

# RELIVING The Rochester Era

July/August

The Rochester-Avon Historical Society Newsletter

2015

## In this issue:

President's Message

Upcoming Programs

Rod Wilson Elected  
MISSAR State  
President

RAHS Membership  
Brochure Redesigned

Oral History  
Committee Update

By-Laws Changes Will  
Create Corresponding  
Secretary Position

Penny Reddish  
Honored With  
Earl Borden Award

RAHS Members  
Honored With  
Annual Awards

Mark Your Calendar  
For Our Upcoming  
Events

2015 Mount Avon  
Cemetery Walk  
Features "Women in  
the Stones"

In Memoriam  
2014-2015

Theatre Project Update



YouTube



Find us on  
Facebook

## It's Christmas in July for The Wilsons!

### Susan and Rod Wilson Named Grand Marshals of the 64th Annual Rochester Hometown Christmas Parade



Rochester  
Regional  
Chamber  
of Commerce

Rochester • Rochester Hills  
Oakland Township

Read  
all  
about  
it!



Photo: Leslie Mack



Go to the Chamber of Commerce website ([www.rrc-mi.com](http://www.rrc-mi.com)) and click on "News."

Or click on this link: <http://business.rrc-mi.com/news/details/news-release-wilsons-named-grand-marshals-of-64th-annual-rochester-hometown-christmas-parade>

## Veterans Remembered with Handmade Greetings for Memorial Day

In an informal, cooperative effort between volunteers of the [MISSAR](#), the [Daughters of the American Revolution](#) and the [Rochester-Avon Historical Society](#), cardmaker extraordinaire Susan Wilson organized and supervised a small group in mid May to craft a variety of greeting cards honoring the service of 100 veteran residents of the VA Hospital in Detroit.



Photo: Leslie Mack

Pictured L to R: Susan Wilson,  
Leslie Mack, Liz Golding, Janet Potton

John Crissman and Jim Kemler, RAHS members as well as members of other military-related organizations, delivered the cards to the VA facility to be distributed to those veterans in permanent residence.



Photo: Leslie Mack

The group met again in June for July 4th-themed cardmaking and exceeded their previous output. Similar distribution of these cards to the intended recipients is planned.

## President's Message ... We Welcome New Board Member; Seek Others

Our efforts to attract and recruit enthusiastic new Board members continue to show results. This process began at the RAHS annual meeting last year, when our membership approved restructuring the Board. For the past year, we've worked to fill the newly created Board positions with committed volunteers.



Photo: Leslie Mack  
Brian Dunphy, President  
Rochester-Avon  
Historical Society

Most recently, the Board has elected Tom Bledsoe as Director of Special Projects. Tom and his wife, Holly, joined the historical society last year and have volunteered in a number of our projects, including the RAHS booth at Greater Rochester Heritage Days. Best wishes to Tom in his new responsibilities.

As announced earlier, Mary Howarth and Cary Downer have shifted their positions, with Mary now serving as Director of Merchandising and Cary succeeding Mary as Treasurer.

Rod Wilson has resigned from the Board to pursue other interests, including serving as State President for the Michigan Society, Sons of the American Revolution (see story on page 3). Rod isn't leaving us completely – he will continue to lead the historical society's downtown walking tours for another year and will assist with other projects.

We still have two open seats on the RAHS Board: Second Vice President – Finance and Director of Fund Raising Events. These are tremendous opportunities for members who want to get more involved with the historical society, and I urge you to consider taking on one of these positions. There's not enough space here to provide details on each, but if you contact RAHS at **248-266-5440** or **rahupdates@gmail.com**, I can provide you with information.

As always, the efforts of dedicated volunteers make possible all of our many projects, programs and events. To volunteer, please call or email as indicated above.

## Upcoming Programs ...

### Brown Bag and Monthly Library Lecture Skip July, August; Return in September

**Brown Bag Meeting**  
**Tuesday, Sept 1, 2015, at Noon**  
Rochester Community House  
816 Ludlow Street

**FREE AND  
OPEN TO  
THE PUBLIC**

#### "Fifty Years of Meadow Brook Theatre"

Thom and Maryann Foxlee will discuss Meadow Brook Theatre and their collaboration on a book celebrating MBT's golden anniversary season. Meadow Brook Theatre began in 1966 as part of a strategy to bring professional music and theater to the university to complement its academic programs. Almost five decades later, MBT is the largest local producing professional theatre in Michigan and is considered "Michigan's Answer to Broadway." Mr. and Mrs. Foxlee met at Oakland University in 1968 while Thom was working on a degree in engineering and Maryann was majoring in secondary English and speech. They shared a love of theatre and volunteered as ushers at Meadow Brook Theatre. In 1970 they married, raised a family and continued to volunteer at MBT.

**Bring your lunch and enjoy the free coffee, tea and cookies for this casual program.**

**RAHS Library Lecture**  
**Thursday, Sept 3, 2015, 7:00 p.m.**  
Rochester Hills Public Library  
500 Olde Town Road

**FREE AND  
OPEN TO  
THE PUBLIC**

#### "The Many Hats of Rochester's Main Street Pharmacist"

Bob Lytle, RAHS member and local businessman, will discuss his Opera House building, retail pharmacy, local history and his writing experiences and published books. He started writing historical adventure novels for young adults about subjects that interested him. His history-based adventures are used in many schools for their social studies and history content. Mr. Lytle's books include A Pitch in Time, which won the Ben Franklin Award in 2003, Bulwick School, and Mr. Blair's Labyrinth. A graduate of Ferris State pharmacy school in 1968, Mr. Lytle spent one year studying at Queen's University in Belfast, Northern Ireland. He has received a number of awards including the Jaycees' Rochester Man of the Year in 1988 and the Bowl of Hygiea Award (Michigan Pharmacist of the Year) in 1993. He was a member of the Rochester City Council from 1991 to 1995, the mayor pro-tem 1994-1995, and the Rochester Christmas Parade Grand Marshall in 2001.

## Rod Wilson Elected MISSAR State President for 2015-2016



Photo: Leslie Mack

RAHS past President and, most recently 2nd Vice President, Rod Wilson, has been elected State President of the [Michigan Society, Sons of the American Revolution \(MISSAR\)](#) for 2015-2016 following two years of service as 1st vice president of the organization.

“Being elected President of the Michigan Society of the SAR is a big deal, and (Rod)

has already made a positive impact with his leadership,” says RAHS member John Crissman, MISSAR Historian and Oaks Chapter President, adding, “He is responsible for me joining the SAR and has been a mentor to me ever since.” Elaborating on the significance of Rod’s election, he says, “Having (Rod) become State President is an achievement few accomplish, and he is the first Oaks Chapter member to be State President. He is responsible for an organization of over 350 men. You know his leadership qualities.”

In keeping with Rod’s dedication to preserving what is historically significant, “The objectives of the Michigan Society are declared to be patriotic, historical and educational, and shall also include activities designed to perpetuate the memory of those Patriots who gave of their services and sacrifices during the war of the American Revolution. Unite and promote fellowship among their descendants and inspire them and the community at large with a more profound reverence for the principles of the government as founded by our forefathers. Encourage historical research in relation to the American Revolution, and acquire and preserve the relics and records of individual services of Patriots, and to identify specific areas of conflict with appropriate memorials.”

Rod achieved another objective of the MISSAR in August, 2012 by “... locating Patriot gravesites and honoring them properly” by identifying, researching and organizing the rededication of the graves of Benjamin Loomis and George Horton, two Revolutionary War soldiers buried in Rochester’s historic Mount Avon Cemetery.

MISSAR is also involved with the Children of the Sons of the American Revolution (CAR) and the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR).

Rod’s wife, Susan, is a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution as are their daughters and granddaughters. He was the founding President of the Oaks Chapter, MISSAR and has held several officer positions both in the Oaks Chapter and the MISSAR.

[If you’d like to watch a video overview of the REVOLUTIONARY WAR GRAVES REDEDICATION event, click this link or enter the following into your browser:](#)

<https://youtu.be/riV4BkA9DN4>

## RAHS Membership Brochure Redesigned; Already in Use

Unlike the appearance of our American currency, the RAHS brochure has changed only once since the organization’s founding nearly 50 years ago. Designed by committee,

Don't just talk history ... **teach** it!  
 Don't just share history ... **shape** it!  
 Don't just read history ... **record** it!



Don't just learn history ... **live** it!

the updated and printed product was made available at the annual picnic on June 10. These images represent very small sections of the new piece.

We hope you’ll pick up a copy of the full brochure at an upcoming event.

## Oral History Committee Update

By Samantha Lawrence

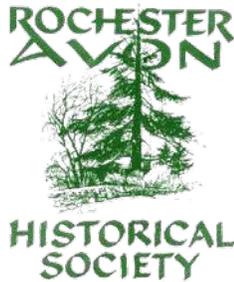


In May, the Oral History Committee began acquiring the equipment necessary to digitize the previously-recorded interviews stored on cassette tapes. This equipment includes a 3 TB external hard drive to store the digital files, as well as

a USB audio interface, which transfers sound from a cassette player to a computer equipped with recording software. Six cassette tapes have been successfully digitized and the future placement of the digital audio files will be determined in the coming months.

## By-Laws Changes Will Create Corresponding Secretary Position

Membership Approval  
Needed For Proposed  
Board Expansion



The RAHS Board is proposing changes to our By-Laws to create a position of Corresponding Secretary and change the position of Secretary to Recording Secretary. The Corresponding Secretary will take on certain responsibilities of the Board's Director of Communications, enabling the Director of Communications to focus on publicity and advertising and ensuring that more routine communications are handled on a timely basis.

**These changes will be voted on by RAHS members attending the Sept. 3 membership meeting and evening program at the Rochester Hills Public Library, 500 Olde Town Road:**

### Article V, Section 1:

Change "Officers shall be the president, three vice-presidents, secretary, and treasurer."

To "Officers shall be the president, three vice-presidents, recording secretary, corresponding secretary, and treasurer."

### Article V, Section 6:

Change "secretary" to "recording secretary"

### Article V, Section 7:

Change to Section 8

### Add new Article V, Section 7:

Section 7 - The corresponding secretary shall:

- Handle necessary correspondence
- Send get-well & sympathy cards to members as needed
- Send yellow rose for funerals / memorials for deceased members as needed
- Send RAHS acknowledgment of all donations to donors
- Send notification of memorial donations to family of deceased
- Submit an annual report of activities

### Article VI, Section 1:

Change

- The six (6) elected officers.
- Seven (7) elected directors for a total of thirteen (13) Board members.
- Two additional directors may be appointed by the Board for a total of fifteen (15).

To

- The seven (7) elected officers.
- Eight (8) elected directors for a total of fifteen (15) Board members.

## Penny Reddish Honored With Earl Borden Award

RAHS member Penny Reddish was honored by the [Rochester Hills Historic Districts Commission](#) with the Earl Borden Historic Preservation Award presented by Brian Dunphy, HDC Chairman and RAHS President, during the May 18, 2015 City Council meeting.

As stated during the awards presentation: "The Preservation Leadership Award recognizes individuals or organizations who have made outstanding efforts to support historic preservation in the greater Rochester Hills community."

Penny was selected to receive this coveted local award acknowledging her authorship of the book, "I Got My Thrill on Newberry Hill," about a group of ski-jumping enthusiasts who, in 1926, built a ski jump on property in what was then part of Avon Township, adjacent to Bloomer State Park. The Newberry Hill site was adjacent to the farm owned by the family of Penny Frank Reddish.

"I Got My Thrill on Newberry Hill" was published by the [Rochester-Avon Historical Society](#) last year. The book is available for purchase on line through our [online store](#): <http://www.rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org/our-store> and at our event sales booths throughout the year. Upcoming 2015 sales events include Downtown Sidewalk Sales July 9-11, Mount Avon Cemetery Walk Sept. 26 and Kris Kringle Market Dec. 4-5.

Last, but certainly not least, don't forget that your RAHS membership entitles you to a 15 percent discount on your purchases of regularly priced merchandise during any of the sales events listed.

## Members Honored With Awards During Annual Picnic



L to R: Carol Tough, Bill Williams, Bree Boettner, Brian Dunphy

Awards were presented by RAHS President Brian Dunphy to those members who demonstrated a high level of leadership and involvement in our organization during the 2014-2015 fiscal year. Recipients were determined by a vote of the Board of Directors.

### Lois Collet Award - Carol Tough

Outstanding Member of the Board of Directors

### Mary Eberline Award - Bill Williams

Outstanding Member

### Gail Kemler Award - Bree Boettner

Outstanding First Year Member

Congratulations to all for their dedication to the success of our organization.

## Remaining Walking Tour Dates

Only four scheduled dates remain for the [Historic Downtown Walking Tour](#) this year. Don't miss your chance to enjoy the sights, sounds and stories of our beautiful and historic downtown.

Thursday, July 16, 7:00 p.m.  
 Friday, Aug. 21 7:00 p.m.  
 Saturday, Sept. 19 1:00 p.m.  
 Sunday, Oct. 18 1:00 p.m.



Rod Wilson, "Mr. Rochester"

**"Look for the man in the top hat."**

**Free to RAHS Members**

## Don't Miss These Upcoming Events

Membership Dues are Due  
Wednesday, July 1, 2015

### Downtown Sidewalk Sales Booth

Thursday, July 9, 2015  
10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
 Friday, July 10, 2015  
10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
 Saturday, July 11, 2015  
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

### Historic Downtown Walking Tour

Thursday, July 16, 2015  
7:00 p.m.

Please mark your calendar now!

JULY						
sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

AUGUST						
sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Historic Downtown Walking Tour  
Friday, Aug. 21, 2015  
7:00 p.m.

Brown Bag Lunch  
Tuesday, Sept. 1, 2015  
12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

Evening Program @ Library  
Thursday, Sept. 3, 2015  
7:00 p.m.

Membership to Vote on By-Laws Change to Create Corresponding Secretary Position

SEPTEMBER						
sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Historic Downtown Walking Tour  
Saturday, Sept. 19, 2015  
1:00 p.m.

Mount Avon Cemetery Walk  
Saturday, Sept. 26, 2015  
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## 2015 Mount Avon Cemetery Walk Features “Women in the Stones”



Debbie Larsen

By Debbie Larsen

Rochester’s history comes to life on Saturday, September 26 when the Rochester-Avon Historical Society presents its fourth annual Mount Avon Cemetery Walk from 1-5 p.m. The event features reenactors in period costume who portray characters from the community’s past as tour groups are guided through the cemetery. This year’s theme is “Women in the Stones,” and tour guests will encounter several historical female characters who will describe aspects of Rochester’s history from their unique perspectives. Audiences will also tour Mount Avon’s recently-restored 1925 mausoleum and learn about the building’s history.

Tours will depart by shuttle van from the municipal parking lot at Third and Walnut streets and will be escorted by tour guides. Tickets (\$15 per person) will be issued for specific tour departure times. Tickets will go on sale at the Rochester-Avon Historical Society’s booth at the downtown Sidewalk Sale July 9-11. After the Sidewalk Sale, tickets may be purchased in person at the [Rochester Regional Chamber of Commerce](#) office, 71 Walnut St., Suite 110, or online by clicking here: [Mount Avon Cemetery Walk](#). Any tickets not sold in advance will be available for walk-up sales at the shuttle stop at Third & Walnut on the day of the event, but a limited number of tickets will be sold, so advance purchase is recommended.

The Cemetery Walk is a fun and engaging way for families to learn about local history. The event is not scary and is enjoyable for both school-age children and adults. (The presentations are not designed to be of interest to pre-school children).

For further information, e-mail [rahsupdates@gmail.com](mailto:rahsupdates@gmail.com) or phone 248-246-5440.

The 2015 Mount Avon Cemetery Walk is made possible by generous support from:

[Rochester Hills Chrysler Jeep Dodge](#)  
[Pixley Funeral Home](#)  
[Potere-Modetz Funeral Home](#)

[Click to buy tickets now!](#)

# WOMEN IN



# THE STONES

A Living History Walk Through Historic Mount Avon Cemetery

presented by the Rochester Avon Historical Society

Saturday, September 26, 2015

The Rochester-Avon Historical Society (RAHS) was founded in 1969 to help preserve, collect and interpret the history of the greater Rochester area for present and future generations.

For more information, including a list of upcoming events, visit online at:

[www.rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org)

## In Memoriam 2014-2015

Our thoughts turn to the following RAHS members lost during the past year:

Harold Golding  
 Fran Huegli  
 Lou Ann Dennis  
 Marie Remer  
 Russell Bracewell  
 Timothy Brown

Photo: Leslie Mack

## Contact Information for RAHS Board of Directors and Committees

### RAHS Board of Directors

Brian Dunphy, President	248-266-5624
Carol Tough, Vice President, Operations	248-375-0084
Janet Potton, Vice President, Development	248-652-7296
June Hopaluk, Recording Secretary	248-652-9242
Cary Downer, Treasurer	586-201-2285
Tiffany Stozicki, Director, Communications	248-650-0415
Leslie Mack, Director, Editor, Era Newsletter	586-924-4961
Bree Boettner, Director, Membership	248-515-0881
Mary Howarth, Director, Merchandising	248-375-0206
Margaret Bartos, Director, Programs	248-759-4768
Tom Bledsoe, Director, Special Projects	248-923-2602
Gail Kemler, Director, Historical Preservation	248-651-0907

### Committee Chairpersons

Deborah Larsen, Research	248-375-2974
David Gifford, Media	248-941-7587
Samantha Lawrence, Oral History	586-255-1883

## Volunteer Areas of Interest

### How would you like to participate?

- Annual Picnic
- Antique Appraisal Day
- Historic Research
- Historic Walking Tour Guide/Assistant
- Fundraising
- Genealogy Research
- Heritage Days
- Oral History
- Publications
- Refreshments at Meetings
- Sidewalk Sales
- Special Project Volunteer
- Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(Feel free to suggest. If we don't offer it, we may consider adding it!)

<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal
\$15 <input type="checkbox"/> Student	
\$20 <input type="checkbox"/> Individual	
\$35 <input type="checkbox"/> Family	
\$50 <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing	
\$100 <input type="checkbox"/> Business	
\$250 <input type="checkbox"/> Patron	

## Join the Rochester-Avon Historical Society Today! Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Volunteer Areas of Interest

How would you like to participate?

- Annual Picnic
- Antique Appraisal Day
- Historic Research
- Historic Walking Tour Guide/Assistant
- Fundraising
- Genealogy Research
- Heritage Days
- Oral History
- Publications
- Refreshments at Meetings
- Sidewalk Sales
- Special Project Volunteer
- Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(Feel free to suggest. If we don't offer it, we may consider adding it!)



Mail completed form with check payable to:

**Rochester-Avon Historical Society**  
P O Box 80783  
Rochester, MI 48308-0783

## Opening Night: Another Step!

### Theatre in Downtown Rochester ... A Dream In Progress



By Katharine J. Burns



FILM SOCIETY OF ROCHESTER

The Film Society of Rochester committee has been quite active in two main projects in addition to its ongoing fund raising activity. Recently two new flyers were designed and made their debut at Heritage Days to rave reviews. They will, again, be available at our booth at the 2015 Downtown Sidewalk Sales, Thursday, July 9 through Saturday, July 11. Yes, we will have our own booth with a beautiful new banner and beautiful new flyers. The flyers are announcing:

1. The Film Society of Rochester is bringing back a movie theatre to downtown Rochester (there were previously two theatres from 1913 to 1984).
2. The Film Society of Rochester is proud to present its First Annual Rochester Film Festival, Sept. 18-20, 2015.
3. Following the Film Festival, there will be Pop-Up Movie Theatres in downtown Rochester until there is a "brick and mortar" theatre. How exciting is that? The exact schedule is being discussed currently.

The next project is working on our website to include the [Theatre Group of Rochester Company](#) (our legal name on documents) and the Film Society of Rochester (our actual name now) as well as a [Facebook page](#). We have just hired a new web designer, so that should all be up and running in the near future. And, of course, the actual fund raising continues. More to come about that soon.

Have a wonderful summer, and drop by and visit us at the Downtown Sidewalk Sales.

A 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization



P O Box 80783  
Rochester, MI 48308-0783

"Pride in Preserving the Past"