

*(Editor's Note: The following address was given by **Elvira Vogel** on May 22, 1971, at the dedication of the new Freedom Township Hall. John Miller, father of Bob Miller, current Freedom Township Historian, was Township Supervisor at the time.)*

*Word processed by Bonnie Mitchell, May 10, 2005*

## DEDICATION OF FREEDOM TOWNSHIP HALL

May 22, 1971

Talk by Elvira Vogel

This is truly a great occasion for residents of Freedom Township---and for all of those who have or who have had associations in this place.

Some of us have come tonight because we are anxious to see the new facility, some have come because we want to renew old friendships, and some of us have come to put our stamp of approval on this occasion----

I hope that there is a little of all three desires in each of us, and I hope that you will look back on tonight, being glad that you were on hand.

I hope to help you to: RECALL some events of the past  
RAISE your hat to the Bldg. Committee and the people who have worked so hard to make this a reality  
REVIVE our community spirit so that indeed this new center will be all that it was planned for. IT IS MORE THAN A BUILDING.  
WE ARE HERE TO PERPETUATE A KIND OF INSTITUTION.

Let me say that it is a real honor to be the one to step forward for this part of the program which is meant to highlight the History of the Old Building and the new.

The records bear out the fact that those early Vogels really got around (the name Vogel means Bird – and I suppose that there are some who think that we are for the birds, but be that as it may, the Vogels have always been interested and still are, in FREEDOM TOWNSHIP, their community.

John Fredrick Vogel was Township Clerk after the Township election of 1874, and was the one to record many of the events which are of particular interest to us here tonight. And I am glad to be the Vogel to be reporting them to you.

It was a fellow named MATTERNICK who said that men who make History have not had time to write it – but in this case this is not true; the pioneers and residents of this area once known as FREEDONIA did record their deliberations and actions via the Township Clerk and we should be proud of these records and our heritage.

It was sheer delight to pore back over the books. I only wish that time would permit us to share so many interesting facts about so many different events, but for tonight let us concentrate on FREEDOM TOWNSHIP HALL.

In 1876 the Township Board worried about all sorts of things, and it was decided that the General Election must be held at a place where no intoxicating liquors were sold, and so the election was held at the Pleasant Lake School House of District #3 (by the way, the taxes paid by the residents to the twp that year were \$3,700).

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of March, 1878, two years and many meetings later, the TWP BOARD: Jacob Breining, Henry J. Davidter, Wm. Beuerle, J. Fredrick Vogel held their meeting for the purpose of locating a more permanent place to hold the township meetings. On the motion of J. H. Davidter (who it seems made most of the motions) it was agreed that “the Board order a small building and the erection of said Bldg. was to be done by the lowest bidder.”

March 26<sup>th</sup> (two weeks later) they met as the clerk said: “Pursuant to the Public notice”, and Motion by Davidter that clerk Vogel be instructed to “have the proper ballots prepared for such an election.” (P.S. they also voted to pay the raised money to the several school districts: \$2009 of the 3700 – showing the importance they placed on education).

It was decided: “Building should be 12’ by 12’ and not less the 8’ high, with one half window and one dorr – yes, spelled dorr. “The contract (for something not specified) was let to Jacob Johns at SEVEN DOLLARS AND SEVENTY FIVE CENTS. HE WAS THE LOWEST BIDDER.

I would like to share the eloquence of the day and thoroughness of the notes as recorded by Vogel the clerk, as they had DECIDED ON THE WRITING FOR THE BALLOTS:

Minutes of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1878

“Whereas the People of the Township of Freedom, Co of Washtenaw, and State of Michigan, and Freeholders of said Township and liebol to pay taxes in said Township, do hereby, pass the following resolution: To Wit: Resolved by the majority of the qualified voters of the Township of Freedom in the above named County and State to vote by Ballot for the Town Hall or against it, and those electors voting for the Hall shall have printed or written on their ballots the words FOR THE HALL and those electors voting against the hall shall have written or printed on their ballots the words written AGAINST THE HALL: and, it is FURTHER RESOLVED by the said electors of the above named Township that they vote by ballot FOR OR AGAINST the LOAN, and those electors voting for the loan shall have printed or written on their ballots the words for the loan, and those electors voting against the loan shall have written or printed against the loan.”

This was on the motion of Gottlieb Scherdt, one of the Freeholders who has signed the notice requiring a vote to be taken for the PURPOSE OF BUILDING A TOWN HALL IN THE TOWNSHIP OF FREEDOM, COUNTY OF WASHTENAW AND STATE OF

MICH. SUPPORTED BY JACOB JOHNS. Signed by the Bd.: Breining, Beuerle, Davidter, and Vogel.

At the same meeting, Secy. Vogel ordered to post notices for Building Proposal with one copy at Beuerles, one at Bethale Church, one at Rogers Corners, and one at Charles Vogel's place – and publish notice for three consecutive weeks in Manchester Enterprise.

The election was held and vote was taken:

FOR THE TOWNSHIP HALL	79
Against the Township Hall	<u>50</u>
Total	129 Votes

For the loan	82
Against the loan	5

Township Officers: Clerk:	Jacob Knapp
Treasurer:	Charles Stierle
Justice of the Peace:	Henry J. Davidter
Supt of the Schools:	Thomas Flynn
School Inspector:	Henry Koebbe

The Township Board met at 9AM on April 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Beuerle House, and on Motion of Davidter, a building committee was appointed – number 5 – four representing the different areas one representing at large.

It was decided that the at large member should be Beuerle; others were: Fredrick Gross, Jr., Secy: Godfrey Grou, Mathias Alber and J. H. Koebbe.

On Motion of Beuerle, Town Hall shall be built of Brick and not less than 24' wide, 44' long and height to be decided later by the committee.

Discussion followed as to the place of the building. Should it be the NORTH SIDE of Pleasant Lake Road: the Jacob Lutz property or the South side of the road, the J. Fredrick Vogel property? Vote: 2 for the north and 2 for the south; Revote: 3 for the north, one for south. Provisional: Chairman was to talk to Lutz asking him to "LORE" the price to \$10. If he would not, then they would take the south side of the property --- He did come down! Built on north side, section 22.

The weeks of the summer flew as did the hammers. It was built by Wm. Beuerle and his crew. The chairman of the Bldg. committee was John Koebbe.

Oct 28, 1878 at the house of Wm. Beuerle, the committee met to authorize payments:  
- to Beuerle for the bldg. – 125.00 (but to wait until after Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, 1879 for the money)  
- for Pot belly stove \$ 50

- To Beuerle for extra Beam for the floor \$ 5.00

Beuerle was made manager: a sum was allowed him to spend as deemed necessary; he was to hold users responsible, charging fees.

On November 2, 1878 the records show the wonderful report of this date telling of the progress, asking for inspection of the facility, and to be relieved, as a committee, of their responsibility. The Bldg. committee at this point was John Koebbe, chrm, Fred Gross, Secy, Gotfried Grau, John Alber, and John Schenk. SO CLOSES THE CHAPTER ON THE FIRST TOWNSHIP HALL.

I would like to wish you over the next 90 years - find residents in serious and vigorous discussion of REMODELING vs. REBUILDING.

April 5, 1969 - Twp Bd. (Chaired by John Miller) heard a report of the Town Hall Committee which had been working on this. VOTED: To go ahead with the Building project, subject to referendum voted within 90 days.

June 30<sup>th</sup> at Special meeting of the Township Bd. (John Miller, Gilbert Luckhardt, Alvin Weidmayer, Walter Hieber and Harold Eiseman). Motion made to accept petitions of 12 freeholders to construct a new town hall on the site of the present building, carried unanimously.

July 17, 1969, meeting of Twp. Bd. and Building Committee: Voted Yes 36  
No 26  
Total 62

Motion that contract for architect go to Ron Finkbeiner for drawings.

April 4, 1970 Motion to have Bill Zahn drill test holes for drain field. Luckhardt, Weidmayer and Weidmayer members of bldg. committee.

May 1970 Ground breaking

Nov 1970 first activity; election

Since that time: chairs and tables purchased  
draperies made by Learn and Save 4H Club who have sung for you

The HALL STANDS HERE –corner of Lima Center and Pleasant Lake Rd  
40' x 80', one story, assembly plus office plus kitchen and restrooms  
planned to hold 125-250 people. Cost \$38,000  
Architect: Colvin, Robinson and Wright Assoc.  
Builders: Finkbeiner Lumber Co  
Plumbing: Eugene Luckhard, Heating by Wahl, Painter Robert Gross and  
Electrician, Gilbert Luckhardt.

The Building Committee – Clarence Schneider, chairman  
Armin Haeussler  
Neil Stierle  
John Miller  
Luke Schaible

Outside, a handsome marker graces the lawn –Gilbert worked on this and gives you a first hand report and besides he wants to present a plaque.

This then brings us through the years 1878 to 1971, 93 years. In closing, I want to say ONE CAN'T HELP BUT GET A BIT EMOTIONAL AT A TIME LIKE THIS, FOR THE HISTORY OF OUR LAND AND OUR PEOPLE AND THESE PLACES IS IMPORTANT TO US.

Abe Lincoln put it eloquently when he said, “Fellow Citizens: We cannot escape history. We will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance or insignificance can spare one or another of us. The fiery trial thru which we pass will light us down in honor or dishonor, to the last generation.”

--and it is true, my friends...and we hope that the FREEDOM TOWNSHIP HALL WILL BE OF SIGNIFICANCE AND BRING HONOR TO THIS COMMUNITY.

(signed)

Elvira Vogel