

The Kutsche Chronicle

Kutsche Office of Local History is part of
Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies at
Grand Valley State University

www.gvsu.edu/kutsche
Spring 2019



Upcoming Events....

Monday, May 6, 2019, 12pm

Behind the Scenes Look at Planning a Large-Scale, Collaborative Community Project (ETC Series Event)

Alumni House, GVSU Allendale Campus

Tuesday, May 14, 2019, 6pm

Contemporary Stories of Saugatuck Exhibit Opening

Old School House, Douglas

Wednesday, June 12, 2019, 9pm

Stories of Summer Exhibit Reception

Old School House, Douglas

Wednesday, September 18, 2019 1:30pm

"The World's Greatest Minstrel Show Under the Stars: Blackface Minstrels, Community Identity, and the Lowell Showboat, 1932-1977

Mary Idema Pew Library Multipurpose Room

GVSU Allendale Campus

Tuesday, October 15, 2019 11am-3pm

Lunch with the Kutsche Office

Mary Idema Pew Library Multipurpose Room

GVSU Allendale Campus

For more information, or to register for these events: gvsu.edu/kutsche, or 616-331-8099.

Kutsche Office Acting Director, Fall 2019

The Kutsche Office is pleased to announce that Marilyn Preston will serve as acting director of the Kutsche Office during the Fall 2019 semester. Preston is an assistant professor of liberal studies at Grand Valley State University. Her current project, "L'Dor V'Dor: Oral Histories of the B'nai Israel Congregation," explores Muskegon's Jewish community. The stories collected explore the relationship of religion to personal identity, the affective ties between congregants and the space, place, and people, and the role of an institution in cultural and familial life. At its heart, L'dor v'dor tells the story of family, religion, and resilience through political and cultural changes. Preston received the Kutsche Office's Community Collaboration Grant to support this work. Kimberly McKee will resume her duties as director in January 2020.



6th Annual Gordon Olson Award Recipient: Kim Donald Rush

Kim Rush received the Gordon Olson Award as a result of his unrelenting research and documentation of local African American community. In 2003, he became curious about authentic African American blues bands in Grand Rapids, and scoured local newspapers and other sources for information on the African American music scene in the city. He interviewed almost 100 local elders many of whom were musicians. In 2011 Kim and Doug Taylor founded the website, West Michigan Music Hysterical Society, which is a rich archive about local musicians from all genres, including past and present. Kim has written articles for the website on the local African American music scene since the 1940s, and featured individual musicians, bands, and music venues like

Roma Hall and the Horseshoe Bar. Kim's interest in the history of the African American community in Grand Rapids currently focuses on early African American barbers in the city, the subject of a future book he is writing.



Pictured: W. Christine Byron, Kim Rush, and Peg Padnos

A Behind the Scenes Look at Planning a Large-Scale, Collaborative Community Project

Monday, May 6, 2019, 12pm — 3pm

Alumni House, GVSU's Allendale Campus

RSVP: www.gvsu.edu/kutsche



This Engaging the Community event provides an opportunity to learn how to effectively work with multiple community partners. Learn about the *Connections Along the Grand River* project and what makes it successful and how feedback is integrated to improve the ongoing project. You can hear from community organizations participating in the project as well as from the Kutsche Office concerning project management. To RSVP for the event, please contact kutsche@gvsu.edu or 616-331-8099.

Come see the stories of the Saugatuck High School's Class of 2019.



Contemporary Stories of Saugatuck

Tuesday, May 14, 6-8pm

Saugatuck Douglas History Center

The Kutsche Office partnered with the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center and Saugatuck High School teacher Christina Lewis to document the lives of the Class of 2019 throughout the 2018-2019 academic year. As part of this work, the Kutsche Office trained journalism students in oral history methods and underscored the importance of preserving the everyday experiences as part of the historical record as part of our Youth Leadership Initiative. These students developed their own oral history questions and interviewed members of the Class of 2019. More than sixty high school seniors' voices were captured during the fall, winter, and spring trimesters.

This project will culminate in an exhibit on display at the Old School House during May 2019.

Stories of Summer

Throughout 2018, the Kutsche Office and Saugatuck Douglas History Center collected the oral histories of more than thirty people and digitized 2,000 objects of ephemera. We want to thank the GVSU Special Collections & Archives for supporting collection processing in addition to our Special Projects Graduate Assistant, Mollie VanOrsdol, and Undergraduate Research Assistant, Kendra Garcia, to bring these materials online. To view the materials as they become available during 2019, please visit: <https://digitalcollections.library.gvsu.edu/collections/show/38>.

EXHIBIT OPENING

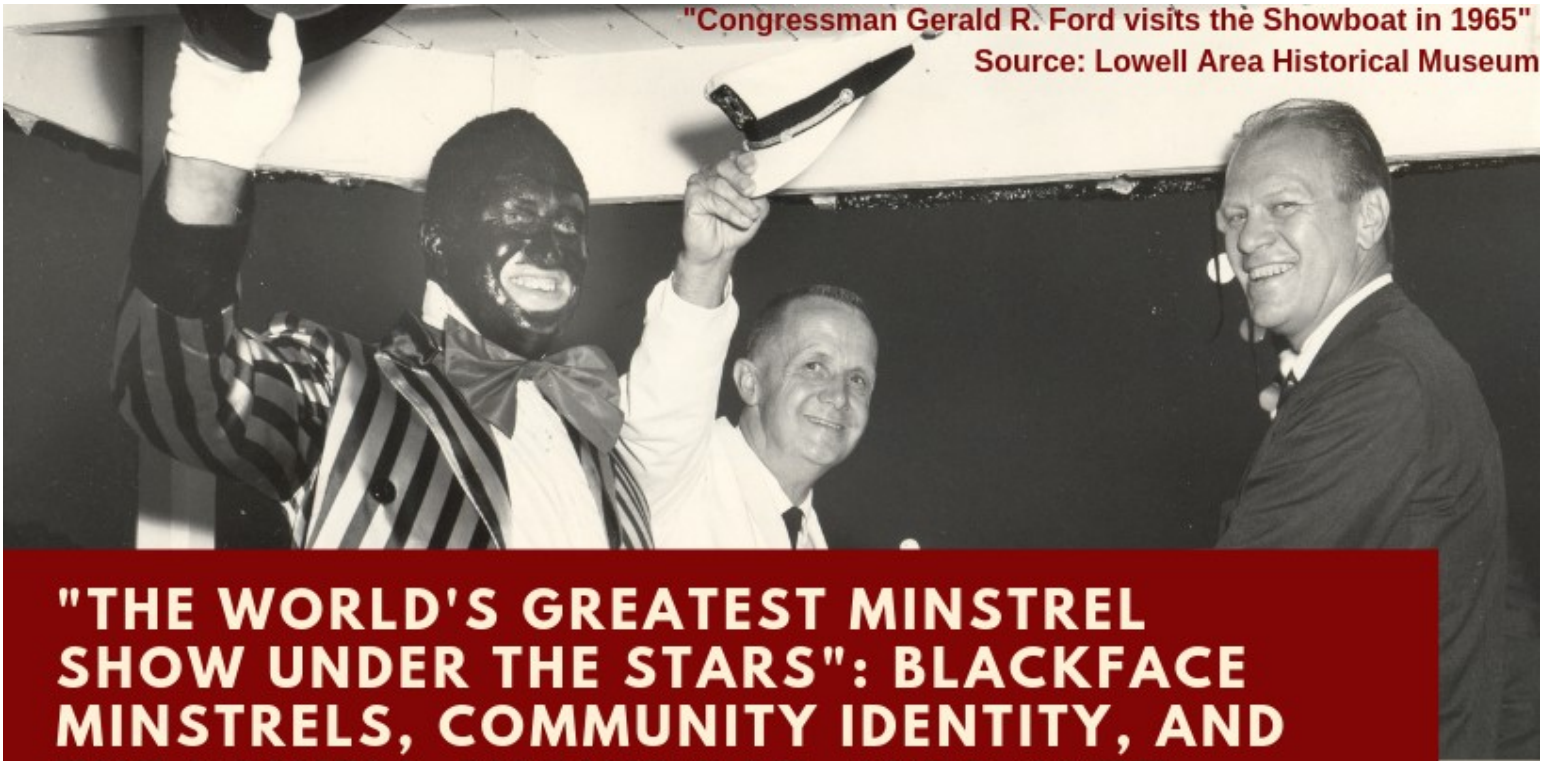
June 12, 2019

7:00 — 9:00pm

Old School House
Douglas, MI

"Congressman Gerald R. Ford visits the Showboat in 1965"

Source: Lowell Area Historical Museum



"THE WORLD'S GREATEST MINSTREL SHOW UNDER THE STARS": BLACKFACE MINSTRELS, COMMUNITY IDENTITY, AND THE LOWELL SHOWBOAT, 1932-1977

The Lowell Showboat, named *Robert E. Lee*, entertained thousands each summer with well-known performers including Dinah Shore, Pearl Bailey, Milton Berle, and Louis Armstrong. Alongside these entertainers, minstrels in blackface humored audiences with racial stereotyping.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2019 // 1:30PM - 2:45PM
MARY IDEMA PEW LIBRARY, MULTIPURPOSE ROOM

Featuring Drs. Matthew Daley and Scott Stabler, along with George Bayard, executive director of the Grand Rapids African American Museum and Archive.

Sponsors: GVSU Kutsche Office of Local History and Lowell Area Historical Museum. For more information, including parking permits, please contact kutsche@gvsu.edu or 616-331-8099.



**GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY**
KUTSCHE OFFICE OF
LOCAL HISTORY