



Vol. 35, No. 3, March 2019

Director's Comments

Dear Friends,

The time has changed and with later daylight hours comes a whiff of hope for Spring.

In addition to warmer temperatures, BCHA joins in the celebration of National Women's History Month. We celebrate women like Amelia Earhart, Rosa Parks, Elizabeth Eckford, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, on whose shoulders we proudly stand.

The board and myself continue to meet with individuals for feedback on what BCHA is doing well and ways we may improve. We have a few more focus meetings this month and then we will be working on updating our strategic plan.

I hope you have marked your calendar for our Annual Meeting on Tuesday, April 23. We hold this meeting each year to report on our previous year's performance, present the Frank J. Ward Memorial History Award, and enjoy a presentation on local history. This year our presenter is Dr. Gregory Sumner. Sumner will speak on the information in his book, "Michigan POW Camps in World War II."

If you're looking for ways to get involved we have three upcoming events planned for spring and summer. See the section "Wanted: Volunteers" listing the opportunities to lend a hand.

Sincerely,
Kathy A. Cyr
Executive Director

Hey, batter, batter, swing! The Swingin' Ladies of the All-American Girls Baseball Professional League

With men fighting overseas during World War II, some of the major league baseball executives (Phillip Wrigley, owner of the Chicago Cubs; Branch Rickey, General Manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers; and Ken Sells, Assistant General Manager of the Chicago Cubs) became concerned that Major League games would cease. In an attempt to keep interest alive, the executives created the All-American Girls Softball League in 1943 (later renamed the All-American Girls Baseball Professional League). The league became very popular and lasted until 1954. Over the course of its existence 10 teams were created employing over 600 players. The players received a higher than average salary for women (between \$45-\$85 per week during the first few seasons and an average of \$125 per week during later seasons). At its height in the 1948 season, league attendance was over 900,000 spectators. The (somewhat exaggerated) story and creation of the league is displayed in the 1992 film, *A League of Their Own*. But did you

know that some of the players were from Berrien County? Today we look at, and celebrate, Lillian Luckey.

Lillian Luckey was born in Niles, MI May 19, 1919. Growing up during the depression there was not much to do and she would play a lot of baseball with the other kids in her neighborhood, developing a strong pitching arm. She later played for the Auto Specialties Auscos of St. Joseph and played in the US Marines from 1943-1945. In a 2008 interview she stated, "The only reason I became a pitcher, I think, is because I pumped water, and that helped me develop strength."

In 1946, Luckey was recruited by the South Bend Blue Sox as pitcher. The league's fourth season introduced two new teams to the circuit and a change in the size of the baseball (decrease to 11 inches from 11.5 inches). Additionally, there was the introduction of sidearm pitching to the game as the league continued to move from softball to baseball. During this season, an estimated 10,000 people saw the Fourth of July doubleheader game of the South Bend Blue Sox. The team ranked third overall.



Expectations of the girls' behavior were high and there were many regulations in place to keep the girls in line. Uniforms consisted of a belted, short-sleeved tunic dress with a flared skirt. According to the rules, skirts were not to be worn more than six inches above the knee. This was widely ignored to facilitate running and fielding.

During spring training the girls were required to attend Helena Rubinstein's evening charm school classes to learn etiquette for every situation from mannerisms to personal hygiene. Each player received a beauty kit and instructions on how to use it. Additionally, girls were not allowed to wear short hair, smoke, or drink in public and were required to wear lipstick. In order to ensure the girls did not misbehave each team was assigned a chaperone.

At the end of World War II and the return of men to the workforce and to the ball-fields, the interest and support of the All-American Girls Baseball Professional League declined, and it was largely forgotten by baseball historians. During the 1980s, one of the former league players, June Peppas, began a newsletter, searching for former teammates and opponents, resulting in a reunion in Chicago in 1982. From then on, general interest in the girls gained traction and there is a permanent display honoring the league installed in 1988 at the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, New York.

Luckey only pitched for that one year. She worked for five and a half years for the Medical Mission Sisters in Philadelphia before moving back to her hometown of Niles. She joined the staff at Niles High School serving as secretary from 1959 to 1984.



The 1946 South Bend Blue Sox Team.

Back, L-R: Jenny Romatowski, Betsy Jochum, Phyllis Koehn, Donald "Chet" Grant (Manager), Lucille Moore (Chaperone), Mona Denton, Elizabeth "Lib" Mahon.

Middle, L-R: Inez Voyce, Marge Stefani, Joyce Hill, Betty Luna, Mary "Bonnie" Baker, Lillian Luckey.

From the Collection

Sometimes while digging through archives we here at BCHA stumble upon other finds that spark our imagination. This happened at the beginning of the month while Kelsey, our Museum Services Coordinator, was attempting to locate some photographs when she found a professionally printed photograph of Dr. Mary M. Danford, First Great Medical Examiner for Michigan, L. O. T. M. This led to many questions: "Who was Dr. Danford? What does it mean to be 'First Great Medical Examiner?' and What does L. O. T. M. mean?"

The Knights of the Maccabees is a fraternity order formed in 1878 by businessmen in London, Ontario, based on the historic Maccabean traditions found in the Old Testament apocryphal books of the Maccabees. One of the main goals of the Knights of the Maccabees was to provide life insurance for its members. The Order grew rapidly amassing over 100,000 certificates in two years. The Order regularly reviewed its laws and in 1890, the laws of the Order provided for a ladies' auxiliary branch to be created: the Ladies of the Macabees, or, the L. O. T. M.



When the idea of a ladies' auxiliary branch was first introduced in 1886, there was quite a bit of opposition as the Knights doubted that their mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters "possessed sufficient ability and business tact to properly manage the Order and insure its success." The L. O. T. M., as the first fraternal benefit society operated exclusively by women, created their own laws, instituted its own subordinate bodies, provided its own ritual, had district Lodges or Hives, and managed its own financial affairs (subject only to the approval of the governing body of the Knights of the Maccabees). Not only was the branch an aid to the parent branch but also proved that women were fully capable of managing fraternal and business enterprises. These women worked and cared for the sick, provided relief to the suffering, uplifted humanity, and worked toward the betterment of the world at large. As stated in a history of the Maccabees, the Knights of the Maccabees recognized the capabilities of women and felt that "In every walk of life, in every line of action, the highest interests are subserved by mutual helpfulness, and it has been found that in secret societies, as in all other good things of life, 'It is not good for man to be alone.'"

At its first Annual Review of the Great Hive (the headquarters of the Ladies of the Maccabees) Dr. Mary M. Danforth, of Muskegon, Michigan, was elected the Great Medical Examiner. In the Peterson Magazine, Volume 6, January –June, 1896, presented an article of the Ladies of the Maccabees, extolling the wonders of the group and what achievements they were setting for womankind. In this article, Dr. Danforth was celebrated as "a distinguished physician practicing in Port Huron, who holds a very high professional rank in that community. Besides being an able practitioner she is a skillful chemist, an accurate learned scientific writer, and a scholar both within and without her vocation."

Aside from a mention in the Biennial Report compiled by the Supreme Commander (Lillian M. Hollister) of 1900, Danforth visited "a large number of States in the interest of contested claims and the general work of the Order, giving instructions and installing officers of subordinate hives and making address for public meetings.", and a notice of her move from Port Huron, Michigan, to Chicago, Illinois in 1903, there are no other news items or statements located for Dr. Mary M. Danforth.

Books of the Month

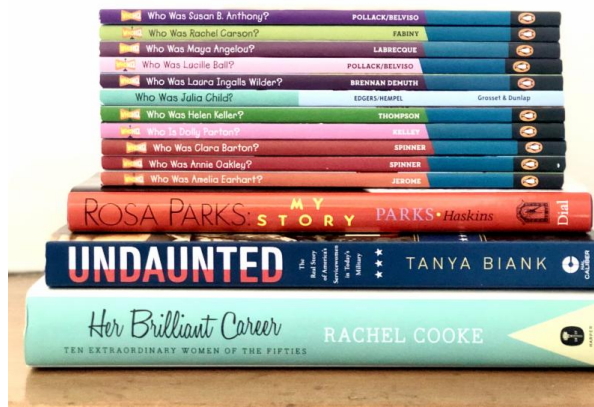
The books of the month feature women of history. Each book listed below is available for purchase in the History Center Gift Shop located in the 1839 Courthouse. Remember: members always receive 10% off items in the gift shop.

***Her Brilliant Career: Ten Extraordinary Women of the Fifties*, Rachel Cooke, Listed price: \$26.99;**

BCHA Price: \$21.99

Before there could be a Danica Patrick, there had to be a Sheila van Dam; before there was Barbara Walters, there was Nancy Spain; before Kathryn Bigelow came Muriel Box. The pioneers of *Her Brilliant Career* forever changed the fabric of culture, society, and the workforce.

Rosa Parks: My Story, Rosa Parks with Jim Haskins, Listed Price: \$17.99; BCHA Price: \$14.99
Written in her own straightforward and moving language, this compelling account speaks dramatically to our times and reveals the deliberate choices that clearly earned Rosa Parks the title "Mother to a Movement."



Undaunted: The Real Story of America's Servicewomen in Today's Military, Tanya Biank, Listed price: \$16.00; BCHA Price: \$11.99

Today, women make up 14 percent of our active-duty military forces, and they are now members of ground-combat units serving on the front lines. Since 9/11, more than 250,000 have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, yet servicewomen are still pressed to prove themselves and to overcome challenges men never face. ... Tanya Biank brings to light the issues of femininity, veiled discrimination, dating, marriage, separation from children, and self-worth by focusing on four individual stories.

In the Children's Section

The "Who Was" Series of Women in History. This series of history books recounts the stories of women in a compelling, inspiring, relatable manner. These are perfect gifts for girls between the ages of 8-13. \$5.99 each. Titles include:

Who Was Susan B. Anthony?

Who Was Rachel Carson?

Who Was Maya Angelou?

Who Was Lucille Ball?

Who Was Laura Ingalls Wilder?

Who Was Julia Child?

& More!



Wanted: Volunteers

At Berrien County Historical Association we host several programs throughout the year that use varying amounts of volunteers. There are three events in the coming months that you can help with. Read below to choose which one(s) you prefer and call 269-471-1202 or email kcyr@berrienhistory.org to sign up!

Pioneer Days, May 10, all day This annual spring event invites area 3rd and 4th grade classrooms (including homeschoolers) to the History Center to learn about life in the 1830s. Volunteers help lead and teach activities like: stenciling, life in a log cabin, courtroom dancing, cross-cut saws, corn shelling, and blacksmithing.

Mock Trial, May 22, 9:30 am - 12 pm The St. Joseph High School Practical Law Class will return for their mock trial. We need volunteers to serve on the jury to determine whether the defendant is innocent or guilty.

Fourth of July Community Gathering, July 4, 11 am - 5 pm BCHA, the Berrien Springs Community Library, and the Village of Berrien Springs are cooking up a way for everyone to celebrate our nation's birthday and we need lots of volunteers. The day will be broken up into 2-3 hour shifts and tasks will vary in

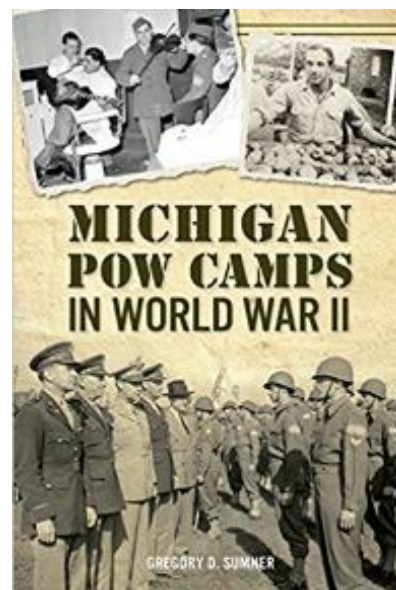
Mark Your Calendar

Save the date for BCHA Annual Meeting on Tuesday, April 23, 2019 at 7:00 pm in the 1839 Courthouse. This year's speaker will be Gregory D. Sumner (co-chair of the Department of History at University of Detroit-Mercy) on Michigan's Prisoner of War Camps during World War II. Sumner wrote a book on the subject (pictured left); you may purchase a copy in the Museum Gift shop ahead of time and at the event.

During World War II, Michigan became a temporary home to six thousand German and Italian POWs. At a time of home-front labor shortages, they picked fruit in Berrien County, harvested sugar beets in the Thumb, cut pulpwood in the Upper Peninsula and maintained parks and other public spaces in Detroit. The work programs were not flawless and not all of the prisoners were cooperative, but many of the men established enduring friendships with their captors.

We hope to see you on Tuesday, April 23, 2019 at 7:00 pm at the History Center!

Gregory Sumners will return on Thursday, July 18, 6:30 pm to repeat the presentation as part of our Thursdays at Courthouse Square series. This will be held in the Community Room at the Berrien Springs Community Library and will be handicapped accessible.



Community Events

Can You Dig It? Have you always imagined yourself an Indiana Jane type? You have the opportunity to get your hands dirty with Western Michigan University during their 44th Annual Archaeological Field School (June 27-August 16, 2019) at Fort St. Joseph in Niles, MI. [Follow this link for more information](#) and to complete an application (due Friday, March 15). You may also pick up an application at the History Center Museum Gift Shop.

Open House on Berrien Parks Our County Parks Department are looking for your input regarding the five year plan (2020-2024) for our county parks - including Courthouse Square in Berrien Springs. An open-house will be hosted at Love Creek Park, 9292 Huckleberry Road, Berrien Center, on March 20, from 3-4:30 pm, and 7-8 pm. If you are unable to attend in person you may also email comments to parks@berriencounty.org with your suggestions of ways to improve our parks.

Friends of the Library Book Sale

The Friends of the Library will hold their annual giant book sale April 25 - 27 in the Felland Auditorium at the Maud Preston Palenske Memorial Library in St. Joseph, MI. (see flier for more information)

2019 Friends of the Library
Annual Giant Book Sale
April 25th — 27th
In the Felland Auditorium—downstairs

Thursday, April 25	10:15am—7:00pm
Friday, April 26	10:15am—5:30pm
Saturday, April 27	10:15am—2:00pm

SALE Friday: Buy 2, get 1 FREE of equal value
Saturday: BAG SALE \$5.00 / bag!

Large selection of books for kids - tweens - teens!

Check out the treasures in the Book Bazaar and the RARE AND COLLECTIBLE BOOKS (these items are excluded from bag sale)

Don't Miss This Sale!

269-983-7167
Maud Preston Palenske Memorial Library
Sponsored by The Friends of the Maud Preston Palenske Memorial Library
500 Market Street, St. Joseph, MI 49085

The History Center is now on Instagram

A vital component of becoming relevant to a younger generation is an organization's presence on social media. The History Center has had a Facebook page for several years and [as of this month it is also on Instagram.](#)



You may be asking "What is Instagram?" Lifewire explains it nicely: "Instagram is a social networking app made for sharing photos and videos from a smartphone. Similar to Facebook or Twitter, everyone who creates an Instagram account has a profile and a news feed.

When you post a photo or video on Instagram, it will be displayed on your profile. Other users who follow you will see your posts in their own feed. Likewise, you'll see posts from other users whom you choose to follow."

Essentially it is a simplified Facebook where pictures are the main focus. We are excited to reach new audiences using this media outlet.

[Visit Our Website](#)

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BCHA Mission Statement

The Mission of the BCHA is to collect, preserve and interpret the history of Berrien County through exhibits, tours, publications, and educational and community outreach programs for public benefit.