

Published on C & G Newspapers (<http://www.candgnews.com>)

Rochester

September 19, 2012

History comes alive at cemetery tour

By Mary Beth Almond
C & G Staff Writer

ROCHESTER — There is an incredible amount of local history connected to Mount Avon Cemetery, according to Rochester-Avon Historical Society member Deborah Larsen.

“We have the oldest platted cemetery in Oakland County, and we have a lot of people in the cemetery who are the settlers and founders of the county,” she said.

The society is giving the community the opportunity to learn about the past during the Mount Avon Cemetery Walk 1-5 p.m. Sept. 29 at the cemetery.

“There is just a lot to be learned, and we wanted to find a way to share that with the public,” said Larsen, who is co-chairing the event with society member JoAnn Kelly-Bourez. “Just walking through the cemetery and talking about what’s there is one thing. We wanted to make it a little more interactive.”

The timed tours will depart from the municipal parking lot at Third and Walnut streets. Ticketholders should park at the municipal parking lot, and they will be transported to and from the cemetery via shuttle van.

Larsen noted that the family-friendly event is a great way to learn a lot more about the community and connect with the past while “having a lot of fun” and enjoying a bit of theater.

“It’s not scary or spooky, or dark or anything like that. We don’t want people to think that this is a Halloween-type event, because it’s not. It’s an educational event, but it has the element of community theater woven into it, so it should be fun for everyone,” she added.

Led by tour guides, visitors will walk through the Mount Avon Cemetery, listening to stories of the lives of a few of the people buried there. The stories will be told in first person by re-enactors dressed in period costumes.

“We like to keep the identities (of the characters) under wraps so that it’s a surprise for the people that show up, but we have a couple who were early settlers. We have a couple who were prominent merchants on Main Street in downtown Rochester, and we have somebody who was involved in a scandal during the 19th century. There is a little bit of everything. Some of the characters are men; some are women; and they’re from different eras in Rochester history,” Larsen said.

Tickets, which are nonrefundable, are \$15 per person. The proceeds will fund the Rochester-Avon Historical Society’s local history and preservation projects.

Tours will be held rain or shine, but in the event of severe weather, the tours will be canceled and money will be refunded. If there is just rain, the show goes on with umbrellas.

Advance tickets may be purchased at the Rochester Regional Chamber of Commerce office, 71 Walnut St. Suite 110. Tickets will also be available for walk-up sales on the day of the event at the shuttle stop in the municipal parking lot at Walnut and Third. The number of tickets is limited, so advance purchase is recommended.

“It’s exciting to go back into history, and this event is a creative way to do it,” Kelly-Bourez said. “We hope it will be our first annual event.”

Rochester Hills Chrysler Jeep Dodge, Pixley Funeral Home and Potere-Modetz Funeral Home are sponsoring the Mount Avon Cemetery Walk.

For more information, email rahupdates@gmail.com or call (248) 266-5440.

You can reach C & G Staff Writer Mary Beth Almond at malmond@candgnews.com or at (586)498-1060.

Source URL: <http://www.candgnews.com/news/history-comes-alive-cemetery-tour>