

## RELIVING

# The Rochester Era

May/June

The Rochester-Avon Historical Society Newsletter

2012

### All Society Members Invited to Celebrate Another Successful Year

The RAHS will wrap up a busy and successful year with the annual meeting and picnic Wednesday evening, June 13 at the Rochester Community House on Ludlow. The event harks back to old time end of the school year picnics in the days of rural schools.

The picnic/potluck will begin at 6:00 p.m. and promises to be an evening of good food and fellowship. We never ask members to bring a specific type of dish to pass. The menu always works out and there is always more than enough delicious food for everyone to enjoy.

Please plan on attending even if you haven't been able to actively participate during the past year. The annual picnic is a great opportunity for all members to mingle and get to know one another while sharing a meal. It is a family event and kids are welcome.

This year's picnic committee persons are Liz Golding, Gail Kemler, Janet Potton and June Hopaluk. RAHS will provide chicken and non-alcoholic beverages. Please bring a dish to pass and your own place setting.

At general meetings, the Society provides entertaining programs and the annual picnic is no exception. Our Era Editor will entertain with stories (see page 2 for description).

After dinner we will elect officers and honor award winners, those hardworking members who will be recognized for exceptional contributions to RAHS over the past year. For more information please call Gail at 248-651-0907 or June at 248-652-9242.



### Rochester Pet and Doll Parade, 1944 —

The DUR tracks have been removed from Main Street and the rail bed paved with brick. June of 1944 marked the 5th US War Bond Drive, a desperate time for the US.

Amid the war and worry, the community made a way for children to enjoy their summer (see Pgs. 4 and 7).

Page 6 for schedule of FREE and excellent RAHS public presentations. Join us!

## June 13, Annual Picnic Meeting

**Bea Catherino presents: Graham Cemetery and the Adventures of Little Charlie Postal. Rochester Community House, (included in the annual RAHS Indoor Picnic)**

Thirty years ago, reporter, teacher, furniture refinisher, and current RAHS Era Newsletter editor), was given (for safe-keeping), a tomb stone found under an apple tree in a country backyard. The person who found Charles Postal's tomb stone, never returned. It took ten years to find where Charlie belonged and whose little boy he really was. Then it took another twenty years to identify 42 of the 57 people who were removed from Graham Cemetery on Crooks Rd. from 1927 through 1929.

The story continues as a journey of discovery, through old records, journals, diaries, genealogies, interviews, and site visits as far away as the original National Cemetery in Washington, DC. Little Charlie Postal is back with relatives and neighbors now—some were Rochester's earliest settlers. Join the fun of this strange but true adventure.

Do the lost help us when we go looking?

Come find out at the Annual Picnic Meeting.

### **Early Announcement, Plan Now!**

**Mt. Avon, Cemetery Walk —  
Saturday, Sept. 29, 2012**

**Much more about this fascinating new venture by RAHS. Tickets will be on sale at the Annual Picnic Meeting, June 13; at the Heritage Days in Rochester Municipal Park and Side Walk Sales in downtown Rochester. More Details In subsequent Rochester Era Newsletters.**



## Use Your Smart Phone to Open

**By Debbie Larsen**

Codes like this one will soon be popping up on historic buildings all over downtown Rochester. A smartphone user who sees one of these QR (Quick Response) codes on one of our buildings may scan the code and the phone will instantly display the building's history, along with vintage photos, from our new Oakland Regional Historic Sites (ORHS) database.

On April 19, we kicked off the QR code project with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at O'Connor's Public House, the very first downtown building to participate in the project. Dignitaries present at the event praised RAHS for initiating a program that will raise local history awareness, connect with a younger demographic, promote heritage tourism and downtown trade, and instill pride of place. A representative of County Executive L. Brooks Patterson also delivered a special citation honoring the project.

To use the QR codes, a smartphone user must first download a free QR Code Reader app. Once that is installed, the code can be scanned with the phone and the fun can begin! Those who do not use smartphones may still view all of the ORHS records by visiting [oaklandregionalthistoricsites.org](http://oaklandregionalthistoricsites.org) on any Internet-connected computer.



**From the President . . . . . Rod Wilson**

What an exciting time to be a member of the Rochester-Avon Historical Society. There are so many projects and so many opportunities to get involved to help make our community a better place to live. Research committee, Oral History committee, Membership committee, Downtown Walking Tours, Greater Rochester Heritage Days, RAHS booth at Downtown Sidewalk Sales, Sons of the American Revolution Grave Rededication committee, Mount Avon Cemetery Tour, Hills Theatre project, developing products that can assist in fund raising, and the list goes on and on. We can only do all these things with your help. Thank you for your support in the past and we are looking forward to you helping in the future. If you have not taken the opportunity to get involved, now is a good time to be part of all the activity and join in on the fun. Everyone has a resource to contribute.

On April 21, 2012, we met as a group to discuss the future of our organization and what paths we might want to take to make RAHS even better. The plan, as it is developed, will be discussed at all Board meetings. These Board meetings are open to the entire membership. Our organization has grown, community needs change, people communicate differently today, and we are a different organization than we were 20 years ago. Your Board is working on taking RAHS to new heights. In the following months this information will be given out to the entire membership. Please help us move our organization forward so we will continue to grow and be strong in the future.

**Elections 2012-** - At our June 13th Annual Picnic/Meeting, we will hold elections for President, Vice President, Treasurer, Corresponding Secretary, Recording Secretary, and two Members-at-Large. These positions are for two-year terms. The appointed chairpersons will be discussed at a Board of Directors meeting. If you are interested in serving on the Board of Directors, please call me. An Elections/Nominating Committee is being formed to handle the elections, and I will put you in touch with them.

***Rochester Avon Historical Society Calendars Coming!***

Exciting news.....we will offer a full size 2013 wall calendar for sale to our members and the public. This new RAHS calendar will have pictures of "old Rochester" combined with multiple newer pictures. We are in the final stage of producing the calendar. It will be available this fall. More information and pricing will be available in the next newsletter.

Submitted by Leslie Palmitier

(Following Article is Reprinted from the Rochester Era, June 17, 1948)

## Pet, Doll Parade to March on Wednesday

The "big day" for hundreds of Rochester kids and countless bewildered animals will arrive next Wednesday, June 23, when the fourth annual Lions Club Pet and Doll Parade swings into colorful march down Main Street.

The parade is set for 2 pm, but all entries should be at East Fifth Street just off Main by 1 pm, so the parade can be formed and judging done. All entry blanks must be in by Monday, June 21. The blanks are available at most local stores and at The Era Office, 115 East Fourth Street.

Entry blanks are important particularly because the winners of the big grand prizes will be chosen by drawing the winning blank from a box. Others may enter the day of the

<p><b>Grand Prizes</b> <b>Children Over 12</b></p> <p>Boy Scout pup tent (boy) Arvin table radio (girl) Camp mess kit (boy)</p> <p><b>Children Under 12</b></p> <p>All-steel wagon (boy) Horseman doll (girl)</p>
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parade and compete only for items and small cash prizes. Judging of all entries in the parade will be 1 to 1:30 after the Parade has formed on Fifth Street, here the Grand Prizes will be given out and all other prizes will be given out at the Methodist Church on Walnut Street after the parade.

In addition to the big prizes, the parade committee, headed by general chairman, Morrell Clute, has arranged that every child participating will get some sort of prize. First, second and third class ribbons will be awarded for

each class of animal and doll, as well as honorable mention ribbons. The committee will also give 50 half dollars to those taking first class, 50 quarters for second class winners, plus a dime for every child in the parade. There's no premium on age, either, with a cash prize going to the parade's youngest entry.

Even more than the prizes is in store for the boy or girl in the Lion's Club parade. A frog leap and hurdle race to be held after the parade will provide laughs for all and prizes to the lucky winner. Ice cream will be on the house for all children, with the final prize rally on Walnut Street following at 5 pm with a theater party at the Avon theater. Tickets for the show will be passed out after the prizes are awarded.

Variety is the spice of life, and if plans work out as expected, it will also be the spice of the parade. Prizes are available for all types of animals and dolls, according to Mr. Clute and the more the merrier. Whether its common or unusual, big or little, a pet or work animal or bike, scooter, or favorite doll—dress it up or fix it up and get in the parade. It could win a big prize.

Clute has assured parents that every effort will be made by the Lions to see that every child entering the parade has full protection against traffic hazards, especially along the line of march (down Main Street). After forming at East Fifth, the parade will go down Main Street to Second Street, then march over to Walnut to the front of St. Paul's Methodist Church.

Ed. Note:  
The Pet and Doll Parade vanished into memory, and with it – a single day in June, in the lives of Rochester/Avon kids, in which every kid who participated in a parade received a prize--if only dime, an ice cream, and a memorable great day!  
**BVC**

## RAHS Members Receive National Award and / Recognition

On Sunday, April 15, 2012, the Crown of Life Lutheran Church presented the ‘President’s Volunteer Service Awards’ to some of our RAHS members. The Crown of Life Lutheran Church has been certified to present these awards in our community.

There are four levels of Service Awards: Bronze Level, Silver Level, Gold Level and the President’s Call to Service Award. Level, Silver Level, Gold Level and the President’s Call to Service Award.

The President’s Call to Service Award (Lifetime) is for volunteering 4,000 hours or more over a lifetime. Judge Lisa Asardoorian presented this award to RAHS members Jean and Roger Bajorek, David Bates, David and Mary Howarth, Mary Lee and Walt Kowalczyk, Rod and Susan Wilson.

All of the volunteer hours were not for RAHS. Ginger and Eric Ketelsen received this award in 2011.

Recipients of the award were presented with an Award pin, a certificate and a letter from President Barack Obama..

Rod and Susan Wilson were nominated by Ginger Ketelsen. By the Wilson’s quick calculations, they have each volunteered over 50,000 hours in their life times.

We may have other members who have received this award previously and we were not made aware of it. If you have received this award previously, please contact The Rochester Era editor so we can let everyone know about your achievements and recognition.



## Walking Tours to Resume, May 15th

The Rochester – Avon Historical Society invites you to our first downtown walking tour of the season on Tuesday, May 15, 2012 beginning at 7:00 p.m. Participants will hear about the historic sites and some of the stories of historic downtown Rochester.

All tours begin at the NORTHEAST corner of Western Knitting Mills Beer Company on Water Street and last approximately 2 hours. Rod and Susan Wilson will be your tour guides; no reservations are required.

Each year we have around 300 who enjoy these tours, which continue through the summer and early fall.

### ***Road Construction is Not a Problem!***

There will be a \$5.00 charge; seniors over 55 and students are \$3.00. Children under 12 are free. For more information call Rod Wilson (248) 651 – 6178. Look for the man in the top hat!



Vintage Post Card and ad contributed by a private owner;

**Brown Bag Luncheon Meetings and the RAHS Evening Program are free of charge and open to all interested persons**

**2012 Brown Bag Luncheon Meetings**

**Meets 1st Tuesday of the month: Future-Topics to be announced**

**May 1st:** Radford Jones, former US Secret Service Agent, presents with a focus on the Kennedy Years.

All Brown Bag Luncheon Meetings are from 12:00 noon to 1:00 pm at the Rochester Community House, 816 Ludlow, Rochester, Michigan  
Coffee, tea, and cookies provided,  
Bring a lunch if you wish

**2012 RAHS Evening Program Schedule**

**Meets 1st Thursday of the month: 7-8:45 pm**

May 3rd, "US Army & the Dawn of the Computer Age" by Carole M. Fischer

Rochester Hills Public Library, 500 Old Towne Road, Rochester, Michigan (assembly room)

Co-sponsored by the RAHS and Rochester Hills Public Library — event is free of charge

**June 13th (Wednesday)**

Annual Membership Indoor Picnic

6 pm — until at Rochester Community House, food, entertainment, fellowship:

**Local Author**, to Present Graham Cemetery and Further Adventures of Little Charlie Postal

**Join the Rochester Avon Historical Society Today!**

Bi-monthly newsletters-monthly meetings with guest speakers-downtown Rochester historical walking tours-monthly lunchtime talks by long-time area residents-oral history projects-book projects-research projects-and much more!

**Rochester Avon Historical Society Membership Application**

\_\_\_ New \_\_\_ Renewal

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ \$10 Student \_\_\_ \$18.00 Individual \_\_\_ \$25.00 Family \_\_\_ \$35.00 Contributing  
\_\_\_ \$75.00 Institution \_\_\_ \$250.00 Patron

**Areas of Interest – How would you like to participate?**

\_\_\_ Historic Research \_\_\_ Genealogy Research \_\_\_ Special Project Volunteer \_\_\_ Antique Appraisal Day

\_\_\_ Annual Picnic \_\_\_ Oral History \_\_\_ Historic Walking Tour Guide \_\_\_ Fundraising \_\_\_ Heritage Days

\_\_\_ Sidewalk Sales \_\_\_ Refreshments at Meetings \_\_\_ Publications \_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

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



Summer is Child Time, sunny days in which our regular school routines are broken.

The Pet and Doll Parade, the Swimming Pond at Avon Park, horse riding, life on farms and in cities in summer months — some of the best memories — no matter where we grew up. If you have

photos of the Avon Park Swimming Hole, please send them to the editor along with your comments or stories. In the July/August edition of The Rochester Era, we will feature on old Avon Park.



Meanwhile, do attend the RAHS May/June Brown Bag, Library Series take your family on one of Rod Wilson's Walking Tours. Refer back to page 5 to see walking tour details. Involve your children in history

(All Pet & Doll Photos on loan from M & J Swords Archive)

**Pet and Doll  
Parade**

Main Street,  
Rochester, MI.

June, 1952

**Is this your  
dog?**



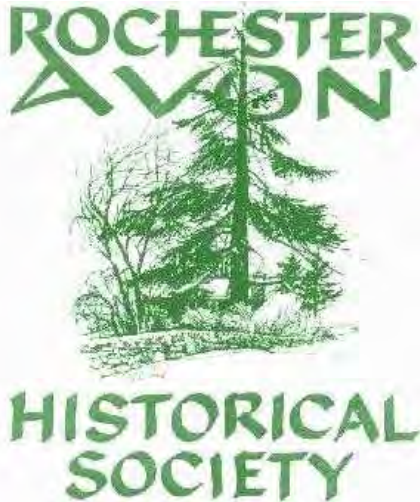
**From the Editor**

Write or phone the editor if  
you have something you  
wish we would cover.

Time and place photos are  
welcome.

Bea Catherino, Editor  
bvcather@gmail.com

(248) 375-0808



Rochester Avon Historical Society  
P O Box 80783  
Rochester, MI 48309-0783

*Pride in  
Preserving  
the Past*