

September, 2023



# Lansing Historical Association Newsletter

**Sunday, October 15, 2023 2 PM Fall Program**

Lansing Town Hall, 29 Auburn Road, Lansing

## **THE LINCOLN FUNERAL TRAIN HISTORY**

Our Fall Public Program will be a presentation by John Lamphere on the historical journey of the Lincoln Funeral train. John is a well-known presenter throughout upstate NY and we are excited about having him come to Lansing. He particularly has the relevance of this event to upstate New York and has a good story to tell.

ALL ARE WELCOME



*The following is an excerpt found and presented by Fannie Welch from an article in the April 17, 1915 issue of THE WEEKLY ITHACA TIMES. It was fifty years since that fateful day.*

## **THE LAST DAYS OF LINCOLN**

**APRIL 14, 1865**

No tragedy was needed to give April 14 prominence to the war annals of the republic nor of Lincoln. On that day four years before the stars and stripes had been for the first time humbled by men born under its aegis, and that very day April 14, 1865, that flag by Lincoln's own order, had been hoisted to float over the walls of Sumter. Moreover, four years before, in the hours corresponding to those when the stage was laid for the tragedy of 1865, Lincoln was preparing the policy that epoch making proclamation which answered the indignity cast upon Old Glory by a clarion call to arms.

And the day itself, April 14, 1865 would have stood apart in executive annals as the one when Lincoln officially formulated the policy he had in mind for ending the political confusion due to the war, the terms upon which the seceding citizens would be received back as citizens. The process he expressed in a characteristic simile that chickens are produced by hatching, not by smashing, eggs. At the cabinet meeting General Grant, just from Appomattox was present and called upon to explain the military situation. There were still over 10,000 Confederates in arms. News of this, however, was not before the cabinet.

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Interest at this meeting centered upon Lincoln's "Louisiana plan" forgetting the seceders back into harmony with the state they had fought for four years. Said he, "We must extinguish resentment if we expect union." One cabinet officer described Lincoln's appearance and demeanor at this last meeting as "more cheerful and happy than I had ever seen him."

The cabinet meeting over, Lincoln went for his usual daily drive with Mrs. Lincoln. He talked like a boy out of college about his plans, and to her he said, "The war is over," and that at the end of his four years he would go back to Springfield to the home he had not visited since he left in February, 1861, to take his seat in the White House and resume law practice."

Major Rathbone and his stepsister, the daughter of Senator Ira Harris, were invited to take the chairs assigned to General and Mrs. Grant.

The action on the stage halted as the party was finally ushered in to the tune of "Hail to the Chief." Cheering, waving handkerchiefs and hats continued, the audience rising until the presidential party was seated. Mr. Lincoln enjoyed the entertainment and seemed to lose the air of abstraction and indifference which had come upon him as soon as he learned of Grant's departure.

Many of the audience were still expectant of Grant's arrival, and during the evening every man who passed along the aisle behind the seats leading to the box entrance was scrutinized. One after another passed down the aisle, but no one approached the box until the second scene of act 3 was on, with Harry Hawkes, playing Asa Trenchard, the Yankee of the piece, alone on the stage. It was about 10:30.

There was an awkward pause, an actress just made her exit, and another about to enter. "While the action halted a pistol shot was heard which all but the initiated supposed it was in the play. But a scream from the president's box, confusion there and a man half leaping, half tumbling from that box to the stage brought the audience to their feet. Some eyes followed the motions of the intruder on the stage; others were riveted on the box. Miss Harris stepped to the side nearest the auditorium and excitedly asked for water or stimulants, adding, "The President is shot."

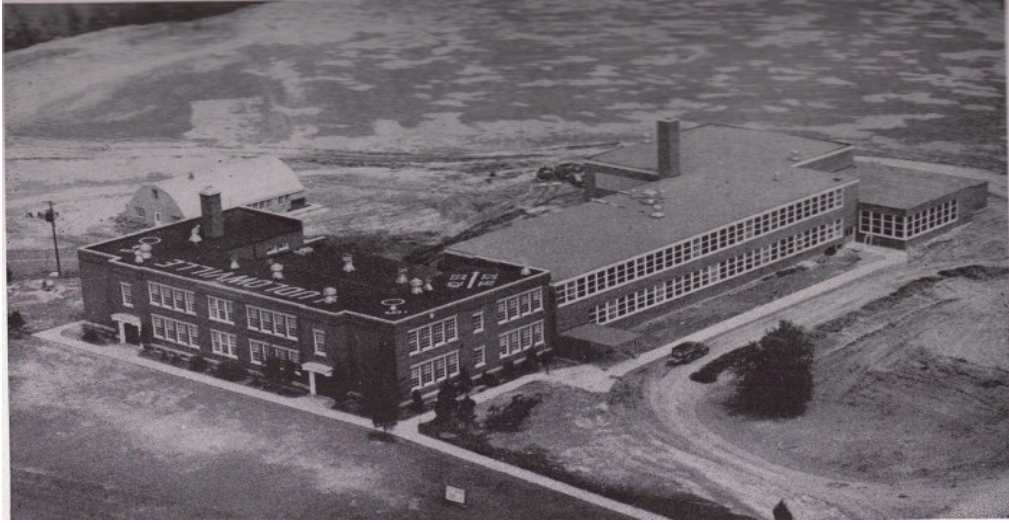
Wild disorder took possession of the house and the troupe of players. Some excited ones attempted to pursue the fleeing assassin; others rushed toward the box entrance. The latter were kept at bay by Rathbone, who asked them to fetch surgeons. Laura Keene quieted the stage people and went to the side of the wounded president, securing a measure of isolation for the box until surgeons arrived.

At this time which was not long by the dial, the wounded president sat calmly in his chair as if dozing, his head drooping on his chest. From this posture the surgeons lifted him and stretched him on the floor, where, it is said, Laura Keene took his head in her lap and began to stench the flow of blood from a wound (which she was the first to discover behind the ear.

Although the weapon had been held close, the hard bone had Stanton, Welles, secretary of the navy-checked the bullet's force, and it did not leave the head, so no lineament of that marvelous face was disturbed.

From the turmoil of the startled theater the scene changed before midnight to the parlor floor of a house opposite, where the still unconscious president lay for the better part of the night, with only physicians, personal attendants and his wife and friends at the bedside.. Later, on hurried summons, came Secretary of War Stanton, Welles, secretary of the navy, Senator Sumner and Mr. Colfax, the last official to grasp the hand of Lincoln alive and to exchange words with him.

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## ***The History of the Current Lansing Middle School Building***

*Presented by John Howell and Bill Martin*

In our last newsletter we discussed the old Ludlowville Union School in the hamlet of Ludlowville.

That district #9 covered students in the Ludlowville/Myers area until Lansing centralized on July 1948.

The following is the story of how the Lansing population grew and the expectation of teaching students in NYS also grew. This growth and new expectations required new buildings that were built and then additions built on these and even the need to re-use some of the old schoolhouses was required.

The Ludlowville Union school in the Ludlowville hamlet was built in 1895 and had approx. 60 students. An addition was added in 1911 (as shown in the -photo in June newsletter)- and enrollment was up to approx. 90 students. In 1928, District 9 voted to build a new brick school up on Ridge Road near where the new bridge over Salmon Creek was being built. The Spring of 1930 saw the last seniors graduate in the old wood Ludlowville Union school.

In Jan 1931- all the district 9 students moved into what was called then the New Ludlowville school (now known as the Lansing Middle school). In the attached photo you can see the original building and also the addition which was added in 1952 (east wing/ cafeteria/gym) plus the quonset shop building. The class of 1931 had just 3 seniors. At that time also, with the opening of the new bridge, the 3 district schools on Ridge Road all closed and sent their students to the new Ludlowville school.

From 1931 to 1935, the old Ludlowville school in the hamlet sat mostly empty. A nursery school in Ludlowville was started in February, 1934, to serve needy and low-income families. Funded by the Federal Civil Works Administration and later TERA, a federal work relief program also known as the Tennessee Emergency Relief Administration. The project in Ludlowville employed 13 persons, including two cook-housekeepers and two janitors who cared for the large six-rooms which housed the school. The schools were closed in 1935 when a funding agreement could not be reached between the State Education Department and TERA.

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A controversy emerged in 1935 involving 2 school staff members whose contracts were not being renewed; Otis C. Chapman, the High School principal, and Lee Kellogg, the agriculture teacher. 79 out of approximately 100 students at the school went on strike in their support, costing, as was noted by the district, about \$68 dollars per day. The strike began in the school gymnasium (now the location of the current Middle School library) with students carrying posters proclaiming “We Want a Reason” and “New Contracts for Chapman and Kellogg.” It was noted that the materials for the posters came from the principal’s office and were constructed in the school shop.

The Reverend Chester M. Beebee, President of the Board of Education, and Mr. Munson, superintendent, said “The money lost (\$68 per day) is not so serious as the educational loss caused by the disruption of classes.” Reasons given for their dismissal included negligence in business management, lack of cooperation and support with teachers involving discipline, lack of leadership and direction with student course planning, and a lack of leadership in school athletics as Ludlowville teams were not allowed to participate in local leagues due to poor sportsmanship.

Beebee said, “Petitions won’t have any weight with the board.” The following year’s 1936 yearbook confirms that Chapman and Kellogg were let go.

Also in 1936 District 9 realized that the population growth had exceeded the capacity of the new building and it was decided that starting in the fall of 1936, 83 students for grades 1/2/3 would be returned to the old Ludlowville school. This was necessary to make room in new the school for the Ag Dept, a music room, and a classroom. Not surprisingly, this was a controversial decision as was detailed in the newspaper. (as follows)



*Illustration 1: 1936 seniors - C Abraham, F Arnold, L Ayers, W Bardo, R Beckwith, N Caliel, J Campbell, W Dean, J Edsall, K Farrell, A Finlay, L Ford, R Halliday, B Howell, A Kozel, M Moses, M Myers, J Peters, R Proston, M Solomon, M Winter, M Zmek*

## **ITHACA JOURNAL – SEPT 21 , 1936**

### **Report School Is 'Firetrap' Brings Denial**

Old Ludlowville Building Is Perfectly Safe, Principal Says Surprise Voiced at Objection to Using

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### Structure for 3 Lower Grades

A fresh school controversy, rumored to be threatening in the Ludlowville-Myers district of Lansing township, was discounted today by Allan principal of the Ludlowville High School. He expressed surprise at a published report, saying that was the first he had heard of any objection to the use of the old Ludlowville school building for three lower grades of his school. The school board, at the annual meeting, approved installing the first, second, and third grades in the reconditioned school building in the center of Ludlowville. The pupils accordingly started studying there this fall.

### Denies Firetrap

The published report said that some parents were complaining that the building is a "firetrap," and that it was abandoned for that reason five years ago. Mr. Hurlburt said that actually the building was abandoned merely because the new central school building was completed midway between Ludlowville and Myers.

The move of the lower grades back to Ludlowville village this term was necessitated because of crowded conditions at the new central school. By taking some 83 pupils to the old school building, space has been made available at the new school for the agricultural department, the music department, and one extra classroom.

### Fire Escape Held Adequate

The principal declared the old school building perfectly safe, saying it is adequately equipped with a useable fire escape. He pointed out that it has been used for the past two years to house the TERA nursery school in Ludlowville, and that to do so it had to pass the rigid requirements of the state Education Department. Mr. Hurlburt also pointed out that the water supply is adequate at the old school, and that it has been tested and pronounced pure by county health authorities.



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*Illustration 2: 1948 Senior Class: First Row Shirley Hill, Fred Croft, Kip Buck, Bill Wegner, Ed, Fowler, Rudy Christopher, Paula Stukitz. Second Row Shirley Parks, Dot Zitchock, Nina Caetelin, Gloria Kelm, Miss Van Antwerp, Ann Knettles, Betty Wickins, Lorraine Abraham, Ruth Knettles, Diana Georgia. Third Row: Bruce Eastman, Jesse Solomon, Don Street, Carl Nedrow, Rich David, Frank Trinkl, Jerry Rounds, Gordon Foster, Jim Girton.*

By 1947/48, there were 13 rural districts that consolidated into the Lansing Central School District. Prior to that, students from the outlying districts would go to Ludlowville or Ithaca if they wanted to go beyond the grade school level. The Field School (district 14) that now sits next to the Town hall was one of these district schools. It operated on Peruville road just opposite the junction of Benson Rd and was relocated in 2000. With the centralization approved in 1948, the year of 1947/48 was the last the 11 outlying schools such as Lansingville, East Lansing, Peruville, and Asbury had students.

June 1948 was the last senior class for the “Ludlowville High School” and had 24 students ; Carl Nedrow, Kip Buck, Rudy Christopher, Don Zitchock, Lorraine Abraham, Frank Trinkl among others were in that class.

June 1949 was the first graduating senior class for the new “Lansing Central School”. Some of that class were Bertha Starner (Peterson), Celest Christopher, Bob Caliel, Stosh Burk, Otsie George, Toby Nally and Ken Gray.

By 1950 the continued population growth of baby boomers required a new large addition to the Lansing Central School plus building the quonset/shop which they moved into in 1952 - the attached photo is from the 1953 yearbook. The last class in the North Lansing school can be seen in the 1951 yearbook. Also in the 51 yearbook are the last students to use the old Ludlowville Union school grades 2/3/4. The South Lansing schoolhouse (now the Lansing Library) continued to be used for 1st grade and kindergarten.

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*Illustration 3: 1949 LCS Senior Class: Back-B Starnier, V parker, D Shockey, E Hillyard, C Nichols, M Collins, J Bacorn Middle-Pesarrento, S Burke, K Grey, C Green, A George, B McMillen, T Nalley Bottom-E Ecker, V Lockerby, R Solomon, R Caliel, J Burling, L Stukitz, C Christopher Absent-A Myskow, A Slavik, D Davis*

However, due to the growth in student numbers, there still was not enough room. In 1957 and 58 the shop building had three 6<sup>th</sup> grade classes. Both the South Lansing schoolhouse and the Grange (now Community Center) continued to be used up through 1958. Many of us boomers have memories of attending those schools until finally the new Lansing Elementary school was partially completed in Jan 1959 and the eight 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes moved in. All grades kindergarten thru 6th moved in by June. In 1959 the building was re-named the Lansing High School and the new wing addition of the auditorium, art/music and Junior High rooms were added in late 1958. In 1974 this building was renamed again as the Lansing Middle School when the new Lansing High building was finished. In 1998 the final large additions to the Middle School were made that added classrooms and locker rooms around the gym.

## The Susan Howell Haring Scholarship

Winner this year goes to **NOOR MAGHAYDAH** was presented by LHA president John Howell in June. She was very deserving and appreciative. She plans on attending Northwestern University majoring in Political Science.

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PO Box 100  
Lansing, NY 14882

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