

The Rochester Era

Annual Meeting and Picnic a Success

Was it a picnic or was it a potluck? Fried chicken, baked chicken, tossed salads, coleslaw, fresh tomatoes, baked beans, tasty casseroles were on the menu at the June 9th event at the Rochester Community House as RAHS members celebrated the culmination of another busy year.

The Society supplied the chicken, the lemonade, iced tea and coffee while members brought dishes to share. In addition to the delicious main course dishes, they brought cakes, pies, cookies and big sheets of fresh straw-

berry cream cheese squares. Sure felt like an old-fashioned picnic or potluck to me. Over 60 people shared the great food and warm fellowship.

President Rod Wilson provided the program with his entertaining

outstanding members.

Beatrice Catherino received the Gail Kemler Award for the Outstanding New Member. As a first year member Bea pitched right in helping with research and doing a wonderful Brown Bag lunch program. The Mary Eberline Award for the Outstanding Member went to **Colleen Barkham** who so masterfully chaired and organized the March Appraisal Day.



James Hopkins, Colleen Barkham, Beatrice Catherino, Rod Wilson

Rochester Farms to Suburbs presentation that took us back to a time when the area was a farming community. Wilson also presented awards to the year's

James Hopkins received the Lois Collet Award for the Outstanding Board Member. As well as doing a perfect job of scheduling volunteers for Sidewalk **Picnic** continued on Page 6



Rod's 'ritings ...
**Rod Wilson, President,
 RAHS**

Our 2009-2010 fiscal year officially came to an end on June 30, 2010. On July 1, 2010, we began our new year. We had a very successful year and are looking forward to another . With all the participation of our members, we are one of the most active historical societies in southeast Michigan. Thank you to everyone who worked on a project, served on a committee, or attended one of our meetings. You are the ones that made this year a success. A special thank you to the Board of Directors for their work all year long.

Congratulations to this year's award winners. It was extremely difficult to make a decision this year. To choose recipients the entire board makes nominations, discusses each nominee, and then takes a secret vote for each of three award winners. There were so many deserving members who made significant contributions this year.

In this issue is a copy of the 2010-2011 planned year. Please read through it and if you see something you want to be involved with, please give me a call. Or if you think of another project we should get involved with, please give me a call. I know we will be involved in the 150th Anniversary of the Commemoration of the Civil War. I did not list that in the planned year as we have not decided what our involvement will be. Give that some thought and let me know your ideas.

As we move into this new year, remember to stand tall and be proud, we are the Rochester-Avon Historical Society.

HERITAGE DAYS A SUCCESS

This year's Greater Rochester Heritage Days festival was a huge success. The near perfect weather helped bring record crowds to the Rochester Municipal Park. Food was abundant, the cars were stunning, and the heritage area was bigger than

ever before. One of the areas under the heritage tents was a photo display of the historic Rochester area. Just under 200 photos, printed on 8½ x 11 paper, were placed on six, 4' x 8' boards. Groups of people were looking at the photos both days. I stationed myself near the photos as many of these people had questions.



Our sales booth had record sales with sales of \$440 which **President** continued on page 3

OFFICERS	
President.....	Rod Wilson 248.651.6178
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Treasurer.....	Mary Howarth 248.375.0206
Recording Secretary.....	June Hopaluk 248-652-9242
Corresponding Secretary.....	Janet Potton 248.652.7296
Member-at-Large.....	Susan Hohf 248.852.9015
Member-at-Large.....	James Hopkins 248.342.6782
Past President.....	Greg Doyle 248.651.6076
COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS	
Historian.....	Gail Kemler 248.651.0907
Membership.....	Carole Fischer 248.853.0118
ERA.....	Mary Howarth 248.375.0206
Program.....	JoAnn Bourez 248.651.7526
Publicity.....	Liz Golding 248.656.1125

President continued from Page 2 was 20% higher than our previous record. Thank you to Jim Hopkins for managing our sales booth. RAHS is part of the committee that plans the Greater Rochester Heritage Days. Next year's Greater Rochester Heritage Days will be bigger and better than ever. If you want to be part of this committee, please contact Rod Wilson.



John Crissman and James Hopkins Sell at Memorial Days

DOWNTOWN WALKING TOURS

We had outstanding newspaper coverage for our June 21, Downtown Walking Tour and because of that 46 people joined us on the walk. It was a beautiful evening and the attendees moved right along as we explained the history of Rochester. Thank you to Jim Hopkins, Penny Reddish, Debbie Larsen and Susan Wilson for their help as tour guides. If you haven't been on one of the walks, plan on joining us on Friday evening, July 23. There is no charge for RAHS members.

HONOR ROLL PLANTS AND FLOWERS

In the last issue of the ERA, I thanked Linda Pinkerton for her help in taking care of the plants and flowers at the Honor Roll, World War II Memorial. I erred by not mentioning Nancy Kraft as also helping to care of those plants and flowers. My apologies to Nancy. Thank you both, ladies, for your work. Also a thank you to

the Rochester Woman's Farm and Garden Club for planting the flower bed each year with red, white and blue flowering plants.

2010-2011 PROGRAMS

Our Society is looking for someone to be the chairperson for our Thursday Evening Programs. This is a Board position and is an exciting and important position in our organization. The Board has a list of 10 potential programs for next year so you don't have to start from scratch with program ideas. If you are interested, contact Rod Wilson

PINES IN THE PARK SIGNAGE

Three years ago, a few RAHS members decided to place markers on a stand of pine trees in the Rochester Municipal Park in honor of twelve young men who had attained their Eagle Scout status. These young men were members of Troop 39 and Troop 40. They achieved their Eagle Scout Award between 1927 and 1937. The trees were planted in 1937. This year we decided we needed to place a sign close to the walking path so walkers could read what all the signs were for. Numerous people asked about the trees and were amazed at what a wonderful thing has been in our park all these years with few knowing about their history. Thus RAHS' motto: "Pride in Preserving the Past".

— Susan Wilson



Memorial Days and Sidewalk Sales—Oh My!

I would like to thank all of the members who gave us a hand at the RAHS booth during the recent Heritage Days.

Everyone had a great time helping to promote our Society and our Rochester heritage. We were able to talk to a great many people and share stories, both theirs and ours. Being able to interact with residents of the greater Rochester area and listen to why they love Rochester makes the effort we put in well worth it.

Our booth was right in the thick of things in the Heritage area. We were able to visit and share memories with the people from the Rochester Historical Commission's booth and the Oakland Township's booth which added a lot to the fun we all had.

The following people were the helpers who manned the booth to help us reach a new record in sales. Without their help none of this would be possible: Janet Potton, Pat Bracewell, John Crissman, Brian Dunphy, Kay Johnson, Colleen Barkham and Debbie Larson. Special thanks to the helpers who stretched their time slots to fill in (which was everyone). Special thanks to Rod and Sue Wilson for all of the extra work they do setting up the booth, bringing the merchandise, tables, signs, etc.

After that great effort by all, I am looking forward to this year's Sidewalk Sales on July 15, 16, and 17. I still need members to help at the booth. If you want to have a great time and to help RAHS let me know. Call me on my cell phone: 248-342-6782. We will be in front of 417 Main St. if you just want to stop buy to say Hi.

Thanks again to everyone.

— James Hopkins

Research Committee Update

The members of the RAHS Research Committee have been hard at work over the past few months. A nomination package for the Rochester Elevator to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places is now in the hands of the State Historic Preservation Office, and we are expecting to have the nomination considered by the State History Review Board at its September meeting.

In the meantime, a team of researchers is documenting the historic home at 1160 South Boulevard, owned by RAHS member LaVere Webster. This home is a local treasure and one of Avon's pioneer farmsteads. Bea Catharino, John Crissman and James Hopkins have been studying old records for months and are now busy compiling their report. We plan to submit a preliminary questionnaire to SHPO as the first step in nominating it to the National Register later this summer or in early fall.

The McAleer Powder Plant/ Proposed Bunker Park area is being researched and documented by a team including Barb Bates, Cathy Pouls, June Hopaluk, Janet Potten, Penny Reddish, Gail Kemler and Jim Kemler. This is a large and complex research project, but an important one because of the state and national significance of

Research continued on Page 6

DID YOU KNOW?

1889—The Academy on the Hill was the first Rochester area high school was built at Fourth and Wilcox. Rod Wilson notes: All the early postcards refer to this as Rochester High School even though there were all grades in the school. It is still in use as the school district administrative building.

1955-1956 : Current Rochester High School built. On October 31, 1956 high school students walked from old high school to the new, many carrying their books

1970—Adams High School completed. Students had been attending half day sessions at RHS prior to its completion.

1987—Football stadium completed for Adams HS. Prior to this, games were played on alternating Friday evenings on the RHS field.

2000-2001—A complete renovation of Adams HS took place. Students attended the new Stoney Creek High School for a year.

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2002—Adams HS opens its performing arts center. Prior to this, all student productions were held at RHS with the two schools alternating schedules for plays and musicals.

The oldest school in the district is Baldwin Elementary School which began life as the Oakland Township District School #2 built of logs in the late 1800's. The current brick structure was built in 1926 and had two rooms. Since then the school has grown and been renovated a number of times.



Brooklands Elementary School was opened in 1928 as Avon Township District School #3. Until

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Join the Rochester Avon Historical Society today!

Help to keep what is significant...

Refurbish what is historic ...

Maintain what is well-known.

- Bi-monthly newsletters
- Monthly meetings with guest speakers
- Downtown Rochester historical walking tours
- Monthly lunchtime talks by long-time area residents

Dues: Individual \$18, Family \$25, Contributor \$35. Mail your check made payable to the Society with your name, address, telephone and email address to:

Rochester Avon Historical Society, P O Box 80783, Rochester, MI 48308-0783.

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Sale Days and the Greater Rochester Heritage Days, James livens up every event with his keen wit. He also works the lights for the Thursday evening programs at the library. Congratulations to Bea, Colleen and James on your awards. Thank you for your hard work and really big contributions to the RAHS.

- June Hopaluk

Did you know continued from Page 5

1953, it was a K - 8 grade school. The eighth grade graduates went to high school in Avondale and Rochester.

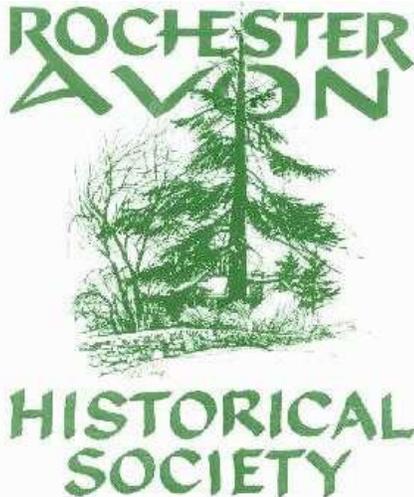
1953—Area district schools consolidate with the Rochester Schools.

RESEARCH continued from Page 4

the work that was done by McAleer there. We hope to begin the process of nominating this property to the National Register late this year or early next year.

Our researchers are becoming more and more expert as the weeks go by. They've been poring over tax records, mortgage and deed records, maps, census and vital records, newspaper back files, and archival material, and they've been doing background reading to provide themselves with historical context in order to analyze the evidence before them. Their work is an extremely valuable contribution toward RAHS's goal of preserving our history and educating our community about its heritage.

— Debbie Larson



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