

"If Only The Walls Could Talk"

George Black: "A Peddling Troubadour"

Sunday morning, February 1, 1925, at about nine-thirty a.m. a fire alarm was given. In short time, the fire department was on the scene along with other townspeople. Assistance came from Caseville and Elkton as soon as the people of those towns heard of the fire. Even with all that help, the rapid advance of the flames and the dense bellowing smoke made it impossible to save any of the stock.

By Sunday afternoon the building and its contents was no more than a heap of smoldering ruins.

Black's Store was completely destroyed by fire.

GEORGE BLACK

The year is now about 1882. A young George Black was making his first sale. "Yes mam, I have a fine assortment of jewelry right here." No one knows for sure how old George was as he pulled his homemade

"eggrate wagon wherever he went.

In the layer of cardboard he would put his \$2.00 investment of jewelry and other small items. If the buyer didn't have the money for such non-essential items, George would trade for some eggs and sell them for his

profit.

As this little enterprise grew, he purchase an accordion, a horse and buggy and became known as a "Peddling Troubadour."

How could you not buy from this short, chubby young lad who would serenade his prospective customers?

Little is known about when George came to Huron County.

Born December 18, 1869 in Canada, he moved to Lapeer County with his parents at age three. By age 17, he opened his first store in Souletown and in 1897 (at age 19) he moved his store to Berne.

George only had two years of formal schooling but frequently told his friends, "My principal interest always has been business."

He was the kind of man who could find a market for nearly anything. In the 11 years his store was in Berne, he became known throughout the state.

George Black had a national reputation as a merchandiser with an exceptional genius for finding markets for goods which other merchants declare unsellable.

It was once said, "He was the kind of a man who could find a market for bustles and hoop skirts today if he could buy them at the right price."



George V. Black

HUGE LOSSES

The loss on the inventory alone ran over \$150,000. Add another \$40,000 or more for the building and fixtures. We are told it was insured for \$100,000. The loss was a severe one for George Black. His annual sales were over \$300,000 when disaster struck. An onlooker shouts from the crowd, "Mr. Black, what are you going to do now?" Black's response was, "I still have a kick and I'm a long ways from being licked."

At 5-foot 2-inches tall and weighing 125 lbs.,

See "BLACK" on page 3



Shoppers and store clerks inside Black's Store in Pigeon.

PIGEON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 523 • Pigeon, Michigan 48755
 989-453-3242

Denny Esch, President
 Clayton Esch, Vice President
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Regular Meetings:

Second Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

Board Meetings

Fourth Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

Meeting Location

Wolke Historical Research Center.

Which was it: Happy's or Harry's Tavern?

In the last edition of The Recorder, I wrote about "Happy's Tavern" that once stood beside the former Heckman Barber Shop. Some readers were concerned that I had my facts wrong. They were sure I meant to say "Harry's Tavern."

In many ways, the complete history of that building is a mystery to me. I know it was built in the early 1900's as the town was growing. It appears to have always been a gathering place.

A couple of pool tables up front near the windows, a poker

table in the back corner and of course, the highly polished mahogany bar with a brass footrail.

Coffee in the morning and barley pop by noon on a hot summer day.

The name of the business has changed more times than anyone can recall.

From the Pigeon Diamond Jubilee Book: Arnie Heckman returned to Pigeon where he was employed by Klondike Winters who had his barber shop in the front of the bar then owned by Ron Piklor.

Arnie purchased the barber shop (within the bar) from Winters' wife after Klondike died.

Along with his brother Raymond, they operated the bar called Happy's Tavern until when Raymond was called into service in late 1943.

Arnie then moved his barber shop next door and they sold the bar to Harry Haist in early 1944. At that time, "Harry's Tavern" was born.

--Denny Esch

Looking back at the Pigeon Business Community

About the only thing not available for purchase in Pigeon during its formative years was the Brooklyn Bridge. There were many small shops and a couple two-story department stores. Black's Store was three-story. The stores were well stocked with all kinds of merchandise. There was much competition among the business men and women, but all were very supportive in promoting the town. The first stores were wooden structures and often two businesses were in the same building. Businesses moved often, always trying to improve their quarters and location. Several fires destroyed many of the first buildings, but they were replaced with brick or block buildings.

E.F. Hess advertised "The Finest Line of Clothing" in 1897. Louis Staubus sold wheels (bicycles) for \$24.00 and also carried a full line of boots, shoes and furs. G.C. Heineman advertised a bed with springs and mattress, pillows, curtains and shades, 3 chairs, a table, 1 rocker and a stove - all for \$20.00. He also sold baby caps, hammocks, sewing machines, caskets and burial cases. Every dealer's merchandise was very diversified.

In 1898 Hirschberg's sold clothing for the whole family, tinware, crockery, rugs, furniture and hundreds of other items. The "Big Store" had wires throughout that carried cash in small cars to the central cashier from each clerk's counter. Along with a full line of hardware, Leipprandt Bros. were in the farm machinery business.

In 1900, there were three millinery shops. H.H. Gould had a line of McCormick farm implements, and annually staged "McCormick Day" when hundreds of pieces of machinery were delivered to farmers and paraded through town. Wm. Heasty sold the "Maud S" windmill, pumps and tanks. John Link advertised gasoline stoves from \$3.85 to \$18.00 that were guaranteed to be "absolutely free from danger of explosion." A two-row sugar beet cultivator from Wallace & Orr cost \$14.50. In John McLean's general hardware store, eavestroughs, as

well as tin and steel roofing was available. H.H. Gould was manufacturing and selling buggies, surreys, runabouts and spring wagons in

were set aside for ladies. Shampoos and massages were available on those days.

And then there were automobiles.



Pigeon's Main Street was a thriving hub of business activity for the residents and guests of the Village as shown in this photo, circa 1960.

1904. Campbell and Paul advertised Champion binders, mowers, hay rakes, along with pianos and organs. E. Paul had Star, King, VanDyke and Kody pianos for sale. He listed his customers in the weekly newspaper and carted pianos from house to house trying to sell them. Doecker Bros. also sold pianos and organs. In all, there were more than fifteen makes of pianos available from Pigeon merchants.

E.W.E. Bundsho sold sporting equipment including rifles, shotguns, ammunition and hunting clothes. A Hopkins & Allen double barrel shotgun could be purchased for \$15.00. His line of Stevens rifles included The Little Scout, The Maynard Jr., The Crack Shot, The Favorite and The Visible Loader. Fred Clabuesch was one of several harness makers that did business in Pigeon in the days when "Prince" and "Jack" had to be fitted for farm work. He was a master craftsman and also sold whips, horse blankets and other accessories. As new products became available, they were quickly added to merchants' stocks.

Service businesses included doctors, dentists, funeral directors, barbers, draymen, blacksmiths, amusement parlors and more. At Geo. H. Anklaam's Bath Room there were tub and shower baths. The business was open every day, including Sundays until noon. Tuesdays and Thursdays

Among those offered by over thirty car dealers during Pigeon's first century were the following makes: Brush, Buick, Bush, Cadillac, Chevrolet, Chrysler, DeSoto, Dort, Dodge, Elgin, EMF, Essex, Flanders, Ford, Fraser, Henry J.,

Hudson, Hupmobile, Jeep, Kaiser, Knox, Krit, LaSalle, Lincoln, Mitchell, Nash, Oakland, Oldsmobile, Packard, Plymouth, Pontiac, Regal, Reo, Star, Studebaker, and Terraplane. There may have been others. To service these cars there were gas pumps, at one time or another, at thirteen different locations. Auto owners had a choice of Gulf, Shell, White Rose, Dixie, Texaco, Sunoco, Hi Speed, Standard, Total, Marathon, Sinclair and several other brands. One pump, no longer in the memory of Pigeon's oldest residents but verified in a newspaper account of an accident at that location, was on the sidewalk in front of McLean's Hardware - later Polewach Store. Today we have one car dealer and three gas stations.

Pigeon's retail community began diminishing with the advent of nearby discount stores and large shopping malls.

Today, the primary focus of businesses is service, instead of goods.

Pigeon's Buildings:

15 South Main Street

This downtown building has been a social gathering place, serving food and drinks for many years.

During Pigeon's early days, the building was home to Bert Eddy, a barber; it also housed the local pool hall. In 1913, Eddy opened a lunch room with Ray Tahash working as the chef.

Things went well for these men until Eddy was summoned to the circuit court in Bad Axe for allowing minors to play pool in his establishment.

In 1920, Sol Beck was barbering Eddy's building and in 1922 the business was sold to Art Anderson who was also proprietor of the boat landing at the end of Weale Road.

Mr. Anderson reported one day that twenty-five cents had been stolen from the lunch counter. The same week some young toughs attempted to steal the slot machine from the restaurant but they were apprehended in the act. Yes, crime existed in those days as well.

Dick McBride bought the business in 1932 and the restaurant sold beer imported from Germany. In 1941, McBride installed a bowling alley above the restaurant and a real social spot was now in full swing.

A year later, in 1942, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Hartman bought the business.

Over the years it changed hands many times and the history is not complete. Prior to the current occupants, it was June & Fargo's Tavern, serving some of the best homemade daily lunch specials around.

Edwin and Neal Eichler purchased the building made it the home of the current Main Street Cafe & Bakery. The upstairs bowling alley was removed and became the first home to Thumb Cellular.

Many improvements have been made to the to the restaurant giving it a new front entrance, new lighting, and improved seating, keeping this building one of the main gathering spots in Pigeon.

"BLACK" from page 1

ing more than 200 pounds, he often portrayed himself as "A jolly fat man, as wide as I am tall." His ex-mother-in-law thought of him differently. While he was living in Berne, his wife "left his bed and board." She had him arrested and he had to appear before the court in Bay City.

It seems he opened her letters against her wishes. The letter in question was from his mother-in-law who was causing him his domestic troubles.

Black stated to a Bay City reporter, "My mother-in-law told my wife I looked more like a pig than anything else she could think of."

That was a filing at my being pretty heavy."

Being well-known, he was released on \$200 personal recognizance, to appear at a later time.

SALESMANSHIP

In the early 1900s, they would call it "gimmicks." He used every idea he could find.

George loved contests, giving free gifts and coupons, as well as being huge on advertising.

After he bought the Gould's Buggy Factory in 1914 and moved Black's Store to Pigeon, there seemed to be no limit to George's salesmanship skills.

A merchant in a larger town took the day off and visited George, asking about his success.

George smilingly said, "I offer nothing but real bargains and I advertise in the newspaper in small towns around Pigeon. It is no secret to it - advertising has done it for me."

"BLACK'S MAKES YOUR DOLLARS HAVE MORE CENTS," "FOLLOW THE CROWDS," "DISHES - NO EXTRA CHARGE FOR CRACKS."

"FREE TRAIN FARE" was a huge draw as he would greet the train, pay the fare and take the shoppers to his store.

Black's first mail catalog had a mailing of 1500 boxholders around the Thumb.

During the final few years Black was in business, he had his own newspaper called, "The Live Wire," with a circulation of 10,000 mailed across the state and more.

Salesmen that called on George could never sell him anything at their price for he was a buyer and only bought at his price.

Black traveled constantly - by train - whenever and wherever (mostly back east) to buy surplus merchandise from manufacturers, bank foreclosures and fire-sale products.

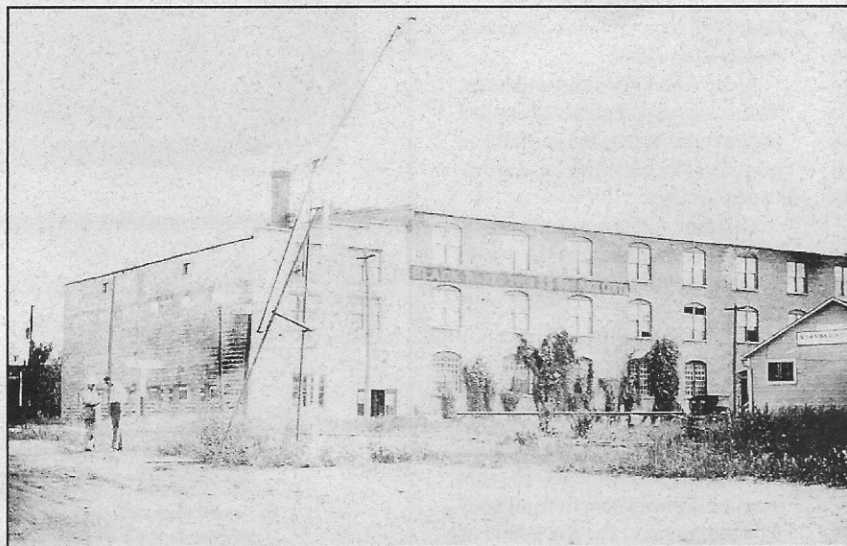
He would make a price offer - take it or leave it.

Black's Store had tools and farm supplies, men and women clothing, kids clothes, boots, hats and gloves, groceries and hardware, pianos and talking machines, books, brooms and shovels, stoves

and graniteware. There was nothing you couldn't buy at Black's Store.

AFTER THE FIRE

Soon after the fire in Pigeon, he opened a store in Colling, but that too burned after little more than a year.



Black's Store the hub of George Black's empire. Notice the advertising slogan "Black makes your \$\$ have more cents" painted on the side of the building. Was Black the Sam Walton of his day and Black's Store the Walmart of the early 1900s?

In October 1926, he built a smaller store in Owendale, (later to be the Automotive Industries building) as he again was establishing his business as "Unique in America."

During the Summer of 1928, George fell ill health died on September 5 at age 59.

His Owendale business was sold to Louis Levinsohn of Bay City and continued for several years.

THE SAM WALTON OF HIS DAY?

I have spent several hours reading the information the Historical Society has about George V. Black and Black's Store.

When Black was a businessman, Pigeon was a

growing town with about 800 people with many fine businesses.

What did the other businessmen think about George Black? Was he the Sam Walton (Walmart's founder) of his day?

He attracted many people to the community, but did they go any farther than Black's store?

The store was a huge building with three stories - nearly 50,000 square feet total.

Boxcar-loads of merchandise would arrive frequently, filling the store. Special trains would come weekly from Saginaw, Port Huron and Pontiac as well as two or three daily passenger trains.

Pigeon had to have hundreds of visitors each week.

The hotels, bars and eating places certainly felt the impact when Black's Store burned.

I can't help but to wonder why didn't George Black build a new store here in Pigeon?

After all, here is where he made his fortune. Here is where two railroads crossed.

Here is where the people came.

Did anyone try to convince George V Black to rebuild in Pigeon?

Or were they glad to see him burned out and leave town? There were, after all other hardwares and dry good stores and places to buy a fancy dresses and hats.

If the Black store wasn't there... maybe they could sell even a little more.

How did the fire(s) start? Why didn't he rebuild here? What did the town merchants really think of George V. Black and Black's Store?

With all these unanswered questions in my mind, I can't help but think... If *Only the Walls Could Talk*.

We'd love to see you on our Team!

An individual or business can become a member by contracting any active member or by sending your tax deductible cash or check to: **Pigeon Historical Society, 59 S. Main St. / P. O. Box 523, Pigeon, MI 48755.** Dues are renewed at the annual meeting each year.

Individual Membership:	\$10.00 (active member with voting privileges)
Life Membership:	\$120.00 (active voting member with lifetime privileges)
Supporting Membership:	\$15.00 (nonactive supporting member)
Business Membership:	\$20.00 or more (contributing member nonvoting)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Everyone is welcome to attend our meetings. Be our guest and become a member!

No. 4

A kid growing up on Saginaw Bay **RESCUE!**

Part 3 in a series,
by Jim Leinbach

As a result of a violent summer storm, our young fisherman's boat had sunk beyond Maisou Island in Saginaw Bay. The boy was thrown into the depths of the bay without a life jacket and was fighting for his life as the waves pounded him first up to the surface, then down in the currents.

He was finally tossed into the rushes of the Middle Grounds, but his salvation was still a long ways away.

Night was falling and our boy was floundering among the cattails and rushes, unable to secure footing in the tangle and vastness of the Middle Grounds. Waves, wind, and currents continued to heave him forward several feet where he could actually touch bottom, then, just as abruptly, pull him into a deep hole where he could only grasp the stalks of the cattails to keep going under.

At times he found he could almost stand on the sandy bottom and a false sense of safety would flood his mind only to be dashed by another roller that would pitch his head under water and the terror would begin again.

The wind screamed over the area and with the gathering darkness the kid was at a total loss as to what direction he should go. His body was growing numb with cold and his arms and legs were cramped and weakening.

Through chattering teeth he prayed to God for deliverance and the safety of solid land, but the Lord had decided that more dues were to be paid before his horrible ordeal would end.

At one point the boy found a huge matted stack of broken cattails, driftwood, and logs.

Now unable to touch bottom, the floating pile seemed like a saving refuge and with the greatest of effort he pulled himself up onto the mountain of flotsam. Thinking that safety was finally at hand, he stood and balanced himself on the swirling pile and took a breath of fresh, waterless air.

"Oh thank God," the boy thought. Ad just as quickly as his mental gratitude entered his mind he took a step and plunged violently through the stack and down into the water

again, slamming his chin on a log as he descended.

This time he found he could not surface and realized he was trapped under the logs and mat of broken weeds and rushes.

Panic filled his mind and body. With what was left of his adrenaline and strength he reached up, grabbed on and wildly butted his head up between the logs.

His chin and jaw ached and the logs slamming about in the driven waves blasted his head and arms like a living vise.

With a superhuman effort the boy jammed himself in between two thrashing logs and pulled himself astride the largest one.

His legs and hands now took the brunt of the punishment -- the skin was literally being torn from his body as he hung on to the log island as tight as a cowboy on a bucking bronco.

In his position atop the log, the kid could at least breathe more easily and the terror of drowning was lessening slightly.

Night was fully upon him now and the blackened sky held no light whatsoever.

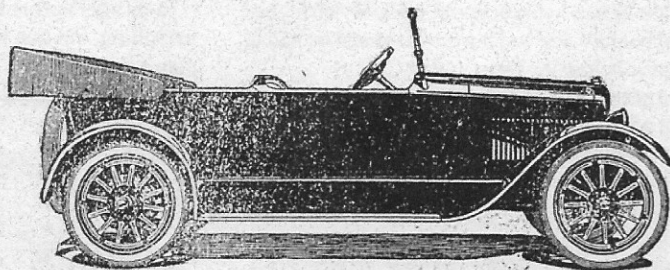
The boy might as well have been trapped in a dark, floating closet, tossed about by the waves and wind and driven deeper into the bowels of the Middle Ground.

Minutes seemed like hours and every now and then the boy would

See "RESCUE" on page 5

Times Have Changed!

From the pages of the Progress-Advance, January 16, 1920



The Better Car

World's Champion Light Six

—the good things folks are hearing—
thinking—saying, about it.

Every Elgin owner knows that all we have ever said about the Elgin is true.

Many Elgin owners have told us that *they* feel we haven't said enough good things about it.

We know of no Elgin owner who has ever been deceived by the good things *most anybody* may have said about it.

By just looking at an Elgin you can imagine why so many good things are constantly being said about it.

By riding in an Elgin you can understand why so many people are saying those good things.

But, only by owning an Elgin and driving it continuously, regardless of the weather or roads, can you fully appreciate what it really is—how creditably it has earned its fitting title.

\$1485
f.o.b. Factory

Elgin Six

ELGIN MOTOR CAR CORPORATION

ARGO, ILLINOIS

ANKLAM & ANKLAM

Agents and Distributors for Huron County
PIGEON, MICHIGAN

Still have some excellent territory for development in the eastern part of the county. Dealers who appreciate the unique selling quality and prestige of the ELGIN SIX should write concerning territory.

Draining land was backbreaking work

Have you ever wonder why our area has so many ditches? They're everywhere! Few road in the county are without a ditch.

Drive around our state you'll notice the majority of the land has few ditches compared to this area.

We all know that our land is really flat and if we're going to construct roads, homes and railroads we need to drain the water so we're not sitting in it every Spring or with every rainfall.

Huge dredgers, backhoes and tile machines continue the process of funneling water from the land.

Currently, the Pigeon River is seeing a cleaning-up process so flooding will be reduced.

The settlers who came here accomplished this monumental task.

History tells us the area's settlers drained the land by hand.

That means they grabbed their shovels and began digging.

Can you imagine the work involved in draining the

water off a forty acre parcel by digging ditches by hand?

And draining ditches were probably not in a straight line either, because the settlers had to dodge huge stumps and chop roots to make the water flow off.

Acres and acres had to be attacked. The mosquitos and flies certainly made this effort even more unenjoyable.

It is amazing that it was accomplished.

Today we get blisters just using the weed whacker and painful wrists from typing on the computer.

Things have changed for sure.

Woelke Center Winter Hours

The Woelke Research Center will be open by appointment for the next couple of months. If anyone is interested in visiting the center, or would like to donate an item to the Depot Museum, please call Vice President Clayton Esch at 989-453-2143.

From the Artifact Collection



COOK STOVE

Engman-Mathews Range Company was a retailer in cook stoves which, at that time, was a huge investment since they were promised to last for years. The company thought it a good use of their time to advertise the product by traveling salesman that demonstrated the product (cooking food) to the public. The company was patented on August 31, 1915 in their native Goshen, Indiana.

"RESCUE" from page 4

attempt to raise his head off the log and strain to see signs of trees, land, or light to no avail.

His body was shaken constantly with shivering spasms and his bones felt as heavy as lead.

Every few seconds the waves would toss the log and its passenger against another floating log and with each of these beatings the boy was certain he could hang on no longer.

But hang on he did, though the pain and terror were a living nightmare.

The boy's absence from home did not go unnoticed by his Mother.

His mother had heard the tornado and severe thunderstorm warnings on the radio from the safety of their home in Pigeon, knowing that her son had ridden his bike out to Weale to go fishing on the Middle Grounds.

She knew he would have obtained a boat from Anderson and rowed out into Dynamite Cut.

Her agony would have been multiplied many fold if she had known he had ventured into the bay and out past the islands in the little boat and was now fighting for his very life.

As the storm began sweeping across the entire county, uprooting trees and sending branches and limbs crashing down, his mother frantically called the police, sobbing out the predicament her son was probably in.

Uncles, brothers, and friends were called and they all started out at high speed down Weale Road toward the landing.

Downed trees, broken limbs and huge flooded puddles halted their progress at several intervals as the rescuers traversed Weale Road west of the highway which was then just an unimproved passageway.

Giant Box Elders and Willows were downed

in their path and it was precious hours getting the rescue party all the way to Anderson's.

By eleven o'clock that night, the first car careened into the muddy parking lot horn blasting, the headlights outlining Anderson's shack.

More people arrived and the men exited their vehicles with flashlights and lanterns and raced about looking for Anderson.

They were not aware that he had launched his own boat hours ago in an attempt to find the lost boy and was at this moment straining his oars in the blackness with but only a kerosene lantern to light his way.

The wind screamed across the marsh and the willows on shore whipped and swayed in the eerie light of the flashlights.

The men raced to the remaining boats that were tied to the dock. Some bailed out flooded boats as others grabbed the oars and launched out into the night.

Our lost soul was oblivious to all this activity as he clung to his lifesaving log.

He felt himself horribly and lastingly alone and abandoned. He was extremely weak and shaking so terribly that he thought he might shake himself off the log and, if that happened, he knew he could not go on any longer.

In the enveloping blackness, the boy raised his exhausted head and said what he thought might be his final prayer; asking God to comfort his mother, sisters, and aunts and uncles at their loss, and to please let him enter the gates of heaven with Jesus.

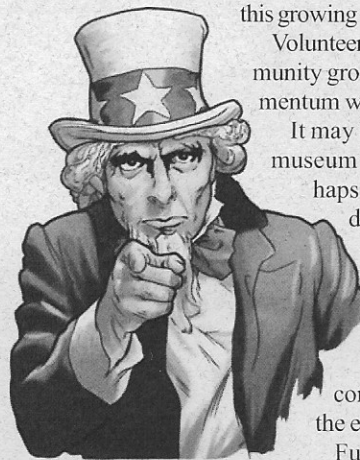
He had done a dumb thing going out onto the bay beyond the islands and he begged his Creator to not hold that against him.

He told God that he had been basically a good kid - even though he had been mischievous with

Volunteers Needed!

We Need Your Help

Throughout the year, and especially during the summer months, the Pigeon Historical Society is in need of volunteers to help with the many projects of this growing organization



Volunteers are the key to the successes of any community group and you can help us keep up the momentum we've experienced in the past few years.

It may be spending a few hours attending the museum so it can be open to the public or perhaps entering information into our archive database.

Maybe you could help distribute our newsletter around the community or research historical information for our website and Facebook page.

Brainstorming ideas and sharing your comments or suggestions are important to the entire group.

Fund-raising is always a major need and assistance with ideas and workers for various events would be welcomed.

Don't think that you don't have anything to contribute, because you do -- We Need Your Help!

If you'd like to volunteer, just come to one of our meetings on the second or fourth Mondays of the month at the Woelke Historical Research Center (behind the Village Hall); or call Vice-President Clayton Esch at 989-453-2143.

his BB gun and slingshot and sometimes he had done mean things to his sisters.

Again he pleaded to have those errors erased from the book.

As he prayed, an enormous wave lifted up the log and sent it crashing through the cattails and out into an open, windier location. He was out of the rushes at last.

Righting himself on his spinning craft, the boy looked up and saw what he thought was a dim light far in the distance. He blinked and saw it again.

Yes, it was a light.

For a moment, the boy's eyes grew large and his sore jaw dropped open. He realized it truly was a light of some sort and for a second he thought he had made it to land.

It was, In fact, Mr. Anderson coming down the cut, straining against the wind and hollering at the top of his lungs.

He had his back to the boy as he rowed and suddenly he slammed up against something while at the same time he heard a yell quite close to him.

Turning around he saw in the dim light of his lantern a totally white form astride what appeared to be a log.

The wind and current swirled the two apart, but not before Anderson could grab the arm of the kid who was floating past him.

With the log banging into the side of his boat, he tossed the kid onto the soggy, sloshing bottom of his craft.

Then, without questions or answers, he whipped his boat around and rowed crazily east down the cut back toward the landing and safety.

The ordeal was over.

And, we hope, a lesson learned.



Here's a rare view from the south side of the Pigeon Depot. The train on the right was southbound on the Pontiac Oxford and Northern Railroad (Polly Ann) from Caseville to Detroit. The track crossing east/west were the Pere Marquette (formerly Saginaw, Tuscola & Huron railroad) from Harbor Beach to Saginaw.

RECOLLECTIONS

[ree-kuh-lek-shuh n] noun

1. the act of re-collecting or the state of being re-collected.
2. the act or power of recalling to mind; remembrance.

As the definition above states, recollections are re-collections or remembrances from our memories.

Memories are so precious. They're treasures locked in our heads or perhaps in a diary we kept many, many years ago.

Memories can be triggered by many things: a sound like schoolbell, or a scent such as a distinct perfume.

Photos serve as a record of the past that can cause us to "re-collect" events of our which come flooding into our minds.

Do you have a favorite Recollection?

Perhaps an old postcard or photograph that's been in the family for years? Maybe your great-grandmother's handwritten diary? A special family recipe handed down from generation to generation?

Why not check out that box in the attic for a treasure that will open up your recollections of the past?

Every story told is a valuable part of our community's collective history. It's the foundation of our local life.

Please share your recollection with us by contacting the Pigeon Historical Society by:

•U.S. Mail: Pigeon Historical Society, Box 523, Pigeon, MI 48755

•via email: eschdenny@yahoo.com

•leaving a phone message at 989-453-3242.

We look forward to your Recollections.

WEIRD RECIPES: How to Smoke Carp

We know certain cultures eat carp all the time, but many folks who live near the Great Lakes are spoiled by the taste of the perch and walleye. Many have not tried other fish, especially the lowly carp.

Here's how to smoke carp and fool your friends into thinking it's steelhead or smoked salmon:

1. Gut and scale the carp but don't remove the skin. In some cases, this may require power sander but keep at it and the scales will come off.

2. Fillet the carp and coat both sides with salt, sugar, pepper, and a sprinkling of hot sauce.

3. Wrap fillets tightly in plastic wrap and put them in the fridge overnight.

4. Prepare your smoker using your favorite hardwood chips.

5. Remove plastic wrap from fillets, and let them sit in the fridge for two hours or until they appear slightly glazed, then brush both sides of the fillets with olive oil.

6. Place fillets on smoking racks inside the smoker, cooking for at least six hours. Use a meat thermometer and cook to at least 180 degrees in the thickest part of the fillet. Cook until it's flakey and all the grease has dripped off.

Remove from the smoker and wrap in waxed paper and place in the fridge for at least three days. Serve it cold, telling your friends it's salmon and let them decide for themselves if they rate you a fraud or a real good fish smoker.

This same recipe can be used for sheephead, catfish, gar pike or gobies.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS SOCIETY shall be to discover, collect and preserve any material which may help to establish or illustrate the history of the Pigeon Community and surrounding region, as well as provide accessibility to the collected material for all who wish to examine or study it. The Society will also disseminate historical information to promote interest in the history of the Pigeon Community.