



Arenac County Historical Society

Preserving the Heritage of Arenac County, Michigan

ACHS NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2023

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

We hope everyone's holiday season was beautiful and blessed. There were many events in our communities that help us get into the holiday spirit. Our organizations and churches remind us of the importance of family, friendship, community and reasons for Thanksgiving and the Christmas Season.

At this time, we would like to thank you and area organizations that support the Arenac County Historical Society. The Iosco Arenac Library System helps pay for the funding of our programs through the year. The Arenac County Foundation as well as the Bay Area Community Foundation, helps us with the preservation of our old buildings, artifacts, and displays. The Mary Jennings Fund through the Bay Area Community Foundation helps us with projects when we need funding or pay some bills. Individual donations help with the day-to-day operation of our organization. We thank all of you for your charitable donations.

Our organization is looking for more help. We need volunteers to serve on our board and volunteers to help at the museum during the summer months. I would love to do some rearranging in the museum. We need help moving things around so we can make things a little different and show off more of our artifacts. If you are interested, you can call the museum and leave a message. We have an ancient phone system so please leave your number and I will get back with you.

In the last few years, especially since the Covid-19 crisis, the museum has been falling on hard times financially.

We need your financial help to help pay our operational costs each year. Many people feel because we have grant support, that it will cover operation costs. This is not true. Many of these grants are very specific as to how the money can be spent. Our organization is committed to preserving the history of Arenac County. We will start out the year with a Bakeless Bake Sale. Your individual donations help us tremendously and we thank you so much.

For everyone's information, we are still selling Rada Knives and we have a large group of books written by local authors. These books contain a lot of interesting reading about the history of Arenac County, people, places and things to see in our small county.

We will again have programs during the summer months at the museum. Ye Olde Courthouse and the Northeastern Arts Council will have programs too. All of us try to have programs that are interesting to our patrons and welcoming to the public. Many of our programs from the past were well attended. We are inviting you to visit us again this year!!!

Sandy Proulx - President

ACHS OFFICERS

President	Sandy Proulx
Vice President	Mary Lou Bugh
Recording Sec.	Mary McLaughlin
Treasurer	Carla Dittenber

ACHS TRUSTEES

Joann Gulau
Brenda Matt
Phyllis Klender
Greg Dittenber
Gaynol Fales
Mary Delaat

ACCESSION COMMITTEE

Sandy Proulx
Joann Gulau
Mary McLaughlin

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Fred Robel

PUBLICITY COORDINATOR

Phyllis Klender

**ACHS REPRESENTATIVE to the
Arenac Heritage Route Authority**
Brenda Matt

YE OLDE COURTHOUSE & MASONIC HALL

Brenda Matt	Chair
Regina White	Secretary
Phyllis Klender	Financial Chair

ACHS WEBSITE TECHNICIAN

Gaynol Fales

FACEBOOK COORDINATOR

Gaynol Fales

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ACHS WEBSITE: www.ArenacHistory.org

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Ye Olde Courthouse/Masonic Hall

We had another great year at the Courthouse thanks to our hard working committee members and our wonderful donors. As always, we are at work planning events and fundraisers for 2023.

Our financial chair, Phyllis Klender has prepared several yearend reports for us to share. We started the holiday season off with a Christmas Junque Sale which netted \$2,096.50. These are Christmas items that we save from donations that we receive throughout the year. Our next fundraising event organized by Phyllis was our Fresh Greens Sale. Twenty volunteers gathered on December 13th and 14th to make the fresh green arrangements. They prepared 222 arrangements for the sale and distribution. Available to the "Greens Makers" were all kinds of fresh greens and an abundance of decorations. The arrangements in various types of containers were then priced and sold the following weekend to add to our "Ye Olde Courthouse Fund." Prices ranged from \$5.00 to \$30.00. This year we made extra arrangements so we could take them to residents of Horizon Senior Living and Ascension Standish Skilled Nursing. We also distributed others to neighbors and friends who are homebound. Our volunteers believe this is a very worthwhile project and many volunteers and customers come back each year to make, decorate, sell and distribute these holiday arrangements. We already have five new volunteers who want to be a part of this project in 2023. We are planning on a number of additional arrangements this year to expand our distribution to other senior living facilities in Arenac County. If you would like to be a part of this project, please call Phyllis Klender at 989-653-2762. If you have Christmas/Holiday mugs, containers, ribbon or decorations that you would like to donate, contact Phyllis. A big THANK YOU to all who volunteered this year and helped to make our Holiday Green Making and Sale a "HUGE" success. We could not do it without you! (We couldn't do it without Phyllis either)

THRIVENT GRANT REPORT

The Arenac County Historical Society, Ye Olde Courthouse Committee sponsors bake sales throughout the year when we have our famous Junque Sales. Our Omer Bakers are very generous with their time and talents and provide us with many delicious items to sell

With this Thrivent Grant we were able to purchase a 5 pound bag of flour, a 4 pound bag of sugar, a 1 pound bag of brown sugar and a pound of butter for each of our bakers. It was a small token of our appreciation for their continued support of our group. Funds raised from these bake sales are used to maintain and improve this historic building. We used some of this grant to purchase rolls to serve lunch for our Fresh Greens Makers.

The Ye Olde Courthouse Committee appreciates the Thrivent organization for providing this grant and we especially thank Ricky Rockwell for obtaining this grant for us. He is an amazing supporter of our group as well as many other organizations in Arenac County.

Committee member Joyce Flick decorated our porch for the holidays this year and we received many compliments. She also proposed and was responsible for placing battery-operated candles in our windows. They were a great addition to the building, and were noticed and appreciated by many.

Our new gas furnace in the second story (thanks to the grant we received from the Catherine and John Maser Historic Preservation Fund) is up and running. The grant we were awarded in 2021 for our beautiful new fire escape/stairway was installed in 2022. Be sure to check out this beautiful and safe addition to the south end of the Courthouse. This was also made possible by the grant we received from the Maser Fund of the Bay Area Community Foundation.

Some of our income for 2022 includes a total of \$7,787.90 for Junque Sales, \$1,912.00 for Bake Sales, and \$3,912.00 from the Christmas Junque, Bake and Greens Sale. Many thanks to all of our volunteers, donors and customers who make these fundraising events such a success.

Our first Junque Sale of 2023 is scheduled for February 9, 10 and 11th, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day.

Our next sale will be held in April during Sucker Days in Omer. Watch our sign, face book, the Pinconning Journal and the Arenac County Independent for our ads. Alice Sproule is scheduling programs with the sponsorship of the Iosco-Arenac District Library. These programs are always interesting and well attended.

Our committee meets on the second Friday of each month at 9:30 at the Courthouse. Volunteers are always needed and welcome to attend.

Brenda Matt, Committee Chair 989-846-0501
Mary DeLatt, Recording Secretary 225-247-6746
Phyllis Klender, Financial Chair 989-653-2725

Masonic Hall Being Improved

A contract for placing the new foundation under the Masonic Hall in Omer has been let to Thomas Norton of Twining and it is expected work will be started at an early date. The hall, once the Courthouse when Omer was the county seat of Arenac County, is one of the old land marks which survived the disastrous fires of 1909 and 1914. The town was practically destroyed in the fire of 1914 and only the untiring efforts of a group of volunteer fire fighters were able to keep it from being burned with the rest of the buildings.

It is of interest that the hall was originally purchased by a group of Omer businessmen who formed the "Masonic Association" and who later sold it to Omer Lodge No. 377, F. & A.M.

The former courtroom serves as the lodge room and clerk's offices were turned into a dining room many years ago. In late years the partitions were removed from two other rooms, making an auxiliary dining room or recreation room. Not generally known is the fact that a second staircase is boarded up on the right-hand side of the front entrance. Oil heat was put in two years ago and a gas stove for cooking installed the same year.

The lodge is to be congratulated for the continual improvements and the good condition the hall is kept in.

- *Arenac County Independent on August 17, 1949*

Arenac Heritage Route Authority Standish Historical Depot

Our lights and Christmas displays at the Depot were beautiful and enjoyed by our local residents and all of our guests traveling through Arenac County. We kicked off our holiday season on November 25th with the Santa Parade and the Lighting of the Depot. The parade and lighting were enjoyed by several hundred people that night and continued until January 2nd when we turned off the lights. Our volunteers have been busy picking up cords, dismantling displays, taking down thousands of lights and packing everything away and storing until next year. Thanks to Chris Gwisdala and the Standish DPW Crew our large Santa, snowman, and snowflakes are in storage with the city. The DPW also installed our new icicle lights on the Depot. Two years ago our Consumers bill in January was over \$ 1600.00. We received a grant from the Arenac Community Fund to purchase LED lights to replace our incandescent lights. We replaced our C7 and C9 lights with funds from that grant but not our icicle lights. That year our bill was reduced by \$ 900.00. This year the Standish Downtown Development Authority paid for LED icicle lights. Our electric bill for the same month went from \$ 564.00 to \$ 354.00! We are so thankful for the Arenac Community Fund and the Standish DDA for their support. We have several other sponsors from our community that contribute to our Christmas events and help to make them possible. The Depot has some wonderful volunteers who begin in October and work tirelessly to put up all the lights and displays. Thanks to Dennis Whitney for putting up our tree and decorations in the City of AuGres Riverfront Campground. We appreciate all of our donors and volunteers who make the lights and parade possible. Our community is great!

The Lake State Santa Train rolled into Standish on December 3rd with Santa and Mrs. Claus on board.

Several storybook and cartoon characters also arrived on the train and were enjoyed by our guests. Our very own Grinch and Cindy Lou Who were very popular with the children and their parents. We gave the children "goody bags" containing a Christmas craft, stickers, fruit and candy. We were thankful to have several members of the Rotary Club to help at this event. The children had the opportunity to visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus in the Depot as well as enjoying cookies and hot chocolate served by our volunteers.

Community Digital Sign

Our Community Digital Sign is installed and operating. This sign was made possible by grants and funds we received from the Arenac Community Fund, the Standish Downtown Development Authority, the Standish Area Chamber of Commerce, the Saginaw Chippewa 2% program through Arenac County and our own funds. This sign will advertise events held at the depot as well as events sponsored by other non-profits in the community. Stone columns and landscaping will complete the sign in the spring.

Board members and volunteers are busy planning for 2023. Concerts are being booked for the Summer Concert Series, plans are underway for the Farmer's Market, the County Wide Garage Sale, the Vintage Car Show on July 8th and Depot Days in October. Watch for announcements on our website, facebook page, the Arenac County Independent and our new digital sign.

Family Fare Shoppers

We are now 12,000 away in Direct Your Dollars receipts to receive \$ 1,000.00 from this Spartan Nash program. Just save your Family Fare receipts for us and bring them to the Depot. This will be our third time to benefit from this program.

Gourmet Nut Sale

This Gourmet Nut Sale was formerly the Kiwanis Nut Sale. This 2.25 lb can of roasted and lightly seasoned Almonds, Cashews, Pecans, Brazil Nuts and Pistachios is great to serve or as a gift. If you missed purchasing them for the holidays we still have them available at the Depot, Independent Bank, Owen Moore Agency, the Veterans Club, Turner Bean & Grain and the Arenac County Clerk's office. The cost is \$25.00.

The Arenac Heritage Route Authority meets on the first Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Standish Historical Depot. This is an open meeting and all are welcome to attend. For more information you may call the Depot at 989-718-3021 or email us at info@standishdepot.org. Check out our website and Facebook page for more info.

Brenda Matt, Depot Representative

Arenac County Historical Society Balance Sheet As of December 31, 2022

Dec 31, 22

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

Certificate of Deposit

CD #1

25,000.00

CD #2

10,966.19

Total Certificate of Deposit

35,966.19

Courthouse Checking

17,316.79

General Checking Account

290.60

Money Market (Savings)

14,038.49

Petty cash

200.00

Total Checking/Savings

67,812.07

Total Current Assets

67,812.07

Other Assets

BACF Endowment Fund

Courthouse Agency Fund

16,750.00

Courthouse Agency Revenue

1,596.31

Courthouse Agency Spendable

-116.00

Total BACF Endowment Fund

18,230.31

Total Other Assets

18,230.31

TOTAL ASSETS

86,042.38

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Equity

Building Fund

4,407.01

Courthouse Fund

BACF CH Fund Gain/Loss

1,596.31

Courthouse Fund - Other

59,050.79

Total Courthouse Fund

60,647.10

General Fund

5,141.87

Memorial Fund

15,846.40

Total Equity

86,042.38

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY

86,042.38

Arenac County Historical Society

304 W. Michigan Avenue • PO Box 272

Au Gres, Michigan 48703

(989) 876-6399

Dear Arenac County Historical Society Members,

In the last several years, and especially since Covid became a world issue, we at the museum have been severely struggling financially.

Our membership is good, however our members available to operate the museum and raise funds is very small. The museum exists mainly on membership fees, donations, and book sales. We are in desperate need of funds to operate the museum in Au Gres. We struggle to meet and pay operating costs each month.

There are some grants available to us through the Arenac Fund and the John and Catherine Maser Historic Preservation Fund of the Bay Area Community Foundation. The Maser fund can only be used to preserve historical buildings in Arenac County. In the past we were awarded money from these grants to help with the preservation of many projects we have completed. Last summer we had Berg's Animal and Bug Control upgrade our building to keep out unwanted animals and bats. This was paid through the Maser Funds. Mary Jennings left us a sizeable amount for museum use too. This is also managed through the Bay Area Foundation. Many of these grants are very specific to certain criteria and cannot be used for daily operations.

So again we are asking you to participate in our "Bakeless Bake Sale. You do not have to bake anything, dirty your kitchen, find a recipe, shop for ingredients or clean up your kitchen. You do not have to deliver your bake goods to us and we don't have to sit somewhere selling them. All you need to do is send a donation. For example, if you bought a pie for \$10.00, send us the \$10.00. You can send us any amount you would like to donate. This way we can all stay home, do something for ourselves or spend time with family knowing that we have contributed to the continued existence of our museum. Any and all donations will be greatly appreciated.

Checks can be made out to the ACHS and mailed to our museum. Our address is P.O. Box 272, Au Gres, MI, 48703. Our Bakeless Bake Sale will end April 15th. So make sure your taxes are completed and your check is in the mail to the Historical Society.

Our sincere thanks,

Arenac County Historical Society Board Members