Our popular summer program series begins on June 26 with *The CSI Effect and Forensic Evidence*, and continues through July 31. All programs start at 6:30 p.m. in our courthouse courtroom and thanks to generous grants from the Berrien Springs / Eau Claire Rotary Club and the Indiana Michigan Power Company are free of charge.

**July 3: Robert Myers, “Southwest Michigan and the RMS Titanic”**

This PowerPoint program examines the historical significance of the ill-fated White Star liner and focuses on Sen. William Alden Smith - a native of Dowagiac - who chaired the U.S. Senate inquiry into the disaster. The ship’s passenger list included Dickinson and Helen Bishop of Dowagiac in first class; the family of Nellie Becker, missionaries to India bound for Benton Harbor, in second class; and the family of Hanna Touma traveling in third class and immigrating from Lebanon to Dowagiac.

Books and motion pictures have made the *Titanic* a cultural icon, but the findings and recommendations of Senator Smith’s committee had far-reaching effects on maritime laws that continue to the present day. The program explores the *Titanic’s* history from her construction to her loss on her maiden voyage, how she became a part of popular culture, and how travel became safer because of her loss.

**July 10: Teresa Irish, “A Thousand Letters Home.”**

Co-sponsored with the Berrien Springs Community Library

In 2006, a month after her father’s death, Teresa Irish opened an Army trunk that had resided in the family home all her life. There she found nearly 1,000 of her dad’s handwritten letters from World War II. The letters were postmarked from November 1942 to December 1945, sent from Aarol W. “Bud” Irish to his parents and to the sweetheart he would later marry, Elaine Marie Corbat. From lonesome nights listening to the Hit Parade, to correspondence from the heartbroken mothers whose sons died by his side, “A Thousand Letters Home” is a moving and historic story of life and loss, unwavering faith and true love.
Berrien County Historical Association Board and Staff

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BCHA Mission Statement

The mission of the BCHA is to collect, preserve and interpret the history of Berrien County through exhibits, tours, publications, and educational and community outreach programs for public benefit.

Learn more about the BCHA by visiting www.berrienhistory.org

Director’s Comments

By Kathy Cyr

Dear Friends,

Thank you to everyone who attended our recent events: the Three Oaks book sale and signing on April 5; the Annual Meeting on April 22 (170 people in attendance); Sprin into the 1830s on May 9 (146 in attendance), the Frank Lloyd Wright bus tour, May 18 – 20 (29 people traveled with Bob Myers and Kristen Patzer Umphrey); the Mary’s City of David Bethany House Tour on June 1 (95 attending); and our booth at Three Oaks Flag Day on June 14 and 15. It has been a busy spring!

We sincerely appreciate your patronage of the History Center’s programs and the time and talents of the volunteers who have assisted us with these events: Karen Campbell; Bob Cashbaugh; Jim and Mary Ann Chellman; David Francis; Sandy Garland; and Carol Noid.

More fun and learning is yet to come! Mark your calendars for ~
• June 26, July 3, July 10, July 17, July 24, July 31: Thursdays at Courthouse Square program series;
• August 11 – 16: Booth at the Berrien County Youth Fair;
• September 6 – 13: Hudson River Valley bus tour; Sold out!
• October 23: Dolley Madison is coming to town! Join us for social hour, dinner, silent auction and program at the Mendel Center, Grand Upton Hall, Lake Michigan College;
• December 4: Kindle the Christmas Spirit.

A new event has been added: “Haunted Saint Joseph,” a twilight walking tour on Friday, October 17, produced in collaboration with The Heritage Museum and Cultural Center. More information about this event will be forthcoming.

Have you ever wondered how your family treasures are documented after you donate them to a museum? Come visit our latest exhibit, “New From You!” now open in the lower level of the 1839 Courthouse. View treasures recently donated to the History Center and learn how these artifacts are processed into the collections.

The strategic planning process for the BCHA’s History Center will commence in July and a completed five-year strategic plan will be presented to the Board of Directors for approval at the end of September. We will let you know via email and press releases when the activities and sessions will take place. We hope that many of you will elect to join Board, staff, and community members in the process of assisting BCHA’s History Center in formulating a strategic plan.

I look forward to seeing you at the programs offered by the Berrien County Historical Association DBA The History Center at Courthouse Square and your participation in the strategic planning activities and sessions.

Regards,

Kathy A. Cyr
Executive Director
July 17: Pat Underwood, Love Creek Nature Center, “Animals That Are Hard to Love.”

Everyone oohs and aahs over cute and cuddly animals: chipmunks, baby raccoons, otters and so on. Not all animals are quite so adorable. Naturalist Pat Underwood will help us understand and appreciate less-loveable critters like Eastern Moles (above), snakes, snapping turtles, and a wide variety of bugs, slugs, amphibians, birds and reptiles that populate our natural environment.


A Niles resident and recipient of our Frank J. Ward Memorial Award, Donna Ochenryder, looks at Berrien County’s homefront during World War II.

July 31: Mike Deren, “Civilian Conservation Corps Enrollee, 1941.”

As a CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) enrollee in 1941, Michael Deren goes to work for President Franklin Roosevelt and the nation to help rebuild America’s natural and human resources.

One of our favorite presenters, Mike Deren has previously appeared here as a canal boat captain and a Great Lakes schooner captain. In this program, you’ll accompany Mike as you join the CCC and become a member of Roosevelt’s Tree Army! The CCC Enrollee plays the bugle, concertina and washboard and presents life in the CCC camps from 1933-1942.

You’ll learn about the CCC and what it did for the young men who served their country during its nine-year existence. Discover what the CCC’s 3.4 million men accomplished and how we are still reaping the benefits of their hard work, dedication and sacrifice.

From ration stamps (“You can’t buy that without stamps - don’t you know there’s a war on?”) to long shifts on the production lines, WW II had a profound impact on life in Berrien County. Factories that had struggled to stay open during the lean years of the Great Depression found themselves working around the clock to fill orders from the War Department. This program looks at local contributions to the war effort and the effects that we still feel nearly seventy years later.
Curator’s Corner

Recent Donations to the Museum Collections

Ross Margeson . . . . . Photographs and scrapbook of Benton Harbor and St. Joseph sites

Jason J. Shane . . . . . . Wall map of Benton Township, 1918

Martin D. Pschigoda . . . . Photographs, toy washing machine, door key, school papers

Bud Walkup . . . . . . . Postcard view of Jean Klock Park

New From You!

Exhibit Showcases Recent Acquisitions

Our latest exhibit at the History Center, New From You!, shows off some of our most recently-acquired artifacts. Every year generous members of the public donate pieces of their past to the museum. We usually catalog thirty to forty collections every year, each one ranging in scope from a single article to dozens or even hundreds of individual items.

Our exhibit includes items from the early 19th to the late 20th centuries: a U. S. Navy uniform worn by Ray A. Murray of Bridgman during his service aboard the battleship USS Alabama from 1900 to 1904; a Pennsylvania long rifle once carried by William Dester of Berrien Springs; the signboard from a wagon built by the Walker & Schneider wagon shop in St. Joseph; and Galien High School sports team uniforms from the 1990s.

It never ceases to amaze us what comes out of the woodwork - and sometimes from even stranger places. Just a few days ago we received a collection from a sharp-eyed individual who had poked through a trash pile waiting to go to a landfill and found a trove of photographs and papers from the family of Jesse Helmick. Helmick, a blacksmith from Ohio, came to the Berrien Springs area in 1835 and lived here until his death in 1881 at age 82.

Most collections come to us unsolicited, but we also seek out artifacts that will help us tell the stories of Berrien County’s past. After the Galien Schools closed in 2012 we contacted school officials and asked them to donate school memorabilia; they gifted us with a fine collection of basketball, band and cheerleader uniforms.

New From You! is open 10-5 Mondays -Saturdays. If you have memorabilia that will help us tell the story of Berrien County's past, please let us know. These artifacts will help us and future generations connect with the past in very tangible ways. Help us preserve the history of your family and your community.
Join the History Center Today!

Name: ____________________________ Phone: __________________________
Address: __________________________ State: ______ Zip: ____________
City: ___________ State: ______ Zip: ______
Fax: __________________________ Email: __________________________

Membership categories: [ ] Supporting             [ ] Basic
[ ] Individual $20             [ ] Contributing $40
[ ] Family $30             [ ] Sustaining $50
[ ] Institutional $40             [ ] Patron $100
[ ] Patron $100
[ ] Benefactor $500

Additional donation: $ __________
Amount enclosed: $ __________

Please make checks payable to the Berrien County Historical Assn.
or
Please charge my credit card: (circle one)
Mastercard       Visa       Discover

Card Number: __________________________ Exp. Date: __________

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Spring Tour ~ America’s Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright

We enjoyed a wonderful tour of Frank Lloyd Wright architectural sites in May. History Center Curator Bob Myers and Museum Services Coordinator Kristen Patzer Umphrey led the trip to Wisconsin and Illinois. Kristen agreed with our tour participants that Wright was an eccentric genius. Bob still doesn’t like Wright’s later buildings but thought that his home and studio in Oak Park, Illinois, had some redeeming features.

Our fall Hudson River Valley tour is filled and we’re keeping a waiting list. We’re already in the planning stage for our 2015 tours. Under consideration: our popular “Life of Lincoln” tour to Springfield, Illinois (3 day); an Agawa Canyon Rail Tour to Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario (3 day) and a Charleston, South Carolina tour (9 day). Let us know what you think!

Looking up at the dome of the Wisconsin Capitol Building in Madison. We hadn’t planned to stop here, but we had a little time after touring the Unitarian Meeting House and thought - why not? It’s a beautiful building and well worth the visit.

Our Gang waiting to tour the Frederick C. Robie House in Chicago. The house suffered from decades of remuddlings and neglect, but restoration efforts in recent years are returning the Robie House to its former glory.

We were surprised to learn that Wright’s home and studio, Taliesin, still operates a graduate school for architects. Wright started the school to earn extra money and often put his students to work on various chores around the grounds.

Touring the Unitarian Meeting House in Madison. The docents gave us a wonderful tour of the building, which Wright designed in 1946. His parents were Unitarians, so he had a personal interest in this building.
2014 Signature Event: Dolley Madison

We're looking forward to our 2014 Signature Event - a visit from First Lady Dolley Madison. Actress Cynthia Janzen of Philadelphia will portray Dolley Payne Todd Madison on October 23 at the Lake Michigan College Mendel Center.

The evening will include dinner, door prizes, a silent auction, musical entertainment, and of course a visit with Dolley Madison. Tickets (by advance reservation only) are $75 each or a table for eight for $500.

Dolley (or Dolly - or even Dollie) Payne was born to Quaker parents in New Garden, North Carolina, in 1768. Her parents, John and Mary Payne, moved to Virginia a year later and Dolley grew up in comfort on their plantation. John freed his slaves after the American Revolution and moved the family to Philadelphia, where he became a starch merchant. His business failed, and he died in 1792.

Dolley experienced both joy and heartbreak as a young adult. She had married a lawyer, John Todd, in 1790 and had two sons, but John and the youngest son died in a yellow fever epidemic that swept Philadelphia in 1793. A year later, she wed a 43 year-old congressman, James Madison, to whom she had been introduced by Aaron Burr. Their happy marriage lasted until James' death.

James inherited his family's Virginia plantation, Montpelier, with its 108 slaves upon his father's death in 1801. That same year he became the United States Secretary of State under his friend, President Thomas Jefferson. Dolley often served as First Lady for the widowed Jefferson and helped arrange various social functions at the White House.

The Madisons entered the White House themselves in 1809 after James easily defeated the Federalist candidate, Charles Pinkney, in the Election of 1808. Dolley was an accomplished hostess as First Lady (the term originated with her) and added to her husband's popularity.

Most Americans are familiar with Dolley because she saved the famous Gilbert Stuart portrait of George Washington. British troops invaded Washington, DC, during the War of 1812 and forced the Madisons to flee the city. Dolley insisted that staff members detach and help carry away the priceless painting. A good thing, too, for the British burned the White House. The painting survived and now hangs in the Smithsonian Institution's National Portrait Gallery.

Cynthia Janzen as Dolley Madison. Janzen, a professional actress for over twenty years, has performed in Calgary and Vancouver, Canada, and in Philadelphia. Her performances as Dolley Madison have included appearances at the National Portrait Gallery, Mount Vernon, the National Archives and the Smithsonian Institution.
Continuing and Upcoming Events

**Ongoing:** *New From You!* Exhibit at the History Center. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Mondays - Fridays.

**June 26.** “Thursdays at Courthouse Square” series, 6:30 p.m. Dick Bisbing, “The CSI Effect and Forensic Evidence.”

**July 3.** “Thursdays at Courthouse Square” series, 6:30 p.m. Bob Myers, “The RMS Titanic and Southwest Michigan.”

**July 10.** “Thursdays at Courthouse Square” series, 6:30 p.m. Teresa Irish, “A Thousand Letters Home.”

**July 17.** “Thursdays at Courthouse Square” series, 6:30 p.m. Pat Underwood of Love Creek Nature Center, “Animals That Are Hard to Love.”

**July 24.** “Thursdays at Courthouse Square” series, 6:30 p.m. Donna Ochenryder, “A Local Glimpse at the World War II Home Front and Industry.”

**July 31.** “Thursdays at Courthouse Square” program series, 6:30 p.m. Mike Deren, “Civilian Conservation Corps Enrollee, 1941.”

**Aug. 11-16:** Visit our booth at the Berrien County Youth Fair, 11 a.m. - 10:30 p.m.

**September 6-13:** “Hudson River Valley Tour.” Our annual fall motorcoach tour.

**October 17:** “Haunted St. Joseph.” A spooky walking tour of St. Joseph, in partnership with The Heritage Museum & Cultural Center. 5:00 p.m. $5.00 pp.

**October 23:** Signature Event: Dolley Madison. Lake Michigan College Mendel Center, 6:00 p.m.

**December 4:** Kindle Your Christmas Spirit.