



Museum Matters

the newsletter of the

Elk Rapids Area Historical Society

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

Summer 2020

HISTORY MUSEUM CLOSED DUE TO COVID-19

In May and June, the outside of the History Museum looked like Spring was here. The lilacs and poppies bloomed and the hostas were on their way. Inside the Museum, things were a bit different. Mask and glove wearing along with social distancing is now the norm rather than the exception. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ERAHS has unenthusiastically decided that all our events and programs will be postponed until further notice.

The History Museum will remain closed during the summer of this year. **BUT**, appointments may be made for individual research by calling 231-264-5692. *Everyone must wear a mask - no exceptions!*

The Monthly Programs are canceled for this summer. **BUT**, check out the wonderful Tuesday afternoon (12 noon to 1:00) and Wednesday evening (7-8 p.m.) online programs we are offering to our members through the Historical Society of Michigan. They are quality programs showcasing a variety of historical topics.

We will miss all the friendly faces that we see on a regular basis as well as those who visit occasionally. Stay safe and healthy!



Museum Committee Members (left to right): Karen Szymanski, Jane Lund, Dan Wettlaufer, Jackie Weber

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

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History Museum
 301 Traverse St. (corner of Pine)
 Open June through August
 Wednesdays and Saturdays 1-4 pm
 or by appointment by calling (231) 264-5692

Admission by donation
Free to members, children, students
Non-members: donation gratefully accepted

**National
 Register of
 Historic Places
 Plaque**



On June 8, 2017, the building currently housing the Elk Rapids History Museum received state historic recognition by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. This honor represents state historic recognition of the building built in 1901 as the First Methodist Episcopal Church. As a result, we were allowed to erect a Michigan historical marker on our site.

Prior to the State of Michigan historic recognition; the Elk Rapids History Museum was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on December 29, 2015. This honor represents national historic recognition of the building. The National Department of Interior does not have a program, similar to the State of Michigan, that provides for a sign to be erected highlighting that honor. ERAHS Board of Trustees recently determined that it is time to demonstrate to the public our national historic recognition by purchasing a sign that will be placed over the cornerstone on the building. Above is the final proof of the sign that will be attached to the building.

President's Report:



Dan LeBlond

In our Spring 2020 Newsletter, I wrote that I send out the “e-mail blasts” that announce our monthly speaker and the topic. Well, due to the coronavirus, and in an attempt to be socially conscious about the health and safety of others, the Elk Rapids Area Historical Society (ERAHS) Board of Trustees has announced all Monthly Programs scheduled for 2020 are cancelled and will be rescheduled for 2021.

I’m pleased to announce there are now “alternative historical monthly programs” for our members to view during the rest of 2020 without any cost! Through the Historical Society of Michigan (HSM) you can attend “History Hounds” presentations using the link provided by their website. (See related article listing History Hounds topics through September 2020 on page 4 and 5).

To register online, visit Historical Society of Michigan’s website at: <http://www.hsmichigan.org/>

- a) Click on “Programs/Awards” at the top of the screen
- b) Click on “History Hounds Lecture Series”
- c) Click on “H.H. Lecture Registration -Members”
- d) Fill out form (ERAHS is an Organizational Member of Historical Society of Michigan)
- e) Submit form
- f) You will receive an email confirmation and a second email with instructions for remote access. (Note: You may need to download the latest version of ZOOM if you are using ZOOM for the first time or have not used it recently.)

NOTE: You need to register by 3:00 p.m. on the day before the scheduled presentation.

To register by telephone, call 1-800-692-1828

Enjoy!

- Dan LeBlond

2020 Scholarship Awards



Kolton Drogowski



Tanner McLean



Ellie Ward

Congratulations to Our First History Guides

The Elk Rapids Area Historical Society announces the awarding of \$1000 Scholarships to three Elk Rapids graduating seniors. Over two summers of extensive Community Service at the History Museum, these students have shown their dedication to serving the community. We congratulate them and wish them well in their future endeavors.

Thank You to Great Lakes Energy

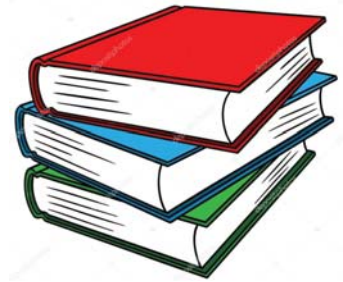
Thanks to a grant from Great Lakes Energy People Fund; ERAHS will be able to repair cracks and paint the History Museum inside and outside the building. This grant, in addition to donations from our members, friends, and businesses, is helping us complete a very needed repair. ERAHS prides itself in being fiscally frugal and yet fore-sighted in maintaining an important historic structure like the History Museum.

We would like to draw your attention to Great Lakes Energy's unique People Fund Program. This program allows those of you who receive your electricity from Great Lakes Energy to comfortably and easily donate to the People Fund that provides grants to organizations like ERAHS simply by rounding up your electric bill to the next dollar.

You can sign up for the People Fund program by calling Great Lakes Energy at 1-888-485-2537 or visiting: gtlakes.com or using the sign-up card below.

Elk Rapids History Book Update

Our hopes were to publish an updated Elk Rapids History book by this time. However, due to the recent resignation of our publishing agent, the actual publication date of the book will be delayed. Yet, with the progress made thus far, plans are to continue



gathering family histories and photos for the book. If you have history/photos you would like to have considered for inclusion in the book, please contact Jackie Weber, author.

Although the Museum is closed this summer, Jackie is available for individual appointments to receive information and photos of your Elk Rapids family history. Call her at 231-264-5692 to make an appointment.



Join People Fund PLUS

Now, you can make a greater impact in your local community with People Fund PLUS.

Choose a People Fund donation level in addition to your rounded up amount. Your donations are awarded in the form of grants to local community nonprofit groups. All People Fund contributors have the chance to win a \$100 bill credit twice per year. In 2019, the People Fund awarded \$206,294 in grants to local nonprofits. Visit gtlakes.com to see the list of grant recipients in your area.

JOIN TODAY!

Working together, we can help enhance our local communities and meet the needs of so many.

Example:

- ▶ **With People Fund:**
Bill Amount \$65.42 + \$.58 for People Fund = \$66.00
- ▶ **With People Fund PLUS:**
Bill Amount \$65.42 + \$.58 for People Fund + \$2.00 for PLUS = \$68.00

▶ **Fill out the back or call us today to join People Fund PLUS.**

Interested?

YES! I agree to the following:

- \$1/each month on my bill
- \$2/each month on my bill
- \$5/each month on my bill
- \$_____/ each month on my bill*
- \$_____/ one-time contribution on my bill*
- \$_____/ one-time contribution by check
(enclosed and made out to GLE People Fund)
- Round-up my bill to the nearest dollar only

Select option above and return with your payment.
***Whole dollar increments only.**

Sign up and be entered to win a \$100 bill credit in June and December. Currently enrolled? You're already entered.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Account # (see enclosed bill): _____

E-mail: _____

Signature: _____

Voluntary monthly contributions may be cancelled at any time.

Prefer to enroll by phone or online?
Call 888-485-2537 or visit gtlakes.com

▶ **Contributions are tax-deductible. Donors of \$500 or more may be recognized in our publications.**



gtlakes.com (888) 485-2537

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UPDATED MARCH 2020

History



The History Hounds Lecture Series is currently being offered by the Michigan Historical Society free of charge to members who belong to local historical societies like the Elk Rapids Area Historical Society. In lieu of our usual Monthly Programs which ERAHS has postponed until 2021, these online programs are being provided. Directions to access these programs can be found in the “President’s Corner” article on page 2.

The Birch-Bark Booklets of Simon Pokagon

with Blaire Topash-Caldwell,
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi

Wednesday, July 8, 2020, 7 - 8 p.m.

During the late nineteenth century, Potawatomi writer and activist Simon Pokagon became a leading spokesman for the Indigenous people of southwest Michigan. Pokagon’s stories, which he published in a series of birch-bark books, refuted anti-Native prejudices and advocated for the environment and Native-American rights. Come learn about the life of this Potawatomi leader.

Life Aboard Great Lakes Freighters

with Roger Lelievre,
author

Wednesday, July 14, 2020, 7 - 8 p.m.

Photographs and videos accompany this depiction of life aboard several Lake Superior vessels. This presentation by the author of Know Your Ships takes attendees through wheelhouses, engine rooms, and galleys as the freighters load and unload cargo, transit the Soo Locks, and pull in and out of ports.

Hull’s Trace in Brownstown, Michigan

with Daniel Harrison,
Wayne State University

Wednesday, July 22, 2020, 7 - 8 p.m.

During the War of 1812, General William Hull’s troops blazed “Hull’s Trace,” a 200-mile supply line from Ohio to Detroit that crossed the Huron River near the Wyandot village of Brownstown. Learn about the rediscovery of this historic road’s remnants and its inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

Michigan at Antietam

with Brian Egen

Wednesday, July 28, 2020, 7 - 8 p.m.

Michigan soldiers played a key role at the 1862 Battle of Antietam. This program, which is based on the book Michigan at Antietam written by the presenter and Jack Dempsey, discusses Michigan regiments in the battle, Michigan’s connections to the mysterious Lost Order, and the role of Captain George A. Custer of Monroe.

The Mighty Mac: Connecting Michigan's Peninsulas

with Kim Nowack,
Mackinac Bridge Authority

Tuesday, August 4, 2020, noon - 1 p.m.

From early on, crossing the Straits of Mackinac came with challenges—that is, until the Mackinac Bridge, the nation's longest suspension bridge, connected the Upper and Lower Peninsulas. But the Mackinac Bridge comes with its own challenges. Join us to learn about the past, present, and future of the "Mighty Mac."



The Great Fennville Train Robbery

with Paul Trap, Lexington Group in Transportation
History - Michigan Chapter

Wednesday, August 12, 2020, 7 - 8 p.m.

In 1895, bandits robbed a Chicago & West Michigan train near Fennville. They dynamited the express car and stole bundles of cash. Robbery suspect John Smalley gunned down Detective George Powers in Grand Rapids, and a posse killed Smalley. But was Smalley's gang the real robbers? Find out in this presentation.

Most Wanted: Fred "Killer" Burke

with Chris Lyon,
Author and Historian

Tuesday, August 18, 2020, noon - 1 p.m.

In 1929, a St. Joseph policeman was gunned down while investigating a traffic accident. The killer's trail led to a Stevensville, Michigan, house—belonging to gangster Fred "Killer" Burke. Thompson sub-machine guns used in the St. Valentine's Day Massacre were also found. This session explores southwest Michigan's role as a haven for Al Capone's gangsters.

Odawa in the Twentieth Century

with Eric Hemenway, Little Traverse Bay Bands
of Odawa Indians

Wednesday, August 26, 2020, 7 - 8 p.m.

The history of Indigenous peoples usually focuses on the distant past, as though their stories ended as the twentieth century began. In reality, the last century was a crucial era for Native communities. This presentation focuses on the Odawa of Northern Michigan and their progress during a challenging time.

A Bomber an Hour: The Willow Run Plant

with Ralph Hotton,
Yankee Air Museum

Wednesday, September 9, 2020, 7 - 8 p.m.

During World War II, Ford Motor Company's Willow Run bomber plant near Belleville, Michigan, turned out a B-24 Liberator every hour. Built in 1941 and designed by architect Albert Kahn, it was the world's largest factory under one roof. Come learn how Willow Run helped turn America into the Arsenal of Democracy.

GARAGE SALE UPDATE!!!



ERAHS Board of Trustees has reluctantly decided to postpone our "Third Annual Garage Sale" scheduled for August 14-16, 2020. Like our decision to close the History Museum for the summer and postpone our 2020 Monthly Programs, the Board chose caution and the safety of our volunteers and shoppers in making this decision. The turmoil and disruption that COVID-19 has caused to everyone is devastating and unlike anything that any of us have experienced in our lifetime. We are continuing to gather and store items in hopes that we will be able to hold a Garage Sale in 2021.

Board Member and Newsletter Editor



Craig Handley joined the ERAHS board in 2011, bringing decades of media production experience with him. Upon graduating from The University of Detroit in 1976, Craig joined Chrysler Corp. where he wrote and directed training videos.

In 1983, he co-founded Word Pictures, Inc., a Tier 1 supplier of video and printed materials to both General Motors and Chrysler. He retired from the company 35 years later in 2018. Since 1986, Craig owned a cottage on Elk Lake and in 2010, he became a year-round resident. His son, Scott, graduated from Elk Rapids High in 2011.

Since 2016, Craig has been the president of Packard Automobile Classics, a car club with regions in 28 countries, and is the proud owner of a 1953 Packard convertible. Family commitments required Craig to move back downstate last year, but he is still a regular visitor to the area and considers Elk Rapids to be his second home.

SCHOOL DAYS: MEMORIES

Although the History Museum is closed for the summer, we are continuing to collect memories of current and former Elk Rapids students to share with the community. We plan to post these memories on our bulletin board and also publish selected memories in future Newsletters.

If you have a memory you would like to share, please limit your writing to no more 150 words. Include your name (first, last, maiden), school attended, year attended.

Mail it: ER Museum/Memories, P.O. Box 2, Elk Rapids, MI 49629

Drop it: into the black mailbox attached to the back door of the History Museum

E-mail it: research@elkrapidshistory.org

A MEMORY FOUND IN THE FILES


E.R. Town Meeting Newspaper – February 17, 1988 – Norm Veliquette shares a memory of when he went to Longfellow School:

"...Teachers sometimes told stories about polio victims and the terrible iron lung – especially after Grace Young, a lovely daughter of the third grade teacher was stricken by the disease. On hot days in the fall, teachers would take their classes on gentle walks during recess because it was said over-heating and fatigue might contribute to catching polio. We took slotted cards home and would try to put a dime in a slot each week for several weeks. When we turned in the slotted cards with our dimes, they went to the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis – the organization whose efforts finally resulted in the discovery of the Salk vaccine and protection from polio."

*** 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



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www.aldenbank.com

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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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THE CRACKS WILL BE GONE SOON, BUT WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP!

Thank YOU to our members, friends and business partners for your generous donations to our "Repair the Cracks" project. We have received enough donations to **START** repairing and painting the interior walls, but we are coming up short because the cracks have increased in size and need more repair than we anticipated. The extra cost of a drywall contractor is straining our budget.

We hope we can count on you to help us get over this bump in the road. Work is scheduled to start and be completed this summer while the Museum is closed to the public. The building should be all spruced up when we, hopefully, return next spring.

*****Please use the form below to add your donation to this important project*****

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

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

___ I would like to support the Elk Rapids Area Historical Museum

___ I would like to support the "Repair the Cracks" project

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 _____

**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: _____

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:

Because of the water...

Hattie Grace Corbett was born Dec. 1, 1882 in Elk Rapids, the daughter of Capt. Duncan Corbett and Mary Elizabeth Hughes.

Hattie is holding a replica of the schooner, Waukesha, which was owned by her father. She was telling the story to her daughter, Barbara, about the tragedy of the Waukesha going down on Nov. 6, 1896 in a horrible storm. The captain and crew were lost off of Muskegon.

This photo was taken during the summer of 1918 on Lake Michigan.

*Contributed by Jackie Weber, Elk Rapids
Historian*

