

# JHA FOOTNOTES



## JHA Update

The interactive open house we called 'History Mystery' was a success with 2 lucky winners getting a Meijer gift card. Thank you to Jenison Meijer for the donation of the gift cards.

JHA participated in the Memorial Day Parade, see pictures on page 5.

Our first "When and wear" in May brought many people interested in vintage clothing. We continue with this display thru June, we sincerely hope you can come and hear the stories of the vintage clothing in our collection.

In July we will be digging into the attic to take a look at older technologies and how our ancestors did their jobs with our "Tool Time" display.

## ISSUE 2, JUNE 2016

### A Different View

A look at History From a Different View

2

### Upcoming

Memorial Day Parade Photos

5

JHA Board of Directors

6

Calendar of Events

8

[www.jenisonhistory.org](http://www.jenisonhistory.org)

## Evening at the Movies!!

Join us at the new Georgetown Senior Center on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue (next to the old senior center) at 7 PM, this Thursday, June 16 to see the Blissfield Romance and 2 other short films. Cookies and punch will be provided.

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## A Look at History From A Different View

By Ronnie Aungst

Today, we are looking at Georgetown township in the late 1800s and early 1900s from a different view. These were the murders of Georgetown township.

### **1875 January – Naylor Murder –**

Clarence Eugene Naylor, best known as Eugene, the son of Samuel Naylor and Ruth E. Niles, was about 20 years old. It is reported that he went missing on January 14, 1875. He could not be located anywhere. Months went by with no word on the young man. Many thought he had simply left home but family and those that knew him did not believe this to be true. On April 12, 1875, Eugene's body was discovered along the Dennison to Grandville RR tracks, near the Kent county border. An investigation revealed that he had been beaten to death, and since his belongings were missing, the motive was thought to be larceny.

The two men that Eugene Naylor was with the day of his disappearance, Joseph Harmon and Peter Schellen had left the area. Harmon was located and cleared of any involvement. Then, four men were arrested - Thomas and James McDonald, George Cathcart, and William Newhall - and all were released for lack of evidence. However, Peter Schellen, the other man that was with Naylor that fateful day, had left the state. Much time and money was spent tracking Schellen. Finally, in the spring of 1878, Schellen was arrested and returned to Michigan to face the charge of murder. After a trial, Peter Schellen was found guilty of second degree murder on December 5, 1878, and sent to the State prison for 20 years. After appeals, in September of 1886, Governor Alger pardoned Peter Schellen and he was released.

### **1897 August – Dailey Suicide after Attempted Murder –**

Henry A. Dailey was a well-to-do farmer in Jenison. He was recently widowed but ready to be married again. He wrote the mayor of Chicago asking for assistance in finding a wife. The mayor gave the letter to the newspaper who ran it as a "literary curiosity." Dailey received about 500 replies. He chose a woman named Mrs. Hattie Newton. They married quickly but the marriage was not a happy one. Hattie made a visit to Chicago which was supposed to be for just a couple of days but turned into two weeks. When she returned, Henry and Hattie argued and then separated. Henry gave Hattie three days to return to her "allegiance" as his wife but she refused to resume her wifely relations.

He forced his way into her bedchamber and pressed his army muzzle against her heart but she pushed it away taking the charge in her right side. She staggered from the house and made her way to the door step of Luman Jenison. Hattie was taken to Mrs. Husband, who along with Dr. Cooper, attended to her injuries. In the meantime, the authorities were notified and Henry was arrested and searched. The officers found a plug of what looked like tobacco in his pocket.

Since there were no jails in Jenison, Henry remained in the custody of the officers to wait for the morning train to take him to jail in Grand Haven. While they waited, they entered the saloon and allowed Henry to have a few beers. Somehow, Henry managed to slip strychnine into his beer and drink it. He fell backwards to the floor in spasms and died in front of the surprised officers. What the officers thought was a plug of tobacco turned out to be opium.

### **1898 September – Badgerow Murders & Suicide –**

[Continued on page 5](#)

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Jesse Badgerow married Mary Aylsworth, a young woman about 10 years younger than himself. They had one son, Gilbert. After about five years of marriage, Mary had learned that Jesse apparently had previously been married and never divorced. This information caused Mary to leave Jesse and return to her father's home with their son, Gilbert. Jesse attempted to get Mary to come back but she refused. Finally, Jesse told Mary's father that she should come to their home and divide their possessions putting an end to their marriage. And so, Mary did return to the home bringing with her Gilbert and her sister, Lucy Aylsworth. After they finished in the house, Mary, Lucy and Gilbert went to the buggy to return to Mr. Aylsworth's home but Jesse stopped them at the gate. After a few angry words, Jesse stabbed Mary in the chest. Mary called out to her sister for help and Jesse turned on Lucy stabbing her as well. Little Gilbert was left sitting in the buggy watching it all.

Jesse then ran off down the road. He met a neighbor, Mr. Parker, returning to his home. Jesse told Parker, "I've done it!" Parker asked what he had done and Jesse told him "I've killed Mamie!" Jesse then ran on to his brother's farm and Mr. Parker headed for the Badgerow farm where he found Mary dead on the ground and Lucy groaning next to her. Mr. Parker, whose daughter was with him, scooped up Lucy and rushed her back to his home. His daughter took care of Gilbert. Word was sent for the doctor, the sheriff and the parents. While the doctor attempted to save Lucy, the sheriff with a party of volunteers began pursuing Jesse Badgerow.

Jesse had made his way to his mother. He told her what he had done and reportedly kissed her good-bye. Late in the night, the officers tracked Jesse down to his brother's barn. It was so dark and they had only their lanterns but it was enough for Jesse to see them. As they closed in, Jesse stood and said, "Boys, you can't hurt me. They drove me to it!" Then he drove the knife into his own chest, falling dead on the floor. Lucy Aylsworth died the next day.

Jesse Badgerow was the son of Jesse Badgerow and Mary Briggs; Mary Aylsworth Badgerow and Lucy Aylsworth were the daughters of John & Susan Aylsworth.

### **1900 December – Jackman Murder –**

On December 30, 1900, in a barn belonging to States McCoy in Jenison, Humphrey Jackman died. At first, the story was that Jackman was kicked by a horse in the head. However, after closer examination, it was determined that he had been hit in the head by something and someone other than the horse. Bert Tibbets sat with the body of Humphrey Jackman the night before the funeral. He seemed calm and unaware that he was viewed as a suspect.

The reason for the murder was thought to be a robbery but the reason was not clear. However, the evidence all pointed to Bert Tibbets who lived nearby and was, from all accounts, the last one with Humphrey Jackman before his death. Bert Tibbets was arrested and jailed pending his trial. Even now, Tibbets showed little concern about being convicted.

The trial was a huge event with the courtroom full at every session. A multitude of witnesses were brought in to testify. The witnesses testifying to the unlikeliness of the horse delivering the fatal blows to the character of Bert Tibbets, who it seems was known to lie and steal. Though the general opinion appeared to be evenly spilt, the jury returned a verdict of guilty to first degree murder.

One would think that was the end of it but it was not. The convicted murderer, Bert Tibbets, now confessed in full to killing Humphrey Jackman but he said he was not alone. He said that

States McCoy helped him to commit this crime. At first, this was ridiculed but the convicted murderer took the stand and named States McCoy as his accomplice. The examination was concluded and McCoy was bound over to a higher court to face a charge of murder.

The case dragged on and the Judge ordered that the lawyers to move things along. The courtroom now was reported to be "packed to the doors." Many witnesses were brought in and testified to the "untruthfulness which has always characterized the statements of the convicted murderer." It was the testimony of Bert Tibbets that sealed the verdict. While Tibbets, who was brought to Grand Haven from the Jackson prison, stayed with his original story, most of it fell apart under cross examination.

States McCoy showed great relief and happiness when the jury returned with a verdict of not guilty. States McCoy was acquitted of murder and Bert Tibbets was returned to the Jackson prison to serve out his life sentence.

Humphrey Jackman was the son of John J. Jackman and Mary Crumbach; his birthdate was October 22, 1879, and he was 21 years old at the time of his death.

### **1913 October – Atwood Murder –**

Zelma Hammond Atwood was found hanging from a tree in a secluded location. Was it suicide or murder? It was a mystery. The developments of the mystery were as such:

October 21 - Zelma Hammond Atwood left the home of her mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Lowing, in Georgetown township, Ottawa county. She said she was going to Grand Rapids with Morris Atwood to be married.

October 23 - Mrs. Lowing discovers that her daughter did not go to Grand Rapids with Atwood, and her worry results in the institution of a search.

October 24 - Frank Atwood, younger brother of Morris, after searching a grave near his home, discovers Zelma Hammond's dead body hanging from to a sapling. Officials were notified. The body was found only a few rods from the barn of the Atwood farm.

October 25 - At the coroner's inquest it develops that Morris Atwood became the husband of the dead woman at a juvenile court wedding performed in Grand Rapids in 1912. Other evidence introduced furnished authorities with numerous choices discrediting the suicide theory. An autopsy was ordered.

October 27 - Dr. A. S. Warthin of Ann Arbor performed an autopsy refusing to divulge his findings.

October 28 - Morris and Frank Atwood were taken into custody by Sheriff Dykhuis and Deputy Nordhouse and lodged in the Ottawa county jail. They will be held pending the result of Dr. Warthin's analysis of the victim's organs.

It appears that enough evidence was gathered to bring Morris Atwood, the "secret husband", to trial and to hold his brother, Frank Atwood for a later trial. There were many witnesses and experts called to the stand. There was a great deal of questioning about rope and knots, a handkerchief and two letters written by Zelma - one to her mother and the other to Morris Atwood. Testimony was made verifying that Atwood was indeed married to Zelma in 1912 and that the marriage had been kept hidden. Dr. Warthin's testimony was "that Zelma Atwood was dead before being hanged and that an abortion was the probable cause of death."

April 19, 1916 - In the end, Morris Atwood is convicted of his wife's death and sentenced to "from four years to 14 years in the Ionia Reformatory and to pay the costs of the case, amounting to \$500. The case was appealed twice during the time that Atwood was convicted and both times the court refused to grant a new trial. In passing sentence, Judge Gross stipulated that in case the costs of the case were paid within four years, Atwood could be released on parole. If the costs are not paid, he is to serve six years."

It appears that Frank Atwood was never tried for this case.

Zelma Hammond Atwood, was the daughter of Emmet Lowing and Elizabeth Cheyne. She was born in November of 1878. She was married first to Guy E. Hammond in 1901 and they had a daughter, Guyola Hammond, before they divorced.

This serves as a reminder that people, unlike industry and technology, don't change. Fear, jealousy, anger still rears its fury causing the most desperate crimes.

## Memorial Day Parade

Photo's By Liz Timmer



*Emi Timmer (Hippy), her friend Annie (Confederate Soldier) and McKenna Bosch (Poodle Skirt)*

*Depicting the era's of the Civil War (1860's), the years of the Sock Hop (1950's) and the Hippy Flower Children of the late 1960's*



## Upcoming Open Houses

### Jenison Museum

#### “History Mystery”

June 7, 2016 – 10 to Noon AM

June 18, 201 – 2 to 4 PM

#### “Tool Time”

July 5, 2016 – 10 to Noon AM

July 16, 2016 – 2 to 4 PM

### Jenison Museum Souvenir’s

Our newest souvenir in the Gift Shop is still available for sale. This year we are highlighting the Jenison Mill. We also have a few of our previous design from 2012 highlighting the Jenison Museum



**Prices:** \$15 each or two for \$25

Find us on Facebook at Jenison History Association and become a friend.

## JHA Trustee’s

### Chair

Liz Timmer (2016)  
457-3708

### Vice Chair/Curator/Tours

Ken Williams (2017)  
772.6523

### Treasurer/Editor

Ruth Lowing (2017)  
540-4709

### Social Secretary

Nellie DeLaat (2016)  
457-1193

### Recording Secretary

Linda Droog (2018)  
457-3016

### Archivist

Barb Semeyn (2017)  
457-9343

### Maintenance/Historian

Mike Timmer (2016)  
531-1218

### Trustee

Yvonne Williams (2017)  
772-6523

Gene Kort (2016)  
534-6769

### Township Rep

Ron Villerius

(####) = year of term expiration

**Contact Information:** Members may contact the board at the above phone numbers or leave a message at 457-4398 or [info@jenisonhistory.org](mailto:info@jenisonhistory.org)

### Organization Membership in the Historical Association of Michigan

Find us on the registry of the Historical Society of Michigan  
[www.hsmichigan.org](http://www.hsmichigan.org)

# 2016 Association Schedule

## Meeting Schedule

Meetings are all open to the public and held on the **3rd Thursday** of the month at 6:45 PM at the Georgetown Library, unless noted. No meeting in December.

Thursday, June 16 (Georgetown Senior Center)

Thursday, July 21

Thursday, August 18

Thursday, September 15

Thursday, October 20

Thursday, November 17

> > No meeting in December

**All meetings begin at 6:45 PM unless noted**

## Museum Open House Schedule

Open House schedule

June 7, 2016 - 10-12 AM - "When and Wear"

June 18, 2016 - 2-4 PM - "When and Wear"

July 5, 2016 - 10-12 AM - "Tool Time"

July 16, 2016 - 2-4 PM - "Tool Time"

August 2, 2016 - 10-12 AM

Sept 6, 2016 - 10-12 AM - "Tool Time"

Sept 17, 2016 - 2-4 PM - "Tool Time"

Oct 4, 2016 - 10-12 AM - "Tool Time"

Oct 15, 2016 - 12 noon - Riverboat Ride

Nov 1, 2016 - 10-12 AM

Dec 3, 2016 - 1-4 PM - Christmas

Dec 6, 2016 - 10-12 AM - Christmas

Jan 7, 2017 - 2-4 PM - Christmas

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*www.jenisonhistory.org*

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JENISON HISTORICAL  
ASSOCIATION

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