



Museum Matters

the newsletter of the

Elk Rapids Area Historical Society

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

Fall 2021

Garage Sale was a HUGE SUCCESS! THANK YOU DONORS & VOLUNTEERS & SHOPPERS!!!!



Storage tent



Large tent setup



Starting to sell



Early shoppers



Young shopper



Will the fan work?



Modeling merchandise



Cashiers



Volunteer lunch break



Starting to pack up



Packing up



More packing up!

Annual Appeal Starts Now!

Each fall, the Elk Rapids Area Historical Society (ERAHS) appeals to our members, businesses, and friends to help start our new fiscal year in October on a positive note. This appeal establishes the foundation for our continued operation. We depend on your generosity to set the stage for the remainder of the fiscal year. It is well known that ERAHS does not receive any taxpayer or government revenue. So, the success of this appeal is important to our continued operation. You may have received a separate mailing in the last couple of weeks about this appeal. Help us by filling out the donor card provided or using the donor form on p. 7 to make your contribution. Any donation, large or small, is always greatly appreciated.

Elk Rapids Area Historical Society
Mailing address: P. O. Box 2
Elk Rapids MI 49629-0002
www.elkrapidshistory.org

ERAHS Board of Trustees:

Dan LeBlondPresident
Kathy PetersonVice President
Florence WettlauferSecretary/Treasurer
Judy Hahn FishbeckTrustee
Marcia GrahamTrustee
Craig HandleyTrustee
Dave LienTrustee
Kim RangerTrustee
Adam SchulerTrustee
Daniel WettlauferTrustee

History Museum
301 Traverse St. (corner of Pine)

Open on program dates
See page 6 for listings and times
(231) 264-5692

Admission by donation
Free to members, children and students

President's Corner:



Dan LeBlond

Where has the summer gone?

It seems the older one gets, the faster it goes. This summer has had many unexpected events. Just when we thought we were beyond the COVID crisis, the DELTA variant emerges. As a result, at the end of July after bringing back

in-person weekly historic presentations, we took the conservative approach in closing our doors once again to the public. While we are still open by appointment to vaccinated visitors for research requests or guided tours of the building, we are not open to the general public. What will happen next summer season is up in the air.

On August 11th, the weather caused a power failure for 30 hours just as tables were being set up for our Garage Sale. As a result, our two sump pumps were not operational. Parts of the lower level had as much as an inch of water. Fortunately, almost all of the displays were on raised blocks and the Archive Room containing all of our paper documents, which is on higher ground, did not experience any water seepage. The Board of Trustees is now looking into purchasing a generator to avoid future power failure problems. Even with the power failure, we were able to hold our outdoor Garage Sale. My personal thanks to all the donors, volunteers, and shoppers who made this event a huge success.

Although my main residence is Florida, thanks to modern technology, I am a daily part of the Museum operation in Elk Rapids. All of the email distribution regarding programs and the website is controlled electronically by me from my home. ZOOM meetings for our Board and Committee meetings have allowed us to come together visually to communicate whenever needed. Is this the new normal?

In conclusion, I wish everyone good health in the coming winter season!

Best Wishes To Retiring Board Member



The Elk Rapids Area Historical Society extends its best wishes to Don Gaskell. After two terms, a total of four years, Don is retiring from the Board of Trustees due to health reasons. We thank him for his years of service greeting

attendees at programs, helping at our Garage Sales, and attending Historical Society Network meetings. Always the first person at any program, meeting, or event, his punctuality will be missed.

Kim Ranger – New Board Member



Like many current residents of Elk Rapids, Kim spent her childhood visiting relatives at their area cottages. After obtaining her teaching degree, she began her career with Elk Rapids Schools. Her relationship with the Elk Rapids Area Historical Society (ERAHS) began after she and her husband purchased their 1911 home and began researching its history. This research later led to her daughter and husband building a replica model of their home which was displayed at the Museum for several years.

Prior to the pandemic and her recent retirement, Kim was the Elk Rapids Schools' contact person for student visits to the Museum as part of the International Baccalaureate program at the elementary level. Under her leadership, focus areas and activities were developed with Museum volunteer teachers and Museum visits expanded from one to five grade levels.

In 2012, Kim collaborated with her third grade students and fellow educators to write a story about their classroom's year in the community. The book is titled, *Looking at the Past, Gazing Into the Future... A Journey Toward Stewardship*. The Museum revised this wording and it now serves as their current motto of Exploring the Past, Understanding the Present, Envisioning the Future.

Kim currently serves as a commissioner on the Elk Rapids Planning Commission, is a volunteer member of Green Elk Rapids, and is on the board of the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation. She's very excited to be a part of the ERAHS' board and to be able to work alongside the people who have been such a part of her past.



Power Outage!

Like many other Elk Rapids residents, the History Museum lost power for about 30 hours starting on Wednesday, August 11th. Although it did not affect our Garage Sale scheduled two days later. The power loss prevented our two sump pumps from working and water temporarily rose about an inch in the low areas of the lower level of the Museum.

Fortunately, the Archive Room where all of our paper documents are kept is on higher ground and did not experience any water seepage. In addition, almost all the display cases were on raised blocks and did not get the brunt of the water.

As a result of this experience, the Board is talking about purchasing a generator and taking steps to investigate installation of one in the near future. Two dehumidifiers and multiple fans helped dry out the rug. The rug was then shampooed. There is no lingering musty smell now that the humidity has been reduced to a normal level.

Busy volunteers



Our historian Jackie Weber and Jean Bedell from the Bellaire Historical Society met July 27th to share photos and documents



Mary Fierle (L) and Ann Ernst (R) working on inventory. Watch for an interview with Summer volunteer Ernst in the Spring 2022 newsletter

Special treasures from the garage sale



While most items at this year's Garage Sale were sold by donation, there were a few items that warranted a price. Those included the **M.A. Hadley Pottery** that was generously donated and three vintage dress forms.

If you are interested in purchasing the pottery, which is individually priced, or the dress forms, please call Karen at the History Museum 231-264-5692 to arrange an appointment to view these items.

Please pass this information onto anyone you know who might be interested.



50 YEARS AND GROWING STRONGER!



In 2022, the Elk Rapids Area Historical Society will be celebrating 50 years of operation. In planning for that event, the Society will be applying for a Milestone plaque from the Historical Society of Michigan and requesting a State of Michigan proclamation. Starting with this edition of our Newsletter and continuing through Spring, Summer, and Fall of 2022, an article will be published chronicling the history of the organization.

ERAHS History - Part I Early Beginnings of ERAHS

While newspaper articles in The Elk Rapids Progress, as early as November 28, 1939, document an interest in forming a historical group that would trace “the origin and facts concerning historical papers, books, places, etc.,” the intent was never formalized at that time.

Information about a “historical club” next appeared in a January 4, 1940, article of The Elk Rapids Progress. It described a group who met at the local library to formulate plans to observe the Antrim County centennial by “digging up and assembling in order facts of Early Elk Rapids and kindred data.” The article noted that “Elk Rapids is rich in historical lore, but these are mostly in small bits and needs to be assembled in some sort of coherent order so that the stranger may have a true conception of early life and time of this community.”

It was not until April 27, 1972 that a front-page article in the Elk Rapids Progress, reported that “a meeting was held last Thursday evening at the home of Mrs. Floyd Merillat for all people interested in forming the E. R. Historical Society.” Readers were directed to contact Evelyn Carden or Opal Westlund if interested. “The objective of the society will be to collect a detailed history of Elk Rapids and preserve the heritage of the village.” As a result, April 20, 1972, is considered the founding of the Elk Rapids Historical Society.

On November 2, 1972, at an organizational meeting was held at the Isle of the Pines now referred to as The Island House. Officers were elected and consisted of Evelyn Carden (President), Opal Westlund (Vice-President), Norma Greer (Recording Secretary); Don Carden (Treasurer), and Marjorie Kinery (Corresponding Secretary). William Butler, Florence Heinmann, and Joseph w. Yuchasz were appointed to the first Board of Directors. A December 5, 1972 article reports that, ERAHS discussed their concern with the restoration of the “Old Town Hall,” a project that became the focus of ERAH’s 1976 United States Bicentennial celebration.

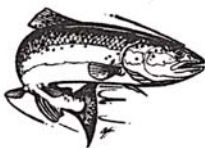
ERAHS was officially incorporated in the State of Michigan on January 22, 1973, as the Elk Rapids Area Historical Society.

Part II of the history of ERAHS in our Spring 2022 Newsletter will detail the efforts made in restoring the “Old Town Hall” now known as the HERTH (Historic Elk Rapids Township Hall).

*** Business Partners ***

Alden State Bank and the Village Market have annually made generous donations to our operating budget.
We are grateful for their support!

LOBBY HOURS: M. - Th. 9:00 to 4:00 / Fri. 9:00 to 5:00 / Sat. Closed
DRIVE THRU: M. - Th. 8:30 to 5:00 / Fri. 8:30 to 6:00 / Sat. 9:00 to 12:00



Alden State Bank
www.aldenbank.com

MAIN OFFICE: P.O. BOX 39 • ALDEN, MI 49612 • (231) 331-4481
P.O. BOX 717 • ELK RAPIDS, MI 49629 • (231) 264-6900
P.O. BOX 1169 • BELLAIRE, MI 49615 • (231) 533-9400
P.O. BOX 515 • CENTRAL LAKE, MI 49622 • (231) 544-8237

VILLAGE MARKET FOOD CENTERS

P.O. Box 455 250 Ames Street Elk Rapids, MI 49629 (231) 264-5629	P.O. Box 280 9556 Rapid City Road Rapid City, MI 49676 (231) 331-6111	P.O. Box 157 7993 State Street Central Lake, MI 49622 (231) 544-3300
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*** Program Sponsors ***

We thank the following businesses who are supporting our 2021 programs!

<p>All Smiles Dentistry</p> <p>American House Oven Fired Pizza</p> <p>Anthony Wittbrodt, Attorney</p> <p>Bayfront Beach and Bike</p> <p>Blackmore Property Maintenance</p> <p>Burnette Foods, Inc.</p> <p>Camille Campbell, Realtor</p> <p>Chef Charles</p>	<p>Chemical/TCF/Huntington Bank</p> <p>Cone Corral - now Jac's Parlor</p> <p>Bill & Diana Cooper</p> <p>Country Hermitage B&B</p> <p>Edward Jones (Tom Shelder)</p> <p>Elk Lake Floral & Greenhouse</p> <p>Elk Rapids Animal Hospital</p> <p>Farmer White's</p>	<p>Fischer Insurance Agency</p> <p>Fitzpatrick Insurance Agency</p> <p>Gill-Roy's Hardware</p> <p>Guntzviller's</p> <p>Kellie Sergent Realtor</p> <p>Ken's Body Shop</p> <p>Kolu's \$5 Meal Deal</p> <p>Michigan Lake Products</p> <p>Mullaly's 128 Gallery</p>	<p>Pine Hill Nursery</p> <p>Rockne L. Paige, CFP (Raymond James)</p> <p>Re/Max of Elk Rapids</p> <p>River Pharmacy</p> <p>Short's Brewing Company</p> <p>The Place</p> <p>Larry G. Wilson, CPA</p> <p>Wittbrodt Waterside Properties</p>
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History Hounds Online Programs through December 2021

To Register call 1-800-692-1828 or go to:

<https://hsmichigan.org/programs/history-hounds-lecture-series>

<p>Tues, Oct 5 (noon-1 pm) Keep 'Em Fighting: Chris-Craft's Contribution to WWII</p> <p>Wed, Oct 13 (7-8 pm) Varied Voices: Stories of Michigan's Capitol</p> <p>Tues, Oct 19 (noon-1 pm) The Detroit, Bay City & Alpena Railroad</p> <p>Wed, Oct 27 (7-8 pm) The Steamboat Sultana Disaster of 1865</p> <p>Tues, Nov 2 (noon-1 pm) Ending Tomorrow: The Bath School Disaster</p> <p>Wed, Nov 10 (7-8 pm) Immigration Politics on the U.S./Canada Border</p>	<p>Tues, Nov 16 (noon-1 pm) The Rocks That Made Michigan: Great Lakes Geology</p> <p>Tues, Nov 30 (noon-1 pm) Secret Upper Peninsula: The Weird, Wonderful, Obscure</p> <p>Wed, Dec 8 (7-8 pm) Reams of Hate: Henry Ford's Antisemitic Newspaper</p> <p>Tues, Dec 14 (noon-1 pm) Restoring the Light: Saving the St. Helena Lighthouse</p> <p>Wed, Dec 22 (7-8 pm) Little House in the Big Woods: The Life of Laura Ingalls Wilder</p>
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ELK FOOTBALL SIX MAN TEAM

The Elk Rapids High School football program began in 1949 by new athletic director 26-year-old Ray Kahler. A "Tag Day" promotion raised funds, fans purchased tags to display throughout town, supporting the newly named "Elk" football team.

By Tim Peterson

Raising \$225.00 and combined with donations, the school purchased 15 football uniforms. Around 31 players came out, but the number of uniforms dictated the school would play 6-Man football. The "Elks" finished the first season at 5-1, winning the Antrim-Otsego County Championship and trophy that is in the showcase to this day.



Coach Kahler presents the Football Trophy to co-captains Delbert Hahn and Chuck Shipman.

Kahler coached another season, then gave way to the new A.D. and coach, John Charles Thomas. He led the team to several championships, including the undefeated 1954 team that was ranked third in the nation on offense and defense.

Thomas left after the 1957 school year, replaced by Robert Vanoy from a New Mexico university for two years. Vanoy coached the last 6-Man team during the 1958 season. The "Elks" switched to 11-man football in 1959, the same system they play today!

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

Gift amount: ___ \$50 ___ \$100 ___ \$200 ___ \$500 ___ \$1000 ___ Other

___ I would like to contribute to the Annual Appeal

___ I would like to support the Elk Rapids Area Historical Museum in whatever way is needed

Please print clearly

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail: _____

I would like to give my gift ___ in honor of ___ in memory of:

Name _____

___ Yes ___ No I would like a letter sent to decedent's family acknowledging gift. Please include name/address of family.

**Make checks payable to
ERAHS**

and mail to:

**ERAHS, P.O. Box 2
Elk Rapids MI 49629-0002**

**Credit Card Payments
Now Accepted!**

_____ **Card Number**

Expiration Date: _____

Three digit code: _____

ZIP code: _____

_____ **Signature**

Thank you for your support!



Elk Rapids Area Historical Society

Post Office Box 2, Elk Rapids, Michigan 49629-0002

Contact: Dan LeBlond, President (231) 264-5692 Email: president@elkrapidshistory.org Web site: www.elkrapidshistory.org

Deliver to:

THE HISTORY OF *Folding Chairs*

Early versions of the folding chair date back thousands of years, all the way to ancient times. During the Middle Ages, churches often used them, but the modern folding chair didn't begin to take shape until 1855, when an American inventor named John Cram patented his folding chair design.

Additional inventors then improved upon Cram's design. In 1931, Philip E.G. Harrison patented the first modern folding chair. It featured a metal frame with a fabric seat and back. However, it was difficult to mass produce.

In 1956, Fredric Arnold filed a patent for a simple folding chair that could be easily mass produced – and the rest is history!

Source: ©History Back Then 2021

