

The Rochester Era

April/May

The Rochester -Avon Historical Society Newsletter

2007

Historical Society Begins talks with Timber Framers

Greg Doyle

As many of you know. The Society has developed a long term plan for the Clinton River Area in our Community. The cradle of our Communities' history, the Clinton River has a rich history to tell.

We have named the project the Clinton River Valley Heritage Area and have identified several "sub" projects along the heritage area to bring this vision to reality. Among these projects are:

1. The relocation of the Rochester Grain Elevator to the Heritage Area.
2. The construction of a covered bridge on The Clinton River Trail.
3. The eventual relocation of one of the remaining Parke Davis Barns.

Our most urgent project had been the relocation of the Rochester Grain Elevator. But as, you all

know, after expending much energy on the Grain Elevator we are on hold until the property is sold some time in the future. We feel it is time to move forward with our next priority for the Heritage area, which is the construction of a covered bridge.

The bridge will span a portion of the Clinton river trail that traverses what may be an old mill race. The location of the bridge will be between Livernois and Crooks road on the Clinton river trail.

The purpose of the bridge is to:

- Create a visual focal point along the trail.
- To help interpret the rich history of the valley.

We have been in communication with the City of Rochester Hills over the past couple of years regarding this project and

most recently we presented the idea to the City Council. The Parks and recreation director, Mayor, and Council have all voiced their strong support for the project.

We recently discovered an organization called the Timber Framers Guild that has accomplished several public projects similar to the covered bridge in communities around the world.

The Guild is a non-profit educational membership association dedicated to the craft of timber framing. The Guild serves as a center of timber frame information and design for the professional and the general public. we will continue our discussion with the Guild in the hope that we can develop a collaborative relationship to bring another unique "jewel" to the Community. Stay tuned for more updates as things develop.





Honor Roll – World War II Memorial

Rod Wilson

For most of the past year, the lights on the Honor Roll have not illuminated this tribute to those who served in World War II. Since the rededication of the Memorial in 2002, RAHS has spent almost \$2,000 in replacement and/or repair of the lights that had been installed. The lights and their installation were originally donated as part of the restoration project.

At first we thought the lights were being damaged by vandals but have found the lights were not the proper type for that use. Because of the heat they put out, when cold rain or snow would hit them, the lens would shatter and soon the light would fail.

Your board of directors decided not to spend any more money on those fixtures and to identify a new company to help find a solution to the problem.

We now have been working with Blue Moon Landscape Lighting. A different design lighting fixture is being installed by them. By the middle of May, the Honor Roll should once again be illuminated at night.

The cost of the fixtures will come out of the Honor Roll fund which was established for the perpetual care of the Honor Roll from donations which were not used in the initial restoration cost. These remaining donations ensure that there will always be a fund to support the Honor Roll and its care for generations to come.

RAHS - 2007 Walking Tour dates

All tours begin at the Western Knitting Mills, Mill Street, north-east corner of the building. Tours will last approximately 2 hours.

May 15 – Tuesday @ 7:00 p.m.

June 18 - Monday @ 7:00 p.m.

July 20 - Friday @ 7:00 p. m.

August 16 – Thursday @ 7:00 p.m.

September 15 – Saturday @ 1:00 p.m.

October 14 - Sunday @ 1:00 p.m.

Tours are free to RAHS members. For non-members: adults \$5, students and senior citizens \$3.

The Society was saddened to learn of the death of long time member

Barbara Butterworth in March of this year. Barbara supported RAHS for many years as the editor of this newsletter as well as helping whenever a volunteer was needed.

In Memorium

Carl Helferich, husband of Twila, and good friend of the Society. His family came to the area in the 1800's.

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Eagle Scout pine tree dedication

Rod Wilson

During her research for the book she is writing for RAHS, Debbie Larsen found an article from the June, 1936, *Rochester Clarion*. The article promoted a ceremony to plant 12 pine trees in Avon Park (today called Rochester Municipal Park) in honor of 12 Rochester, Michigan Scouts who had attained the rank of Eagle Scout over the previous 9 years. Those Eagle Scouts were: Allen Rea Wilson (1927), Cecil O'Dell (1928), Ralph Easterle (1929), Marvin Terry (1930), Floyd Cross (1930), Maynard Aris (1930), Kenneth Fraser (1930), Donald B. Davidson (1932), William Aris (1932), Martin Marzolf (1932), Morley Russell (1935), and Howard Lamphier (1936).



Those pine trees still stand today on the north side of the park sidewalk just east of the Community House.

The RAHS board has approved purchasing 11 plaques to hang on the trees, honoring each of the Eagle Scouts. The twelfth scout plaque is already installed. Sue Wilson and Liz Golding gave that plaque to Marilee Cross Townsend for her birthday in honor of Marilee's father Floyd Cross (who was involved in Boy Scouting for 50+ years). Hopefully, all 12 plaques will be installed prior to the Heritage Festival.

RCS Mural Restoration

LaVere Webster and Rod Wilson have scheduled a meeting with the building administration to continue our discussion regarding the restoration of the mural that hangs in the Rochester Community Schools Administrative Offices on University. The mural was completed as part of the WPA Federal Arts Project and is a very historically significant piece of art. Our hope is for LaVere to begin the restoration process in the very near future.

Brown Bag lunches

June 5—Noon, Community House
September 4—Noon, Community House

Trailways Signs

A few years ago of \$2,500 to co-sponsor the placement of interpretive historic site signage along the Paint Creek Trail in downtown Rochester,

Representatives from the Paint Creek Trailways, Rochester Downtown Development Authority, and Rod Wilson have been meeting to determine which historic sites should be interpreted and how many signs can be funded and their design. That committee is in the final stages prior to ordering the signs.

There will be five locations with interpretive signage: 1) The Detroit United Railway Powerhouse and Car Barn, 2) Train Depot and Rochester Elevator, 3) Western Knitting Mills and Boarding Houses, 4) Western Knitting Mills Dam and Michigan Central Railroad Bridge, and 5) Rochester Paper Mill. These will be installed sometime this summer.

HERITAGE FESTIVAL HELP NEEDED!

The Society will again have a booth at the annual Heritage Festival, May 26 and 27. Help to staff our "booth" is needed both days in the following shifts: 12:30—3:30 and 3:30 to 6:30. Sunday we need help from 9:30—12:30 (one only) Two on a shift is friendly. Please rush to call Greg to volunteer: 248-651-3468 or email him at

DATES TO NOTE

THURSDAY, June 21—ANNUAL PICNIC
6:00 p.m.

Rochester Community House
Please bring your own *place settings*
and a *dish to pass*.

Board will provide meat and beverage.
Entertainment: Doug Joppie and
"Today's Special" (Barbershop).

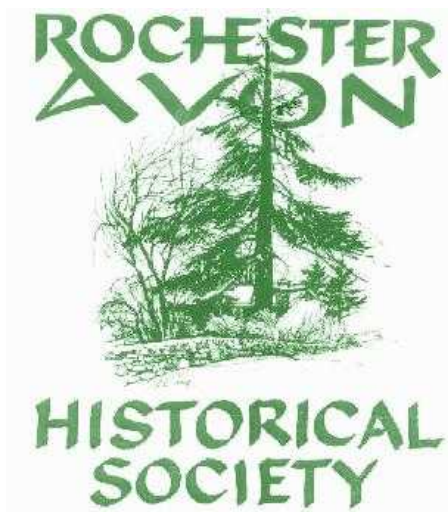
Grave Rededication at Stoney Creek Cemetery

Saturday, May 19 will be a special day of commemoration. The grave of Patriot Michael Van Waggoner will be rededicated at the Stoney Creek Cemetery on Letica Road in Rochester with activities beginning at 11:00a.m. In addition, the Stoney Creek Cemetery will receive a State of Michigan Historical Site Marker, which will be presented by Mr. Samuel Logan, Jr. from the State of Michigan.

The ceremony is jointly sponsored by the Oaks Chapter, Michigan Society, Sons of the American Revolution and the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm. Other participating organizations are the Stoney Creek Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution and the Rochester – Avon Historical Society. The state marker for the Cemetery has received significant financial support from the elementary schools P.T.A.s and Pixley Funeral Home.

Parking will be available at the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm with a shuttle bus to the Stoney Creek Cemetery. After the ceremony there will be hot dogs served at the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm.

At 1:00p.m. the Rochester Granger Base Ball team will play an 1860s style base ball game.



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Pride in
Preserving
the Past