



RELIVING The Rochester Era

July/Aug.

The Rochester-Avon Historical Society Newsletter

2017

2017 Annual Member Picnic “How sweet it was!”

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Heritage Days ... Rained out, but not a Washout



Dessert table displays delectable treats, including birthday cake in celebration of Rochester’s Bicentennial.



Below: Partial room view with festive decorations and members enjoying this year’s annual gathering.



Editorial Comment



Leslie Whyte-Mack
RAHS Director,
Era Newsletter Editor

**“That the powerful play goes on,
and you may contribute a verse.”**

— N.H. Kleinbaum, Dead Poets Society

Our cover photos this issue offer just a glimpse of the generosity and dedication of RAHS members and volunteers, many of whom attended the recent annual picnic to celebrate our shared appreciation of, and commitment to, our organization and each other.

Even without the advantage of a home base, the RAHS board of directors, committee chairs and member volunteers have succeeded over the years in providing entertaining activities, interesting speakers and educational programs and resources to the community in a variety of ways—in person, in print and online—such as:

- Monthly Brown Bag Lunches at the Community House
- Monthly Evening Lectures at the Rochester Hills Public Library
- Historic photos for sale (online and at event booths)
- Merchandise items for sale (online and at event booths)
- Publications (free and for purchase)
- Informative website
- Facebook and Twitter social media presence
- Free bimonthly newsletter
- YouTube channel videos
- Books and DVDs

For years, our program topics have spanned the globe and run the gamut ... from one member’s Peace Corps service in Central America to a local woman’s “Rosie the Riveter” roots; from Detroit’s Purple Gang to Washington D.C.’s Secret Service; from domestic and international pop-up books to our own Main Street makeover; from lingerie to Hemingway, Hoffa to Hudson’s, sanitariums to cemeteries, we’ve covered all of these topics and scores more!

Our own members have presented some of the best programs we’ve offered. Among these speakers are educators, local business owners, leaders of various organizations and nonprofits, actors, artists, musicians and authors.

We all have talents, strengths and our own unique histories. What are yours? You may take them for granted because they’re so familiar to you, but you likely possess knowledge, skills and experiences about which our members know little or nothing!

Try giving some thought to these questions, if you will:

- What skills, hobbies, interests or knowledge might you share?
- What can you teach us that we may not know?
- What have you seen or done that we might experience vicariously through you?
- Moreover, whom do you know?
- What might they share?

We love to learn. We embrace exploration. We can all be enriched by our involvement with RAHS, ultimately profiting intellectually, socially and experientially.

**The human condition is a powerful play.
What will be your verse?**

RAHS Board of Director Awards recognize outstanding contributions

Each year, the RAHS Board of Directors presents awards to outstanding members at our annual June meeting. Awards recently were presented to several members whose efforts have gone “above and beyond.”

Lois Collet Award for the Outstanding Member of the Board of Directors

recognizing someone who has demonstrated a high level of leadership and involvement in our organization during the current fiscal year.

Presented to:

Tom Bledsoe, third vice president, and Holly Bledsoe, corresponding secretary, in recognition for their having created the successful photo sales program. The award also recognizes their efforts for the RAHS surrey in the Rochester Christmas Parade and their volunteering for Antique Appraisal Day,

Mary Eberline Award for the Outstanding Member

for the individual or couple who have demonstrated a high level of leadership and involvement in our organization during the current fiscal year.

Presented to:

Gary Jaracz, for his management of RAHS electronic communications, as well as his active involvement in many other activities of the historical society.

Sandy Agosta and Judy Sloan, for their providing and setting up the refreshments for the monthly Bown Bag Lunch meetings.

Phil and Marilee Townsend, for their support of RAHS events at the Rochester Community House and for handling the labeling, postage and mailing for the Era newsletter.



(Pictured L to R: **2016-2017 Mary Eberline award winners** Marilee and Phil Townsend and Sandy Agosta; Judy Sloan (not present) was also honored with the Mary Eberline award; **2016-2017 Lois Collet award winners** Holly and Tom Bledsoe.)



(Pictured L to R: RAHS 1st vice president, Carol Tough; **2016-2017 Mary Eberline award winner** and RAHS media chair Gary Jaracz; RAHS director and Era newsletter editor Leslie Mack; and Brian Dunphy, RAHS president.)

**Gail Kemler Award for the
Outstanding New Member**
not presented this year.

September Brown Bag and Library Programs

Brown Bag Meeting

Tuesday, Sept. 5, Noon

Rochester Community House
816 Ludlow Street

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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

To Be Announced

RAHS urgently needs a chairperson or a small group of members to work together to continue our monthly Brown Bag Luncheon meetings. If you're interested, **we'd like to hear from you.**

This position is responsible for recruiting and scheduling speakers for the nine noontime meetings. (Meetings are not held in June, July and August.) Held on the first Tuesday of the month at the Rochester Community House, the meetings include refreshments provided by several members.

This is a great opportunity to get more involved with the historical society and help support one of our important educational programs. **Unless one or more members volunteer for this leadership role, we will be unable to continue the Brown Bag Luncheon meetings.**

Help us save the Brown Bag Lunch meetings!

To learn more or to volunteer,

email rahupdates@gmail.com or call 248-266-5440.

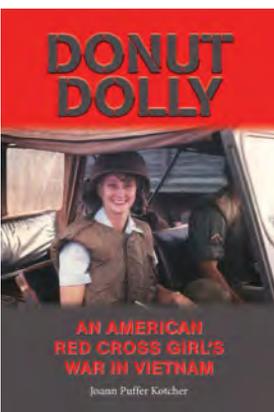
Library Lecture

Thursday, Sept. 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Rochester Hills Public Library
500 Olde Town Road

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

"Donut Dolly"



In honor of the 50th Commemoration of the Vietnam War, Joan Puffer Kotcher will discuss her experiences as an unarmed Red Cross civilian in combat zones during the Vietnam War. The original "Donut Dollies" ventured out to different operating areas in WWII and Korea. They passed out sundry items, played records, served hot coffee and fresh donuts and visited with the soldiers.

Between February 1962 and March 1973, the Vietnam Donut Dollies logged over 2,000,000 miles by Jeep, deuce-and-a-half and helicopters visiting combat troops at remote fire bases. And they didn't pass out a single donut. They traveled in pairs and brought smiles, songs, games and a touch of "back home."

For this duty, the Red Cross recruited girls who had to be 21 years of age, college educated and possessing the "girl next door" look. An understated requirement was the "capacity for hard work under less-than-ideal conditions."

The Donut Dollies set up recreation centers before the USO and Special Services arrived. The time they spent talking with the troops about home, sports, music and wives or girlfriends was a terrific morale booster. She was one of the first women permitted in foxholes and to work in the desolate enemy-ridden combat zone jungles. She went into the Central Highlands, the Mekong Delta and along the Cambodian border. Kotcher was abducted once and nearly killed at least six times.

Based on a diary she kept, her book "Donut Dolly, An American Red Cross Girl's War in Vietnam" tells real stories of men at war and gives tribute to our military's bravery. The only book about Vietnam written by a woman, it has received numerous awards; it was nominated for a Distinguished Writing Award of the Army Historical Foundation, given a national award for Women in American History by the Daughters of the American Revolution, and recommended for school and public libraries by the American Library Association. The Donut Dolly book will be in its second printing in the fall of 2017 and will be available for sale at this event.

Kotcher was born in Harbor Beach, Mich. She graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in math and later earned an MBA.

She is one of only 100 Donut Dollies who remain out of over 600 girls, and she is the only one in Michigan. Kotcher lives in the Rochester area with her husband.



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

President's Message Observer, participant or volunteer?

In our historical society, as in most organizations, it seems that there are three types of members.

The first type is the observers. They pay their dues, sometimes with repeated reminders, and may read the RAHS newsletter, emails and postcards. We rarely see them at events or programs.

Next are the participants. They pay dues as individual members without a lot of prompting. Not only do they read RAHS printed materials, they also follow and "Like" our Facebook posts. They take part in some of our programs and events.

Finally, we have the volunteers. These are the people who really make the historical society work. They pay dues at the family, contributing or patron levels. They read our printed materials and follow us on Facebook – plus they view our Twitter feeds and our YouTube videos.

Most importantly, the volunteers step forward when help is needed. They work shifts in our booths at Heritage Days or Kris Kringle Market. They help as assistants for Antique Appraisal Day and set up for Brown Bag Lunch meetings and our annual picnic/meeting. And they make the commitment to serve on the RAHS Board and committees.

What type of member are you? Will you consider being a volunteer?

We're looking for two volunteers to join the RAHS Board and fill our two vacancies:

- The second vice president coordinates and supports the Director of Merchandising and the Director of Fund Raising Events and serves as a member of the Board's Executive Committee.
- The Director of Fund Raising Events oversees (and if needed, recruits) committees responsible for Antique Appraisal Day, the Cemetery Walk and grant writing, as well as sales at Heritage Days and Kris Kringle Market.

These positions offer great opportunities for you to get more involved with RAHS – and you'll contribute in a big way to the success of the historical society. So be a volunteer! Contact RAHS at **248-266-5440** or rahsupdates@gmail.com.

In Memoriam 2016-2017

Our thoughts turn to fellow members we've lost throughout the year.

**Patricia Bracewell
Carole Fisher**

New item added to merchandise offerings, another coming

In this humid weather, you don't want to set a drink down without a coaster. RAHS can help with our new Rochester-themed coasters. Priced at just \$5 each or \$18 for a boxed set of four, these high-quality coasters feature the Rochester name in various type fonts, on a black background. You'll find these items at RAHS Brown Bag and Library programs and at our Kris Kringle booth. We expect to have them available for purchase through our webstore soon, as well. Meanwhile, email rahsupdates@gmail.com with inquiries.

Also, coming soon—a community cookbook that will preserve the treasured recipes of the greater Rochester area. Scheduled for publication in October 2017, the cookbook will include up to 150 recipes—from appetizers to main dishes to desserts.

We need YOUR recipes to make this cookbook fundraiser a success. And it's a great way to share your favorite or family recipes with others. Submit 1-5 of your recipes from now until Saturday, July 8.

1. Go to www.typensave.com and click "Login"
2. Enter User Name RAHSrecipes
3. Enter password: apple056
4. Click "Submit." Enter your name and click "Continue"
5. Click "Add Recipes" and begin adding recipes



Photos: Leslie Whyte-Mack

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

Don't miss these upcoming events Be sure to mark your calendar now!

JULY						
sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Deadline for Membership Dues Saturday, July 1

No Brown Bag Lunch

No Evening Program @ Library

[Historic Downtown Walking Tour](#)
Thursday, July 13
7:00 p.m.

* Tour departs from WWII Memorial at the Rochester Municipal Complex
400 Sixth Street
(a block north of University/west of Main Street)

* Ample free parking is available.

* Tours run "rain or shine!"

AUGUST						
sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

No Brown Bag Lunch

No Evening Program @ Library

SEPTEMBER						
sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Brown Bag Lunch @ Community House
Tuesday, Sept. 5
Noon to 1:00 p.m.

Evening Program @ Library
Thursday, Sept. 7
7:00 p.m.

Contact Information for RAHS Board of Directors and Committees

Board of Directors

Brian Dunphy, President	248-376-3460
Carol Tough, 1st Vice President, Operations	248-375-0084
Position Open, 2nd Vice President, Finance	
Tom Bledsoe, 3rd Vice President, Development	586-822-2148
Holly Bledsoe, Corresponding Secretary	248-923-2602
June Hopaluk, Recording Secretary	248-652-9242
Cary Downer, Treasurer	586-201-2285
Tiffany Stozicki, Director, Communications	248-650-0415
Leslie Mack, Director, Editor, Era Newsletter	586-924-4961
Janet Potton, Director, Membership	248-652-7296
Mary Howarth, Director, Merchandising	248-375-0206
Margaret Bartos, Director, Programs	248-759-4768
Barb Bates, Director, Special Projects	248-495-6258
Bree Boettner, Director, Historical Preservation	248-515-0881

Committee Chairpersons

Gail Kemler, Honorary Historian	248-651-0907
Deborah Larsen, Research	248-375-2974
Samantha Lawrence, Oral History	586-255-1883
Position Open, Walking Tours	
Gary Jaracz, Media	313-407-9326

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

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

Join the Rochester-Avon Historical Society Today! Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

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



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

**Heritage Days ...
Rained out, but not a washout!**

**Our canopy collapsed, but our sales did not.
The intrepid RAHS volunteers stood their ground
and claimed victory over the elements!**

**Sales were buoyed by our historical photo image selection
and by new merchandise offerings,
including items generously donated for sale
with proceeds benefiting our organization.**

**Ultimately, we surpassed last year's sales in a shorter period of time.
Many thanks to our hard-working volunteers,
and to our generous donor and supportive customers.**

“Pride in Preserving the Past”



P O Box 80783
Rochester, MI 48308-0783



A 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization