



RELIVING The Rochester Era



THE ROCHESTER-AVON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

MARCH/APRIL

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2019

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Rochester Marks 150 Years Since Incorporation

By Deborah Larsen

Any town that has existed for over two centuries will usually mark several important milestone dates. Two years ago, our community celebrated the 200th anniversary of its settlement by the James Graham family. But did you know that this spring, we also observe the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of the village – now city – of Rochester?

The village of Rochester had existed since 1817, but in its early years it was not an incorporated municipal entity under Michigan law. Avon Township’s board of trustees governed the village, and for political purposes, Rochester did not have its own identity. That status changed on March 24, 1869, when the Michigan legislature passed a bill to incorporate the village of Rochester and establish its governing board. The bill defined the municipal boundaries and directed that all adult male residents therein gather on April 12, 1869, at the Lambertson House Hotel, to elect village officers. Thereafter, decisions for the welfare of the residents of Rochester would lie in the hands of its village board of trustees, not with the Township of Avon.



The Lambertson House Hotel became Hotel St. James in 1892 and stood on the southwest corner of Main and University (formerly Fifth St).streets.





Tiffany Dziurman
President

President's Message

Why do we care about history?

About four years ago, I began researching the history of the Haven Sanitarium, a mental health facility that was once a private home along Walton Blvd. near Old Perch Rd. The Haven operated as a hospital from 1932 to 1968. Fred and Lillian Shinnick built the home in 1927, but for possible financial reasons, converted it into a treatment and addiction center in 1932. While interviewing members of the Shinnick family, I was asked why I cared about the Haven – why was it important to me. I explained that it was important because this facility and their family were part of the community's story; it was also part of the history of mental health practices of the early to mid-twentieth century. The Haven was a training hospital for psychology and psychiatry students. Some of the best doctors at the time traveled from across the country and from Europe to work at the Haven. It was an internationally recognized treatment facility in our community and it was worth remembering

Historians and historical societies are often asked why they care about history or why do they want to know so much "stuff." But as Cornell professor Carol Kammen points out in a recent edition of *History News* (a publication of the American Association for State and Local History), "knowing stuff is not the point." Instead historians and historical societies know what questions to ask -- "questions that illuminate the human condition in time and over time."

The history of the Haven Sanitarium, for example, can help us further understand the history of mental health treatment in the United States, as well as illustrate that our community was at the forefront of what was then modern medicine. But the Haven Sanitarium is one story in a community that has thousands of stories to share. Why do we as a society care about history "stuff?" Because as we explore and dig into our community's past, the "stuff" we find provides context for current concerns and happenings. The stuff is important, but as Kammen points out, it's what we do with that stuff that means even more.

So, I ask you, our members and supporters, why do you care about the history of our community? What "stuff" do you care about and why? Send us your answers in an email to rashupdates@gmail.com and we'll share some of them in our next newsletter.

Tiffany Dziurman
President



26th Annual Antique Appraisal Day

MARCH 3RD 2019

RAHS is delighted to report another successful Antique Appraisal Day!

Our 26th annual Appraisal Day took place on March 3, 2019. The event was held at the Rochester Community House. Many treasures were seen and discussed throughout the day. The RAHS especially thanks the nine appraisers who were on hand to assist the public in finding out more about their vintage items. We appreciate both their time and talents! Examples included, but were not limited to: coins, dolls, antique art, and jewelry. **Many thanks, to the terrific volunteers who offered their time toward this important fundraiser. The RAHS would also like to graciously thank the generous contributors who sponsored and supported this endeavor.** Working together, we strengthen the community!



Golden Eagle Restaurant



COVER STORY CONTINUED:

The electors chose Dr. Jesse E. Wilson to serve as the first village president. The board consisted of John H. Hutaf, William Newell, Daniel L. Jennings, and George W. Vandeventer. Marsden C. Burch was appointed to serve as both village clerk and village attorney.

As we would expect, the new village officers were respected citizens of the community. Little is known about Hutaf and Newell, but Dr. Jesse Wilson and his twin brother, Jeremiah, served as town physicians during Rochester's pioneer era. Daniel Jennings ran a foundry that was one of the town's early industries, and George W. Vandeventer was the town's carriage maker. Marsden C. Burch, who had just completed his study of law at the time of his appointment as village clerk and attorney, later went on to national office. He served in two judicial posts in Michigan before eventually moving to Washington, D.C. to become assistant to the Attorney General of the United States.



Dr. Jesse Wilson

Rochester operated under the guiding hand of the village board and its president for 98 years. In 1967, the village incorporated as a city and seated its first city council and mayor. Once again, we say, "Happy Birthday, Rochester!"

**Thursday Evening Lecture: "Bad Women from the Mitten"**

April 4 at 7 pm

Rochester Hills Public Library

Presented by true crime novelist Mardi Link, "Not All Sugar & Spice: Bad Women of the Mitten," looks at four infamous Michigan female criminals: Charlotte Peterson (of the "Anatomy of a Murder" case), Bernardine Dohr (of the Weathermen), Stella Lipinska (nun killer from links; Michigan Notable Book, "Isadore's Secret"), and Debbie Parmentier (once on Michigan's most wanted list). What makes a good Michigan woman turn bad? This talk and slide show takes a look at these women criminals and details their backgrounds, the possible motives for their crimes, and their just (or not) punishments.



Mardi Link

Mardi Link's first book, *When Evil Came to Good Hart*, was published in 2008 by the University of Michigan Press and spent four months on the Heartland Bestseller List. Her second book, *Isadore's Secret*, was published in 2009, also by the University of Michigan Press, and chronicles the mysterious disappearance of a Felician nun from her convent in 1907. It was named a Michigan Notable Book, a Great Lakes Great Read, and also spent several months on the Heartland Bestseller List. Link made the *New York Times'* Bestseller list with her book, *Wicked Takes the Witness Stand*, but may be best known for her first memoir, *Bootstrapper*.

The program is free and open to the public. Registration is not required. Books written by Mardi Link may be available to purchase at this program. <https://www.mardilink.com/>

Brown Bag Lunchtime Program: Tuesday, April 2 at 12 pm

"A View to Rochester's Past Education"

Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm – Stoney Creek Schoolhouse, 1051 Washington Rd. (near the museum)

Michele Dunham of the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm will present the history of the 12 one-room schoolhouses that once formed the Rochester Community Schools. Bring your lunch and enjoy complimentary coffee, tea, and cookies. This meeting is free and open to the public. Registration for this program is not required.

Thursday Evening Lecture: TBA

May 2 at 7 pm

Rochester Hills Public Library

Brown Bag Lunchtime Program: Tuesday, May 7 at 12 pm

"If This is Hastings, Then Where Is Hog's Hollow?"

Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm

Deborah Remer will discuss the lost villages that were once in Avon, Oakland, Washington, and Shelby Township.

Do you remember any of them?

Registration for this program is not required.

Greater Rochester Heritage Days

May 18 & 19

Rochester Municipal Park

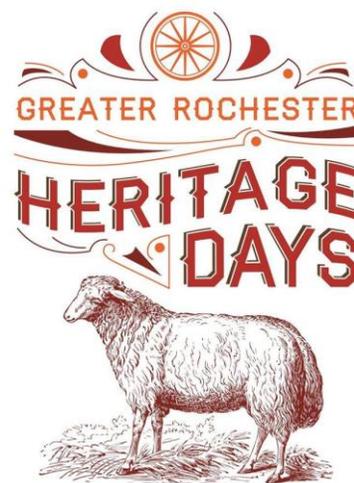
For over 42 years, the Greater Rochester Heritage Days has been bringing free and fun entertainment to the Rochester area! Come visit this year to see car and craft shows, Civil War re-enactors and displays, eat yummy food, and listen to some great performances.



Would you like to volunteer with us at the annual Greater Rochester Heritage Days Festival? The dates are May 18 and 19 and we need volunteers to help set up, tear down, sell merchandise, and inform attendees about our great historical society. If you can join us this year, please email us at rahupdates@gmail.com or call 248-266-5440. Thank you!



*The now lost Village of Disco (now Shelby Township).
Deborah J. Remer, Lost Villages, Small Towns and
Railroad Stops in Oakland and Macomb County*



2019 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						

**Don't miss these upcoming events
Be sure to mark your calendar now!**

Board of Directors Meeting – March 19

Kroger Rewards Enrollment – April 1

Evening Program Meeting 7pm – April 4

Deadline for ERA articles – April 9

Board of Directors Meeting – April 16

2019 APRIL

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				

Evening Program Meeting 7pm – May 2

Greater Detroit Heritage Days – May 18

Greater Detroit Heritage Days – May 19

Board of Directors Meeting – May 21

More to come.....

2019 MAY

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	



Board of Directors

Tiffany Dziurman, President	248-410-5490
Sarah Helferich, First Vice President	248-688-2434
Brian Dunphy, Second Vice President	248-376-3460
Janet Potton, Corresponding Secretary	248-765-1571
Ginger Ketelsen, Recording Secretary	248-496-2032
Cary Downer, Treasurer	586-201-2285
Katie Stozicki, Director, Communications	248-410-6880
Carla Gallusser, Director, ERA Newsletter	248-872-5088
Richard Dengate, Director, Membership	248-390-7012
Director, Programs	
Director, Special Projects	
Barb Bates, Director, Historic Preservation	248-495-6258

Committee Chairpersons

Gail Kemler, Honorary Historian	407-439-1786
Deborah Larsen, Research	248-375-2974
Gary Jaracz, Media	313-407-9326

JOIN TODAY!!

<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	\$15 \$20 \$35 \$50 \$100 \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> Family <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing <input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Patron	<p style="text-align: center;">Join the Rochester-Avon Historical Society Today! <u>Membership Application</u></p> Name: _____ Address: _____ _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____
<p><u>How would you like to participate?</u></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Picnic <input type="checkbox"/> Antique Appraisal Day <input type="checkbox"/> Historic Research <input type="checkbox"/> Historic Walking Tour Guide/Assistant <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising <input type="checkbox"/> Genealogy Research <input type="checkbox"/> Heritage Days <input type="checkbox"/> Oral History <input type="checkbox"/> Photography/Videography <input type="checkbox"/> Publications <input type="checkbox"/> Refreshments at Meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Special Project Volunteer <input type="checkbox"/> Website/Social Media			<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>ROCHESTER AVON HISTORICAL SOCIETY</p> </div> <p>Mail completed form with check payable to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">RAHS P.O. Box 80783 Rochester, MI 48308-0783</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Questions? Call us at 248-266-5440</i></p>



P. O. Box 80783
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