

Flushing Area Historical Society

810-487-0814

431 W. Main St. • Flushing, Michigan 48433 •

Facebook: [Flushing Area Historical Society & Museum](https://www.facebook.com/FlushingAreaHistoricalSociety&Museum)

<http://flushinghistorical.org>

Summer Hours

Tuesday, 9 AM to 1 PM

Sunday, 1 to 4 PM

and by appointment

For information, call or e-mail:

810-487-0814 fahs@att.net

Museum 810-487-0814

Museum tours & building use:

Dan Anderson 810-686-6669

Membership, program director

Robert Davies 810-624-0278

Donation of artifacts:

Call Museum 810-487-0814

President,

Dan Anderson: 810-686-6669

Board of Directors:

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Dan Anderson 810-686-6669

Vice President:

Matt Hartmann 810-210-1518

Secretary: Paul Morgan

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Term expires Dec. 31

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Mary Smith

Flushing Area Historical Society (The Depot)

431 W. Main St. at the R.R. track

7 PM, Monday, May 18, 2026

Rachel Stock returns Monday May 18 at 7pm

I am excited to share that Rachel Stock will be returning to show us how to organize our cell phone photo galleries.

Rachel Stock is the archivist at Sloan Museum of Discovery. She graduated from University of Michigan-Flint with a bachelor's degree in history. She earned her Master of Library and Information Science at Wayne State in 2019. She has worked in academic libraries, archives and museums since 2013. Her professional interests include digital preservation, and she frequently speaks on the preservation of family collections.

In this presentation, Rachel will introduce digital preservation for family collections. She'll cover methods of digitization for print photographs and documents, suggest ways to share digital materials, and give you tips on long term preservation.



The program is free and open to the public. A door prize will be drawn and light refreshments will be available.

Bob's Notes

Our President, Dan Anderson, is touring the USA along Route 66. What a fantastic journey!

The April meeting was highly informative, as Ray Dorhout, Pharmacist shared his experiences at Cherry Street Pharmacy and stories of older Flushing drugstores. Look for his presentation posted on our new website, flushinghistorical.org

The 250th exhibits are coming along and will be ready for viewing when we reopen on Mother's Day, May 10 from 1-4pm. We are participating with Sloan Museum, Crossroads Village, and numerous local museums in Genesee County in celebrating 250 years of freedom. We will have passbooks available and you can get your book stamped here when you visit us.

Recently my neighbor dropped by with a label he found at an estate sale. The label read "Flushing Maid," Michigan Pickle Works, Flushing, Michigan. In the June newsletter we will have photos and information that was found on the "The Pickle Factory."

If you ever picked pickles or worked in a pickle factory, we would love to hear your stories. If you have more information or photos or know someone who worked here in Flushing, please share. Also, we would love to hear the stories or other topics you find interesting for future newsletters.

Best Regards,

Bob

The Flushing Historical Society will be open during Summer Fest in June on the 11-13 from 10 A.M. till 4 P.M. Stop by and check out our America250 Displays. On Sunday June 14th join the Historical Society and the American Legion at the Flushing Park Band Shell at 5:30 pm for our Flag Day Celebration, as part of the celebration of America250. After the celebration join us at the Museum for light snacks.

The Story of Flushing's First Flag

Flushing Observer, June 30, 1976

BY DON BEEBE

With the Nation observing its Bicentennial, and much interest centered on the flag, it may be of interest to Observer readers to learn that the first known "Flushing Flag", one of the area's most historic and prized possessions, is a key exhibit by the Flushing Area Historical Society at the Community Fair which is now in progress.

The historic banner, a home-made product said to have been used at the first Fourth of July celebration in this area, may be seen at the community tent at the Fair.

Historical records indicate that the Flushing Flag was first used in a ceremony held in 1842, near the site of the former Brentwood Manor which was located along the river about four or five miles north of Flushing.

It is believed the cloth for the Flag was furnished by Ezra Smith, another area pioneer, and that the Flag or design itself was painted on the cloth by Henry Brent, son of one of the legendary pioneers of this area, Thomas L. L. Brent.

Its date of 1842 is based on the recollections of another Flushing pioneer, H. D. Penoyer, who was present at that first July Fourth celebration. The following item is taken from The Flushing Observer dated July 4, 1907: "There was a historic relic on exhibition at the home of Alfred Smith on Henry Street today, which attracted not a little attention.

"It was the flag used at the first Fourth of July celebration held in this township. It has been kept in his father's family, the late Ezra Smith, all these years and is in a state of excellent preservation. "It consists of a piece of cotton cloth three or four feet square on which is painted the American Eagle and 13 stars. The cloth was provided by Mr. Ezra Smith, and the flag was painted by Henry Brent."

"The celebration was held on the banks of the Flint River opposite the Brent farm. H. D. Penoyer clearly recalls the celebration, and as nearly as he can fix the date, it was in 1842. Thomas L. L. Brent delivered the oration."

It was with interest that we read the account attributing the making of the flag to Henry Brent, for most historians have stated the father himself made the historic banner. Other accounts have stated that Henry Brent painted pictures as a hobby, and this lends more emphasis to the conclusion that the son and not the father made the flag.

The story of the first Flushing Flag is interesting in its own historical setting, but it becomes doubly interesting when it is tied into the history of the fabled Thomas L. L. Brent and the home called Brentwood Manor."

The story of the Brent family in Flushing -- a wealthy Virginian who took a young noble Spanish lady for his wife, who hoped to carve a plantation-like empire out of his holdings of 70,000 acres in Genesee and Saginaw Counties, plus the alleged mysterious circumstances surrounding the death of his wife and the disappearance of his children -- that story will long intrigue writers and readers.

The complete story of the Brents and their home is another tale for another time. Suffice it to say that it is our firm belief that Brentwood Manor had historical interest and if the Crossroads Village Project been started years earlier it would now be reposing in the historical Genesee County village. One Sloan Museum official stated to us some time ago that the loss of Brentwood Manor, one of the truly pioneer residences, is the perfect example of the "historic accident that cannot happen but did."

continued:

The Brent family came to this community in 1836 where he purchased so much land, he was actually land poor and could not even pay his taxes. Both he and his wife had a bulldog determination to hold unto the land at all costs. It is believed Brentwood Manor was started in the mid 1840's but Brent did not live to see completion.

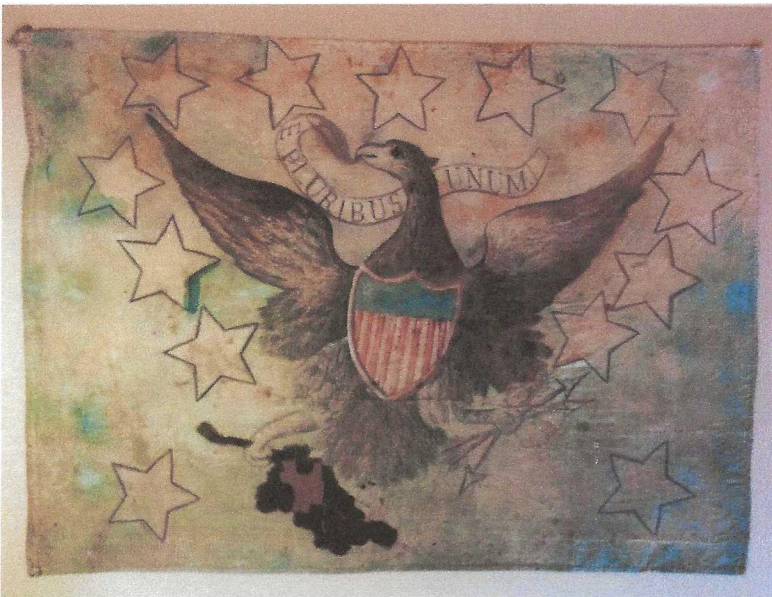
For some years after his death, the home, completed by his wife and a skilled administrator of the estate, was a social center of the area.

Records indicate in the 1890's this home came into the hands of the Bishop family. In 1948 it was purchased by John Donaski and in 1966 it was sold to Russell Jameson of Saginaw and it was torn down.

Editor's Note:

Several years ago, the Historical Society took the Flag to a person who does "repair and conservation" work for the Henry Ford Museum. Considering the age and condition, we had the Flag repaired and conserved to prevent future destruction. The Flag had considerable damage to the lower section where the Eagle would have been holding an olive branch. This was caused by the green ink used in coloring, which probably contained arsenic, which eventually ate through the cloth.

The Flag is on display at the Depot on the inside wall of the area in front of the restrooms, where it is protected from direct light. This area now has a "Betsy Ross" display with "Betsy Ross" sitting on a chair sewing the "new" 13-star Flag.



The spring Small Museums meeting was hosted by the Davison Area Historical Society on Saturday, April 18, 2026. The meeting was well attended with 37 people representing 12 museums or historical societies from Genesee County and nearby locations.

This was the second time the group was hosted by Davison at the Davison Township Museum at 10069 E Atherton Road, Davison, MI. They also have two other buildings, the Woolley Veterinarian Museum and Davison Area Historical Museum, both located at 263 E 4th St, Davison. For hours and other information, go to their web site: <https://www.davisonmuseum.org>

We don't have a clear history of the beginnings of these informal meetings, but it is believed that they first started over 30 years ago with Flushing and Grand Blanc as two of the first founding members. Over the years it has grown to about 15 groups from Genesee County and at least one each from surrounding areas of Oakland, Saginaw, Shiawassee and Lapeer Counties.

The purpose of the meetings is to gather informally and talk about our successes and problems and hopefully help each other out. The Covid shutdown took a big hit, mainly from loss of income and members. Fortunately, most have recovered and grown over the past three years.

Thank you: We wish to express thanks to all our members who donate money to the Flushing Area Historical Society in memory of a loved one or friend. This money is placed in a trust fund and the interest received helps with the expenses and operation of the Depot. The Historical Society is a 501 (C) 3 tax-exempt, non-profit Michigan Corp. Two memorials were received this past month for **James Leszczynski** (1/7/1933-2/14/2026) from: Mr. & Mrs. Richard Goforth and Don Wilson

Check the mailing sticker on your newsletter for your renewal date. If it is highlighted, it is now due. Thanks to those who pay for two or three years as this saves a considerable amount of paperwork. We print 8 newsletters a year: Feb. - June and Sept. - Nov. If you would like to receive the newsletter by e-mail when renewing, fill out the "e-mail" line at the bottom of the membership form below. Make sure that fahs@att.net is in your address book so it does not end up in the "spam" folder.

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May 2026

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