The original documents are located in Box D35, folder “Dedication of Historical Marker, Former Home of Governor Fred Green, Ionia, MI, September 22, 1973” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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PROGRAMME

Dedication and Unveiling Ceremonies for an Official Michigan Historical Commission State Marker in honor of Former Governor FRED GREEN

SPONSORED BY

"FRIENDS OF FRED GREEN"

The Michigan Republican Party
The Ionia County Republican Committee
The Michigan Historical Commission

Saturday, September 29, 1973 – 11:15 a.m.
320 Union Street
Ionia, Michigan
Mr. and Mrs. Eddie Abraham, East Lansing
Mr. and Mrs. Burton Aldrich, Iowa
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Allen, Ithaca
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Allen, Portland
Mr. and Mrs. Eugene B. A. Bartley, New Buffalo
Mrs. Marcia Bien, Flint
Mr. and Mrs. Ray M. Bouvier, Bloomington, Indiana
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Carr, Iowa
Mr. and Mrs. Curtis Chadwick, Kalamazoo
Mrs. C. Borden Chase, Ann Arbor
Mr. Jim DeFrancis, Washington, D.C.
Representative Michael Dively, Traverse City
Mrs. Mildred Dunning, M. Clamans
Mr. and Mrs. Loren Dunning, Ionia
Mr. Robert Fitzke, Lansing
Mr. Peter Fletcher, Traverse City
Mr. and Mrs. John Fluharty, Mt. Pleasant
Congressman Gerald R. Ford, Grand Rapids
Mr. Robert Gough, Lansing
Mr. and Mrs. James Holbel, Flint
Miss Alice Howard, Battle Creek
Mr. Paul Howland, Birmingham
Mr. and Mrs. Harry Larkin, Ionia
Mr. Louis Legg, Okemos
Mr. George Lord, Southfield
Mr. Gordon Lowell, Lansing
Mr. and Mrs. Norman Jameson, Howell
Mr. and Mrs. Emerson McCarty, Sarnia
Mr. Hudson Mead, Detroit
Mr. and Mrs. John Meader, Jackson
Mr. James Middaugh, Pass Pea
Mr. and Mrs. John O'Keefe, Ionia
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Onnell, Flesher
Representative and Mrs. Stanley Powell, Ionia
Mrs. Marra Perrott, Grand Rapids
Mr. Seymour Poisher, Detroit
Mr. and Mrs. John Riecker, Midland
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry D. Roe, Lansing
Mr. and Mrs. Fred Rowe, Portland
Mrs. Miss Carleton Rush, Romulus
Miss Cynthia Sage, Charlotte
Mrs. Sheldon Smith, Pontiac
Mr. Peter Sorum, Ypsilanti
Judge Michael Stacey, Detroit
Mr. and Mrs. John Stahlin, Belding
Mr. Steven Stockmeier, McLean, Virginia
Mr. and Mrs. George Hall Story, Ionia
Mr. and Mrs. Sy Thingstad, Ionia
Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Vander Tilly, Lansing
Senator Robert Vander Laan, Kentwood
Representative Dale Warner, Lansing
Mr. Robert John Webber, Jr., Grand Ledge
Mr. Edward Wyzyvski, Rosselle

GOVERNOR GREEN
Fred W. Green was born in Manistee, Michigan, October 20, 1872. A year later he removed with his parents to Cadillac, where he was educated in the schools of that city, graduating from High School in 1890. His college education was received in the State Normal at Ypsilanti, and later in the law school of the University of Michigan. From the State Normal School he received the degree of B. S. in 1893, and a law certificate to teach in Michigan schools. He found a school, but during the summer he went to work for a newspaper in Ypsilanti and fixed it so well that he gave up the school and remained with the paper for a time. Later he began the study of law, and graduated from the law department of the University in 1896, in which year he entered the army in the Spanish-American War, the commanding General C. 3d Michigan Vol., Infantry in Cuba, and was mustered out as first lieutenant and battalion adjutant.

After the war, he was elected City Attorney of Ypsilanti. While practicing law the opportunity occurred to him to take part in the management of a company associated with the Ypsilanti Reed Furniture Company at Ypsilanti, and later purchased stock in this enterprise. In 1904 this institution moved from Ypsilanti to Ionia. Michigan was then as now struggling with the great problem of how to employ her convicts. The Ypsilanti Reed Furniture Company was urged by Senator Fuller at Ionia to employ his convicts, and a contract was finally made, vastly more advantageous to the State of Michigan and to the convicts themselves than anything which up to that time had been devised.

In 1913 fire made necessary a rebuilding of the factory, the forerunner of the present magnificent establishment. The rebuilding was done on a scale which practically withdrew the Company from the prison. In 1921 he surrendered his contract and urged that he be released from further obligation to the State, but it was not until 1923 that the State was able to provide a suitable substitute and the Ypsilanti Reed Furniture Company was able to withdraw entirely from the prison. This company has proven to be the largest institution of its kind in the world. Mr. Green was elected to the Senate of Michigan in 1922 to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Senator Fuller, and was re-elected in 1924, and in the following year was elected as the successor of Senator Fuller in the United States Senate.

Mr. Green has given up his factory at Ypsilanti and has now devoted his time to improving his home and the farming property in Western Michigan. He was married, in 1899, to Miss Edith F. Goodrich of Ionia, and is the father of four children. The eldest daughter, Mary L. Green, graduated from the law department of the University in 1898, in the year which William Fuller was graduated from that school. She has been one of the most active and conspicuous women workers in the State of Michigan.
PROGRAMME
FRED GREEN MARKER DEDICATION

MUSICAL SELECTIONS: Ionia High School Jazz Band
Mr. Andy McFarland, Director

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF MASTER OF CEREMONIES:
Mr. Larry Bailey, Portland
Chairman, Ionia County Republican Committee

MASTER OF CEREMONIES:
Mr. William F. McLaughlin, Chairman, Republican State Central Committee

WELCOME:
Honorable Donald Stanton, Mayor of Ionia

INVOCATION:
Mr. Jack M. Findlay, Associate Pastor of St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church of Ionia

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:
Miss Terri Morewijn, Ionia area Centennial Queen

NATIONAL ANTHEM:
Mr. Sy Thingstad, Lansing

REMARKS:
Mr. Kenneth Spaulding, President Ionia County Historical Society

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:
Mr. William F. McLaughlin

INTRODUCTION OF CONGRESSMAN GERALD R. FORD:
Mrs. Mildred Dunnell, Mt. Clemens
Vice Chairman, Republican State Central Committee

REMARKS:
Congressman Gerald R. Ford, Grand Rapids
Minority Leader of United States Congress

REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION OF SENATOR ROBERT VANDERLAAN:
Mr. Michael J. Washo, Lansing
Deputy Director, Division of History Department of State

REMARKS:
Senator Robert VanderLaan, Kentwood
Senate Majority Leader

OFFICIAL DEDICATION OF STATE HISTORICAL MARKER:
Mr. Hudson Mead, Grosse Pointe
President, Michigan Historical Commission

UNVEILING OF MARKER:
Congressman Gerald R. Ford
Mr. Peter O'Connor
Mr. Rex O'Connor, Jr.

ACCEPTANCE OF MARKER:
Mr. Rex O'Connor
Arrangements Committee:

Larry Bailey, Portland
Alice Durak, Lyons
Joanne Larkin, Ionia
Kris Taylor, Lansing
Marcia Soderberg, Lansing
Mike Washo, Lansing

Co-ordinator of Dedication Event:

Jerry D. Roe, Lansing
Executive Director, Michigan Republican Party and member of the Michigan Historical Commission

Thanks and acknowledgements to:

Ionia High School Jazz Band and its Director Andy McFarland
Bill Pryor — Sound System
Ed Kosman Funeral Home — Chairs
Bobbie Neubacher, East Lansing — Photographer

SPECIAL THANKS — — —

To the O’Connors for all of their great co-operation and help.
It is a great honor and privilege to be the guest speaker for the dedication and unveiling of the State of Michigan Historical Marker officially designating this lovely home as the former home of Gov. Fred Green of Ionia.

Before I talk about Fred Green, I would like to note that this house, owned for the past three years by Mr. and Mrs. Rex O'Connor, is a most unusual structure. First of all, it's built like a fortress—all big beams and thick walls. It has 20 rooms and four fireplaces. There's a log cabin in the basement, patterned after the log cabin Gov. Green used as a hideaway up in Munising.

Did you know that the gold chandeliers in the living room were fashioned in France? And that the posts and grill work in the wrought iron railing in the main hall came from Italy? And the tile in the vestibule and the bar and the hallway between the living and the dining rooms also came from Italy? Ah, but most important, the walnut hand rail in the main hall was made in Grand Rapids. And the architect for this beautiful home was Harry Mead of Grand Rapids, who also designed two of the schools in Ionia.

The O'Connors have completely restored the house, which makes it a living monument to Fred Green. We naturally think of Fred Green in his role as governor, but it is also important that we remember Fred Green as an Ioniaan. After all, he lived in Ionia from 1904 to 1936, and he served as mayor of Ionia for 13 terms. Gov. and Mrs. Green made their home here. They had one child, a daughter.

Fred Green was born in Manistee in 1872, grew up in Cadillac, got a bachelor's degree from Ypsilanti State Normal, and received a law degree from the University of Michigan in 1898. It was also in 1898 that Fred Green entered the Army in the Spanish-American War. He commanded Company G of the 31st Michigan Volunteer Infantry in Cuba, and was mustered out as a first lieutenant and battalion adjutant.
After the war, Fred Green was elected City Attorney of Ypsilanti and entered business while practicing law. He became associated with the Ypsilanti Reed Furniture Company, which moved in 1904 from Ypsilanti to Ionia. It was that move which made Fred an Ionian. It also led to a contract whereby inmates at the State Prison in Ionia were employed at Ypsilanti Reed Furniture Company. That contract was said to be vastly more advantageous to the State of Michigan and to the convicts themselves than any prior arrangement for prison labor ever made.

In 1913 the factory burned and had to be rebuilt. As a consequence, Green practically withdrew the company from the prison contract and in 1923 the company was able to withdraw entirely from the pact with the prison. Meantime, the company has grown to be the largest institution of its kind in the world.

Fred Green was interested in other concerns turning out products similar to reed furniture. He therefore bought land in the Far East and had agents at Singapore who gathered for export to America the native rattan that was later made into reed furniture.

As a highly successful businessman, Fred Green became director of the Lake Odessa State Savings Bank, president of the National Bank of Ionia, director of the Michigan Trust Company, Grand Rapids, and partner in the Upton Banking Company of Lyons, and was interested in the Bank of Muir and the Ypsilanti State Savings Bank. He was also manager and director of the Ionia Free Fair Association and vice-president and director of the Grand Rapids Market Association. He owned and operated farm property in western Michigan.

Active in politics, Fred Green served as treasurer of the Republican State Central Committee for 10 years and in 1926 became the Republican nominee for governor by beating Alex Groesbeck in the primary. He was elected governor by a plurality of 172,409 votes over William Comstock and was inaugurated on Jan. 1, 1927.

Gov. Green's first administration was marked by unusual harmony between the legislature and the executive branch. Under Gov. Green, the legislature adopted a new code of criminal procedure, an improved workmen's compensation act, important anti-crime measures that put teeth into the criminal laws, a new code of school laws, a highway financing program, a uniform traffic code, and significant conservation measures.

(more)
It is appropriate that Gov. Green should have made his home in Ionia because he loved rural living and the out-of-doors. He knew how to play as well as work. He delighted in fishing, hunting and other sports. He especially loved the woods and the open spaces. You might call him one of the first ecologists, because he was genuinely interested in the conservation of wild life and of Michigan's natural resources.

Fred Green built the beautiful home we are commemorating today in 1923 and 1924. It is a fitting monument to his memory, a symbol of the day when all of our waters were clean and the air was fresh and pure—as Fred Green enjoyed them.

In the gracious couple who live in this home today we have people, like Fred Green, who recognize and love natural beauty. And so Michigan is very fortunate in having the Rex O'Connors as the owners of this home which is today dedicated as a part of Michigan history. With this unveiling, we today officially dedicate the State of Michigan historical marker which denotes that the lovely structure before which we stand is the former home of Governor Fred Green.

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REMARKS BY REP. GERALD R. FORD, R-MICH.
REPUBLICAN LEADER, U. S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AT THE DEDICATION AND UNVEILING
OF A STATE OF MICHIGAN HISTORICAL MARKER
AT THE FORMER HOME OF GOVERNOR FRED GREEN

AT 320 UNION STREET
IONIA, MICHIGAN

11:15 A.M. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1973

FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY

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