



# RELIVING The Rochester Era



## THE ROCHESTER-AVON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

MAY/JUNE

[WWW.ROCHESTERAVONHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG](http://WWW.ROCHESTERAVONHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG)

2019

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### Recognizing Rochester Soldiers' Contributions on 'Poppy Day'

By Tiffany Dziurman

Originally called Decoration Day, the first Memorial Day was held on May 30, 1868, when wreaths were placed at the graves of both Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery and flowers adorned Civil War veterans' graves throughout the country. After WWI, the holiday During that same time, the holiday received an unofficial title – Poppy Day – to honor those who serve and their families. Paper poppies were sold to raise money for disabled veterans and the families of deceased veterans.

In 1971, Memorial Day observance was moved from May 30 to the last Monday in May.

#### A poppy is worth a thousand words

In 1915, Canadian Army Col. John McRae wrote "In Flanders Fields," a poem inspired by the terrible carnage he witnessed while tending to soldiers wounded on the battlefield in the Ypres salient in Belgium. Taking a moment to reflect on the horrific site, McRae wrote the poem, making note of the wild red poppies growing Soon after the poem was published ladies began selling homemade paper poppies to raise funds for children whose fathers died in the Great War.

Rochester began celebrating its own Poppy Day in 1920, when the Rochester unit of the American Legion Auxiliary sold little red paper flowers known as Buddy Poppies. Sales benefited disabled veterans and their families, as well as the wives and children of soldiers who died while serving.

What follows is a brief look at a few of the many the contributions Rochester and its residents have made to the defense of America since 1776.



Courtesy of Tiffany Dziurman

## President's Message

Memorial Day is approaching, and our cover story presents a bit of history about the holiday as well as the contributions of Rochester's former soldiers. There are many more stories to tell. One of my favorite local historical figures is John J. Snook, a veteran of the Civil War and a published poet.

Snook was a sergeant major in the 22nd Michigan Volunteer Infantry during the Civil War. He was wounded in the Battle of Chickamauga. At home in Avon Township (now Rochester Hills), Snook and his wife owned Overlook Fruit Farm – a 170-acre orchard along Rochester Road (where formerly named Winchester shopping mall is now located). A prolific writer and published poet, Snook was nicknamed the "Poet Laureate" of Rochester.

On May 30, 1911, Snook wrote an original poem, "The Soldier Monument," for the dedication of the Billy Yank statue in Mount Avon Cemetery.

### The Soldier Monument by John J. Snook, May 30, 1911

*Hail! loyal hearts and true! This marks the time  
When semi-century has swiftly flown,  
And we are here with patriot glow  
To dedicate brave worth in chiseled stone.*

*'Mongst peace and plenty strewn on every side  
The rising race think not nor understand,  
The fearful times of those dark awful years  
When men stood up as targets for our land.*

*They cannot know the struggle that it cost  
To save our country from war's dreadful strife;  
And may our children's children never need  
To don the sword or gun, to save her life.*



Tiffany Dziurman  
President

Rochester-Avon Historical Society

*Oh, God of Heaven! make brave our loyal hearts  
That in this blessed land so dearly saved,  
We stand united, firm, against all wrong  
That cause our youth and homes to be enslaved.*

*Speak, then, oh monument, in years to come;  
Tell of the G.A.R. and others dear;  
Tell of true woman's trying years at home,  
And of the W.R.C who placed you here.*

*Hail! comrade, hail! Hail sisters, children all;  
The zeal of loyalty will never lag  
While here this token stands for those who fought  
In freedom's cause, for country and for flag.*

We hope you come out to see your fellow members at our great events in May and June. We have two fascinating lectures, Heritage Days, and the annual member picnic and annual meeting. Please remember to send in your renewal dues and consider a gift membership for friends and family. Thank you for your continued support and have a happy summer.

**Cover Story Continued:****Nathaniel Baldwin, Revolutionary War soldier and Rochester pioneer**

Born in Connecticut in 1761, Nathaniel Baldwin served in the Sixth Connecticut Regiment during the American Revolution. He arrived in Michigan in 1817 and soon after helped to establish the Rochester settlement. Baldwin is buried in Mount Avon Cemetery.



Courtesy of findagrave.com

**Samuel Harris, Civil War Prisoner of War**

Samuel Harris served in Company A of the Fifth Michigan Cavalry. In 1864, he became a POW of the Confederacy, which accused him of war crimes. Narrowly escaping death by hanging, Harris was sent to Libby Prison, where he suffered malnutrition, hard labor and illness. Harris requested a fountain be built in his honor. The fountain was restored and rededicated in 2002 in a location near the Rochester Police Department in Rochester Municipal Park.



Courtesy of Tiffany Dzurman

**WWII Honor Roll Monument**

Ten percent of Rochester's population served in WWII. Their names are listed on the WWII Honor Roll Monument in Rochester Municipal Park. Originally dedicated by the Blue Star Mothers in 1945, the memorial includes the names of 1,116 men and women from Rochester who died in the war. Their names are etched on 16 panels of glass.

In 2002, the monument was rededicated with the help of the Rochester-Avon Historical Society and several other community organizations and businesses.

**Memorial Day 2019**

This Memorial Day wear your own symbolic poppy by taking an hour to read the names on the WWII Honor Roll Monument. You can also visit the graves of soldiers in cemeteries throughout Rochester and Rochester Hills.



## MAY & JUNE EVENTS

### Thursday Evening Lecture Program

#### Margaret Mitchell & Gone With The Wind

May 2 at 7 pm, Rochester Hills Public Library Multipurpose Room

Kathleen Marcaccio will present "Margaret Mitchell and Gone With the Wind" on Thursday, May 2 at 7 pm. Her presentation provides background on author Margaret Mitchell and her Pulitzer Prize-winning novel "Gone With The Wind;" the 1939 film by the same name; Margaret Mitchell's post-GWTW life; and Gone With The Wind in popular culture. Her lecture will include a look back at the film's 80th anniversary this year, as well as its premiere in Detroit in 1939.



This program is free and open to the public. Registration is not required.



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

### Brown Bag Lunchtime Program

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

Tuesday, May 7 at 12 pm, Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm/Calf Barn

Deborah Remer will discuss the lost villages that were once in Avon, Oakland, Washington, and Shelby Township. Do you remember any of them? This will be RAHS' last Brown Bag program of the year.

### Annual Member Picnic & Annual Meeting

Wednesday, June 12 from 6-8 pm, Rochester Community House

RAHS members are invited to attend our annual Member Picnic & Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 12 from 6-8 pm at the Rochester Community House. Fried chicken, beverages, plates, and cutlery will be provided, and we ask that you bring a dish to add to the potluck fare. We will have live entertainment and awards will be presented for Outstanding New Member, Outstanding Member, and Outstanding Board Member. Come and enjoy an evening with fellow members and friends.



## Historical Walking Tour of Downtown Rochester

Hangouts: A Tour of Downtown Rochester's Entertainment Spaces  
Sunday, June 23 at 3 pm

RAHS is pleased to bring you a brand-new historical walking tour of downtown Rochester. This new tour is all about the local hangouts and entertainment spaces that are a part of our community's past. Where was the action in downtown Rochester in days gone by? Where did the kids go to hang out with friends? This tour will take you back to some of the hangouts

enjoyed by Rochester residents of decades past. Join us as we show you vintage photos and advertisements and delight you with stories and anecdotes from the people whose lives intertwined with the places that entertained Rochester.

The tour begins at the city parking lot on E. University and Water Streets, across the street from the iconic Rochester Elevator building. The group will then proceed to walk up the corner of University and Main to begin the tour. Please arrive on time.

Space is limited, so register early! Tours are free for RAHS members. Non-members are \$5, \$3 for seniors (55+) and students. Payments must be made at the time of the tour. Cash-only.

Email us at [rahsupdates@gmail.com](mailto:rahsupdates@gmail.com) to reserve your spot today or sign up using our online registration form at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0945AAA72BA7FD0-downtown>. There will be limited space for walk-ups and we cannot guarantee a spot.

## Shop at Kroger & Help Support RAHS

Thank you to all who participate in the Kroger Community Rewards Program and have chosen RAHS to receive a percentage of your purchases at Kroger using your Kroger card. Members already using the number **RE101**, please keep using it for your Kroger Community Rewards. New members may enroll by searching the number **RE101** or the name Rochester-Avon Historical Society at [Kroger.com](http://Kroger.com). Thank you so much for your assistance!



Annual membership to RAHS expires June 30, 2018. Renew now to keep your membership current. A renewal form is located on the last page of this newsletter. You can also renew online at:  
<http://www.rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org/join-us>

## 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	

## 2019 JUNE

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						

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

May 2 – Evening Program Meeting 7pm  
 May 7 – Brown Bag Program 12pm  
 May 18 – Greater Rochester Heritage Days 10am-6pm  
 May 19 – Greater Rochester Heritage Days 10am-6pm  
 May 21 - Board of Directors Meeting 7pm

June 11 - Deadline for ERA articles  
 June 12 – Member Picnic and Annual Meeting 6pm  
 June 18 – Board of Directors Meeting 7pm  
 June 23 - Historical Walking Tour of Downtown Rochester 3 PM  
 June 30 – MEMBERSHIP DUES for 2019-2020

## 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
- Special Project Volunteer
- Website/Social Media



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

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

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

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

**How would you like to participate?**

- Annual Picnic
- Antique Appraisal Day
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- Genealogy Research
- Heritage Days
- Oral History
- Photography/Videography
- Publications
- Refreshments at Meetings
- Special Project Volunteer
- Website/Social Media



Mail completed form with check payable to:

**RAHS**  
P.O. Box 80783  
Rochester, MI 48308-0783

Questions? Call us at 248-266-5440



Rochester, MI 48308-0783  
P.O. Box 80783



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