

Kutsche Chronicle

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

Winter 2021

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Upcoming Live Webinars

Friday, February 26 / 10:30-11:30 am

Grand Rapids Canal History,
from Water Power to Hydroelectricity
Part of the Grand Rapids Time Traveler series

Monday, March 1 / 10-11:30 am

Solidarities: White Women & Women of Color's
Activism to Secure the Vote
Part of the Annual Local History Roundtable

Wednesday, March 17 / 10-11:30 am

Lesser Known Women in West Michigan History
Part of the Annual Local History Roundtable

Wednesday, March 24 / 10-11 am

Grand Rapids Women & Their Work
During the Great War
Part of the Annual Local History Roundtable

Friday, March 26 / 10:30-11:30 am

A Decade of Upheaval:
Grand Rapids Women & Public Office in the 1910s
Part of the Grand Rapids Time Traveler series

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Cover image courtesy of GVSU Special Collections & University Archives,
contributed by the Saugatuck Douglas History Center as part of the Stories of Summer project

Director's Report

Kimberly McKee

While we miss seeing everyone in person, we hope that you and your families enjoyed a safe and healthy holiday season. The Kutsche Office of Local History continues its online programming in winter 2021, with a mix of live webinars and on-demand video content. Visit our [Digital Programs Hub](#) for more information, or check out [our YouTube channel](#). **If you can't make it to a live webinar, please note that they will be recorded and available online a few days after each event.**

Our 12th Annual Local History Roundtable will look a bit different. Join us in March for a **month-long series of digital programs** that will be similar in style and theme to our in-person Roundtable sessions. This year's theme is Leading the Charge for Change, highlighting West Michigan women's leadership roles in social movements. These programs underscore the significant roles of women in history.

We also are excited to continue to release videos as part of our asynchronous content. This includes our **Archives Against the Grain series**, highlighting how historians and archivists locate voices often left out of the historical record. I also recommend **our short video series on oral histories**, [now available online](#).

If you or your organization has an idea for a speaker or have an idea for a collaborative project that can get started remotely, please contact me (mckeeki@gvsu.edu). We would love to connect.

New Advisory Council Member

Stephanie Ogren



The Advisory Council welcomed Stephanie Ogren this fall. Ogren is Vice President of Science and Education at the Grand Rapids Public Museum. She develops innovative exhibits, programming, and educational materials related to watershed science and its relationship to West Michigan's people and places. Prior to her current work, Ogren was the Senior Aquatic Biologist for the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, where she forged deep community ties.

Ogren has worked with the Kutsche Office in the past by collaborating on the Connections Along the Grand River project, contributing materials from the Grand Rapids Public Museum that helps illustrate the historic relationship between the people of West Michigan and the Grand River.

Note from Advisory Council President Peg Padnos

In Fall of 2020, Gordon Olson stepped down as chair of the Kutsche Office Advisory Council. As a charter member of the Office, he brought an incomparable wealth of experience throughout his tenure. Gordon served as the Grand Rapids City Historian for nearly 25 years and is the author and editor of numerous books about local history.



Gordon Olson with Paul Kutsche in 2014.

In 2014, the Gordon Olson Award was established in recognition of his leadership, programming, mentorship, advocacy, and scholarship in the field of local history. His years of service inspired generations of West Michigan residents, as he embodied the Kutsche Office mission of using history to give voice to diverse communities. Though we will miss Gordon's wise and kind presence, we wish him a happy and healthy retirement!



Elected to follow Gordon as Chair is Peg Padnos, who joined the Advisory Council in 2013. Prior to becoming Chair, Peg served as Vice Chair for many years. Born and raised in New York City, Peg married her college classmate Jeff Padnos in 1970. In 1979, they and their children moved to Holland where Jeff joined his family's scrap recycling business.

Peg was a history concentrator in college and for many years was a freelance writer and book reviewer. In midlife she studied nursing at Hope College and worked in developmental pediatrics with a special interest in premature and high-risk newborns and their families. As a retired R.N., she now writes poetry and essays with a focus on family history, science, and the natural world.

Active in the Harvard Alumni Association, Peg has served as a local interviewer of prospective students, as secretary of her class, and as president of the Harvard-Radcliffe Club of Western Michigan, where she and Paul Kutsche met and became good friends.

12th Annual Local History Roundtable

Leading the Charge for Change

This year's program features three live webinars throughout March, celebrating ways that women in West Michigan have uplifted and advocated for their communities.

For more information on speakers, program times, and registration, visit gvsu.edu/kutsche/RT

2020-2021 Student Employees



G. Angel - Metadata for Stories of Summer project

G is a class of '21 Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies major, with a minor in LGBT Studies. After graduation, they plan to complete a PhD in Gender Studies. G was drawn to the Stories of Summer project because of their interest in local queer history. Over the last few months, they have assisted the Office with metadata collection for the Stories of Summer project. They have looked through hundreds of primary source documents related to the history of Saugatuck and Douglas, preparing them for use by future researchers.

Emma Quick - Video & Graphic Design

Emma is a junior-year transfer in the Film & Video Production program. After some initial work on film sets, she developed an interest in animation and motion graphics, along with lighting, and special effects. Emma's position with the Kutsche Office of Local History allows her to hone her graphics and animation skills by creating promotional materials and online videos. Her work with our digital materials allows us to continue reaching our communities during these unusual times.

