

Remembering The 1966 Pigeon Holiday Giveaway

Since the first merchants opened their stores in Pigeon in the 1890's, the town has been known for it's many holiday promotions. Pigeon has always been a popular shopping site. Merchants from the past like Black's General Store, Leipprandt Brothers, Hirshbergs Big Store, Wright's Men's Wear, Polewach Store, Doepker's Hardware and today's Orr's Drugs, Linda's Basket Case, Amy's, Pigeon Hardware, Har-Jo's Ben Franklin, Pigeon IGA, Dollar General, Self Serve Lumber, (to name just a few) were and are always well stocked with merchandise in popular demand.

The Holiday Giveaway, sponsored by the Pigeon Chamber of Commerce, was so popular that thousands of people would descend on Main Street Saturday afternoon from November 25th through Christmas. The town was a holiday shopping haven, where, if you were lucky, you could even win a bike, or a car.

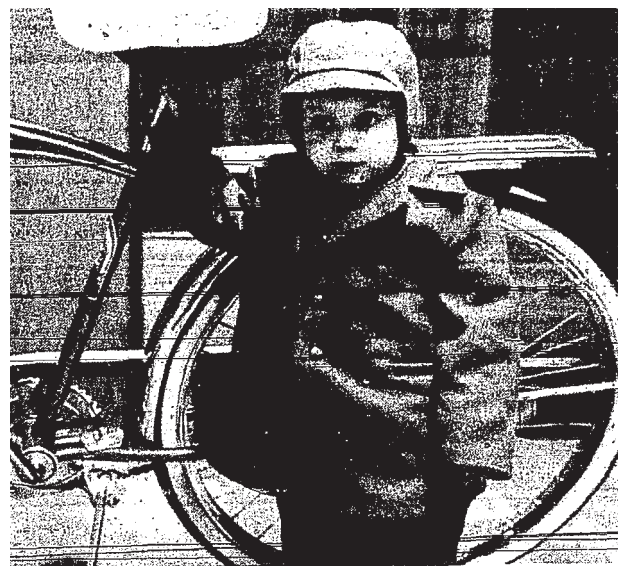
From December 22, 1966 Pigeon Progress Advance

Bicycle winners in the final children's drawing of the 1966 Christmas season, sponsored by the Pigeon Chamber of Commerce, were Rodney Stalter, son of Mr. and Mrs. Darwin Stalter, Pigeon, and Renee Born, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Born, Elkton. This brings to six the number of bicycles given in this year's prize drawings for children of this area.

Also winning prizes in the drawing held Saturday were Sue Anderson, Pattie Buchholz, Clarence Eisinger, Connie Damm, Philip Klein; Ricky Fritz, Elizabeth Good, Linda Geiger, Carl House, Rodney Fluegge, Cindy Buchholz, Karen Wisenbaugh, Shelly Elenbaum, Tommy Diebel, Mary Hamilton, Jill Chiotti, Michael Fritz, Cathy Kretschmer, Connie Jo Fritz, Beth Foy, Joe Good, Dennis Nieschulz, Sheril Buchholz, and Wendy Dast.

Adult cash prizes of \$25, \$15, and \$10 went to Wayne Schember, Orville Yackle and Vincent Sturm, respectively

Thursday, December 22, is the date of the final Christmas drawing in Pigeon, when merchandise prizes with a total value of \$1,250 will be awarded. These prizes range in value up to \$260 and will be given on a drawing of tickets that have been given free to persons visiting Pigeon stores since November 25.



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 Kretschmer

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

Woeke Historical Research Center.

Thank You!

The Pigeon Historical Society managed the Pigeon Farmers' Market this past season. The market is held every Friday from 9-4, from May through October.

We want to thank all of the great vendors and the wonderful customers who made this a fabulous season.

See you in May, 2018. Call 989-545-5240 or visit our web site: www.pigeonfarmersmarket.com SEE YOU AT THE MARKET!



Pine Timber Attracts Attention

Early in 1851 the splendid pine timber in the county began to attract the attention of lumbermen and speculators from states adjoining Michigan. In 1851 Leonard Case, of Cleveland, purchased 20,000 acres of pine land on the Pigeon river. The next year William Rattle, representing the interests of Mr. Case came and built a saw mill at the mouth of the river. The little settlement that gathered around this place was named Port Elizabeth in honor of Mr. Rattle's wife. In 1856 Mr. Case sold this property to Francis Crawford and George Martin, of Cleveland. This partnership continued for two years when Mr. Crawford became sole owner and the village was re-named Caseville. Another name familiar to every lumberman was that of Moses C. Gregory. He had lumbered in his native state, Maine, and about the year 1851 went to Cleveland, where he entered the employment of John G. Worth, who sent him out in search of pine timber. In 1853 he landed at Stockman's Point (now Pointe Aux Barques summer resort) and followed the Indian trail to Pigeon river. Here he found Reuben Dodge and Chas. Smith. He spent some time in getting out shingle bolts which he shipped to Cleveland on the first floating craft other than a canoe landing at Caseville. This was the schooner Ohio with Capt. John Armour in command. In 1857 he entered the employment of Francis Crawford with whom he remained for over 16 years. During that time he married Sarah Dodge Lverage, daughter of Reuben Dodge. For a number of years he had large lumber camps on the Pigeon river and also had charge of many of the log drives in the spring of the year. After he left the employment of Mr. Crawford he was connected for a number of years with the hotel interests of Caseville. Of strong and striking individuality to meet him once was always to remember him. He was also postmaster of the town under President Harrison. The first hotel in Caseville was opened by Robert Squires in 1856. It was situated at the head of what is now main street. Rev. J. B. Varnum held the first preaching services in this vicinity. His circuit reached from Lexington to Bay City, then Hampton. Educational opportunities were limited but the children of the village were given private lessons by Mr. Wheeler, the first supervisor, and the first school was taught by Miss Elizabeth Fox. The second teacher was Miss Setton. After Mr. Crawford became owner of the Pigeon river property he not only built saw mills but later a grist mill, the foundation of which is still to be seen.

By Florence McKinnon Gwinn
Originally Published in 1922



Pigeon River in Caseville. Thousands of logs make their way to the saw mill. The home on the river bank is Mr. Crawford's home, later to become Don's Resort and then moved to M-25 as the Champaign Funeral Home.



Lumber Camp near Caseville.

What October 20th in the Thumb used to be like

by Jim Leinbach

Many of us can remember when October 20th arrived during the 1950's the population of Winsor Township exploded. Visitors from the city descended on our roads and restaurants dressed in tan hunting coats pulling thoroughbred dogs out of cars and station wagons and crowding the yards of local farms. The Michigan pheasant hunting season had begun and it was a holiday atmosphere for everyone. The term, "Opening Day," did not need defining.

As 10:00 a.m. approached the hunters could be seen standing by stubble fields, ditches and fence rows studying their watches and anticipating a sport like no other hunting season could offer. Pheasants were everywhere. In fact, there are some who still re-

call the birds being so prolific that they were considered a nuisance to vegetable gardens, grape arbors and orchards in our area. It was not uncommon to see car windshields cracked and broken from colliding with a flying bird, and a car trip down Sturm Road in the evening could be likened to running a gauntlet with birds flying and running from one field to another.

Most local kids were taught hunter safety from a parent, uncle, or grandfather and many became excellent wing shots. These kids also had "hunting dogs," but they were usually a pet farm dog of mixed breed; however, oftentimes these dogs could match the hunting and retrieving skills of the expensive ones imported from the cities.

A single-shot 20 gauge might have been the first pheasant gun a kid would be allowed

to carry while some of the adults had graduated to the 12 gauge single shot or pump gun. The Winchester Model 12 was for years the most popular field and duck hunting gun in the country and sold for less than \$100.00. But what kid could afford one of those? Locals usually used whatever scattergun was available to bring home their quota of birds.

The decade of the 60's brought on the beginning of the decline of the pheasants in our area. Farming techniques had changed. Newer pesticides and herbicides were being applied, fence rows and bird cover were being eliminated, and two consecutive years of ice storms and deep snow in the 60's caused the pheasant population to plummet. The pheasant holiday was over but it was great while it lasted.

THE GRIST MILL.

A Great Industry Added to Our Town.
One That Our People Should Feel Proud of.

Last Tuesday morning the new grist mill started to grind its first wheat, and what is remarkable is that the wheels started at 7 o'clock and continued to run until 6 without a stop. Very seldom a mill runs ten hours without any trouble the first, day. That goes to show what first class work and good machinery does.

The mill is now running every day grinding out as good flour as can be produced, and long may she do her faithful work.

The machinery has a capacity of eighty barrels per day, and is an institution that Pi-

geon can feel proud of. The building throughout is nicely arranged, and when the few finishing touches are put on, which is being as rapidly done as possible, no finer grist mill can be found in the state.

Mr. Leitz, a miller of long experience, is employed to do what his trade calls for, and Fred Reithel will act as engineer.

The Pigeon Milling Co., composed of three of our enterprising business men, J. W. Leipprandt. E. C. Leipprandt and Fred Reithel, have erected this mill at an expense of about \$10,000. They have spared no pains in

order to make a beautiful building and put in up-to date machinery. Now, as the industry will be a great trade-draugher for our town, every citizen should see that he is interested in its welfare. There is one way that all can show their appreciation of the efforts of the proprietors. and that is by using none other than, which will soon be, the celebrated WHITE ROSE FLOUR.

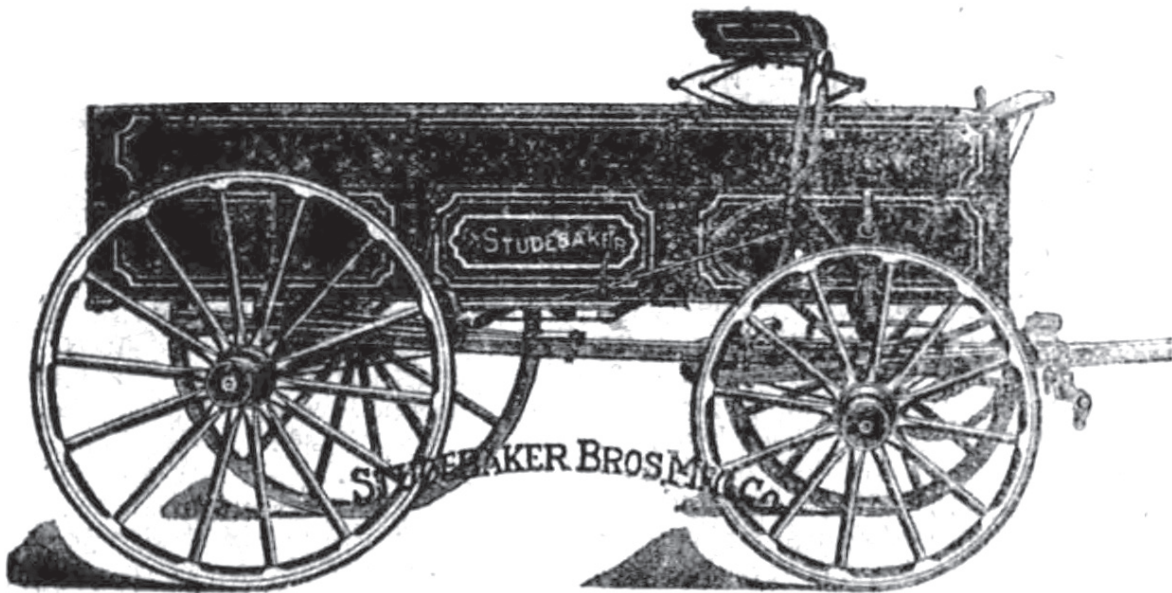
Both the ad below and this article are from the Pigeon Progress, Oct. 8, 1898

The Studebaker

*** WAGON**

Is recognized by all to be the WORLD'S BEST, It is not manufactured by a firm that does intend to keep its reputation, It is a wagon that is considered the world over to be the best for the money.

LEIPPRANDT BROS. Sole Agents, Pigeon.



WE HAVE JUST RECEIVED A LARGE LINE OF SHOES AND ARE NOW GIVING SOME GREAT BARGAINS IN BOYS AND GIRLS SCHOOL SHOES. DON'T MISS THEM.

Remember we have all kinds of School Supplies.

LEIPPRANDT BROS.,

General Merchants, Pigeon
Square Dealing. Courteous Treatment. Low Prices

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 genealogy club. The club meets in the Woelke Research Building the third Thursday each month, at 6:30 p.m. If you are interested in joining, stop into the Depot Museum. There is no charge. We do have internet, so bring your laptop or tablet.

Pigeon Historical Society

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

989-453-3242 (Leave Message)

Visit our Facebook Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/124844244905031/members/>

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

| | | | |
|---------------------------|------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| Novice Collector | \$ 50.00\ | Artifacts Collector | \$100.00 |
| Heirloom Collector | \$150.00 | Archival Recorder | \$ 500.00 |
| True Historian | \$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!

History of Huron County

Pigeon Progress, Friday, Sept. 26, 1946

It is believed the first time a white man stepped foot here, was in 1667 when Father Marquette and Joliet, French Missionaries, on their travels. There is reason to believe that they stopped along these shores because of the wild apple trees found near Caseville and other parts along the shore, supposed. to have been seeds from the fruit that the missionaries had eaten. The next white man, Edward Petit. born in what is now Port Huron, in 1813, traveled the shores of Saginaw and Wild Fowl Bay, 19 years later. He, like the missionaries, traveled in a canoe, and when the water was rough, canoed on the shore.

Dr. Levi Williamson homesteaded 80 acres in section 29, Grant township in 1863 and built the first structure for a residence.

In 1851 the only road in Huron county was the shore road which ran from Port Huron along the shore to Bay City.

Carl Heisterman was the first white settler in Fairhaven township. He purchased Heisterman Island in 1852 and lived on the island for a number of years. Later he sold the property to a Saginaw Club for \$11,000.

The first white settler in Brookfield township was Andrew Burton who came in 1865. He located a homestead of 160 acres on section 25.

William H. Holmes, was one of the first settlers in Winsor township, who came from New York in 1868. He came with three teams, sleigh and wagons and after he left Detroit made his way by blazed lumber roads. History does not say how long it took him to make the trip. At one time he owned 1,000 acres of timber land. For years he had a saw mill.

In 1864 Caseville township had the highest valuation of any township in Huron county, \$72,524. The entire valuation of the county was \$539,733.

Edward Heaton settled in Chandler township in 1860. He homesteaded 320 acres in sections 26 and 27. He owned the first team of horses in the township.

Richard Winsor, whom Winsor township is named after, was the first representative in the Michigan legislature from Huron county. He was elected in 1860.

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.

