



13493 Waterloo Munith Rd
Grass Lake, MI 49240

The Pioneer

Waterloo Area Historical Society

Est. 1962



11501 Territorial Rd
Munith, MI 49259

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Preserving Pioneer Living and Education

April 2025



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Chad Kinch

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Open

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Denise Frahm

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Next Event

Jackson County Free

Museum Day



May 10th, 2025
10:00am to 4:00 pm

Celebrating



Free Museum Day and Season Opener

By Chrissy Norris

The Waterloo Farm Museum and Dewey School Museum are proud to take part in Jackson County Free Museum Day on Saturday, May 10, 2025. This annual event invites the public to explore local history at no cost and offers a unique chance to step back in time and experience life in 19th century rural Michigan. From 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, visitors can enjoy a variety of activities across the museum grounds. The historic farmhouse will be open for tours, offering insights into the daily life of the original settlers, while costumed interpreters bring the past to life. The blacksmith shop will be in action, showcasing traditional skills, and the Dewey School Museum will be open to explore the experience of students and



teachers in a one-room schoolhouse. Throughout the day, guests can enjoy live music on the grounds, browse hand-spun goods and demonstrations by the Spinner's Flock fiber artists, and shop for unique souvenirs and local crafts in the museum gift shop. A variety of hands-on children's activities will be available, and concessions will be offered for those looking to enjoy a bite to eat while soaking in the osphere of his




atmosphere of this historical gem. This event also marks the perfect opportunity to plan a return visit, as the Waterloo Farm Museum will begin its regular Saturday openings for the 2025 season on June 7. Whether you're a local resident or visiting the area, the museum offers a rich and engaging way to connect with the heritage of the Waterloo area and the wider Jackson County region.

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Waterloo Area Historical Society
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Stockbridge, MI 49285

www.Waterloofarmmuseum.org

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Christmas on the Farm

Photo Review

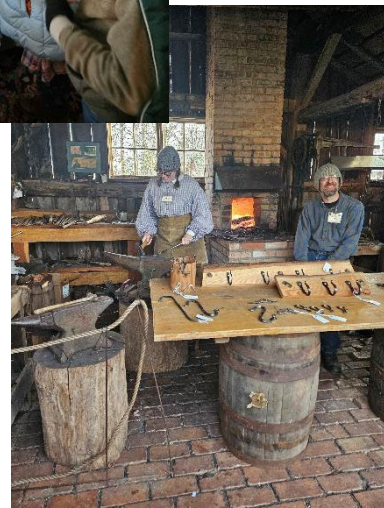


Photo Credit: Brain Dewey, Chrissy Norris, Jim Hunt, and Facebook

A letter from the President

I am honored to introduce myself as the new President of the Waterloo Area Historical Society.

With a deep passion for preserving and sharing history, I am excited to take on this role and continue the important work of our organization.

Our historic sites, the Waterloo Farm Museum and Dewey School Museum, are invaluable treasures that tell the story of our past. Thanks to the dedication of our members, volunteers, and supporters, WAHS has achieved incredible milestones, and I am confident that together, we will

accomplish even more in the years ahead. We will look to implement new technologies to streamline operations and improve efficiency, grow our grant and sponsorship opportunities to increase revenue and promote our branding to expand our reach and engage a wider audience. As we move forward, I welcome your ideas, participation, and support. Together, we can ensure that the Waterloo Farm Museum and Dewey School Museum continue to educate, inspire, and connect future generations to our shared heritage. I look forward to meeting and working with all of you.



Photo Credit: Brain Dewey

Thank you for your commitment to the Waterloo Area Historical Society.

- Chad Kinch



Christmas on the Farm



By Chrissy Norris

Christmas on the Farm is always a magical time, but this year it felt extra special for me. I was not just as a guest, but a part of the planning and setup. I had the chance to meet many volunteers I hadn't met before, and it was wonderful to finally put faces to names. The Waterloo Farm Museum was brimming with baked goods, fresh greenery, and holiday cheer. The historic charm of the property was beautifully enhanced with festive decorations—greenery tucked into every corner, the sound of live music filling the air, and traditional

evoked the spirit of Christmases long past. Visitors were welcomed by the sights and sounds of the season, creating a warm and nostalgic holiday experience.

A highlight of the day was a special presentation on Charles Dickens, which brought both the beloved holiday tale and the man behind *A Christmas Carol* to life. The presentation offered a fascinating glimpse into the world that inspired the story, and it was particularly interesting to hear guests' thoughtful questions about Dickens and his life.



Photo Credit: Digital Crumbs



Photo Credit: Digital Crumbs

Upgrades to Volunteering and Membership

By Chad Kinch

AN HOUR OF VOLUNTEERING
CURRENTLY WORTH

\$33.49



Created by: Canva

According to a yearly study done by
Independent Sector

We're excited to announce that DonorPerfect is officially active on our website. Members can now renew their memberships and make donations online quickly and securely. This new system will make it easier to stay connected and support WAHS year-round. This new program is also integrated with VolunteerLocal that helps ease the burden of

tracking hours, scheduling, and sending out reminders of volunteers' shifts. The program also allows us to post jobs out to the volunteer base for events, and assistance at the Waterloo Farm Museum. This will help us stay better organized and recognize all the hard work our volunteers put in.

A Journey of Dedication and Passion for Waterloo Farm Museum

By Kevin and Denise Frahm

In the 1960s, the first meeting about the Waterloo Farm Museum was held at the Stockbridge Town Hall. Ron's parents, Norm and Wilma Kaiser, became charter members, helping to clear the grounds and clean up around the farmhouse. Long before the museum was established, Arlene spent time playing in the big barn that would later be moved to the museum. Arlene also recalls visiting the Realy farm, where her brother worked, assisting with chores and forming lasting memories of the farm's appearance at that time. In the 1970s and 1980s, Hattie Beckwith (founder of the Waterloo Area Historical Society) asked Ron and Arlene when they would become more involved with the museum. At the time, their children were



Photo Credit: Stock Image



Photo Credit: Stock Image

young, so they decided to wait. However, in 2002, their neighbor, Mary Schoonover (Baker), reached out to Ron, inviting him to join the museum's board as a trustee, recognizing his business acumen and his experience in organizing fundraisers for local organizations. Mary asked Arlene to help with room cleaning including the farmhouse, pantry and dining room.

That was the beginning of their deep passion for the Waterloo Farm Museum and Dewey School. Over the past 23 years, Ron and Arlene have formed many cherished friendships with fellow museum supporters. Sadly, some of these friends have passed, but their knowledge and passion for the museum live on through the Kaisers' dedication to preserving its legacy.

When reflecting on their proudest accomplishments, Ron and Arlene mention the improvements made to the museum buildings and events, which have contributed to the continued success of the Waterloo Area Historical Society. They honor the contributions of everyone who has worked tirelessly to keep the museum thriving over the past 63 years.



Photo Credit: Stock Image As Ron and Arlene reflect on their 23 years with the Waterloo Area Historical Society, they would like to express their heartfelt gratitude to the members for welcoming them on this incredible journey. Their passion for preserving the museum's history and sharing its stories will continue for years to come.

On behalf of the Waterloo Area Historical Society, we Thank Arlene and Ron Kaiser for all their contributions.

Have you checked out our website lately?

Check out www.WaterlooFarmMuseum.org

SPRINGTIME ON A VICTORIAN FARM

By Ken Giorlando

...March, April, May...the months of springtime... the sun is out, the snow is melting, temperatures are rising, the hyacinths and daffodils are poking through... For farmers of the 19th century, February's last days were like the 21st century's New Year Season. Accounts and diaries were closed, and inventories were made. There was talk of spring and the new farm year. All farm calendars and diaries, almanacs and agricultural manuals begin appropriately with March. Almanac after almanac starts the month of March with "*Look to your fences.*" March is the ideal season for storing up firewood and splitting fence-rails. March winds dry out the winter-cut logs in the woods, making them easier to haul in.

From mending fences and tools to tapping the trees for syrup, the next big job a farmer has is hauling manure from the manure pile in the barnyard to the field where he will later plow and plant. The gutters behind the cows are cleaned daily and the mixture of straw and manure becomes an ever-growing pile in the barnyard. No matter how much one may love cows and horses, I can almost guarantee they will simply despise having to shovel manure into a wheelbarrow and then haul it out to the manure pile.

But it has to be done. From November through the end of March, while the animals spend their nights in the barn, it needs to be done. Daily. And then, once spring planting preparations begin, the farmer again will have to haul the pile, load after wheelbarrow load (or piled onto a horse-drawn cart), out to the planting field. This is a backbreaking ordeal, for carrying a heavy load of manure through the crevice-filled field is no easy task. Then comes the duty of spreading...I would venture to guess this was probably the worst job in a farmer's year.

Now it's time for plowing. This is another challenging tilling necessity. The process of plowing is an unbroken link to the past, one of which is carried on today, though with much greater ease than in days of old. The plow, of course, breaks up and turns over the soil to make it smoother for planting. It is one of the oldest of farming tools. Back and forth, walking literally mile after mile. Arms, as use to plowing as they are, will still ache nightly, and they ache even worse come the next morning when the farmer, once again, will find himself behind the two plow horses in the cool of the morning, digging the cast iron mould-board tool into the ground to turn up the soil that had laid dormant and frozen all the long winter.

It was after plowing that the farmer would use the harrow to further spread and even the dirt out for planting. The purpose of a harrow is to break up the clumps of soil and to provide a smoother finish to the land, making for better planting and growth. Back across the field mister farmer would go, and when he finished in one direction, he would harrow (or drag) the field crosswise to smooth it further.

Henry Ford once commented that children knew more about wars than about harrows, even though harrows did more to build this country than wars. With March and April signaling the end of the winter season, you would most likely be using up things in the root cellar; by the time springtime arrived, people were nearing the end of their winter storage of the food from last fall's harvest and were looking forward to the season of growing.

However, some of the winter vegetables have begun to rot, and the apples are getting soft. Mushy potatoes will be made into starch, and the winter's accumulation of fat needs to be made into soap before it turns rancid. For vegetables, you would have the last of the potatoes, winter squash, carrots, onions, and dried beans, though it would not be long before you'll have fresh asparagus (in May). There might also be fresh lettuce especially if you had cold frames or hot frames to grow them in.

SPRINGTIME ON A VICTORIAN FARM CONT....

Pickled items of all sorts would be on the pantry shelves, cucumber pickles, watermelon rind pickles, sauerkraut, pickled peppers, pickled onions, etc... For fruit you would have jellies, jams, and the last of your cellar apples.

In the meat category, ham is popular since it is getting warmer and whatever is left in the smokehouse isn't likely to keep much longer. (I personally suspect that's how Ham for Easter got to be so popular). Since I planned my breeding, my sow is farrowing, and we have piglets to raise. If you are willing to be a bit more adventuresome there is also lamb and veal, meaning if one doesn't make it, guess what? I'll have suckling pig or lamb to eat for Sunday dinner (newborn animals that didn't make it were not wasted). I could still have fresh beef maybe, but most likely there wouldn't be any left. Salted beef would be much more likely. This is the time to plan and prepare your kitchen garden. As a side note... this is what you plant in your kitchen garden in April or May in Michigan: onions, potatoes, peas, lettuce, leeks, cabbage, and asparagus.

By the way, it would be the month of May when you may start to see radishes, lettuce, asparagus, and new peas popping up.

May is also when you would plant tomatoes and peppers and beans and corn and squash and pumpkin and melon and cucumbers and whatever else your little heart desires to put into the ground. "When the oak leaves are the size of a field mouse's ear, then it's

time to plant the corn," said one old-time farmer.

Another said that the whippoorwill offered another reminder for corn planting, calling soon after sunset when the days begin to warm (usually in May). Planting the crop was a critical step with no room for error. Missing a section of a field could cause a huge problem: no seed in the ground, no crop.

For hundreds of years farmers sowed grain by hand; shouldering a bag of seed, the farmer walked up and down the tilled field, fingering the seeds from side to side. As a 19th century farmer said, *"On spring-plowed fields it was heavy traveling for the man who carried grain and sowed by hand. Of course, it was heavy work, even traveling over fall-plowed ground, with the grain hung over the shoulders, and the steady swing of the right arm throwing the grain as the right foot advanced and dipping the hand into the bag for another cast of grain as the left foot advanced."*

But the sowing process and outcome was frustrating at best. There is an old proverb that I recall hearing in my youth from my own farming grandfather that best describes the planting of seeds:

One for the mouse,
one for the crow,
one to rot, and one
to grow.

Shearing sheep is usually done only once a year so that the sheep are free of their heavy wool coats for the hot summer months. You would not want to shear the animals

too early in the spring, however, for fear of not-so-fair weather for the animals. Inside the home, the women of the house were no less busy. Here in the warmer months of mid-to-late spring, the house is very dirty; spring has always been the time for a ritual turning out and thorough cleaning of the entire house, from cellar to attic. Spring cleaning entails more domestic disruption and manual labor than its autumnal counterpart. It was said that if you had ever witnessed the hurry, bustle, confusion, and noise of a house-raising or a ship launching you could have some idea of this house cleaning business. Therefore, *"a husband, however beloved, becomes a perfect nuisance during this season of female rage."*

The ashes and soot from constant fires for cooking and warmth - combined with the soot from candles and oil lamps - is on nearly every surface, the mud of fall and winter covering the soles of shoes are now ground into the floors and rugs, firewood chips and slivers lie throughout, especially in corners...the kitchen and family parlor (or sitting room) have been the center of activity for months, and the remnants of spinning, sewing, whittling, and other wintertime activities are in desperate need to be cleared away.

SPRINGTIME ON A VICTORIAN FARM

Each room in turn is emptied and scrubbed and freshened with new whitewash and the furniture rubbed and polished.

Heavy drapery is to be taken down and be replaced with the summer curtains, fresh blinds replace the filthy ones that have taken on the winter's grime, and the windows need to be washed. Removing the ashes from the fireplace and sweeping and scouring the hearth desperately needs to be done. The rugs must be taken up and given a thorough cleaning by being brought outside, looped over a clothesline and beaten mercilessly, raising a cloud of dust as bad as the worst dust storm. Carpets were un-tacked while every square inch of the floor underneath was swept and mopped, then afterward fresh straw matting was laid down before the carpet was reattached "to make it soft, I guess" (from Catherine Havens upon

her remembrances of her sister's mid-nineteenth century best parlor). To do this, every piece of furniture in every room had to be moved either outdoors or to a different room. Although straw for matting was quite popular, a number of folks felt it wasn't good for the carpeting due to causing uneven wear.

Wall hangings were removed and the dust scrubbed from the frames. Walls, too, were wiped thoroughly in each room while it was emptied. The feather beds were aired outside for at least two days so each side could be moistened by the dew and dried by the sun before being put away for the summer and replaced with straw mattresses.

The removal of winter stoves and the cleaning of chimneys commences, and the cleaning of pantries and bins are also necessary to help keep it as

CONT....

clear of bugs and rodents as possible...

White garments and linens need a proper wash. The difficulties of drying clothing thoroughly in freezing weather has resulted in badly yellowed sheets, shirts, and undergarments. Linens that had been hung to dry before the fire have holes from flying sparks and need to be mended. Woolen clothing worn for weeks on unwashed bodies really smell something awful. Flannel undergarments have begun to itch instead of providing comfort.

And if that weren't enough, the women of the farm home would also head out to help the farm hands as necessary.

And how is your spring cleaning going?

Thank you to our Going Board Members

By Kevin and Denise Frahm

JAMES HUNT

We are grateful to James for his dedicated service as a Board Trustee for the past 10 years. In addition to his role as a historian for the WAHS, James has been an invaluable contributor to various initiatives, particularly those focusing on pre-and post-revolutionary war history. His passion for history has greatly enriched the museum experience for guests, families, and young people alike. We deeply appreciate James for so generously sharing his extensive knowledge with our community.



Photo Credit: Brian Dewey

Thank you to out Going Board Members Cont.

By Kevin and Denise Frahm



Photo Credit: Stock Image

KIM TITUS

We're excited to recognize Kim for her incredible dedication over the past 6 years serving on our board, most recently as Vice-Chair. Kim has played a pivotal role in shaping our education program, especially at the Dewey School. Whether she's engaging with guests as the School Marm or using her exceptional organizational skills to support and expand our educational offerings, Kim has truly been a gift to our organization. We are grateful for her contributions and continued commitment!

Thank you to out Going Board Members Cont.

By Kevin and Denise Frahm

BUTCH RICHMOND

For the past 10 years, Butch Richmond has served as a dedicated Board Trustee, playing an integral role in countless initiatives. Beyond his leadership, Butch and his wife Abby, along with their family, have gone above and beyond in supporting the museum community. Their generosity extended to running the museum's concessions, where Butch could often be found manning the grill, cooking up brats to perfection and ensuring that guests, families, and young people were well-fed and cared for. We are deeply grateful to Butch, Abby, and their family for sharing their time, talents, and culinary skills with us all.

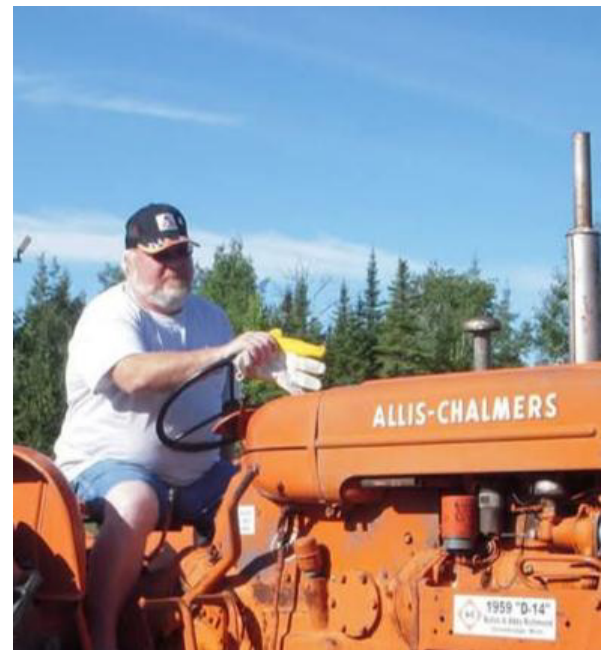


Photo Credit: Stock Image

Thank you to our Going Board Members Cont.

By Kevin and Denise Frahm



Photo Credit: Kevin Frahm

DAVE WILSON

Dave has been a dedicated Board Trustee for the past 10 years, playing a key role in numerous initiatives that have shaped the success of the museum. Beyond his leadership, Dave has brought joy and laughter to countless guests, particularly through his role as Saint Nicholas at our annual *Christmas on the Farm* event. His stories, magic tricks, and candy canes have created lasting memories for children and their families. Dave's warmth and generosity have been an incredible gift to the WAHS, and we are truly grateful for the unique and special impact he has made.

Log House Hearth Updates

By Chad Kinch



Before Photo Credit: Brian Dewey

The hearth in the Log House has been restored to a period appropriate cooking hearth. Thank you to Ken Giorlando for your support on this project. The project was completed by Terry Wilkerson. With the hearth restored and the interior put back together, the Log House is ready to welcome students and visitors for our upcoming education programs.



After Photo Credit: Brian Dewey

Sitting Room Wallpaper Project Completed

By Chad Kinch



Before Photo Credit: Stock Photo

The restoration work in the sitting room is complete! The new wallpaper installation is finished, and it looks fantastic. Thank you to everyone who helped bring this beautiful update to life.



Bad Spot Photo Credit: Stock Photo



Hanging Photo Credit: Brian Dewey



Applying Glue Photo Credit: Brian Dewey



Jeff Dewey patching a bad spot Photo Credit: Stock Photo



A Job Well Done Photo Credit: Brian Dewey

2025 EVENT SPONSORS



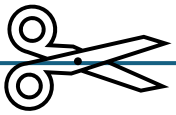
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Waterloo Area Historical Society
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in the amount of \$_____

Volunteer:

☐ Please contact me with more information

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Waterloo Area Historical Society

P.O. Box 37

Stockbridge, MI 49285

Free Museum Day

May 10, 2025

10am to 4pm

Complimentary admission to explore the farmhouse, school, and outbuildings. Enjoy live music, blacksmith demonstrations, and activities like arrowhead crafting. Shop at the gift shop for unique items.

**Antique Tractor,
Truck, and Farm
Equipment Show
August 9 & 10, 2025
10am to 5pm**

Celebrate the evolution of farming technology with antique machinery displays.

EVENTS



WATERLOO AREA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Pioneer Day

October 12, 2025

10am to 5pm

Step into the past and immerse yourself in the enchanting world of pioneer life at our premier event, Pioneer Day. Explore the Farm Museum and Dewey School through guided tours, where you'll learn about the daily rituals and cherished traditions of late 19th century farm communities.

**Blacksmith's, Soldiers,
and Log Cabin Day**

June 28 & 29, 2025

10am to 5pm

Step into history with soldier encampments, blacksmith forges, and log cabin experiences. Enjoy live music, delicious concessions, and browse through vendor stalls.

Participate in hands-on activities and create your own keepsakes.

Christmas on The Farm

Dec. 6 & 7, 2025

10am to 4pm

Experience the magic of "Christmas Past" at our enchanting re-creation of holiday traditions.