

Subject:

For Whom the Bell Tolls: The First Congregational Clock Restoration Project

PRESS RELEASE:

Effective immediately

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The Romeo Historical Society (RHS) is pleased to announce the First Congregational Clock Restoration Project, and is seeking donations to purchase materials. For years, Romeo's beloved clock has sat in frozen silence, high above Main Street in the church's 100-foot tower. Now it looks as if the clock's bell will chime once again.

Earlier this year, RHS member and owner of Miller Machine & Tool, William Miller began working with Charlie Randles, co-owner of Sugar Art Cake & Candy Supplies, to fix the iconic clock. Both Miller and Randles are donating their time, and hope to have it completed for the 5th Annual Victorian Festival, in May.

Effective immediately, the RHS will be collecting donations for the project. Contributions should be mailed to the Romeo Historical Society: P.O. Box 412, Romeo, MI 48065. Please make the check payable to the Romeo Historical Society, indicate it is a contribution to the First Congregational Clock Restoration Project, and specify where the ornament is to be sent.

Donations will also be accepted at Kane's Town Hall Antiques, Sugar Art Cake & Candy Supplies, on Van Dyke in Washington Township, and the Romeo Arts and Archives Center, which is open every Tuesday from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Anyone donating \$25 dollars or more will receive a RHS commemorative First Congregational Church ornament. Proceeds will go to the clock's restoration and maintenance, to ensure its chimes are heard throughout the village for generations to come. Remaining proceeds will be used to preserve the clock's historic tower and the church's exterior, so its stately elegance will continue to be enjoyed by all.

For more information please call the Romeo Historical Society at 586-752-4111 or visit our website romeohistoricalsociety.org. The annual Romeo Christmas Home Tour is sponsored by the Romeo Historical Society, a non-profit, 501 c3 organization dedicated to the preservation of Romeo's exceptional heritage.

The Society is a member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Historical Society of Michigan and the Macomb County Historical Alliance. RHS supports three museums in downtown Romeo, the Bancroft Stranahan House at 132 Church Street, the Clyde Craig Blacksmith Museum at 301 N. Bailey and the Romeo Arts and Archives Museum at 290 N. Main Street. Each is a unique experience showcasing Romeo history. All three locations are walking distance from historic downtown Romeo, open for events and by appointment.

The Romeo Arts and Archives Museum (RAAC) a former State Police Post building is open every Tuesday evening from 7pm – 9pm, with research archives and gift shop available. On current display is *Romeo on Wheels*, an exhibit chronicling Romeo's progression from carriage, to automotive, to the Ford Romeo Plant in operation today.

RHS is the proud host of the annual Victorian Festival in downtown Romeo the third Saturday in May. The Village of Romeo has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places and on the State Register of Historic Sites since 1970.

The First Congregational Church was organized in 1828. Since its inception, the church has remained in the same location, with three "meeting houses." The first was erected by Charles Chamberlain in 1833. Eventually it was moved to Church Street, and was home to the Romeo Academy. The second meeting house was built in 1842 and was of Greek Revival design by Mr. Wilcox. That structure was demolished to make way for the current building three decades later.

The current building was designed by Charles H. Marsh, a young architect from Rochester, New York. On July 4, 1876, the cornerstone for the current building was laid, and all construction was supervised by Romeo builder, R.F. Odion. Even though the building was occupied the following spring, the interior wasn't complete until 1883.

For more information about this project, please call the Romeo Historical Society at 586-752-4111.