

# *Chesaning Area Historical Society & Museum*

602 W Broad St  
Chesaning MI 48616

November 2017  
NEWSLETTER

---

## MONTHLY MEETING

Monday November 13, 2017

—NOTE TIME CHANGE for this month only—  
2 p.m. - Meet at COMFORT CARE of CHESANING  
(Next to United Financial Credit Union)

We will be given a tour of the facility and have our meeting there at the facility. Coffee & goodies provided.

---

This is the time of year when we take time to be with our families and friends, just being thankful that we are together. This beautiful holiday celebrated nationally since 1864, how fortunate we are to live in the United States.

We are in process of getting the museum ready for the Candlelight Walk bake sale (bring your baked goods to the Peet Center Friday & Saturday Nov. 24-25 12-noon till 8pm)  
Enjoy the holiday Season, keep safe and know that.....



we are thankful for YOU!

## Shiawassee Navigation

Printing from Shiawassee County  
Historical Society — July 2017  
Newsletter "Shiawassee Gazette"

From the time earliest settlements were made on Owosso, the city's pioneers contemplated navigable development of the Shiawassee River. Roads in the 1830s were practically useless for heavy transportation; obstacles to construction were generally regarded as virtually insurmountable. Thus, to avert an isolated condition, the city's leaders weighed possibilities of making the river beatable between Owosso and Saginaw. After the idea was conceived, little time elapsed before steps were taken to procure legal rights.

By an act the State Legislature adopted March 21, 1837, the "Owosso and Saginaw Navigation Company" was incorporated.

Daniel Ball was regarded as the originator of the idea of securing navigation on the Shiawassee River. He, with Sanford M. Free, a prominent member of the company, commenced work in 1837. It had been authorized by the Legislature "To enter up the river Shiawassee, and upon the lands on either side, and to use the rocks, stones, gravel, or earth which may be found there-on in the construction of their works, first giving notice to the owners or occupiers of the land; and

to form and make, erect and set up any dams, locks, or any other device whatsoever which they shall think most fit and convenient to make a complete slack water navigation between the points herein mentioned, to wit' from the village of Owosso, situated on the Shiawassee River, to and down said river to a point where the Flint River intersects the Shiawassee; and the locks for the purposes of passing steamboats, barges, and other craft up and down said river shall be of sufficient width and length to admit a safe and easy passage for steamboats, barges, and other crafts, up as well as down said river."

---

During the first year several thousand dollars were consumed in removing fallen timber, driftwood and other obstructions, principally between Chesaning and the mouth of the Bad River. Through this work the river was made navigable for flat-bottomed boats and scows. Several of these were constructed in such a manner as to permit the crew to stand on foot-boards at each side and "POLE" the craft up the stream. Below Chesaning the poling process was used extensively, but above Chesaning, horses towed the boats from tow-paths along the banks. The tow-paths were built on whichever side of the river appeared most economical.

The stream was developed to the

extent that produce was shipped from Owosso to Saginaw frequently. At one time two hundred barrels of flour was transported on a craft constructed by Ebenezer Gould.

After 1846 some improvements were made on the river through the construction of a lock at Chesaning, the building of a number of dams and in other ways, but the company never utilized the additional authority it was granted in 1846 for the construction of the Shiawassee-Bad River canal.

Until the opening of the Detroit & Milwaukee Railroad, boats continued to run on the Shiawssee River at favorable stages of water, but with the introduction of railroad's service, water transportation was entirely discontinued.

The river method of transportation, unreliable and unsatisfactory as it proved to be, was in use to some extent for about fifteen years. It is doubtful, however, whether it's advantages even partially offset the outlay of over \$100,000 expenditure involved in the project.

..... submitted by Dianne Stanuszek

\*\*\*\*\*

DID YOU GET THE ANSWER??

In our last issue we riddle for SMART people ( We KNOW 1 smart person: Kelly Personke — she guessed the answer.....

"NOTHING" Good Job !!!

## September 27, 2017 Board Meeting Minutes

### Old Business

- Gary Azelton installed a ground light. Ray Gengler replaced 4 letters on Chesaning sign
- Bob repainted & repaired remaining letters & background.
- Brett has purchased a new laptop & Office program for museum

### New Business

- A sign "Sorry, we are closed today due to lack of vounteers" on front door if necessary, during open hours.
- Candlelight Walk hours open: Friday & Saturday 5-9 pm

JUST A NOTE: Len Strait, due to illness, was unable to appear at October meeting - we will have him here another time.

## Memorial

In Memory of

Kristin Greenfelder

from:

James & Frances Young Family