



Green's Art Supply

Since Green's Art Supply is closing its doors for good, RAHS would like to share a bit about the history of the building in which the store has been located in since 1964. This historic site is a stop on our online walking tour, which can be viewed [here](#) or from our website under [Resources/Online Walking Tour](#).

The George Burr Building

This two-story, double-front brick business block was built in 1914 for hardware merchant George Burr. Important original features of the building remain intact, including the stamped tin ceiling and the large central staircase. The building has housed only two businesses in its more than a century of existence: the George Burr Hardware from 1914 to 1964, and Green's Artist Supply since 1964. It is an excellent, substantially intact example of an early twentieth century commercial block.

George Burr had this store built in 1914, after he had outgrown his previous location across the street at 418 S. Main. George Burr was the brother of fellow Rochester merchants Charles A. Burr, builder of the Opera House block at 4th and Main, and Frank H. Burr, who built a two-store block to the immediate south of the Opera House block.

The new building at 429 S. Main was built in tandem with another project on the lot immediately to the south of the Burr building; the building at 425 S. Main was known as the Erlacher building.

The *Rochester Era* newspaper reported on the progress of the construction on October 30, 1914:



George Burr, 1907.

COVER STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE 3 . . .

IN THIS ISSUE

Page 1 – Green's Art Supply

Page 2 – President Message

Page 3 – Cover Story Continued

Page 4 -5 – Programs/Events

Page 6 – SmartTown Programs

Page 7 – RAHS Merchandise

Page 8 – Contact Information

Page 9 – Business Sponsors

A Message from RAHS' President

The Rochester-Avon Historical Society continues its mission to bring high-quality educational programming to members and the community. We are pleased to be able to offer some in-person programs this fall. We will continue to present a mix of in-person and online programming for the foreseeable future as the world continues to experience COVID-19. While there are no official mask mandates to date, RAHS is encouraging all program attendees to wear a face mask while visiting our program venues at the Rochester Hills Public Library and/or the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm. We wish to maintain a safe environment for all so that we can continue providing in-person programs.



Program highlights include American baseball, ancestry research tips, cider mills, and Abraham Lincoln. New this year is registration for all programs. This is so our venues can monitor the number of people attending as there may be attendance limits. Please follow the links in this newsletter and register for our midday Brown Bag programs and our Thursday evening lectures.

RAHS is also pleased to announce that membership comes with a fantastic new benefit! All RAHS members now receive free admission to the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm tours and exhibit spaces. (Please note that the benefit does not extend to museum programs or special events.) We are grateful to the museum for working with RAHS to provide this wonderful new membership perk.

Many of you may be wondering what is happening with the Rochester Community Schools Administration Building. I and a few other local historians and preservationists have been selected to serve on the RCS Legacy Committee tasked with reviewing options for the future of the building. RAHS is doing all it can at the moment to help preserve the building and find creative options for its future life.

Over the summer, the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm reopened after temporarily closing for extensive construction on the Dairy Barn and the newly built Equipment Barn, among other renovations. You are now welcome to see the RAHS Dunlap Surrey on exhibit at the museum (free admission for RAHS members). Again, we are fortunate and proud to show off this beautiful piece of local history!

Have a wonderful rest of the summer and a beautiful beginning to autumn! Enjoy our local historical sites!

Sincerely,

Tiffany

COVER STORY CONTINUED

"The brick masons finished laying the brick on George Burr's new building Friday, and if the weather permits, the building will soon be completed." Then, on November 13:

"The masons have finished the plastering on the new George Burr block, and the carpenters are working on the woodwork for the large plate glass front, and the steel ceiling is being put up."

George Burr was born in Michigan on January 23, 1862, the son of Louis and Eliza Gendrich Burr. He came to Rochester from Mount Clemens in 1899 and opened his first hardware and agricultural implement store there in the spring of 1900. He died suddenly from a stroke on August 13, 1934.

In 1922, George Burr retired from the business he had founded and passed the management of the store to his daughter, Neva, and her husband, C. Ward Crissman. When Ward Crissman died suddenly in 1935, Neva Crissman brought her own daughter, Arlene, and son-in-law Leon Robertson into the business, and they continued to manage it until they decided to close the hardware store and sell the building in June 1965.

After the hardware store closed, the building housed Green's Artist Supply.

This article was written by RAHS Research Committee Chair Deborah Larsen for our online tours featured on theclio.com.



Above: This 1961 photo is from the collection of Marjorie and the late Walter Dernier and shows the building at 429 S. Main while it was still occupied by Burr Hardware. rochesteravonhistory.blogspot.com.



PROGRAMS

A Colorful History of American League Baseball Parks

September 2 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Rochester Hills Public Library Multipurpose Room

Presented by Paul Hinz, a baseball enthusiast, sit back and experience the evolution of the original ballparks of the eight Charter Members of the American League in this informative presentation! This program is free and open to the public.

Registration is suggested. Register at www.rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org.



Michigan Cider Mills

September 7 @ 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm

Did you know Michigan is home to more than a hundred cider mills? Spread across the state, these independently owned, local businesses celebrate the best the fall harvest provides. Farm fresh produce, honey, baked goods, and old-fashioned candies are just some of the local treats visitors come to enjoy.

The fresh-pressed cider and warm donuts are why droves of people return to cider mills every September and October. Cider mill enthusiast, Michael Dwyer, will highlight these local treasures to help make the most of your visit. A cider tasting will conclude the presentation. Registration is required. Register at www.rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org. This meeting is free and open to the public. Bring a lunch! Due to

Genetic Genealogy: Using DNA Tests for Family History

October 5 @ 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm



Genealogist Katherine R. Willson introduces the basic principles of genetic inheritance, the types of tests currently being marketed by the big DNA companies, and examines the pros, cons, and ethics of DNA testing.

Willson is an engaging & dynamic genealogy lecturer at local, regional, and national conferences; an educator teaching beginning, intermediate, and advanced genealogy classes in Michigan since 2001; the author of *The Genealogist's Guide to Grand Rapids, Michigan* (published in 2018 by The In-Depth Genealogist). She lives in Dexter, MI.

Registration is required. Register at www.rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org. This meeting is free and open to the public. Bring a lunch! Due to COVID-19, refreshments will not be provided.

Alan Turing: The Father of Computer Science & Artificial Intelligence

October 7 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Rochester Hills Public Library Multipurpose Room

This Smart Towns program, presented by the Rochester-Avon Historical Society, features Frank Cardimen, Oakland University professor, who will discuss the life and genius of Alan Turing, the mathematician who broke the German Enigma Machine during World War II, and his impact on today's technological revolution.



Alan Turing, the mathematician

Smart Towns is a lifelong learning program for everyone in the community led by local educational organizations. Lectures are centered on one theme per year. The theme for 2021 is "Renewal: Ingenuity of the Human Spirit."

Registration is suggested. Register at www.rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org. This meeting is free and open to the public.

smart towns

PROGRAMS

The Rochester-Avon Historical Society is a proud member of Smart Towns, a community-wide lifelong learning program. The global pandemic has put many things in perspective. In 2021, Smart Towns programs will focus on the many ways humans have found to solve problems and find inspiration during difficult periods. Smart Towns wishes to celebrate how resilient and resourceful people can be in the world. Join us as we take a look at resilience in both historical and contemporary times. [Smarttowns.rhpl.org](https://smarttowns.rhpl.org).

In Our Own Voice: African American Art Thursday, September 16, 7 p.m. Zoom.

Enhance your awareness of the creative contributions of African Americans from the nineteenth century through the present day. This talk from the Detroit Institute of Arts provides a lens to examine race, gender, politics, and cultural issues. This program is free and open to the public. To register, visit smarttowns.rhpl.org.



Courtesy of the Detroit Institute of Arts



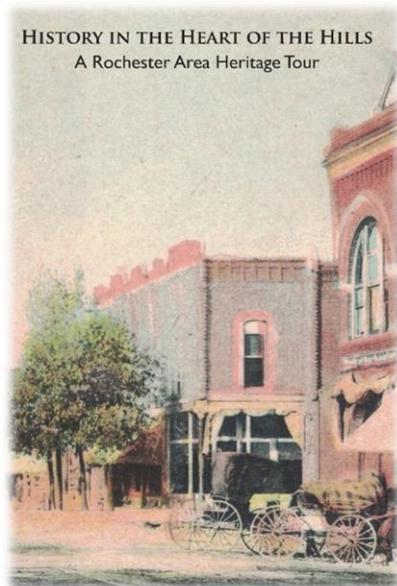
*Daniel Clark,
Oakland University Professor*

Life History Narratives of Detroit Auto Workers in the 1950s Thursday, September 23, 7 p.m. Rochester Hills Public Library.

Daniel Clark, professor of U.S. history at Oakland University, will talk about the lives of autoworkers in the 1950s, highlighting their resilience during a time of economic and job insecurity and instability. Clark regularly teaches courses on U.S. Labor and Cold War America as well as undergraduate and graduate seminars. His first book, *Like Night and Day: Unionization in a Southern Mill Town* explored what unionization meant to workers and managers at cotton mills in a North Carolina community during the 1940s and 1950s. His most recent book, *Disruption in Detroit: Autoworkers and the Elusive Postwar Boom* argues that for ordinary autoworkers the period from 1945-60 was marked by job instability and economic insecurity, not a steady rise into the middle class.

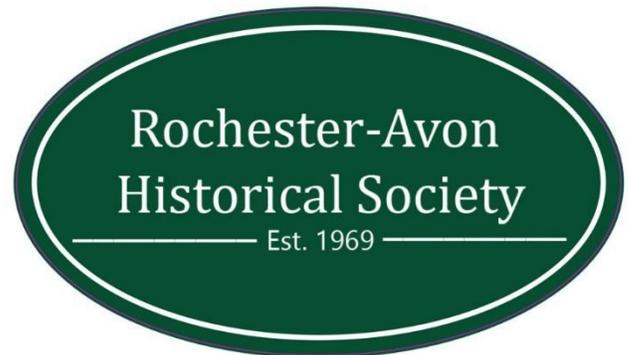
This program is open to the public. To register, visit smarttowns.rhpl.org.

RAHS Merchandise



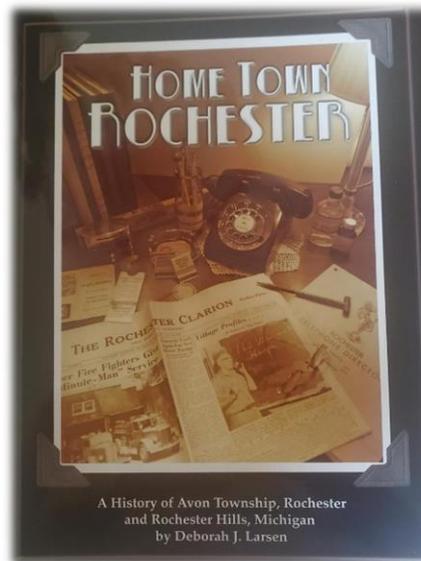
History in the Heart of the Hills:
A Rochester Area Heritage Tour

\$10



RAHS Car Decal

\$6



Hometown Rochester

\$10

<https://www.rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org/store/>



To contact us, call (248) 656-5440 or email to rahsupdates@gmail.com.

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Join the Rochester-Avon Historical Society Today!

Membership Application

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| | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Household Includes immediate family members living in the same household. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Business/Sponsor Designed for community businesses and individuals with a desire to promote the restoration and promotion of local history. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Lifetime Perpetual membership for those who wish to make a long-term commitment to the preservation of local history. |

Rochester-Avon
 Historical Society
 — Est. 1969 —

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Picnic | <input type="checkbox"/> Historic Walking Tour Guide/Assistant |
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