Thursdays at Courthouse Square ~
Our popular summer program series returns!

Join us every Thursday evening through July 30 for some great programs! A terrific lineup of dynamic speakers are coming to the History Center this summer to entertain us with stories of state and local history.

The series begins on June 25 and runs every Thursday through July 30. All programs start at 6:30 p.m. and are free of charge thanks to grants from Indiana-Michigan Power Company and the Berrien Springs/Eau Claire Rotary Club.

**June 25:** We kick off the series with one of our favorite speakers: our friend Valerie van Heest and her latest book, *Fatal Crossing: The Mysterious Disappearance of NWA Flight 2501*. The program and book examine the tragic events of June 1950 when Northwest Airlines Flight 2501 vanished over Lake Michigan somewhere near South Haven.

Valerie is an award-winning author, founder of the Michigan Shipwreck Research Association and an accomplished Great Lakes diver. She has authored six books, numerous magazine articles, and created a dozen documentary films, been featured in numerous publications and on the History and Travel Channels, and is a regular presenter at museums, libraries, and conferences. She will share the dramatic story about what was then America’s worst aviation disaster.

This program is co-sponsored with the Berrien Springs Community Library. Valerie promises to bring along copies of her books to sell and autograph that evening.

**July 2:** *The Worthy Virgins: Mary Purnell and Her City of David.*

If you talk with anyone from outside the area about Benton Harbor they’re sure to mention the Israelite House of David. Benjamin and Mary Purnell arrived in Benton Harbor in 1903 and founded one of America’s most successful and long-lived communal orders.

Author Julieanna Frost presents this program based on her new book of the same title. In this first-ever biography of Mary Purnell she explores the life of this pivotal religious leader whose influence spread far beyond southwest Michigan. After Benjamin died in 1927 Mary had to overcome many challenges to create her own colony: Mary’s City of David. Hers is a fascinating story of a charismatic woman who kept true to her faith while managing a communal society of hundreds of believers.
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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,

Spring has sprung at last! As I walked down the boardwalk to the Sheriff’s Residence on our campus in mid- June, the blossoming catalpa tree had carpeted the ground in white (with purple and yellow center) blossoms - a truly wondrous sight to behold.

Our six tulip trees on the grounds are also blooming with yellow/orange/green blossoms. A few appear on the lower branches, but most blossoms are higher up in the tree and you can only tell that the tree is blossoming by the blossoms that have fallen on the ground.

We invite you to the grounds at Historic Courthouse Square County Park to view these magnificent trees. The catalpa and tulips are historic plants and play a prominent role in our county’s horticultural history. They grow large: catalpas reach heights of 40 –60 ’ and the tulips grow to 70-90’.

Programs offered in the first six months of the year enjoyed good attendance. We hope you had the opportunity to participate and enjoyed the new offerings.

Looking ahead … on Thursday, June 25 we begin our evening program series with Valerie van Heest and her recent book Fatal Crossing: The Mysterious Disappearance of NWA Flight 2501. For the next five Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. more speakers will present their research and experiences. These programs are admission-free thanks to grants from Indiana Michigan Power and the Berrien Springs/Eau Claire Rotary Club. Two programs are co-sponsored by the Berrien Springs Community Library.

Bob Myers and I will lead the Agawa Canyon Adventure heritage tour in July. This trip and our Southern Hospitality tour to Charleston have both sold out; we appreciate all those who travel with the History Center. If you missed out on the 2015 trip opportunities, we would welcome your suggestions for the 2016 tours.

In August (Monday the 17th through Saturday the 22nd) we will have our booth at the Berrien County Youth Fair and need volunteers to help staff it. If interested call us at 269-471-1202.

From June through September, we will again host the Mobile Farm Market stand, Tuesdays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., offering fresh fruits and vegetables from the Andrews University Gardens.

We hope you can join us for some of the events at the History Center at Historic Courthouse Square County Park!

Kathy A. Cyr

Executive Director
Julianna will also have copies of her book for sale and will autograph them after the program.

**July 9:** History Center curator Bob Myers will present *Lost on the Lakes: Shipwrecks of Berrien County.* Bob’s 2003 book related the stories of over forty ships that sank off the Berrien County shore or called St. Joseph/Benton Harbor their home port. They were among the approximately 6,000 vessels that lie on the bottom of the Great Lakes.

Bob's PowerPoint program features rare photographs of these ships and describes the circumstances of their losses. Some, like the famed *Chicora* that disappeared in an 1895 storm, have never been found. Others, like the House of David's steamer *Rising Sun*, lie plainly visible just offshore.

**July 16:** Mollie Kruck, curator at the Heritage Museum and Cultural Center in St. Joseph, will present a program on the museum's newest exhibit, *Sports in Southwest Michigan.* Just as in movie *Field of Dreams*, Berrien County had many semi-professional baseball teams sponsored by local industries like Auto Specialties and Clark Equipment Company. This rich sports history was augmented by the Israelite House of David's famous traveling baseball and basketball teams as well as high school sports teams.

Mollie will discuss the full range of organized sports and how they evolved following the Civil War. Her presentation takes special note of events that have taken place in Berrien County, including the 1946 Auto Specialties Company baseball team, heavyweight boxing champion Jack Dempsey's title bout in Benton Harbor, the Senior PGA Championship, and the role played by southwestern Michigan school teams.

**July 23:** Discover our region’s prehistory as archaeologist Bill Mangold presents *History under your Feet: 10,000 Years of People in Southwest Michigan.*

This area is justly famous as the ancestral homeland of the Potawatomi, but human settlement in the St. Joseph River valley actually dates back some ten centuries. Bill's program focuses on archeological discoveries in the Berrien Springs area, describes the various peoples who lived in the region, how they existed in the environment at the time, and how scientists analyze the data they uncover.

Do you have artifacts that you’ve unearthed yourself and wonder what they are? Bill has invited program attendees to bring them in for identification.

**July 30:** Politician, historian, naturalist, soldier, author, rancher, conservationist - Theodore Roosevelt was all of these and more.

Actor/historian Gib Young of Huntington, Indiana, portrays Theodore Roosevelt in a one-man show. As a professional interpreter, Gib has performed in hundreds of venues including Mount Rushmore, The JFK Library, and The Smithsonian Museum of American History.

Enjoy visiting with the former U. S. President as he recounts his life as the 26th President of the United States while residing in the White House. Co-Sponsored with the Berrien Springs Community Library.
Curator’s Corner

Recent Donations to the Museum Collections

James Boardman . . . . . . New Troy justice of the peace docket book, 1858-1871
Elaine Cole . . . . . . . . . . . . Photographs of Smith Lake
Sue Ann Crapsey . . . . . . WWII Eisenhower jacket, newspapers
Corbin Detgen . . . . . . . . . . . . Ezra Clark military insignia
David Doss . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Postcard photo of Spring Creek School in Three Oaks, ca. 1910
Patricia L. Hunsberger . . . . . Buchanan High School varsity sweater, 1941
Beth Kenagy . . . . . . . . . . . . Woman’s feather fan, dress
Frank M. Nichols . . . . . . Nichols Funeral Home record book
M. Jeanne Place . . . . Book, History of the 7th Michigan Cavalry
Cynthia Schroeder . . . . . . Baroda & Benton Harbor archival materials

Donald F. Ryman Receives History Award

The History Center presented its fifth annual Frank J. Ward Memorial History Award to Donald F. Ryman of Buchanan at our annual meeting on April 28.

The History Award honors an individual, organization or business that advances the cause of local history through research, writing, historic preservation or programming. The Award is named for Frank Junior Ward, a long time member of the Berrien County Historical Association and benefactor of the History Center at Courthouse Square.

Don Ryman was one of three incorporators and an original director of the Buchanan Preservation Society (BPS), which formed in 1981 in an effort to save historic buildings. As president, he led the fund-raising efforts for the restoration of the Pears Mill, a flour mill constructed in 1857. With restoration completed in 1984, it is the only waterwheel-powered mill operating in southwest Michigan.

During the early 1980s, Don planned and wrote home descriptions for tours of Buchanan homes and historic buildings and prepared Buchanan's Architectural Heritage Walk, a description of 58 or more historic structures for use by docents or individuals. In 1984, Don published Buchanan's Heritage, a book on lost and surviving historic architecture in the city.

Don and his wife, Martha, became directors of the Berrien County Historical Association in 1993 and thereafter served at different times as the organization’s president, vice-president and treasurer. During his sixteen years as a Berrien County Commissioner he was appointed to the U.S. 12 District Committee, where he worked tirelessly with others until U.S. 12 was declared a historic highway.

As an attorney for Clark Equipment Company, Don recommended the donation of the company’s archives to the History Center after its acquisition by Ingersoll Rand in 1955. He has also authored a soon-to-be-published history of Clark Equipment Company as seen through the eyes of an insider.
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Mail or fax to: BCHA, PO Box 261
Berrien Springs, MI 49103
Phone: (269) 471-1202 Fax: (269) 471-7412

Enjoy Our Local History!

Greetings from Three Oaks ($25.95) Quantity: ______ Total: $ ______
Greetings from Benton Harbor ($27.95) Quantity: ______ Total: $ ______
Greetings from St. Joseph ($27.95) Quantity: ______ Total: $ ______
Greetings from Berrien Springs ($21.95) Quantity: ______ Total: $ ______
Greetings from Buchanan ($24.95) Quantity: ______ Total: $ ______
The Story of Buchanan ($14.95) Quantity: ______ Total: $ ______
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Locomotives Along the Lakeshore ($24.95) Quantity: ______ Total: $ ______
Twin City Trolley ($8.95) Quantity: ______ Total: $ ______

SPECIAL: Greetings from Buchanan & Story of Buchanan Quantity: ______ Total: $ ______
Get both for $29.95!

Subtotal: $ ______

Amount enclosed: $ ______

Please make checks payable to the Berrien County Historical Assn.
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Please charge my credit card: (circle one)
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Signature: ________________________________
Western Michigan University archaeologists are conducting their 16th “dig” on the Fort St. Joseph site in Niles and invite the public to get a first-hand look at the latest discoveries. The Fort St. Joseph Archaeology Open House will be Saturday and Sunday, June 27-28, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free. The site is on Bond Street - for full information, visit the website at http://www.wmich.edu/fortstjoseph/

This year’s Open House theme is “Taking Shelter from the Storm” and explores the many types of structures at the fort. These included everything from houses to wigwams to soldiers’ tents.

Costumed interpreters will demonstrate timber-framing, blacksmithing, varieties of tents and other shelters. Members of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi will build a wigwam, and naturalists from Sarett Nature Center will offer rides ($3 each) in their replica 35-foot birchbark canoe. Volunteers will lead children’s games, and colonial-era dancers will demonstrate and teach dances of the era. Food will be available onsite.

Motorcoach Tours for 2016

Our annual motorcoach tours are really getting popular! Our April “Life of Lincoln” tour to Springfield, Illinois, sold out, as have our two other 2015 tours to Sault Ste. Marie and Charleston, South Carolina.

People are already asking where we’re going in 2016, so here’s what we’re considering right now:

An Upper Peninsula tour, including Mackinac Island, Sault Ste. Marie, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore in Munising, the Quincy Mine in Hancock, the Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum at Whitefish Point, the Iron Industry Museum at Fayette, and much more.

New Orleans, including the National World War II Museum, St. Louis Cathedral, Chalmette National Historical Park (better known as the Battle of New Orleans site), the Old Ursuline Convent, and The Historic New Orleans Collections. We’d also make stops on the way down and back - Bob wants to see Vicksburg, Mississippi, for example.

We’ll also work in one of our three-day tours - maybe Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site and some other attractions in southwest Illinois.

We’re also considering something new for 2016: a Family Adventure Tour for parents (or grandparents) with school-age children. Timed to coincide with Spring Break, this tour would visit sites to learn about the foundations of our country: Washington, DC; Williamsburg; Jamestown, Yorktown Battlefield; Monticello; and Gettysburg Battlefield. All of these sites offer outstanding family programs that bring history to life for young people. What better way to learn American history than to visit the places where it happened?

It’s hard to believe that we’re even thinking about 2016 tours already, but we start our planning process at least a year in advance. We put together every detail of our tours from scratch, booking all the attractions, restaurants, hotels and even boxed lunches.

We have a wonderful time on our tours. We hope you can join us!
Haunted St. Joseph Walking Tour

October 16-17, 5-7 p.m.

We expected 30-40 people to attend last October’s “Haunted St. Joseph Walking Tour.” We hoped that we might have 50-60 people.

It turned out that ghosts are more popular than we thought - over 200 people showed up and we were hard pressed to get everyone in! This fall we’re expanding the tour to two evenings - Friday and Saturday, October 16 and 17.

We conduct the tours with our friends at The Heritage Museum and Cultural Center in St. Joseph. The tour route follows State Street for about six blocks and back with stops along the way for true stories about the people who lived in the houses and their sometimes tragic fates.

We hope you can join in on this fall’s Haunted St. Joseph Tour. We had a fun time and we’re sure you will, too!

An Evening with FDR

Historians today rank him as the second greatest President of all time - only Abraham Lincoln stands higher. Franklin Delano Roosevelt guided the country through the Great Depression and World War II and in so doing reshaped America and the world.

The History Center will welcome President Franklin D. Roosevelt to the Lake Michigan College Mendel Center on Thursday, October 29. Neill Hartley, an actor/historian with American Historical Theatre in Philadelphia, will portray the President in a one-man show.

FDR, the 32nd President, took office during the most challenging times for any chief executive since Abraham Lincoln. The economic collapse of the early 1930s had led to a 25% unemployment rate, bank failures by the thousands, “Hoovervilles” and soup kitchens. The Roosevelt Administration responded to the crisis with the “New Deal”: a wide array of federal programs like the WPA and CCC that gave jobs to desperate people and rebuilt the national infrastructure.

When World War II broke out in Europe in 1939, FDR at first vowed that America would remain neutral. As the situation in Europe worsened, the President began taking what steps he could to support the Allies (Lend-Lease, for example) without actually engaging American forces in combat.

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor ended American neutrality and FDR’s focus turned from national economic recovery to winning a two-front war. He helped coordinate Allied war strategy against the Axis Powers even as the strain of leadership took a toll on his health. He won election to an unprecedented fourth term as President in 1944, but died less than six months later.

We’re looking forward to a wonderful Evening With FDR this fall. You’ll receive full details in the fall issue of The Docket.
Continuing and Upcoming Events

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


**July 2: Thursdays at Courthouse Square.** Author Julianna Frost presents *The Worthy Virgins: Mary Purnell and the City of David.* 6:30 p.m.

**July 9: Thursdays at Courthouse Square.** Bob Myers presents “Lost on the Lakes: Shipwrecks of Berrien County.” 6:30 p.m.

**July 16: Thursdays at Courthouse Square.** Mollie Kruck presents “Sports in Southwest Michigan.” 6:30 p.m.

**July 23: Thursdays at Courthouse Square.** “History under your Feet: 10,000 Years of People in Southwest Michigan,” presented by Bill Mangold. 6:30 p.m.

**July 26-28: “Agawa Canyon Adventure Tour” bus tour to Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.**

**July 30: Thursdays at Courthouse Square.** Actor/historian Gib Young portrays *Theodore Roosevelt,* presented with the Berrien Springs Community Library. 6:30 p.m.

**September 12-19: “Southern Hospitality Tour” bus tour to Charleston, South Carolina.**

**October 16-17: Haunted St. Joseph Walking Tour.** 5 - 7 p.m.

**October 29: Signature Event** 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. at the Lake Michigan College Mendel Center. An Evening with FDR.

**December 3: Kindle the Christmas Spirit,** 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.