Whenever anyone asks me why I raise sheep and make my own yarn, my answer is: “Because it makes me feel connected with history!” We live in a time when antiquated things are cast aside for new, fresh, up and coming devices. I am not against such things when used in proper proportion, time and place. However, I cannot help thinking we do ourselves much disservice by prioritizing the modern and contemporary, all the while forgetting where our roots lie.

We live in a day when social media, YouTube etc.… are prevalent, prioritized and routine. So, it should not surprise anyone that the average time spent on social media is 2 ½ hours per day with 46% of people spending a daily average of 5-6 hours on their smart phones. And though this doesn’t seem too concerning to most, it would definitely make our ancestors be asking questions. This should in turn make our generation stop and think about where our future is headed if we continue down media driven rhythms of life.

Looking back 100+ years ago, our grandparents/great-grandparents treasured the hand-me-down skills they learned from their parents. Life was slower, and I venture to suggest it may have been more enjoyable than our fast-paced lives that are considered “normal” today. What now might seem an art-form and/or craft that is nostalgic or a fun hobby, in contrast was valued and appreciated as a necessity for survival not that long ago.

Why do I enjoy spinning a fiber that I grow in my backyard? I love bringing awareness of the history that is spun into every fiber! The opportunities I have had to share and demonstrate spinning fiber have shown me that minds of any age are hungry for something simple like spinning, crocheting, etc.… are prevalent, prioritized when antiquated things are cast aside for new, fresh, modern and contemporary devices. I am not against such things when used in proper proportion, time and place. However, I cannot help thinking we do ourselves much disservice by prioritizing the modern and contemporary, all the while forgetting where our roots lie.

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Early PTA Record Books Donated

The PTA, Parent Teacher Association, founded nationally in 1897, is an organizational voice for all children, a resource for families, and an advocate for public education. It is an organization composed of parents, teachers, and staff that was created to encourage parental participation in the schools.

With thanks to the donation from Terry and Kathi (Bartell) Miller, RAHGS now has the record books for the Richmond chapter of P.T.A. from 1938 through 1958. The first page of the first book is transcribed for you here.

Richmond, Mich. October 11, 1938

The meeting of people interested in organizing a Parent-Teacher association was called at the Roosevelt Auditorium by Supt. M.L. Cushman. He extended a welcome to those present, on behalf of the faculty and Board of Education of the Richmond Schools, and gave an explanation of P.T.A. as to history, purpose, structure and activity.

Mr. Cushman then introduced Mrs. Almstead, Junior President of the Macomb Co. Council P.T.A., who outlined the general procedure in organizing a P.T.A. She said the work of the organization acquaints people who have no other chance to become acquainted and gives an outlet for activities to people who have no other outlet, since it consists of all classes of people working together. She listed the requirements for people who will become officers of a P.T.A. saying that they must be people who love folks, who are friendly, who can get others to follow them in the work, and who will give credit to others and not claim it all for themselves, people who can improve, who have confidence that the right will win, who are good workers, patient, sincere, not easily discouraged and who thoroughly enjoy their work.

The motion was made, seconded, and carried that we form a Parent Teachers Association. Mr. Cushman then read the proposed by-laws, by articles and sections...

Mr. Cushman appointed a nominating committee composed of Mrs. Lola B. Smith, Mrs. Albert Lindke, and Mrs. Scott Burke, and instructed the committee to return to the Home Economics room to nominate the necessary officers.

Remarks were made by W.L. Lee, County School Commissioner, and a reading given by Mrs. Hollis.

The nominating committee proposed the following officers, who were declared elected and were installed...

President: Mrs Harold Adams
Mother Vice President: Mrs Ralph Fuerstenau
Father Vice President: Roy Eppler
Teacher Vice President: Marion Stewart
Secretary: Mrs. Lewis Smith
Treasurer: Mrs. Harold Parker
Historian: Mrs. L. W. Youatt

Mr. Cushman then turned the meeting over to Mrs. Adams, who declared it adjourned.

Refreshments were served by Miss Waite of the Home Economics Department.

Lola B. Smith
Temporary Secretary

The final two pages in the last book in our possession are dated May 12, 1959 and September 22, 1959 (just prior to the opening of the new high school). The following names are mentioned on those pages: President Glen Connor, Superintendent Nelson, Mr. Dunklee, Mrs. Robt. Snitchler, Mrs. Winton Hath, Mrs. Donald Keech, Mr. Clifford Hughs, Mrs. Robt. Armstrong, Mr. Wallace Gibson, Mrs. Richard MacMartin, Mrs. Busch, Mrs. Orris, Mrs. Dunklee, Mrs. Peppernau, Mrs. Hughes.

What a treasure these books are to have in our collection. The beautifully handwritten (in cursive!) penmanship and the well-constructed sentences make these minutes a pleasure to read. To find out more about who was involved with the P.T.A. and what that organization did for the children in our area between 1938 and 1959, come to the museum and take a look. C.R.
learning. I love seeing when the lightbulb goes off in these minds as they learn firsthand how yarn was made for hundreds of years.

To be completely transparent, I did not learn to spin from my grandmother. Library books, YouTube (it does have its uses) and trial and error were my teachers. I also have a patient, understanding and helpful husband. My grandmother did however pass down to me her love of crocheting. And so bloomed the blossom of love for history and fiber in my heart!

I mentioned earlier that fiber craft was a necessity rather than hobby not that long ago. If the lady of the household wanted to keep her family warm in our Michigan winters, she would have to spend long hours preparing and making wool underthings and outerwear for herself and loved ones. Her skills would have been highly valued and appreciated on cold winter days and nights! The articles of clothing would have been saved and mended from wear, and passed down for generations. Now adays we aren’t even fully aware of where our clothing comes from, who made it, or how full the landfills are with last year’s latest fashion. I truly believe our generation has so much to learn from our ancestors!

We are so blessed to have innovation! The inventions and scientific findings of the last 100 years have propelled us into a very productive nation! Along with such findings though, we have mostly forgotten the slower ways of life. On the surface, they seem less productive, but after taking time to slow down and enjoy doing something simple like spinning, crocheting, knitting, weaving etc., one is left feeling comforted and refreshed! How very productive for our mental, physical and spiritual selves! Even though it was a necessity for our grandparents, I can guess that the same satisfied, joy-filled feeling was just as present in their hearts and hands from their work as I experience today. This is why I love it so much! The shared feeling of contentment that I have with the homemaker 100 years ago.

Why bring a Fiber Festival to the Historic buildings in Richmond Michigan? Well, fellow fiber enthusiasts: Dennis Pellegrom and Anne Tullet and myself came together with the same desire that others in our community would benefit from the history, knowledge, and joy gained from learning about fiber arts. From those desires blossomed the Festival of Fibers to celebrate and showcase these benefits.

This being our first year, we decided to concentrate on demonstrations including: spinning, weaving, crocheting/knitting as well a brief history of how fiber is prepared and how the industry has changed over the past 100 years. What better place to talk about history than the historic buildings in Richmond Michigan?!

Admission is free! We have hands-on crafts planned for all ages, as well as a fiber arts/crafts and fiber related vendor sale planned as a way for local fellow fiber enthusiasts to show off their handiwork. Planned for Saturday July 23rd 9am-5pm and Sunday July 24th 10am-4pm at the Richmond Historic buildings on Park St in Richmond, Michigan. A full schedule of events and demonstrations will be posted soon to the Fiber Festival link on the RAHGS website. We are still currently searching for demonstrators, craft/vendor applicants, and volunteers for the event. Interested please call or text Audrey Goetzinger: 248-622-3393 We are on Facebook, please checkout our page: “Festival of Fibers Sponsored by RAHGS” Links for signup can be found on Facebook or on the RAHGS website.

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SAVE THE DATE

5th Annual Living History Cemetery Walk City of Richmond Cemetery
Saturday, September 24, 2022 1:00-3:00 P.M.
Inclement Weather- Sunday, September 25, 2022

Featuring the history of: Clarence Flowers- One of Richmond’s first photographers O.B.Evans- Village President for 25 years Lettie Bailey- daughter of James and Jemima Claggett (Pioneer Family) Ferdinand and Louise Springborn- The Springborn Hotel George Weston- Richmond Lumber Yard established in 1875

For more information contact: Mary Ellen 586.808.2953 mlogan5477@sbcglobal.net
Memorial Day in 1969 was marked by the passing of one of Richmond’s well-known Grocer and Banker. The headline in the upcoming Review newspaper would read “Pioneer Richmond Banker is dead”. Lee VanInwagen or just “Lee Van”, as he was usually known by, had been associated with the First National Bank after his retirement, serving as vice-president and as one of the official appraisers. However, people in town remembered Lee best wearing the white apron of a grocer for thirty years, at times in partnership with others having similar interests.

William Lee VanInwagen was born 6 November 1890 on the Bates farm on Armada Ridge, to Frank and Amy [Bates] VanInwagen. Two children were born into this union: Nora, who died when only three and one-half years old, and Lee. The family lived on the Armada Ridge farm until 1915 when Frank and Amy had bought a home on Park Street in town.

Lee’s wife, Helen, died 3 July 1976. Their daughter Rocelia “Rose” married Lawrence Solberg; Ruth married Russell Claggett, a Richmond native, and Mary married Grover Bowles of Rochester, NY.

On 20 June 1917, Lee was married to Helen C. Evans, school teacher, and daughter of Isaac and Sophie (Marth) Evans. The family lived on Ridge Street where their three daughters, Rocelia, Ruth, and Mary were born.

Lee had been in a partnership with Harry Kolts, sr. since 1920. The store was initially located on the West side of Main Street. In May of 1929, Harry Kolts sold his interest in the store to Charles Lapp. After a few months when Lapp resold to Kolts, the latter offered Elmer Sample, a young, energetic and faithful employee, the partnership in the firm.

The newly formed enterprise, then known as the Van & Sample Market, celebrated its twentieth anniversary in May of 1952. The store at that time was located across the street from its former location, between the A&P and “Smith’s 5c - $1.00 Store”. The sign above the door read “The Red and White Stores”.

After Lee’s retirement in 1954 he supervised the construction of several homes in the community. He still owned the farm on the Armada Ridge and was a member of the Farm Bureau.

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Was it Tea or Was it Coffee?

Submitted by Sue Jakubiak

Alice Virginia (McWhirter) Foster, RAHGS Member Ginny Foster

Who knew my end-of-season lunch with fun-loving, good-friend and snowbird Ginny Foster would begin a search into her family history? Over lunch I shared with Ginny my excitement about the RAHGS 2022 8th Annual Historic Tea program “Vintage Wedding Gowns through the Ages” to be presented by Historical Seamstress, Beth Turza, of Canton, Michigan. Ginny offered her bouffant wedding gown and matching headpiece from her marriage to Richard “Dick” Foster in 1957, for our lobby display.

After lunch, I followed Ginny home to pick up the dress. I was thrilled and ready to leave Ginny’s house when she spotted another box which she thought I might enjoy. In it was an obviously older wedding gown and what looked like a nightgown. Under a muslin cloth, Ginny pulled out a slip of paper containing the words “Wedding gown worn by Grandmother Mary Easton Folger 1839”. Ginny said her family was among the first settlers from England to Nantucket Island, Massachusetts, in the 1600s. Oh my, if this dress was the real thing, I surely did not want to be responsible for it all winter! Ginny insisted, and reluctantly, I took both dresses home.

A call followed by pictures of the 1839 gown sent to Beth Turza resulted in a meeting with Beth to authenticate the gown. Beth carefully spread a cloth on a table and donned white gloves, as she gently proceeded to examine the gown. If the dress had any machine stitching, it would not be from that period. Beth quickly determined the dress was hand sewn, probably by a professional seamstress. She explained the dress fabric was Jacquard woven figured silk and only 18 inches wide, as broad looms had not been invented yet. The pleated Bertha (collar) across the chest line was pure silk satin. The accompanying nightgown (NOT) was a “chemise,” which would have been the first garment the bride put on before her corsets.

Beth’s first comment to me about the 183-year-old wedding dress was “exquisite”! So, to the delight of all the 185 ladies who attended the 2022 Tea, Beth added and featured the 1839 wedding gown ensemble of Ginny Foster’s ancestor Mary Easton, in her presentation!

In the meantime, Ginny searched genealogy and confirmed Mary Easton was her great-great grandmother. Ms. Easton was a Quaker. Mary Easton married Andrew Jackson Folger on May 5, 1839, on Nantucket, Massachusetts, where both the bride, age 21 and groom, age 23, were residents. Nantucket records listed Mary as the daughter of George and Sarah (Macy) Easton, and Andrew, the son of Thomas A. and Judith (Morris) Folger. Both families were descendants of the first settlers on Nantucket Island. Ten years later, 1850 Census records listed Mary and Andrew with four children: three girls, Mary, Sarah, and Lizzie, and a boy, Arthur.

So, now, what about the coffee connection, you ask?

Yes, Mary’s groom, Andrew Jackson Folger, was a relative of James Athearn Folger, the founder of J. A. Folger and Co., or as we know it today - Folger’s Coffee!
RAHGS Hosts Heritage Festival
For 3rd Year
Submitted by Don Graham, event chair

New at this year’s Heritage Festival were the Donley Farmall H tractor, the Macomb Farm Bureau agriculture exhibit trailer, and the young people’s chemistry area. The Farmall was the subject of several questions and certainly augmented the Donley family story. Almost all of the children – and many adults - visited and re-visited the virtual reality booth in the Farm Bureau trailer, donning the VR goggles to harvest soybeans with a huge John Deere tractor. In fact, one 80-year-old man sat in the booth for ten minutes “driving” the tractor. And kids were delighted changing the colors of various chemicals, watching liquids turn to solids, and setting fires and small explosions, squealing with delight as smoke and fire erupted from a volcano.

All of this occurred as a result of the contributions of people and businesses. We would encourage to support and express your appreciation to them. Our major sponsors were Family Farm and Home and Shepherd Sales and Service. Donors included Auto Zone, Capozzo and Sons, Dave and Susan Foster, Graham Family Farm, Hamlin Pub, Homey Bee Café, Mary Ellen and Doug Logan, Macomb Farm Bureau, O’Reilly’s, Papou’s Place Restaurant, Richmond Antique Engine and Threshing Association, Richmond Meat Packers, Sunrise Stores, US Pattern Shop, and the Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm Center. Without their support, the Heritage Festival would be much less than it is.

To all of the members of RAHGS who worked the event, we want to especially thank you. Some of you functioned in pain; some sacrificed important events; some suspended their normal activities and routine. All donated valuable time, of which we have such a limited amount. A few, over the last six months, have spent hours visiting area merchants in support of this important community occasion. In this day and age there is a desperate need for positive influences in the lives of young people. Showing them the efforts of previous generations and illustrating the strength of character required to survive in a more difficult time can’t help but stimulate their own work ethic and elevate their own character. Time will provide evidence of the good you contributed to the Richmond area, and the young lives you influenced in a constructive way. You and your work are rated so highly.

Recent Acquisitions
Submitted by Norm Gibson

Lorraine Burman: corn knife, wooden rake, corn husking tool, shears, croquet mallets.
Laura Baffaqlini Smith: Roberson family photos.
Marsha Phillips: Planet Jr. edger, Lever type post hole digger.
School Days at the Village

Mid-May proved to be a very busy time around the Historic Village as we hosted the annual School Days. Richmond Community Schools Fifth Grades (four sections) each spent a day in the one room schoolhouse with their teacher. The Saint Peter’s School, Kindergarten and 5th through 8th Grades enjoyed a tour of the Village, and on Monday May 23 Richmond Second Grades toured the grounds. One of our Board members commented that this is perhaps the most important things we do. Of course it is--we are educating these young people by showing them the importance of our mutual past, and we are having fun doing it.

Naturally many adults accompanied the classes, but all of this activity required many RAHGS volunteers to act as docents and presenters. Here is a list of those dedicated and generous members who shared their time and their knowledge with the children: Kris Nolan, Don Graham, Heather Rowley, Doug Porrett, Norm Gibson, Marsha Phillips, Jon Beard, Marla Beard, Rich Weinert, and myself. C.R

The Village Gardener

Submitted by Norm Gibson

We have had the village open on the second Tuesday of the month from 6-8 pm. to give more people an opportunity to enjoy the village. Our Gardener, Marsha Phillips, has been available to talk about preparing a garden and identifying plants. In July Marsha will introduce her butterflies and discuss how to attract and raise them. In August there will be photo-ops around the village. Hope to see you on one of these evenings.
Donley Family Visits Historical Village

Members of the Donley family returned to Richmond in late June to officially dedicate the replica Donley table built by Andrew Donley Robb, and to present the 1946 Farmall H tractor key to Vice President Don Graham. (For more information on the tractor, refer to the front page of the 2022 Spring Historian.)

Also presented during this visit were two videos. One is titled “The Family Heirloom: The Dining Table Story.” The other is “The Gift Tractor: The Story of the 1946 Farmall H Tractor,” narrated by John Donley. These videos, created by Brendon Donley, are now in RAHGS possession and are available for our visitors to see on the newly acquired AV equipment which was purchased by generous gift from the estate of Bill and Marianne (Donley) Kessler. John Donley, who appears to be the Donley family historian, made all of it happen. It is always good to see these fine people who travel from various states to the hometown of their ancestors to revisit their heritage, and to say hello to the ancestral family cabin. We enjoyed the time with multiple generations of Donleys--toddlers, an octogenarian, and all ages in between. RAHGS is fortunate that the Donley family continues to share their legacy with us—it is the story of one family, but yet it is a story that all of us share. Thank you, Donley Family, for everything you do for RAHGS. C.R.

Your Board in Action

April
• Rough wiring in barn is complete.
• Filling Station bids have been sent.
• School Section School painting will resume soon.
• Two representatives will attend the MCHA meeting on April 30.
• The Village will be open for visitors on second Tuesdays in May, June, July, and August.
• Research has begun for acquiring signs outside the buildings.
• Docents/ambassadors/greeters are needed to work at events.

May
• Demonstrators will be selling crafts at the Heritage Festival June 25 and 26.
• Vendors are reserving spots for the Festival of Fibers July 23 and 24.
• Bids for printing were submitted.
• Motion was made to purchase a new computer for the RAHGS office.
• The Village will be open during Good Old Days Weekend on Saturday and Sunday.

June:
• Flowers have been planted at the Village.
• Heritage Festival plans are on track.
• Vendors have reserved spots for the Fiber Festival.
• A permit for the windmill foundation has been submitted.
• Electrical work in barn has been completed.
• A contract with Set in Stone has been signed.
• Painting of schoolhouse has resumed.
• Computer needs continue to be assessed.
• A “Filling Station Fund Raising” letter will be sent to the membership.

C.R.
Janet Lee Klauka nee Martin, 90, of Richmond, passed away Sunday, May 29, 2022. Janet was born March 19, 1932 to the late Olney and Daisy Martin. Beloved wife of the late George (Jim) Klauka; cherished mother of Kirk and Jimmy (Jenny) Klauka; caring grandmother of Ryan and Leya Klauka and great grandmother of Juliana. Also, survived by her nephews, Robert Martin, Craig Martin and Craigs family, Barb, Sarah and Russell. Janet loved her extended Harrison Family, Tim, Val, the Mabrys, the Rowleys, the Booths and Charlotte. She is preceded in death by her brothers, Olney Jr., Wilbur and David (Mary Ann) Martin, nephew, Kevin Martin and niece, Barb Martin. Janet retired from Security Bank Northeast and was the loving caregiver to her son Kirk. She enjoyed shopping and spending time with family and friends especially her trips with Jim in their motorhome. Janet watched all kinds of sports, but loved Tiger baseball and University of Michigan football.

It was always great to see Janet’s smile at RAHGS events; she was especially fond of the Historic Tea and the annual dinner meetings where she knew the family history of almost everyone in the room. C.R.

Janet Ellen Kruger 78, of North Street, passed away Thursday, November 18, 2021, at MediLodge of Yale. She was born in Mt. Clemens, June 12, 1943, the daughter of the late Alfred and Bernice (Holborn) Berarducci. Her marriage to Robert Kruger was in 1966. Robert passed away May 14, 1995. Janet was a 1961 Sacred Heart Catholic School graduate and was a former parishioner of St. Edward on the Lake Catholic Church, Lakeport. She was a member of the Michigan Nature Association and the Clyde Historical Society. Janet was a homemaker and helped her husband on the farm with raising livestock and growing feed. She enjoyed ceramics, woodworking, and traveling. Surviving are a son, Robert Kruger, Jr. of Capac; two grandchildren, Ashley and Andrew; four siblings, Barbara Wittbrodt of North Carolina, Alice Stephans of Roseville, Allen (Betsy) Berarducci of Colorado and Karen Kahn of Florida, as well as many nieces, nephews and friends.

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**In Memoriam**

Janet Lee Klauka

Janet Ellen Kruger

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**TEA CHAT**

with co-chairs Christine & Sue

Q: I want to be sure to get the 2023 Historic Tea on my calendar. What is the date?
A: The 9th Annual Historic Tea is Saturday, March 18, 2023, at Solitude Links Golf and Banquet Center, (formerly Fore Lakes), in Kimball, MI.

Q: I am interested in setting a table. If I do so, must I sell all 8 tickets?
A: No, we will sell tickets to fill your table. Please contact us to have your name added to the hostess list.

Q: I have my great grandmother’s china. May I use that to set a table?
A: Absolutely! Tables set with heirloom china are so pretty. We always have a variety of tables: some are traditional and some themed.

Contacts:
Christine Rowley: crowley50@comcast.net; 810.392.0261
Sue Jakubiak: ejakubiak99@comcast.net; 810.305.6338

Watch for more Tea Chat news in the next Historian!
The Festival of Fibers will bring awareness and inspire curiosity in the pursuit of knowledge of the craft of fiber arts. We wish to educate the community on the history and creativity of how fiber arts were used in the past, as well as how they apply to our lives today.

Please consider joining us for: demonstrations/education, hands on kid’s craft, and local vendor fiber artist’s sale. The festival will take place in and around the RAHGS historical buildings.

Save the Date:

July 23 & July 24 2022

Key Event Info:

The Festival of Fibers

Volunteers Needed!
Demonstrators Needed!
Interested in joining the Vendor/Craft Show?

Please Contact:
Dennis Pellegrin
586-484-8729
or
Audrey Goetzinger
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Richmond Middle School Student Council Continues Village Clean Up Tradition

Submitted by Mary Ellen Shepherd-Logan

What began over 10 years ago, when Gil Orris was RAHGS President, Christine Rowley was Vice President and Mary Ellen Shepherd-Logan was still teaching and served as Richmond Middle School Student Council Advisor, continued again this year in May. Thirty-three ready, willing, and able students with their teachers, Ms. Jamie Clausen and Ms. Wycinski joined forces with the RAHGS garden and building crew for the annual grounds clean-up. Raking, pulling weeds, dusting furniture, sweeping floors, washing windows, moving artifacts, and a minute or two of some old time fun filled every minute of the morning. After enjoying a pizza picnic lunch, the students walked back to school (just like the “old” days) and back to class. “They were an amazing group of young people who worked hard and followed directions well. They really took pride in all they accomplished. The society sends out an enormous thank you to the students and their outstanding teachers.”

Recent Donations and Memorials

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Our mission statement:

• To share with others the legacy left to us by our forefathers, the migrants from the East and the immigrants from Europe, who with foresight and conviction built a better future for themselves and their children, and for the generations that followed.
• To honor and remember those who cleared the land, grew the crops, educated the young, and to pay homage to those who fought in the wars and sacrificed their lives for something they believed in.
• To encourage our community leaders to preserve the few historical buildings remaining today.
• To provide assistance to those who turn to us for help in finding their roots.

The general membership meetings/programs, which are open to the public, are held throughout the year. The Historic Village is open during Winter Festival, on Log Cabin Day, during Good Old Days, Thursday morning work bees, special events, and by special appointment. Watch the newsletter, the website, and Facebook for dates, times, and program information.