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*Found in Collection* is a phrase used in the Museum field to describe undocumented objects found within a Museum’s collections whose donor, history, and significance are unknown. These items pose the exciting (and sometimes frustrating) challenge of figuring out where they came from.
A Note from the Archivist

Hospitality is one of the pillars of the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm. Welcoming visitors to our grounds, our buildings, and into our history is what we do every single day but this began long before the Van Hoosen Farm was a museum. Alice, Bertha, and Sarah opened their home and farm to their family, friends, and community (both local and international) for over 50 years.

Archival photographs offer us a glimpse into the Van Hoosen’s hospitality. One photograph in particular has always stood out to me. It shows the members of the Rochester Women’s Business Club gathered in the Van Hoosen Farmhouse for a Christmas party. Bertha Van Hoosen stands at the head of the table carving a turkey with the welcoming figures of the Hospitality plaque just to her left. The angle of the photograph makes you feel as though you are seated right alongside these women. This is one of the magical things about archives. You can peer into a moment that has long since passed and imagine what it was like to be there.

With every issue of Found in Collection, we welcome you into the archives to share the projects we are working on, the objects we are preserving, and the history we are uncovering. Whether you are a local resident, student, researcher or just someone who loves history, I invite you to explore the Museum’s archives. There is an incredible story waiting for you.

In the postscript of Chronicle of Van Hoosen Centenary Farm, Sarah Van Hoosen Jones shares the story of international delegates of the Associated Country Women of the World.

“At 6:30 p.m. I was truly thrilled to see the bus slowly turn into our gateway with its honored guests; who came from Canada, our good neighbor, Trinidad, New Zealand, Australia, North and South Ireland, Wales, Scotland and England. As the bus proceeded toward the house I realized it was crossing great-grandfather Elisha Taylor’s mill-yard. So the Centennial Farm had lived from the deep woods of the Territory of Michigan to a suburb of a great city, Detroit, to see the coming of visitors from far away overseas countries.”

Sincerely,

Samantha Lawrence

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Hospitality
By Rebecca Wagener

Bertha Van Hoosen embodied the true meaning of hospitality. She was known to never turn away a patient, and charged them only what they could pay. In several cases, her patients would repay her kindness and generosity with gifts in addition to money. These patients were known as her “grateful patients or “GPs” for short.

One of these gifts can be spotted instantly when you walk in the front door of the Van Hoosen Farmhouse. It’s a sculpture built into the bricks of the living room fireplace, named Hospitality. Hospitality is a bas-relief sculpture, also known as a low-relief. The artist that made this would have carved away at plaster until the figures became slightly more raised than the rest of the surface. This adds depth to the carving, and draws more attention to the people. The artist then painted the entire sculpture, giving it its bright colors. This style of sculpture became very popular in the 1800s in the United States as artists became inspired by relief sculptures from the Italian Renaissance.

The exact year the sculpture was made is unknown, but we do know it was made prior to the renovation of the Van Hoosen Farmhouse that began in 1923. Bertha originally displayed Hospitality in her Chicago home, and received it from an Italian patient who made the sculpture by hand. When she came back to her home in Stony Creek, Bertha carried Hospitality with her on the train from Chicago. Bricks from the fireplace were removed and additional plaster was added to install the plaque. Sarah Van Hoosen Jones recalled in her book Chronicle of Van Hoosen Centenary Farm that the architect behind the farmhouse’s renovation objected to the plaque being installed, but in her words, “What could one man do against three women?”

We may never definitively know what the story and meaning behind the Hospitality plaque is, but we can theorize what they may be. The style of clothes the people in the plaque are wearing resembles the togas worn in Ancient Greece. The woman seated on the throne in the center with her arms outstretched is set apart from the other figures and is larger in size. This symbolizes that this is the person who the story of Hospitality is centered around. Hospitality was a deeply important aspect of life in Ancient Greece. It was believed that you should welcome every stranger or friend that comes to your home and treat them with kindness, for you could never know if it was a Greek god in disguise. One Greek goddess that often represented hospitality was Hestia. Hestia is the goddess of the Hearth, and often the home. She was believed to watch over families and homes, but also the strangers that may visit these homes. Turning away a stranger was seen as disrespectful to Hestia. The woman at the center of Hospitality shares a lot of the same qualities as Hestia. She has her arms outstretched towards the other people, in a way that seems like she is welcoming them. She also is seated on a throne next to a flame. This flame, known as the Hearth, is the most common symbol of Hestia. Hestia watches over the Hearth, and many Ancient Greek towns would have an eternal flame honoring her. Another possible symbol of Hestia in Hospitality is the flowers the guests are carrying. Another symbol of the goddess is the chaste tree, which somewhat resembles the branches carried by the guests. Just like Hestia, Bertha Van Hoosen represents the true meaning of hospitality. In a way, Hospitality may not just be an image of Greek mythology, but also a representation of Bertha herself.

As a doctor, Bertha never turned away a patient, even if they were unable to pay her. In Petticoat Surgeon, Bertha said, “Of one thing I am certain. It was not my urge for money that influenced my choice, even though the financial need was great.” Bertha welcomed every patient with open arms, helping them and treating them as family. Money was never a reason to turn away a patient. The figures to the sides of Hospitality are all women and younger children, much like Bertha’s patients. In a way, Bertha Van
Continued from Page 4

Hoosen was like a modern-day Hestia. Bertha would watch over the families and patients she treated. The Van Hoosen family often welcomed guests into their home, treating them with as much kindness as possible.

Even in the lifetime of Bertha Van Hoosen, it was uncommon for a person to express so much hospitality to strangers. For Bertha, there was no fear that turning away a patient would lead to the wrath from a Greek god. Her actions came from the kindness in her heart. This kindness cared for and saved countless lives. She had a lasting effect on each of her patients. Several patients, like the woman from Chicago, were inspired to make beautiful creations to thank her, like Hospitality and other objects in the Van Hoosen family’s home. Bertha Van Hoosen was the personification of hospitality and went above and beyond to make the world a better place.

Rebecca Wagener is a senior at Albion College. She is majoring in anthropology and art history with minors in history and geology. She plans to begin graduate school in the fall of 2021 for museum studies with a focus on archaeology and collections management. She has worked at the Rochester Hills Museum for the past two and a half summers and is grateful for the opportunity to work on this project with Samantha Lawrence in the summer of 2019.

Back in the Day...

At the Rochester Hills Museum, we are always looking for ways to share our archives beyond the boundaries of our 16-acre museum complex. This summer, we were able to bring history right to the streets of downtown Rochester! Through a collaboration with the Rochester Downtown Development Authority (DDA), the Museum installed 10 Back in the Day signs on lampposts throughout downtown. Each sign features an archival photo from the Museum’s collections and offers a link to more history. Take a stroll through downtown and see how Rochester has changed over the years!
Uncovering the Scrapbook of Rochester’s First Female Postmaster
by Chelsea Pridmore

Discovered during the relocation of the Museum’s archives in 2019, the Jessie Stackhouse Scrapbook presented a fascinating challenge to uncover more about Rochester’s first female postmaster. At first glance, the scrapbook belonged to someone dedicated to the post office and the Democratic Party. Further research led to the discovery of Jessie Stackhouse, an individual deeply involved in the local community.

After learning that the [assumed] creator of the scrapbook was Jessie Stackhouse, research led us to learn more about Jessie as a person, an active Democrat, and the postmaster of Rochester. She was born in Mt. Pleasant and moved to Rochester when she married James Stackhouse in 1912. Jessie was involved in the community, joined numerous organizations like the Rochester Business and Professional Women’s Club and the Rochester Women’s Club. Her involvement made her a well-known individual and beloved member of the greater Rochester community.

She started working for the post office in 1917, eventually working her way up to postmaster in 1934. To accommodate the growth of the Rochester community, construction began on a new post office at Fourth St. and Walnut Blvd in 1937. When construction was completed in 1938, there was a dedication ceremony to celebrate the new building, which included a big parade in downtown Rochester. During her time as postmaster, Jessie also took the post office to first class status. While Jessie’s scrapbook has provided us with unique information about the Rochester area, it has also presented challenges on how it should be preserved and stored. From the outside, the scrapbook appears in good condition. Flipping to the first page revealed a different story. Pages are falling apart at the seams, newspaper clippings are coming unglued and loose photos are scattered throughout the entire scrapbook. Digitizing each scrapbook page and then, each photograph individually was the first step in the preservation process. Once the scrapbook was digitized, the pages were interleaved with acid free paper and the loose photographs were placed in separate folders. Finally, the scrapbook was placed in an acid free box and safely tucked away in the Museum’s archives.

The entire scrapbook and all of its photos can be found on the Oakland County Historical Resources site at oaklandcountyhistory.org by searching “Jessie Stackhouse Scrapbook” in quotation marks. To learn more about Jessie Stackhouse, check out the article on the Local History page of Museum’s website here: rochesterhills.org/DocumentCenter/View/12467.

Chelsea Pridmore is a recent graduate from Wayne State University earning a master’s degree in Library and Information Science with a graduate certificate in Archival Administration. She has always had a passion for learning and archives. Over the last two years, she has been working at the Rochester Hills Public Library while finishing her degree and internship at Rochester Hills Museum.
A Summer Internship at the Museum
By: Anna Dean

When my summer came, I decided I wanted to spend my time doing an internship at my local museum. As someone who does not want to work in a museum one day, many begged the question why I would voluntarily choose to do this internship. When they found out it was not paid either, they became increasingly perplexed. If I was not going into this field of study, and I was not getting paid for the 120 hours of work I put in, then why was I choosing to work here?

When I was in high school, I did my very first internship. My school offered a work-study program, where I was able to intern somewhere during school hours. I worked at the Office of the Mayor of Rochester Hills, Mayor Bryan K. Barnett. After this internship, I had many other experiences in politics. I worked on five campaigns, in two offices, and became President of multiple political organizations on my campus. Nothing, however, was as fulfilling as that very first internship, and I could not figure out why.

As I was moving forward in my professional goals, it dawned on me that there were two reasons as to why I missed working for the City of Rochester Hills. The first was that I was able to work for my local community and help make it a better place day by day. I was able to make a difference in my neighbors’ lives. The other was because I had become so incredibly passionate about my own community and its accomplishments throughout the years that I missed learning about those successes and how they shaped our local story.

I realized that I was missing a huge part of that puzzle. Where I might have understood the present accomplishments of our city and town, I was really lost on how the City of Rochester Hills became so amazing in the first place. I wanted to learn more about its past and how it has shaped the future to come, including how the past has shaped me personally.

Upon entering this internship, I was aware that I wanted to learn about our past. I did not realize just how large of an impact this community has had on a global scale. Without this Museum, there would be no record of that. No one else would be preserving it. No one would be able to show our community’s past here. I am helping the museum take on the world. That’s what it is. That’s how I choose to view it. We are hoping to change the lives of every person that walks through that door. Whether it’s a third grade field trip, a wedding, or open hours, I want each person to feel like they’re stepping into something bigger than themselves. Because they are. And they’re now a part of it.”

Upon entering this internship, I was aware that I wanted to learn about our past. I did not realize just how large of an impact this community has had on a global scale. Without this Museum, there would be no record of that. No one would be able to show our significance, or even have knowledge of it, because no one would be preserving it. No one else would be keeping the same kind of community spirit alive in Rochester Hills through weddings, summer slip and slides, camps, tours, pumpkin lightings, and so much more. Our community would be lost without the Museum: unaware of its past and how that impacts the future.

I know for certain that this place matters because it changes lives every single day, and I am so glad that it changed mine. That is why I interned at a museum for 120 hours, unpaid, in a field I’m not going into, and I did it prouder and left with a fuller heart than any other job that came before.
These Letters Tell a Story

By: Chelsea Pridmore

When working with archives, you never know what is going to come your way. You can be surprised at any step of the way. This is exactly what happened when digitizing the Eula Pray Collection in 2019. The Eula Pray Collection contains research notes and correspondence from a local social studies teacher, Eula Pray, who completed her master’s thesis on the history of Avon Township during the 1940s. The research notes found in the collection cover everything from the first settlers of Avon Township to the naming of streets and parks to the clubs and schools of the area. While the notes were interesting in their own right, a folder titled “1940’s Publication and Legal” stood out. This folder included letters from the Rochester Clarion newspaper to Eula Pray and from a lawyer back to the Clarion Newspaper.

These letters give us a glimpse into a series of events that happened in November 1946 between Eula Pray and the Clarion Newspaper. She had just recently published her thesis and had moved from Rochester to Battle Creek, Michigan. She made an agreement with the Rochester Era to publish her thesis in their newspaper as a series. While she was still teaching in Battle Creek, she received a letter from the head of the Clarion, Charles S. Seed, stating that they were starting legal action against her for using their information in her thesis. They believed Eula Pray had gained access to their archives under false pretenses to take their information to their competitor, the Rochester Era.

On the back of the envelope, we find evidence of Eula’s immediate and practical reaction to reading this letter, which was to write a to-do list. The list read:

“Write Clarion
Call Era Gallery Proof
Original immediately
Chief question– to avoid injunction”

This list from 70 years ago reveals what was going through her mind after she read the letter. Eula didn’t waste any time hiring a lawyer and avoiding a lawsuit. Although the collection does not contain all of the correspondence between her lawyer and the Clarion, there is enough to understand what Eula Pray went through. These letters are a reminder that you never know what you might find while processing an archival collection.

Forty years after Eula Pray tried to share her thesis in the Rochester Era, the Avon Historical Preservation Committee published her work into a book called *A History of Avon Township 1820-1940*. This book is available for sale in the Rochester Hills Museum store.

The Eula Pray Collection is available for research at the Rochester Hills Museum. Contact Museum Archivist, Samantha Lawrence, at 248-841-2673 or lawrences@rochesterhills.org to set up an appointment to view the collection.

*Chelsea Pridmore is a recent graduate from Wayne State University earning a master’s degree in Library and Information Science with a graduate certificate in Archival Administration. She has always had a passion for learning and archives. Over the last two years, she has been working at the Rochester Hills Public Library while finishing her degree and internship at Rochester Hills Museum.*
A Young Lady on the Woman Question

Within the Rochester Hills Museum’s archives are the stories of residents who lived in the greater Rochester community a century before us. By exploring the archives, we are provided with the opportunity to listen to their words and add a new layer to what we know about our history. As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 19th amendment, the words of Etta Hutaff, a fifteen-year-old Rochester resident, help bring the fight for women’s suffrage closer to home. The below excerpt was found in the July 16, 1874 issue of the Rochester Era newspaper.

“The following argument, written by Miss Etta Hutaff, a young lady of Rochester, fifteen years of age, was read by her at the recent entertainment given by the R.L.S. {Rochester Literary Society}, being a discussion of the Woman Suffrage questions. -ED.

Yes, I think that women should vote. Voting would be a culture to woman. With all the objectionable features of political campaigns and political life, the political life of America stimulates thought, exercises the minds, and is a kind of culture that is not to be despised. No one can measure the mental discipline and the awakening of the mind that political life generates. Many of the questions of civil government are adapted to develop, interest, and exalt the human mind. They call the mind away from the selfish cares of our own narrow lives and turn the attention toward distant and national interests: lifting men from the little to the sublime - from petty personal interests to grand patriotic duties. Now, if this is a culture for men, it is no less a culture for women. It may be said by some that women, without suffrage, are free to study these great political questions and thus gain all the culture she may need. Yes, very true. But do men study intricate subjects and details of business in which they never expect to bear a personal part?

To confer on a woman the right of suffrage would be to open wide avenues for them and advancement of society. Give them an opportunity through the ballot box, and they will break up the nefarious practices now existing, and purify society.

The spirit of the Constitution should be carried out, and women allowed to vote. To have a voice in choosing those by whom one is governed, is a means of self-protection due to every one, both men and women. Under whatever condition, and within whatever limits men are admitted to the suffrage, there is not a shadow of justification for not admitting to women under the same. The majority of women in any class, are not likely to differ in political opinion from the majority of men in the same class, unless the questions be one in which the interests of women are involved; and if so, women require the suffrage as their guarantee of just and equal consideration. Also, is it just that women should be taxed as well as the men, and then be allowed no voice in saying how those taxes should be used? No, indeed, it is not just! With the promise and assurance of justice and freedom for all, women should not be denied and restrained from free exercise of any natural right.

Woman’s true sphere is doing whatever she chooses to do, and is capable of doing it well. In regard to political life, if the political system is such as to exclude unfit men, it will equally exclude unfit women. While, if it is not such, there is no additional evil, in fact, that the unfit persons it admits may be either men or women. Either women have no right at all, or else they are clearly within the constitutional recognition of citizenship; and, if so, are of course entitled to all the privileges and immunities belonging thereto.”

Read Etta’s whole argument on page 3 of the July 16, 1874 Rochester ERA issue found on the Oakland County Historical Resources website here: oaklandcountyhistory.org/awweb/pdfopener?md=1&did=202193
Women’s Suffrage Scavenger Hunt

In this outdoor, self-guided scavenger hunt, families can explore the Children’s Garden and learn about 12 suffragists, who paved the way for the 19th amendment! Outdoor exhibit panels highlight the Museum’s new collection of the women’s suffrage dolls and share the contributions each suffragist made to American history. Pick up the scavenger hunt booklet at Museum’s kiosk and find all 12 exhibit panels tucked away in the Children’s Garden.

The dolls, featured in this scavenger hunt, were recently donated to the Museum by former Rochester High School teacher Gladys McKenney. Gladys handmade each doll and used them for educational programming throughout the community for several decades. Gladys has been inducted into the Michigan Women’s Hall of Fame and the Rochester Hills Museum Community Hall of Fame.

UNLADYLIKE2020

Bertha Van Hoosen broke down barriers for women in medicine, while Sarah Van Hoosen Jones blazed trails in the agricultural industry. How did other women push aside gender barriers?

UNLADYLIKE2020 is an innovative multimedia series featuring diverse and little-known American heroines from the early years of feminism, and the women who now follow in their footsteps, in honor of the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage in 2020. Premiering on PBS’s American Masters over the summer, the 26 short documentaries explore the stories of these trailblazing women through artwork, animation, interviews, and archival imagery. Learn more about UNLADYLIKE2020 and watch the episodes at unladylike2020.com.

In the episode on Margaret Chung, the first American-born Chinese woman doctor, you’ll learn about her connection to Bertha Van Hoosen and see a few photos from the Museum’s collections!

Where Women Made History

Explore where women made history with the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s new campaign! To commemorate the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote, the National Trust set out to discover places connected to women’s history and encouraged submissions from all across the country. Among the 1,000+ entries, you will even find the Van Hoosen Farm & Farmhouse! Travel through women’s history with this incredible resource at savingplaces.org/where-women-made-history.
A Trip to Asia
By Caroline Shaltz

In October 1922, Dr. Bertha Van Hoosen, her sister Alice Van Hoosen Jones, and her niece, Sarah, began a yearlong tour of Asia and Oceania. Over the next 12 months, they visited Hawaii, the Philippines, New Zealand, Australia, Hong Kong, mainland China, and Japan. The trip was nothing short of fantastic. The trio and their traveling companions experienced unique traditions, cultural heritage sites, rode in sedan chairs, surfed, and survived the 1923 Japanese earthquake.

The trip was organized by Bertha, who had been advised to winter in warmer climates to ease her bronchial asthma. Traveling, however, did not stop her from practicing medicine, and she performed surgeries and gave lectures in almost every country she visited. Sarah, on the other hand, was more interested in visiting the farms of New Zealand and Australia, as she was preparing to run the family dairy farm full-time.

The women set sail for Honolulu, Hawaii in the fall of 1922. Upon their arrival, they rented a house, near the city center, for fifty dollars per month. Throughout their stay, the five traveling companions cooked their own meals, excited by the many exotic fruits and vegetables the local market offered.

The time spent in Hawaii, however, was not simply a leisurely vacation. In seeking to foster her medical interests while traveling, Bertha immersed herself in Hawaii’s health care system. She visited a leper colony outside of Honolulu and marveled at its efficiency. Additionally, the Honolulu Welfare Committee invited Bertha to host a prenatal care clinic in which she used pomelos and tangerines as models for the womb and fetus. Finally, she assisted with multiple surgeries, and even treated a former patient who required an emergency appendectomy. From this procedure, Bertha earned enough to pay for her ticket to China.

Strikes at the docks of Honolulu caused the travelers to accept third class passage on a ship with a crew of strikebreakers. The passage was arduous and the group was relieved to reach Auckland. Bertha remarked in her autobiography that the group only stayed in New Zealand and Australia for 3 weeks, just long enough for Sarah to visit the nearby farms and study their farming techniques.

From Sydney, the Van Hoosen women boarded the Yoshina Maru, a Japanese ship, bound for Hong Kong. Despite warnings of bandits, the group then took a train from Hong Kong to Canton to visit the local medical school where Bertha continued to give lectures.

From Canton the group traveled to Shanghai, where they visited the Bethel Mission, a prominent hospital founded by University of Michigan graduates Drs. Shi Meiyou (Mary Stone) and Kang Cheng (Ida Kahn). Shanghai also provided the group with the unique opportunity to visit an authentic one hundred-room home, belonging to relatives of Bertha’s acquaintance, Dr. Chi Che Wang. The home made quite the impression on Bertha, who wrote in her book, “It seems strange that no one in our country has ever built a summer resort or an oriental museum on such a scale, after such a model.” Upon their return to the United States, Sarah constructed an Asian-style gazebo modeled after the architecture that the women had observed on their trip. The structure had circular doorways, negative space in the brickwork, and an upturned roof fashioned out of ox yolk.

Jiujiang, the next stop, was once again filled with professional opportunities for Bertha. She operated daily at the Danforth Hospital, and it was here that she realized the struggles that Chinese hospitals faced. Upon first entering the operating room, Bertha was surprised to see many brass kettles filled with sterile water, especially since there was a modern sterilizer in the room. The staff explained that although the hospital had managed to obtain...
the machine, they did not have the gas to run it. Moved by the explanation, Bertha asked to take a kettle home with her. The kettle is currently on display in the Van Hoosen Farmhouse.

Their time in Shanghai was followed by two months in Beijing. In her book, Petticoat Surgeon, she remarked that in Beijing, “the charm is intangible, but ever present.” Day trips to nearby cities introduced the women to local traditions, including foot binding. Bertha continued to stay busy giving lectures and teaching interns. Unfortunately, the group’s arrival in Beijing marked the beginning of a disastrous end to their holiday.

Just before leaving the city, Bertha agreed to monitor the health of a man named General Yin, who suffered from terminal heart and kidney failure. There was immense pressure on her to understand that when her patient was near death, he must be moved to his coffin as Chinese tradition dictated. Much to Bertha’s relief, the General’s primary caregiver returned before the patient’s situation became critical. Days later, Bertha, Alice, and Sarah would visit the General’s family and bear witness to their mourning rituals, which included special clothing and sweetmeats.

The Van Hoosens left Beijing for Tianjin and from there sailed to Kobe, Japan. After short visits to Kyoto and Nara, they arrived in the city when the Great Japan Earthquake began. After taking cover in a doorway, Bertha recalled timing the aftershocks “like labor pains.” On the advice of a local, the women made their way to a nearby park, where they spent a restless night. For the next few days, the city experienced raging fires.

Finally, the group made it back to Kobe, where they began their trip home. The souvenirs from this trip can be found throughout the farmhouse. A light fixture, a small Chinese pillow safe, Bertha’s brass kettle, and various decor bearing Asian motif can be found in almost every room. Even the front door is guarded by a pair of Chinese guardian lions.

Caroline Shaltz is a recent graduate from Wayne State University earning a master’s degree in Library and Information Science with a concentration in Archival Administration. History has been her lifelong passion, beginning with her high school history club, her undergraduate degree in History and her time spent in local archives. She began volunteering at the Romeo Community Archives last year and recently completed her practicum at the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm.