



FLAT RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FRHS LogMark

Anniversary Year-End Review, November/December, 2022

Board of Directors: Keith Hudson, President; Robin Walter, V. President and School Liaison; Jean Hudson, Secretary; Lee Beard, Treasurer; Judy Gager, Publicist; Trustees Larry Alman, Kelly Deitz, Steve Kemp, Bill Garlick, Carolyn Garlick (emeritus); Rae-Anne Beard, Cory Smith, Susan McDonnell.

Meet Susan McDonnell, our newest board member, elected at the Annual Membership Meeting in October. Even before she joined the board, she put in many hours lining up sponsors for the golf outing, coordinating the Sandy Pony Birthday Party and helping out in many other ways. Susan moved to the Greenville area in 2019. She visited the museum and says she fell madly in love with the history and artifacts of Greenville and began volunteering as a docent. She is excited to add her energy to the dedicated board of the museum and we're delighted to have her!. Welcome, Susan!



1972 – 2022
THANK YOU, HSM
FOR YOUR
PARTNERSHIP!

Our 50-year Anniversary is drawing to a close, but what a year it has been! During our Re-Dedication Ceremony, we received a **MILESTONE PLAQUE** as a **MICHIGAN SEMICENTENNIAL ORGANIZATION**. *“This plaque is issued by the Historical Society of Michigan, in recognition of FLAT RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM, founded in 1972 for more than 50 years of continuous operation in service to the people of Michigan and contributing to the growth and vitality of our state.”* Our museum will be highlighted in the January/February 2023 issue of “Michigan History” magazine published by the Historical Society of Michigan! We thank HSM for honoring us with their Society and Educator Awards this year! **Did you know that as a member of Flat River, YOU** can take advantage of the many programs and workshops HSM offers during the year? Their “History Hounds” programs online Tuesday noons or Wednesday evenings offer great history presentations on a variety of themes. Check out HSM website has info!

During our anniversary year, over 2450 visitors came to the museum to help us celebrate! We thank our volunteers for helping to guide visitors and activities throughout the year.



Some were students:

← **3rd graders** who came in the spring before the museum was officially open, to participate in activities about Native Americans and fur traders - - - - **and 4th graders** → who came in the fall to learn how hard it was to live and work in a lumber camp of old.



MORE ABOUT OUR ANNIVERSARY YEAR:



Visitors in May during Spring Into the Past weekend saw our special **“Celebrating Women”** display of prominent women of Greenville, created by board member Robin Walter, who even printed a booklet about the women that’s for sale at the museum with medallions, patches, glasses and other anniversary mementoes.

Summer weekends were busy with visitors and others came Thursday evenings prior to the Rotary music concerts in the park.



Our first-ever **golf outing** was a huge success. (Plans are underway for another to be held June 24, 2023. Hope everyone will join us.)



In July, GHS Class of 1964 alumni came to dedicate our new **“Postcards from Baldwin Lake”** exhibit which they helped fund. The Baldwin Lake Association also visited to learn more about their lake history. **Day campers** from Danish Cultural Center came to learn more about their history and heritage.



Our summertime **Victorian Garden Party** was a special event with lovely ladies in pretty hats to enjoy a beautiful day with the sound of a string quartet and a babbling waterfall!



What fun we had at the **Sandy Pony 60th birthday party**, with families enjoying many “horsey” activities. Danish Festival weekend, we were represented in the festival parade and had many visitors from out of town.



Another “first” was our **Grandparent Day** when we opened our period rooms for a multi-generational photo op experience.



Three **Haunted Museum Fright Nights** were spooky successes and Halloween Trick/Treat brought out great costumes. P.2

HISTORY OF THE FLAT RIVER MUSEUM – Part 3 Final – 1980s to Present

PHASE 3, the renovation of the lower basement level was begun about 1981, once the city removed the last of its park equipment to a new storage building nearby. Plans included three period rooms to depict shops for blacksmith, carpenter and harness maker, as well as displays of home and agricultural nature. Cost of basement work would be about \$7500 and the completion goal was 1982. However, with expenses for moving the Eureka Township Hall to the museum site and updates to the exterior of the museum building, it was March of 1983 before the basement was finally completed and opened.

By 1986, the museum had recorded 34,000 visitors since its dedication in 1972! During Michigan's Sesquicentennial in 1987, a new loading dock, ramp and door were completed, needed office items donated, and other enhancements were made.

For Greenville's Sesquicentennial in 1994, many special events were held and a history book was published and sold. The first military encampment was held and became an annual event for five years. During 1997, the 25th anniversary of the museum, a replica Silver theater was created on the main floor with a small stage and theater-type seats.

Around 2000, community members with a passion to rebuild the famous Fighting Falcon glider found a new home in the former school administration building on Cass Street and the military artifacts from the Eureka hall and museum were donated to them for their new military museum. The industrial artifacts from an area in the museum's second floor were moved to the Eureka hall in 2001 and additional period rooms took their place upstairs. In 2002 the basement display area was updated and spruced up.

Outside, work began in 2006 to create a Victorian garden in the yard and on the hill, with assistance of Boy Scouts and many others. Rocks were brought in and bricks from old city streets were laid for the pathways. A waterfall was added in 2007 and the area became a photographer's paradise.

Designers of the garden, Jennifer Simon and Julie Johansen, accepted the Michigan Museums Association's award for Institutional Achievement.

In 2012 the Superintendent of Greenville Public Schools humbly requested the return of the 1912 school clock that had been installed in the front of the museum, to be used in the fieldhouse of the new Legacy Field. The museum agreed to return the clock, once arrangements were made for local craftsman Jack Bailey to create a beautiful stained-glass window to take its place and fill the big round hole.



The window design depicts founder John Green overlooking the Flat River toward the tall pine tree on the opposite side.

With a hundred years from the school (1912) to the field (2012), it was dubbed the "Centennial Clock" and the Class of 1962 raised funds for a descriptive plaque at the field. It was a win-win situation for all and again shows the community spirit of Greenville.

Another example of community can be seen in downtown Greenville, where historical research from the museum helped to create interpretive panels to show pictures and history of what present-day buildings were like in the past. The historical society received the 2017 COGG Spirit of Collaboration Award for that endeavor and for its school programming.

A grant request for renovation of the entry and main floor of the museum resulted in a Greenville Area Foundation Challenge Grant of \$150,000, along with a consultant stipend to help raise the funds. The "Bridging the Generations" drive was wholeheartedly supported by the community and resulted in more than the original goal. Strategic planning sessions resulted in a new logo for the museum as well as many plans and ideas for the future, with a professional exhibit designer guiding designs and creations.

A new entry porch, steps and ramp were constructed, while inside, the walls of the main floor were sandblasted to remove paint, ceilings were painted black and new flooring installed. A large back room was turned into an educational center with a Native American setting and authentic wigwam at one end and a log cabin fur trading post at the other end. A Ribbon-Cutting Event for this first phase was held August 27, 2019.

New exhibits continued to be added to form a chronological history of the community, from ancient seas and ice age to modern day industries and Meijer stores. The garden and pathways which had been disheveled by construction were put back in order, and outdoor artifacts were added and labeled to create an exterior museum that can be viewed even when museum is closed.

The COVID pandemic in 2020 kept the museum closed to visitors, but much work was safely done by volunteer board members and others, in spite of it. The entire office was emptied and renovated and updated. A team of four board members worked daily to inventory, clean and restage the entire second floor period rooms. A storage room was emptied, painted, and outfitted with new shelves and workspace. Accumulated acquisitions were accessed and a new website was created. New wiring and other necessities were completed.

The museum finally reopened with health precautions in spring, 2021. An intern was added in 2021 and did many tasks as she learned about museum operations. Plans were begun for celebrating the 50-year anniversary of the museum in 2022, as well as the 55-year anniversary of the historical society.

During the museum's 50th year in 2022, many special events and activities were planned to celebrate!

A grand re-opening reception in April unveiled some commemorative glasses, pins, and medallions. A Golden Anniversary Golf Outing in June brought together business and sports for a day of fun. A lovely tea party in the Victorian garden featured a string quartet for ambiance.

A new Baldwin Lake exhibit in the lower level was unveiled and dedicated with the GHS Class of 1964 who supported it and visited by Baldwin Lake Association members.

In August, we celebrated the Meijer Sandy Horse 60th Birthday Party, marched in the Danish Festival Parade and reached out with a ham radio event. A Grandparent Day in September provided a generational photo op. Several work days sorted out the crowded Eureka building and determined renovation needs.

During the year, we were visited by Fox 17 for a TV program and gave information for WOOD TV8 feature program. We were honored to receive the Greenville Public Schools "School Bell Award" for our collaboration with students. We received the Historical Society of Michigan's 2022 Society Award and Robin Walter received their Educator Award. Keep Michigan Beautiful also selected us for their President's Award for the garden and yard beauty and education.

The rededication of the museum October 10, exactly 50 years from the original dedication, featured city, state and historical presentations, as well as introduction of a time capsule. A student who unlocked the door 50 years ago was present to reenact the event.

Looking back, we appreciate all the support and encouragement from our community that helped create the Flat River Historical Museum fifty years ago and continues to sustain it in the present day. We look forward to a future of continued community interest and participation through memberships, donations, events and the investments to and income from our endowment fund.

Thank you to everyone who believes in and supports the Flat River Historical Society and Museum.

(Looking ahead, we hope to do some renovations on the Eureka Town Hall building to make it more useful.)

REDEDICATION CEREMONY OCTOBER 10, 2022



Our Anniversary was capped off with a Rededication Ceremony exactly 50 years from the original dedication, October 10, 1972. Flat River President Keith Hudson (center) presided over the event. A city proclamation was made by Mayor ProTem Jeff Scoby (top left) and a State of Michigan tribute was presented by Judy Emmons (top right). (Lower row, left to right) Kelly Deitz read the 50-year history of the museum. Historical Society of Michigan representative Erika McDowell (lower left), presented HSM 2022 awards for Society and Educator of the year, and the Milestone Award for 50 years. Robin Walter showed the Time Capsule that will be filled with memorabilia of our anniversary year and buried on museum property for the next generation to discover. David Brewster, who as a student 50 years ago had the honor to unlock the door, was present again to unlock it 50 years later!

Thank you for supporting the Flat River Historical Society and Museum for the past 50 years.

We are exceedingly grateful for such a supportive community as Greenville and beyond. Your smiles and encouragement and continuing visits to see what's new keep us going and wanting to please you. As the year ends, your Flat River membership dues show that you appreciate and support an organization that preserves and shares local history. Additional donations reinforce your support for the importance of what we do. You can renew or donate easily on our website, flatrivermuseum.org or use the form on this Logmark's last page. Tell your friends and family.

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SELECT CHARITY: FLAT RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

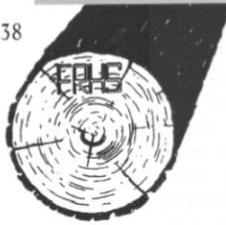
As you do your gift shopping online, remember to use
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and select charity: FLAT RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY)
Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

LOGMARK

FLAT RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 188

Greenville, MI 48838



MUSEUM IS CLOSED

Until April.

**Thanks for your support
during 2022. We hope
you will continue to
support us in 2023.**

Flat River Historical Society

P. O. Box 188 • Greenville, MI 48838 • 616-754-5296

APPLICATION FOR NEW or RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP

Dues payable at the beginning of the calendar year

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email address _____ Logmarks will be emailed unless checked: _____

Phone _____

___ New ___ Renewal Date _____

___ Single - \$15.00 ___ Family - \$25.00 ___ Annual Business - \$50.00

#Giving Tuesday - Additional Donation _____

Would you like to be a volunteer? _____ The Flat River Historical Society needs you!

Fill in this membership form and return it with your check to the above address. Dues are payable at the beginning of the calendar year. If you have already paid your membership dues for the year 2023, we **thank you**, and want you to know that your membership is the lifeblood of the society.