

TYRONE GLEANINGS

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MAYNARD'S RAMBLINGS:

How did July get here so fast? Oh well, let's enjoy it because December will be here before you know it. Kent City Days will be here soon also and we have a nice beautiful quilt made by non-other than Nellie Afton. She is such a wonderful 93 year old to be making quilts to be giving away. We are having a raffle so you must get some tickets. You might be the lucky one to win this. Tickets are \$1.00 a piece or 6 for \$5.00. If you win and live too far away to pick it up we will see that you receive it. Can't beat that!

Recently someone asked me why there were so many houses that burned years ago. The houses in those days had wood shingles –usually cedar- and when they became dry they were very susceptible to sparks from wood and coal burning stoves. Remember in 1907 it was sparks from the train that started the fire that leveled Kent City. There were four houses within a mile of my place in the 30's that burned. One was the home of our Historical Secretary, Elsie Harrison. She was a little girl at the time. The house burned in the afternoon. The school house was just a short distance away and the teacher immediately excused the older boys to go help get things out of the house. How different today? Barns also burned but that usually was caused by putting hay in the barn that wasn't properly cured and was caused by spontaneous combustion.

We receive some nice Historical Newsletters from different areas; one of the last ones we received was the Power House Post of Rockford. They had pictures of different schools from 1900, 1931 and 1955. The one I really liked was from 1931: the teacher was standing outdoors with an open book in her hand and a Model A Ford was parked next to the schoolhouse. It reminded me of my 8th grade teacher who also had a Model A and drove each day from Nunica.

I'll leave you with this> Question: How many retirees to change a light bulb?
Answer: Only one, but it might take all day.



**Please mark your 2012 calendar for the next 2 meetings at 1:00pm
remember "NO" meeting in July
August 14th & Sept. 11th**

Be sure to attend our August meeting as we will be getting ready for Kent City Days

As we go to press we learned that Alice Wanamaker of Grant has passed away at the age of 92. Alice has been a member for many years.

We would like to say a big **Thank You** to the following:

Ann Marie Hole – for the nice portrait of her Great-Grandfather, George Barrett, who founded the Ford Garage in Kent City.

The township – for cleaning the carpeting in our room.

Bob Stark and son, Jim – for the paint job and window washing.

Kent City Community Carnival – for the very generous monetary donation

Debra Rottman – for a box of odds & ends

Lynn Lewis – for a stack of old newspapers

Elsie Harrison – for continuing to be our Secretary

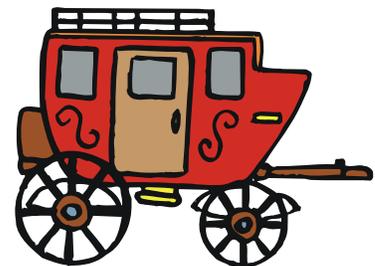
Merry Malfroid – for renewing the membership cards and printing the new labels

On April 2, 2012 we lost one of our most faithful, oldest and longest members – Art Johnson, age 97. He attended our March meeting just three weeks before he passed away. I can hardly remember a meeting that he didn't attend. Right up to the last, his mind was good in remembering places and events in the Kent City area. Art farmed all his life around the Kent City area. He loved the Lord and was very involved in his church and community. Funeral Services were held on April 5th, 11:00 A.M. at the Kent City Baptist Church with internment in Idlewild Cemetery.

The following article is Maynard's experience with the runaway stagecoach-

Mr. John Bowen who built and owned the Kent City Hotel also owned the farm across the road from us. It was a real showplace; with a nice house and many out-buildings all painted red and white. He also raised registered Holstein cattle and kept many beautiful horses. I especially remember a pair of dappled greys that he owned. After he passed away everything went into an estate trust and one thing that was left was a terrific stagecoach. It had brass lamps and the inside was beautifully upholstered. It even had rubber wheels. A piece of rubber was molded around each wheel which was to give it a smoother and quieter ride. It was truly the Mercedes of its day. It was stored in the machine shed.

In the early 1930's the Shirk family came to the farm. I think it was about 1934 on a nice summer Sunday afternoon, Mr. and Mrs. Shirk took their two daughters, Iris & Elsie and little son, Bobby away for the afternoon. The older Shirk boys, Maurice, Royce and Cloyd, along with a neighbor boy, Maurice Stafford decided it would be great sport to wheel the stagecoach out and hitch up the old farm horses- Ned & Molly- and go for a ride. With two sitting up front driving and two standing on a small platform -sort of like a running board on the back- they took off. They picked me up and I being much younger had to sit inside. I was the only passenger. The horses were much too big to be hitched to the Stagecoach and their hind legs kept hitting the tugs. We went down the road and turned around and everything was fine until an old car came up in back of us and honked its horn and the horses ran away, they hadn't gone far when the rubber strip on the right front wheel came loose and each time the wheel came around it slapped Molly on the rump, so the faster they ran the faster the horses got slapped. There was no way the boys could hold them. The horses ran off the road and headed for a tree. My brother, Kenneth, who was always a good horseman and of course real young and agile, had been watching. He ran out and in true Hollywood style grabbed one of the horse's bridles and was able to bring them to a stop. A real accident was averted. I can tell you there were three pretty somber Shirk boys. They were going to try to put things back to normal the best way they could so their dad wouldn't find out.



CHRIS THOMAS' RESTAURANT

There was a little Restaurant on the north side of Waterloo Street east of Main Street (Kenowa Ave) in Casnovia, Michigan. This building was purchased by Chris Thomas from Lula Reed in 1927. A lady by the name of Marjorie VanBelzen went to work for him. Ten years later they were married. They never had any children.

Myrtle Lillie made all of the pies from scratch, which were served fresh each day. Chris' Restaurant was a very popular "hang-out" for the young people especially after sports events in Kent City and Sparta. He always served excellent food and his hamburgs were second to none – the best of anywhere around.



Chris sold the Restaurant back to Lula Reed in the early 1950's. She didn't keep it very long this time because she had a new husband, Joe (no last name) who wouldn't help her and it was too much for her. She sold the Restaurant to the Willett family from Chicago – Joe and Maxine and two girls, Linda and Fredda. They didn't keep the Restaurant many years because they felt they weren't making any money.

Chris lived most of his adult life in Casnovia. He died in 1962. He was born in 1900. He is buried in South Casnovia Cemetery.

"I'll stand by it!"

"I'll stand by tobacco . . . in good times, in hard times . . . all kind of times . . . it helps a whole lot!"

I grew up with tobacco. And I never got anything but *good* from it! But that goes for every smoker I ever heard about.

"Why, I remember as a boy, way back, how the old folks in the fall used to pick and cure tobacco from a little patch they'd raised, and save out the best for their own smoking.

"They'd certainly appreciate what we get today, though. These Chesterfields now. Fine tobaccos from all over the world, and cured and blended just so; there

isn't anything purer or milder. • Cleanest factories you ever saw, too—everything up to date.

"But what I started out to say was, you can *always* depend on tobacco. No matter how things are going. It means so much to so many people, and costs so little!... Yes, sir—I'll stand up for tobacco as long as I can strike a match!"

"MUSIC THAT SATISFIES"
Mondays and Thursdays, Boswell Sisters.
Tuesdays and Fridays, Alex Gray. Wednesdays and Saturdays, Ruth Etting.
Shilkret's Orchestra, every night except Sunday. Columbia Network.

• NOTE. In the sections where tobacco grows and where people know tobacco, Chesterfield is usually the longest-selling cigarette.

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Retired Kent City Doctor, 72, Dies

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — Austin H. Smith, 72, a retired medical doctor who practiced for 25 years in Kent City, Mich., died here Wednesday morning.

Dr. Smith, a graduate of the University of Nebraska Medical School, had moved here in retirement in 1970. His body has been donated to the University of Colorado Medical school. No services are scheduled.

Prior to opening his practice in Kent City, Dr. Smith was a staff doctor at the Michigan Veteran's Facility in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Survivors include his wife Renee, two daughters, Mrs. Margaret Clough of Sparta Mich. and Mrs. Kathie Sremba of Colorado Springs; a sister, Mrs. Avis Makemson of Leon, Iowa, and a brother Cecil of Loveland, Colo.

Obituary

SMITH—Austin H. Smith, M.D.

aged 72, of 3770 E. Uemtah, Colorado Springs, Colo., formerly of 3 Mile Rd. NE, Grand Rapids, passed away Wednesday, Feb. 28, 1973, in Colorado Springs after a lengthy illness. He is survived by his wife, Renee; two daughters, Mrs. Margaret Clough of Sparta, and Mrs. Kathie Sremba of Colorado Springs; two grandchildren in Sparta; one sister, Mrs. Avis Makemson of Leon, Iowa; one brother, Cecil Smith of Loveland, Colo., and one niece. In keeping with Dr. Smith's wishes, his body was donated to the University of Colorado School of Medicine. In lieu of a memorial service, he wished to be remembered in the hearts of his patients and friends. For further details call Reyers North Valley Funeral Chapel.

This is an interesting article quite appropriate for this time of year.

SOMEBODY SWIPED LAFAYETTE'S WATCH

His real name was Marie Joseph Paul Yves Gilbert du Motier . . . but he became the American Revolutionary War hero – the Marquis de Lafayette.

A French nobleman, Lafayette bought a ship and sailed from France in 1777 to America where he offered his military services to Gen. George Washington in the fight for freedom. He was made a major general (without pay) and joined Washington's military staff. Lafayette was a better than good soldier. His military tactics helped win the war.

He returned home with high honors . . . and took part in the French Revolution. Lafayette didn't do so well back home. He fell out of favor, and lost much of his popularity. He lost his fortune and he eventually fled to Austria where he was imprisoned. He was rescued and given his freedom by Napoleon.



He returned to France, and served for many years in the Chamber of Deputies. He was always a controversial figure . . . and had as many enemies as he had friends.

In 1824, Lafayette visited the United States as a special guest of the government. He stayed at the White House . . . and made a triumphant tour of the young nation. He was hailed everywhere by cheering Americans. However, during Lafayette's visit to Nashville, Tennessee during the tour, some wily American pickpocket stole his watch. Lafayette almost cried. It wasn't an ordinary watch – it was the watch George Washington had given him as a reward for his military services during the Revolutionary War. Government officials were apologetic. But they couldn't find Lafayette's stolen

watch.

It turned up – 50 years later in 1874 – in a Louisville, Kentucky pawnshop. It was redeemed with \$300 appropriated by Congress and sent to Lafayette's grandson. Lafayette died in 1834. He was buried in Paris . . . Over his grave was placed a mound of dirt from Bunker Hill. Lafayette – a Frenchman – was one of our greatest Americans!

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After hiring a young man, his employer gave him a broom. "Your first job", he said, "will be to sweep out the office."

"But", the new employee protested, "I'm a college graduate!"

"Very well," replied the boss. "Hand me the broom and I'll show you how."