



History of the WEBSTER TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

September 1980. A dozen Webster Church members and friends with an interest in history set about to form a historic committee. On December 29, 1980, Webster Township Historical Society formally incorporated under laws of the State of Michigan as a nonprofit corporation with the stated purpose:

*To promote historical research, education, preservation, and community effort projects
in Webster Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan.*

February 1981. The Society had its first fund-raising event, a box social and square dance held in the Community Center. That event evolved into the 1981 Webster Fall Festival. Co-sponsored with the Webster United Church of Christ, this annual community celebration supports the acquisitions and work of the Society.

January 12, 1983. The IRS granted 501(c)3 status making the Society exempt from Federal tax, and eligible to receive tax deductible gifts and donations.

The first major project of the Society began with the purchase in 1983 of one plus acres of the Williams Farm from May Kleinschmidt Mast, a founder of the Society. Over time May sold three parcels to the Society, always on most favorable terms.

February 23, 1984. The Society adopted by-laws, confirming it to be a community organization, not a church working group.

On that first parcel, the Society reconstructed a circa 1870 wheelwright and blacksmith shop built by Victor Jean Wheeler. This building was transported in sections from three miles further north. On August 20, 1985, the Webster Township Board of Trustees decreed:

“Wheeler Blacksmith Shop, an historic structure, a significant relic of early Webster Township History, its architectural, and structural integrity shall be preserved.”

Over the next 32 years, the Society acquired several more buildings—a one-room school, the old town hall, and the Cottonwood Farm long wagon shed which you can read more about in [Buildings Owned and Maintained by WTHS](#). In 2004, an Eagle Scout candidate built a gazebo over the picnic area and in 2005 the Society built a general store. In 2016, our grounds were chosen as the site for the Dieterle Corncrib, dedicated to the memory of Richard Dieterle of the RFD Boys bluegrass band, and designed for acoustic music performances. The Society is currently planning to build a picnic pavilion.