



Romeo Perspective

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ROMEO, MACOMB COUNTY, MICHIGAN

www.romeohistoricalsociety.org



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Winter in ROMEO 2011!

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Harriet Tubman speaks at Gray's Opera House in January!

Meet **Harriet Tubman** at Gray's Opera House / Masonic Temple on Tuesday evening January 18 starting at 7pm! Refreshments, displays, and tours of the historic Opera House at 231 N. Main Street, downtown Romeo! **Free!**



Listen as Harriet Tubman tells of her Underground Rail Road escapes of the 1860's! Rosie Chapman, Michigan Humanities Council historic re-enactor, will portray Harriet Tubman for the evening telling over her daring adventures helping escaping slaves head north towards Michigan. RHS hosts this entertaining and informative program sponsored by DTE Foundation, Stoney

Burke and Romeo Masonic Temple Lodge.

"Rosie Chapman has performed all over the United States, Australia, Africa, Scotland and Germany. Her one-woman show of Harriet Tubman is unforgettable" says Michigan Humanities Council board members.

Join us as we begin to commemorate the sesquicentennial of the Civil War this year.

Harriet Tubman

born Araminta Ross (c1820 or 1821—March 13, 1913) in Maryland was an African-American abolitionist, humanitarian, and Union spy during the Civil War.



Romantic Romeo on display at Bancroft!

Do you know that Randle Stone Bancroft, the dentist, probably never lived in the Bancroft Stranahan Museum on Church St? He probably used it as an income. So Andrew Stranahan, Romeo builder, was probably the first occupant. RHS is researching

Dr. Bancroft, Andrew, and Charles Stranahan, the grocer, along with Dr. "D." Douglas, all former owners.

The newly donated Douglas family furniture is looking great in its original setting now. In addition, members Linda St. Laurent and Judy

Dugger have set up a display called *Romantic Romeo*. Wedding dresses, wedding cake decorations, hats, shoes and valentines herald Valentine's Day approaching! Over 400 visitors have toured this museum since May 2010! *Stop by!*

Three local museums

Romeo Art & Archives Center,

290 N. Main Street.
(former state police building)

Bancroft-Stranahan House

132 Church St.

Clyde Craig Blacksmith Shop 301 N. Bailey St.



Rosie Chapman appears as Harriet Tubman at Gray's Opera House on January 18, 2011. Meet her!

MLK Day is Monday, January 17! Celebrate with us!

Romeo Art and Archives Museum... *Stop here too!*

We have new, exciting donations!

Peter and Sarah Lerrick have come to stay permanently at the Archives! You will have to meet them!

Peter's and Sara's oil paintings are portraits of them as the 'accused' Underground Rail Road *conductors* of Spring Hill Farm in Shelby Township, just south of Romeo.

The present day Theurer family have generously donated the oil paintings and hundreds of other items for both our local archives and our Flea N Tique sale in June. The Theurer's contacted

RHS last fall and arranged to meet with us and explain their collection of artifacts associated with the Underground Rail Road due to our extensive exhibit on this topic.

RHS is now ready to display this new collection to the public.

Come visit the Archives soon and view the paintings and the crock that was supposedly to be filled with food for escaped slaves back in the 1800's. Have a look at Sara's dishes and read her diary about the 'illegal' underground activity in Macomb County in the 1860's.

It is all part of our local history.

Meet Kinchen Artis America's most famous black Civil War soldier. Kinchen and two of his black soldier buddies are buried in Romeo Cemetery! ... all part of our ongoing commemoration of the sesquicentennial of the Civil War.

Stop by **Romeo Arts and Archives Museum on Tuesday evenings from 7pm to 9pm** and check out all the displays and information your local Society has on Romeo.

—Richard Beringer

Curator

Craig Blacksmith Shop updates...

Our Blacksmith shop will host another Hammer-In this year on Victorian Festival Day May 14. Guest smiths from out of town will be working at the shop and on the grounds.

Did you know that the Michigan Artist Blacksmith Association (MABA), with over 400 members around Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, started in our humble

blacksmith shop about 30 years ago. MABA and Romeo resident Steve Alling, had his residence and shop on this year's Christmas Homes Tour. Steve has been MABA president for many years. (He is the guy who taught us what little we know about blacksmithing here. Steve is a great teacher and makes some wonderful art and beautiful useful home items.

Fencing surrounds our shop and the lot next to it, which RHS leases from owner Romeo Community Schools. We will be offering lumbering programs soon for local school children. Board member Stu Walters is working with Michigan Hartwick State Pines staff on this program. —Richard Beringer

2010 Milestones... RHS closes another busy and productive year

Spring time 2010 showcased a memorable Fifth Annual Victorian Festival with the chiming of the First Congregational Church 1878 clock tower after about a 20 year silence. At precisely the stroke of noon, the clock struck twelve and the started like it had never stopped. Thanks to Charley Randle and Bill Miller and many generous donors, May 15 was a historic highlight of 2010 in Romeo. RHS also dedicated four new automotive transportation markers that day with *MotorCities National Heritage Area* staff helping unveil these important testaments to Romeo history.

RHS hosted its best Flea N Tique Sale\$ yet on a hot June afternoon!

Our September walking tours brought in new crowds visiting our historic neighborhoods.

In fall, RHS accepted some noteworthy family donations into our archives. We had a very successful Romeo Cemetery walk as well with ideal weather.

The 2010 Christmas Homes Tour was unique and sold out this year as usual. The 2011 ornament of the Siminic home on N. Main Street was a hit and sales have been brisk.

2010 has been a spectacular year for RHS!

I am proud of all the hard work accomplished by our local and dedicated members. We have Joan Beringer as a new curator at Bancroft museum and with expert advice from Professor Richard Daugherty, the museum has been re-

decorated. A period clothing room has been added and you can actually see the clothes, accessories and period time lines.

The Craig Blacksmith Shop has a new gate and fencing in preparation for new programs by Steve Alling and Trustee Stu Walters. Tim Billo and Richard Beringer, trustees did all the work.

Sean McManus, new board member, also has been a big help with all ongoing maintenance for three museums.

Barb Merryfield and SERVE students expanding our archives this year.

Museum attendance grew at all three of our sites this year and we can proud of our efforts! Thank you!!!

-Sue Kane, President

"In 2011 we hope to add new walking tours, trolley tours and an inside tour of local barns, outbuildings and man-caves in June. We are working with Bob and Sherry Allen of Washington Twp. Historical Society on a Civil War soldier tour of Romeo Cemetery. ... Join us!!!"

-Sue Kane, President

2010 Christmas Homes Tour, a success!

The 2010 Christmas Homes Tour was a big success! On Saturday December 11, people came from across the metro area to enjoy our community's exquisite homes decorated for the holiday season.

Each of the five homes was carefully selected to reflect our community's

unique heritage and appeal. As each group made their way through the homes, they learned about the history of the home and Romeo from the owners and docents.

Proceeds raised from the event will help RHS continue our mission to preserve, document and pro-

mote the history of Romeo and its surrounding communities. *If you're interested in offering your home on the 2011 Christmas Homes Tour or helping with the event, please contact the Romeo Historical Society at 586-752-4111. It's quite an honor!* -Barb Merryfield

See the

2010 Christmas Homes Tour

photos

on the website!!!

Romeo Historical Society

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ADDRESS LABEL

Romeohistoricalsociety.org

Preserve our Heritage!



Martin Luther King Day -
January 17

Abraham Lincoln's Birthday
February 16

George Washington Birthday
February 22

EVERY TUESDAY NIGHT
7:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.
Archives and House
Museums are OPEN!

**Send suggestions,
ideas and photos!**

2011 program plans... we are busy! *Save this page!*

RHS has great program plans for 2011!

Here are the opportunities to meet, socialize and preserve our important heritage here!

Jan. 18— We kick off the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, 1861 thru 1864. Rosie Chapman as Harriet Tubman speaks at Gray's Opera House. 7:00 p.m.

Feb. 11 / 12 - Watch for us at Romeo Romantic Days & Chocolate Festival! Wedding ceremony display at Bancroft Stranahan Museum.

March 15 - Spring Open House at the Archives Museum.

April 19 - William Gibbs the artist and his work on exhibit at the Romeo Art and Archives building.

May 14 - 6th Annual Romeo Victorian Festival. Mark this date down! A marker dedication, Main Street Promenade and Blacksmith Shop Hammer-In and exhibits.

June 11 - Flea N' Tique Sale. Our flea markets sales at Bancroft Stranahan Museum help support our annual programs! Stop by!

Join us and participate in some great events coming up!

We need YOU!

—RHS Board members.

WEBSITE...Check out
www.romeohistoricalsociety.org

Kezar Library celebrates 100 years in February 2011!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Email addresses....

We need your email address to add to our membership files! Please, please send us a message with your email address to info@romeohistoricalsociety.org or make sure you write it on your membership renewal.

Thank you!!!