

The Rochester Historical Preservation Society



Item

P.O. Box 13
ROCHESTER, ILLINOIS 62563

1830s Stone House

Spring 2022

www.rochesternhistoricalsociety.org

Rochester Historical Preservation Society Moving Forward!!

The RHPS is moving forward. We have had a two year hiatus and now are anxious to welcome visitors to the Stone House on the first Sundays, June through October, 1-4 p.m.

We also look forward to the Rochester 3rd grade classes visiting

the Stone House on May 23rd and 24th. There will be 3 groups each day starting at 9 a.m. Principal Jeff Reed expressed excitement about continuing this opportunity to expose the children to this bit of local history.

Mowing Rochester's Historical Park

Prior to 2021, the Rochester Historical Preservation Society (RHPS) was fortunate to have a volunteer mowing the Historical Park for us. However, we contracted with a lawn company to perform the trimming around the grounds. In the fall of 2020, we learned that our volunteer could no longer perform the mowing. With no other volunteers, our Treasurer approached James Foster, Superintendent of Public Works for the Village of Rochester, about their willingness to perform the

mowing and trimming for the Historical Park. Mr. Foster considered it possible and prepared us a proposal/quote which we agreed to. The question was then brought before the Village Board. A resolution was passed and the RHPS entered into a contract with the Village of Rochester for the mowing. The RHPS has recently agreed to have the Historical Park mowed by the Village of Rochester again for 2022. It will be mowed the same time as the Rochester Community Park on West Main Street.

The RHPS Thanks

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WEB & PRINT SOLUTIONS

For Building Our WEBSITE

Please join us for the RHPS Annual Meeting to "Jump Start" our society

MONDAY— MAY 16, 2022

7:00 p.m.

ROCHESTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

-OFFICERS-

PRESIDENT

????????

VICE PRESIDENT

Tony Schienschang

SECRETARY

Ann Rowley

TREASURER

Max Dillahunty

-DIRECTORS-

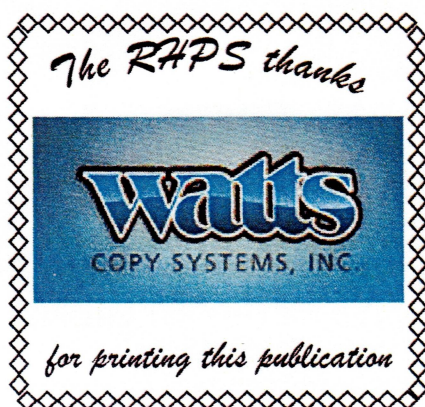
David Grubb

Toby McDaniel

David Ramsey

Jerry Robertson

Cheryl Soerensen



RHPS Board Seeks Society President

The Rochester Historical Preservation Society (RHPS) is seeking persons interested in serving as President. Our past President's term expired during COVID and we were unable to have a meeting where the nominating committee could present candidates for an election. According to the RHPS By-Laws, *"The President shall preside at all meetings of the membership, Board of Directors and Executive Committee; appoint chairpersons of standing and special committees; be ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee and preform such other tasks appropriate to the office."* The President's position is critical to the ongoing and successful operations of the RHPS. If you are interested in being a candidate for President or have questions related to the position, please contact one of the current RHPS Officers or Directors. Max Dillahunt—217-725-3205. Ann Rowley—217-415-4964. Cheryl Soeren—217-652-8545

Vandalism in Rochester's Historical Park

Sometime during the fall of 2021, the small building at the entrance to the Historical Park had both windows broken out. No other damage was apparent and there was no damage to the Stone House. Both windows have since been repaired in the small building and some modifications were made to the alarm system on the Stone House to allow for better monitoring and alerts. If anyone notices something unusual at the Historical Park, please don't hesitate to contact one of the Board Members.



OLD STONE HOUSE
Rochester Historical Preservation Society

I/We would like to become a member of the
Rochester Historical Preservation Society

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

(Check Appropriate Box)

[Sodbuster/Youth (Student)	\$10.00
[Settler/Individual	\$15.00
[Homesteader/Family	\$25.00
[Blacksmith	\$50.00
[Fur Trapper	\$100.00
[Tradesman	\$200.00
[Storekeeper	\$250.00
[Frontiersman	\$500.00
[Colonist	\$1,000.00
	And Above

[] My Additional Gift of \$_____ given in:
 [] Honor of [] Memory of

Name: _____

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

I'm interested in being an active Volunteer.

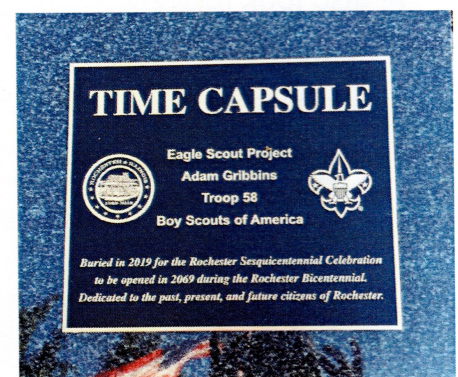
Please contact me: ☐

Please return with payment to:

RHPS

P.O. Box #13, Rochester, IL 62563

If you have lost your membership form or just forgot to return it, the above form may be used to either renew your membership or become a new RHPS member.



Nearly 2 years ago, Adam Gribbins buried the Sesquicentennial Time Capsule. Hopefully, at some point, we will be able to have proper dedication.

Rochester History: The Life Story of Lucetta Putnam Stevens West

by Carolyn Moore



This is a version of the life story of Lucetta Putnam Stevens West that we share with the 3rd graders when they visit the Stone House during a Spring field trip. The 22 years that Lucetta spent in Rochester (1837-1859 when she died of typhoid fever) were filled with joys and sorrows, stability and changes and a time of beginnings and endings.

Welcome to this prairie town of Rochester. This is a special place to me even though it is not my birthplace. I was an Eastern girl originally, born to Benjamin

and Sally Putnam of Charlestown, New Hampshire. I am their daughter, Lucetta. You have probably heard the romantic legend that my father would not allow me to come to this developing frontier unless I had a proper stone house in which to live. Of course, out East, stone houses and stone fences are as common as the log houses and split rail fences are in this area. But, here in this developing land, it was going to be a challenge to build such a dwelling. However, my beloved Samuel Stevens, to

whom I was engaged to be married, was young and determined, and he built this beautiful stone house for us. He came on ahead to get established in this new village of Rochester. He and his partners, Lewis Sargent and Samuel West were enthusiastic about this area and operated a mill to fill the needs of the pioneers. There was wonderful farm land (land that was not filled with stones and much easier to till than the land in New Hampshire and Vermont.) This presented a good opportunity for enterprising young men like my Samuel.

So, in July 1836, Samuel Stevens and I were married when he returned to Charlestown, New Hampshire. I was 19 and he was 24 years old. What an exciting time as we jour-

neyed westward and came to our stone house in Rochester, Illinois. It was so different from living out East. We were 3 miles east of the village with no other houses close, but a major road ran in front of our house. It was the stagecoach route to Shelbyville and also went on to Terra Haute, so there was always someone traveling by. Of course, my Samuel was busy buying and selling land, and involved in the development of the village. Soon my time was occupied with our new baby, Samuel Phineas Stevens who was born October, 1838; but alas within 7 months my dear husband died quite unexpectedly of an illness. Not only was I burdened with grief at the loss of my husband, I was burdened with debt. Samuel had died without a will

and with all his business dealings, he owed over \$4300.

We New Englanders look out for one another however. My husband's business partner, Samuel West, also a Yankee, offered to accompany me back to New Hampshire with my infant son, to return to my family and to receive advice and financial assistance from my father-in-law, Enos Stevens. Knowing that I could not return to Rochester and cope as a widow with overwhelming debt and raise a baby alone, Mr. West and I were married in Unity, New Hampshire in 1840. I knew he would be able to help me with my first husband's estate and assist me in petitioning the Sangamon County Circuit Court for my widow's share. We were aided by

the Springfield lawyer, Abraham Lincoln. (Perhaps you have heard of him?) He would also be valuable in helping with the sale of our possessions to raise money to satisfy the creditors.

As much as I enjoyed being with my family in the East, I had left my heart in this prairie town of Rochester and knew that we must journey back here. I persuaded my older sister, Zylpha, with her husband, Henry Kimball and their 3 year old daughter, Lucilla to join us and share in the adventure of this developing town. Plus, I had made friends in Rochester among the 25 or so families who were living here at the time.

(This concludes part one of Lucetta's narrative.)

2022 MEMBERSHIP LIST *

Charter – Life

Elliott Bell
Terry & Tammy Campbell
Carolyn "Cari" Carlson
Patricia Creviston
Chelsea Gerberding
Fred & Carolyn Gerberding
Gabe & Angela Gerberding
Linda Grimm
David & Arlene Grubb
Dean Housel
Dennis & Nancy Keiffer
Allen & Barb Mendenhall
Carl O. "Bud" Moore
Lee & Carol Shafer
David & Debbie Taft
Steve & Robin Taft
Ann Tucker
Bill & Barb Voisin
Nate & Carol Wilcoxon

Storekeeper

David & Ruth Hicks
Mike & Brenda Jeffers
Gary & Connie Leach

Tradesman

Jane Fairchild
Patricia Kessler
Greg & Kathy Park
Dean & Pamela Robert

Fur Trapper

Richard & Karen Alexander
Roy & Trudy Ballinger
Joshua & Cecile Becker
Grant & Alison Blasdel
Byron Braner
Susan Cull
Max & Deborah Dillahunty
George & Phyllis Fairchild
Kathy Garst
Randy & Brenda Hawkins
Bill & Penny Hinrichs
Sandra Hudgins-Brewer
Robert & Leslie Forte-Leach
Steve & Nancy Leach
Stu & Sandy McMillan
Carolyn Moore
Jacquie Ramsey
Roxy Schmidt-Gundy
Don Taft
Dorothy Taft
James & Ruth Ann Theis
David & Vanessa White
Richard Williams

Blacksmith

Mark & Cynthia Anderson
John Day
Shawn, Mary Ann &
Lucas Denney
John & Sue Endsley
Ron & Sue Green
Mike & Glenda Long

Darrell & Denise Maxheimer
David & Karen Ramsey
Ann Rowley
Tris & Debbie Schnepfer
Ben & Mary Tuxhorn
Ron & Kahla Wiggins
Curt & Kathleen Winhold
James & Debra Yeaman

Homesteader

Terry & Diane Arthur
Wayne & Anita Beck
Ray & Pam Bruzan
Jeffrey & Andrea Deters
Tom & Cherie Doherty
Bev Drilling
Rick & Jeanne Eilering
Sharon Evans
Dennis File
Henry & Beth Haupt
Don & Gayle Highley
Forrest & Mary Lou
Holsapple
Don & Becky Honigman
Elaine Hundley
David & Fay Ann Jostes
Nancy J. Leach
Michael & Donna Lennon
Monroe & Laurie McWard
Bev & Rodney Matthews
Ken & Nancy Miller
Tom, Stacia & Logan
Munroe
Sandie Nuding

Nick & Stephanie
Palazzolo
Henry & Margaret Patterson
Mark & Nancy Poffenberger
Jerry & Reba Robertson
Maxine Scott
Randall & Suzann Segatto
Robert & Leslie Struble
Gene & Sandy Wheeler
Dick & Lorine Wallin

Settler

Janice Catalano
Carolyn Lea Clevenger
Toby Mc Daniel
Carolyn Wanless

Sodbuster/Youth

Tanner Hensey

*NOTE: The above listing of the 2022 RHPS Membership is compiled from new and renewal membership forms received as of March 28, 2022 from the Annual Membership Campaign. If there are any questions, please contact Max Dillahunty at 217-498-9709.

The R H P S needs YOU!

We need members! You might ask, "Why should I be a member of the RHPS?"

Check the following list for some of the top reasons for joining this group.

1. Tiered, tax deductible membership offerings.
2. Learn about the history of the community.



Dave Jostes is shown at the edge of the South Fork River in 2015, observing a log from the Clark Mill that had washed out of the river bank. The Clark mill was built in the 1820s and served the needs of the settlers of Rochester Township. Because the log would wash away and be lost with the next flood, Jostes, along with Carl "Bud" Moore, retrieved the log that is currently in storage. This log represents one of Rochester's earliest historic artifacts. (Submitted by Ray Bruzan; Photo by Ray Bruzan)

HOPE TO SEE YOU ON
MAY 16, 2022
ROCHESTER UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
7:00 p.m.

ROCHESTER HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

P.O. 13

ROCHESTER, ILLINOIS 62563