



Dexter Area Historical Society

Estab. 1971

2026 Spring Newsletter

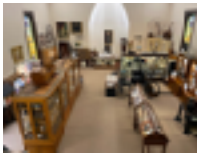
President Caryl Burke's Note:



Everything is coming out of hibernation and blooming like crazy! Now that the rain has slowed down, it is time for some adventures. Come explore Dexter's historic downtown, visit the Dexter Area Museum on Friday or Saturday 1-3 PM, walk the beautiful tree-lined streets, get in on some of Dexter's many enticing treats and activities. Be sure to check out our calendar below to see which DAHS adventure calls you. Happy Spring! We are excited to announce that Julie Esch has joined our Board! Julie grew up as part of a family that first arrived in the Dexter area in the early 1800s. Her enthusiasm and her background in finance will be a great addition. Welcome Julie!

The Dexter Area Museum

Our opening day is May 1st and we will be open on Fridays and Saturdays from 1 to 3 through November. There is no charge and we welcome you to come for our displays and also our Gift Shop.



Bring your genealogical questions for our staff to help you discover your Dexter family. Information on our 2026 special display is noted below:

“Footprints of History”

Vintage shoes offer more than protection for the feet - they tell stories about fashion, technology, and everyday life in the past. Each pair reflects the materials, social customs, and the craftsmanship of its time, revealing how people lived, worked and expressed themselves.



In the earlier centuries, shoes were often handmade or produced in small workshops. Styles varied widely depending on era and purpose. Sturdy leather boots were designed for labor and travel, while delicate, finely stitched shoes were worn for formal occasions. Details such as button closures, hand sewn seams and shaped heels highlight the care and skill involved in their creation.

Unlike modern footwear, vintage shoes were rarely thrown away. Instead, they were repaired and maintained by cobblers using specialized tools such as iron lasts, awls, knives, and hammers, cobblers also restored worn shoes, reinforced seams, and adjusted them to fit. These repairs extended the life of each pair and reflect a time when resources were valued and preserved.

Today vintage shoes and cobbler tools together tell a story of craftsmanship, sustainability, and daily life. Each crease, stitch and repair mark represents not just wear, but care, skill and history.

DuMouchelles Antique Appraisers

This year our Antique Appraisal Day will be on May 2nd with DuMouchelles appraisers, and is looking to be very successful. We used an



on-line registration form for the first time with great success!! All time slots were booked much earlier this year and we already have 21 people on the waiting list, in case someone cancels. If interested, please call the museum at,

734-426-2519, and leave your name & phone number for future appraisals. Thank you!

Isn't it time to do some

Spring cleaning?

The Heritage Guild Museum Garage/Yard Sale will be on May 28 and 29th from 10:00am till 5:00pm at the Dexter Area Museum, 3443 Inverness, Dexter, MI 48130. Come and support the Museum by either donating towards the sale or coming and buying at the sale! All the purchases will support the museum's projects.



Clean and in good working order household items will be accepted on May 26th and 27th. No clothing please. All proceeds go towards up and coming Museum projects! Any questions, please call Sue B. at 734-426-4763.



Be sure to check out the America 250 Articles that are now appearing in The Sun Times.

As our nation celebrates its 250th anniversary, you might wonder how the major events in America's history were felt by the people here in Dexter. The Dexter Area Historical Society has written a series of articles about Dexter's history as it relates to happenings in the country. The articles explore how Dexter and its citizens were involved in or affected by the events or ideas happening in the nation.

2025 Gordon Hall Challenge Grant a Success!

Yet again, our community has stepped up and dug into their pockets to prove how much they love Gordon Hall and want to see it restored! Our goal for the 2025 Challenge Grant was \$50,000. As of March 31, 2026, we raised a total of \$49,024!

This year's restoration project, the Gordon Hall 2026 Project, is a really big one – restore the original floor plan, completely finish the inside of the central hall, and install a lift. These funds will contribute significantly to our ability to get that done. To those of you who have donated at any time to restore Gordon Hall, we can't thank you enough. To that incredible group of people who have donated faithfully over the years, you are an inspiration. This is a huge job and it will take each and every one of us to complete it successfully.

2026 Memorial Day Parade

To celebrate America's 250th birthday, DAHS will march in Dexter's parade. We will dress up in our 1800s costumes and carry a banner about Gordon Hall. Please join us! Wear a costume or your favorite patriotic clothing. Flags and patriotic banners are encouraged. All are welcome, including kids (accompanied by an adult). Meet us at 9:30am on Monday May 25 on Inverness between Main and Forest. For more information about the parade itself: <http://www.dextermemorialdayparade.com/>

The Heritage Guild



We are a group of ladies who craft items throughout the year for the Holiday Bazaar in December. Many talents are represented in the group and having a willingness to try new projects in a fun atmosphere is characteristic of our members. New members are always welcomed. If you are interested, please call either Jacquie' Merrow, the Guild President at 734-787-8095 or Carol Ann Emerick, our Secretary/Treasurer at 734-223-8001 or call the Museum, 734-426-2519 and leave a message. Thank you for inquiring about the Heritage Guild and we hope you'll join our group!

The Guild Ladies appreciate donated items they can use toward their projects. If you have cotton or cotton blend fabric that needs a new home, please keep us in mind. Also, if you make your own jams or other Garden Treasures, please save some for the Holiday Bazaar. The customers love home canned jams, pickles and pickled beets! For the gift baskets we offer, we need large clear cellophane bags or clear cellophane on a roll for the smaller baskets to wrap them in. Items can be dropped off at the Museum on the 3rd & 4th Wednesdays 10 to 12 or Friday & Saturdays from 1 to 3pm.

The Gordon Hall 2026 Project

Final: \$49,024 on 3/31/2026

THANK YOU!



	\$50,000
	\$45,000
	\$40,000
	\$35,000
	\$30,000
	\$25,000
	\$20,000
	\$15,000
10/23/2025- \$10,000 Challenge Grant!	\$10,000



The 2026 Gordon Hall Raffle

We are back!! Our 2026 raffle will start soon with the drawing on August 8th at the Summer festival. We have had tremendous support for the restoration of Gordon Hall over the years through the purchase of the raffle tickets. The winner will receive half of the proceeds, and the other half will help with the restoration.



A special thank you to Daryl Albright for organizing the raffle sales at the Cedars. Last year our winner was a resident at the Cedars of Dexter.

The Latest on Gordon Hall Restoration

December 2025 saw the completion of our work to improve the structural supports inside Gordon Hall. As soon as the holiday activities at Gordon Hall were complete, a large team of volunteers went to work to pack up everything in the building.

Our big project in 2026 is to restore Gordon Hall's original floor plan, completely finish the inside of the central hall, and install a lift. We are currently working on identifying the contractors who will complete this work and we expect demolition of the 1950s interior to begin soon. Next will be removal of the small amount of remaining asbestos, repair of the plank flooring, installation of the staircases, and rough-in of the 1841 floor plan. The lift and central hall will come later in the year. The expected cost for this transformational project is \$1 million, and we already have \$750,000 of it. We are all waiting with great excitement to see what remains of the original structure underneath the 1950s surfaces that we are so familiar with. Stay tuned – we will share with you as discoveries are made!

Many thanks to Phoenix Contractors and Hopkins Burns Design Studio, our long-time partners in the restoration of Gordon Hall, as well as to Grit Construction and DDI Inc, our contractors for this project. Finally, our sincere appreciation to the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office whose grant partially funded the project, and to Joe Frost and Washtenaw County who coordinated and administered the grant.

Bicentennial Book - Then and Now

Don't forget to purchase your copy of the Dexter book Then and Now. All proceeds support the Dexter Area Historical Society. The cost is \$30.00 per book with a small service fee for credit sales.

The books are available at the Dexter Museum, 3 Bird, Sheer Bliss Salon, and at Robin Reed Barbering.

A special thanks to the Lauras at 3 Bird for selling our books throughout the year.



250th Historic Documents Display



Look for a repeat display of our Nations 250th Birthday at the **Dexter District Library!** It will be there in June and July, and is sponsored by the Consortium of Washtenaw County Museums along with the students from Hillsdale College. Presented are the major United States Documents along with descriptions of them. The poster Boards can be found on the 2nd floor of the Dexter District Library. Make sure that you check both sides of the posters!

Save the Dates

September 20th - Forest Lawn Cemetery Tour

Presented by the Dexter Area Historical Society
and the Dexter District Library

November 14th - Restoration Gala

Due to construction we will not be able to have Gordon Hall Days or Christmas At The Mansion this year, but we will have one big event on November 14th. We are at the beginning of our planning stage and if you would like to join our committee we would love to have you - this is very exciting.

Please contact Bev Hill 734-426-4767 or beverlyhill6@gmail.com for information or volunteering.





Dexter Area Historical Society 2026 Calendar

Jan – March	The US 250th Display – Dexter District Library
May 1	Museum opens for the season, “Footprints of History”
May 2	Antique Appraisals with DuMouchelle’s
May 16	Gordon Hall Raffle ticket sales begin at Dexter Garden Club Spring Plant Sale
May 25	Memorial Day Parade
May 28-30	Museum Yard Sale, by the Dexter Heritage Guild
June – July	The US 250th Display – Dexter District Library
August 7-8	Dexter Summer Festival
August 8	Gordon Hall Raffle Drawing
Sept 20	Forest Lawn Cemetery Tour
October 11	DAHS Volunteer and Donor Appreciation Event
November 14	Gordon Hall Restoration Gala
	DAHS Annual Meeting
November 28	Museum closed for the season
December 5	Holiday Bazaar at the Museum - Dexter Heritage Guild
December 12	Second Chance Holiday Bazaar at the Museum

Note: No Gordon Hall Days or Christmas at the Mansion this year due to the exciting construction project there.

Not to worry – they will be back!



See our website for up-to-date information on all these events

dexterhistory.org • 734-426-2519 • dextermichhistory@gmail.com

Business Members

The Dexter Area Historical Society began a campaign to bring local Dexter businesses into the membership of the Society. Businesses are offered a lifetime, non-voting membership in the society and in return they will receive the newsletter, a membership emblem and recognition in the newsletter of those who have joined. If you are interested in joining us, please contact us at DexterMichHistory@gmail.com. We are happy to have the following as DAHS Businesses:

Beacon Dental - Dr. David Traynor
Chelsea Dexter Dental Group
Cindy Strang Insurance Agency
CMR Mechanical LLC
Dexter Family Dentistry - Brent Kolb
Dexter Oral Surgery and Implant Center
Dexter Riverside Cellar
Mike Fitzpatrick of Edward Jones
Finn's JM&J Insurance Agency
Hackney Hardware

Hosmer-Muehlig Funeral Chapel
Huron Counseling Services
Main Street Optometry-Vision
Reed Barbering - Robin's
Spring Valley Trout Farm
St. Andrew's UCC Church
Village Animal Clinic of Dexter
Wallace & Wallace Properties
Whitetail Farm - Mary Baude

Membership Form

On the next page is our Membership Form! Please print it out and use it to join or renew your Membership in the Dexter Area Historical Society! We always need volunteers of all ages and diverse skill sets, but one of the areas missing from the form is a place for you to indicate how you would like to volunteer to help us. Please let us know what you love to do by putting a note somewhere on the page!

Membership fees are due January 1st each year. We have indicated in the note in your email or on your letter the status of your account according to our records. Please use the form on the next page to renew or begin a new membership. Mail the form and your check made out to DAHS to Dexter Area Historical Society, 3443 Inverness, Dexter, MI 48130. Thank you.

DEXTER AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OFFICERS:

President
Caryl Burke
Vice-President
Beverly Hill
Secretary
Ina Germain
Treasurer
Jan Weaver

DIRECTORS:

Julie Esch
Carol Jones
Shawn Pierrel
Kelsey Tingley
Nancy Van Blaricum
Gary Vander Haagan
Sharon Wheeler

CONTACT INFORMATION:

NEWSLETTER - Nancy J. Van Blaricum DexMuseum@aol.com
WEBMASTER - Jan Weaver weaver9113@gmail.com
GORDON HALL SPECIAL EVENTS - Bene Fusilier: 734-426-8972
HERITAGE GUILD - Jacque' Merrow jalyme65@gmail.com
MUSEUM DIRECTOR - Carol Jones DexterCofC@aol.com
GORDON HALL DIRECTOR - Bev Hill: BeverlyHill6@gmail.com

FACILITIES:

DEXTER AREA MUSEUM - 3443 Inverness, Dexter, MI 48130

PHONE - (734) 426-2519. WEBSITE: DexterHistory.org EMAIL: DexterMichHistory@gmail.com

Museum Hours: Friday and Saturday, 1 to 3 PM, May through November



Membership Form

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

(home)

(cell)

Email: _____

Membership Type* New member Renewal

\$_____ Individual \$15 yearly

\$_____ Family \$25 yearly

\$_____ Student \$2 yearly

\$_____ Business \$50

\$_____ Life \$200

\$_____ Extra gift for Museum

\$_____ Extra gift for Gordon Hall

\$_____ **TOTAL**

-----Make checks payable to: **Dexter Area Historical Society (DAHS)**-----

Mail to:

Dexter Area Historical Society
3443 Inverness Street
Dexter, MI 48130

Contact:

Phone: 734.426.2519
Email: DexterMichHistory@gmail.com
Website: DexterHistory.org
Find us on Facebook @dexterhistory
Dexter Area Historical Society

*All memberships except Life and Business are renewed each January.