Berrien County Historical Association Celebrates 50 Years

The History Center Annual Meeting, Tuesday, April 25

On Tuesday, April 25, at 7 p.m. Robert C. Myers, Assistant Director for Education Programs and Events for the Historical Society of Michigan and former Curator for the History Center, will be the keynote speaker for the History Center’s Annual Meeting.

Since 1967, the Berrien County Historical Association (BCHA) has strived to achieve the mission to collect, preserve, and interpret the history of Berrien County through exhibits, tours, publications, and educational and community outreach programs for public benefit. This began with the challenge to restore the 1839 courthouse - the oldest in Michigan! This was accomplished through a combination of grants, contributions, and countless hours of volunteer work. The restorations were finished and BCHA has continued growing.

Robert C. Myers, a.k.a. Bob, joined the team at the History Center at Courthouse Square in 1981 and was crucial to its success. He wrote numerous books, created fascinating presentations (for example, the Gangsters of Berrien, and Shipwrecks on Lake Michigan), led fun and informative historical tours, and, along with his wife Candace, was a local champion of historic house research and restoration. Both he and Candace also enjoyed many roles—on and off screen—at Twin City Players. At the beginning of 2017, Bob joined the Historical Society of Michigan in Lansing as Assistant Director for Education Programs and Events. During his tenure at the History Center, his name became almost synonymous with BCHA and we are delighted to have him as keynote speaker for the Annual Meeting.

The Annual Meeting will also include the presentation of the seventh annual Frank J. Ward Memorial History Award. The History Award is presented annually to honor 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 and benefactor of the History Center at Courthouse Square.
Director’s Comments

By Kathy Cyr

Dear Friends,

First, thank you for your support as we bid farewell to Bob Myers as Curator after 35 years. We dearly miss him, but wish him and Candace well in their new endeavours in Lansing. With the arrival of Spring, we are reminded that time continues to march on and so must we!

Spring has officially arrived! Though this winter has been mild - even warm at times, I am still looking forward to longer, sunnier days.

Looking back to December 2016, the staff would like to express their heartfelt appreciation for your contributions to the Annual Appeal. Your generous support netted the History Center over $5,900 to continue our mission of collecting, preserving and interpreting the history of Berrien County through exhibits, tours, publications, and educational and community outreach programs. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the 2016 Annual Appeal.

Looking ahead to our upcoming programs and special events, please mark your calendars and plan to attend the following programs, special events and heritage motorcoach tours:

April 25: Annual Meeting of the Berrien County Historical Association, 7:00 p.m. at the 1839 Courthouse featuring Robert C. Myers, speaking about 50 years of BCHA. Free admission.

April 29-May 6: Delaware Bay Excursion Tour

May 12: Springing into the 1830’s-Pioneer Days for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students. Sessions run 9:30-11:30 a.m. and 12:30-2:30 p.m. $4 per student.

June 11-14: Historic Hannibal and Ste. Genevieve Tour - Four days exploring Mark Twain’s hometown and the colonial town of Ste. Genevieve. Tour booklet coming soon!

June 22 - July 27: Thursdays at Courthouse Square. 6:30 p.m. Underwritten by AEP Indiana Michigan Power and the Berrien Springs/Eau Claire Rotary Club. 6:30 p.m. Free admission.

September 2-3: Second Annual Blacksmithing Festival - Last year’s festival organized by local Boy scouts was such a hit we have decided to make it an annual event. Admission is free.

September 9-17: The “Bonjour Canada, French Quebec” Tour booklet will be mailed soon with more details.

October 14: Haunted St. Joseph Walking Tour, with the Heritage Museum and Cultural Center. $5 per person.

October 26: Signature Event 6-9 p.m. at the Lake Michigan College Mendel Center. $75 per person or $500 for a table of 8.

December 7: Kindle Your Christmas Spirit, a Berrien Springs community event, 6-9 p.m. Free admission.

We are also introducing weekend programming and activities during the summer months. See page 7 of this newsletter for more details and check our website for current information.

Have a terrific spring!

Kathy A. Cyr

Executive Director
Thursdays at Courthouse Square ~
Our popular summer program series returns in June!

We’re thrilled about this summer’s line-up of history programs and the dynamic speakers who will come to the History Center with fascinating topics on state and local history.

The series begins on June 22 and runs every Thursday through July 27. 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 22: A Michigan Polar Bear Confronts the Bolsheviks: A War Memorial, Gordon Olson, former Grand Rapids City Historian, will tell the story of Godfrey Anderson, who was one of an often overlooked contingent of 5,000 American men assigned to join British troops in the attempt to prevent Archangel, Russia from falling into the hands of the Bolsheviks during World War I. Join us to hear the journey of a Michigan Polar Bear. Books available for purchase.

June 29: The Battle of Benton Harbor: The Jack Dempsey Fight of 1920 Stephen Smith. Decades before Muhammad Ali was even born, the eyes of the boxing world were focused on Berrien County and the only heavyweights championship ever staged there. Stephen Smith is an attorney at Foster Swift Collins and Smith and currently sits on the board of the Berrien County Historical Association.

July 6: Adeline and Julie: Growing up in Michigan and on the Kansas Frontier Robert C. Myers returns to Berrien Springs to tell the story of local sisters Adeline and Julia Graham. Both kept lively diaries of their adventures—Adeline as a teenaged tomboy and Julia as a young woman homesteading in Kansas. Their diaries show Victorian women leaving their prescribed “women’s sphere” of life to engage in politics, business and homesteading.

July 13: A 1,000 Mile Walk on the Beach Loreen Niewenhuis author, adventurer, and speaker returns again, this time to recount the journey that began it all. In 2009, Niewenhuis completed a 1,000 trek around Lake Michigan—the world’s fifth-largest lake leading to her book, "A 1,000 Mile Walk on the Beach". Following, two more epic adventures along the shorelines of all five Great Lakes and the islands of the Great Lakes. Books will be available for purchase and signing.

July 21: World Wide Webb Miller Steve Arseneau, Director of the Dowagiac Area History Museum Webb Miller covered every significant event across the globe. From the trenches of World War I to the opening salvos of World War II, award-winning journalist Webb Miller was there. Miller was also the first Western journalist to cover the independence movement in India of the 1930s led by Ghandi.

July 27: World War II Navy Aircraft Recovery from Lake Michigan Taras Lyssenko, the “T” of A. and T. Recovery, has worked locating and recovering the lost Navy airplanes for the past thirty years. Taras will present his unique perspective of the nearly thirty year effort to recover these important aircraft built and used by the “Greatest Generation” to preserve America’s and the world’s freedom and liberty.
Collections Corner

Recent Donations to the Museum Collections

Copy of letter of thanks for service from President Truman . . . . . . . Steven Trail

Silver Beach memorabilia, Postcards, Photographs, Tire Jack . . . . . . . Daryl T. Schlender

1950s Berrien Teacher Correspondence . . . . . Cynthia Schroeder

Winter Lectures Welcomes Wisdom Seekers

Winters can be rough. Short cold days lead into long cold nights, and it has been nice to have a break from this monotonous cold with the 2017 Winter Lecture Series. This year the series has centered around the History Center’s current exhibit- “Wisdom Seekers”- telling the story of Andrews University, located just two miles down the road.

On the fourth Thursday of the months of January, February, and March, speakers have spoken on various aspects of the University’s history. In January, Rebecca May, Campus and Community Relations Director at Andrews University, and a BCHA Board member, gave an overview of the history - from the university’s beginning as Battle Creek College, to the move to Berrien Springs in 1901 as Emmanuel Missionary College, where land was used as a campus and a training ground for missionaries. Many of the buildings were constructed by the students themselves when not in class.

In February, Meredith Jones Gray, author of the book “As We Set Forth” and chair of the English Department, told the story of how Emmanuel Missionary College, became a credited university. Indeed, there were many challenges from the process of bringing the graduate studies, to Berrien Springs, to the new name of the university. The Herald Palladium headline announcing the change was bigger than the announcement of the new Pope!

In March, we discovered the many contributions to education made by E. A. Sutherland from Ronald Knott, director of Andrews University Press.

If you have not already viewed the exhibit, do not fret; “Wisdom Seekers” will remain on display through October of this year.
Join the History Center Today!

Name: __________________________  Phone: ________________
Address: _____________________________________________
City: ______________________ State: ______ Zip: ____________
Membership categories:
Basic
[ ] Individual $20  [ ] Contributing $40
[ ] Family $30  [ ] Sustaining $50
[ ] 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

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
Get both for $29.95!

Quantity: ______ Total: $ ______

Subtotal: $ ______

Discounts (Library 20%  BCHA Members 10%)
State sales tax (6% for Michigan orders only)
Shipping ($4.95 for 1st book, $1.00 each additional book

Total: $ ______

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

Credit Card Orders (Visa, MC, Discover)
Card No.: __________________________
Exp. Date: ____________________________
Name on Card: ____________________________
Signature: ____________________________
Bonjour Canada, French Quebec: September 9 - 17

Imagine it’s an autumn day. The air is crisp but the sun is still warm on your face. You are sitting at a table at a busy café. The people all around you are speaking French. You lift your cup and sip your coffee. You smile and think, “I’m glad I came to Quebec!”

Did that surprise you? Quebec is the second largest region in the world where French is spoken and it is where we are headed for our nine day, 8 night Fall Tour, slotted for September 9 - 17.

Don’t worry - you won’t need to know a word of French to enjoy this trip! The itinerary is getting firmed up but here is what you can expect:

- Tour the capital of Canada, Ottawa
- Historic Old City of Quebec
- Montreal - the walled city
- Live historical interpretation
- Poutine - a tasty traditional dish

The price? We’re still working on that, but you can expect to receive a booklet describing the whole tour very soon.

While you wait, here are some useful French phrases you can practice:

- Bonjour (bawn-zhoor)
- Comment ca va?
- S’il vous plait (seel voo ple)
- Bon voyage! (bon voi-ahzh)

Hello/Good Morning!
How are you?
Please
Happy Trails!

Historic Missouri: Hannibal and Ste. Genevieve, Missouri: June 11 - 14

In June we will be heading to Hannibal, Missouri, hometown of the Father of American literature, Mark Twain, for a four day, three night Motorcoach Tour. We will leave the parking lot of the History Center promptly at 8 am on Sunday, June 11 aboard the Royal Excursion motorcoach. On this tour we will: enjoy an evening river cruise with dinner and dancing; take a tour of Mark Twain’s childhood home; visit the old world village of Ste. Genevieve, and a relaxing evening at the Star Theatre that combines the classic date idea of dinner and a movie.

Like all our tours, this one includes Royal Excursion Motorcoach transportation, lodging (Best Western, Microtel Inns), all breakfasts and dinners, some lunches, all admission fees, taxes and gratuities.

The tour fee is $660 for members, based on double occupancy. The single supplement is $145. A $100 per person deposit, refundable up to 60 days prior to the tour, will secure your place on the tour.

For more information, please call Kathy or Kelsey at (269) 471-1202, or email info@berrienhistory.org.
Changes in Weather and Hours

The new year often symbolizes a fresh start and a new beginning. Many of us make resolutions that revolve around making positive changes in our lives. Author Lisa Scottoline makes Un-Resolutions—instead of focusing on what is wrong with herself and often falling short, she focuses on what she does well and celebrates (like falling asleep fully clothed surrounded by her loving puppies). With spring, we have another new beginning—meaning warmer weather and bright flowers blooming.

This year has already brought a lot of changes for us here at Courthouse Square, but we are embracing these changes and celebrating all the things we love about the History Center.

NEW HOURS
That is right. We have new hours of operation, expanding our availability to you, our favorite community.

Now - April  
Monday - Saturday 10 am - 5 pm
May - September  
Monday - Saturday 10 am - 5 pm
Tuesday - Saturday 10 am - 6 pm
October - December  
Tuesday - Saturday 10 am - 5 pm

Winter Programs
Because our new hours extend into the weekends, this summer we are organizing some unique, fun, and historic programs that are family friendly. Including a rotation of blacksmiths to come in and work the forge! Keep your eyes on your inboxes and our Facebook page for updates.

Volunteer Opportunities
Have you volunteered in the past? Have you thought about volunteering in the past? With more program opportunities come more opportunities for you to volunteer! Beginning with Pioneer Day on Friday, May 12, we will be needing some extra hands on deck to help with a variety of activities. You can set up a regular schedule or sign up for special events by calling 269-471-1202, or emailing info@berrienhistory.org.

Fifty Years Ago...

The Berrien County Historical Association is celebrating its 50th Birthday this year! A lot can happen in fifty years. Do you remember what was happening in 1967? Here are some highlights.

- January 10 - PBS begins as a 70 station network. Without it how would we have known the drama of Downtown Abbey?
- Feb 14 - Aretha Franklin records “Respect”
- March 25 - The Turtle’s “Happy Together” goes to #1
- April 20 - US Surveyor 3 lands on Moon
- May 14 - NY Yankee, Mickey Mantle hits 500th homerun off Oriole’s Stu Miller
- May 20 - 10,000 demonstrate against war in Vietnam
- May 22 - Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood debuts
- June 2 - The Beatles release Sergeant Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band
- October 2 - Thurgood Marshall sworn in as first black US Supreme Court Justice
- December 20 - “The Graduate” starring Dustin Hoffman and Ann Bancroft premiers
- December 28 - Muriel Siebert is the first woman to own a seat in the NY Stock Exchange

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December: "Kindle Your Christmas Spirit," 6:00 - 9:00 pm.

June 2: Thursdays at Courthouse Square. "A Michigan Polar Bear Confronts the Bolsheviks" with Gordon Olson. 6:30 pm.

June 9: Thursdays at Courthouse Square. "Adeline and Julia: Growing up in Michigan and on the Kansas Frontier," presented by Robert C. Myers. 6:30 pm.

June 14: Thursdays at Courthouse Square. "A 1,000 Mile Walk on the Beach by Another Lonely Beachcomber," presented by Robert C. Myers. 6:30 pm.

June 16: Thursdays at Courthouse Square. "A 1,000 Mile Walk on the Beach by Another Lonely Beachcomber." Presented by Robert C. Myers. 6:30 pm.


October 26: Thursdays at Courthouse Square. "The Battle of Beorn." Presented by John E. Howard. 6:30 pm.

October 1: "The History of the History Center." Presented by Joan E. Howard. 6:30 pm.


Now - October 31: "Wisdom Seekers" Exhibit in the Sheriff's Residence.

November 6: Thursdays at Courthouse Square. "A Florida Polar Bear Confronts the Bolsheviks" with Gordon Olson. 6:30 pm.

November 13: Thursdays at Courthouse Square. "A 1,000 Mile Walk on the Beach by Another Lonely Beachcomber" presented by Robert C. Myers. 6:30 pm.

November 15: Thursdays at Courthouse Square. "A 1,000 Mile Walk on the Beach by Another Lonely Beachcomber" presented by Robert C. Myers. 6:30 pm.

November 29: Thursdays at Courthouse Square. "A 1,000 Mile Walk on the Beach by Another Lonely Beachcomber" presented by Robert C. Myers. 6:30 pm.

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