

Howell Area Historical Society

Museum location: 128 Wetmore St.

Mailing address: P.O. Box 154, Howell, MI 48844 Phone: 517.548.6876

email: howellareahistoricalsociety@gmail.com website: www.howellareahistoricalsociety.org



From the President's Desk

“Trains -- and the railroads that carried them -- encouraged westward expansion, stimulated industrial and commercial growth, and spurred technological innovation for much of the 19th and 20th centuries. And often, stations were the most important and prominent buildings in town -- the gateways to their communities,” according to the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

At the height of railroad building during the late 19th century, more than 40,000 depots dotted the country. Now, less than half remain. But with these losses come an opportunity to preserve historically and architecturally significant railroad buildings in creative ways such as ours.

Our station was the gathering place for our community. Sometimes for gossip or gathering of friends, sad farewells, happy welcome homes, other times for mail, newspapers, shipment of crops or receiving merchandise for local businesses. It also served as the telegraph office.

The above photo shows the Ann Arbor train station alive with activity. Holkins Lumber Company occupied the west side of the Center Street block and the north side of Wetmore Street. The freight shed sits just west of the depot and the massive platform stretched to within inches of the tracks.

Large Holstein farms shipped their milk by rail to market, and the cars on the spur which ran to the mills on Walnut sit ready for loading. North of the tracks is the platform next to the “Doodlebug” (gas powered train) Garage. We are honored to preserve and share its history.

James “Rudy” Rudolph, President

WHERE DID THE NAME COME FROM?

Railroads first formed to carry freight and people from one point to another point. Around 1865, many railroads met in Chicago and transferred to other railroads. Chicago became a bottleneck causing long delays.

Three railroads were extended to reach Frankfort, Michigan so freight could be ferried to Wisconsin and farther north. Since Toledo, Ohio had access to Lake Erie, it became the connecting city east of Chicago.

The first Railroad to reach Frankfort, Michigan was the Toledo and Ann Arbor Railroad in 1888. It got its name because the first tracks were between these two cities. From Ann Arbor, the track went to Whitmore Lake, Hamburg and Chilson. The line continued through Howell north to Oak Grove, Cohoctah, Durand, Owosso, and finally Frankfort.

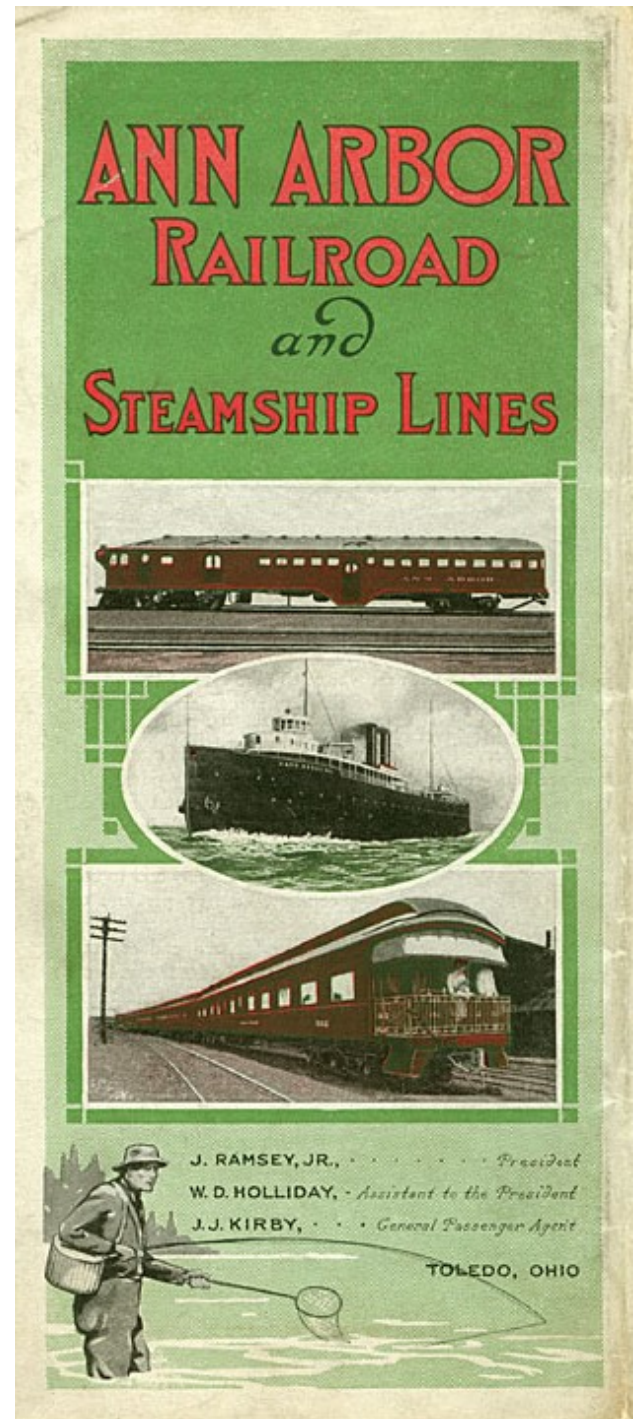
How the Pere Marquette Railroad got its name is not so simple.

Could it be the railroad was named after the Jesuit Missionary, Pere Marquette, buried on Mackinac Island? Or maybe the railroad was named after the Pere Marquette River? Neither being the case. The city of Ludington is located on the mouth of the Pere Marquette River on Lake Michigan. The city was once named Pere Marquette, but later the name was changed to honor James Ludington a logging magnet in 1873. In 1875, the Flint & Pere Marquette RR began a ferry shipping operation across Lake Michigan from Ludington to Wisconsin.

The Wabash was the third railroad to reach Frankfort through Toledo using the Ann Arbor tracks.

The Wabash Railroad was named after the Wabash River. The Wabash River flows from northwest Ohio along the Indiana, Illinois border into the Ohio River.

The Miami Tribe named the river, the French translation of the Indian name was Ouabache and the English translation is Wabash. The Wabash Railroad's main line was from Kansas City to Detroit.



LIGHTING YOUR WAY

The large electric light bulb pictured here, was given to the Historical Society by Mrs. Robert Chapel and her son, from the George H. Chapel Jewelry Store, one of the outstanding business establishments of Howell.

Mr. Chapel carried a fine stock of silver, watches and Jewelry for over 50 years. His store occupied the west half of the brick building at the northwest corner of West Grand River and North Michigan Ave. now occupied by the Uptown Coffee Shop. The store was built shortly after 1880 by M. J. McPherson on the site of one of the earlier frame business blocks.

O.J. Parker's Drug Store occupied the east half of the building and Dr. J. C. Walton had his dental office in the front room above with the rear room upstairs occupied by various fraternal lodges; and in later years by several law offices. The upper floor was reached by an ornamental outside stairway. At the rear, facing Michigan Ave. (then called East St.) Manchester Beach, "The Man Milliner" had his famous hat shop for many years.

The unusually large light bulb was used for special illumination at the jewelry store with the patent date of 1880. Thomas Edison patented the incandescent light in 1879 using a carbon filament. Improvements followed using other heat resistant materials. Tungston followed, first used in 1908. The example is undoubtedly an improved type of incandescent lamp.

Howell streets were first lighted with oil lanterns mounted on eight foot poles. These were serviced by a man who rode in a horse-drawn open buggy. The lamps were lit at sundown and the next day at dawn, the lamps were extinguished, the wicks were trimmed and oil refilled.

About 1890 the first electric lights were installed in Howell as Arc Lights with carbon



strikes carrying the current to overhead globe lamps, hung from road side poles to which wires were fastened.

A private company controlled the power plant which was located on N. Barnard St. at the Ann Arbor Rail Road Crossing.

Mayor Clifton Heller (served 1957-1969) provided information from the city records about the electric lighting of the village. "in 1900 the village voted to acquire its own electric plant at the estimated cost of \$14,450.00. The vote in March of 1900 resulted in 427 yes - 238 no. The council declared vote lost - no quorum. After several attempts and contracting between village and privately owned companies, a village owned plant was constructed and power was provided about 1903."

Use of incandescent lighting for stores and homes began in 1900. Before that, most homes used oil lamps. Some patented gasoline lighting was used for outdoor torches, etc.

TRAIN ORDERS

AT ONE TIME, TRAINS COULDN'T LEAVE THE STATION WITHOUT THEM



The train order, variously called the "flimsy" or the "tissue" - together with its attendant operators, train order offices, and order hoops - was rendered obsolete by the radio, the computer, and amended work rules. With its passing in the late 1980s, so did a whole concept of railroad traffic control that had been a hallmark of U.S. practice since the 1840's.

How train orders developed - In the early to mid-1800's, opposing trains on the same track were governed by a timetable, which contained a schedule for most regular freight and passenger train movements. Meets were prescribed, and one train simply waited on the other.

As traffic increased so did the level of sophistication, culminating in a timetable containing schedules of various classes and establishing priority. Still, there was no way to supersede it, and single-track operation was slow, hazardous at best, downright dangerous at worst. The term "cornfield meet" (for a head-on collision) had real meaning in those days.

By the time of the Civil War, the Train movements were controlled by a dispatcher who used telegraph agents to deliver orders to affected trains. The system remained essentially unchanged for more than a century.

Typical train-order operations began with the timetable. In it were contained schedules of each train, which were accorded a number and a numerical class. Such trains were called "regular trains," e.g., authorized by

the timetable. First-class trains were superior to or had precedence over second-class trains, which were superior to third-class trains, etc.

Between trains of the same class, those in the direction specified in the timetable were superior to those in the opposite direction. Inferior trains were required to clear the schedule of opposing superior trains, and they were also required to clear the schedule of following superior trains, although in latter days this meant first-class trains only.

These timetables, distributed to all employees with duties involving train operation, conveyed the authority for a train to move over a given section of track at a given time; they were the official operating schedules of the railroad. Simpler versions of the timetables, showing times and other information regarding passenger trains, were made available to the public so riders could know when the trains ran.

Meeting points between scheduled trains were indicated in the timetable, usually in boldface type together with the number of the train or trains to be met. However, such meets were not positive. It was only an "advisory" where such trains should meet if they were both on time. The superior train did not have to wait on an inferior train at a timetable meet. The onus was on the latter to clear the former.

Train orders were issued by the dispatcher and superseded the timetable. They were used to advance an inferior train against a superior one, establish positive meeting points, create extra trains and sections, annul schedules, authorize work trains, and warn of track conditions and the like. There was an old saying: "What the timetable giveth, the dispatcher taketh." Train-order forms themselves came in pads printed on a thin onionskin paper, or "flimsy," which enabled crews to read them over the light of a firebox or against a kerosene lantern.

Running trains with train orders - The transmission of a train order was a strict ritual. The names of stations were pronounced and then spelled out letter by letter. So were numbers and time. The dispatcher always addressed an order to the train being restricted first and then each operator repeated the order back to him in the succession in which they were addressed. In telegraph days, the dispatcher wrote the order in the train-order book from the first repetition; with the telephone it was written as it was transmitted. In all cases, it was underlined as each station repeated the order.

(continued)

Once it was repeated correctly, it was made "complete" and the time given. Once effective, the train order remained in effect until superseded by another order, fulfilled or annulled.

Along with the orders came a clearance card, called a Form A on some roads. Its purpose was to list all the orders a train was to receive at the station. A train-order signal was installed at most stations. These took sundry forms: as basic as a simple rotating lantern, semaphores, color lights, or, as on the PRR, a simple flashing "O" mounted on a signal mast.

Handing up orders was part and parcel of the operator's job. For many years a bamboo hoop with a metal clip holding the orders was used. Its big drawback was that it had to be returned by the crew, who simply threw it along the right of way. Pity the hapless operator who had to trudge down the track to retrieve the hoop in winter or during an electrical storm. In later years, operators used a fork holding a string in which a slip knot was tied to hold the orders. The crew member simply slipped his arm through the fork, the string slipped out of the springloaded latch that retained it, and the orders were in hand.



This train order hoop (above) once stood at the Ann Pere station on the Chesapeake and Ohio tracks at the south side of Howell. The Ann Pere (below left)



On many roads, permanent order-hoop stands or racks allowed

the operator to "load them" and then stand back and inspect the passing train. Regardless of the improvements, delivering orders was not pleasant under any circumstances. Operators had to watch for shifted loads and flying brakeshoes.

Technology catches up - The timetable system was replaced by newer methods of operating authority involving radio communications. Under these systems, trains are granted movement authority on a case-by-case basis, not by a standing timetable. For the convenience of riders, schedules are still issued to the public, but, as always, they convey no official operating authority.

In the years following World War II, a number of changes occurred as passenger trains disappeared and branch lines were abandoned.

The 1980's brought the fax machine, signaling another round of train-order office closures. The end was near. Hard on the heels of the 1986 contract, train orders became history.

DOWN SOUTH COURT STREET

The blacksmith's shop was often in the center of town. Settlers depended upon him to make and repair basic items and tools. He made hoes and plows for farmers, hinges and nails for carpenters, and wheel coverings for wheelwrights. Most blacksmiths also made shoes for horses and oxen.

The heart of the blacksmith's shop was a huge, hot forge. A helper fanned the hot fire with giant bellows. The blacksmith heated iron on the forge until it was soft enough to use. The shop was dim so that the blacksmith could easily see the color of the heated iron. It was best to bend and shape it on the anvil when it was yellow-orange. A tub of water stood near the forge to cool the hot iron.

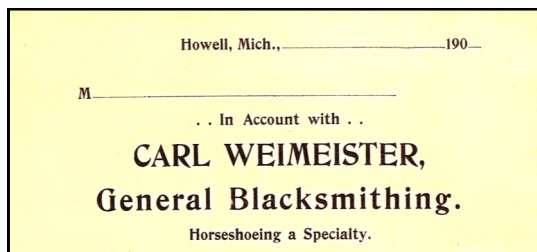
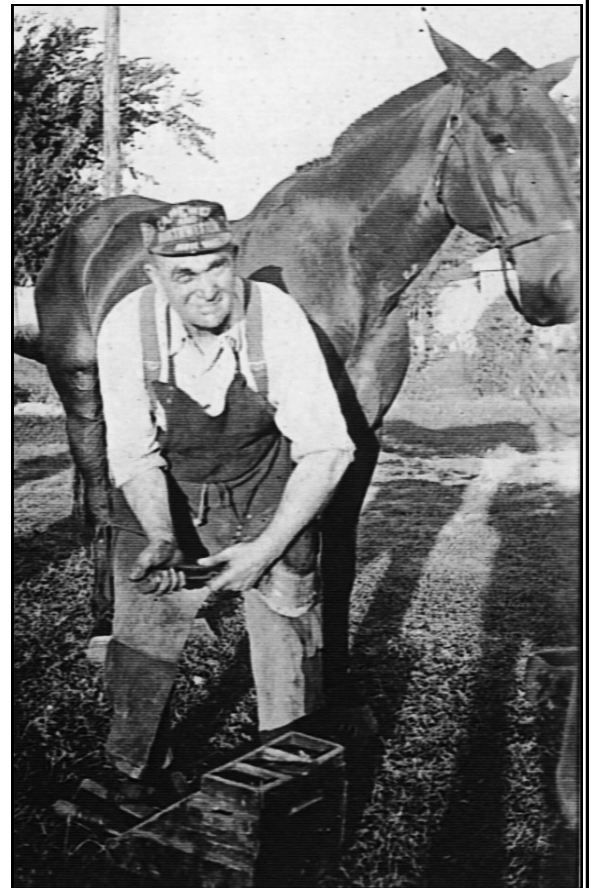
Settlers brought their horses and oxen to the blacksmith for new shoes. The blacksmith removed the old shoes with pincers. He shaped new shoes for a

perfect fit. Next, he trimmed the animals' hooves. He hammered nails into the horn part of the hooves. It did not hurt the animals. Hooves are like fingernails. They do not feel pain.

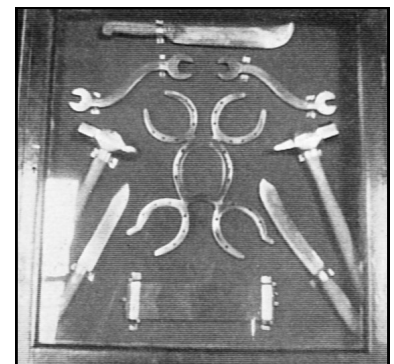
A horse could stand easily on three feet while the blacksmith put a shoe on the fourth. But oxen have tiny feet compared to their big bodies. They cannot stand on three legs. The blacksmith put oxen into a sling in order to shoe them!

The blacksmith learned a lot about caring for animals. Settlers often asked for his help when horses were sick.

Frontier Blacksmith. (2012, June)



Above: Mr. Weimeister remembers one day when he worked in his shop with his hired man from 7am until 7pm applying 164 horse shoes at 15 cents per shoe for reset and 35 cents per new shoe. He turned 92 years old in May of 1959 and attributed his longevity to hard work. Below left: His shop on the west side of S. Court St.



Above: Display case of tools he designed and made by hand in his shop which received many awards.

WHERE YOU LIVE

1835: George L. Sage was the first child born in Howell.

1836: The first saw mill was built by Moses Thompson.

1836: The Eagle Tavern was the first building erected within the limits of the village. Being such, it served as the site for first election, court room, church, retail store, post office and town meeting hall. (on the site of the Current Opera House).

1836: First church organized – Methodist.

1837: First School house built on Gregory Street.

1838: First resident physician: Dr. Gardner Wheeler.

1838: Presbyterian Church organized.

1838: Baptist Church Organized.

1840: First Church building erected – Presbyterian.

1843: First newspaper: Livingston Courier.

1847: First Court house built.

1850: First plank road to Howell from Detroit completed and Plank road to Lansing begun.

1855: Group of thirty women visited the saloon of Samuel Balcom and destroyed the liquor as well as the cask in which it was stored.

1857: First major block Fire: south side of grand river between Walnut and Michigan Ave. destroyed including the Eagle tavern.

1860: First county fair held at the new fair grounds.

1863: Village of Howell incorporated.

1872: Jewett Block built. Housed the Jewett, Goodnow and Hickey dry goods store, then became the First State and Savings Bank and later, 1st National Bank.

1875: John Weimeister built the Weimeister building, home of National Hotel (Cleary's Pub).

1887: Second major block fire. Which began in the Greenaway building at Grand River and Michigan Ave.

1892: Third major block fire in the same location as 5 years previous. F.G Hickney and E. D. Wines, two prominent businessmen lost their lives in the fire.

1906: the Howell Carnegie Library opened.

1912: the first theater opened in Howell – Temple Theater next to Weimeister building. Admission: 15¢.

WHAT'S IN A NAME - PEANUT ROW

Frank H. Bush was a young, enterprising Howell businessman. He is recorded in local history as being responsible for State Street's nickname of Peanut Row. After signing a three year lease, Bush placed large, front page box ads in the Livingston Republican newspaper during the month of May, 1881. He advertised "picture frames, house plants and toys," among other things. He said that he would accept "butter, eggs or produce" in exchange. In bold print he declared his business to be located on "Peanut Avenue." A month later the newspaper reported that "Frank Bush of Peanut Avenue has a new peanut roaster." Soon other tenants on the street began to announce themselves as located on "Peanut Avenue." It was a well-used term among the populace later to become, Peanut Row.

Peanut Row would partially burn in the fire of 1887 that destroyed almost the entire city block bound by Michigan Avenue, Grand River, State and Clinton Streets. The four northernmost stores on State Street survived the fire. The next building south was partially saved. The three stores nearest Grand River Avenue were destroyed. Two were rebuilt in 1887, restoring the row as it exists today of six architecturally uniform buildings.

The 1892 fire that leveled many stores on the north side of East Grand River spared Peanut Row in its entirety. A compilation of newspaper reports regarding Peanut Row was done by Judy Burns and is available in the Archives at the Howell Carnegie District Library.

From: A Walk Through Time Seven Walking Tours of Howell - Historic Preservation Commission

DOWN MEMORY LANE - PIZZA ANYONE?



2709 E. GRAND RIVER, HOWELL, 546-8930

	Small 12"	Med. 14"	Lge. 16"	X-Lge. 18"
Cheese	1.65	2.20	2.75	3.75
Cheese and 1 item	2.30	2.90	3.65	4.75
Cheese and 2 items	2.75	3.35	4.20	5.20
Cheese and 3 items	3.10	3.65	4.45	5.45
Cheese and 4 items	3.60	4.15	4.85	5.90
Vio's Deluxe	3.85	4.40	5.25	6.35

Deluxe: Cheese, Pepperoni, Ham, Mushrooms, Green Pepper, Bacon, Onions & Anchovies.

CHOICE OF ITEMS: (any combination) Pepperoni, Ham, Mushrooms, Bacon, Green Pepper, Onions, Hamburger & Anchovies.

OPEN: 4 p.m. TUES.—SUN.
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Val's Pizza

HOWELL

2429 E. Grand River
546-4118

GREGORY

144 Main St.
498-2222

BRIGHTON

300 W. Grand River
229-9561

Val's Pizza

Small 12" 8 Pieces	Medium 14" 8 Pieces	Large 16" 12 Pieces	X-Large 18" 16 Pieces
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Prices Include Sales Tax.

Cheese	1.90	2.75	3.25	4.40
Cheese and 1 Item*	2.75	3.25	4.25	5.50
Combination Cheese and 2 or 3 Items*	3.25	4.25	5.00	6.50
Hawaiian Delite Cheese, Ham, Pineapple	3.25	4.25	5.00	6.50
Deluxe	4.25	5.00	6.00	7.50

Cheese, Pepperoni, Mushrooms, Green Peppers, Ham, Bacon, and Onions. You may substitute Hamburger for Pepperoni, or add Anchovies at no extra charge.

*Your choice of: Pepperoni, Mushrooms, Green Peppers, Ham, Bacon, Onions, Anchovies, Olives, Fresh Sausage, Pineapple, and Peanut Butter.

	Howell	Gregory	Brighton
Mon — Wed	4 p.m. — 12 p.m.		5 p.m. — 11 p.m.
Thur	4 p.m. — 12 p.m.	5 p.m. — 11 p.m.	5 p.m. — 11 p.m.
Fri — Sat	4 p.m. — 2 a.m.	4 p.m. — 11 p.m.	4 p.m. — 1 a.m.
Sun	4 p.m. — 12 p.m.	3 p.m. — 10 p.m.	4 p.m. — 11 p.m.

HOWELL

2429 E. Grand River
546-4118

GREGORY

144 Main St.
498-2222

BRIGHTON

300 W. Grand River
229-9561

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select Howell Area Historical Society as your organization to support

Kroger Community Rewards brought over \$452.00 in donations to the Historical Society in 2016.

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LEARNING ABOUT THEIR COMMUNITY



Each year the second grade classes of Howell area schools visit many of the historical buildings in the downtown area to learn of their importance and their history.

The weather cooperated and we had a wonderful time sharing with over 500 students during May and June. Pictured here are several of our amazing groups.



CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY

August 19th

Howell Historical Society

Classic Car Show

10am - 4pm

Grand River Ave

In front of the Court House

August 19th - 20th

Museum open

10am - 6pm

Howell Melon Festival

1225 Steam Train Excursions

October 15th 2pm

Howell Historical Society

Annual Meeting

Depot Museum

Open Sundays

August 6, 13, 20, 27

Closed Labor Day Weekend

September 10, 17, 24

Open during Food Truck Rally

on September 30th

In the shadow of the historic Livingston County Court House on Grand River Avenue

**Howell Melon Festival
Classic Car Show**

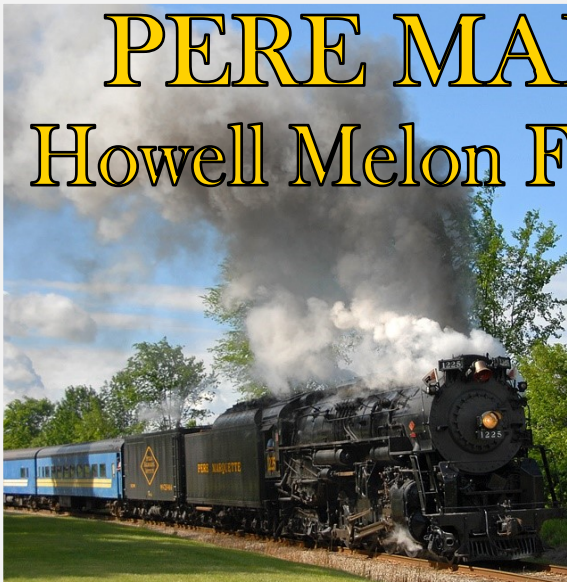
Presented by the Howell Area Historical Society

Dash Plaques will be provided for the first 50 cars along with goody bags.

Cash award will be presented to the top pick voted by People's Choice.

Registration fee will help to maintain the
Society's Historic Howell Depot Museum, Caboose and grounds.**Saturday
August 19th****10am - 4pm**

Pre-registration fee \$10.00, day of event, \$15.00

Applications may be picked up on Sunday
at the museum from 10am - 2pm or downloadable on our website.**PERE MARQUETTE 1225
Howell Melon Festival Steam Excursions**

Departing the Howell Depot

August 19 & 20

10am, 12pm, 2pm, 4pm, 6pm* (*Saturday only)

Coach: adults \$15 Children \$10 Caboose: adults \$25 Children \$20

for tickets contact:

MichiganSteamTrain.com (989)399-7589

 Sponsored by
Federal Credit Union
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**Howell
Melon Festival**
 AUGUST 18TH, 19TH, & 20TH 2017

ANNUAL MEETING

Howell Area Historical Society

128 Wetmore Street, Howell

Open House

immediately following the annual meeting

light refreshments

**SUNDAY,
OCTOBER 15, 2017
2:00 PM**

all members and public welcome

rsvp: 517-548-6876

or howellareahistoricalociety@gmail.com



Support HAHS with your membership or Donations
Not a member? Join today!
Your support is vital to the preservation of local history

2017 Membership Year - January 1, 2017 - December 31, 2017

**2015 - 2018
Board of Directors**

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Rudolph

Vice President
Mike Mason

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Joan Wilkinson

Secretary
Mary Shaughnessy

Trustees
Geri Moen
Joyce Fisher
Ed Vitez

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Memberships: ☐ \$15 Single ☐ \$25 Family ☐ \$100 Contributing ☐ \$500 Lifetime

Donations:

☐ \$10 ☐ \$25 ☐ other _____

The Howell Area Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.
Your donation is a tax deductible contribution.

Our updated website gives us the opportunity to share more history, our current projects,
and to preserve memories shared with the society.

You can even renew your membership, purchase a "This Place Matters" brick, drop us a email,
sign up as a volunteer or make a donation online.

**Howell Area Historical Society
P.O. Box 154
Howell, MI 48844**