place the wreaths, come to
Pentwater Twp, Cemetery on December 13 at noon!**



OCEANA COUNTY HISTORICAL & GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

**Rental of Buildings
Mears Museum Complex
Call
231-873-2600**

**The OCH&HS Website
Was included the minutes of
the Annual Membership Meeting.**

**These minutes will show the
List of Current Board Members
Meeting dates
Artifacts Update
Budget, Finance & Grants
Buildings & Grounds
Communications/Newsletter
Facility Volunteer Coordinating
Library
Membership
Programs and Special Events
Web: oceanahistory.org**

**Please Consider Joining
Our Team of Volunteers
Whatever your interest is,
we invite you to come and enjoy our group
to share and to learn more
about Oceana County history.**

OCH&GS Needs YOU!

There are so many ways in which our volunteers add to the society, using their individual talents!

Filing! Gardening! Auto Mechanics!
Cleaning! Scrapbooking!
Organizing! Cutting and Pasting!
Sharing Memories!
Setting Up Displays!
Helping Visitors! Researching!
Taking Pictures!
Volunteering as a Docent at the Mears Museum!



MEMBERSHIP

The lifeblood of our organization is the retention of our current members and the recruitment of new members. We could not provide all of the wonderful services and opportunities without your support! THANK YOU!!

In reviewing our current membership list there are five levels of membership available: Regular Annual Membership (\$20), Family Annual Membership (\$30), Senior Annual Membership (\$15), Life Membership (\$250) and Corporate Sponsor Annual (\$75).

We are reaching out today to challenge everyone to think of one person, business or family you might ask to join us. We are also challenging our regular membership if it fits their budget and giving goals if they might consider becoming Life Members. If you are unsure what membership you currently have, please contact the Society at 231-873-2600 or info@oceanahistory.org

So many exciting things are happening at the "Society" all the time! Interesting discoveries are made, new people join, people generously donate their time, treasure and talents and as a result our Oceana County history is preserved. Soon, we hope to have an Annual Membership Report on our website, so members can see what the society has been doing.

As funds allow we are keeping the everyday operations going while working to add new features and installations. Therefore we are challenging each of you, if you haven't renewed, please do so today. If you are not already Life Members please consider making your membership permanent. If you are so inclined and able, we would gratefully accept any donations over and above your regular membership (Regular, Senior, Family, Life, Corporate), and forward this information to others who may be interested in joining!

Our organization's finances are holding, and we intend to keep our mission going long into the future. We are simply reminding you we are here, and this is truly an organization worth supporting.

Members receive our email newsletter with news and updates. We are working to bring more benefits to Members, but even that takes more members. Please consider renewing today!

**THE OCEANA COUNTY HISTORICAL
& GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

See page 7 for Membership information.

NEW VERTICAL FILES

Board member, Brad Moul, purchased, delivered, and installed new vertical file cabinets for the Chadwick/Munger House, where volunteer, Nancy Rakosky spends her Wednesdays, clipping and organizing news items into folders for those who are interested in researching.

Thank you, Brad, for this wonderful contribution! These are beautiful!



ANSWER: [Question on page 2]

Barns are usually painted red because it's the most popular color of farmers? Because barns absorb the sun's heat and thus keep cattle warmer in the winter? Is it because cows are color blind but can see red and thus always find their way home? Nope to all three. Back in the "old days" when manufactured paint was expensive and often hard to find, paint was made at home. And red paint was the easiest and cheapest to make. You filled a large drum with buttermilk, tossed in a few iron scraps, and then waited a few weeks until the iron rusted and turned the buttermilk red. Today, buttermilk paint has given way to a synthetic iron oxide pigment —still very economical and one of the most durable pigments known.

Oceana County Historical & Genealogical Society

MEMBERSHIP FORM

____ New Member ____ Renewal

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

SEASONAL ADDRESS IF APPLICABLE AND DATES USED:

MEMBERSHIP DUES:

____ ANNUAL: \$20

____ SENIOR: \$15

____ FAMILY: \$30

____ LIFE: \$250

____ CORPORATE/ ORGANIZA-
(ANNUALLY) TION: \$75

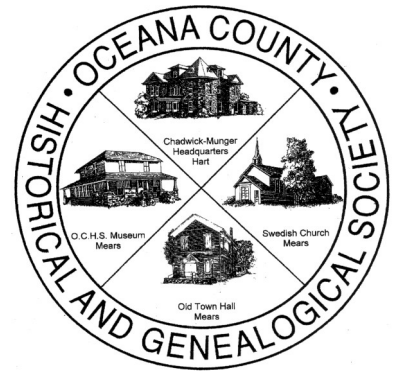
PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: OCHGS

OCHGS

114 DRYDEN ST

HART, MI 49420

NEWSLETTER WILL BE MAILED ELECTRONICALLY UNLESS



MEMBERSHIP

We appreciate your membership!
It helps to support this
completely volunteer, non-profit organization.

DUE: JULY 1, 2025





From Our
Volunteers & Board
We Wish Our Members
A Very Happy Holiday Season!
We appreciate your membership
and your support!





'Special thank you' is ripe in the Land of Mears

By Mort Wiegand
Oceana County Historical
& Genealogical Society

Thank you to all who were in the Golden Fair parade last Friday, Oct. 3. Entries included: the military, the police, the fire department, golf carts, cars and trucks, tractors big and small, a Mac Woods dune scooter, the Hart High School marching band and the Spitler Elementary fourth graders. And thank you to the Golden Eatery for their hamburger and coffee special.

Congratulations to 2025 King Theodore Smith and Queen Olivia Mitchell.

And to all the folks who came out and cheered them on. It was a perfect day!

If you didn't get your copy of the October 2025 Mears News, extra copies are available at the two restaurants in Mears. Enjoy!



THE MEARS NEWZ

The Smallest Newspaper in the World

Founded in 1914 Mears, Michigan October 3, 2025

SPECIAL EDITION FIFTY CENTS A YEAR

"GOLDEN HARVEST" is ripe in the land of Mears

Summer is gone and Fall is in full swing — cooler days and nights are here. Peaches, pears, and plums are gone, and apples and peaches are busy filling boxes and you have many varieties to pick from for pies. Cookies and muffins are on the menu.

Another Golden Fair — October 3rd — is being planned, complete with a parade, the Hart band, and lunch at Golden Eatery. Enjoy a \$2.50 hamburger and 75-cent coffee on the menu!

The 4th graders from Hart School are planning to be in the parade, along with the Hart band. Starting at the Golden Eatery, going west through town, the kids will pass out the current "Mears Newz". Get your copy!

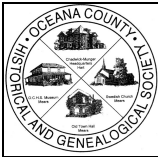
The 2025 King and Queen
from the 4th grade class are

KING: Theodore Smith
QUEEN: Olivia Mitchell



GOLDEN HARVEST Is ripe in the Land of Mears

The Golden Fair has been celebrated in Mears, Michigan for many years, creating a lot of memories.



OCHGS
114 DRYDEN STREET
HART MI 49420

METHOD OF DELIVERY/MAILINGS

If you wish to receive your newsletter electronically, please let us know by contacting us at
info@oceanahistory.org

By receiving the newsletter electronically, you will receive it more quickly, and the images will be clearer.

Those of you who wish to continue receiving the newsletter as a hard copy
will still be receiving your letter in the mail as usual.

Take care! Be safe!

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please notify us if you have a change of address.

Some members' newsletters have been returned to the Society.

If you are not receiving the newsletter, please contact us!

info@oceanahistory.org