



Buildings Owned and Maintained by WTHS

Our buildings and grounds are available for rent for various activities and events—teaching a craft class, yoga classes, club meetings, birthday parties, anniversary parties, baby or bridal showers, family reunions, wine tastings, etc. Please contact the WTHS for information (734-368-0887 or 734-994-1045).

Crossroads Community Center



Originally an old apple storage building and cider mill owned by the Williams family, it was given to Webster Church in 1925 and converted to function as a community facility. Known as the “Community Hall,” it served the Webster community for 75 years as a Grange Hall, theater, meeting facility, dance hall, and a place for church suppers, family reunions, and wedding receptions. Falling into a state of disrepair and no longer useful to the church, the building was acquired by the WTHS in 2011. That same year, the building underwent considerable restoration and was renamed the “Crossroads Community Center.”

The building has two floors. The first floor has an open space that will hold tables to seat 75 people, a warming/serving kitchen, two bathrooms, and an area for hanging coats. The upper floor also has an open space that can accommodate about 75 people and a small raised stage.

Webster Corners

The “village” consists of 4 historic buildings: May Mast’s Horse Barn, the Wheeler Wheelwright and Blacksmith Shop, Podunk School, and the Old Town Hall. Two other buildings were built here: the Kleinschmidt General Store, in honor of Paul and Liz Kleinschmidt’s contributions to the township, and the Dieterle Corncrib, built as a memorial to the late Richard Dieterle of the RFD Boys bluegrass band.



May Mast’s Old North Barn. Built for the summer camp for young women run by May Mast, owner of Cottonwood Farm, this building served as a stable for the horses. The farm had 50 riding horses, bunkhouses, and a large activity center as well for the camp. The young women were given a taste of real rural living during their stay at camp. The WTHS purchased the barn and the half acre of land on which it sits in 1999, increasing the Society’s land holding to just under 4 acres. For many years, this barn has housed the “petting zoo” during the Webster Fall Festival. Plans are now being considered to renovate it to be a more useable structure during spring, summer, and fall.



Wheeler Wheelwright and Blacksmith Shop. This building, built in the mid-1870s, was originally located on Webster Church road, north of North Territorial Road. It sat idle after 1914, gradually deteriorating as wild growth enveloped it---doors off and windows fell out, the roof no longer offered much protection against the elements, the siding fell off, the wind toppled the cupola, and the beams were all askew. However, the tenon and mortise construction held the building upright making restoration feasible. In 1982, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Beaugrand, owners of the farm on which it sat, donated the building the WTHS. The first

project of the WTHS, it was disassembled and transported in sections to Webster Corners Village. In 1985 a crew of Amish barn builders reconstructed the building. It is operated during the Webster Fall Festival complete with a working forge and blacksmith.



Podunk School. This building was built about 1850 and originally located on Walsh Road at Merkle Road in Webster Township. At one time it had an enrollment of 83 students and an allocation from the county of \$21.42. As tuition, each student was required to furnish a half cord of wood prepared to fit the school stove. After the rural school system was consolidated into the Dexter Public School system, the school was sold at public auction to a local farmer who converted it to a shed in which to store farm equipment and house animals. Part

of the building had been cut away to provide a large doorway and the sill-understructure rotted away over the ensuing years. WTHS purchased the building in 1992, loaded it onto wheel dollies, and moved it 8 miles along Walsh, Mast, North Territorial, and Webster Church Roads to its present site. At that time, WTHS invested \$26,828 in the restoration of this historical, one-room school. Boy Scout Troop 477* of Webster recently repainted the building and some repairs were made by WTHS to preserve it for several more years. During the Webster Fall Festival the bell in the tower on the roof can be heard summoning students to a one-room school experience.



The Old Webster Township Hall. At the annual meeting of Webster Township on April 3, 1871, 47 Webster voters cast ballots on the question of building a new township hall at the corner of Gregory and Scully Roads to replace the original hall on North Territorial Road. The building served the township well until it could no longer accommodate the township voters during elections. In 1996, the Township built a new hall on a 12-acre parcel purchased from May Mast. The old building was moved across the fields to its present location. It is a wonderful structure with tall windows on three sides and a high ceiling. The old stove that once heated it sits in the center

of the building and rows of benches line each side of the center aisle. “Gingerbread” adorns its roofline and front door.



The Kleinschmidt General Store. This general store replica was built in 2005 in recognition of the service to the community and WTHS by Paul and Liz Kleinschmidt. With its display cases and cabinets, it provides almost 1,000 sq. ft. of storage and exhibit space for the Webster Historical Archives—artifacts, records, photos, local art, and documents illustrative of life in Webster Township. A display of Paul Kleinschmidt’s hand-carved wood art, meticulously detailed from his memory—farm implements, livestock, his one-room school,

his grandparents’ log cabin, a collection of Noah’s arks, complete with 2 x 2 animals—is on loan to the WTHS by the Kleinschmidt family.



The Dieterle Corncrib. Completed in 2016 in time for the Webster Fall Festival, this structure honors the memory of Richard Dieterle, founder and fiddler of Ann Arbor’s premier bluegrass band, The RFD Boys. Richard was born on his family farm not far from Webster Corners in Ann Arbor Township. He loved all things country and was an ardent supporter of the Webster Fall Festival. Beginning in the early 1990s, he and his band played there every year, and the remaining RFD Boys continue to honor this tradition. The corncrib

event stage was architecturally designed to reflect Richard’s rural roots and blend in with the existing buildings. Landscaping will be completed soon.

May's Memorial Garden. May Mast was Webster's Renaissance woman. She was wife, mother, grandmother, school teacher, musician, artist, poet, horsewoman, farmer, church leader, girl's camp operator, world traveler, and a co-founder of the Webster Township Historical Society in 1981. She was generous in providing valuable property at bargain prices for the creation of Webster Corners. This garden is in her memory. The garden is currently being redone to contain plants from the period 1750-1850, reflecting the time period of the historical buildings surrounding it.

***Boy Scout Troop 477** of Webster Township has been extremely helpful to WTHS in maintaining its building and grounds over the years. We recognize their donation of time and energy to our cause and thank them profusely.