

In this issue:**President's Message**

RAHS' Honorary Historian Inducted into Community Hall of Fame

WWII Memorial Signage Repairs

Save the Date! Membership Outing to Grangers Vintage Base Ball Game and Potluck

"Calling all Members" for Heritage Days Volunteer Support

RAHS' 2017 Schedule Yields to Bicentennial Events

Mark your Calendar for our Upcoming Events

Paul Haig to Present at Annual Member Picnic

Bicentennial Event Overview

**Our 24th Annual Event was, in a Word, *Amazing!*****Rochester Antique Appraisal Day**

Fox 2 Detroit contacted RAHS 1st vice president and Appraisal Day event chair, Carol Tough (center), to appear in an early morning interview segment with Charlie Langton (right). RAHS president, Brian Dunphy (left), contributed to the conversation. (Click on image above to view video of the full interview.)

The 24th Annual Antique Appraisal Day is now history. Kudos to our communications director, Tiffany Stozicki, for the extensive print, electronic and social media exposure promoting this year's event. And, of course, many thanks to our dedicated appraisers and volunteers who worked tirelessly to ensure the success of this major RAHS fundraising activity.

Fun facts about the day ...

More than 300 people attended.

11 appraisers volunteered their time and expertise.

32 volunteer members of RAHS worked to set up, direct, assist and tear down.

712 appraisals were performed during a four-hour timeframe.

Our revenue exceeded that of the last **two** years combined!

'Save the Date' for our Silver Anniversary!

Mark your calendar for March 4, 2018, and join us in celebrating 25 years of our Annual Antique Appraisal Day.

Teamwork: the heart of preservation

The RAHS board of directors recently approved a one-time \$500 donation to offset the cost of digitizing microfilm archives of Rochester Clarion and Rochester Eccentric newspapers dating from 1925 to 1999, which are currently housed at the Rochester Hills Museum.

These digital records will become an important part of the Oakland County Historical Resources website.

The OCHR site is available to explore at: <http://oaklandcountyhistory.org>.

President's Message

Fun Activities Coming Soon



**Brian Dunphy, President
Rochester-Avon
Historical Society**

The arrival of spring brings the historical society's warm-weather activities. Several will be happening in the coming months.

First, Greater Rochester Heritage Days will be taking place Saturday and Sunday, May 20 and 21. This year's event is being held earlier than in past years—the weekend before Memorial Day. It will feature entertainment, reenactors, activities and exhibits. Heritage Days also will enjoy a number of events related to the Rochester Bicentennial, including the return of the Floatable Boatable. RAHS will again be a sponsor of this event.

On Wednesday, June 14, the historical society will hold our annual member picnic. This fun event includes a potluck dinner, and this year will feature Paul Haig as guest speaker.

Also in June, our downtown walking tours begin. We've scaled them back a bit this year, and they will be held Wednesday, June 21; Thursday, July 13, and Saturday, Sept. 16. You'll find additional information about the walking tours elsewhere in this issue.

Meanwhile, the historical society's membership continues to grow. We currently have about 180 memberships. About 50 of those are family memberships, which brings us up to about 230 total members.

Our Presence Grows

We also continue to see growth in our [Facebook](#) 'Likes.' Two years ago, we looked forward to reaching the milestone of 1,000 'Likes.' Today, we have more 1,300 Facebook 'Likes'—as well as more than 90 [Twitter](#) followers. If you haven't 'liked' or followed us yet, please do!

Speaking of social media, be sure also to check out the RAHS [YouTube](#) page. Many of our evening and Brown Bag speaker programs are recorded and posted there, as well as other videos of general interest. You'll find lots of interesting videos to browse and view.

More Honors for RAHS' Honorary Historian

If you missed last month's Founder's Day celebration and kickoff to the Rochester Bicentennial events, you can still enjoy video of the proceedings.

RAHS' honorary historian, Gail Kemler, was among those inducted into the "Community Hall of Fame."

Click the link below for Michele Dunham's announcement of Gail's backstory, as well as her comments upon receipt of the award.

https://youtu.be/Uv3sQMT_meE?t=14m35s



Gail Kemler (center) receives "Community Hall of Fame" award, while Rochester mayor, Cathy Daldin (right) looks on.



**Honor Roll moving
in 1963
(Rochester Hills
Public Library)**

WWII Memorial Signage Repaired Slated to be Repainted and Replanted

Fifty years prior to [Debbie Larsen's Sept. 1, 2013, Remembering Rochester blog post](#):

"... Rochester leaders were contemplating what should be done with the community's World War II honor roll, which had fallen into disrepair and was standing in the way of a proposed urban renewal project.

In 1963, the honor roll was located on the east side of Main Street at Second; Second street had not been opened east of Main at that time. The village was preparing for an urban renewal project on the east side of Main, encompassing the area occupied by the former Chapman Mill Pond (which had been washed out in 1946) and adjacent property. Part of this plan was to open Second Street east of Main.

The village fathers and the Blue Star Mothers, who had originally sponsored the creation of the memorial, contemplating moving the memorial to the municipal building grounds, as this article from the September 26, 1963 issue of the Rochester Clarion reported:

Township treasurer Helen V. Allen, representing the Blue Star Mothers, addressed a letter to the Council asking them to consider a spot for the memorial on the Civil Center grounds. The memorial is now located on Main St. across the road from the eastern end of Second. Because the names are etched on glass, some of the panels are broken and the memorial in general is in poor condition. It is believed that stones thrown up by passing cars have broken the glass panels.

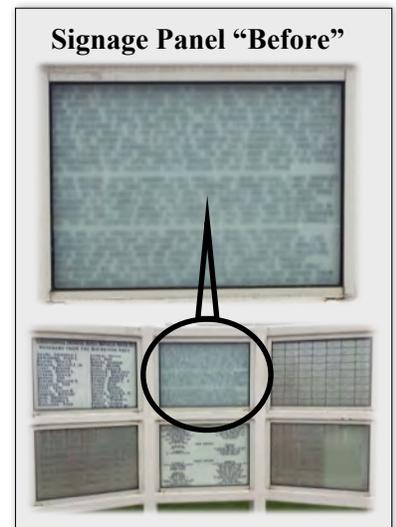
Mrs. Allen said this week that the Blue Star Mothers have brought a glass company person to Rochester to look at the memorial and it is estimated it will cost \$600 to repair the memorial. It will cost an unestimated amount to move the memorial. She said that the Blue Star Mothers will ask other organizations and individuals to help them finance the project.

The planned move to the municipal building grounds did not happen in 1963. Instead, the honor roll was removed from its site at Second Street and dismantled. The broken panels were stored away in a garage and not seen again for several decades, until the Rochester-Avon Historical Society adopted the honor roll as a historic preservation project and restored it. At a cost many thousands of dollars greater than the estimate of 1963, the memorial was returned to its former glory and given a place of honor on the grounds of the Rochester Municipal Building in 2002. It was re-dedicated on Memorial Day of that year with many local World War II veterans in attendance."

A separate "signage" structure was added in 2004, just feet away from the main Honor Roll. It contains six glass-enclosed panels displaying: the names of 33 WWII veterans who were overlooked on the original Honor Roll structure, the story of the memorial itself, dog tags representing each financial donor, as well as sponsors credited for their contributions to the memorial project.

Recently, signs of seal failure in several of the panels allowed condensation to accumulate behind the glass, rendering the information difficult—or impossible—to read. RAHS' funding allowed 3rd vice president, Tom Bledsoe, to arrange for repairs. He took on the task of hiring, recruiting and overseeing glass removal and replacement, arranging for repainting of the metal structure and upgraded landscaping at its base.

The Paint Crew donated their services to paint the memorial when it was moved, and they plan to support the Rochester community yet again by donating their services to refurbish the metal six-panel portion of the memorial once the weather consistently warms up. The Rochester Women's Garden Club has historically planted the flowers at the base of the small memorial. This year, they will enhance the landscape by planting perennials rather than annuals.



(Continued on Page 4)

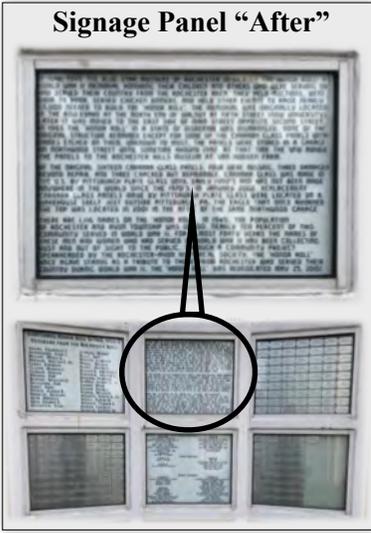
WWII Memorial Signage Repaired

Signage Panel "After"

(Continued from Page 3)

The repainting and replanting will complete the revitalization of the smaller sign structure.

In light of the upcoming Memorial Day observance, we hope you'll make a point of visiting this site in memory and appreciation of those who served so selflessly.



Feeling Cranky?

Save the Date: Sunday, Aug. 20

By Janet Potton

Did you know that when baseball first started in the 1800s, the fans were called "cranks?" Locally, we have a team called the "Rochester Grangers" that plays vintage "base ball" in the style of 1860. Based out of Rochester Hills Museum, they play other vintage teams all over the state. This year, the Rochester - Avon Historical Society will be organizing an outing to one of the Grangers' home games, which are played on the field behind the calf barn at Van Hoosen Farm, starting at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 20.



Photo: Leslie Mack

All RAHS members and families are invited to bring their own chairs and meet up to enjoy the game together! After the game, we'll share a pot luck meal with the players, and the museum will be open to view the bicentennial exhibit.

More details will be forthcoming. Cost of admission? Your chair and a dish to pass (a bargain for some good old-fashioned entertainment and esprit de corps), so please mark your calendar now to join us for this fun summer event.

Membership Dues Deadline is July 1

By Janet Potton

As you know, the renewal date for memberships is July 1 each year. We would like to encourage all our members to continue their support of Rochester-Avon Historical Society by renewing their annual membership at their earliest convenience. You may renew online at our website via Paypal, at one of the upcoming Brown Bag or evening meetings, at the annual picnic or by mailing a check to P.O. Box 80783, Rochester, Michigan 48308-0783.

If you have any changes in address or telephone, please advise the membership director, Janet Potton, at jjppost@hotmail.com.

Members are encouraged to introduce themselves to board members at the meetings and take the opportunity to pose questions or to share any suggestions or comments. We are always looking for input and welcome all ideas on how we can continue to improve our organization.

We also encourage your participation in our meetings, events and committees. Volunteering is a great way to make new friends and contribute to the community while learning the stories and history of the area.

The awareness of our area's history will be heightened this year as we celebrate our bicentennial, so please encourage your like-minded friends to join Rochester-Avon Historical Society.

The only way our history will survive is by sharing our knowledge and experience with others.

The Rochester-Avon Historical Society (RAHS) was founded in 1969 to help preserve, collect and interpret the history of the greater Rochester area for present and future generations.

For more information, including a list of upcoming events, visit online at:

www.rochesteravonhistoricalsociety.org

May Brown Bag and Library Programs

Brown Bag Meeting
Tuesday, May 2, Noon
 Rochester Community House
 816 Ludlow Street

**FREE AND OPEN
 TO THE PUBLIC**

Bring your lunch! Free coffee,
 tea and cookies provided.

“Sons of the American Revolution”



Photo courtesy of
 Rod Wilson

Rod Wilson, local historian, will discuss the SAR, including some of their community and youth projects. He may also have a story or two to share!

In 1876 there were many celebrations to commemorate the centennial of the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. As part of this patriotic fervor, a group of men in the San Francisco area, who were

descendants of patriots in the American Revolution, formed an organization called the Sons of Revolutionary Sires. Their objective was to have a fraternal and civic society to salute those men and women who pledged their lives, fortunes and sacred honor to the battle for independence from Great Britain. They desired to keep alive their ancestors' story of patriotism and courage in the belief that man's struggle against tyranny is universal. This organization evolved into the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution on April 30, 1889, the 100th anniversary of the inauguration of George Washington as our nation's first President. The Michigan Society of SAR was organized in January, 1890 in Detroit.

Rod has been a member of the Sons of the American Revolution since 2004. He was the founding president of the Oaks Chapter headquartered in Rochester. He served on the [Michigan Society, SAR](#), Board of Managers for over 10 years and just completed serving two years as State President. He recently received the Patriot's Medal, the highest honor that a state can bestow on one of its members, for his numerous contributions to the Society.

Library Lecture
Thursday, May 4, 7:00 p.m.
 Rochester Hills Public Library
 500 Olde Town Road

**FREE AND
 OPEN TO
 THE PUBLIC**

“Forgotten Stony Creek: The Construction Years 1959 to 1969”

Stony Creek Metropark, one of 13 Metroparks, is located in Macomb and Oakland counties near Rochester. Planning for Stony Creek started in the early 1950s with construction starting in 1959 and the official opening in 1964. Retired supervisor of grounds, William Remer, will present a collection of historic photographs, the work of then information officer John Sterling. These pictures were used to document the development of the 4,500-acre park and include the construction of the two dams that created Stony Creek Lake, the building of the Baypoint Beach Bathhouse and park office and a landscape that looks different from what we see today.

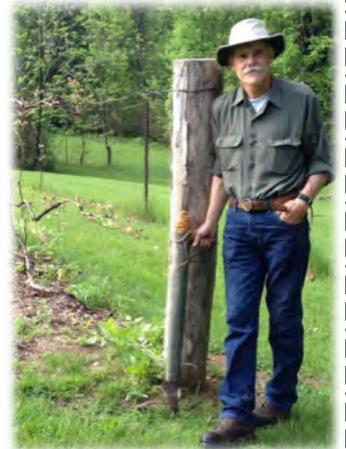


Photo courtesy of William Remer

Stony Creek provides recreation and education opportunities 364 days per year. It boasts an incredible array of plants and wildlife and provides prime opportunities for hiking, fishing, wildlife viewing, nature study, swimming and a host of other outdoor activities. We can get that “up north” feeling without leaving the suburbs.

Remer started as a seasonal employee at [Stony Creek Metropark](#) in 1975 while attending Michigan State University. After graduating with a degree in Natural Resource Economics and Policy, he became a full-time employee. He retired in 2012. Growing up several miles south of the park, he has a lifelong interest in the natural world and history that was sparked by his parents' love of their land, which became known as Remers' Woods. He is currently a member of the American Association of Geographers.

Calling all Member Volunteers for Heritage Days

Join us for a weekend celebration of our shared history and community, May 20 and 21 in the Rochester Municipal Park. Help staff our merchandise or historic-photo sales booths that help to fund informative and entertaining programs and activities throughout the year.

Call 248-266-5440, email rahsupdates@gmail.com, or click here to sign up online:

<http://www.SignUpGenius.com/go/10C0A48ACAF22ABFF2-greater1>

RAHS 2017 Schedule Yields to Bicentennial Events

Historic Downtown Walking Tours

A great deal of effort has been expended by individuals, groups and the DDA to make this, Rochester's 200th "birthday" year, a fun and eventful one.

In the spirit of community, therefore, RAHS will be yielding to the events of other organizations by reducing our 2017 Historic Downtown Walking Tour season to the following three tour dates and times:

- Wednesday, June 21 - 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, July 13 - 7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, Sept. 16 - 1:00 p.m.

Important note: Tours this season will depart from the WWII Memorial at the Rochester municipal complex. Ample free parking is available in the municipal lot adjoining the location. Tours will be reduced in length, as well, so if tour distance or duration were deterrents, delay no longer!

Mount Avon Cemetery Walk

Sadly, we have laid to rest our hopes this year of reanimating local historical characters longing to share their stories with visitors to Mount Avon Cemetery—yet another casualty of this very busy Bicentennial celebration.

We hope to breathe new life into many of our dearly departed settlers in the years to come, allowing them a glimpse of daylight, the warmth of sunshine and company, and a platform to inform and interact with the present.

Don't Miss these Upcoming Events Be sure to mark your calendar now!

| Brown Bag Lunch - Tuesday, May 2 - Noon to 1:00 p.m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Evening Program @ Library - Thursday, May 4 - 7:00 p.m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| No Historic Downtown Walking Tour this month | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| <p>Annual Picnic with Guest Speaker, Paul Haig Members Only @ Community House Wednesday, June 14 - 6:00 p.m.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Historic Downtown Walking Tour Wednesday, June 21 7:00 p.m.</p> <p><i>(Departs from WWII Memorial)</i></p> | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr style="background-color: #00b050; color: white;"> <th colspan="7">JUNE</th> </tr> <tr style="background-color: #e0f2f1;"> <th>sun</th> <th>mon</th> <th>tue</th> <th>wed</th> <th>thu</th> <th>fri</th> <th>sat</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="border: 2px solid red; text-align: center;">/</td> <td></td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td style="border: 2px solid red; text-align: center;">/</td> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>12</td> <td>13</td> <td style="border: 2px solid green;">14</td> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> <td>20</td> <td style="border: 2px solid green;">21</td> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25</td> <td>26</td> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> <td>29</td> <td style="border: 2px solid green;">30</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> | JUNE | | | | | | | sun | mon | tue | wed | thu | fri | sat | | | | / | | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | / | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | | | | | | | |
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| <p>2017-2018 RAHS Membership Dues Friday, June 30</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| <p>Historic Downtown Walking Tour Thursday, July 13 7:00 p.m.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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Who Does Paul Haig Think He Is?

By Tiffany Stozicki

Our guest speaker for the picnic event will be local businessman and community advocate, Paul Haig, who will discuss his love and interest in genealogy and share information about his own impressive family tree with roots going back centuries.

Since opening his jewelry and antique shop in downtown Rochester in 1973, Paul has turned a little store into one of the largest family-owned jewelry retailers in the greater Rochester area—a testament to the company’s expertise and authority in the jewelry industry. In addition to his unparalleled knowledge of jewelry, Paul is also an avid collector of Asian antiques.



Photo courtesy of Paul Haig

He and his wife, Diane, have traveled the world to find the most beautiful antique Asian textiles, prints, ceramics and more for his shop and personal collection. As a community volunteer, Paul works with, and for, such local groups as the Rochester Downtown Development Authority, the Rochester Historic Districts Study Committee, Crittenton Hospital, the Lighthouse of Oakland County, and the Paint Creek Center for the Arts. He frequently gives lectures to school and community groups, and assists with local appraisal clinics—especially the Rochester-Avon Historical Society’s annual Antique Appraisal Day.

So, who does Paul Haig think he is? Find out at the annual RAHS member picnic on June 14.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New | \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Student |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal | \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual |
| | \$35 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family |
| | \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing |
| | \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Business |
| | \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron |

Volunteer Areas of Interest

How would you like to participate?

- Annual Picnic
- Antique Appraisal Day
- Historic Research
- Historic Walking Tour Guide/Assistant
- Fundraising
- Genealogy Research
- Heritage Days
- Oral History
- Photography/Videography
- Publications
- Refreshments at Meetings
- Special Project Volunteer
- Website/Social Media

Join the Rochester-Avon Historical Society Today! Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____



Mail completed form with check payable to:

Rochester-Avon Historical Society

P O Box 80783

Rochester, MI 48308-0783

Questions? Call us at 248-266-5440

Bicentennial Event Dates

(Information provided is per the City of Rochester website)

Greater Rochester Heritage Days - May 20 & 21

The 40th Annual Greater Rochester Heritage Days will celebrate the heritage of the Rochester while providing an opportunity for local non-profit organizations to raise funds and increase awareness. A family fun event with activities such as the return of Floatable Boatables, mustache growing contest, historical displays and demonstrations, Pioneer Playground, car show, craft show and food. Admission is free. For more information, call 248-656-0999 or visit dinosaurhill.org.

Rochester 200 Project - May 30 - June 17

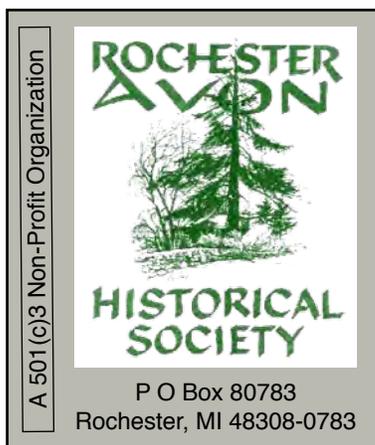
Bicentennial Barn Dance at Van Hoosen Farm - June 23

Rochester Homecoming - August 12

Rochester Municipal Park will transform into a walk down Rochester's memory lane in celebration of history and fond memories of the place we are proud to call home. Activities include fireworks, entertainment, kids' activities, pioneer playground, mobile farm and much more!

For more information and updates, visit:

<https://www.downtownrochestermi.com/rochester-bicentennial-celebration>



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