“Old Man River” New Orleans Tour
April 30 - May 8, 2016

* A carriage tour of New Orleans’ famed French Quarter.

* A steamboat ride to Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and the historic Chalmette Battlefield - better known to us Northerners as the Battle of New Orleans.

* Free afternoon in the French Market

* A naturalist-led New Orleans Swamp Tour ecology tour aboard a pontoon boat.

* Oak Alley Plantation, including a lunch and dinner at this historic antebellum sugar plantation.

* National World War II Museum in downtown New Orleans. We’ll spend a full day at this new museum, rated as one of the best in the nation.

* Evening dinner cruise aboard the Steamboat Natchez, one of only two true steam-powered sternwheelers plying the Mississippi today.

* Vicksburg National Military Park, including a special guided tour with a National Park Service ranger and a tour of the restored gunboat USS Cairo (sunk on December 12, 1862, on the Yazoo River).

As always, transportation will be aboard Cardinal Motorcoach. Cardinal, out of Middlebury, Indiana, provides the transportation for all of our tours. Their coaches are impeccably maintained, their drivers are wonderful, and they’re great to work with. The coaches have air-condition-

What’s this with a spring tour? You may be surprised to see that we scheduled our annual tour in the spring instead of the fall.

Well . . . we thought about Hurricane Season in New Orleans and decided that the risk of sitting out the trip on high ground somewhere was too great. We decided to schedule the tour for late spring instead and move our Upper Peninsula trip to the early fall.

You’ll receive our booklet with a full description of the trip in the mail very soon, but here’s a synopsis:

Attractions include:

* The Mississippi River Museum in Memphis, with 18 galleries showcasing 10,000 years of history in the Lower Mississippi River Valley, including two full size boat replicas to board and explore and a 90-minute riverboat cruise aboard the Island Queen.

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Berrien County Historical Association Board and Staff

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Kathy A. Cyr, Executive Director
Robert Myers, Curator
Madge Bibler, Museum Services Coordinator

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,

As another year draws to a close, we wish to thank everyone for their generosity in support of The History Center at Courthouse Square. We know many of you have attended and participated in programs, traveled with us on the heritage motorcoach tours, attended the signature fund raising event, shopped in the museum store (now called Courthouse Gifts), contributed artifacts for the collections and donated funds for operations through the Annual Appeal. Your support and participation ensures the success of the programs offered. The History Center would not be here without you!

We appreciate receiving grants and sponsorships from the Berrien Springs Community Endowment, the Berrien Springs/Eau Claire Rotary Club, and Indiana Michigan Power. We are also grateful to Ron Taylor, Mary’s City of David, and Eden Park Preservationists for the presentation, tours and train ride in June; to Andy Vavra for launching the US 12-Heritage Trail program and book signing tour in early October; and to the Heritage Museum and Cultural Center staff for partnering with us to offer the “Haunted St. Joseph Walking Tours” in mid-October. We also wish to acknowledge Berrien County’s commitment to the site and operations.

Members of the Berrien County Historical Association Board of Directors are very giving of their time and resources. They donate their time to attend committee and board meetings, work diligently on the signature event, and are always first to contribute to programs and projects that required funding. They care deeply about the History Center.

The staff joins me in thanking each and every one of you for your gifts (time, resources, and expertise) to the Berrien County Historical Association DBA the History Center at Courthouse Square.

Best wishes for a Happy Holiday Season!

Sincerely,

Kathy A. Cyr

Executive Director

P. S. Nominations are due on February 1 for the Frank J. Ward Memorial History Award. Call or email us to receive a nominations form.
We'll ride one of New Orleans' famed streetcars to the French Market. Comfortable seating, DVD movie players, and a bathroom for emergencies.

The tour fee of $1,795 (per person, double-occupancy) includes just about everything: transportation, lodging (usually Comfort Inns, Holiday Inn & Suites, Hampton Inns, etc.), all breakfasts and dinners, some lunches, all admission fees, taxes and gratuities. We even include the bus driver's tip!

We're really excited about this trip! We think it's our best one yet and hope you'll be able to join us. Give us a call at (269) 471-1202 or email curator Bob Myers at rmyers@berrienhistory.org if you have any questions.

Our 2016 Signature Event — Franklin D. Roosevelt: An Arsenal of Democracy

Actor Neill Hartley enthralled his audience with his portrayal of President Franklin Roosevelt at our annual Signature Event in October. Hartley, from Philadelphia, presented FDR during his famed “Arsenal of Democracy” speech in December 1940.

Next year’s speaker? It almost goes without saying: Eleanor Roosevelt!

Lake Michigan College's Grand Upton Hall is a great facility for the event, and the dinner was outstanding. Larry Nielsen, as always, was a superb master of ceremonies for the evening.

Neill Hartley greeted History Center board member Stephen Smith after the program.

Neill Hartley with History Center member Larry Wozniak.

Jerry Vandenburg entertained us during the evening.

We'll tour Oak Alley Plantation and have lunch and dinner there, too. Oak Alley was built in 1839 - the same year as our courthouse!
Curator’s Corner

Recent Donations to the Museum Collections

David Doss ............... Postcard view of riverboat *May Graham*
Janeene M. Raymond .......... Family photographs & certificates
Janet V. Robards ............. Korean War army raincoat
Daryl T. Schlender ....... House of David hydrostone plaque, pieces of WWII Japanese airplane, Panama-Pacific Lines map, 1929, postcards, souvenir glassware, photograph of Lewis Filstrup
Cynthia Schroeder .......... Kindergarten project placemat, 1932
Alan Snyder .................. Vietnam War army uniform
Western Star Lodge No. 39 . . . Masonic photographs & memorabilia

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Fun and Great Weather on our Charleston Trip

We had a great time on our trip to Charleston last September. Everyone enjoyed the historic sites there and on the way: the Carl Sandburg House, Biltmore, Fort Sumter, Drayton Hall, Magnolia Plantation, USS *Yorktown*, the Dock Street Theatre . . . and we all ate too much!

We were lucky with the weather, too - a little rain one day, but that was all. A couple of weeks later, Charleston endured heavy flooding.

The flooding got us to thinking about hurricane season, and we decided that we don't want to press our luck with the New Orleans trip. We've therefore rescheduled the tour to April 30 - May 8, 2016. Bob is finalizing all the plans now and you should receive our booklet describing the trip very soon. In the meantime, here are a few photos from the Charleston Tour.

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Fern Brown of Baroda made this burlap placemat as a Kindergarten student in Baroda. The children created them as Christmas gifts for their parents - in Fern's case, Forest and Elsie Brown. Our thanks go to Cynthia Schroeder for donating this delightful piece of memorabilia.
Winter Program Series

Our second annual Winter Program Series kicks off this year with “Berrien County & the Great Depression,” presented by curator Bob Myers. The new Power-Point program explores the Great Depression’s impact on Berrien County’s families, farms and industries.

The series continues on February 25 with “The Life & Legend of ‘Babe’ Ruth,” presented by Ron Bolin. Ron’s program takes the audience back in time to the heyday of baseball and the “Sultan of Swat,” Babe Ruth. From his Baltimore childhood to his 60th home run to his “Farewell to Baseball” speech and final appearance at Yankee Stadium in 1948, this account of the Babe’s life encourages audience participation with the use of realistic artifacts and lively role-play. Ron’s program is endorsed by members of the Ruth family and the Babe Ruth Estate.

The March 24 topic is still pending at this time.

Programs are held at 2:00 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of the month in January, February and March. Admission is free.

Spring Break “Founding of America” Tour

To quote Monty Python’s Flying Circus, “And now for something completely different.”

For several years now the History Center has created many popular bus tours for adults. We’ve traveled to South Carolina, Maine, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and many other places. This year, in addition to our regular tours for adults, we’ve planned a tour for young people!

As a History Center member, you should have received our booklet describing our Founding of America Junior Tour. If you have a friend or family member who would like a copy, give us a call or email and we’ll send one right out.

We based this one, our Founding of America Junior Tour, on a wonderful trip we ran back in 2010. It’s an eight-day, seven-night tour to historic sites in Washington, DC, Virginia and Gettysburg during Spring Break 2016. The tour is planned especially for young people ages ten and over, accompanied by a parent or grandparent. Tour dates are April 2-9, 2016. The trip includes tours of Colonial Williamsburg, Washington, DC, Jamestowne, Mount Vernon, Monticello and the Gettysburg Battlefield National Park.

History Center curator Bob Myers will lead the tour with the assistance of co-guide Suzannne Thursby.

The tour departs from the History Center in Berrien Springs.

The tour fee of $1,499 per person includes Cardinal Motorcoach transportation; all lodging; all breakfasts and dinners; some lunches; guide services; and all admission fees, taxes and gratuities. Families can add a third or fourth person (sharing their room) for $1,149 each. For further details, call the History Center at (269) 471-1202 or email bcha@berrienhistory.org.
Kindle Your Christmas Spirit at the History Center

Good weather and holiday cheer brought a big attendance to this annual Berrien Springs event. Almost 900 people toured the History Center. They enjoyed Christmas Carols in the courthouse, watched blacksmith Dave Francis make iron sleighbells in Bennett’s Forge, listened to stories in the Murdock Log House, and shopped for gifts in the Museum Store.

Kindle Your Christmas Spirit takes place on the first Thursday of December in Berrien Springs. In addition to activities at the History Center, there are horse-drawn carriage rides, ice sculpting, crafts and face-painting for children, a village Christmas tree lighting, drawings for prizes, and Santa and Mrs. Claus.

Special thanks go to the Trinity Lutheran Church and School for their musical entertainment in the courthouse; blacksmith Dave Francis for his demonstration work in the Bennett Forge, Jennie Branch Sailor for volunteering in Courthouse Gifts, and Karen Campbell for greeting guests at the courthouse.

Haunted St. Joseph Tour Draws a Crowd

About 250 people enjoyed our “Haunted St. Joseph” walking tour in October. Tour groups went up and down the State Street Historic District hearing tales of mysterious deaths and hauntings, and then rode a bus to the St. Joseph City Cemetery for a tour of burials and the mausoleum.

We hosted the tour with our friends from The Heritage Museum & Cultural Center. A big “thank you” goes out to them and to our tour guides: Scott Bradford, Ron Bolin, and Kate Ulrey.

The Duncan House on State Street, built in 1891, is said to be haunted by the ghost of a teenaged girl. It was a featured stop on our Haunted St. Joseph Tour.

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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: $ 
The Heyday of Hinchman ($18.95)  Quantity: Total: $ 
Historical Sketches of Berrien County ($23.95)  Quantity: Total: $ 
Autotram: Clark's Aluminum Railcar ($16.95)  Quantity: Total: $ 
Locomotives Along the Lakeshore ($24.95)  Quantity: Total: $ 
Twin City Trolleys ($8.95)  Quantity: Total: $ 

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

Save on shipping and pick up your books from the History Center Store!

Join the History Center Today!

Name: ___________________________ Phone: ____________
Address: ____________________________________________________________
City: ______________ State: ______ Zip: ____________ Fax: ______________

Membership categories:
Basic  Supporting
[ ] Individual $20  [ ] Contributing $40
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[ ] Institutional $40  [ ] 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: __________

Mail or fax to: BCHA, PO Box 261
Berrien Springs, MI 49103
Phone: (269) 471-1202 Fax: (269) 471-7412

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Name on Card: __________

Make check/money order payable to: Berrien County Historical Assn., PO Box 261, Berrien Springs, MI 49103

Signature: ___________________________
Continuing and Upcoming Events

Winter Hours, January - March: 10-5 Mondays-Fridays

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

April 2 - 9, 2016: Founding of America Junior Tour” motorcoach tour to Washington, DC, Virginia, and the Gettysburg Battlefield.

April 30 - May 8, 2016: “Old Man River’ New Orleans Tour” motorcoach tour to New Orleans, Memphis & Vicksburg.

January 28, 2016: “Berrien County & The Great Depression.” A new PowerPoint program with curator Bob Myers. 2:00 p.m. Free.

February 25, 2016: Babe Ruth. Author, historian and actor Ron Bolin presents a one-man show as New York Yankees legend Babe Ruth. 2:00 p.m. Free.

March 24, 2016: Topic TBA. 2:00 p.m. Free.