



# The Rochester Era

## THE ROCHESTER-AVON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

MAY/JUNE 2020 ROCHESTERAUVONHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG

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### The Haven Sanitarium: A Brief History

by Tiffany Dziurman

#### The Haven Home: 1927-1932

Originally built as a country estate for Detroit industrialist Fred M. Shinnick and his wife, Lillian, The Haven stood along Walton Boulevard (known then as Perry Road) on the former Manwaring farm. In 1927, the Shinnick family moved into the opulent English Tudor Revival-style home with their four children, Donna, John Graham, Retta, and Fred Jr. The 33,000 square-foot residence included 40 rooms, twelve baths, four fireplaces, and a glass-enclosed atrium.

Born in Michigan in 1877, Fred Shinnick began working for Briggs Manufacturing Co. in Hamtramck around 1910. He eventually became secretary and treasurer at Briggs, which then was the world's largest supplier of automobile bodies and other car parts. Later he worked for Parsons Manufacturing, which made automobile hinges and locks, and Central Iron Foundry from which he retired in 1945. Fred also owned and operated the Rochester Dairy in the 1920s and he served the local community as vice president of the Avon Township Library. In 1925, he donated a house he owned at 134 W. Fifth Street (now University Drive) to the Women's Club of Rochester for use as a community house.



Fred M. Shinnick

Lillian Graham Shinnick was born in Ontario, Canada, in 1883. She designed The Haven estate's landscaping in an English style, importing a variety of flowers and plants from overseas, including ewes, lilies, and irises. Lillian was a member of several area garden clubs.



Lillian G. Shinnick

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*Photos: Courtesy of the Hall/Shinnick Family & Rochester-Avon Historical Society.*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

These are crazy, historic times. We are sad to cancel our upcoming programs, including the popular June picnic, but it is for the best. Programs will remain canceled until we can be sure that a gathering for in-person events is safe for everyone. In the meantime, please visit our new website at [rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org](http://rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org) and on our social media platforms for interesting local history content and future virtual programming. Also, take some time to consider the historic period you are living in now – a time that will be remembered and studied by future historians.

History begins with you. Those yet to be born will one day ask how we responded, survived, and coped during the COVID-19 pandemic. Historians will look for diary entries, photos, ephemera, and the like to understand this time in history. The Rochester-Avon Historical Society would like you to contribute to the historical record and send us your thoughts about the pandemic. These thoughts could be in the form of an email you sent a loved one, a diary entry, a drawing, poem, song, etc.

Below are some questions from the Library of Michigan and the Historical Society of Michigan to keep in mind:

- How and when did you learn about the coronavirus?
- How and when did the pandemic first affect your life? How did your daily routines change? Did you miss out on any big events?
- What emotions did you feel? What things scared you? What things brought you comfort?
- How was your school or job affected? Did you have the opportunity to study or work from home? How did you manage during these uncertain times?
- How did the pandemic affect your neighbors? How did the pandemic affect religious or civic groups that count you as a member?

People of all ages are invited to submit their story. Tell us if you are a healthcare worker, teacher, parent, student, etc. Provide us with some basic biographical information such as age and where you live and will respect your privacy if there is information you would rather not share.

This project will continue for many months, so feel free to submit items today or weeks from now. Please follow all local, state and federal guidelines regarding the pandemic and do not do anything that risks infection.

Submit your COVID-19 reflections to [rahupdate@gmail.com](mailto:rahupdate@gmail.com).

Thank you and be well.

Tiffany Dziurman



**Tiffany Dziurman**  
President  
Rochester-Avon  
Historical Society



**COVER STORY CONTINUED:****THE HAVEN****The Haven Sanitarium: 1932-1968**

In 1932, the Shinnicks converted their country residence into The Haven Sanitarium, a private hospital treating patients with alcohol and drug dependency, depression, schizophrenia, and other illnesses. Speculative reasons for converting the home into a mental health facility range from the stock market crash in 1929 and the financial stress it later took to support a large estate, to the family's personal experience with a family friend's mental breakdown in 1931 and the growing need across the country for mental health hospitals in the wake of the Great Depression. Both Fred and Lillian personally managed the new facility, which quickly gained a world-wide reputation for its amenities and treatments for mental illness.

One of the most notable doctors to work at The Haven Sanitarium was Dr. Leo Bartemeier, a world-renowned psychiatrist and psychoanalyst who was the hospital's director of professional staff from 1942 to 1954. Under his direction, The Haven Sanitarium became a leading psychiatric hospital not only for patients across the country, but for medical students from around the world who came to the sanitarium to receive training from Dr. Bartemeier.

**The Haven Closes: 1968**

The introduction of prescription medication to treat mental illnesses in the 1940s and 1950s caused a sharp decline in hospitalized patients around the world. A decline in patients coupled with many changes to fire and safety regulations ultimately led to the closure of The Haven hospital in 1968. A private individual purchased the property soon afterwards but left it vacant through 1973. As a result, the building deteriorated due to lack of care and exposure to the elements, as well as acts of vandalism.

The building caught fire on the night of November 2, 1973. Despite the Rochester Fire Department's efforts to fight the fire, the building was a total loss. It is still questionable whether the fire's cause was accidental or intentional.

By 1977, new owners platted the property into 142 home sites for a new subdivision named Grosse Pines. The subdivision's first home models opened in June 1978.

**Final Note**

It has long been rumored that a few Hollywood celebrities and notable Detroit figures of the day sought treatment for dependency and depression at The Haven. However, The Haven's doctors, nurses, and staff held to a strict code of confidentiality about the identities of their patients. To this day, the rumors cannot be verified with recorded evidence.

## 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Antique Appraisal Day 2020

Thank you to all who attended RAHS' annual Antique Appraisal Day! RAHS would like to thank the Rochester Community House, our sponsors, appraisers, and volunteers. The weather was beautiful and many passersby stopped in and gathered with us to learn more about Antique Appraisal Day. We are grateful for all who participated either by volunteering or by bringing items to be appraised. This year's treasures included fine art, instruments, dolls, coins, jewelry, weaponry, and clocks. Please stay tuned for information regarding our 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Antique Appraisal Day.



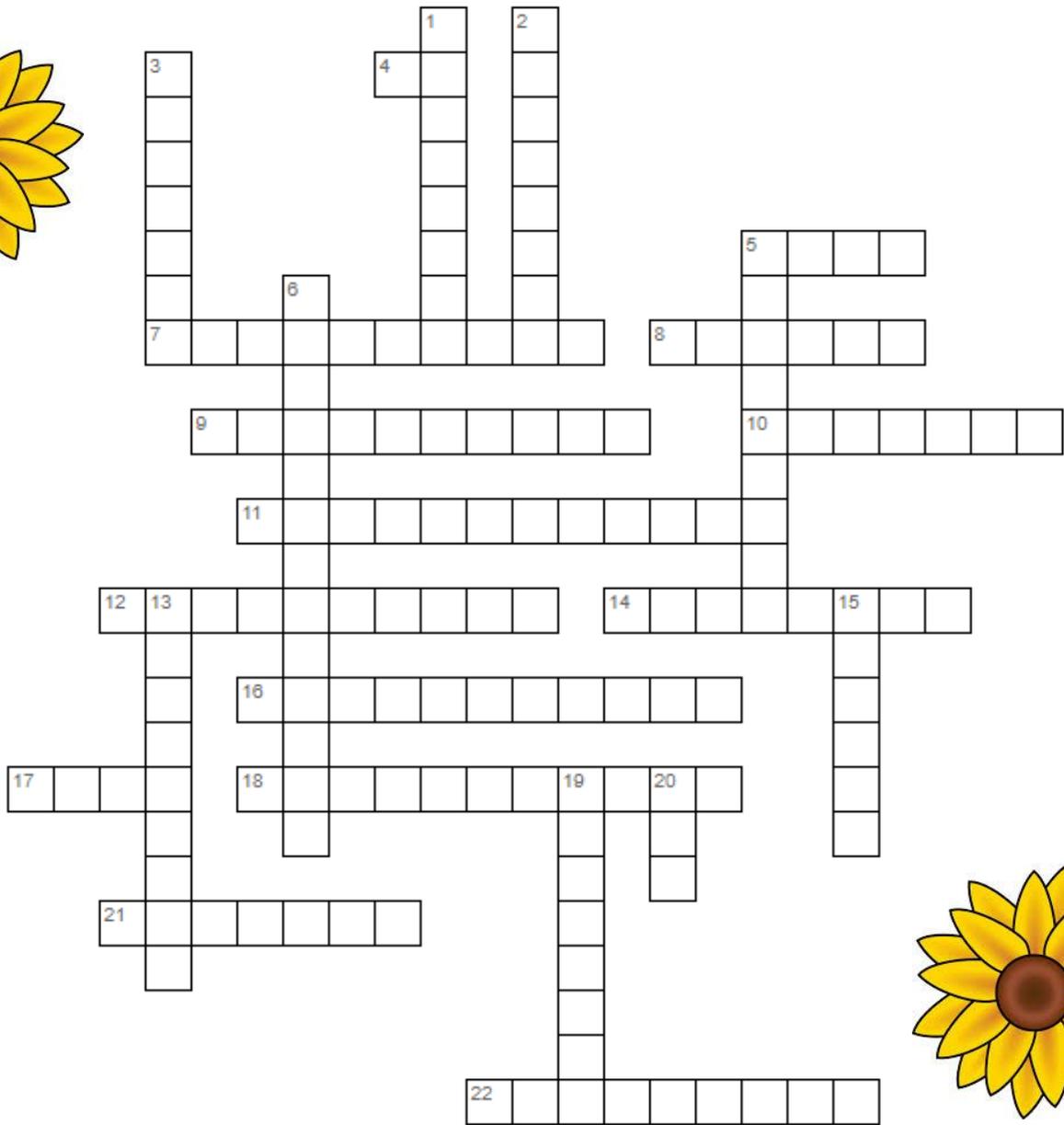
## Women in Rochester History Bike Tour

Saturday, June 27, 6-7 p.m. Rochester Hills Public Library.

This in-person bike tour will take riders on a three-mile ride through Rochester to visit historic sites featuring women in the Rochester area's history. Register at [calendar.rhpl.org](http://calendar.rhpl.org) and choose a time slot starting at 6 p.m. The time you register is the time your bike group will depart from the library's west parking lot. Groups of xx riders will leave the library in ten-minute intervals. Helmets are recommended. Face masks are recommended. Safe distancing from other bike riders will be required. This tour is in partnership with the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm & the Rochester-Avon Historical Society. This event is subject to change or cancellation.



# Rochester Trivia Crossword



**Across**

- 4 Squeaky wood floors to choose a dime's worth of candy.
- 5 Main Street was home to how many bars.
- 7 School was dismissed early for this annual Parade along University Drive.
- 8 This kind of farm that was next to Leader Dog School for The Blind went up in flames.
- 9 Bus Depot
- 10 A trip downtown wasn't complete without checking out these kinds of cars at Byer's Shell.
- 11 A child's admission ticket was 35 cents.
- 12 A ride down this jarred your teeth.
- 14 Walked barefoot to Paul's Market.. Alward's... Sherman's Grocery... or Shorty's in the summer to get this.
- 16 Fabric and patterns for your home and sewing projects you could buy here.
- 17 The community was stunned at the announcement of this kind of school in the middle of nowhere at Adams and Tienken Roads.
- 18 Your first makeup set.
- 21 You could read this on Thursdays.
- 22 Banned from opening a restaurant in Rochester.

**Down**

- 1 Avon Dairy
- 2 Family reunions were held here.
- 3 Junior High football games were played at this field.
- 5 This could be watched from Livernois Rd. just south of the RHS football field.
- 6 You would trade in old lightbulbs here.
- 13 Shopping Center that offered the choice of two soda fountains.
- 15 These grazed at the Great Oaks Stock Farm.
- 19 Dillman and Upton sat next to this track downtown.
- 20 This was 19.9 cents a gallon at the Oak station.

For answers, visit our website at [rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org](http://rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org) or email us at [rahupdates@gmail.com](mailto:rahupdates@gmail.com) and will email them to you.

## MAY 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					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						



### UPCOMING DATES:

May 4 - ~~Brown Bag at Museum~~

May 7 - ~~Evening Program Meeting~~

May 16 - ~~Heritage Days~~

May 17 - ~~Heritage Days~~

May 19 - Board of Directors Meeting

## JUNE 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	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				

June 2 - Executive Committee Meeting'

June 8 - Deadline ERA Articles

June 10 - ~~Annual Picnic - Members ONLY~~

June 16 - Board of Directors Meeting

June 30 - Membership Dues Due 2019-2020

# MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

## *Annual Dues*

Due for 2019-2020

**JUNE 30, 2020**



RAHS could use a helping hand or two so if you have a creative side or love to connect to the community, contact us!

- Annual Picnic
- Antique Appraisal Day
- Heritage Days
- Walking Tour



To contact us, call 248-266-5440 or send an email to rahsupdates@gmail.com.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- Tiffany Dziurman, President
- Sarah Helferich, First Vice President
- Brian Dunphy, Second Vice President
- Janet Potton, Corresponding Secretary
- Ginger Ketelsen, Recording Secretary
- Cary Downer, Treasurer
- Katie Stozicki, Communications Director
- Carla Gallusser, ERA Newsletter Director
- Richard Dengate, Membership Director
- Barb Bates, Historic Preservation Director
- Programs, **open position**
- Special Projects, **open position**

# CONTACT



**COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS**

- Gail Kemler, Honorary Historian
- Deborah Larson, Research
- Media, **open position**

## Join the Rochester-Avon Historical Society Today!

### Membership Application

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>New</b>     | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 <b>Student</b> Open to person currently enrolled in a secondary or post-secondary educational institution.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Renewal</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 <b>Individual</b> Open to any person interested in local history.   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 <b>Household</b> Includes immediate family members living in the same household.  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 <b>Business/Sponsor</b> Designed for community businesses and individuals with a desire to promote the restoration and promotion of local history. |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 <b>Lifetime</b> Perpetual membership for those who wish to make a long-term commitment to the preservation of local history.                       |
- 
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Annual Picnic</b>         | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Historic Walking Tour Guide/Assistant</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Antique Appraisal Day</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Photography/Videography</b>               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Historic Research</b>     | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Refreshments at Meetings</b>              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Fundraising</b>           | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Special Project Volunteer</b>             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Genealogy Research</b>    | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Website/Social Media</b>                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Heritage Days</b>         | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Volunteer Interests/Other</b>             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Oral History</b>          |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Publications</b>          |   |



RAHS is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization

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

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

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

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

Mail Completed Form with check payable to: RAHS P.O.Box 80783 Rochester, MI 48308-0783 <http://rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org/>

# Rochester-Avon Historical Society

Est. 1969

## BUSINESS SPONSORS



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FOR BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE**

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Chief Medical Officer: Clinical Trials Group at RCBM

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