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Rochester-Avon Historical Society to debut restored surrey during Christmas parade



Elizabeth Butts Casey Case and her granddaughter Laura Wilson pose with the surrey sometime in the 1930s. Photo courtesy of Rochester-Avon Historical Society.

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POSTED: 12/04/14, 3:45 PM EST

UPDATED: ON 12/05/2014

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The Rochester-Avon Historical Society plans to debut a fully-restored 19th-century surrey during the Rochester Hometown Christmas Parade Sunday, Dec. 7.

The parade begins at 2 p.m. at the corner of Tienken and Rochester roads.

The 100-year-old surrey was returned to the historical society in September after several weeks of restoration work by carriage craftsmen in Indiana.

The surrey was originally produced by the Dunlap Vehicle Company of Pontiac between 1898 and 1908, according to a press release from the historical society.

The surrey was purchased by the Knapp family in the late 1960s or early 1970s during an estate auction located where the Bill Fox dealership is today.

In 2009, Roger Knapp donated the surrey to the Rochester-Avon Historical Society, which immediately began raising funds to have it restored.

Longtime resident and volunteer Gail Kemler will ride in the surrey's front seat as the first official passenger.

The surrey will be led down Main Street by a carriage driver, two horses and accompanied by many historical society members dressed as characters from Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol."

The historical society plans to use the surrey for select future events around town.

-Submitted by Rochester-Avon Historical Society



The Butts surrey on its way to be restored in early 2014. Photo

contributed by Leslie Mack