



Museum Matters

the fall/winter 2015 newsletter of the

Elk Rapids Area Historical Society

Exploring the past... Understanding the present... Envisioning the future

Learning about the past



by Dolores Hibbard

Students from Lakeland Elementary and Mill Creek Elementary Schools have been visiting the Elk Rapids Area Historic Society (ERAHS) to learn about a bygone time. The Kindergarteners and First Graders came to the museum on October 28, 2015 for a history lesson.

The students were met by Judy Lopus, a volunteer, in the disguise of an old-fashioned schoolmarm. She talked about what life was like when people first settled in this area. She discussed everything from outhouses to pumping water and from washboards to clotheslines. People originally came to the area for available work and to make a new home. First, they had to build themselves a log home and dig a well for water. There was no running water in the house, and water had to be hand pumped. To heat water or cook food, wood had to be chopped for a fire. Mothers had much to do. They made the clothes, grew much of the food, cooked and cleaned. Baths were taken in a tub by the fireplace. After pumping the water, heating it, and filling the tub, father was the first to bath, then mother, and finally the children, one after another in the same water.

Mrs. Lopus used artifacts from the museum collections during her lesson. She and the students talked about games, and played one game with an antique milk bottle - yes, milk came in a bottle not a carton - dropping clothespins in the bottle from a standing position.

The students were delighted and willing participants, learning by doing and seeing. The audience participation was great. Hopefully, the children went home and shared with their families all their new knowledge. In fact, some feel such presentations would be informative for adults, also. ✝





**ERAHS
THANKS VOLUNTEERS
WITH A MOVIE**



The Elk Rapids Area Historical Society (ERAHS), which is particularly reliant on volunteers to maintain their museum at 301 Traverse Street, wanted to do something to thank their volunteers, so they treated them to a movie recently.

Volunteers staff the museum, greet visitors, act as docents, do housekeeping chores, set up displays, host programs, take pictures, serve on the Board of Directors, and some even maintain the outdoor landscaping.

Did you know 65 volunteers put in over 4,000 hours of volunteer time during the past 2014-2015 fiscal year!

A couple examples: Those on the Museum Committee accessed 93 new items into our collections. Volunteers on our Education Committee hosted 99 Lakeland Elementary 3rd graders and 45 Mill Creek Elementary 1st graders on their recent field trip

On Tuesday, October 20, Joe Yuchasz opened the Elk Rapids Cinema to provide a movie party, along with complimentary concessions, for the volunteers, their families, and friends. Marsha Graham addressed the volunteers, thanking them for all their hard work and dedication. Joe Yuchasz followed with a brief history of the theater and then he introduced the movie *Learning to Drive* to the 40 people attending the event.

The ERAHS is always looking for volunteers. Volunteering can mean as little as three hours at a time. Those interested can call Inez Gotts at 264-6558 for dates and times. The museum is open Wednesdays and Saturdays from June through August, and by appointment the remainder of the year. In addition there are evening programs through out the year.

Submitted by Dolores Hibbard, Contributing Writer, Museum Matters Newsletter



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Would you consider joining our board of Trustees?
 We need your input to keep ERAHS a vibrant cultural and educational asset to our community. If you are a snow bird, don't let that stop you. We meet once a month except in the dead of winter.



MUSEUM MATTERS is published periodically by The Elk Rapids Area Historical Society.

Contributors: Dolores Hibbard, Dan LeBlond, Karen Szymanski, Glenn Neumann

All editorial and correspondence should be sent to:
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President's Report:



Dan LeBlond

Looking back at the past fiscal year and beginning of the current one, I'm once again amazed at all our volunteers have accomplished! For example, our Museum Committee consisting of Glenn Neumann - Chairman, Karen Szymanski - Registrar, and assistants, Marge Paradis, Jane Lund and Ann McPhail, reported their past fiscal year-end accomplishments:

- Exhibits were displayed in Museum from May to September
- Six evening programs from April through September
- 93 artifacts were accessed with locations identified
- Worked with our Elk Rapids school system in designing programs used to enhance specific grade level curriculums. more than 300 students attended from Lakeland and Mill Creek Elementary Schools
- Quilt Program was presented at Lakeland Elementary to kindergarten students by Cathy Walle and Karen Szymanski and other quilter friends in January 2015.
- Museum was open every Wednesday 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. for eleven months
- Community Cash more than \$300 received, there is now a mailbox on back door to collect receipts
- ERAHS was represented by Flo and Dan Wettlaufer in the Harbor Days parade (see below)



- Hosted Business & Professional Women (BPW) 70th anniversary celebration Sept. 27th
- "Then and Now" Exhibit statistics:

- o Open 36 days
- o 118 hours
- o 283 visitors
- o 19 greeters
- Volunteers overall for the year:
 - o 65 volunteers/helpers
 - o 3743 hours

In addition, I'm pleased to report the following:

- Hosted Elk Rapids District Library Library's "Evening with an Author" series. 199 attended in 2015. We received \$522 in free will donations
- Offered six educational programs (April - September) to the general public. 649 people attended the programs
- Two programs at Hope Village were presented by Glenn Neumann/Dale Lopus. Had 41 attendees.
- Museum published a book, "Land and Family Valiquet Roots" written by Norm Veliquette. 250 books printed. 170+ sold thus far.
- Maintained artifacts, history and genealogy records
- Support of Chamber of Commerce and Harbor Day Commission activities via our memberships.
- Participated in a 2-hour Inland Seas History Cruise. Dan LeBlond talked about three docks that served the Village in earlier years. A DNR representative, Randy Claramunt, gave a presentation about rebuilding the fish reef outside the Elk Rapids Harbor.
- Partnered with local Rotary Club regarding the Park Pavilion mural. Dan LeBlond and Glenn Neumann serve on a committee involved with the project. Glenn Neumann researched the history and wrote some of the text which will be on the panels in front of the mural. ERAHS acts as a fiduciary for grant funds that were received for this project.
- On September 11, 2015, our nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places was approved and submitted to the National Park Service which is the keeper of the Register for final review. We should receive official notification by end of November. Nomination was based the significance of :
 - o The yellow brick used on the exterior of the building
 - o The nine (9) stained glass windows
 - o The significance of the "Price" designed plans used to build the church

continued next page



- Remodeling of building bathrooms delayed because of August 2, 2015 storm as local builder and subcontractors swamped with insurance claims and repairs. Work will commence over winter/spring 2016. Our Grantor, Rotary Charities, extended our final report deadline to September 30th, 2016.
- A volunteer appreciation event was held in October at the Elk Rapids Cinema. All enjoyed popcorn, a drink and the movie, *Learning to Drive*. Prior to the movie, Joe Yuchasz, theater owner, gave a brief history of prior movie houses in Elk Rapids.

The Board continues to plan for the Museum's future - especially its sustainability. Examples:

- Establish "reserve fund" for on-going maintenance (external painting, roof replacement, emergency repairs, etc.)
- By-Laws review for potential updating such as establish Term Limits for Board Members
- Find a volunteer "Video Historian" to record programs and oral histories.
- A volunteer(s) to convert VHS tapes to DVDs and cassette tapes to digital media. †

Community Cash Time Again!

Please save your Village Market / Gas Station receipts for us again! You can hand them to a Board member, a volunteer or new this year - the drop-box located on the rear door of the Museum.

Last August 25th, 2015, the Village Market presented the Historical Society with a \$324.62 check.

39 groups and organizations participated; The Historical Society ranked 22nd on the list.

Because the program has been extremely successful and helped so many people over the last 35 years, the Village Market has decided to double the reward amount to 2% of the slip total for next year (2016)! Thank you in advance for your receipt donations. It really does pay to shop locally!



Elk Rapids Historical Society Announces Business Partners

The Elk Rapids Area Historical Society began a program this fall inviting area businesses to sponsor evening programs and events for the coming year. It is with pleasure that we welcome the following businesses to our sponsorship program:

- **The Nature Connection**
- **The Corner Druggist**
- **Edward Jones**
- **The Moose**
- **The Cone Corral**
- **Fitzpatrick Insurance Agency**
- **Re/Max of Elk Rapids**
- **All Smiles Family Dentistry**
- **Elk Rapids Chiropractic Center**

Along with the Elk Rapids community the ERAHS would like to thank our businesses partners for their generous support!

The program is open to individuals and businesses in the Elk Rapids area. For more information please email rmdagraham@gmail.com or phone 248 542 4208.

ERAHS Museum Applies for National Registry

By Karen Berry, photos by Dave Lien and Tom Vranich



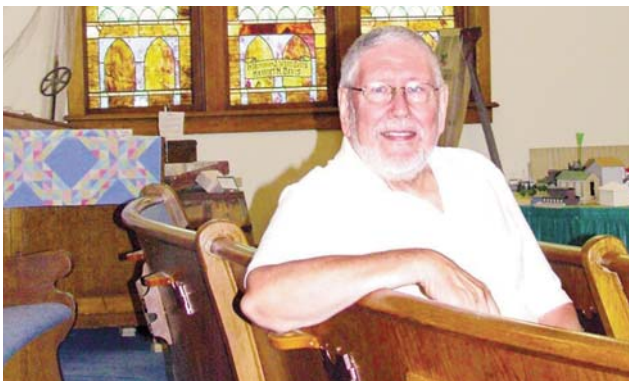
ELK RAPIDS – Elk Rapids is celebrating another bit of history, as the Elk Rapids Area Historical Society museum was approved by the state to be included on the National Registry of Historical Places. If the society's nomination is accepted by the National Park Service in Washington, D.C, it will be the fifth Elk Rapids location on the registry.



Originally built from 1901-1902, the Elk Rapids Area Historical Society museum is located in the former United Methodist church building on Traverse Street in Elk Rapids. When the church disbanded, it donated the building and the land to the historical society with the provision that it

would be made into a museum and the building would be preserved. The historical society has lived up to its end of the agreement, including nominating the building for the National Registry of Historical Places.

The historical society's president Dan LeBlond said they initiated the process back in 2011. "A lot of opportunities for grant money open up when you're accepted on the registry," he said. "And if the community should ever decide



to establish a historic district, the research has already been done."

That research took several years, as the historical society needed to show three aspects of local significance. "Historical significance is the determination that a property is important for its association with significant events or

persons, for their importance in design or construction, or for their information potential," said LeBlond.

The society submitted a 17-page application and pictures to the National Park Service. In it, they described the building's three areas of local significance: the yellow bricks, stained glass windows and architecture.

"The museum is built from locally-manufactured yellow brick," said LeBlond. "Those bricks were also used in a number of other buildings in Elk Rapids, some of which are still visible today."

The stained glass windows are also historically significant. Eight of the 13 stained glass windows date back to the church's construction in 1902. The original eight were made in Chicago, three were made in Grand Rapids, and the last two windows were crafted by Elk Rapids native, James Pfeiffer.



Finally, the third area of historical significance is the building's architecture. The church was built based on Benjamin D. and Max Charles Prices' church designs. Though several churches followed Prices' plans, the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office said the Elk Rapids building is in the best condition of any other building in the state. It also followed the plans more closely than any other building.

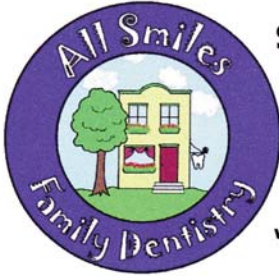
It took many years and more than 30 resources for the society to complete the application, but on Sept. 11, 2015 they were approved by the state of Michigan for listing on the national registry. They're now waiting for the National Park Service in Washington, D.C. to approve them so they can officially join the registry.

LeBlond said he's anxious to hear if they meet the requirements, and he's also excited about the possibility of adding another historic place to Elk Rapids. The four historic markers currently in the village are the Historic Elk Rapids Town Hall, the Island House, the Elk Rapids Iron Company marker near the Riverwalk Grill, and the Elk Rapids Golf Club, which celebrated its marker earlier this summer.

Earning a spot on the registry will make it possible for the historical society to apply for grants to help maintain and refurbish the building, but LeBlond said recognizing local history is about much more than grant money. "It gives that location a sense of place in Elk Rapids history," he said. "In today's world of tearing things down and building new things, it shows what can be done by repurposing old buildings." ✈

Note: This article originally appeared in "The Antrim Review."

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Monthly programs for 2016: (as of 11-12-2015)

April ??	To Be Announced	To Be Announced	To Be Announced
May 5th	1st Thursday	David Miles/Earl Young	Mushroom Houses Part 1
May 12th	2nd Thursday	David Miles/Earl Young	Mushroom Houses Part 2
June 2nd	1st Thursday	Catherine F. Allchin	Fox Island Lighthouse
July 7th	1st Thursday	To Be Announced	To Be Announced
August 11th	2nd Thursday	Emily Musgrave	Magic of Millers Park
September 1st	1st Thursday	Norton Bretz	Murder in Antrim County 1870, a Family Story
October 6th	1st Thursday	Dan LeBlond	Annual Meeting, Potluck & Program

More details about these programs will be in the Spring 2016 Museum Matters Newsletter.

***It costs \$82.19 per day to operate the Museum,
whether open to the public or closed!***

Yes! I want to support The Elk Rapids Historical Museum!

Gift Amount: \$50 \$100 \$200 \$500 \$1,000 \$2,500 Other

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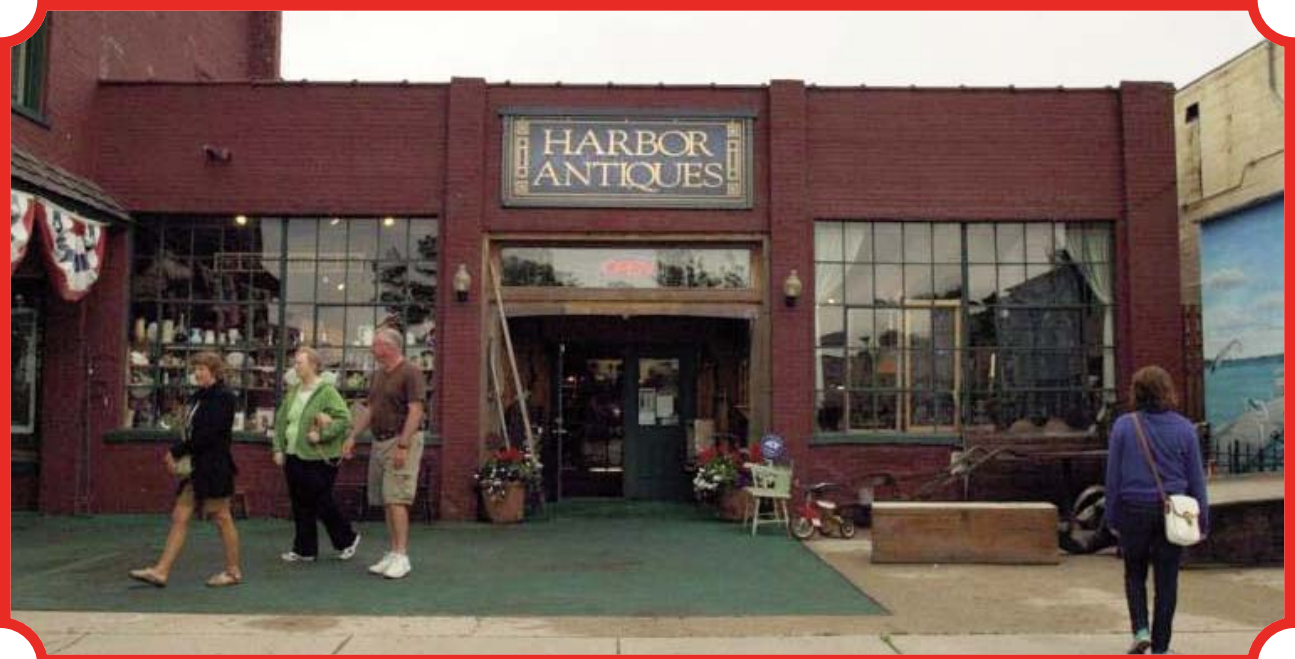


Elk Rapids Area Historical Society

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