

Drive Arenac 250 Tour



Blaise Freeman
Au Gres-Sims HS

DRIVE, SNAP, POST, TAG, LIKE AND WIN!

 America's 250th Anniversary
1776-2026



 The Arenac County Historical Society

Contest

Arenac County Historical Society



Drive, Snap, Post, Tag, Like & WIN

Unlock the hidden history and significant role Arenac County played in the development of Michigan and America through its lengthy history of lumbering, fishing, oil drilling and farming. To enter, visit one or all of the numbered historical sites listed in the booklet and on the map; snap a photo; post it to your Facebook; "tag" Arenac County Historical Society; and like our page and you will be entered to win ACHS' Drive Arenac 250 Tour Contest, celebrating America's 250th Anniversary.

One entry per person, per site; must be 18 years of age or older to enter and win; Winners chosen randomly and announced after Sept. 8, 2026. Contest runs July 1, 2026–Sept. 8, 2026 12 pm. Do not enter private property.

1st Place:

* \$25.00 gas card

* One year free membership to ACHS

Choice of ACHS Published Books

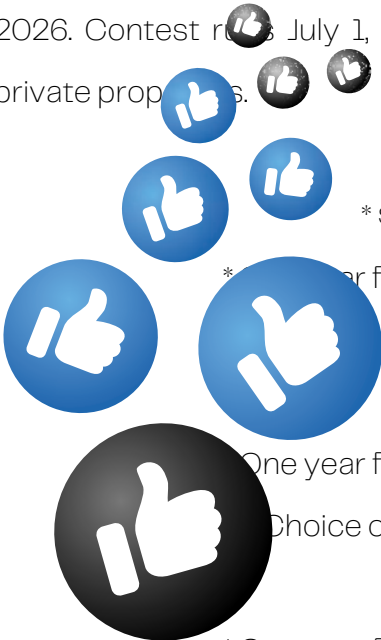
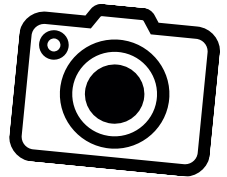
2nd Place

One year free membership to ACHS

Choice of ACHS Published Books

3rd Place

* One year free membership to ACHS



Museums

Arenac County Historical Society

Arenac County Historical Society



ACHS, AUGRES:

Left: An older file photograph of ACHS, Au Gres.

Right: ACHS pictured in 2026 along with the historical brick sidewalk in front of the museum.



*Roberta House-
Forshee* **16**

The Arenac County Historical Society (ACHS) was organized in 1970 and on Oct. 13, 1976 established its 501C3 as a non-profit organization.

It is currently housed at 304 E Michigan Ave, Au Gres, in the former Au Gres Methodist Church, which ACHS purchased from the church on July 11, 1984. The building was built in 1883.

ACHS was originally quartered in the former Delano School House on Delano and Whitman roads in Whitney Township from 1970–1984.

ACHS's mission is to promote and preserve Arenac County's history through engaging exhibits and programs at the museum and throughout Arenac County in collaboration with the Ye Olde Court House in Omer and The Historical Depot in Standish.

ACHS museum is open the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month from 1–4 p.m. or by appointment. Please call 989–876–6399.

Museums continued

Arenac County Historical Society

The Standish Depot



Roberta House-Forshee

Standish Depot in May 2026



<https://standishdepot.org/depot-timeline/>

Standish Depot in 1907

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The Standish Historic Depot & Welcome Center

located at 107 N. Main St., Standish, was completed in 1889 and served as a transportation and social hub for travelers and residents of Arenac County for 66 years before the last steam engine, passenger coach pulled into the depot on Oct. 28, 1955. The decline of rail transportation was

spurred by the rise of truck and auto transport.

The Depot sat abandoned for decades until the early 2000s when a group of business and community leaders worked to gain ownership of the property and restore the stone Depot to its former glory.

Today, The Historical Depot in Standish includes tours of the Depot and a former Detroit & Mackinac caboose that the non-profit organization obtained and restored through donations and fundraisers in 2003.

The original depot was built in 1871 (south of M-61) just after the Jackson, Saginaw and Lansing Railroad finished a new line North of Bay City to Wells.

Museums continued

Arenac County Historical Society

Ye Olde Courthouse



Roberta House-Forshee



<https://arenachistory.org/arenac-co-mi-history-museum/2nd-courthouse-masonic-baseball-museum/>

Above: Ye Olde Courthouse in 1907 Left: Ye Olde Courthouse in 2026.

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Ye Olde Courthouse at 120 Center St., Omer, was built in 1890 and served as a municipal building for only a short time before a countywide vote moved the county seat to Standish, leaving the structure vacant until it was purchased in 1893 by the Grand Lodge of the Free and Accepted Masons of Michigan for the Omer

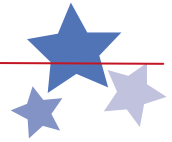
Lodge.

Approximately 100 years later, the Masons moved to a smaller building, leaving the the structure vacant until private ownership in 1997 and then full ownership by the Arenac County Historical Society in 2013.

For tours or research, call, 810-938-6991 or 989-653-2762.

Historical Sites

Arenac County Historical Society



Centennial Farms



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<https://www.migenweb.org/arenac/places/farms.htm>

Above Left: An earlier picture of the Goodroe Farm, Sterling. Right: 2026 Goodroe Farm

Goodroe Farm: The Centennial Farm in Deep River Township along M-76 at the NW village limit of Sterling has been owned by the Goodroe family since 1882. The farm has expanded significantly over its history, but the home, itself, which still stands today, was formerly used for boarding railroad crews in the early 20th-Century, according to Ricky Rockwell as told by Mrs. Martin Goodroe in the 1980s.

<https://www.migenweb.org/arenac/places/farms.htm>

Symons Farm: The more than 100-year-old farm is located on the SE corner of Knight and Dobler roads in Clayton Township.

Leonard Farm: The Centennial Farm is West of School Road about 1/4-mile North of Knight Road. The property trails back five generations to Clayton Township settler, Luther Daniels.

Hertzberg Farm: The Hertzberg farm in SW Section 18 of Deep River Township on M-76 displays a Centennial Farm marker 1/2 mile NW of Sterling. The property was acquired prior to 1886 by Gottfried and Marie Felske Hertzberg.

<https://www.migenweb.org/arenac/places/farms.htm>

Colombe Farm: The Centennial Farm in Standish Township was purchased in 1883. The original buildings on the farm consisted of a saloon with rooms overhead, blacksmith shop, hotel and livery stables. It was a halfway house and stage coach stop. The white-framed, two-story home is located on the easterly side of Arenac State Road, almost 1/2-mile North of Pine River Road.

Historical Sites Cont. ...

Arenac County Historical Society

Selle Farm: The Centennial farm was settled by Henry Selle. The existing home was built in 1882 on Manor and Swenson roads in Au Gres Township. Farm operations with expansions continue in 2026 with Henry's two grandsons, Dwight (Diane) and Marvin (Nancy) Selle, and one great-grandson, Brent (Amber) Selle.



Left: Henry and Wilhelmenia (Meyer) Selle pose for a picture with their children in front of the still-standing Centennial homestead in Au Gres Township on Manor and Swenson roads.

Below: The Selle farm in 2026.

Selle Family/Roberta House-Forshee



Just the Facts

County Organized: 1883

County Seat: Standish

Population (2020 Census): 15,002

Land Area: 230,711 Acres – 360 Sq Miles; 52 Miles of Lake Huron/Saginaw Bay shoreline

Arenac County is the 3rd smallest county in Michigan

Historical Sites Cont. ...

Arenac County Historical Society

Maple Ridge

First Presbyterian Church: The First Presbyterian Church of Maple Ridge was incorporated in 1886. A newer church was built in 1999 on the original site.; however, the former building was moved in 2008 about three miles West on Maple Ridge to Dobler Road on Sandra and Roger Bowen's property where the former Berry School also sits in its perserved form. The school was moved to Clayton Township in 1904 by Sandra's grandfather, Jacob Berry. Sandra's family members were students, administrators and teachers at the one-room school house.

https://www.mlive.com/truenorth/2008/05/arenac_family_moves_church_nex.html

1



The 130-year-old Maple Ridge Presbyterian Church (Left) and the former Berry School (Below) sit preserved on the property of Roger and Sandra Bowen on Maple Ridge in Clayton Township. The couple preserved the buildings with private funds. The buildings reflect a simpler time, but stand evident that progress and sustainability in any community centered on church and school.

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Roberta House-Forshee



Historical Sites Cont. ...

Arenac County Historical Society

Alger

Alger Department Store: The Centennial building is located North of the former Spencer's Market on Joy Street. The building served as a clothing store; a grocery store, a saloon, a creamery, a dance hall, a telephone office, a post office and a private residence.

School: The former school is located just East of the Methodist Church and is now a private residence.

Sterling



Roberta House-Forshee

Iva's Chicken Dinners: It's been 88 years since Iva Ousterhout, the founder of Iva's Chicken Dinners at 201 Chestnut Street, began serving her cast iron skillet, Southern fried chicken dinners to oil rig workers who flocked to the Sterling area, gambling on striking liquid gold beneath the sandy earth of Deep River, Adams and Clayton townships. Iva rented rooms to the workers in the existing farmhouse turned restaurant that was built in the early 1900s. (Continued Pg 10)

Historical Sites Cont. ...

Arenac County Historical Society

The property has undergone many changes over the decades, including additional dining space and kitchen upgrades that accommodate the volume of customers visiting the Sterling landmark.

The galvanized chicken nesting boxes and pen of chicks in the rear yard near a barn where Iva's Chicken Hatchery was located are now only pastimes recalled through glances at old photographs of a more difficult, yet, somehow, simpler era. (See below)

But despite all the changes and competitive world that pushes for faster and cheaper, Iva's legacy stands four-generations-strong, with great-grand nephew, Liam King, at the roost, and Liam's parents and third generation owners, Kevin and Natalie King, still cooking small-batch chicken in a cast iron skillet, peeling potatoes by hand, and assisting in other labor-intensive food preparation and service.

You won't find a kiosk or an ATM machine inside the two-story, red and white building either. But you can still see a plate hanging on the dining room wall where Iva once stood and posed for a picture during her early years. (See below)

In reflecting on Iva's story, maybe her legacy isn't simply good home cooking and hospitality, maybe, just maybe, it has something to do with her ethics and sense of family. Iva Ousterhout didn't just build a restaurant, she built a home for her family and the community at large.



Left: Iva Ousterhout poses for a picture in her restaurant in front of a plate that still, today, hangs on Iva's Chicken Dinners' wall. Right: Iva's Chicken Dinners' early days when the business included a chicken hatchery where public tours were provided.

Historical Sites Cont. ...

Arenac County Historical Society

Wiley House: The home built about 1892 is located on Washington Street – the first home West of the railroad tracks and M-76. It was built on a site known as “Mill Reserve.” Part of the home was used as an office for the former mill in the village.

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Smogy Home: The home is the third house on the North side of Sterling Road, East of M-76. The house was originally moved from the town of Dunham.

The Sterling Park: The park property was originally owned by the Morehouse family who had Sterling surveyed and platted in 1875. The Bossback family was also an owner, but donated the land to the American Legion, who eventually sold the land to Sterling Village in the late 1970s.

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Standish

The Chamberlain House: Mr. Chamberlain was the Register of Deeds when the county seat changed from Omer to Standish. His home is the fourth house on Court Street South of M-61. Today, the home still dons the architecture’s original, ornate, interior wood trim and its grand, exterior porch.

Clothing Store: The original building is located on the NW corner of Cedar and Forest streets and houses a print business today. It was previously owned by Sam Blumenthal and then later Harry Schlanger, Sol Marx and Robert Forsyth.

The old Standish Hospital: The brick structure is located on M-61 and Front Street and serves as an apartment building today. Previously, the building served as The Standish Hospital, which was opened by the late Dr. Gunn.

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Historical Sites Cont. ...

Arenac County Historical Society

Saganing

Saganing Indian United Methodist

Church: The 1880s church, which was built through donations of family and friends' of Mary and Peter Sagatoo, sits at 5480 Sturman Road, across the street from the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Center. The church received historic site designation by the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office on Nov. 30, 1983. The church no longer holds services nor is it open to the public since around 2013, according to Saginaw Chippewa Tribal District 3 Rep. Frank Cloutier.



Roberta House-Forshee

Saganing Indian United Methodist Church in 2026 is no longer operational.

Saganing Eagles Landing Casino: The Class III Gaming Casino, owned by the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, opened its 47k-square-foot business on Jan. 1, 2008. Today, the facility includes a multi-story, 148-room hotel that was opened in 2018, additional gaming space, and a camping and RV park, which opened in 2014, featuring 58 rustic spaces. In 2014, after years of hauling potable water to the casino site for daily operations, the Tribe negotiated an agreement for water with the Saginaw-Midland Municipal Water Supply, eliminating the need to haul water via tanker truck. Saginaw Chippewa Tribal District 3 Rep. Frank Cloutier says the Saganing casino accounts for one-third of the Tribe's total annual income.

Saganing Indian Methodist Mission Cemetery (aka Saganing Cemetery): The operational cemetery is located on Sturman Road in Standish Township, East of the Casino and next to the United Methodist Church.



Historical Sites Cont. ...

Arenac County Historical Society

Old Pine River



Left: The Centennial Home of John and Mary Lentz. Right: The former Lentz Store in 2024, which was built around 1874 near the Pine River in Standish Township.



William Lentz Home: The Lentz home has been in the family for over 100 years and is located on Pine River Road approximately 1.5 miles East of Arenac State Road on the South side of the road. John and Mary Lentz were the first white settlers in 1854 to Standish Township where they settled, built a sawmill the same year as their arrival, a home, a grocery store around 1874, and a larger sawmill in 1881.

The Lentz Store: is at 1487 Pine River Rd, approximately 200-feet to the West of the public access. Currently, ACHS is in the process of acquiring and relocating the store to the Ye Olde Courthouse property in the City of Omer along US-23. **10**

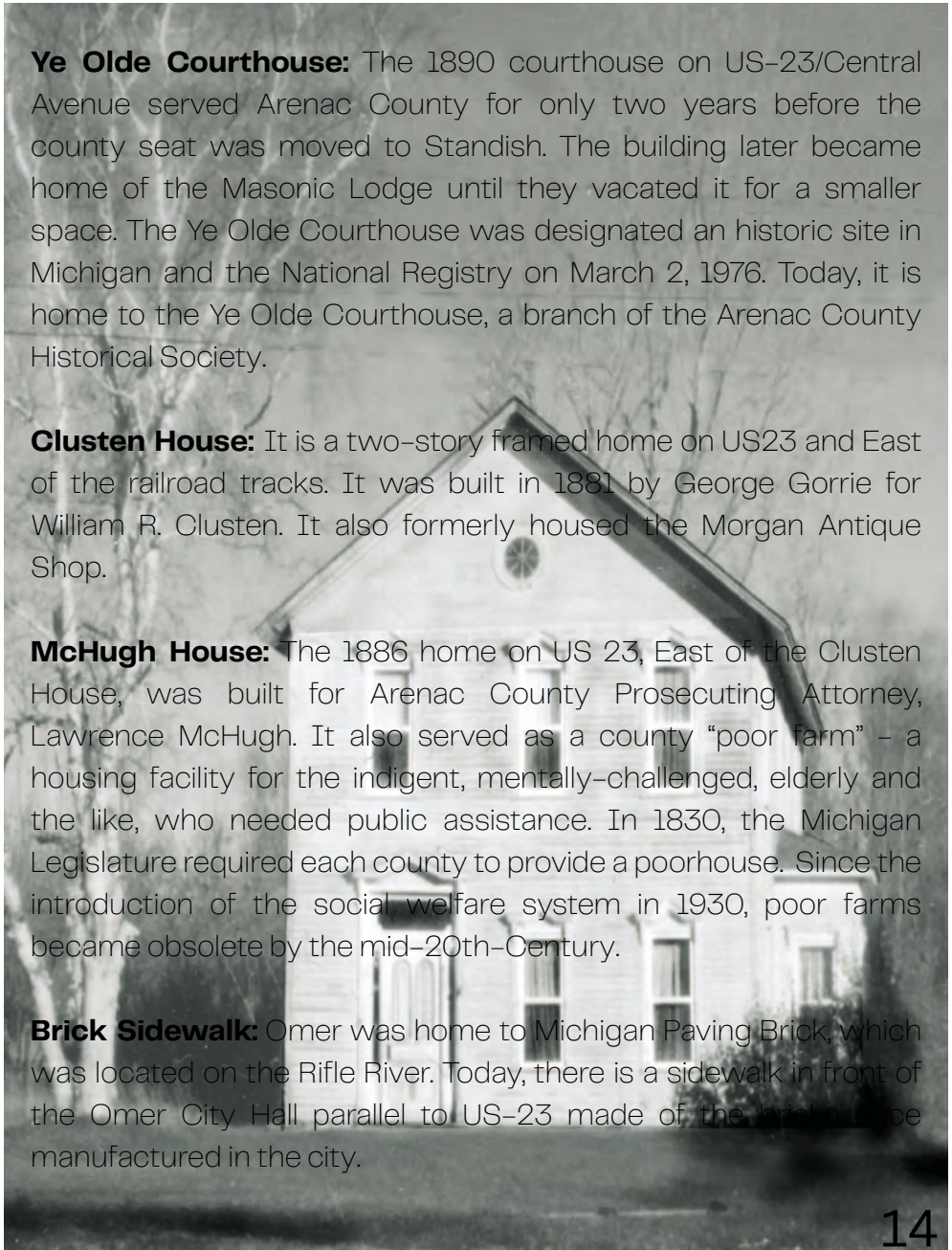
Lentz Fisheries: The fisheries owned by the Lentz brothers as far back as 1907 has been operated for generations by family members to John and Mary. The fishery can be viewed from the public access site on Pine River Road, just over a mile East of Arenac State Road, and then South on the Public Access Road. The fishery is directly across the river.



Historical Sites Cont. ...

Arenac County Historical Society

Omer



Ye Olde Courthouse: The 1890 courthouse on US-23/Central Avenue served Arenac County for only two years before the county seat was moved to Standish. The building later became home of the Masonic Lodge until they vacated it for a smaller space. The Ye Olde Courthouse was designated an historic site in Michigan and the National Registry on March 2, 1976. Today, it is home to the Ye Olde Courthouse, a branch of the Arenac County Historical Society.

Clusten House: It is a two-story framed home on US23 and East of the railroad tracks. It was built in 1881 by George Gorrie for William R. Clusten. It also formerly housed the Morgan Antique Shop.

McHugh House: The 1886 home on US 23, East of the Clusten House, was built for Arenac County Prosecuting Attorney, Lawrence McHugh. It also served as a county “poor farm” – a housing facility for the indigent, mentally-challenged, elderly and the like, who needed public assistance. In 1830, the Michigan Legislature required each county to provide a poorhouse. Since the introduction of the social welfare system in 1930, poor farms became obsolete by the mid-20th-Century.

Brick Sidewalk: Omer was home to Michigan Paving Brick, which was located on the Rifle River. Today, there is a sidewalk in front of the Omer City Hall parallel to US-23 made of the bricks once manufactured in the city.

Historical Sites Cont. ...

Arenac County Historical Society

Twining

The Depot: The 1896 home located on E Main Street, West of the railroad tracks, was originally located on the South side of the road. The ticket and passenger portion of the train depot was once used as an apartment building and a freight room. The date of the building coincides with the arrival of the D&M Railroad in 1896. Twining was surveyed and platted under the title of Village of Twining in 1898.



Left: The small, red wood-framed jail in Twining pales in comparison today to the Arenac County Jail in Standish. (Pictured Right)

Roberta House-Forshee



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The Village of Twining Jail: The early 1900s Village of Twining Jail is on Dewey Steet, just South of Main Street. Today, Arenac County has one operational jail, and it is located in Standish. In 2024, the jail in Standish underwent several renovations, including a new garage, booking area, secure pathway from court to jail and expansion of the women's section.

Turner

School: The former school was located at the East Village limits on the North side of the road. The original building was built prior to 1902 when George Kelly's father, the superintendent of the Michigan Cooperidge Company, moved his entire family to Turner. The Old Kelly Home no longer exists, but was located two houses West of the former Methodist Church on the South side of Main Street in the center of the village.

Historical Sites Cont. ...

Arenac County Historical Society



Roberta House-Forshee

Turner Bean and Grain at 119 S Railroad Street, Turner, MI, is in its 113th year of operation. The grainery, is currently owned by Mark Hadd and Grant Schutte, the third-generation Schutte in the business and son of late owner, Laurie Schutte, and grandson of Fred Schutte, who purchased the business in 1978.

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Turner Bean and Grain: Turner Bean and Grain, formerly known as Kawkawlin Bean and Grain and in 1950, Snider Bean and Grain, was founded in 1913 by Jerry Martindale. The business was purchased by Fred Schutte in 1978 from Sanford Snider and has since been in family's hands with the late Laurie Schutte at the helm until 2024 when her son and Fred's grandson, Grant Schutte, joined with 47-year-employee, Mark Hadd, in ownership and operations. The elevator is the only business still operating in the once thriving, lumber town that in the early 1900s included a dance hall and car dealership.



Turner Bean and Grain at 119 S Railroad Street, Turner, MI in its early days. It is currently in its 113th year of operation.

Turner Bean and Grain

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Historical Sites Cont. ...

Arenac County Historical Society

Au Gres

Brick Sidewalk: A portion of the original brick sidewalk laid in 1907 still remains in front of The Arenac County Historical Society and former United Methodist Church on Michigan Ave.

Independent Order of Odd Fellows: The IOOF was found in 1819 by Thomas Wildey in Baltimore, MD and focuses on humanitarian service. The IOOF building is still standing in Au Gres and also housed a Wood Shop located on Michigan Ave and Mackinaw streets.

Fr. Henri Nouvel, SJ Historical Marker: The historical marker is on the Northwest lawn of St Mark's Catholic Church on S Court Street. The marker recognizes Fr. Henri Nouvel's efforts in teaching Native Americans religious instruction in 1675. Nouvel traveled from St. Ignace to Saginaw for classes. **18**

Sanks Indian Marker: The historical marker recognizes the Sank Indians who inhabited the Point Au Gres area. The Sanks were a territorial tribe and were eliminated by Northern Indian tribes, including the Chippewa Indian Tribe about 1538. **19**



The Point Au Gres boardwalk and park on Santiago and Booth roads is marked with an historical marker recognizing the township's Native American history.

Historical Sites Cont. ...

Arenac County Historical Society

Chapel in the Park: Chapel in the Park is located in Kinder Platz Park on the North side of East Michigan Ave across the street from the now Arenac County Historical Society in Au Gres. The Chapel was formerly St. John's Congregational Church, also known to locals as the "Old German Church." It was dedicated on May 11, 1913 at its original location on Tonkey and Bessinger roads in Sims Township. Today, the building is owned by the City of Au Gres, who had it moved to the park in the early 2000s. The city added electricity to the building, which holds about 100 people with 10 original wooden pews on each side. 17



Roberta House-Forshee

The Chapel in the Park is formerly known as the Old German Church. George Dittenber and John Felsing, German settlers, erected the church.

*A History of Arenac County, Michigan
by Calvin Ennes*

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Delano School: The 1897 Delano School is on Delano and Whitman roads in Whitney Township. The school closed in 1965 and later housed The Arenac County Museum until 1984. The bell tower still exists in 2026.

Roberta House-Forshee 18



Cemeteries

Arenac County Historical Society

Arenac Township

Arenac Township: Main Street Rd, Northwest of Arenac State Road near the former Arenac Store, North of Stover Road.

Evergreen Cemetery: West side of Michigan Ave, North of US-23 in Omer.

St Edwards: West side of Michigan Ave, North of US-23, next to Evergreen Cemetery, Omer.

Au Gres Township

Linwood Cemetery: East Linwood Road, West of N Court St and North of the former Bessinger Pickle Company. **20**

Indian Burial Ground: Michigan Ave, Au Gres

Indian Burial Ground: Gordon Road, Au Gres

Unknown Cemetery: Lentner Road, North of US23, Au Gres

Clayton Township

Clayton Township Cemetery: 1124 Reed Road, Sterling, North of Main Street

Deep River Township

Polish National Cemetery: On the West side of Augustine Road, between Wyatt and Ellison roads in Sterling.

St John's Byzantine Cemetery: Melita Road, North of Old M-76 and next to the Sterling Cemetery

Sterling Cemetery: Melita Road, North of Old M-76

Plains Cemetery: North side of Jose Road and East of Grove Road in Omer. No tombstones or burial records exist.

Lincoln Township

Resurrection of the Lord Catholic Cemetery: The Catholic Cemetery is located North of the City of Standish on US-23 on the East side of the highway.

Woodmere Cemetery: Woodmere Cemetery is on US-23 just North of the City of Standish on the West side of the highway.

Cemeteries Cont. ...

Arenac County Historical Society



Mason Township

Cedar Valley Cemetery: The cemetery is on the South side of Maple Ridge Road in Mason Township, approximately six miles West of M-65 in Twining.

Moffatt Township

Alger Cemetery: The cemetery is located on the West side of M-76, one mile South of Alger.

Indian Cemetery: Lost

Sims Township

Sims-Whitney Cemetery: The cemetery is located on the East side of US-23 along the Lake Huron shoreline, approximately six miles North of the City of Au Gres.

Sims Family Cemetery: The "Private" family cemetery of the Sims' Family is located on US-23, approximately five miles North of the City of Au Gres on the bayside.

Standish Township

Coon Family Cemetery: The "Private" cemetery is located on Worth Road behind the Saganing Eagles Landing Casino.

Pine River Cemetery: The cemetery is located on the East side of State Road, just South of Pine River Road. in Standish Township.

Saganing Cemetery: The cemetery is located on Sturman and Worth roads in Standish Township, across from the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Center.

Turner Township

NONE

Whitney Township

NONE



Parks

Arenac County Historical Society

Arenac County Fairgrounds

2392 Airpark Drive, Standish

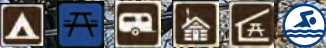
The Arenac County Fairgrounds has been the site of the annual Arenac County Fair since it was established in 1890 and incorporated in 1946. The Fair is July 14-18, 2026. The grounds include event space, sheltered exhibition space; and a brand new Event Center with kitchen and dining and meeting area.



Arenac County EDC

Arenac County Point Au Gres Park

1775 Rumsey Road, Au Gres



Au Gres Boat Launch

Riverside Drive, Au Gres



Au Gres Riverside Park

US 25/Water Street, Au Gres



Oasis Lake Park

60 M-76 South, Sterling, MI 48659



Pine River Access Boat Ramp

Wigwam Road, Standish Township



Point Au Gres Boardwalk

2211 E Bay Ridge Dr, Au Gres



Singing Bridge Public Access

1998 North Huron, Au Gres



Sterling Park

State/Locust streets, Sterling



Youngman Fiddler Park

3000 State Road, Standish



Drive Arenac 250 Tour Contest Sites

Arenac County Historical Society



Drive, Post, Tag, Like and WIN

20 Sites = 20 entries to WIN

Must be 18 or older; Do not enter private properties; See complete rules, page 2.

Drive Arenac 250 Tour Contest Sites

Arenac County Historical Society



Map KEY



- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Maple Ridge Presbyterian Church/Private Property | 11. Colombe Farm/Private Property |
| 2. Old Berry School/Private Property | 12. Ye Olde Courthouse |
| 3. Goodroe Farm/Private Property | 13. Twining Jail/Private Property |
| 4. Wiley House/Private Property | 14. Turner Bean and Grain |
| 5. Sterling Park | 15. Delano School/Private Property |
| 6. Old Standish Hospital | 16. Arenac County Historical Society |
| 7. Standish Depot | 17. Chapel in the Park |
| 8. Saganing United Methodist Church | 18. Fr Henri Nouvel, S.J. Historical Marker |
| 9. Saganing Cemetery | 19. Indian Historical Marker |
| 10. The former Lentz Store/Private | 20. Linwood Cemetery |



Above: The Arenac County Courthouse at 120 N Grove, Standish. Left: The Arenac County Veterans Memorial between the county courthouse and the Arenac County Jail in Standish. Below: The Arenac County Courthouse in 1907.

This project is dedicated to the Native Americans and immigrant settlers of Arenac County who through generations of family, faith, perseverance, sacrifice, pain and joy built and developed, literally from the ground up without any modern industrial or technological advancements, some of the very communities we still enjoy today.

We hope you enjoyed the ride as much as we did.
Happy 250th Anniversary, America!

Arenac County Historical Society
Drive Arenac 250 Tour Committee and Contributors
 Roberta House-Forshee * Austin Hazeltine * Phyllis Klender *
 Brenda Matt * Ricky Rockwell * Greg Dittenber * Gaynor Fales * The
 Standish Historical Depot * Au Gres Area Chamber of Commerce

Created by Roberta House-Forshee

