

THANK YOU

The 1975 DeWitt Memorial Association Board takes this opportunity to thank each and every individual who so unselfishly, has donated his or her time on the Ox Roast. Only a close-knit community as DeWitt, working together can produce a successful Ox Roast, year after year after year.

We also express our sincere thanks to the many service clubs and organizations of DeWitt, which have cooperated so completely in helping us bring you a successful Ox Roast Day, 1975.

We thank, in particular, the DeWitt Businessmen's Association, the DeWitt Lions Club, St. Judes Ushers Club and Bingo Committees, the DeWitt Vets Club, the American Legion, Lake Geneva Association, the Merry Mixers Square Dance Club, the DeWitt Education Association, the DeWitt VFW and Auxiliary, the Masonic Lodge, Blue Star Mothers, the DeWitt City Police Department, Fire Department, DPW, City Council & Mayor, members of girl scouts and boy scouts and their leaders, members of the Clinton County Sheriff's Posse and all who have contributed so generously of their time and effort in putting on the Ox Roast for 1975.

Sincerely,

The DeWitt Memorial Association Board

1975 Memorial Board Members

Gerald Thiel, President

Darwin Rose, Director

Harold Birgy, V. President

Willis Fuller, Director

Mrs. Roger Overway, Secretary

Terry Gartside, Director

Rev. Jerry Cole, Treasurer

Mrs. Robert Acuna, Booking Agt.

William Hayner, Director

Mrs. David Bordui, Custodian

PROGRAM EDITORS

Joan B. Overway, DeWitt Memorial Board, Secretary
Charles A. Root, Spartan Duplicating & Printing, Inc.

1975

PROGRAM

SATURDAY AUGUST 16th

DeWitt Mich.

29th

DeWitt Ox Roast

Spartan

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DeWITT

OX ROAST SCHEDULE

10:00 a.m. til 11:00 p.m.

TIME	EVENTS
10:00	Parade - Art Show Opens
11:00	Mid-Way Opens - Rides - Games - Food Tent, Bingo Tent, Beer Tent, Games Tent
1:30	Pony Pull - Clinton County Pony Pullers - City DPW
3:00	Country Music Show VFW Hall Carl Kosloski & The Playboys
7:30	Country Blue Grass-Charley Anderson - VFW Hall
7:30	Square Dancing - VFW Parking Lot DeWitt Merry Mixers Dave Crissey, Caller
8:00	Square Dancing - Memorial Building
9:00	Country Folk Music - VFW Hall Diana DeWitt & John - John
10:00	GRAND PRIZE DRAWING

1st Prize: 10 HP Garden Tractor with 42in.
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ALL DAY LONG

* BEER TENT

* BINGO TENT

2nd Prize: \$200 CASH \$ \$ \$

3rd Prize: \$100 CASH \$ \$ \$

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* SQUARE DANCE - 8PM

Dave Crissey - Caller

* PONY RIDES



* ART
SHOW
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DEWITT MEMORIAL BUILDING

On Oct. 16, 1945, Mrs. Earl Pierson, Assistant Librarian, issued a request to every organization in DeWitt Township to send two representatives to discuss the possibility of building a community building in DeWitt. A piece of property on West Washington Street, where the present memorial building stands, had been donated by Mr. & Mrs. William Rogerson, for the purpose of building a library, but they were agreeable to the construction of a community building, provided a library was accommodated.

The first donation was a pledge of \$1,000 given by Mr. & Mrs. Verne Walker. All of the organizations agreed to raise money for this purpose. They formed a non-profit organization to erect and maintain a building, and named their group the "Memorial Association."

In April, 1946, delegates and leaders of clubs met to find a way to raise money. They decided on a street carnival, which was a very successful three day event, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Most prizes and articles for booths were donated with expenses being less than \$100.00. Later the event was cut to two days, Saturday and Sunday, and at present is a one day event, being held the second Saturday before Labor Day weekend of each year. From this street carnival, the present 29th annual Ox Roast has grown, and it has become an annual event to provide funds for the operation and maintenance of the Memorial Building. Jack Lenneman and Don Reed were the principle chefs and became known as the "Barbecue Kings" of Central Michigan.

The original building incorporators were L.J. Griswold and J.B. Vincent, Leo Spayde, Leon Blizzard, Mildred Carris, Hazel Norris, Verne Walker and Mr. & Mrs. William Rogerson.

This building was dedicated to all veterans of all wars. It has been the meeting place for all local organizations and is quite unique in its inception and use.

The building was opened for partial use for the 1947 Ox Roast and was dedicated at the annual event in 1948. A bronze plaque placed in the lobby of the library by the DeWitt Blue Star Mothers, reads, "Lovingly dedicated to the men and women who served in all branches of military service, and to those who gave their lives to their country." The plaque also lists the eight names of local boys who gave their lives in World War II.

In September, 1965, an addition to the Memorial Building was started. This addition gave DeWitt the needed room for its Library and community events. This addition, which is still unfinished to date, calls for a lounge, snack bar, and two more restrooms, the dance floor, paneling and ceiling are completed.

Our building now houses one of the most modern libraries in the state, for an area of this size. It is a member of the Central Michigan Library System. There is currently a meeting room with complete kitchen facilities for use by the public and also a second level also for use by the public.

The DeWitt Memorial Association, a non-profit organization, sponsors the Ox Roast each year to help maintain the Memorial Building. Rent paid by the Library and weekend rentals from the two halls also help to defray costs.

Nine DeWitt residents, volunteering their time, make up the Memorial Association Board. Three members are replaced at each annual board meeting, which is held in January, giving each member a three year term to fill.

Public meetings are held on the last Wednesday of each month, at 8:00 P.M. in the Meeting Room, adjacent to the Library, in the Memorial Building.

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CHECK OUR SIDEWALK TABLES FOR
OX ROAST BARGAINS



Joe's TAVERN - DEWITT, MICH. 1971

The above picture is the "Clinton House" built by Captain David Scott, a veteran of the War of 1812, and first white man to settle in DeWitt area. This large Hotel was built between 1840 and 1842, the main Ballroom was on the third floor, which also housed the Clinton County court room until St. Johns became our County Seat. The "Clinton House" burnt down in 1930.



The union 76 Gas Station now rests on the very same spot that the "Clinton House" rested on years ago. This Station is now run by William Ackles.

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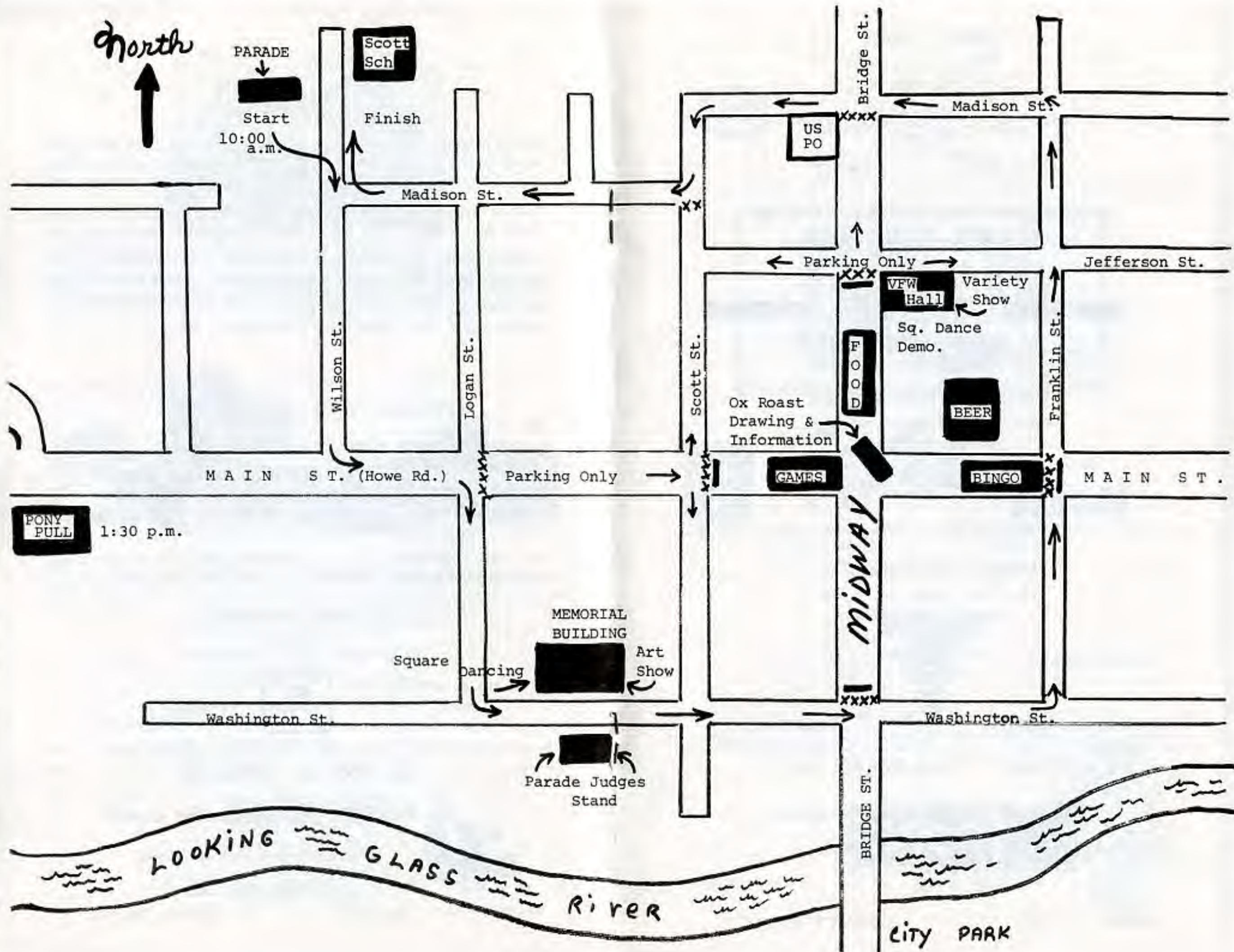
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DEWITT

EARLY HISTORY OF DEWITT

BY FAYE HANSON

Captain David Scott, a veteran of the War of 1812, was one of those Daniel Boone types who didn't hanker to have neighbors "too close" that is within a dozen miles or so, which is how DeWitt came into existence.

Scott found New York state too confining after the War of 1812, so he moved on to Ann Arbor, a brand-new frontier town, in 1825. Ann Arbor, in turn became "too civilized," and in the spring of 1833, Scott picked his way up the Grand River Trail (parts of which still exist as Round Lake Road) until he came to a Chippewa Indian village named Wabwahnasupu on the Looking Glass River.

The high ground overlooking the Looking Glass was to be had at little cost from the federal government. Scott returned to Ann Arbor for his wife, Eunice, and children David and Charles. In September, they loaded oxen-drawn wagons with household goods and headed west and north, taking a horse and 17 head of cattle. They forded rivers and drove through swamps, axle-deep, pitched their tents wherever night overtook them.

On October 4, 1833, they arrived at their homesite, to establish the first permanent settlement in Clinton County, an event memorialized on a huge boulder in the old part of DeWitt Cemetery.

Three families of Indians welcomed the Scotts, loaning them on to their wigwams until the newcomers could build a log cabin on a site directly behind the present Municipal Building in Block 41, Section 8, DeWitt Township.

While the Scotts were dwelling in this primitive bark habitation, a party of English travelers sought shelter while enroute to the village of Grand River, later Portland. One of the members became ill and died. He was buried in a coffin made of bark taken from the waggon. This was the first recorded death of a white person in Clinton County.

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124 WEST MAIN

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8:00-5:00

SATURDAY

DeWITT

EARLY HISTORY OF DEWITT (CONTINUED)

Scott's acreage was considerable, even for that day. He had acquired 1,426 acres. However, like the early cattlemen of the plains, he had "open range." There wasn't a fence between his holdings and the Shiawassee River on the east and the Grand River on the south, with the result that his "pasture" comprised parts of what later became Eaton, Ingham, Clinton and Shiawassee counties.

Roundup time was just about any time for Captain Scott. He spent a few interesting days seeking out and rounding up cattle which had strayed south to a particularly dense section of forest in a big bend of the Grand River to the south of his homestead, where there was no evidence of habitation.

Less than a decade later, the place where he found his cattle would become the site of Michigan's capital.

During the early years in DeWitt, the Scotts had to return to Ann Arbor periodically for supplies. Then, in 1839, he erected a frame building for a storeroom and grocery and a "public house" or tavern. This landmark was known simply as "Scott's" but it led, in 1840, to the little community being singled out as the governmental seat of Clinton County. The first court session here was held October 2, 1840. This structure was on the southeast corner of Bridge and Washington Streets.

Sometime between 1840 and 1842, Scott built a large hotel, the "Clinton House" on the southeast corner of Bridge and Main Streets. It became the social center of the community and is remembered by many living residents, having burned in 1930.

The boom in emigration up the Grand River Road from southeastern Michigan added up to boom times for the little village in the 1840's. The Grand River Road was a main-traveled highway between Detroit and Grand Rapids, leading through DeWitt and Ionia, where the federal land office was located. Money from the Ionia office, where settlers deposited cash for land, was carried to Detroit via DeWitt in a wagon drawn by horses and guarded by soldiers. At DeWitt, the money boxes were unloaded and stashed away in a barred room of the hotel, with the soldiers sleeping within easy range to prevent possible pilfering.

Like many other Michigan communities, DeWitt put in its bid for the state capital in 1847. But, unlike most, DeWitt missed out by only one vote.

Then, in 1857, the county seat was removed to the newer village of St. Johns, after heated controversy.

There are still traces of the pioneer village. At 102 Webb Street is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Klaver, a pioneer hostelry in the olden days, and the building that was the county jail still stands at 206 East Washington Street. It became a dwelling in 1862.

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