

The Archaeology Day event held at the end of October at the Michigan History Center in Lansing was another big success. It was another record year with nearly 1,100 people attending. Displays from sites around Michigan were set up throughout the museum. There were several presentations given and a number of activities for kids and adults that exhibited high participation. The Warner and Hicks school sites were showcased with four tables of artifacts, samples of pottery from our comparative collection, a photo slideshow on a flat screen TV, as well as a few articles on the sites. Postcards featuring a "Sydenham" saucer found in situ at the site were given out to a number of children.

Despite the cooling temperatures as of late, we did manage some limited excavation near the house that was required for the installation of ground rods and wire for electrical service to the school. A variety of artifacts were recovered including a "Siam" (registered in 1850s) transferware sherd in blue. A piece of yellowware, dippedware, and a couple pieces of blue edgeware were also recovered. Also, one sherd with handpainted decoration in blue was found, the pattern and maker currently unidentified. Cut bone, window glass, isinglass, bottle glass, iron bolts, and square nails rounded out the finds. A ground rod made of square iron stock was found at the center of the south gable end that could have been part of the lightning rod fixtures that once adorned the house.

Several pieces of "Sydenham" blue transferware were found including a sherd that appears to be the top section of a pedestal to a tureen. The origins for the pattern have been of interest to me for many years but remained elusive. In the world of ceramics, it is commonly known that the inspiration for many 19th century patterns were based on steel engravings appearing in books and magazines. In fact, the Transferware Collectors Club database boasts nearly a 1000 sources for over 14,000 patterns. However, without knowing the name of the print or the engraver, it has been next to impossible to determine the origin, especially for a pattern such as "Sydenham" that has a set of different central designs. Recent research, made by a chance discovery, has revealed the source prints (steel engravings)

for some of its various central designs. As previously suspected, it turns out that the central figures in the "Sydenham" pattern originated from engravings of marble statues. Although various designs in the pattern appear to be statues of ancient Greek or Roman origin, they actually cover a number of subjects such as King Arthur, Ino & Bacchus, Hagar & Ishmael, Genevieve of Brabant, and others. The central figures vary slightly from the engravings in some cases and are placed in a fictitious setting. The statues that serve as the subject matter were actually plaster cast copies of originals formerly on display at the Great Exhibition of 1851. The Great Exhibition was a huge worldwide event that was held in the Crystal Palace (an iron and glass building) in Hyde Park, London. After the event concluded, the building was dismantled, moved from London, and rebuilt at Sydenham in 1854. It was destroyed by fire in 1936. Not only has the subject matter been identified, but this new development suggests that MI frontier families such as the Warner's had access to some of the latest trends very shortly after they were introduced (even over great distances), in this case, ceramics celebrating some of the fine art on display at the Crystal Palace in Sydenham, England.

Restoration work on the Hicks School has also continued. The exterior paint is complete including forest green on the fascia and wood trim around the doors/windows to match the house. Eavestroughs and downspouts have been installed by Livingston Gutter of Howell. Period correct materials were used, in this case 6" half round galvalume. The interior of the main section has also been painted. Many thanks to my uncle, Chuck Warner, for helping out with the interior priming and paint. The restoration specialist has also begun the work of reglazing the five large windows on the east side. Each must be removed one at a time to allow for the old window glaze to be replaced with new. The next step will be to install lighting in the main section. Period lighting appropriate for a one room school has been difficult to find, particularly pendant lights. Area antique stores often carry school lights, but usually only one or two at a time and we needed a half dozen. Luckily, my uncle, Chuck Warner, recently discovered a set of six period lights that are a

perfect match at a local consignment store. Many thanks to Chuck for a great find!



MARtha AND LAZARUS, —Villa, OF FLORENCE.





Engraved by J. G. Kneller. Sculpture by B. West.

