The Official Magazine of the Kalamazoo Valley Museum

Museography

INSIDE: Community through play in...

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Special Exhibition: The Amazing Castle

Renaissance Faires: Living-Breathing History

Core Object: Suit of Armor

Citizens Save Water Tower That Saved Downtown

Windmills: Green Energy a Century Ago

Special Clothes for Special Events

We Love a Parade!

Thomas Jefferson: “The Sciences… My Supreme Delight”

Jefferson the Scientist

Jefferson the Surveyor

Townships of Kalamazoo: Wakeshma

New Acquisition: Guidon Flag

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ON THE COVER: Thomas Jefferson’s interest in surveying (see article on page 19) is illustrated on the cover by an icon of a surveyor’s compass. Jefferson’s career in surveying was key to conducting the original survey of the Michigan Territory. The 1860 map of Michigan shows the vertical and horizontal survey lines that created the state’s counties.

Look for the icon at right throughout the magazine. It indicates objects you can view in the special Museography display case, located next to the reception desk on the main floor of the Museum, or in other exhibit areas throughout the KVM.

Museography

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Genius of Jefferson
(And a Goodbye to One of the KVM’s Own Innovators)

President John F. Kennedy invited America’s Nobel Prize winners to a state dinner at the White House in 1962.

Once all 49 were seated, Kennedy rose to toast the guests. “I think,” he said “this is the most extraordinary collection of talent and of human knowledge that has ever been gathered together at the White House, with the possible exception of when Thomas Jefferson dined alone.”

The genius of the nation’s third president is the subject of a special exhibition in the Museum’s first-floor gallery, “The Sciences…My Supreme Delight.” Developed by retired KVCC history instructor Paul Millikan, the exhibition reflects the mind of the man who wrote our Declaration of Independence, founded the University of Virginia, and sent Lewis and Clark exploring across the North American continent.

Jefferson’s interests ranged across a variety of fields of knowledge, from political theory to the latest scientific discoveries. The exhibition features the sorts of furniture, scientific instruments, images and texts that Jefferson used in his pursuit of enlightenment.

On the Museum’s third floor is an exhibition from the Minnesota Children’s Museum designed to delight children of all ages. “Play,” a wise man said, “is the work of children.” “The Amazing Castle” transports visitors to a realm of imagination where they can take on the roles of jester, cook, blacksmith, tailor, and carpenter and play away.

Specifically targeted for children under 10 and their caregivers, “The Amazing Castle” provides a colorful environment where children can take on the work of childhood.

This spring we said goodbye to Jean Stevens, the Kalamazoo Valley Museum’s curator of design who has retired after 29 years of service that began when the Museum was based on the second floor of the Kalamazoo Public Library in downtown Kalamazoo.

Jean can now be found painting away in her Park Trades studio. Her final project was the re-installation of the first-floor Core exhibits, “Time Pieces,” now on view. Jean superintended the palette of this re-installation as well as the interpretation, which highlights the history of the museum and the treasures we have acquired over the last 127 years. But there was hardly an exhibit project in the last three decades that did not involve Jean Stevens’ eyes, hands, and sense of art. She is missed.

I recall a paragraph that Jean supplied for a grant application years ago. Those words are as reflective of our practice today as they were when she wrote them:

“We try to engage the visitor’s interest, and to encourage further inquiry by providing visitors with a variety of direct experiences—from interactive devices with which to experiment, to a quiet corner in which to share a moment with a significant artifact from the past. We try to communicate simply and clearly, and to leave room for the visitor’s interpretation.”

Jean Stevens, 2008; and at left, inspecting an exhibition maquette in 1979.

ASK THE CURATORS

Thanks to our readers who have provided us with additional information about “What Is It?” objects featured in previous issues of Museography.

Sal Campana of Lawrence, Mich., wrote about the collar stay featured in the winter 2008 issue. “My father wore this type of collar stay every day… the circular ends ended in a sharp point…[the sharp points] were inserted under the points of the collar making them invisible. The springs allowed the user to wear the stay with any size collar because the stay was automatically adjustable.”

Henry P. Lerner also wrote about the collar stay: “When I entered the Aviation Cadet Program in March 1943… we always had to wear a shirt and tie so the collar stay was very necessary [to help us look] neat. [If the] stay would come unstuck from the collar point and hang down over the shirt… we would say, “Your landing gear is down.”

Mark Thiel, archivist of Native American collections at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wis., wrote about an unidentified pin cushion featured in the fall 2007 issue. “Tecquous Indians from the Seneca and Tuscarora reservations (New York) and the Six Nations Reserve (Ontario) produced tourist souvenirs, which were popular by 1850. Pin cushions were among the items produced and this type was known ca. 1890-1930.”

Q: How do I store my grandmother’s old quilt?

A: By following some simple steps, an heirloom quilt can be passed down for generations.

The best storage is in an archival costume box with acid-free tissue stuffed between the folds. The quilt should be refolded at least once a year to prevent permanent creases. Avoid storing in the attic or basement where temperature and humidity is not stable and pests can be prevalent. Storing out in the open is another option. It could be used as a bedspread, wall decoration, or draped over a quilt stand.

Place it in a room that is relatively dark for most of the day—perhaps a spare bedroom. As a bedspread, you may want to remove it when guests are in the room to reduce excessive wear. As a wall decoration, hand-sew a muslin sleeve (see photo at left) on the back and hang the quilt from the wall with a sturdy curtain rod.

Quilt stands are ideal display fixtures but, just like being in a box, the quilt should be refolded on the stand from time to time. Storing in the open requires that the quilt be cleaned periodically. Vacuum at low suction through a piece of fiberglass screening. The screening helps ensure that the stitching is not pulled up while vacuuming.

Whatever your choice for storage, keep exposure to light, heat, and dust to a minimum.

Q: I was recently walking along Westnedge Avenue and I noticed the words “S. West St.” imprinted in the sidewalk. Why?

The original plat map of the village of Bronson (now Kalamazoo) shows the municipality’s limits as North Street, South Street, West Street, and the Kalamazoo River.

Although the city has grown, North Street and South Street still remain, as does the river. In 1921, the Kalamazoo City Commission renamed West Street to honor Kalamazoo natives Col. Joseph B. Westnedge and his brother, Lt.-Surgeon Richard Westnedge.

Richard Westnedge commanded the Michigan National Guard with the U.S. Army during the Spanish-American War, the Philippine Insurrection, and World War I. He died of an infection in France shortly after the Armistice was signed in 1918 ending the war.

Richard Westnedge was an Army physician who died of typhoid fever in 1899 while serving in the Philippines.

Since the name “S. West St.” (South West Street) is impressed in the sidewalk, it means the road is relatively dark for most of the day—perhaps a spare bedroom. As a bedspread, you may want to remove it when guests are in the room to reduce excessive wear. As a wall decoration, hand-sew a muslin sleeve (see photo at left) on the back and hang the quilt from the wall with a sturdy curtain rod.

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Correction

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A scale-model version of a fantasy medieval castle from days of yore is the venue for defining what “community” is all about in contemporary times.

The bilingual exhibition, “The Amazing Castle,” which opens at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum on June 21, is targeted to entertain youngsters from toddlers to pre-teens, while at the same time delivering messages about the collaborating roles people play in the success of a community.

So, what’s in it for adults? Conceived and created by the Minnesota Children’s Museum in St. Paul, the eight themes of “The Amazing Castle” and their hands-on activities allow plenty of opportunities for family and friends to be entertained by watching children use their creative energies and imaginations. The youngsters are actually experiencing village life through the perspectives of characters working together to throw a castle party.

A giant medieval version of the museum’s Children’s Landscape on the second floor, “The Amazing Castle” and its magical role-playing as lords and ladies, carpenters, cooks, gardeners, tailors and seamstresses, entertainers, blacksmiths, and builders will be parked in downtown Kalamazoo until Sept. 14. While no moat is involved, the slowly meandering Arcadia Creek flanks the exhibition’s home for those three months.

The special duties and roles of the characters will be explored and experienced as visitors make their way through a variety of work shops in the castle village.

Instead of individual pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, the activities make the points that a community consists of different kinds of people, and for that community to succeed, people must help each other solve problems and work toward achieving common goals.

One role in “The Amazing Castle” is that of the town crier. But this newscaster comes in the form of “Herald the Dragon,” a creature feature that has a tendency to fall asleep on the job.

However, the child participants and their families can get “Herald” to deliver the latest news and make castle-wide announcements by solving an electronic matching puzzle that sends the dragon a wake-up call. “Herald” will rise from the top of a tower and tell the world what he knows.

According to information supplied by the Minnesota Children’s Museum, “The Amazing Castle” can launch children into “a world of dramatic play and imagination” as they and their families become inhabitants “of a fanciful castle village and playfully explore ideas related to community life.”

Donning costumes as they assume roles, they can harvest fresh ingredients from the castle’s garden and become a cook mixing a mouth-watering stew in the Great Hall’s cauldron, they can assume the creativity of a carpenter in constructing a small chair, they can build a small fortress out of lightweight “stone,” or they try their “hands” as purveyors of entertainment as puppeteers and court jesters.

The exhibit’s design creates the impression of stepping into a time machine and dialing up the Middle Ages in a playful way. Arches, towers, split-beam construction, hand-cut stone walls, and heraldic symbols abound.

“The impression of a small, bustling village within castle walls,” the brochure states, “is attained by assembling a group of structures related to the basic functions of a community—working, eating, playing—and making them quickly identifiable. Life-sized images of rather comical castle residents stationed in the doorways and at work further the perception of being in a village or community,” and that it is time for a little fun.

Joining with the museum in St. Paul in supporting the creation of “The Amazing Castle” are the Curtis and Marjorie Nelson and The Curtis L. Carlson Family Foundation, along with the Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing (3M) Foundation Inc.
Renaissance Faires

In 1963, two teachers in southern California organized the Renaissance Pleasure Faire. That first Renaissance Faire in the United States drew 8,000 visitors, and the idea quickly became popular and spread across the country.

Renaissance faires mix entertainment, improvisational theater, and audience participation. While they do not re-create a specific historical place and time, they strive for historical authenticity in dress, behavior, and language.

Guests may be spectators or may interact with the performers. Musical and theatrical entertainment, medieval contests, as well as food and craft vendors offering appropriate fare, bring a touch of medieval Europe to 21st century Americans.

Kalamazoo-area residents can enjoy renaissance faires each spring and summer. Both the Mayfaire Renaissance Festival and the Silver Leaf Renaissance Faire offer entertainment from an age long before computer games and television.

The Silver Leaf Renaissance Faire is the older of the two. It was the inspiration of Richard and Zandra Cole, who, while living in Texas in the 1980s, visited the Scarborough Renaissance Faire outside Dallas and became enthusiasts. Originally from Portage, the Coles returned to this part of Michigan in the early 1990s and decided to organize a festival locally. Their first effort was staged in Scotts Mill Park in August 1992. Although they had been enthusiastic participants, neither had any experience organizing such an event.

Nevertheless, they accepted the challenge and, on an unseasonably cool weekend, the first Silver Leaf Renaissance Faire drew some 200 guests and 20 performers. The name was inspired by an old flour advertisement painted on a barn in the Scotts Mill Park.

The chilly weather and limited turnout did not discourage the Coles. The next year, working with the Society for Creative Anachronism and others, they organized a second faire in River Oaks Park near Galesburg. They brought in more entertainers, staged a living chess match, and drew larger crowds. The next season they added jousters, one of the more popular attractions. Learning by doing, the Coles and their friends organized two corporations. The Silver Leaf Faire and Dragon Tails, each with its own boards, took on the tasks of finding and hiring entertainers, screening vendors, and handling all the minutiae of a growing public event.

Increasingly, the audience became comfortable interacting with the entertainers and costumed participants. The event is especially attractive, Zandra Cole says, to those with a “delightfully twisted sense of humor.”

Over the years, Silver Leaf has grown and moved to Calhoun County’s Kimball Pines Park. The original two-day festival now runs for five weekends from July through August.

The second area faire, the Mayfaire Renaissance Festival, grew out of the Silver Leaf event. Some of the earliest Silver Leaf performers are active participants. It runs the weekends of May 17–18 and May 24–26 behind the Calhoun County Fairgrounds in Marshall. Although the Coles have yielded their role as organizers of either festival, they still enjoy participating here and in festivals throughout the Midwest. They have created their own characters with unique, perhaps quirky personalities. As they, and now thousands of others, have discovered, Renaissance festivals offer a light-hearted trip back in time.

Richard and Zandra Cole organized the first Silver Leaf Renaissance Faire in 1992. Below right, the color and pageantry of these events bring medieval times alive for both participants and spectators.

The Cold Weather and Limited Turnout Did Not Discourage the Coles. The Next Year, Working with the Society for Creative Anachronism and Others, They Organized a Second Faire in River Oaks Park Near Galesburg. They Brought in More Entertainers, Staged a Living Chess Match, and Drew Larger Crowds. The Next Season They Added Jousters, One of the More Popular Attractions. Learning by Doing, the Coles and Their Friends Organized Two Corporations. The Silver Leaf Faire and Dragon Tails, Each with Its Own Boards, Took on the Tasks of Finding and Hiring Entertainers, Screening Vendors, and Handling All the Minutiae of a Growing Public Event.

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This Armor Still Protects the Secrets of Its Origins

Every museum has a few oddities in its collection, and ours is no exception.

One of those curiosities is a suit of armor—not an oddity in itself, but for a Midwest museum that’s all about regional history, science and technology, a suit of armor that represents medieval Europe may seem a bit out of place.

Nevertheless, it has been a high-profile artifact at the Museum since it was donated in 1928 by local businessman and collector, Donald O. Boudeman.

As the story goes, when he was transporting the armor to the museum, he stood on the running board of his automobile to steady it while his wife drove. When she braked sharply to avoid a collision, Boudeman was thrown from the car and broke his shoulder. Despite the accident, he delivered the armor before going to the hospital.

Other facts about the armor are sketchy. Boudeman wasn’t one for recording the provenance (or history) of the things he collected. He reported to the Kalamazoo Gazette in 1929 that the armor dated to 1600–1625 and was “originally owned by Le Sieur de Bouder Cormeilles, France.” He purchased it when Bouder’s estate was sold at the end of World War I.

In 1930, a letter and photograph was sent by the Museum’s director to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City requesting authentication of the armor. The response was that it appeared to be a replica.

No further attempts were made to verify its history until 2006 when Museum staff contacted the Musée duVieux Cormeilles. It was a dead end. It had never heard of “Le Sieur de Bouder sur Cormeilles.”

In an ideal world, we would know everything about the armor. Is it real? Who wore it? And when?

But despite not knowing, the armor has provided decades of fascination to this Museum’s visitors. Even in 1935 the Gazette hinted, tongue-in-cheek, at a romance between the armor and the Statue of Justice that stood on top of the old courthouse:

“… In the great northwest window of the Kalamazoo museum building… stood a knight in armour—a sight to make the heart of even an iron maiden palpitate… day after day she gazed wistfully at the knight with never a hope that she might ever have a closer acquaintance with him…”

Eventually, of course, they ended up in the same place.

While the suit of armor has been seemingly standing guard over the Museum for 80 years, it has had its ups and downs.

The helmet was found missing one day but was returned by a Good Samaritan in 1958. Some time later, the fingers on the gauntlets were unchivalrously removed. Those have yet to turn up.

Today, though fingerless, the armor stands intact a few cubicles away from Miss Justice on the second level of the Museum’s “Time Pieces” exhibit. It may be an oddity for this Museum, but it can call this place “home.”

The suit of armor from France (above) and the Statue of Justice, which once stood on top of the Kalamazoo County Courthouse (above right), have made quite a pair since arriving at the Museum in 1929 and 1935, respectively. Today, they each occupy a cubicle in the Museum’s “Time Pieces” exhibit.

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Perhaps the most distinctive feature of the Kalamazoo skyline is the imposing silhouette of the water tower on the grounds of the Kalamazoo Regional Psychiatric Hospital. For more than 100 years, the tower has been a familiar and beloved architectural treasure. The Michigan Legislature voted to raze the tower rather than repair it.

As the first hospital for the mentally ill in the state, the asylum grew quickly over the last decades of the 19th century. By the 1890s, it had become virtually a distinct village within the city. It needed its own water supply for fire protection, particularly after the collapse of the water tank at Pontiac’s Eastern Michigan Asylum in 1889 left that institution in danger should a major fire occur. On the recommendation of the Asylum’s board of trustees, the Michigan Legislature provided funds to build a fire-proof tower at the Kalamazoo hospital.

B. E. Stratton of Detroit designed the tower and Kalamazoo contractor Benjamin Roe built it in 1895. Constructed of brick, the walls are six feet thick at the bottom and taper to four feet at the top of the 171-foot tower. One large tank held 220,000 gallons of ground water, while two other tanks each contained 15,000 gallons of rain or soft water. The latter two provided water for laundry and other daily needs. As it turned out, the water tower did apparently play a key role in averting a disaster, but not on the hospital grounds. Rather, it helped save downtown Kalamazoo from potential devastation.

On the night of Dec. 9, 1909, a fire broke out at the old Burdick Hotel. With the temperature below zero, the city’s water mains burst. Firemen ran hoses to the asylum tower and, with the added water pressure, restricted the flames, which threatened to engulf several city blocks, to the hotel and adjacent buildings.

It seems only appropriate that the nearly 70 years later the community would rally around the venerable structure. Residents, foundations, and even school children raised more than $200,000 to save the tower rather than repair it. Kalamazoo rallied around the venerable structure. Residents, foundations, and even school children raised more than $200,000 to prevent the demolition. Although it is no longer used, the water tower still stands a silent sentinel on the Kalamazoo skyline.

The water tower was a popular image on picture postcards in the early 20th century. Supporters of preserving the water tower used postcards like the one shown at right, to promote their efforts in the mid-1970s.

Asylum Water Tower
Citizens save landmark that saved downtown

Windmills
Green energy a century ago

One of Kalamazoo’s lesser-known nicknames is the “Windmill City.” While most residents today are unaware of why the city gained this fame, windmill enthusiasts across the country know that in the late 19th and early-20th centuries Kalamazoo was home to several major windmill manufacturers.

Windmills were important pieces of farm machinery in the latter half of the 19th century, harnessing the wind to draw water from wells to irrigate fields or to power equipment. In 1867, William H. Pendleton and Ary Lucane began making and selling windmills.

New partners joined the company in the 1870s, most notably Bradley S. Williams. By the early 1880s, the firm was known as B. S. Williams & Co. and made the Stover windmill. Not only did American farmers purchase these products but so did their counterparts in Canada, Cuba, Germany, and Japan.

A local competitor began operations in 1873. Melville J. Bigelow and Horace Phelps organized Bigelow & Phelps, makers of the IXL windmill. They, too, sold to a global market as well as to farmers in the Great Plains states.

The success of these two firms spurred further imitators. Thomas Clangage and Clarence Bird organized the C. H. Bird Co. in 1878 and Homer Manvel started his own enterprise in 1880, while Kirk Smith and John Woodard opened Smith & Woodard, later known as Smith & Pomeroy, in 1883.

Manvel would later join forces with B. S. Williams and the combined company would produce the Manvel model windmill. Even the prominent Kalamazoo building contractors, Bush and Paterson, would make windmills.

At the industry’s peak, Kalamazoo manufacturers claimed to make 4,000 windmills per year, of which 1,500 were sold to overseas markets. This production gave Kalamazoo the unofficial nickname of “Windmill City” during the 1880s.

Early windmills were made of wood but galvanized steel became the preferred material as the century progressed. The windmill industry declined in the 1890s, in part because of the severe depression that gripped the United States from 1893-1896.

Only three firms—B. S. Williams, Phelps & Bigelow, and Smith & Pomeroy—survived. All three purchased their steel from the Kalamazoo Galvanizing Co. That firm was subsequently acquired by the Kalamazoo Tank & Silo Company, in which the B. S. Williams Co. owned a controlling share.

The demand for windmills diminished in the early 20th century as internal-combustion engines were adapted for powering water pumps and farm machinery. Kalamazoo Tank & Silo, the successor to B. S. Williams, continued to manufacture them until the early 1930s but eventually the last Kalamazoo windmill was sold, reportedly to Henry Ford.

Kalamazoo Tank & Silo remained in business, however, until the mid-1990s. By then, KTS produced table saws, drawing upon its expertise in metal-working. Its factory stood on the banks of the Kalamazoo River, north of Kalamazoo Avenue.

Today, the site is timed for redevelopment and the days of the “Windmill City” have gone with the wind.
Many of life’s most significant moments—birth, marriage and death—are replete with their own traditions, including the donning of “special” garments.

In Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries, very restrictive mourning customs began to be followed by the upper classes. The customs weighed most heavily on women who were expected not only to grieve but also to wear somber clothing through the stages of mourning.

It wasn’t until 1861 when Queen Victoria of England spent the next 40 years wearing only black, mourning for her beloved Prince Albert, that the rest of Europe and America followed suit.

Proper mourning took place in stages, with each having its own rules of dress. In deep mourning, women wore the darkest black clothing, with no adornment.

In the second stage, jewelry could be worn, but it was black or made from the hair of the deceased.

By the early 20th century, with the advent of two major wars, and the loss of many lives, most Americans found themselves in mourning for someone close to them. As a result, they began following fewer of the strict rules, including the custom of wearing black for long periods of time.

On the more joyous occasion of the birth of a baby, many families participate in christening ceremonies.

These too have a tradition of dress for the baby.

Since the 18th century, both infant boys and girls have worn long, elaborate, white gowns—the white representing purity and innocence of the child.

These gowns have traditionally been handmade with delicate tucking, embroidery and pleating. They were designed to be worn just once, but many have been saved as family heirlooms for future generations to wear.

Of all the ceremonial garb of one’s life, it’s the woman’s white wedding dress that is the most elaborate and recognizable.

But its tradition is surprisingly short. It wasn’t until Queen Victoria became a bride in 1840—and wore a white gown trimmed in lace and orange blossoms—that the idea of the white wedding dress became popular in Western society.

That’s not to say that women immediately began wearing white at their weddings. While society women could afford to make a white gown for the sole occasion of their wedding, most 19th-century American women needed to be more practical. Most wore a “good” dress of a darker color or print.

To make it extra special for the wedding day, the bride may have adorned it with a lace veil or added a special collar and cuffs. By the 1890s, more and more women wanted something a little extra special, something that made them feel like a princess, in the tradition of Queen Victoria.

Ivory and cream-color gowns became the popular color of the day.

While most of these dresses were worn once, some women did find other occasions to show them off, often altering them for fit and to keep with the style of the day.

By the 1930s, the white wedding gown was firmly the dress of choice for most women, and it was worn only once.

The photograph (above right), ca. 1860, shows the woman at right dressed all in black during the early stages of mourning. Her outfit includes a black crepe mourning bonnet such as the one above, which dates to about 1880. She may also have worn jewelry made from the woven hair of deceased loved ones, such as this brooch (above left) from the 1850s.

By the time Lawrence Peter Moser and Winifred Coleman (top) were wed in Kalamazoo in 1924, a white wedding dress was the choice for most women. When Mabel La Cure wed Paul J. Staley in 1912, she wore a simple white dress (above left) that could be used for other occasions. A practical dress color was often worn by brides of the 19th century, such as the dress (above right) worn by Carrie Woodford in 1876 when she married William S. Dewing of Kalamazoo.

This christening gown, above, was worn by three generations of the Frobenius family of Kalamazoo—Harry Frobenius in 1886, Ruth Frobenius (pictured at top) in 1901, and Thomas Rainill in 1933.
WE LOVE A PARADE!

Just like fireworks on the 4th of July, parades are an American tradition, bringing people together to celebrate, pay their respects, or just have fun. Here is a glimpse of local parades spanning more than 100 years.

1. Labor Day Parade, Sept. 2, 1898
Gen. William R. Shafter of Galesburg, and hero of the Spanish-American War, proudly acknowledges parade-goers from the balcony of the Burdick Hotel. Shafter is pictured in the center, holding his cap.

2. Circus Parade, Main Street, July 1881
The streets of Kalamazoo were crowded with onlookers watching the Barnum London Circus, complete with elephants, coming into town. Looking west, this scene was photographed from the top of today’s Olde Peninsula Brewpub and Restaurant at 200 E. Michigan.

3. Silver Anniversary Parade, 1909
Who doesn’t like a parade? Mabel Read and friends have decked out their carriage with flowers and are ready for a procession through the streets of Kalamazoo to celebrate its 25th year as a city.

4. Fourth of July Parade, 1889
A troop of boys dressed as Revolutionary War minutemen march in formation on South Burdick Street, the site of today’s downtown mall between Michigan and South streets.

5. Oakwood Parade, 1943
The residents of Oakwood watch a neighborhood parade near the corner of Oakland Drive and Parkview Avenue.

6 & 7. Doo Dah Parade, June 1984
This celebration of silliness by the Herby Curby Precision Drill Team was perfect for Kalamazoo’s first annual Doo Dah Parade.
Thomas Jefferson: “The Sciences... My Supreme Delight”

Thomas Jefferson's far-reaching interest in the sciences is the theme of an exhibition in the Museum's first-floor gallery from June 14 through Sept. 1. Featuring scientific, instruments, furniture, maps, and Native American objects from the period of Jefferson's life, all are from the private collection of Paul Millikan, professor of history emeritus at Kalamazoo Valley Community College.

"I have always had an abiding interest in the genius that was Thomas Jefferson," said Millikan, who taught history at KVCC for 32 years. "A true Renaissance man, he was statesman, architect, political philosopher, artist, diplomat, designer, musician, collector, inventor, and almost the keenest observer, analyst and recorder of the things around him."

Born in 1743, Jefferson grew to adulthood during the Age of Enlightenment, and lived to see the beginnings of America's Industrial Revolution before his death on the Fourth of July in 1826. In one of U. S. history's most remarkable coincidences, fellow American Founding Father John Adams died that same day—the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Jefferson had a passionate interest in learning, from political philosophy to the latest invention or scientific discovery. That curiosity was not only a personal thirst for knowledge, but was aimed at applying that knowledge to better the lives of humankind.

In Jefferson's time, scientists were often referred to as “practical philosophers” who were trying to learn as much as possible about the natural world and scientific phenomena. Jefferson once said, "No inquisitive mind will be content to be ignorant of the sciences of astronomy, natural history, natural philosophy, chemistry, and anatomy."

"He came to be recognized as a pioneer in numerous branches of science, a subject explored in the article beginning on the following page. Following his two presidential terms, Jefferson in retirement at his home in Monticello said, "Nature intended me for the tranquil pursuits of science by rendering them my supreme delight." The exhibition provides a glimpse of the range and breadth of his scholarship and pursuits. "Upon my first visit to Monticello in 1962, I was very much taken with Mr. Jefferson's interest in natural history and his collections of specimens. "I began to read about all of Mr. Jefferson's scientific interests. "When I purchased part of the petrified tusk of a mammoth," he said, "the collector bug had bitten and I determined to collect duplicates of as many of the scientific instruments, specimens, and objects in Mr. Jefferson's inventory at Monticello as I could. The results of that collecting interest are presented in this exhibit." In the exhibition are an 18th-century electric generating machine, surveyor's equipment, telescopes, maps, and a replica of a painted buffalo robe given by the Mandan Indians to Lewis and Clark, who sent it to Jefferson. Specially featured is a pair of Country Chippendale chairs made to Jefferson's order at the joinery at Monticello. All other pieces are duplicates of items that Jefferson owned. The originals are found at Monticello, the University of Virginia, and the Peabody Museum at Harvard University.

"I hope that the exhibit will add to the education, inspiration, and enrichment of this community and the surrounding area," Millikan said. "I believe it to be a unique look at an often overlooked facet of one of our most diverse and complex founding fathers. Continued next page..."
Before returning to the United States, Jefferson toured the Royal Observatory at Greenwich where he may have met with the “Royal Astronomer,” Nevil Maskelyne. Maskelyne was working on a method for determining longitude using the angular separation between the sun and moon as a way of fixing the time. Jefferson purchased almanacs at the observatory that he brought home and sent to friends.

Back in the United States, Jefferson served as secretary of state. The post included duties in the patent office, where he reviewed applications. Jefferson often insisted on testing inventions himself. One of his tests for granting patents was that inventions should be useful. Further, a patent should not be granted for making an old invention out of new materials, or applying an existing invention to serve another purpose.

Jefferson was originally opposed to patents, believing everyone should have free access to new technology. Serving in the patent office, he saw how patents encouraged new invention and gradually accepted the idea of intellectual rights. Yet he never sought a patent for any of his own inventions.

When Jefferson was elected to the vice presidency, at the same time the American Philosophical Society elected him to be president of that organization of scientists and scholars. Jefferson’s reaction was that it was the most flattering moment of his life. He served for 20 years, staying on beyond his two terms as U. S. president.

One of Jefferson’s goals was to determine the geography of America. He worked to establish an American method for determining longitude using the moon and almanacs that would not be subject to errors from an inaccurate chronometer bounced about in travels across rugged lands. When, as president, he sent Lewis and Clark to explore the newly acquired lands in the West, they proved he was right about the frailty of chronometers. Theirs failed early in the expedition.

Jefferson also wanted to establish an American Prime Meridian centered on the White House in Washington. A marker for this forgotten meridian sits near the Washington Monument today.

Later in life, assisted by President James Madison, he used observations of an 1813 annular eclipse to determine the meridian and longitude of his home at Monticello. In 1816, he wrote that only through measuring the positions of the sun, moon, and stars do we “know our place in the universe.”

He also passed time designing sundials for himself and his friends. “I have amused myself with calculating the hours lines of an horizontal dial for the latitude of this place, which I find to be 37° 22’ 26”. The calculations are for every five minutes of time, and are exact to within less than half a second of a degree.”

Jefferson’s final years were spent planning and designing the University of Virginia. He proposed using the rotunda dome as a primitive planetarium, painted sky blue with the stars in their positions and sized according to their brightness. The instructor would have a seat manipulated by a pulley system that would allow him to move to any part of the dome to point out the stars. Jefferson’s college design also included sketches of an observatory. Construction commenced shortly after Jefferson’s death, but the observatory was never used for its intended purpose, and eventually fell into ruin.

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Jefferson is remembered for authoring the Declaration of Independence and establishing the University of Virginia, but he also etched his place in history as a diplomat, an architect, an inventor, and a scientist.

Townships would be divided into 36 sections, each one mile square. The national government would sell the sections at $1 per acre or $640 per section. (One square-mile section equals 640 acres.)

Originally, however, Jefferson hoped to create a new decimal-based measuring approach to replace the English system of inches and feet, yards and rods, and acres. He had persuaded Congress to adopt such a system for the national currency in 1784, the system of dollars and cents still used today.

Congress and land-hungry settlers were too anxious to wait for the creation of a new and unfamiliar system. The national government had few sources of revenue other than land sales. It was deeply in debt to European governments and banks that had helped finance the...
One such tool was the surveyor's chain known as Gunter's chain. Edmund Gunter, an Anglican priest, had devised it in the 17th century. The chain has 100 links and totals 22 yards or 66 feet. Eighty chains equal one mile. A parcel of land one chain long by ten chains wide equals an acre. Feet, yards, miles, and acres—these were units of measure with which Americans were already familiar. Neither congressmen nor anxious settlers wanted to await the invention of a new measuring system. It would be several decades, not until 1815, that surveyors would start the survey of the Michigan Territory. Then, after the conclusion of the War of 1812, they began mapping the Lower Peninsula. They drew a hypothetical line from near Sault Ste. Marie to Defiance, Ohio. All townships would be marked off in vertical ranges, either east or west of this “meridian.”

As a result, it's fair to say that Jefferson's ideas for a rectilinear survey of the Northwest Territory make it easier for us today to know where we're going and where our homes are located.

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Top of the page: an embroidered world map. 1810. Jefferson owned more than 350 maps. Above, a French surveyor’s instrument, ca. 1780. Though there is no record of Jefferson having owned a compass such as this, he visited the shop where it was made on at least two occasions when he was U.S. minister to France.

The Townships of Kalamazoo County: WAKESHMA

Wakeshma, the final township to be profiled in this series, is last alphabetically and was the last to be politically organized. Not until March 25, 1846, was it set off from Brady Township. Although the residents would have preferred the name “Maple” because of the extensive maple sugaring in the area, the Michigan Legislature chose the name “Wakeshma,” which may be either an Ojibwa or a Potawatomi term meaning “it shines” or “it is shining.”

Designated Town 4 South in Range 9 West by the Michigan Land Survey, Wakeshma is in the far southeast corner of Kalamazoo County. Heavily timbered with maple, cherry, and walnut trees, and drained by Little Portage and Beaver creeks, it did not attract permanent, non-native settlers until 1843.

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The first business in Fulton was a general store that Henry Selkirk opened in 1869. By 1880, the village contained two general stores, a hardware, two boot and shoe stores, a drug store, one blacksmith shop, one harness shop, a wagon shop, an undertaker, and two physicians. There were two churches in Fulton. The Evangelical Reform Church was built in 1869 and the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1871. The Wakeshma Masonic Lodge was organized in 1869 and had 48 members by 1870. By the early 20th century, Fulton had a bank, a hotel, and a town hall.

Perhaps the most prominent native of Wakeshma Township in the 20th century was Dr. Homer H. Stryker. He was born on a farm in the far southeast corner of the township in 1894 and graduated from Athens High School.

The skilled surgeon and inventor founded what is now the Stryker Corp., a national manufacturer of medical equipment. Today, Wakeshma is a pleasant rural township, home to 1,414 people according to the 2000 U.S. Census, about 100 less than the 1884 Michigan Census recorded. Perhaps because it is relatively distant from area freeways, Wakeshma retains its rural 19th-century feel.

The Fulton Methodist Episcopal Church is visible looking east along what is now W Avenue.

The Pixley Shoe Store stood on the corner of Main and Church Streets, now 42nd Street and W Avenue.

The first settlement near the intersection of what is now 42nd Street and V Avenue. A small settlement including a blacksmith shop, a school, and a store developed here and became known as Gardner’s Corners. The first township meeting was held in Gardner’s home and, following a home-cooked meal of bear meat, the residents elected him the first supervisor. Gardner’s Corners was one of three early settlements in the township. A bit further east along UV Avenue was a small settlement known as the Wakeshma Post Office. It originated in the 1850s near Benjamin Atwood’s sawmill on Bear Creek at 46th Street, but the post office was later moved further east to 47th Street by the 1870s.

A third settlement, eventually larger and longer-lived than the others, was Wakeshma Center at the intersection of 42nd Street and W Avenue, just a mile south of Gardner’s Corners. John W. Codman, an early settler, persuaded the residents to rename the village Fulton after his home county in New York.

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**SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS**

**THE AMAZING CASTLE**
June 21–Sept. 14
Havermill Special Exhibition Gallery, Third Floor
Travel to a magical place and become inhabitants of a castle village in this playful exhibit. Eight themed areas invite visitors to experience community life through the perspective of characters working together to throw a castle party.

**HANDS-ON PROGRAMS**
"ONCE UPON A TIME…"
WEDNESDAYS, 1-4 P.M. • FREE
June 25: The Castle
Explore the castle made of stones, glass, and tapestries.
July 2: Storybook Characters
Go on a medieval adventure with storybook characters.
July 9: The Royal Family
Meet the family members who live in the castle.
July 16: Knights and Dragons
Discover dragons and the knights who fight them.
July 23: Mystic and Magic
Learn magic words and amazing potions.
July 30: Fairies, Frogs, & Falcons
Take a fantastic adventure with familiar characters.
Aug. 6: Jesters, Jugglers, & Jousts
Become an entertainer by learning to juggle, dress like a jester and prepare to joust.

**MARY JANE STRYKER THEATER**
Thursday evenings at 7:30, enjoy an eclectic schedule of live music, classic films, and independent cinema. Free documentary films are screened on Sunday afternoons. For titles, descriptions, and times, see inside back cover of this issue or visit us on the web at www.kalamazoomuseum.org.

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#1 This machine helped with bottling.

#2 The teeth on the underside of this tool were used to grip something many of us have around the house.

#3 The well-equipped, 19th-century traveler might have carried this handy pocket device.

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**Have a question about a person, object, or artifact that relates to the history of Southwest Michigan? Send your question to Tom Dietz, curator of research, [tdietz@kvcc.edu or 269/373-7984] and you might see it answered in a future issue of Museography.**
GROUP ACTIVITIES AT THE MUSEUM
Kalamazoo Valley Museum is a great destination for parties and group activities. Groups can attend concerts, planetarium shows, Challenger Learning Center mini-missions, movies, special classes or programs! Call the reservation coordinator at (269)373-7965 for more information on any of the programs available to groups of all ages.

VOLUNTEER ALERT!
Call the volunteer coordinator at (269)373-7907 and learn about the benefits of volunteering at the Museum.

ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES
The Museum is barrier-free. Sign language interpreters may be scheduled for programs with a minimum of two weeks' notice. Assisted listening devices are available for use in the planetarium. Our TDD number is (269)373-7982.

PLANETARIUM
Experience a journey into space like never before. Spectacular sights and sounds guide your imagination to locations and events throughout our amazing universe. $5/person

RINGWORLD
June 7–Aug. 31 • Saturday/Sunday, 3 p.m.
The Cassini spacecraft is wrapping up its mission at Saturn. Find out what Cassini has revealed about Saturn's clouds, rings and moons, including Titan where a probe landed early in the mission. 40 minutes

TREASURES OF THE MILKY WAY
June 4–Aug. 27 • Saturday, 3 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m.
Beardless Red guides stargazers in their search for glittering star clusters and glowing nebulae visible in the Milky Way this summer. Learn the tricks of reading star charts and star hopping to find faint objects. 40 minutes

NIGHT OF THE FALLING STARS
June 7–Aug. 31 • Saturday 11 a.m.; Sunday, 1:30 p.m.; Wednesday 2 p.m. (during hands-on programs)
Sarah learns about meteors, meteor showers and meteorites on a visit to her grandparents' farm. 30 minutes

CIRCUIT TIME PROGRAMS
Offered FREE to families and preschool groups, these programs are approximately 20 minutes long and may include stories, musical activities, games, and art projects appropriate for ages 3 to 5. Monday–Friday 10 a.m.; Saturday at 11 a.m.

MONDAY: Math
TUESDAY: Science
WEDNESDAY: Stories
THURSDAY: Music
FRIDAY: Art
SATURDAY: Stories

KVM SUMMER CAMPS

IN MEMORY OF ALVIN H. & EMILY T. LITTLE
The Challenger Learning Center is an innovative educational facility—complete with Space Station and Mission Control—that takes thousands of visitors each year on simulated space missions. Public and special group missions are available. Call (269)373-7965 for more details and to make reservations.

JUNIOR MISSIONS
A specially designed 90-minute mission for children ages 8 and up. Pre-flight hands-on activities prepare junior astronauts for an exciting flight in the CLC's spacecraft simulator. Successful crews receive certificates and mission memorabilia. An excellent program for scouts and other clubs. Ages 8 & up; minimum of 8, maximum of 14 participants. Registration and $80 deposit required at least two weeks prior to mission date: $10/person.

MINI-MISSIONS
Children ages 6 and up and adults get a chance to fly a 45-minute session in the Space Station Simulation. Be the very first humans to travel to Mars! And even though the mission has been carefully planned, experience unforeseen dangers that pose a threat to the crew. These mini-missions are available only during the summer. Wednesday hands-on programs. $5 per person. Each child ages 6–11 must be accompanied by a partner 12 years or older.

CHALLENGER LEARNING CENTER

CHALLENGER LEARNING CENTER CAMPS
JULY 16–20 • 2 Half-day Camps
Morning Camp, 8 a.m. to Noon
Junior Astronauts (ages 8–12) max. 30
Space explorers and junior astronauts train for a Voyage to Mars mission. Enroll in either half-day camp, or for both camps to enjoy a full day of mission preparation. Cost: $70 each or $120 for both

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE MUSEUM’S SUMMER CAMPS, SEE THE INSIDE FRONT COVER OF THIS ISSUE.

BurtOn Henry Upjohn
Children’s landscape

Designed to introduce preschoolers and their parents to an interactive museum setting. Children’s Landscape offers hands-on activities, exhibits, and programs designed for children 5 and under. Children older than 5 may participate only if accompanying a preschool buddy, and their play must be appropriate to preschool surroundings.

Monday–Friday: 9 a.m.–3 p.m.
Wednesday: 9 a.m.–5 p.m. (June 25–Aug. 27)
Saturday: 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
Sunday: 1–5 p.m.
Closed for maintenance: Sept. 22–26

JUNE/JULY • TELL ME A STORY
Explore all of your favorite stories using books and hands-on activities.

AUG./SEPT. • BACK TO SCHOOL
Explore the basics including numbers, letters, colors, shapes, science, and art. Children will have so much fun playing they won’t know they’re learning!

Sounds Amazing!
While visiting the Museum’s recent Raise the Roof exhibit, Carylyn Williams, 1, and her 3-year-old brother, William, react to hearing their voices come back to them sounding as if they were in a very empty room. The two children, whose parents are Ron and Kerry Williams of Oshtemo Township, were visiting the Museum on Saturday, March 29, 2008. (Photograph by Jerry Campbell/Special to the Kalamazoo Gazette ©2008. Reprinted courtesy of the Kalamazoo Gazette.)
In late 2007, the Museum received a flag (guidon) that had belonged to the surviving members of Company C, 126th Infantry Regiment of the U.S. Army’s 32nd Division.

For those with knowledge of local military lore, that unit was part of the famed Red Arrow Division, composed of men from the Michigan National Guard drawn from the Kalamazoo County area. The unit served in both World War I and World War II. The donation is a proud reminder of their military service.

A guidon is used to identify a military unit during review and is often carried in parades. This guidon is a swallow-tailed banner of dark blue cloth. It bears the crossed-rifles insignia of an infantry brigade, the numbers “126” at the top, and the letter “C” at the bottom.

Eight surviving members of Company C donated the guidon in November 2007. Wheeler Bowman, Donald F. Cripps, Casimir Czyzewski, Arthur J. DeWitt, George Merrill, Fred S. Spencer, Benjamin F. Taylor and Shirley H. Weber enlisted in the Michigan National Guard a few years before the United States entered World War II. They saw front-line combat during their service (alongside two other surviving members, Byron L. Gibbs and Ritchey Ray, who were not from the Michigan National Guard). Merrill died in February 2008.

All had previously been enrolled in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a government project that provided employment during the Great Depression of the 1930s. At the end of that decade, with war looming in Europe and Asia, the Michigan National Guard began to expand. The Guard offered pay of $2 per month more than the CCC, so the men opted to join.

Company C of the 126th Infantry served with distinction during the war. The unit participated in a two-month battle for the Japanese beachheads at Buna, New Guinea, in 1942. Taylor was severely wounded there. His comrades rescued him from no-man’s land.*

This guidon has been carried in recent Memorial Day parades in Kalamazoo, but its fragile condition led the survivors to place it in the Museum so future generations will know of the service and sacrifice of all the men who served in their unit.

SPECIAL EVENT: An “Enchanted” Evening at the Museum
Friday, June 20
Showtimes: 6 p.m. and 8 p.m.; $3 adm.
In conjunction with the opening of The Amazing Castle, you are invited to view the fairy tale that comes to life before enjoying a sneak preview of our new third-floor special exhibit.

FREE SUNDAY DOCUMENTARIES
These FREE events augment our special exhibits The Amazing Castle and “The Sciences… My Supreme Delight”—T. Jefferson, 1809
Sundays, 1:30 p.m. — “The Amazing Castle”
7/13 David Macaulay: Castles
Tour the interior and culture of a 13th-century Welsh castle.
7/27 Medieval Siege
Enter the battlefield and experience the chaos of medieval life.

8/10 Warrior Challenge: Knights
Transport back in time as a polo player and a police officer test their skills as knights.
8/24 Great Streets: The Royal Mile
From the Palace of Holyroodhouse to Edinburgh Castle, the Royal Mile captures the history of Scotland. Witch burnings, body snatchings, and royal assassinations are just a start.

9/7 Visions of: Scotland
Explore Scotland from a bird’s-eye view. See the beautiful countryside, historic cities and many more unique views.
9/21 Visions of: England

“The Sciences… My Supreme Delight” — Thomas Jefferson series
Sundays, 3 p.m.
7/13 Thomas Jefferson, Pt. 1
Author of the Declaration of Independence and the third president, explore the life and impact of Thomas Jefferson in this two-part series.
7/27 Thomas Jefferson, Pt. 2
8/10 Lewis and Clark, Pt. 1
Follow along with Lewis and Clark as they explore the West.
8/24 Lewis and Clark, Pt. 2
9/7 Monticello: Home of Thomas Jefferson
Take a visual tour of Monticello and see how this fascinating home tangibly reflects Jefferson’s life and interests. The video shows the house in its entirety and traces Monticello’s history from the original plans to the stately home of today, including architectural features, gardens and furnishings.

9/21 Saving the National Treasures
Watch as a team of conservators, engineers and historians work to save the Declaration of Independence and other documents that have been ravaged by time.
Once Upon a Time

Discover medieval legends and lore this summer Wednesdays from 1 to 4 p.m. — FREE!

June 25: The Castle
Explore the castle made of stones, glass, and tapestries.

July 2 — Storybook Characters
Go on a medieval adventure with storybook characters.

July 9 — The Royal Family
Meet the family members who live in the castle.

July 16 — Knights and Dragons
Discover dragons and the knights who fight them.

July 23 — Mystic and Magic
Learn magic words and amazing potions.

July 30 — Fairies, Frogs, & Falcons
Take a fantastic adventure with familiar characters.

Aug. 6 — Jesters, Jugglers, & Jousts
Become an entertainer—learn to juggle and prepare to joust.

PLUS: Challenger Mini-missions: 1:30 p.m./$3 per person
Planetarium Shows: 1:30 and 3:30 p.m./$3 per person

Kalamazoo Valley Museum
230 N. Rose Street
Downtown Kalamazoo
FREE General Admission—Open Daily
HOURS: Mon.—Sat. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
(First floor re-opens at 6:30 p.m. for Thursday evening events in the Mary Jane Stryker Theater)
Sundays & Holidays 1 to 5 p.m.
(269)373-7990 • (800)772-3370
www.kalamazoomuseum.org