

- EST. 1958 -

# WYANDOTTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

February 2024

VOLUME 2



Two youngsters  
bake heart-shaped  
cookies.....1947



**FROM THE PREZ-**

Join us for a vintage valentine on Friday February 9, 2024, from 5-8pm or Saturday February 10, 2024, from 1-4pm. We will have wedding dresses, vintage valentines, wedding photographs and more on display for the two-day event.

One thing most people don't know about me is that I collect wedding photographs. Over the years, I have bought dozens of wedding photographs but the ones I hold near and dear to my heart are the ones given to me by friends. Over the years, friends and family members have given me copies of themselves or their family members and I truly do cherish all of them.

~Mary-Johna Wein



Marlene and George Gouth on their wedding day .



Right  
Mary Swiecki  
& Alfred Pischke  
July 18, 1931



The Wyandotte Historical Society would not be where it is today without decades of dedication from **KEN NAVARRE!** Here he is on his wedding day, **May 16, 1953.** He and his lovely bride will celebrate **71 years of marriage** this May!

## Tragedy days before her wedding

Friends enjoying a Wyandotte summer day! Unfortunately, tragedy would befall two people in the photograph. Lena Gee would die days before her wedding, she was buried in her wedding dress. Shortly after her passing, Aaron Strong was electrocuted while painting the Dynamo room at the Municipal Power Plant.



Left to right- Aaron Strong, William Girardin, Joseph Girardin Sr, William Girardin, Mrs. J. Girardin Sr, and Lena Gee.

Written by Don Gutz

**Alexander (Alex) Laurent Gee (1831-1890)** was born in Canada on July 1, 1831, son of Josephine Campau and Jean Gee. When Alex was a young boy, his family moved to Wyandotte. In 1853, he married Margaret Girardin. On January 29, 1862, Alex mustered into Company E, of the 15<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry for a three-year term. Shortly after his first steps into the land of Dixie, Alex would have his first taste of battle in April 1862. After a long voyage, the regiment arrived late in the night in Shiloh, Tennessee, where they were to join the army in the morning just a mile beyond. The thought was that camping on the banks of the Tennessee River was safe because the nearest rebel was supposed to be more than 50 miles away. Unfortunately, that wasn't true, and they would soon find out. At daybreak, the 15<sup>th</sup> Regiment was jolted awake by the crack of gunfire. While Alex was off fighting for his country, Margaret gave birth to their daughter Josephine on September 20, 1862. After the war, he returned to Wyandotte and worked as a drayman. Margaret would have a few more children, including their daughter Cecilia. In early 1890, Alexanders' health started to decline. On May 12, 1890, "Mr. Gee expressed a wish to have his daughter married before he died, so Miss. Cecilia Gee and Jon Ginsel of Wyandotte were quietly married after service in the Catholic church on Wednesday night." (The Herald) The following day March 13, 1890, Alexander died at the age of fifty-nine; he is buried at Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte, Michigan.

Martin Bertera & Mary-Johna Wein

**IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY.....JOIN THE WYANDOTTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY!**

Readers of our newsletter are very important to us! But did you know that many people who read the newsletter do not actually belong to the society? If that's you, please join our wonderful group! Being a member of the Wyandotte Historical Society not only means discounted prices to many of our fun year-round events, but you are supporting our local heritage, the Historical Society, and the Museums. Memberships start as low as \$1 for students and \$20 for a basic annual membership.

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**SPEAKING OF READERS....**

Longtime Society Member Pat Gillum surprised us with a too-generous offer for me (editor, Josh Halasy). After reading the story in our December 2023 issue highlighting my vintage Christmas display, she offered to DONATE three vintage Christmas decorations to me, saying that as she downsizes, she wishes them to go to a good home. Rather than try and sell them (and they could make a pretty penny, too), she donated them. That's the type of people we have downriver, kind and generous! And it also shows that you never know what you will find in our monthly newsletters! Pat and I met up on December 27, 2023, and I also gave her a tour of my home.



## Call for Vintage Christmas Ornaments and Decorations!

The Wyandotte Museums are actively seeking vintage and vintage-inspired (reproduction) Christmas tree ornaments and decorations for future use in campus holiday decorating. Items from the 1890s through the 1990s are requested. If you have ornaments and decorations you would like to donate, or have questions about whether your items meet the criteria, please contact the Wyandotte Museums at [museum@wyandottemi.gov](mailto:museum@wyandottemi.gov). Staff will contact you to discuss your decorations and the next steps. Please keep in mind, due to the possible influx of prospective donations and available storage space, not all pieces can be accepted. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to hearing from you!



**BACK BY \*\*\*VERY\*\*\* POPULAR DEMAND...**

**3RD ANNUAL PISANKI MAKING CLASS!!!**

Come join us Friday, March 8, 2024 at 7:00 pm at the Marx Home and learn how to make your very own Pisanki (polish Easter eggs)!!!

Historical Society members Sue & Josh Halasy will teach the class, and the cost is only \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members. Due to the limited seating please reserve a spot by emailing the Historical Society at [wyandottehistory@gmail.com](mailto:wyandottehistory@gmail.com) or leave a message at 734-324-7299.

Return Service Requested

**Wyandotte Historical Society**

Burns Home

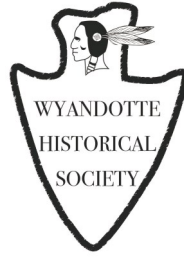
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