

Welcome to the first issue of the Otsego Area Historical Society's quarterly newsletter. At this point we have not thought of a name for the newsletter, but we would sure be glad to hear from our members for any of their ideas. Our current plans call for distributing the newsletter by mail to members every August, November, February, and May. Each newsletter will contain information about the organization and any events or programs that may be planned, and also to share bits and pieces of Otsego's history by allowing space for articles of that nature. The idea is for the newsletter to be a labor of love for those involved in producing it, and hopefully it will be a piece of mail that will attract your attention and draw upon your curiosity when it arrives at your mailbox.

Developing the contents for each newsletter will be the chore of the folks who bravely volunteered to undertake such an adventure, but please, if you have news to share, memories to recall, or perhaps a story to suggest, send in your proposal to the newsletter's publishing headquarters. The editors are open to many ideas, ramblings and such. On a last note, you who have become paid members of the historical society are the rightful and distinguished recipients of this unnamed, yet informative little spread. That means there are still many friends out there in our neighborhoods who are not receiving this in their mailboxes, but who would probably enjoy reading it, too. So tell them about the newsletter and the Otsego Area Historical Society and how they too can sign on as members. Spread the word if you will, please.

MUSEUM NEWS

Many of you were informed at the informational meeting in March of the historical society's plans to utilize the old Waterworks building on North Farmer Street as a Museum. As a reminder, the Downtown Development Authority has purchased the building from the City and as part of the purchase agreement, the DDA must lease the building to the historical society for use as a public museum. The lease agreement between the DDA and the historical society will commence when the building is ready to be occupied.

The DDA has recently contracted with Capital Consultants Engineering and DesignWorks Architects, both of Grand Rapids, to provide the engineering and architectural work

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needed for the renovation. Phase I, "Programming/Conceptual Design and Building Investigation" is already underway. Both firms have met with the historical society at board meetings and at site visits to other similar museums in west Michigan to gain an understanding of what our vision is for a public museum here in Otsego.

A report that analyzed the current structural and design elements of the building was presented by architect Debra Sypien at the July 11 board meeting. The report listed several recommendations: 1) the exterior shells of the original (1907) pumping station building can and should be retained; 2) the removal of damaged plaster, clean brick, and repainting of interior brick where needed, and restoring the tin ceiling of the 1907 structure; 3) the demolition of the 1937 (garage) addition and subsequent reconstruction on the existing foundation and column piers there. Reconstruction

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