



ROYAL OAK

Historical Society

JUNE 2018 • ROYALOAKHISTORICALSOCIETY.COM

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August 20, 1934 - March 10, 2018

7th Annual Car Show Opens August 4

Edited by John S. Schultz, ROHS Board Member



2017 Car Show; Photograph Courtesy of Mike Frentz

The Royal Oak Historical Society Museum will host its 7th Annual Car Show fundraiser on Saturday, August 4 with a special preview party planned the evening before on Friday, August 3.

The theme of this year's Car Show is rear engine cars, sports cars, and muscle cars. Included with the art work will be a display of Tucker car memorabilia, pedal cars, Batmobile

models, and will also include an Isetta car parked inside the museum. Also inside the museum will be the "Woodward Memories Exhibit" and the "Automotive Concept Art Exhibit."

This year's Automotive Concept Art Exhibit will honor the memory of Robert Edwards, whose passion was automotive design art, where he amassed one of the most comprehensive collections of automobile art in the country and became one of the leading experts in the field. At the time of his death, Robert was working on a film honoring the auto designers of the mid-20th century.

"The automobile is the most significant industrial object of the 20th century," Robert was quoted as saying. "The artwork that was created by these talented, but often unappreciated men and women, in the closed studios of the automotive companies is rarely seen (by the public); only around 5 percent of it still exists. As for the public viewing, many generations will have the opportunity to see this great display of creativity and to appreciate the art and science of automotive styling."

Robert's dream for far-reaching automotive art will be realized next year with an exhibit planned at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

The premier opening is from 7-9 p.m. Friday, August 3. Meet the designers and clay modelers while you "cruise" down Woodward Avenue as it appeared in the 1900s to present day.

The car show is from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, August 4. Registration is \$15. Dash plaques goodie bags will be given out to the first 75 entries. Enjoy the music by Jaime Burean and Chris Wietzke and also enter for a chance to win \$100.

Pre-register at the Royal Oak Historical Museum at 1411 Webster, near Crooks or online at royaloakhistoricalsociety.com or call for more information at 248-439-1501.

All proceeds to the Royal Oak Historical Society Museum



Royal Oak Historical Society Museum

PRESENTS:

7th Annual Car Show

Featuring rear engine vehicles

Saturday August 4, 2018, 10AM to 3PM

On Friday August 3rd, 7PM to 9PM

The Museum will host the preview party of:

The Woodward Memories Exhibit and The Automotive Concept Art Exhibit

Meet the designers and clay modelers while you cruise down Woodward Avenue as it appeared in the 1900's to present day.



Car Show Registration Fee: \$15.00

- Chance to win \$100.00 in a drawing
- Dash plaques given to first 75 entries
- Goodie bags to first 75 entrants

Music by Jaime Burean and Chris Wietzke

Pre-register at the Royal Oak Historical Society Museum
at Webster and Crooks

or online at royaloakhistoricalsociety.com

For more information call: 248-439-1501

All proceeds to the
Royal Oak Historical Society Museum

1411 Webster
Royal Oak, MI 48073



Homes & Buildings In Royal Oak

Edited by John S. Schultz

Each newsletter, 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 Camus House 520 Kayser Street

Adaptive Reuse of Store to Home Built in 1925

One of the most charming and convenient features of life in the early part of the 1920s was having a "corner store" in the neighborhood. In 1925, Emile Camus and his wife's nephew's Stewart Lynn, built this one-story frame structure on the northwest corner of Kayser and Sixth streets. The front portion facing east was called Camus Grocery Store and sold groceries and candy. This would have been appealing to the children attending Ulysses S. Grant Elementary School across the street.

Living quarters for Emile F. and his wife, Myrtle, were attached behind the store and consisted of a kitchen, large dining room, three bedrooms, and a bathroom.

Since it was partially a commercial building, it was positioned close to the

sidewalk with a two-step concrete slab leading up to the recessed entry of the store.

On either side of the entry there were plate glass display windows and above was a typical flat false front. Access to the living quarters was through the store as well as through an outside entry on the south side.

Beneath the sharply angled roofline there was an attic space which was the playroom for young Emile Jr., who climbed a ladder in one bedroom into the area where he had a train set.

The Camus daughter, Marguerite, married Alfred John Hermann, who worked for his other brother George, at the bakery on South Main Street. They had eight children. The son Emile married Hilda Lesko and had no children.

continued on page 6



Royal Oak Then & Now

by John Maurice, ROHS Facebook Editor

It seems that the face of our city is changing from day to day. Along with the changes, there are many buildings in Royal Oak which have remained relatively unchanged for as long as many of us have lived here. For this edition of *Royal Oak Then & Now*, we take a look at the corner of 12 Mile and Woodward where the Shrine of the Little Flower church has stood for more than 80 years. The "Then" photo was taken July 31, 1937 just after the opening of the Shrine Super Service station. Looking closer at the photo,

this station, operated by Robert Antwis, was a full service station that featured tire repair, lubrication and car washing. Behind the station, you can see the iconic Shrine crucifix tower rising above the trees. On the east side of the service station, which faces away from the photo, there was a refreshment stand built for the many visitors who would travel to see the Shrine. Although the service station has changed many times over the years and been demolished and rebuilt, the tower remains as it did on this day in the summer of 1937.



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

Our Musical Past!

by Former Royal Oak Resident Glen Tuomaala

Did you know that the former 1961 drum major of Dondero High School returned to become band director (Richard Perkins)?

Did you know that the 1962 marching band was featured in a Ford automobile commercial (<https://tinyurl.com/1962band>)?

That's just some of the band history being uncovered with the help of the Royal Oak Historical Society, but you can help too!

We're searching for the lost history of the Royal Oak Bands by scanning both band concert programs and personal photographs. If you, or someone you know, have any band concert programs or photos, we need your help.

We've already interviewed nine former students and directors to piece together an oral history of the bands. It's easy, it's free and you would be helping the Royal Oak Historical Society document the past for future generations.

If you, or someone you know, have any questions or want to help, please contact Glen Tuomaala at (614) 999-2030 or email Tuomaala@gmail.com.



ROHS Notices

What's Going On At The Orson Starr House?

The Orson Starr house had its annual show of historic bridal gowns last Sunday at its Open House with 17 gowns and many visitors to enjoy them.

This latest attraction will be available at the Open House from 1-4 p.m. on Sunday, August 12. The house was built in 1845 for the Starr family, but others have lived there making their own changes. Come see the "new" old kitchen, a part of the restorations that are constantly going on. We love new members to our Orson Starr House Guild. Call Isabel Patterson at 248-548-6638 for more information.

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 Rd.
Royal Oak, MI 48073

Donations are tax-deductible. Thank you in advance.

Honoring Judge Leenhouts

As published at royaloakhistoricalsociety.com

The Royal Oak Historical Society, with the support of the Leenhouts Family and 44th District Court Chief Judge Derek Meinecke, wish to honor Judge Keith J. Leenhouts, a visionary jurist, Royal Oak Citizen of the Year, and member of the Royal Oak High School Hall of Fame. Judge Leenhouts was elected to the Royal Oak bench in 1959.

Early on, the judge was deeply troubled by a system that appeared unable to break the cycle of crime. In 1960, Leenhouts launched the "Volunteers In Probation" program calling on community-minded volunteers to serve as "sponsors" to meet with probationers for 12 hours per month. As a result of his passion and commitment to

making a difference, Leenhouts enrolled many Royal Oak community leaders in a program that would not only transform Royal Oak's system of justice — it literally transformed the entire country's approach to probation.

The results from Judge Leenhouts program were incredible. The Volunteers In Probation Program was 11.5 times more successful than other traditional court programs. In the late 1960s, Reader's Digest twice covered the efforts of Judge Leenhouts and the impact of his program. In 1967, Look magazine designated Royal Oak as one of seven cities in the United States to be called an "All American City".

In recognition of these efforts, Judge Leenhouts received the National Council on Crime and Delinquency "Excellence in Probation" award, and in his lifetime was honored by five U.S. Presidents for his innovative and effective program.

The Royal Oak Historical Society is looking for your help to memorialize this important figure in our community's history with a permanent display and an official renaming of the 44th District Court Probation Department. We should never forget his work and his message of the power of investing in people.

If you are interested in donating securely to the Judge Leenhouts Memorial or learning more about the different sponsor levels, please click on the link below to go to our website:

<https://www.royaloakhistoricalsociety.com/Leenhouts%20Dedication%20Project.html>



The Camus House *continued from page 3*

In 2001, the home was taken over by Dan and Megan Dubensky, and they undertook a complete transformation of the house and yard. The secluded side yard has lovely landscaping featuring a very large, well-pruned silver maple in one corner near the cedar deck. Other plantings include arbor vitae, a weeping cherry, and a Japanese maple.

Inside the house there have been several changes. The wall that formerly separated the store from the living quarters was removed, thus increasing the feeling of spaciousness. The north wall of this room has a window wall looking into the side yard and at one end is a wood burning fireplace. Strategically placed close to the front entry is a small table and chairs with a view across to Grant Park, where the school once stood. The original three bedrooms and bathroom locations remain the same, however, a newly created stairway now leads to a master bedroom with a bathroom that once was the attic.

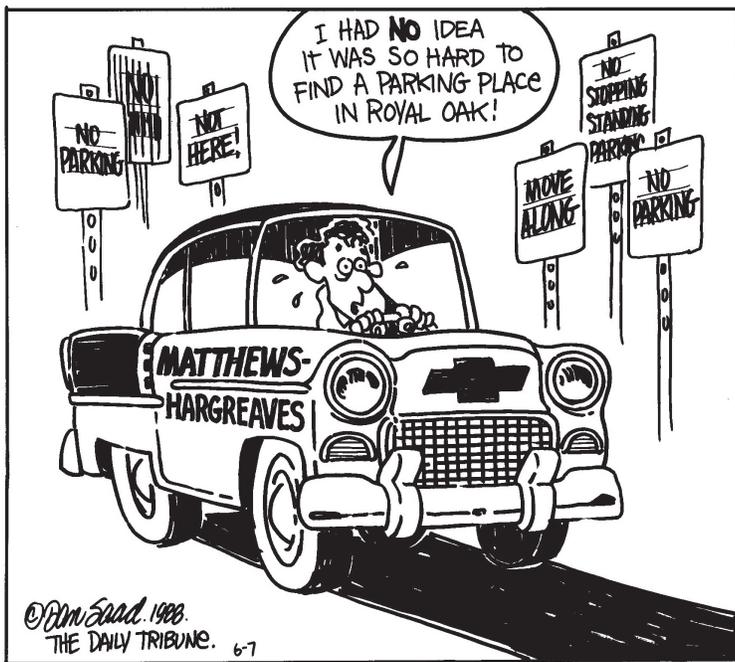
The owners have taken the best elements of the past and transformed them with appropriate changes into a real treasure.

ROHS Cartoon Vault

by Dan Saad, ROHS Board Member

A Different Kind of Parking Problem

The Daily Tribune | June 7, 1988



When I-696 construction displaced Matthews-Hargreaves Chevrolet from its original location south of downtown, nobody anticipated how difficult it would be for the dealership to find a new home within Royal Oak.

After a long site search, and a few detours, construction began on the 12 Mile Road site, between Campbell and Stephenson, where the dealership finally found its new home.

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

We're always busy here at the Historical Society, but we're never busier than when we're cooking up pancakes for hundreds of people at our annual Memorial Day Pancake Breakfast. It's our biggest event of the year, requiring lots of volunteers to make sure it's a success.

Once again, this past Memorial Day, the Royal Oak community came through for us, and we are so grateful for all of the help from so many people – both on Sunday to set up and then on Memorial Day to cook and serve the best pancakes in town (ROHS Vice President Jay Dunstan's secret recipe)! And, of course, we wouldn't have a successful event without having hungry people coming to eat those pancakes and – there again – we had a great success to celebrate.

If you were among those who volunteered to help us out, please accept our heartfelt gratitude – we really couldn't have done it without you. It's events like this that make Royal Oak a great place to live, and we were so glad to see so many of you there!





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



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Historical Society

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

Email Address _____

Individual: \$20____ Family: \$30____ Supporter: \$50____
Century: \$100____ Club: \$200____ Premium: \$300____ Benefactor: \$500____

**Mail your check to: Royal Oak Historical Society
1411 W. Webster Road • Royal Oak, MI 48073**

Dues also are payable online at royaloakhistoricalsociety.com. 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!

IMAGE PRINTING

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