



Gardner House drawing  
by Maggie LaNoue

# ALBION HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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## Holidays are Here!

We just celebrated Thanksgiving not too long ago. And the message of the holiday extends to all of the upcoming celebrations in the next few months. Thanksgiving is so much more than parades, turkey, family and friends. The holiday is a part of American history and has left a legacy of reminding us to be grateful for what we have in our lives. Many versions of the first Thanksgiving are told, but the underlying message seems to be "we need each other". We need each other's talents and resources. We need to keep our stories, our lessons learned, our heritage not just preserved, but alive in the hearts and minds of the next generation.

With your gifts of time, financial support, and knowledge, in 2014 the Albion Historical Society has not only kept up the Gardner House Museum with necessary repairs to the building, but has hosted programs and events at the museum and at other sites in the community.

Thank you for helping us keep our area's heritage not just with words on a paper, but spoken, sung, and read to our family, neighbors and visitors. With your Albion Historical Society membership, people can come to Albion and experience our history and become enthusiastic of our future through our museum and the society's programs. Your contributions to the Albion Historical Society made the difference for this year and your continued support will make the difference throughout the holidays and for the years to come!

## Speaking of Thank You...

Although Andy Zblewski is still serving on the Albion Historical Society as Vice-president of the board this term, we want to thank him for his many years of service as Albion Historical Society Board President. Andy has had a willing heart of service-whether it has been raking leaves at the Gardner House to arranging for repairs to the building to archiving to being a tour guide to supporting innovative programs. We thank him for his leadership, encouragement, and sharing his knowledge of Albion's history.

Join us in welcoming our new Albion Historical Society President and new or returning board members. Read on to see what programs your support made happen this year!

Carolyn Face Gilg, President; Andy Zblewski, Vice-President; Celeste Connamacher, returning board member & Secretary; Jennifer Wood, new board member; Barb McAuliffe, renewing board member; Maurice Barnes, new board member; Kathie Dekker, new board member; Denise Porter, renewing board member.

Thank you for being willing to serve!

## What's Coming Up!

January 6, 2015

### Twelfth Night Fun!

Start your 2015 with Twelfth Night merriment presented by the Albion Historical Society at the Gardner House Museum.

Decorations are put up on December 6th by volunteers in the morning from 10:00AM till Noon. If you missed decorating this year, you can always circle the calendar for the first Saturday in December for next year.

There are two days to enjoy the handiwork of our volunteers. Visit the Gardner House on Tuesday, January 6th from 6 pm to 8pm in the evening on the traditional Twelfth Night or visit the following Saturday afternoon on January 10th from 2-4pm.

Tours, delicious snacks, and lovely Christmas music are always at the heart of the Twelfth Night celebrations.

## What We've Done!

December 7<sup>th</sup>

### Gardner House Museum Commemorates Pearl Harbor Day

Thanks to board member Bill Blomquist for arranging an open house at the Gardner House Museum that honored the 73rd anniversary of national Pearl Harbor Day. A 1945 recording of Albion veteran Victor Vaughn interviewing returning servicemen before they left England for the U.S. was made available to guests visiting the museum on Pearl Harbor Day between 2 and 4pm.

### Upcoming Events-MI

Dec. 13 & 14 Historic Charlton Park's turn-of-the-century village is the setting for **Of Christmas Past!** Come out and enjoy the sights, sounds, tastes and activities of the late 1800's; from noon to 5:00 p.m., you are invited to tour the village & enjoy Christmas at Historic Charlton Park. ([www.charltonpark.org](http://www.charltonpark.org))

December 14, tours 1 to 4 pm

December 26 and 27, tours 5 to 8 pm

December 28, tours 1 to 4 pm-

Lakeshore Museum Center, Muskegon

This year at the Hume house we are interpreting 1920s Christmas. We know that 19 people called the Hume House home during one point in the 1920s. Can you imagine going through the holiday season living with so many people? ([lakeshoremuseum.org](http://lakeshoremuseum.org))

## Grateful to Have Served, Board Member Debra Hadfield!

By Sylvia Benavidez

Debra Hadfield is a Michigan native, but being new to the area several years ago, she found working for the Albion Historical Society a fun way to get to know her community and its history. Hadfield started on what was then known as the brainstorming committee. In 2012 she served as Vice-president and in 2013 worked as the board secretary. During her time of service on the board, she helped with events, worked on the manual for new members, and contributed her efforts to encouraging new membership to the Albion Historical Society.

Although personal reasons require her to step down from the board, Hadfield says, "I definitely will be involved when I can." Her pursuit of a Doctorate in Nursing Practice limits her time, but not her enthusiasm to promote the membership and programs of the Albion Historical Society.

Hadfield encourages others to support the new board by being active on committees and to step up and serve on the board when board openings present themselves. She says, "In addition to having a voice in your community there are personal benefits to being on the Albion Historical Society Boards. I gained personal friendships, met interesting people that I might otherwise not have met, and been a part of community events in a way I could not have been had I not been a part of the group."

**Fun facts:** You may have met Debra's husband Derek while he was working at Hadfields' Watch Repair or shopped at antique store in Albion, but did you know that she grew up on a Christmas tree farm in Cass County? Their family raised buffalo, too, in Cass County.

## Restoration of the Bohm Theatre

By Denise Porter



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Historic Bohm Theater in October getting final touches before opening.

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Earlier in the year (June meeting), the board of the AHS voted to donate to the "Lights, Camera, Action: Name a Seat Campaign". With a donation of \$500, the society sponsored one seat. Each seat sponsored through this campaign will have a personalization plaque in the arm rest. Our seat will say "Albion Historical Society".

The board felt it important to help support the preservation and restoration of our 85 year old theater. It is one place in Albion that has helped people make memories for generations.

This is one of many fundraising campaigns the Friends of the Bohm Theatre, a non-profit group, has run. The group, in partnership with Albion Community Foundation, has almost completed the multi-million dollar restoration. They have returned

the silver screen to Albion! New custom seats and carpeting compliment the decorative paint that has been done. A historic paint analysis was performed that composed the pallet for the theater and the placement of the original stenciling. Maybe you have noticed the upper portion of the marquee has been restored. The lower portion is set to be done within the next few weeks.

The theatre is now open for movies. The space lends itself beautifully to other events, such as lectures and concerts. It is also available to rent for private screenings, parties, meetings, group training, the opportunities are endless. Watch for a gala celebration to come in December when the Friends of the Bohm Theatre will celebrate the 85th anniversary of the opening on Christmas Day 1929.

Visit the website at [www.bohmtheatre.org](http://www.bohmtheatre.org) for more information. You can also like them on Facebook. Look for the "Friends of the Bohm Theatre". Be sure to look at the photos...they are simply amazing! If you would like to support the restoration of the theatre, donations can be sent, and should be made out to. "Friends of the Bohm Theatre, PO Box 444, Albion, MI 49224"

## Moving Forward: Local History Room (LHR)

By Jennifer Wood

### Donating Records

Do you or someone you know belong to an Albion voluntary association? Local organizations (fraternal, cultural, ethnic, social, or social-service) have played significant roles in the lives of Albion citizens from the 1830s to the present day, and their records tell important stories about our values, our interests, and what we sought to accomplish. Please consider donating any organizational records no longer being used on a regular basis by your membership to the Local History Room so that they can be preserved for future generations. Local History Archivist Jennifer Wood can be reached at (517) 629-3993, ext. 210.

### Community History Meeting

Interested in uncovering Albion's history? We are seeking collaborators for a local history project in partnership with the State of Michigan. Join representatives from the Albion District Library, Marshall District Library, Marshall D.A.R., and the Michigan Historical Center as we explore ways to use local resources to uncover the unique story of 19th-century Black communities in Calhoun County.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, January 15th, from 5:30 - 8:30 pm in the Albion District Library's Elsie Munro Room. All are welcome, new faces included.

The Community History branch meeting next month is part of a 3-year, W. K. Kellogg Foundation grant-funded project to implement change, build capacity, and reshape the Michigan Historical Museum's second floor exhibit galleries to better reflect the diversity of Michigan's stories.

Community Historian for the State Michelle S. Johnson, PhD says, "... the project will be significantly shaped by our talented and passionate collaborators as we learn the needs and

— cont.

— *cont. moving forward*

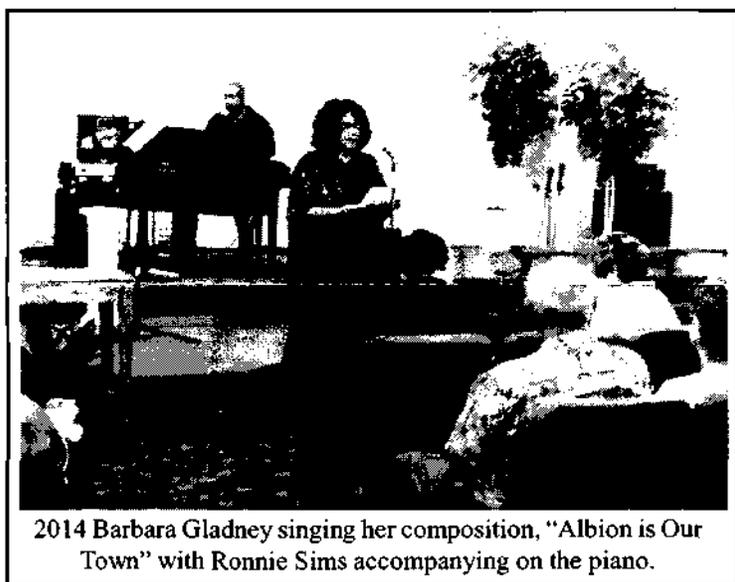
resources of people interested in documenting and highlighting this often untold part of our history.”

Gathering organizers are hoping to meet others attracted to collaborating toward the identification, introduction, or connection of resources and people. Partners like Patty Parker, with Marshall’s Governor’s Mansion Museum, hope to begin locating historical knowledge and/or resources such as stories, documents, artifacts, recordings, photographs, and/or videotapes. “Pulling together these different resources to gather data is exciting,” states Parker, “but the picture this information can paint of our community is priceless and a compelling way to teach history.

“ For more information about the project or the January 15<sup>th</sup> meeting, contact ADL Local History Archivist Jennifer Wood at (517) 629-3993, ext. 210; [history@albionlibrary.org](mailto:history@albionlibrary.org).

Oct. 11, 2014

## New Board Members & Albion’s Music for the Ages



2014 Barbara Gladney singing her composition, “Albion is Our Town” with Ronnie Sims accompanying on the piano.

Once the business of voting in new board directors was accomplished on October 11<sup>th</sup>, toes began tapping at the celebration of Albion’s musical history when the Albion Historical Society presented “Albion’s Music for the Ages” at the Caring Community Wesleyan Church on Irwin Ave.



The first performance of the evening was a musical tribute to the first inhabitants of our area, the Potawatomi. The Welcome drum song was performed by Arthur Zapata and his wife, Mon-ee Zapata, Cultural

Associate in the Cultural & Historic Preservation Office of the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi.

Arranger and Narrator for the program Barb McAuliffe said she read the quote, “Music is what feelings sound like” and immediately noted, “I read the above quote and knew how our program could pull together the people of Albion through music.”

A variety of musical styles and performers gave the audience a taste of the types of music heard and enjoyed throughout Albion’s history. Eleven performances included musical styles of: the Civil War era, Parlor, Country, Irish, Blues, Soul, Hip-Hop, Folk, and Pop. Songs written in Albion were also featured which included “Sweetheart of Sigma Chi”, “Old Rugged Cross”, “Albion is Our Town, Your Town”.

Performers represented all ages and cultures in Albion from Matt Kleinow playing parlor music on his violin to Jeff Thomas sharing Blues and Soul to John Harden singing an

Irish tune to Civil War re-enactors playing instruments and singing songs of that era. And even former members of the Albion-based Goodwill Singers. Ten new memberships were gained that evening and over 200 people attended.

Thanks to Barb McAuliffe for all her work on putting this and all the programs together including the successful Garden party in June that had over 40 vendors and an estimated 450 people in attendance.

## Albion Philanthropic Women Give to the Gardner House Museum

*By Jim Seidl, Treasurer*

The Albion Philanthropic Women donated \$8,950 to the Albion Historical Society for the purchase of storm windows for the Gardner House Museum. Former Historical Society President Andy Zblewski said the Philanthropic Women’s donation enabled the Society to achieve the Albion Community Foundation and Rotary Club of Albion Foundation’s grant requirements that the storm windows be purchased and installed by the end of the year.

The Gardner House was built in 1875 by Albion hardware merchant Augustus P. Gardner, who came to Michigan from New York in 1837. He lived in this Victorian brick house until his death in 1905.

The Albion Historical Society purchased the Gardner House in May 1966 from the City of Albion and turned it into a museum. The Albion Historical Society received an Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History in 1969, and in 1971 the House was placed on the National Register of Historical Places.

The House was restored in 1966. However, weather and time have taken their toll since the last major work was done on it. Over the last six years the Society spent \$75,000 to preserve the house with a new roof, gutters, front porch, attic insulation, and exterior trim paint. \$17,000 was gifts from donors.

Our largest expense each year has been gas and electric. The House still has its 38 original single-pane glass windows, which are now 139 years old. Several of the windows are eight feet tall. The purchase of historic-style wood storm windows will help preserve the windows and maintain the period look of the House.

The Albion Historical Society thanks the Albion Philanthropic Women for their kind generosity and support of our local treasure, The Gardner House Museum.

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*Special Holiday Edition*



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**LHR Volunteer Appreciation**

Thanks to LHR volunteer Bill Blomquist for orienting Albion College students in Dr. Wesley Dick's class to the LHR collections when they visited us on November 17th. Albion College students are always welcome to use the LHR for class assignments, as well as for private research.

**Honoring History**

Please also note, the Albion Historical Society wishes to thank the following for their gift in memory of:

*Floyd and Ruth Dean* sent by Anita Lavengood Cook

*Joseph Romanchuk* sent by Anita Lavengood Cook

*Alice Seidl* sent by Marlene Plassman

*Mary Luedtke Daly* sent by Shirley Claucherty

The memorial fund will be used to further the work of the Society.

**Upcoming Events-Albion**

**Jan 6:** Traditional Twelfth Night celebration, 6pm-8pm

**Jan 10:** Twelfth night celebration continues, 2pm-4pm

**Feb 10:** Board meeting-All Welcome, 7pm

**Reminder**

Your last renewal date will be circled in red if we have not heard from you lately. If the date in the upper left corner of your label is not '13 or '14 we need to know if you wish to continue your support of the Albion Historical Society. If your label says "tr" in the top left corner of the label, you have received this newsletter as a special invitation to join the financial supporters of the Albion Historical Society and the Gardner House Museum.

**Sponsorship Form - Mail to:**

Albion Historical Society  
509 S. Superior St.  
Albion, Michigan 49224

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_

- |                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ___ Regular (\$5)       | ___ Century (\$100)         |
| ___ Supporting (\$10)   | ___ Endowment (\$300+)      |
| ___ Sustaining (\$15)   | ___ Junior (16-) (\$2)      |
| ___ Contributing (\$30) | ___ Senior (65+) (\$3)      |
| ___ Benefactor (\$50)   | ___ Other donation \$ _____ |