



RELIVING The Rochester Era

Jan./Feb.

The Rochester-Avon Historical Society Newsletter

2016

In this issue:

President's Message ...

"Working Together,
We Can Make 2016
Another Great Year"

Upcoming Programs

2015 Rochester
Hometown Christmas
Parade Grand
Marshal's Reception

Gather Up Your
Treasures for Annual
Antique Appraisal Day

Mark Your Calendar for Our Upcoming Events

2015 Rochester
Hometown
Christmas Parade
Surrey Overview

Christmas Cards for
Our Veterans



YouTube



Find us on
Facebook

We Were Busier Than Santa's Elves in December! Find Out Why in This Issue ...



Left: Tom and Holly Bledsoe assist visitors to the festive and inviting RAHS Booth at Kris Kringle Market.

Below: Our restored surrey is now an award-winning attraction!



Below: Rod and Susan Wilson honored as Rochester Hometown Parade Grand Marshals.

Right: The horse-powered surrey, handlers, passengers, banner bearers and "scoopers" cross the "finish line" near the Rochester municipal building.



President's Message ...

Working Together, We Can Make 2016 Another Great Year



Brian Dunphy, President
Rochester-Avon
Historical Society

The historical society had a big finish last year. We had another successful sales booth in the Downtown Rochester Kris Kringle Market the first week in December.

The following day, we showed our beautifully restored surrey in the Rochester Hometown Christmas Parade, where we won 1st Place in the Novelty category.

Special thanks to Tom Bledsoe, the RAHS Board's Director of Special Projects, and his wife, Holly, RAHS Corresponding Secretary, for handling the many details of getting the surrey, horse, driver, walkers, passengers and "scoopers"—all decorated and costumed for the season—into the parade for this outstanding showing.



Tom and Holly Bledsoe

In February, we begin our monthly programs with a Brown Bag Luncheon meeting Tuesday, Feb. 2. Our evening programs will start Thursday, Feb. 4, with "Downtown Movie Palaces," presented by Michael Hauser. Some may recall Michael's 2012 presentation on "Remembering Hudson's—The Grand Dame of Detroit Retailing" at our evening program. Video of that presentation was just uploaded to our YouTube channel last month. You can access it at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rzkpnut7nsM&feature=youtu.be>. We'll have several more interesting programs in the following months, leading up to our picnic and annual meeting June 8.



Pictured left to right, Mary Howarth, Bill Williams, Carol Tough and Brian Dunphy worked to set up the RAHS booth.



Brian Dunphy shows 1st Place ribbon

One of our biggest events takes place in March – our annual Antique Appraisal Day on Sunday, March 6. It's our version of "Antiques Road Show," and it will take the efforts of more than 20 volunteers to make it a success. We'll share more information about this important event and how to volunteer in the weeks to come.



Cheri Dowdall

Our Historic Downtown Walking tours will resume in May, and on Memorial Day weekend, we'll take part in Greater Rochester Heritage Days.

In the months that follow, we'll join the Downtown Sidewalk Sales (July), and present our annual Mount Avon Cemetery Walk (September).



Mount Avon Cemetery Walk

Photo: Bill Williams

All in all, we plan another year of great programs and events, and we encourage you to be a part of it. We're always seeking volunteers to help make these activities a success. Please watch this newsletter, your email and the RAHS Facebook page for more information.

And once again, a reminder – 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 **rahsupdates@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

Brown Bag Meeting

Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2016, at Noon
Rochester Community House
816 Ludlow Street

**FREE AND
OPEN TO
THE PUBLIC**

"The Crissman Family in Rochester"

John Crissman will discuss the history of his pioneering family and its impact on the local community. The first members of the family arrived in the 1830s with a mass migration to the Rochester area. However, he will emphasize the last four generations and their businesses, including his grandfather's drug store which became a popular hangout for residents of all ages.



Mr. Crissman is a native Rochester resident and was educated in the Rochester Public Schools. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Central Michigan University.

His entire career was spent in the retail automotive business, working for his uncle, Keith Crissman, at his Cadillac dealership for 17 years and then in partnership with his cousin Charles in the Lincoln Mercury dealership for 24 years.

Since he retired at the beginning of 2012, Mr. Crissman has enjoyed spending time with his granddaughter. He is also very active in the [Sons of the American Revolution](#) and is currently serving as President of the Oaks Chapter (Oakland County).

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

**The public is invited,
so bring your friends and family.**

RAHS Library Lecture

Thursday, Feb. 4, 2016, 7:00 p.m.
Rochester Hills Public Library
500 Olde Town Road

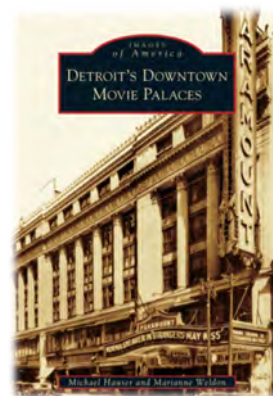
**FREE AND
OPEN TO
THE PUBLIC**

"Downtown Detroit's Magnificent Movie Palaces"

Author and entertainment historian Michael Hauser will discuss the glory days of the extravagant movie theatres of the past, where patrons were entertained by the film presentations and also by the exquisitely designed and embellished surroundings.

Mr. Hauser will focus on the majestic theatres surrounding Grand Circus Park in Detroit, which were designed by renowned architects. He will include the programming, concessions, specialty venues, local exhibitors and demographic changes. Attendees will be able to browse through photos and artifacts from these palaces and view several videos.

Currently the Marketing Manager for the [Michigan Opera Theatre](#) and the [Detroit Opera House](#), Mr. Hauser has extensive experience in advertising and promotions. He is the co-author of five [historical books for Arcadia Publishing](#), including "Hudson's: Detroit's Legendary Department Store," "20th-Century Retailing in Downtown Detroit," "Remembering Hudson's: The Grand Dame of Detroit Retailing," "20th-Century Retailing in Downtown Grand Rapids" and "Detroit's Downtown Movie Palaces."



As guest curator for the [Detroit Historical Museum](#), he was responsible for the exhibits on "Remembering Downtown Hudson's," "The Reel Story," which focused on the moviegoing experience in Detroit, and the more recent "Detroit's Fab 5 Retailers." He also developed the rotating exhibits of Detroit retail history at [The Detroit Shoppe](#) in Troy's Somerset Collection.

**This program is free and open to the public.
No registration is required.**

RAHS's Own Rod and Susan Wilson Honored During Grand Marshal's Reception

The Rochester Regional Chamber of Commerce hosted a gala event at Great Oaks Country Club on Thursday, Dec. 3, to honor Rochester Hometown Christmas Parade Grand Marshals, Rod and Susan Wilson, and to recognize the many corporate sponsors required to organize and fund this annual local tradition.

About a dozen RAHS members joined in to celebrate and support our organization's successful nomination of the Wilsons for this honor.

Below: Partial room view illustrates the impressive turnout for this event.



Rod and Susan center stage after video was shown highlighting their contributions to the community.



Below: The Wilson family enjoying the evening's festivities. Pictured are:
Seated: Sheri Emery (daughter) and Darren Emery (son-in-law).
Standing L to R: Melanie Sharp Huddas (granddaughter), Stuart Sharp (son-in-law), Debbie Sharp (daughter), Rod and Susan Wilson.

[Click here to watch "Meet the Grand Marshals" video.](#)
Or, copy and paste the following into your web browser:
<https://youtu.be/UcjBDr7Wc9s>



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:

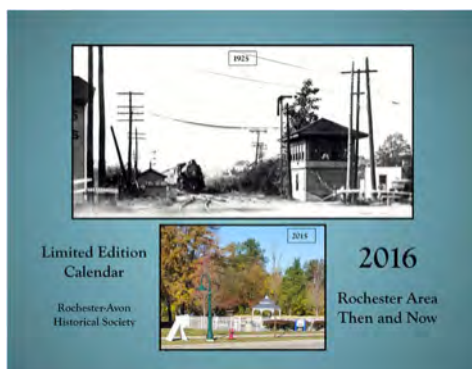
www.rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org

Newest Merchandise Items Still Available, but Supplies Are Limited!

Our new limited-edition mug featuring the art of Gerry Post is still available for purchase at Lytle Pharmacy.



Calendars can also be purchased at Lytle Pharmacy or can be ordered through our website. In most cases, this limited-edition calendar shows three phases of each site: 100 years ago, 50 to 60 years ago and today. To snag this keepsake for



yourself or as a thoughtful gift, simply visit our online store at www.rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org, or click on this link:

<http://rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org/our-store>

Gather Up Your Treasures for Our Annual Antique Appraisal Day

It's not too early to start planning for this annual chance to bring up to five items to discuss with our appraisers on Sunday, Mar. 6. Whether you want to learn more about items with a sentimental attachment or need to know whether to consider adding or removing insurance coverage, it won't cost a fortune to glean useful information.

No appraisal fee is charged for items valued at less than \$20. Those individual items valued at \$20 or more will each incur a \$5 donation fee; therefore, maximum appraisal expenses would be \$25.



Photo: Leslie Mack

Please note: Written appraisals will not be available at this event, and no buying or selling of items will be permitted.

Don't Miss These Upcoming Events

Please mark your calendar now!

JANUARY						
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						

Please note:
No Brown Bag Lunch this month

Please note:
No Evening Program this month

Great Everything Sale
Sponsored by Rochester Community House
Friday, Jan. 29
(Early Birds 8:00 a.m.—\$5)
9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 30
(Bag Day)
9:00 a.m. to noon

Contact Rochester Community House for more information
(248) 651-0622

FEBRUARY						
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				

Brown Bag Lunch
Tuesday, Feb. 2
Noon to 1:00 p.m.

Evening Program @ Library
Thursday, Feb. 4
7:00 p.m.

MARCH						
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	

Brown Bag Lunch
Tuesday, Mar. 1
Noon to 1:00 p.m.

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

Antique Appraisal Day
Rochester Community House
Sunday, Mar. 6
Noon to 4:00 p.m.



2015 Parade Day looking southeast down Main Street

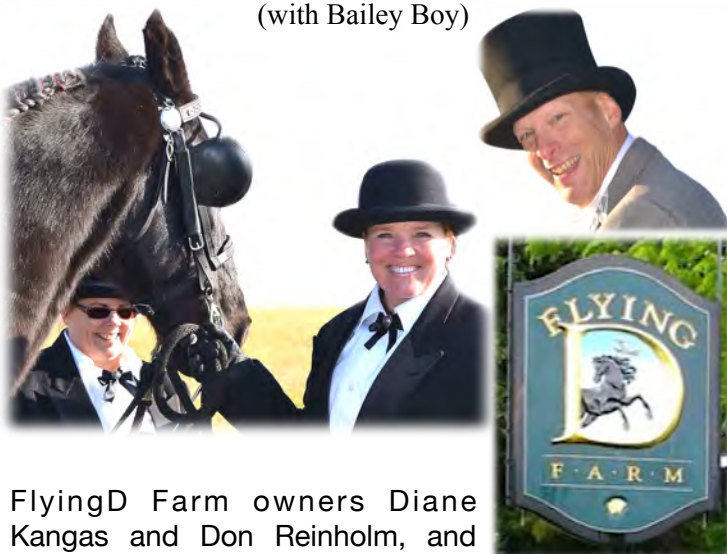
Thousands View Surrey on Beautiful Hometown Christmas Parade Day

Sunny and unseasonably warm and dry, Sunday, Dec. 6, turned out to be a gorgeous day for a leisurely spin in the surrey.

RAHS director of special projects Tom Bledsoe took ownership of all of the arrangements for our parade participation this year, including all of the surrey logistics and handlers.

Holly Bledsoe, who also recently accepted a board position as our new corresponding secretary, teamed up with her husband to prepare our "float" for its second parade appearance since undergoing complete restoration. Holly joined Tom in serving as banner bearers as well.

Below: Tina Kangas, Diane Kangas and Don Reinholm (with Bailey Boy)



FlyingD Farm owners Diane Kangas and Don Reinholm, and Diane's sister, Tina Kangas, expertly guided our parade entry (powered by the FlyingD's own Tennessee Walker, Bailey Boy) with plenty of smiles for the assembled crowds.

Last, but not least, Denise Adler, who works as a guide dog mobility instructor for Leader Dog, shared quality time with son, Bryce, while she cheerfully performed the all-important role of "scooper."

Board members Carol Tough, Vice President of Operations, Gail Kemler, Director of Historical Preservation (and community icon) and Brian Dunphy, President, greeted the throngs of onlookers with plenty of RAHS enthusiasm from their tufted perches beneath the swaying fringe of the surrey's "top."

And speaking of tops, our parade experience was "topped off" by being awarded 1st Place in the Novelty category. RAHS received a blue ribbon and a wall plaque acknowledging the success of our "float" entry.



Above: Tom Bledsoe, Carol Tough, Holly Bledsoe, Brian Dunphy and Gail Kemler



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
Holly Bledsoe, Corresponding Secretary	248-923-2602
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
- Photography/Videography
- 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!)

☐ New ☐ 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 |

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
- ☐ Photography/Videography
- ☐ 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!)

Join the Rochester-Avon Historical Society Today! Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____



Mail completed form with check payable to:

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

RAHS and the "Friends of the Oaks Chapter" of SAR Team Up, Once Again, to Remember Our Veterans

"Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can." - Arthur Ashe

This small group of RAHS ladies produced 100 hand-made Christmas cards to be delivered to veterans who reside at the V.A. Hospital in Detroit.

The cards will be hand-delivered to the hospital in time to express appreciation for the recipients' service to our country.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

- Margaret Mead

"Friends, you and me ... you brought another friend ... and then there were three ... we started our group ... our circle of friends ... and like that circle ... there is no beginning or end."

- Eleanor Roosevelt



"The world is hugged by the faithful arms of volunteers."

- Everett Mámor

Seated L to R: June Hopaluk, Janet Potton, Mary Howarth
Standing L to R: Susan Wilson, Leslie Mack, Carol Tough
(Invaluable regular contributor to this group, Liz Golding, was unable to attend, but was present in spirit!)

"Pride in Preserving the Past"



Rochester, MI 48308-0783
P O Box 80783



A 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization