



Arenac County Historical Society

Preserving the Heritage of Arenac County, Michigan

ACHS NEWSLETTER

Summer 2025

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Summer is officially here, and the year is going by so quickly. We had a successful "Give Local Bay" day this May. Money raised will help support the Arenac County Historical Society for future use. We hope to be around for a long time so we can preserve the rich history our county has.

We have some great programs this summer at the museum. You will see them listed on our website and on Facebook. Gail Demco gave an excellent program on the Arenac County Gold Coast. She explained how roads, waterways and the railroad brought people to Arenac County. Her great grandfather E W Sims was instrumental in helping get US 23 through the county and along the shoreline. There are 3 more programs this summer. Check out our web page and Facebook for details. We also have flyers within our communities. You will see programs listed later in the newsletter.

It is with sadness that we tell you we lost a former member of our board and trustee. Marilyn VanSickle passed away. She served the board for many years. She worked on many projects and devoted much of her time to help raise money and support our organization. She was a joy to work with. Her smile and humor sure gave us a lift. We sure had some good laughs. She often told me she was a clean freak. She could sure put her cleaning skills to good use. She was one of those special people who had a smile to make you feel special. We will miss her, knowing she left us a wonderful legacy of life.

Ye Olde Courthouse in Omer now has an updated computer system with Ancestry.com. You can go to Omer and access Ancestry to help you with your family research. If you need more information, we have lots of scrapbooks, pictures, and information at the museum in Au Gres. We also have books for sale, and lots of odd information to help you with your research. Check us out. We will be glad to help.

We are open at the museum every 2nd and 4th Saturday during the summer months. With an appointment we can be open for you all year long. In fact, we had a lot of fun with Mrs. Bashaw's elementary class from the Au Gres Sims School. The children asked very interesting questions and were excited to learn about some of the artifacts in our museum. So, if you are interested in visiting us but can't come when we are open, give us a call. I am sure we can work something out. Come check us out. You may be pleasantly surprised.

May your summer be filled with a lot of fun along with fun festivities the rest of the year. Make some great memories with your families and friends.

Sandy Proulx
President of ACHS

ACHS OFFICERS

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Secretary	Tammy Wiltse
Treasurer	Greg Dittenber

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Phyllis Klender
Gaynol Fales
Mary DeLaat
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Mary McLaughlin

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Brenda Matt

YE OLDE COURTHOUSE & MASONIC HALL

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Mary DeLaat	Rec. Secretary
Phyllis Klender	Financial Chair

ACHS WEBSITE TECHNICIAN

Gaynol Fales

FACEBOOK COORDINATOR

Phyllis Klender

NEW ACHS MAIL POLICY

Due the rising costs of Postal Service and our effort to streamline operations and increase efficiency, the Arenac County Historical Society has decided to offer members the option of receiving ACHS correspondence electronically. Please look for our revised membership form or, send your email address to with a note indicating your preference.

All historical news clippings courtesy of *The Arenac County Independent* (unless otherwise noted)

ACHS WEBSITE: www.ArenacHistory.org

THE ACHS NEWSLETTER IS PRINTED COMPLIMENTS OF JIMCO FIRE PROTECTION OF AUGRES

Ye Olde Courthouse/Masonic Hall

The Courthouse Committee has been busy this year with our first bake and Junque Sale of the year during Sucker Days, a bake sale during Memorial Day weekend and a Junque and bake sale on the 4th of July weekend. Several of our members, friends and neighbors have been enjoying potluck dinners once a month at the Courthouse. Watch our sign and Facebook for events and announcements.

Tim Hagley

Our committee lost a long-time benefactor with the passing of Tim Hagley in December. Tim's life revolved around his farm and his family. He served on the Arenac County Soil Conservation board for many years, and he had a passion for politics. He was deeply interested in the history of his family, Arenac Township, and the Ye Olde Courthouse. He visited with us several times sharing the history of the Hagley farm and his family. He and Dianna were very generous to the Ye Olde Courthouse through the years. Tim's family requested expressions of sympathy to consider the Ye Olde Courthouse/Arenac County Historical Society. We appreciate Tim's family for their continued generosity. Tim and his knowledge of history will be missed at the Courthouse.

RESEARCH CENTER

Our Research Center that we announced in our last newsletter is now operational. Thanks to a grant from the Arenac Fund and our own resources we are online, we have a new desktop computer, new printer, and a subscription to Ancestry. We are now assisting people who want to explore their family history and the history of our area. Our next date to be open is Monday, July 14th, from 9:30 a.m. until 5 p.m. We will be there to help you with your research on line and with our many scrapbooks and documents both in Omer and at the Arenac County Museum in Au Gres. If you are interested in volunteering to help us index our scrapbooks, we have several laptops available for use. We are also available for research through appointment. You may call Brenda at 989-233-1428 or Phyllis at 810-938-6991

NEM BASEBALL UPDATE

Through funds donated last year from the NEM Baseball organization we have installed UV film on our windows in the baseball exhibit room and placed all of the uniforms on padded muslin hangers. These were both preservation recommendations from the Central Michigan History Department last year. Phyllis Klender and Brenda Matt attended the annual NEM Baseball Reunion on June 22nd and shared our updates with them.

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

Brenda Matt, Committee Chair 989-233-1428
Phyllis Klender, Financial Chair 810-938-6991

MASER GRANT AND THE LENTZ STORE PROJECT

The Ye Olde Courthouse Committee of the ACHS has received a grant from the Catherine and John Maser Historic Preservation Fund for \$45,250.00 for the Lentz Store Project.

John and Mary Lentz were the first white settlers in Standish Township. They arrived by boat in the spring of 1854, landing at the mouth of the Pine River where they made a home for themselves and carved a home in the wilderness, established a farm, sawmill, built a house, barns, and a grocery store. We know from invoices that the store was operating in 1874. The grocery store remains on Pine River Road on a farm owned by Ruth and Monte Gulvas. Several of the Lentz Family descendants and the Ye Olde Courthouse Committee of the ACHS are working on moving the store to the Ye Olde Courthouse Site. Ruth and Monte have graciously offered to donate the store to us. After exploring many options, we learned that the cost to move it in one piece is too expensive, so our plans include separating it at the second story knee wall and moving it in two pieces. Costs include the mover with two trucks and a crane, a builder to separate, brace it and reattach it, a mason to construct the foundation and an excavator to prepare the site and restore the Gulvas site, bids from Consumers Energy and Spectrum to clear the wires and the Arenac County Road Commission to clear tree branches. The total cost is \$109,250.00. In addition to the Maser Fund Grant the Ye Olde Courthouse Committee has committed \$10,000 and Lentz family descendants have pledged \$22,000. We have been working on this project for over a year and still need \$30,000. We are exploring other grant and fundraising options. We welcome any ideas you would like to share with us.

GIVE LOCAL BAY 2025

In 2015, "Ye Olde Courthouse" Committee joined the "Give Local Bay Day"¹ seeking funds for the preservation of our historical building and artifacts, in Omer, for future generations to enjoy. In 2015 we raised \$5,800.00 (45 donors) and received \$9,869.61 from the incentive pool. We continued to participate in Give Local Bay every year and this year we raised \$12,935.00 (75 donors) and received \$3,246.44 from the incentive pool. Through the years, since 2015, the Bay Area Community Foundation has grown our funds into a sustainable funding source providing money for future preservation efforts. Many thanks to all of our wonderful donors throughout the years. Please consider donating to "Ye Olde Courthouse" for Give Local Bay Day in May of 2026.

Arenac Heritage Route Authority

Standish Historical Depot

Summer events are in full swing at the Depot. Our Summer Concert Series is underway, the Farmer's Market is held every Friday and our Vintage Car Show is scheduled for July 12th. The concerts are held every Thursday evening from 6:30 to 8:30 through August 24th. (No concert on July 17th during Fair Week,)

Our Vintage Car Show will be held on Saturday, July 12, rain or shine. All vehicles original/restored, 1934 and older are invited and welcome. Lunch and an ice cream social are provided free to all pre registered vehicles. To register or for more information contact Curt at 989-812-8954.

Give Local Bay

Thanks to all of our generous donors who contributed to the Friends of the AHRA (Standish Historical Depot) during Give Local Bay. Our total in donations was \$ 4,905.00 and our percent of the incentive pool was \$ 1,231.06 for a total of \$ 6,136.66 added to our endowed fund with the Bay Area Community Foundation. This invested fund will help to provide for the future of the Depot.

EXTERIOR SPEAKER SYSTEM

Through all the years we have held events and needed an outside speaker system our sound people Derek Welk and Curt Hillman have had to haul their systems, set them up, bring them in at night and set them up again the next day. Derek designed and priced an outside system that amounted to over \$5600.00. We planned to apply for a grant when another board member, Dennis Whitney, approached the DDA. (Downtown Development Authority) Their members voted to fund this system. Derek ordered all of the components and spent two weekends and several days during the week installing it. This involved many trips up and down ladders on the exterior, several trips in our attic and our crawl space. Derek did all this as a volunteer. Many thanks to Derek and the DDA for their generosity. You are very much appreciated.

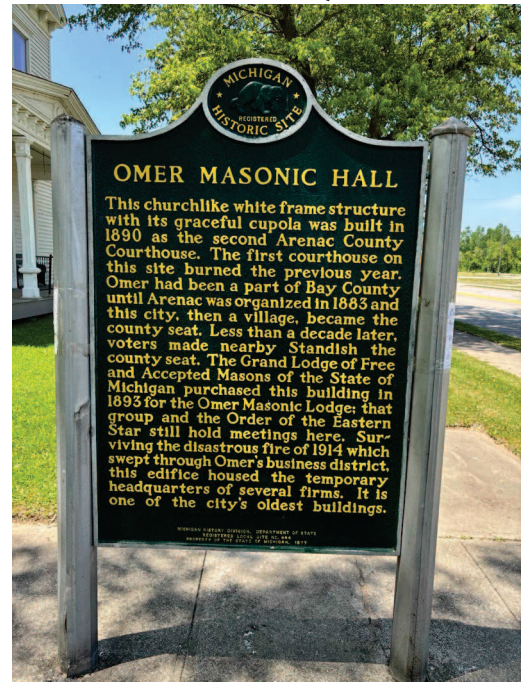
ASPHALT SEALING OF OUR PARKING LOT

We were blessed with another generous volunteer offer when Al's Asphalt (Al McElroy) offered to seal and stripe our parking lot. Al contacted one of our board members, Josette Rang, and offered this service to us. Thanks to Al and his crew for the great job. The Depot operates on a very limited budget and we appreciate Al for his generosity.

Watch our digital sign, our website and Facebook for more information on events and happenings at the Depot. Volunteers are always welcome. Our number is 989-718-3021. The Depot Committee meets on the first Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Standish Historical Depot.

Brenda Matt, Depot Coordinator

"STATE HISTORICAL SITE PLAQUE REFURBISHED"



If you haven't stopped to see our "Ye Olde Courthouse/Masonic Hall" commemorative plaque in its newly repainted condition, you should! The building was officially recognized as a historic site in the 1970s by the State of Michigan. It was hoped that the sign would be authorized by July, 1976 for the U.S. Bicentennial celebration, but it took another year to finally receive and install the metal sign. In the past few years, the sign has begun to show its age (forty- eight years). So, our committee decided to have the sign refurbished so those passing by can once again enjoy its green and gold colors announcing another claim to fame for Omer! Thanks to Shirley Piche for her artistic talents in the completion of the plaque.

Arenac County Historical Society Balance Sheet As of May 31, 2025

	May 31, 25
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Certificate of Deposit	
CD #1 (5/28/25)	26,968.09
CD #2 (9/24/25)	11,604.14
Total Certificate of Deposit	38,572.23
Courthouse Checking	82,106.08
General Checking Account	14,715.29
Petty cash	200.00
Total Checking/Savings	135,593.60
Total Current Assets	135,593.60
Other Assets	
BACF Endowment Fund	
Courthouse Agency Fund	18,750.00
Courthouse Agency Revenue	8,585.90
Courthouse Agency Spendable	-116.00
Total BACF Endowment Fund	27,219.90
Total Other Assets	27,219.90
TOTAL ASSETS	162,813.50
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Equity	
Courthouse Fund	
BACF CH Fund Gain/Loss	8,585.90
Courthouse Fund - Other	127,808.17
Total Courthouse Fund	136,394.07
General Fund	26,419.43
Total Equity	162,813.50
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	162,813.50

Arenac Historical Society Books & Publications – Mail Order Form

The Society has a number of books and publications for sale related to Arenac County history and people.

All of our selections are also for sale at the Museum, the Depot, and Ye Olde Courthouse.

Mark quantity in left column and add price to subtotal for each item desired. Then add shipping as detailed at bottom.

		Title & Description of Book or Publication	Price
	01	Arenac County Centennial 1883 to 1983 - One Hundred Years of Growth, Road tour guide, 12 pages	\$ 3.00
	02	Omer Masonic Lodge #377 F&AM 100th Anniversary - Reprint, includes a history of Omer & Free Masonry	\$ 6.00
	03	Arenac County Fair Premium List 1914 - Reprinted, includes ads of the period, showing businesses in the county	\$ 3.00
	04	Arenac County Directory 1947 - Reprinted, lots of local information, 90 pages	\$ 8.00
	05	First Arenac County Fair Premium List 1885 – Reprint, 4 ½" x 6"	\$ 6.00
	06	Arenac County Pioneer Society Au Gres 1911 -	\$ 6.00
	07	Standard Atlas of Arenac County, MI 1906 - Including a plat book and index, reprinted by the ACHS in 2012	\$ 12.00
	08	Plat Book of Arenac County, MI c1920 – Reprint, shows land ownership and includes index	\$ 10.00
	09	Au Gres Centennial 1865 - 1965 - From Timber to Tourists, History of Au Gres Area, reprint	\$ 8.00
	10	The Early Au Gres Area - A series of maps with buildings and landmarks, Edited by Mike Melvin	\$ 5.00
	11	First Families of Standish Township – Reprinted 1974, lots of family names and pictures, 32 pages	\$ 10.00
	12	A History of Arenac County, MI - by Calvin Ennes, edited and compiled by Paul Michalke, 2003, 208 pages	\$ 25.00
	13	A History of Maple Ridge Arenac County, MI - Written & compiled by Marion Poole Maday & Friends, 2008, 282 pages	\$ 28.00
	14	History of the Sterling Area - by Virginia Adams, reprinted 1976, 16 pages	\$ 8.00
	15	History of the Sterling Area Second Generation - by Virginia Adams, reprinted 1977, 15 pages	\$ 8.00
	16	Omer Centennial 1872-1972 - Reprinted	\$ 10.00
	17	One Room Country Schools Arenac County Volume 1 - edited by Marie Bauer & friends of ACHS, reprinted	\$ 7.00
	18	One Room Country Schools Arenac County Volume 2 - edited by Marie Bauer & friends of ACHS, reprinted	\$ 7.00
	19	One Room Country Schools Arenac County Volume 3 - edited by Marie Bauer & friends of ACHS, reprinted	\$ 7.00
	20	One Room Country Schools Arenac County Volume 4 - edited by Marie Bauer & friends of ACHS, reprinted	\$ 7.00
	21	Point Lookout - The famous summer resort located on the west shore of Saginaw Bay, pictures, time tables & more, 12 pg	\$ 3.00
	22	Program Pioneer Picnic and Homecoming Au Gres 1941 - Published for the annual Pioneer Picnic in Au Gres, 20 pages	\$ 3.00
	23	One Room Country Schools Map - Map showing all 42 schools (1 & 2 room) that were in Arenac Co. at one time, 8 ½" x 11"	\$ 2.00
	24	Rifle River Centennial Sucker Festival 1983 - Schedule of events, sucker recipes, history on Omer, sucker fishing, & logging	\$ 4.00
	25	A Short History of Arenac County Roads - With 3 different color maps of the county, 2004, 30 pages	\$ 6.00
	26	St. John's United Church of Christ 1912 - Old German Church relocated from Tonkey Road to City Park in Au Gres	\$ 5.00
	27	The Story of Standish and its People 1876 - by Allan McCready, reprinted 1976, 108 pages plus illustrations	\$ 10.00
	28	The Au Gres Harbor Story - Short story of how Au Gres got the Harbor of Refuge and Marina, 1945-1973, 12 pages	\$ 3.00
	29	The Handy Cook's Book 1915 - by the Ladies Aid Society of the M. E. Church of Au Gres, MI	\$ 6.00
	30	This is the Way We Went to School - West and Northwest of Saginaw Bay around the turn of the century	\$ 6.00
	31	Record of Arenac County Soldiers and Sailors – Served in WWI, written and compiled by the ACHS 2010, 300pg	\$ 28.00
	32	Arenac County Normal 1904-1957 - Written and compiled by the ACHS, 2013	\$ 30.00
	33	A Point to Remember - A pictorial history of Point Lookout by Val Korth, 2 nd Edition 2014	\$ 30.00
	34	Wah Sash Kah Moqua - by Mary A. Sagatoo 1897, reprinted, 140 pages plus illustrations	\$ 12.00
	35	Standish Telephone Directory 1942	\$ 6.00
	36	Changing Times - by Chris Miller	\$ 15.00
	37	Arenac/Ogemaw Telephone Directory 1928	\$ 6.00
	38	Civil War Veterans of Arenac County - by Joann Gulau and Brenda Matt	\$ 30.00
	39	Turner Manual of Public Schools 1917-18	\$ 3.00
	40	Alla Lizzie – by Helen Eichsteadt	\$ 15.00

Subtotal

Mail orders, please include the shipping and handling charges indicated below in addition to the price:

\$5.00 for book #13, #31, #32, #33

\$4.00 for book #12, #38

\$3.50 for book #7

All other items:

\$3.50 for the first item

\$0.50 each additional item

Send form & personal check or money order to:

Arenac County Historical Society

PO Box 272

Au Gres, Michigan 48703-0272

Name & Shipping Address

Questions? Call 989-876-6399 or email: achs@centurytel.net

+ Calculated Shipping

Grand Total Enclosed

ARENAC COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 272

Au Gres, Michigan 48703-0272

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The Arenac County Historical Society (ACHS) was incorporated in 1971, and operates the County Museum in Au Gres, Michigan, and Ye Olde Courthouse and Masonic Lodge in Omer, Michigan. Membership is open to anyone. Dues are payable IN ADVANCE of each calendar year. Dues of a NEW member joining after July 1st will be credited through the following fiscal year. Renewals are accepted at any time.

I would like to: _____ Join _____ Renew

Name _____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone (with Area Code) _____

E-mail _____

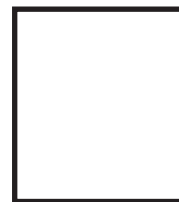
Send ACHS correspondence by email ☐

Enclosed is \$ _____ for the Membership circled below:

Category	Dues	Category	Dues
STUDENT (under 18 years)	\$3	PATRON	\$250
SENIOR (over 55 years)	\$10	BUSINESS	\$50
SENIOR COUPLE (over 55 years)	\$15	LIFE - Over 55 (individual)	\$150
INDIVIDUAL	\$15	LIFE - Over 55 (couple)	\$225
COUPLE/FAMILY	\$20	LIFE - 55 And Under (individual)	\$300
CONTRIBUTING	\$50	LIFE - 55And Under (couple)	\$400
BENEFACTOR	\$100		

MAIL TO: TREASURER, ACHS
PO BOX 272
AU GRES, MI 48703-0272

Arenac County Historical Society
PO Box 272
Au Gres, MI 48703



ACHS Newsletter For:

COMING EVENTS

July 12: Vintage Car Show, in Standish at The Standish Historical Depot.

~ACHS meets each month on the 3rd Thursday, at 7:00pm –Au Gres at the Museum (April thru October); at JIMCO (November thru March)~

~Courthouse Committee meets on 2nd Friday of each month, at 9:30am – at the Courthouse in Omer~

~Arenac Heritage Route Authority Board meets on the 1st Monday of each month, at 7pm – at the Depot in Standish.~