



## Museum Notes

### Newsletter of the Bellaire Area Historical Society

#### **A Note from the President**

2026 at the Museum! We've made it through the winter and are getting ready to open for our 50th season! To stay in closer touch with all of you, we will be sending out our newsletter twice this year and ...who knows ... with more and more of you participating, we may expand even beyond two one day. Expect to hear from us again in the Fall.

The museum will be open for the season **Wednesday, May 27th at noon** and stay open until 8pm. Throughout our season, we will be open on Wednesdays from noon until 8 pm and Thursday through Sunday from noon until 4 pm. These are the same hours as last season which seemed to work well for the community. As always, if our hours don't work for you or your group, reach out to us and we will do our best to accommodate you. Looking forward to seeing you there!

In the meantime, we have lots to share - and encourage you to join us. Want to be a museum docent or just learn more about the displays and information we have? Join us **Thursday, May 21st at the museum either from 11 am to 1 pm or 5-7 pm** for a pre-opening look. We'll give you a personal tour and overview - super interesting and also a way to consider if you could be comfortable being a volunteer docent on occasion. You don't have to decide or commit, just come on by and then give it some

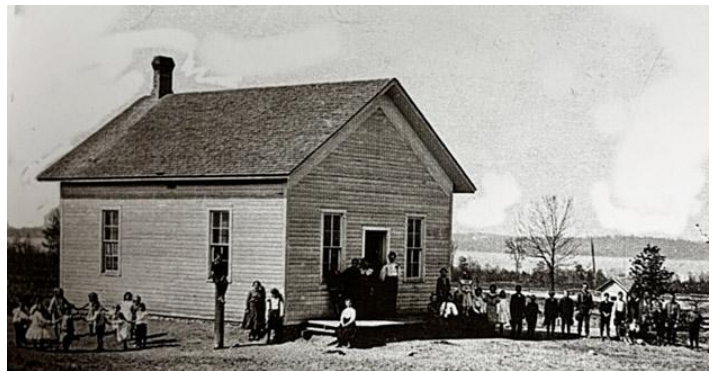
thought. Important: historical knowledge not required! The museum shares the knowledge - we just share the museum and that is just plain fun!

**LouAnne Cooper**  
**President**  
**Bellaire Area Historical Society**

---

**Visual Presentation by Bob Holtzmann**  
from museum files

### **One Room Schools of Antrim County**



Ball School at corner of Wright Rd. and Bellaire Hwy. with Torch Lake in background

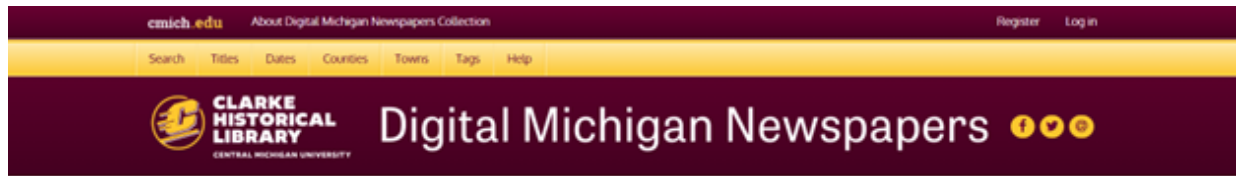
**Date:** Tuesday, May 5th

**Time:** 7 PM

**Place:** Bellaire Public Library  
111 South Bridge Street

**Price:** Freewill Donation

Sponsored by the Bellaire Area Historical Museum and Antrim County Historical Society



## **That's a Wrap!**

Three years ago, the Bellaire Area Historical Society began a campaign to digitize our local historic newspapers and make them available online with an easy-to-use search interface.

The Antrim County Herald 1881-1882, the Antrim County Record 1920-1931, the Bellaire Record 1931-1955, The Antrim County News 1947-1974, and the Bellaire Spectator 1972-1974 are now online at <https://digmichnews.cmich.edu/> where they are keyword searchable with in-text results. There is no charge to use this site, which is operated by the Clarke Historical Library at Central Michigan University. The Bellaire Independent 1895-1919, the last paper we submitted for digitization, will be on the site later this year.

Typing in the search box on the landing page will search the entire DigMichNews collection. If you want to restrict your search to certain newspapers or times, click the three little lines on the search bar and a box of limiters will open. You can select your title(s), location, and inclusive dates. Putting quotation marks around your text searches for the exact phrase.

We are relieved that our area's fragile historic newspapers are now permanently preserved in a digital format. Over ninety individuals and organizations donated to this project. Thank you all for your help.

## **We Want YOUR Story!**

Has your family lived here for generations, or did you join us recently? Maybe you just visit as often as you can. What brings you to our beautiful area? What is one of your favorite memories here? We are collecting stories, and we need yours. Not your complete history - just 250-350 words. This is part of the exhibition, *Our Family Stories*, in the hallway entering the museum. We are celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> year of the museum, and we will publish our collection this year. Don't be left out! For more information, come to the Bellaire Public Library on the third Thursday of any month - anytime from noon to 2 - we'll work together on your ideas. There's a link to submit your writing on our website, or just reach out to us and we'll find a way. We really do want your story!



*Our Family Stories*

## **The 2nd Annual B.A.H.S. Open House!**

**August 9th, 1-3 PM at the museum**

It's the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday of our wonderful United States of America and the 50th anniversary of our museum, and we want to celebrate! We have so much to thank the community for and so much to share with all of you! Come and check out our exhibits - old and new - and remind yourself of all the information available in our museum. We'll make a little more Bellaire area history. Refreshments will be served. Mark your calendars!



Museum Notes, Spring 2026



Evan Proudfoot at work

## Collections Management Initiative

The museum is getting more organized. Evan Proudfoot, a trained archivist and member of our board, is cataloging and conserving the artifacts we hold. This multi-year project will professionally document and preserve the collection, which has become less manageable with growth and more deteriorated with age. We want to ensure that the items we now enjoy will be here for future generations. Please watch for updates in coming issues of the newsletter.

## Big Donations

The museum has recently received two important donations. Doug and Nancy (Wilson) Kelly gave us a generous donation for technology, and we now have a new computer and 11”x17” printer/scanner. These additions will allow us to research historical websites with patrons and to copy and print large documents. Our sincere appreciation goes out to Nancy and Doug.



Left: Nancy (Wilson) Kelly, Doug Kelly, and Mariel (Wilson) Madison at the museum; Right: The Kelly computer.

We would also like to thank James Templin and his heirs for the donation of his unparalleled collection of historical postcards from this area. Unfortunately, Jim passed away on January 7. The Bellaire Area Historical Society would like to extend our sincere condolences to his family and friends. Readers will remember Jim’s wonderful presentations at the library, where he discussed the area’s history as reflected in these unique artifacts.

These additions will be found in the Resource Room. Please ask a docent for access and assistance.

## Featured Artifact

*The Hierlihy “Never-Slip” Heel Plates: a northern cobbler and his lucrative invention.*

William Hierlihy (1868-1933) came to Bellaire in 1896, opening a shoe sales and repair shop. An inventor and businessman, he became known for his “Never-Slip” Heel Plates, which offered improved grip on ice. He traveled throughout the upper Midwest selling his popular product, and he became one of Bellaire’s leading citizens. Forty sets of Hierlihy heel plates were used by Admiral Byrd’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Antarctic Expedition in 1933.



William Hierlihy and his “Never-Slip” heel plates. View this unique artifact in the Blacksmith Room.



*New book for sale!*

**Bellaire History**

by Mary Kay McDuffie

Containing reprinted columns published in 1979 in the *Antrim County News* celebrating Bellaire's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

\$12 at the museum



**Thursday, May 21, 11AM-1PM; 5-7PM:** *Pre-opening Look and Docent/Volunteer Training.* If you love your local history, become a museum docent! Docents engage patrons, lead tours, and answer visitor questions. No experience is necessary. Please join us at the museum on May 21 to see our new exhibits and to hear more.

**Thursday, August 9, 1-3 PM:** *Open House* Celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Bellaire Area Historical Museum

**Bellaire Area Historical Society Board**

- LouAnne Cooper, President
- Mary King, Vice President
- Charles Caldemeyer, Secretary
- Suzanne Ring, Treasurer
- Christina Golday
- Robert Holtzmann
- Evan Proudfoot
- Janice Proudfoot
- Jean Seman

**Bellaire Area Historical Museum**

202 North Bridge Street, Bellaire  
P.O Box 646, Bellaire, MI 49615  
231-533-8631

BellaireHistoricalSociety.org  
[bellairehistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:bellairehistoricalsociety@gmail.com)

**Hours:** Wednesday, 12-8  
Thursday through Sunday, 12-4  
Memorial Day through Labor Day

**Coming Events**

**Tuesday, May 5, 7 PM:** *One Room Schools of Antrim County*, presented by Bob Holtzmann.  
Please see the announcement on page 1.

**Thursday, May 7, 3 PM:** History Hounds at the Bellaire Public Library  
*From Cadillac to Traverse City: The Historic Old Indian Trail*

Presenter: Frank Ettawageshik, former chairman, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians.  
History Hounds is a series of recorded lectures presented by the Historical Society of Michigan. BAHS will offer more of these programs this fall.

**Membership Form**

Membership is \$10 a year. Additional donations are welcome! Thank you for your support!

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form with your check to: Bellaire Area Historical Society, PO Box 646, Bellaire, MI 49615