



ROYAL OAK

Historical Society

WINTER 2018 • ROYALOAKHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG

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Royal Oak Police: A Century of Service

Submitted by City of Royal Oak Community Engagement Specialist Judy Davids

In 1918, the Village of Royal Oak established a new kind of law and order with the formation of a local police department and the rest, as they say, is history.

The first police chief, Philip H. Beauvais, was also the village manager. He ran the day-to-day bureaucracy of a small town and, as necessary, assisted with arrests and hauling prisoners to the county jail in Pontiac.



*Photo: Courtesy of the Royal Oak Historical Society Museum
Royal Oak Police Officers (L to R): Potts, Johnson, Geister, Linville, McCafferty*

One hundred years later, Chief Corrigan O'Donohue also has dual titles. He heads what is regarded as one of Michigan's premier police departments while also performing the duties of assistant city manager. From time to time, you will see the chief at the table at city commission meetings filling in for City Manager Don Johnson.

From Beauvais to O'Donohue, the City of Royal Oak is delighted to reflect on a century of leadership and service in the police department with a series of events this year. In late January, the city will distribute an eight-page booklet on the history of the police department, which thanks to generous sponsors, will be delivered to every Royal Oak household as an insert in *Royal Oak Today* magazine. The commemorative publication titled "A Century of Service" chronicles the various chiefs, stations and police dogs, among other things, through the years.

Displays on the department's history, which include vintage photographs and extra copies of the commemorative booklet (as available), can be found through February at the Royal Oak Public Library, 222 E. 11 Mile Road, and City Hall, 211 S. Williams.

An exhibit and reception at the Royal Oak Historical Society Museum and a fitness challenge/community event to celebrate this special 100th anniversary are both scheduled for May to coincide with National Police Week.

Also in the works this year, the police will roll out a new uniform style, commemorative badges, and patrol cars will be adorned with special centennial graphics. The new uniforms will mark the first change in attire for officers in decades.

City officials hope the many planned events and activities will give the community an opportunity to interact with officers whose services, for the most part, tend to go unnoticed as residents go about their daily routines.

For more information on the Royal Oak Police, go to romi.gov/police or call 248.246.3201.

From Smoke Signals To Smartphones

by Karen Turk, ROHS Volunteer

The Royal Oak Historical Society Museum is ringing in the New Year with an exciting new exhibit titled *A Journey to the Smartphone*. The display highlights all forms of communication, from the most rudimentary to recent developments in digital devices. Attendees will experience how the apps at our fingertips have roots in technology such as television, phonographs, telegraphs and more.

The exhibit's theme invites guests to wander through groupings of unique objects from as far back as the 1800s. Families are encouraged to attend the event and take advantage of its teachable moments. Among displays of radios, cameras and rotary phones, digital natives will have a

clearer view of how technical advances truly changed lives... and have a laugh or two (who knew phones could be shaped like a tennis shoe?)

Of course, no communications exhibit would be complete without including the rich history of newsprint. Archives of The Daily Tribune are always available for curious visitors to peruse; the museum boasts issues from 1926 through 1965. Another permanent fixture at the museum, the electrified Victrola, will provide a fitting soundtrack for the interactive exhibit. Just ask a docent to choose from the extensive record collection!

Other must-see pieces include vintage typewriters on loan from the Berkley Historical

Society Museum, a "magic lantern" and an arrangement of objects emphasizing the evolution of technology in schools. The latter offers a rich opportunity for multigenerational conversations about what students used in classrooms before the Internet and smartphones. Hint: they balanced books, brainpower and *multiple* devices.

A Journey to the Smartphone opens in February 2018, with the Preview Party scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 4 from 2 to 5 p.m. No preregistration is required. Admission to the gala is \$5 per person, and free for children 12 and under. Expect refreshments, beverages, finger foods and lively banter.

What's Going On At The Orson Starr House?

The Orson Starr House is a Michigan farmhouse that was originally constructed about 1845. Located at 3123 N. Main St., one block south of Thirteen Mile Road, the house is owned by the City of Royal Oak and is open to the public from 1-4 p.m. on the second Sunday of each month or by prior arrangement. Additional parking is available two doors to the south at the Salvation Army Citadel.

The house was occupied by the Starr Family for nearly 100 years and was home to one of Royal Oak's pioneering families. Open houses and tours are provided by the members

of the Orson Starr House Guild, a volunteer committee that organizes special events at the monthly sessions.

Admission is free, however, donations are always welcome.

Donations to the Royal Oak Historical Society are gratefully accepted. Send checks payable to:

**The Royal Oak Historical Society
1411 West Webster Road • Royal Oak, MI 48073**

Donations are tax-deductible. Thank you in advance.

PHOTO GAME ANSWERS:
• Photo A: Sole Sisters at the corner of S. Washington and 4th Street
• Photo B: Le Crepe at 317 S. Washington
• Photo C: In brickwork top of the new parking structure across from the Post Office

Coming February 2018 to the ROHS Museum...

A Journey to the Smartphone



*Experience how the apps at our fingertips have
roots in the technology of the past.*

See a “magic lantern” · View typewriters on loan from
the Berkley Historical Society Museum · Discuss the
evolution of technology in educational displays ·

Hands-on fun for kids of all ages!

Open Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday 1-4pm



Preview Party

Sunday, February 4, 2018 from 2 to 5pm

No preregistration required

\$5 per person, free for children 12 and under

Refreshments, beverages, finger foods

royaloakhistoricalsociety.com

Royal Oak Then & Now

by John Maurice, ROHS Facebook Editor

This edition of Royal Oak Then & Now pays tribute to the winter weather that we've had over the last couple months and to what it used to be like in the pre-Depression years in Royal Oak. The "Then" photo is from the winter of 1927 and shows a man and a boy plowing the sidewalk in front of 2200 Northwood Boulevard using a plow strapped to a 2-horse team. The home at that time was owned by Paul Heitman and still sits today at the northwest corner of Northwood and Linwood. A little research

shows that the Detroit area received about 12" of snow January 13-14 in 1927, which equates as the 10th largest snowstorm in the area's history. Looking past the man in the photo, some houses on the west side of Linwood can be seen in the distance. The pine seedlings that can be seen in this photo have matured in the intervening years, and 91 years later this property still has at least 5 very large pines, some of which can be seen in the "Now" photo.



Photo Credits: "Then" Courtesy of the Royal Oak Historical Society Museum, "Now" Courtesy of John Maurice

Photo Game

by Bob Muller, ROHS Board Member

Can you identify which
Royal Oak buildings have these
unique architectural details?

(Answers on page 6)

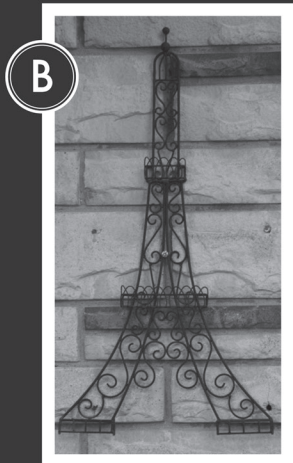


Photo Credits: Bob Muller

Curator's Corner

by Muriel Versagi

Museum Gaining Popularity

The Historical Society Museum has become an overnight success 13 years later.

Not only are more groups wanting tours of the Museum, we are getting more requests from students, Brownies, and Cub Scouts to visit. We also are receiving more requests from Royal Oak High School reunion committees to hold a "Meet & Greet" on a Friday evening at the Museum. Those who came last year seemed to have a really great time.

Last August, Sarah Bockhausen, a history teacher at the Royal Oak Middle School, approached us about the possibility of a History Club meeting at the Museum as well as at the school to research and plan an exhibit at the school in June.

Needless to say ... we said "YES!!!" We now have a full-fledged History Club that meets at the school one Wednesday and one Wednesday once a month at the Museum to explore information for the exhibit.

The sixth, seventh, and eighth graders are so enthusiastic about the research. For me it is so rewarding to see this group of eight to 15 young people interested in history. The exhibit will open June 2 as a part of the school district's art event. The History Club exhibit will cover, "Teens in Royal Oak," (working title). It will cover from the 1920s through the 2000s.

Homes & Buildings In Royal Oak

Edited by John S. Schultz

In this issue, the Royal Oak Historical Society will focus on historic homes and buildings in our city. The selections come from the book, "Royal Oak Images, Yesterday's Charm Today's Treasures" published by the Roundtable of Royal Oak Historical Organizations, a standing committee of the Royal Oak Historical Commission of the City of Royal Oak. The book was published in 2006 and a second edition is in the works.

We encourage other Royal Oak residents to share the history of their home for possible publication. For more information, contact: John S. Schultz at johnsschultz@sbcglobal.net.

The Kidder-Huebner House 1028 Longfellow Avenue

Clapboard-Sided Bungalow Built In 1925

Shortly after their marriage in 1924, Lee S. and Frances E. (Willard) Judder came to Royal Oak from New York state where both had grown up at their respective family homesteads. Lee had arrived in Royal Oak in 1920 to work in the lumber business with his uncle, Albert D. Kidder.

Lee drew the plans and acted as the contractor for their new home on Longfellow Avenue. In 1914, A.D. Kidder, with his wife, Clara Erb, and brother-in-law, Lewis Erb, established the Erb-Kidder Lumber Company on the Amos Decker property at the southwest corner of South Main and East Eighth (now Lincoln) streets. Lee eventually became the manager of the Royal Oak lumber yard.

The house was constructed on the exterior with clapboard siding as were most of the bungalows built in Royal Oak. American ingenuity made something new of clapboard. In England, clapboard was used for making barrels; the English who migrated to America learned to apply it to houses. The colonists soon learned to overlap clapboards and make them specifically for houses. With one edge thinner than the others, these long narrow boards would overlap horizontally to cover the outer walls of framed structures.

The interior walls and ceilings are of wet plaster with hardwood oak floors. The front porch was screen enclosed in the summer. The original storm windows on the porch still provide protection in the cold weather.



ROHS Cartoon Vault

by Dan Saad, ROHS Board Member

Barbara Hallman's Legacy

The Daily Tribune | March 19, 1988



Former Royal Oak Mayor Barbara Hallman (1981-1985) died in March 1988, leaving a legacy of caring and public service. A city commissioner, art teacher and founder of the annual Oak Apple Run, her positive impact on our community remains 30 years later. In researching this edition of "The Cartoon Vault," I realized how young Barbara was when she passed – only 63. That didn't have much impact on the 30-something cartoonist who penned this tribute to her in 1988; but the old cartoonist who pulled this drawing from the "vault" was stunned to realize that she was younger than he is now.

The next time you and your family pass through the Barbara A. Hallman Memorial Plaza downtown, remember her and appreciate how much she contributed to Royal Oak.

Dan Saad was the editorial cartoonist at The Daily Tribune from 1983-1999. He still draws editorial cartoons regularly for Crain's Detroit Business. He is a Royal Oak resident and member of the Royal Oak Historical Society Board of Directors. Dan's Cartoon Blog: <http://saadcommentary.blogspot.com/>

President's Message

by Deb Anderson

Thank You To Our Supporters

I'd like to offer our appreciation for the community-minded businesses and organizations that supported the Royal Oak Historical Society as sponsors/donors for our 78th Annual Dinner in October. I'm going to list them because it's important to recognize how much they do for the ROHS – and we all know that each of these entities do so much for so many causes in Royal Oak and beyond. I hope you will all help to support them as they have supported us.

First up, our major sponsor was once again Jon Witz and his organization, Ford Arts Beats and Eats. He has consistently supported us for several years now, and we really appreciate it.

Farmers Market, Hotel Royal Oak and Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Directors were our next level of sponsorship. We also received much-appreciated support from B&B Collision; Berridge & Morrison; Birmingham Coin & Jewelry; Clawson Steak House; 4th Street Auto Care; Frentz & Sons Hardware; Holiday Market; Royal Oak Inter-Club Council; Clarence H Johnson, PC; Kinsey-Garrett Funeral Home; Nick's Grecian House; Royal Oak Rotary Club; Sands Barber Shop; and Mark Vanderkaay, DDS.

And there's more! Billings Lawn Equipment; Briggs Gallery; Buttons RentIt; Dos Manos; Stephen Jones, Attorney; Ladybug Shoppe; Midcoast Studio; Miner's Den Jewelers; and ZMC Pharmacy also all gave their support to make sure our event was a huge success – and it was!



THE ROYAL OAK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1411 West Webster Rd. • Royal Oak, MI 48073
248.439.1501 • ROYALOAKHISTORICALSOCIETY.COM



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Individual: \$20____ Family: \$30____ Supporter: \$50____
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**Mail your check to: Royal Oak Historical Society
1411 W. Webster Road • Royal Oak, MI 48073**

Dues also are payable online at royaloakhistoricalsociety.org. Click on the Membership link and you may pay your dues online or subscribe and have your dues paid automatically annually. For more information about membership levels and benefits, visit the website. Thank you in advance!

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