

Hadley Township Historical Society-Summer-2019

Hadley Mill Museum



“The Orphan Train in Michigan”

Did you know 12,500 orphans from New York City and the Boston area were placed in Michigan from 1854 to 1927? Al and David Eicher, research historians and television producers, spent a year and a half in research and gathering photographs about the Orphan Train Riders in Michigan. They have produced a lecture and video documentary about this event in Michigan’s history, depicting in great detail the selection process and being an Orphan Train Rider.

The first Orphan Train Riders (14 boys), arrived in Dowagiac, Michigan on a Sunday morning in late September 1854, traveling on the Michigan Central Railroad. By 1927, forty-three Michigan towns received orphans from the “Baby Train”, as it was sometimes called. Most of the children and teenagers came from the New York Children’s Aid Society and the New England Home for Little Wanderers. Thirty-nine percent were girls...most children were never adopted.

“The Orphan Train in Michigan” lecture combined with several visual segments from their documentary and new research about the Orphan Train Agents make this 50 minute presentation a very interesting topic. We are very pleased to have Al and David present this program on **Thursday, September 5 at the Township Office building at 7 p.m.** Everyone is welcome to attend this program. Invite your friends.

“A grand old day in Hadley”, June 22, came and went without a hitch. Our Board was really wondering how the day would go and if we would have good weather. Mike Hartwig had the sawmill running for those who wished to watch a log being sawed into boards, The Parlour set up their hot pizza box and sold out of pizzas several times and the church parking lot was full of antique cars, cars of special interest, and tractors. Some folk came by just to see the special

exhibits set up on the mill lawn including a very interesting display of lanterns. Those who wished could check out the 1926 Ajax automobile or watch the line shaft run the antique mill equipment. Each entry received a special wood coaster with the Hadley Mill embossed on the surface. They were a special gift from the Aseltine family in honor of the passing of our longtime member, Jim Aseltine. Will we do it again? It is a lot of work but a good time was had by all.

4th of July-2019

The Hadley Mill Museum usually has around 300 people visit the displays each year. We might have had a few less this year but the 5K Run, sponsored by Ken Hartwig, had 351 participants! This run started several years ago as a fund-raiser for the historical society with 40 entries. The run began at 8 a.m. just after the Pledge to Allegiance sung by John Paul Wallace. Ken's "staff" had the run staked out early that morning and ready to go. Phil Foley from the County Press mingled with the crowd, snapping photos as he went.

For the **Historical Society Raffle**, Leslie Kirkpatrick and Bonnie Dennis donated a beautiful quilt. First prize, the quilt, went to Elizabeth Scott, Goodrich, second prize, a Hadley Throw, to Ann Moyer, Lapeer, and third, a Hadley Mill Tee shirt, to Michael Rossi, Ortonville. Congratulations to the winners.

Milling Around

Even though we are open on the second and fourth Saturdays of June, July, August and September, there still is activity within the historical society. The mill is checked several times each month for rodent control and to check the alarm system. A new deck

has replaced the old one off the apartment patio door, the lawn is kept mowed and Mike Hartwig is working on a marine engine to drive our direct current (D.C.) electrical system. He hopes to have it in operation this year. Mike is also the person that operates the large **Oil Field Engine**. This engine that resides in our "engine room" is similar to the engine that ran the mill if the mill pond water ran low. The mill always had an alternative power source. Early on it was steam. The boiler sat at the north end of the mill. Later it had the "hit and miss" engine as you see now. In 1926 electricity came to Hadley and from then on electricity ran the mill and it no longer depended on the mill pond and supplemental power. So, what is an "Oil Field Engine"? ...any engine used in the oil fields.

They were a bit crude and rugged and designed for limited maintenance. Oil field engines filled an important need in in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Our 20 horsepower engine was produced by Superior Gas Engine Company and is of the 2-stroke design. Patrick J. Shouvin began building engines for tough service in 1892. The company eventually produced engines ranging from 400 to 2500 horsepower. After building engines for 112 years, Superior went out of business in 1997. Who

came up with the idea of an oil field engine? Perhaps it was Joseph Reid, a Scottish immigrant who designed and patented an unusual gas engine in 1894. His invention changed the way oil was pumped. Soon many engine makers were selling their own versions and competition became intense. No matter how they were built, they were simple, rugged and ready for a hard life. They would be running day and night with little attention. The engine had to be durable. Some builders turned to the 4-stroke design but the 4-stroke never eclipsed the 2-stroke for its utter simplicity. Others built engines that were of different designs but, perhaps, were just too complicated for the oil producer. A unique variant of these engines were combination engines, which could operate on either gas or steam. How did oil field engines differ from industrial engines? Industrial engines were used in factories, machine shops, water pumping applications, print shops and the like. The industrial engine was usually well-finished and had an exceptional appearance. The next time you visit the Hadley Mill Museum, take a second look at our engine. When the original engine was running it could be heard a mile away!

A special thanks to Paul Harvey-June/July 2019 Old Iron News for the background on the oil field engine.

Back to the subject of the historical society... we have four programs each summer of historical interest, our treasurer keeps on paying the bills and we publish four newsletters, again, relating to Hadley's

historical past. But, there are needs! When we are open we could really use some help. We cover all the exhibits with sheets due to an occasional bat. So, even though we are open from 1-3 p.m., we need an additional half hour at the beginning and at the end to prepare for visitors and to close up. Dave Beckley, our Vice President, is in charge of seeing that we have at least four people for each opening. **Dave's phone number is 810.441.3988. If you can help, let Dave know that you might be available. You do not need to know details about the mill nor the exhibits. Many of the objects have information cards and we have three "voice boxes" that tell about the mill pond, turbine, and the Ajax automobile. Just "push the button" We will be adding more of these as time goes on.**

In memory of our member, Ellen Magnuson of Sarasota, Florida, July 16, 2019

We very much appreciate all those volunteers who spent their 4th of July helping with the 5K run and being at the museum so visitors could enjoy the exhibits and viewing the Ajax automobile.

Each mill brochure has a membership application form on the back. Welcome newcomers to Hadley with the brochure and a handshake. It is an easy way to get to know your neighbor.

A special thank-you to the Michigan Barn Preservation Network for the summer loan of their display banners. They brighten up all three floors of the museum.

