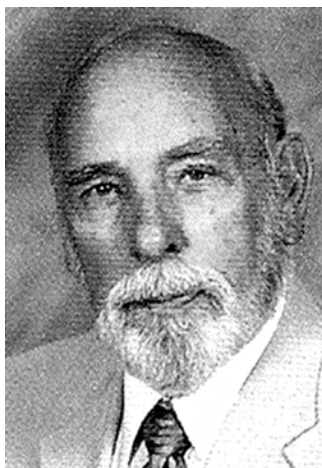


## We Invite You To Visit The Woelke Historical Research Center

The Arthur Woelke Research Center is where you might find your family. The center is a repository of history from Pigeon and the surrounding areas. We offer clippings from newspapers, obituaries, photographs, and recollections from the past.

Art Woelke, born December 4, 1927, was a charter member of the Pigeon Historical Society and served as secretary from 1998 until his death on May 29, 2012.

In 2000 he was honored by the Historical Society of Michigan with an Award of Merit for his extensive collection of local historical documents, photographs, newspaper articles, and artifacts now on display at the Pigeon Historical Museum.



Today our members have continued Art's work by keeping the files updated and making them available to the community.

We invite you to visit the Arthur Woelke Research Center whenever you are looking for information on the history of your family and the community.

*See Woelke on Page 2*

### Pigeon Depot Museum Historical Society

Sunday, July 23

**OPEN HOUSE  
& ICE CREAM SOCIAL**

**At Depot & Farmer's Market  
Open House: 10-3  
Ice Cream Social: 11 - 2**



The Woelke Research Center was dedicated at a place where everyone can come and search the historical records of Pigeon and the surrounding area. The center is open Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Our attending members will help you in your quest for information on your family and friends.

#### PIGEON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 523 • Pigeon, Michigan 48755

989-453-3242

Denny Esch, President

Ardra Schaaf, Vice President

Duane Wurst, Secretary

David Eichler, Treasurer

~: Trustees ~:

Jim Leinbach • Randy Ovcen

Dorothy Thuemmel • Joyce Kretzschmer

#### 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

Woelke Historical Research Center.

## Help!

The historical Society is helping to manage the Pigeon Farmers' Market this year. The market is held Fridays from 9-4. If you or someone you know would like to be a vendor, please call today for information. Call 989-545-5240 or visit our web site: [www.pigeonfarmersmarket.com](http://www.pigeonfarmersmarket.com) **SEE YOU AT THE MARKET!**

## A black and white photograph of the interior of a Pigeon Club. At the top center, a sign above a doorway reads "PIGEON". To the left of the doorway is a counter area. On the counter, there is a sign that says "Soda" and another that says "1 PEA TICKET". Below the counter, there is a sign that says "TICKET". To the right of the doorway is a tall, dark wooden display case with glass doors. On top of the display case sits a hat. To the right of the display case is a small table with a trophy on it. The walls are decorated with several framed photographs. The floor is covered with a patterned carpet.



**Arthur J Woelke**  
**December 4, 1927 - May 29, 2012**  
**Historical Research Center**  
**Dedicated September 28, 2013**

This building is dedicated to Arthur J Woelke, a lifelong Pigeon resident, who spent countless hours documenting and preserving local artifacts and photo history of Pigeon and the surrounding area. Art was an avid reader, traveler, community planner and activist. He was a tireless worker, church member and leader, but even more, he was a friend to all who crossed in his path. Art understood that local history must be recorded so people could benefit by knowing who and what created the foundation for the present. His passion for history now provides us with a lasting resource for residents and visitors to study and enjoy. Very few people have accomplished what Art has given to us. We honor his merit with this plaque and Historical Research Center, that all who enter here will leave further enriched by the unselfish commitment he left behind.

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# Pigeon's History of Flooding!

In the late 1800's the residents of Berne, Michigan expected the east - west Saginaw Tuscola and Huron (S. T. & H) Railroad would cross the North South Railroad in their new community. Berne was out of luck. Even though the area south of Berne was known as "The Swamp" the S. T. & H. Railroad passed through the swamp and crossed a mile south of Berne. The railroad called the site "Berne Junction" and the people of Berne soon realized that they would also be moving south soon.

Our area has great soil, often a foot deep, but under the soil is a layer of clay. When it rains the soil lets water go no further than the clay layer. When the soil is saturated it begins to flood. Our forefathers dug ditches and worked to provide a great drainage system. But every spring, there was a flood, especially along the banks of the Pigeon River.

This year we had a record rain storm which reminded us of how fragile we are. The rain again

flooded the River and many basements in Pigeon. We were lucky that our ancestors worked so hard to drain the fields, as the water quickly flowed to Lake Huron.

After flooding again, in the early 1900's, the residents of Pigeon knew they had to do something to keep their homes and businesses dry. The swamp had to be filled! With horse and wagons, fill sand and dirt was carried into Pigeon to lift the community onto higher ground.

## The Greatest Flood Since 1935

The earliest spring flood in the history of Huron county occurred Sunday following a rain which started Saturday morning.

March 16, 1935 occurred the greatest flood when a large part of Sebewaing was under water.

Sebewaing suffered the greatest damages in this flood which was not as great as that of 1935.

The experience of two years ago, however, was a warning to the people of that village and as a result precautions were taken that resulted in cutting down what might have been a heavier loss. Bridges Closed

Sunday afternoon the County Road Commission stopped traffic to the approaches of the Moore Bridge 2 and one-half miles north of Pigeon, the Foster bridge south and east of Pigeon, the Eimer bridge south and west of Pigeon. The approaches of these bridges were under water from one to two feet.

In the vicinity of Pigeon the high water mark was at five o'clock Sunday afternoon. The water was receding Monday morning and has continued to recede.

Winsor Twp. Bridge Carried Away

The Broderick bridge on the quarter line in section 24 Winsor was carried away by an ice jam. This bridge was an old one and not in the best of condition. This is the greatest loss that the county suffered. County Engineer Bateman says that it will cost about \$2,500 to replace the structure.

Mr. Bateman says the damage to roads and culverts in the county will amount to about \$10,000.

### Damage In Pigeon Slight

The flood damage in Pigeon was very little, aside from a few flooded basements.

*Pigeon Progress  
February 11, 1938*

## Springtime Flood of 1947 Recalled

The Progress-Advance July 9, 1981

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This story and these photos was provided to us by local historian Carl Dast of Pigeon. The photos were property of Irvin Werner. We thank Carl for sharing these with us, to help forget this July heat by recalling cooler times...34 years ago!)

The Pigeon River rose in the spring of 1947. My memory tells me it went something like this:

The ice at the mouth of the Caseville River had not yet broken up. On shore, we had a real fast thaw. Our snow turned into water so fast the water could not get away. The following pictures will help tell the story. They were taken at the Irvin Werner place at 7902 Pigeon Road, where Denny Fritz and his family now live.

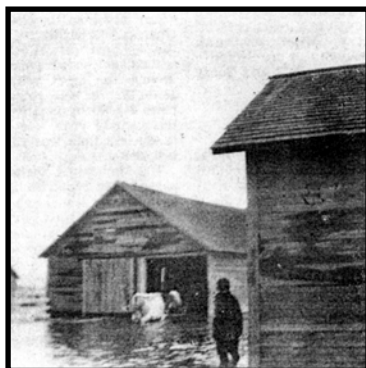
The top left picture shows Irvin following or chasing a cow as he had to drive them over to Ben Beachy's to milk, as the water was too deep and there were no dry places at home to do any milking.

The bottom left picture shows Irvin looking at a

cow or the cow asking, "well, now my feet are wet and getting cold." Ben Beachy was living at the time at 7787 Pigeon Road, and I think Vernon Beachy lives there now. Ben had his own trouble on the farm, as it was surrounded by water which almost ran into his basement windows.

As the top right photo shows, Pigeon Road was under water by at least 12 inches. It also was backed up around Otto Rathje's farm on South Brown Road. North of Pigeon Road Gene Hamilton's home was also in the path of the flood. The railroad ballast was washed out from under the C & O tracks and trains could not travel. All railroad service was canceled until the ballast was replaced.

Downstream at the Hayes Methodist Church, Chuck Leipprandt tells me the water was in the church basement and when the men went down to check things over, they found the piano floating around on its back in the water, still in the basement.



From the early 1900s.  
Yes, it's the Pigeon River, perhaps on Berne Rd.

# Genealogy Club Now Forming In Pigeon

Grandmother used to tell us stories of her family when we were young. We listened with intense interest but never wrote anything down. Now, as we grow older, we wish he could remember who Aunt Millie married. What was Uncle Pat's wife's name? If only we could find our history. Where do we start? Do we have to pay for information on the internet?

Weather you are a novice at genealogy or a seasoned professional, we welcome you to join our new genealogy club. The club will meet in the Woelke Research Building one evening each month, starting in September. If you are interested in joining our group, stop into the Depot Museum or the Art Woelke Center any Thursday, Friday or Saturday and sign up.

## Pigeon Historical Society

59 S. Main St. / P. O. Box 523, Pigeon, MI 48755

989-453-3242 (Leave Message)

## 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:** \$20.00 (active member with voting privileges)

**Contributing Members:** A Contributing Member supports the Historical Society as an Individual or Business but does not participate in the monthly functions of the Society. Contributing members are not eligible to vote or hold office of the Society.

### Contributing Membership Levels per annum

<b>Novice Collector</b>	\$ 50.00\	<b>Artifacts Collector</b>	\$100.00
<b>Heirloom Collector</b>	\$150.00	<b>Archival Recorder</b>	\$ 500.00
<b>True Historian</b>	\$1,000.00		

Contributing Members shall receive a Membership Certificate stating their support to the Pigeon Historical Society.

**Junior Member / Junior Historian:** Junior Members are those who have reached the age of 12 years, but have not reached the age of 18 years. Junior members are not eligible to vote or hold office. **Dues:** Volunteer 10 hours of service to the Society. Junior Membership Certificate received after volunteer service is completed

**Junior Historian:** Junior Historians are those in second, third, fourth or fifth grade, have studied Michigan history, local history and has visited a local museum. They are entitled to receive a Junior Historian Certificate upon completion.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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

# Local News

Pigeon Progress Sept. 3, 1897

## Pinnebog Points

Our farmers are all happy this fall.

Henrv Biddle called on friends in Elkton this week.

Mrs. Truscott has been on the sick list, but is improving.

The Pechette bridge, one mile west of town, is being repaired.

Wheat is averaging about 24 bushels per acre in this neighborhood.

Good yearlings will bring over \$20 and lambs \$3.75 in our market.

Joel Pechette is buying livestock. Our farmers are glad to see him in the business again.

There are 10,000 bushels of wheat in sections 1 and 2 of Chandler and the south half of sections 35 and 36 of Lake township,

## Caseville Craziess

The Caseville Colts played a return game of ball at Soule on the 30th of August. Jos. McKinley has moved into the Residence lately occupied by Dr. Austin.

## Bay Port Bits

Florence McDonald, of Sand Beach is visiting Lizzie Crughell.

Libby Dagan, of Grindstone. City, is visiting friends at the Quarry. .

Supt. W. H. Wallace, of the S T & H. Railroad, entertained his brother, Samuel Wallace, of Grindstone City, last week.

## Elkton Elklets

Elkton is to be incorporated - that is, she will try.

Thomas Loosemore, of Caseville, was in town last week.

The Canboro picnic last Thursday was an unmitigated success.

Some much needed improvements are being made on our streets.

Lena Strabure was pleasantly surprised by a large party of friends last week.

Horton & Cray are pushing the work on the bank building with all possible speed.

Dame Rumor says we are to have a foundry and machine shop in the near future.

Our band went to Gagetown this week, Thursday, to furnish music for the picnic there.

School commenced Monday. Principal, Chas F. Nash; Intermediate, Lenora Moore; Primary, Kate McGregor.

# Family Photos - Part Of Community's Heritage

The Pigeon Historical Society has a large collection of historical postcards and photographs. Many of these images have been enlarged, and are on display in the Depot Museum and the Arthur J. Woelke Historical Research Center. We are always on the look-out for other pictures that are not in our collection. It is true that a picture is worth a thousand words, and we are in search of those images.

If you have family photographs which show something that you would consider of interest to the community, please contact a board member. We have a scanner in the Research Center and can scan photographs and negatives.

We are always looking for old photographs, negatives or slides, and old postcards like the one shown here. If you have any old boxes or albums of pictures, don't throw them away until we are given the opportunity to view them for potential inclusion into our collection.

**Call the museum at: 989-453-3242, Duane Wurst at 989-545-5240, or any board member for more information.**

