

# THE FUTURE OF HISTORY

JUNE



VOL. 26



ISSUE 2



2026

Our mission is to tell the story of Muskegon County by collecting, preserving, and interpreting the history of its people and natural environment.



**LAKESHORE  
MUSEUM CENTER**





Cover and above photo are of Lake Michigan Park, see page 7 for more information.

# MUSEUMS MAKE YOU.

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# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Summer Love

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As the season begins, I'm excited to share a few of the things our team is especially loving this summer. First, you'll see the return of the front porch on the Hackley House. It will be installed with primer this season, with plans to complete the final painting later in the year. Our historic houses, loved by many, will be visited by thousands of people this summer.

We are also thrilled to share that we have partnered with Michigan State University to bring the Hackley and Hume files back home to Muskegon. In the 1970s, Jean Hume Browning, granddaughter of Thomas Hume, donated the business and personal records of the Hackley and Hume families to the MSU Archives. Throughout the winter, our staff has been meeting and traveling to Lansing to work through the details of the accession. This important collection will be part of the museum's archives, returning significant history to our community.

This summer also brings exciting exhibit changes across our museum sites, including the Muskegon Museum of History & Science, Fire Barn Museum, and Muskegon Heritage Museum of Business & Industry. For more details see the Exhibits update on page 5.

Finally, I began my museum career in programming, and I am continually impressed by the creativity and dedication of our program teams across all locations. I'm especially excited about their outstanding summer lineup of fun and educational programs for our members and visitors to enjoy. See our museum calendar on page 11 for the full lineup.

On July 24, we will have a Member Appreciation Event at the Hackley & Hume Historic Site. This is our way of saying thank you for being part of our museum family and I hope you will be able to join us. I am looking forward to a summer of fun, excitement, and love for Muskegon history.



**Melissa Horton**  
Executive Director

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Image 1: Pieces of the Hackley front porch  
Image 2: Production of the Hackley front porch at Grand River Builders  
Image 3: Hackley and Hume collection at Michigan State University archives

# ARCHIVE & COLLECTION

## Recent Acquisitions

04

The Lakeshore Museum Center actively collects objects and archival material relevant to Muskegon County's natural and cultural history. These items are reviewed by the Acquisitions Committee and the Board of Trustees for condition, their relevance to Muskegon County, and the LMC's ability to care for the objects. We are grateful to our donors for their ongoing contributions to the Muskegon County Archive & Collection.

In the first quarter of 2026, the LMC was offered 105 objects. The following objects were accepted into the collection.

### Photographs:

- Photographs of the Young and Meurer families [\[Image 03\]](#)
- Portrait of Malcom Hutchinson
- Photographs of Nellie B. Warren and her daughters, Marjorie and Melba, ca. 1912-1937
- Photograph of Hackley Nursing School, dated 1957
- Photograph of Honora McGordon
- Framed photographs from Muskegon YMCA basketball team, 1895

### Archives:

- Blu-ray of *Buster Keaton Home*
- Oversized map of Muskegon County, 1968
- Menu from Upper Crust Pizza
- Title documents from 1220 Lakeshore Drive
- St. Mary High School Graduation Invitation Class of 1949
- "My Scout and Other Poems" by Merritt Lamb [\[Image 02\]](#)

### Objects:

- Sewing chair owned by the Hume family [\[Image 01\]](#)
- Bureau scarf owned by Helen M. Hume and embroidered with her initials
- Print ad string used at Beckquist Camera Shop [\[Image 04\]](#)
- Muskegon Township Fire Department trophy for annual competition, ca. 1930s
- Muskegon Piston Ring jacket owned by Celia Pehm
- Feedsack from Peoples Milling & Grocer Co.
- Shop stool from Paragon Pattern in Muskegon Heights



01



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# WHAT'S ON VIEW?

## A Summer of Updates

05



01

## Muskegon Heritage Museum of Business & Industry

It's finally here! The Muskegon Heritage Museum of Business & Industry has a new interactive digital kiosk. [\[Image 01\]](#) Visitors can browse photos, documents, and objects related to businesses by tapping on a map of Muskegon County or by searching for a business name. This digital exhibit is a work in progress, so check back for new content and features!



02

Along with the new interactive kiosk, the entrance gallery has a fresh look. New photos from the Museum's archives greet visitors as they enter, and the lumber industry exhibit, Sawdust Cities, received an update. [\[Image 02\]](#)



03

Venture to the third floor to see two new exhibits. Step off the elevator to explore a hands-on office space and try out a typewriter and other office equipment. Then visit What's the Station? Black Media in Greater Muskegon. Learn about the powerful role Black media has played in shaping local communication, culture, and community. [\[Image 03 & 04\]](#)

## Fire Barn Museum

The Fire Barn Museum received a glow-up during the off-season. The new light fixtures and new flooring on the second level are just the first to come in a series of updates. We will be working hard over the next year to bring even more refreshing changes to the space.

## Muskegon Museum of History & Science

Get ready for a fun-filled hands-on summer at the Muskegon Museum of History & Science with *Nature Cat: Backyard and Beyond*. Play, create, and explore the natural world with Nature Cat and his friends. This exhibit will be open through **September 12, 2026**.

Visit the Muskegon County History Gallery to view objects from the Museum's Collections and Archives that represent the different regions of the county. The Muskegon County History Gallery is a great space for the Museum to share more of the collection with the public.

When you visit *Coming to the Lakes* this summer, you might catch our exhibits team doing some work in the gallery. We will be making some minor updates to improve artifact security and visitor traffic. Be sure to stop by and see what we are up to.



Nature Cat will be open through September 2026

# MUSKEGON HISTORIC SITES

Lavish Summers at Lake Harbor Hotel

06



Looking south at Lake Harbor Hotel, circa 1907-1914

Long before the Maranatha Conference Grounds, the bustling summer resort of the Lake Harbor Hotel rested on the southern skirts of Mona Lake Channel. Built in 1886 by J.O. Antisdale, it was “one of the best-known resort hotels in the central west,” according to a 1918 Muskegon Chronicle article. Scores of visitors arrived at the resort via the steamer Florence, which ferried them across from Black Lake Railroad Station.

Considered one of Muskegon’s greatest assets, the two- and three-story hotel boasted 80 rooms, including lavish amenities of the day: electric lights and running water. The hotel along with the surrounding cottages could accommodate approximately 1,000 guests.

With 400 feet of channel frontage, this luxurious establishment was one of the largest in Michigan, second in size only to the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island. The sprawling grounds of the Lake Harbor hotel included an 18-hole golf course, riding stables, tennis courts, icehouse, casino, and bowling alley. Serene walks canopied by robust maple trees, breezy Lake Michigan swims, and lounging on the broad veranda made this a “perfect summer paradise.”

So, the next time you stroll along the tranquil, wooded paths of Lake Harbor Park, gaze across the channel and ponder the warm, sunny days of summers gone by.

Hillary Jones, Historic Sites Manager

## Upcoming Summer Programs

Summer is a busy time of year for the Muskegon Historic Sites! We will be welcoming guests from several cruise lines through our doors as they stop and visit our lovely town. We are excited to share history and our love of Muskegon with these out-of-town guests.

We will be hosting *Dog Days of Summer: Life in the 1930s* at the Scolnik House of the Depression Era, where you can get a firsthand experience of summertime during the Great Depression in West Michigan. Activities include ice cream churning, laundry on the lawn, and so much more!

Monthly throughout the summer, we will also be offering our exclusive After Dark Tours of the Hackley & Hume Historic Site.

QR code to Zeffy site



To see all our upcoming programming and secure your tickets, please visit our website or scan the QR code.

Hannah Erdman, Historic Sites Program Assistant

# MUSKEGON MUSEUM OF HISTORY & SCIENCE

Sun and Sand on the Riviera of Michigan



For over one hundred years, the beaches of Muskegon County have brought visitors from all around to experience the sun, sand, cool water, and breeze.

From 1890 to 1929, entertainment at the beach was easy to find, at least if you went to the Riviera of Michigan, Lake Michigan Park.



Loop De Loop Attraction, at Lake Michigan Park

The Street Railway Company created Lake Michigan Park as an attraction to drive business on their line in the summertime. The park was located where Pere Marquette beach is today. During its history it offered dancing, music, roller coaster rides along the lake, vaudeville performances with actors from the Actors Colony, skating, bowling, a 100-foot-tall Ferris wheel, and, swimming.

The park was also the prime destination for Fourth of July celebrations, hosting events all through the day. Fireworks, of course, were a given, but events over the years also included boat races, foot and swimming races, pie-eating contests (hopefully after the swimming race), a hot air balloonist who went up into the air and parachuted down, and flying demonstrations. In 1916, an estimated 15,000 people were expected to be there for the Fourth of July.

Sadly, as automobiles became more popular, the park had trouble without the revenue from street car ticket sales to stay in business. It changed hands many times in the 1920s before shutting down in 1929 and being torn down the following year. Nothing remains of this once active park besides pictures and postcards, although I think we could all agree, it would be quite a sight to see on the shoreline today.



Theater, at Lake Michigan Park



Street Car Tracks, to the beach at Lake Michigan Park

# MUSEUM ENGAGEMENT

The 1937 Legacy Society: Celebrating the Museum's Founders

08

Archie McCrea and Margaret Drake Elliott served on the original board of trustees of the Muskegon County Museum, now known as Lakeshore Museum Center. In 1946, to honor Archie McCrea and his contributions to Muskegon, the city dedicated a park space in his name. McCrea Charter Playfield (McCrea Park) is located at Kenneth Street and Catawba Avenue in the Angell neighborhood. Similarly, in 1992, the city renamed Spider Park in honor of Margaret Drake Elliott. Margaret Drake Elliott Park is on Beach Street, along the south side of the Muskegon Channel near Pere Marquette.



1937 Museum Board of Directors; Margaret Drake Elliott front row center, Archie McCrea front row on the right.

Archie McCrea was born in Sheridan Township, Michigan. His family moved to Muskegon when he was a teenager. Upon graduating from Muskegon High School in 1905, he was hired by the *Muskegon Chronicle*, where he spent his entire career. He served as editor there from 1935 until his death in 1950.

McCrea was involved in a number of volunteer service organizations and positions, including Muskegon Public School Board of Education, President of Hackley Hospital's board of directors, Vice President of the YMCA, and he served as Superintendent of Sunday School at his church, Lakeside Methodist, for twenty-five years.

His obituary read, "No other personality had a greater influence on the growth and development of Greater Muskegon than Mr. McCrea... [He] was a man who couldn't say 'no' to a call to public service." McCrea's is a story of hard work, setting a good example, exemplifying integrity, and truly making a difference in Muskegon.

Margaret Drake Elliott was born in Breckenridge, Michigan. She came to Muskegon to serve as an educator and librarian at Muskegon Public Schools for thirty-seven years. Like McCrea, she was also employed by the *Muskegon Chronicle*. As one of the first female writers in the U.S. to focus on nature, she was a pioneer in the field, writing about nature and the environment for sixty-two years.

In addition to founding the museum, Drake Elliott was affiliated with a myriad of organizations, many of which as a charter member. She was a woman of innumerable interests and hobbies, often reflected in her volunteerism, and most of which focused on the natural world. For instance, she helped to found the first Audubon Society in Michigan. She was the first female member of the Muskegon County Conservation Club. And Margaret's data from her study and collection of monarch butterflies notably impacted the knowledge of the species. Additionally, her support and advocacy for the local Native American community increased public awareness, earned her great respect, and an adoption into the Ottawa tribe.



Portrait of Archie McCrea circa 1930-1940s. Mounted on pressed wood.

# MUSEUM ENGAGEMENT

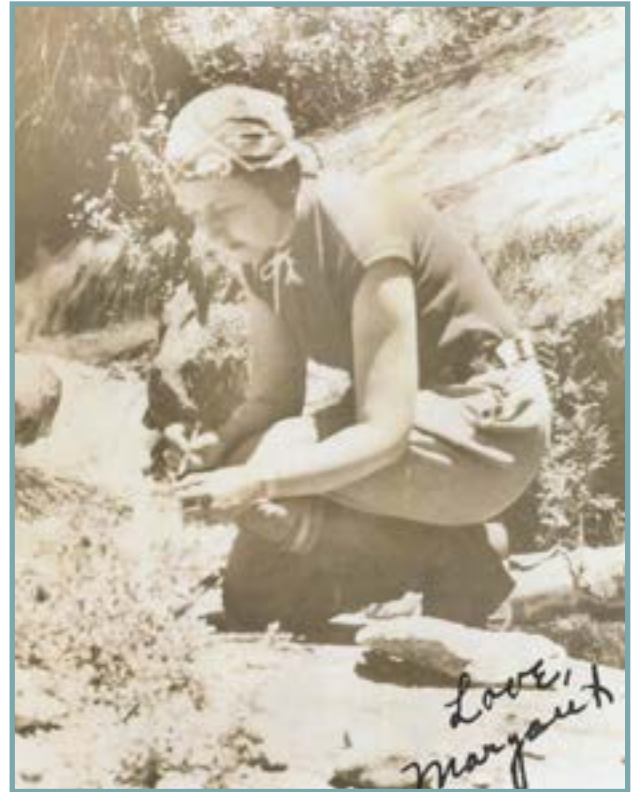
The 1937 Legacy Society: Celebrating the Museum's Founders

A highly intelligent and passionate person, Margaret Drake Elliott's mark on Muskegon can still be seen, particularly through her contributions to the museum's natural history collection and her prioritization of the sustainability of our organization.

She loved Muskegon with ferocity, as is evident in her writing from February 5, 1981, "There are few places in Michigan, I am sure, where one can find the city, the suburbs and the countryside all in one. They are all within walking distance, and that is a real advantage in these days of high fuel priced and limited fuel. Paraphrasing our state's motto: If you would seek a beautiful community, look around you. It is great living here."

Today, thanks to the city's commendation of Archie McCrea and Margaret Drake Elliott, we are able to enjoy outdoor community spaces that honor their legacies. Nearly 90 years ago, these early museum founders showed deep commitment to our community and to preserving Muskegon County's history.

Our 1937 Legacy Society invites you to ask yourself: What will be your legacy? If you'd like to learn more about leaving an impact on Muskegon's history through planned giving, please contact [Morgan Witmer at morgana@lakeshoremuseum.org](mailto:Morgan Witmer at morgana@lakeshoremuseum.org).



Margaret Drake Elliott taking notes as she closely examines plants, circa 1920s. Location unknown.

Morgan Witmer, Development & Office Administrator

## Enjoy These Reciprocal Membership Partners This Summer!

<p><b>July</b></p> <p><b>Grand Rapids Public Museum</b></p> <p>Free Admission to the Museum</p> <p>grpm.org</p>	<p><b>July</b> <i>New Partners!</i></p> <p><b>Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum</b></p> <p>Free Admission to the Museum</p> <p>discoverscienceandnature.org</p>		
<p><b>August</b> <i>New Partners!</i></p> <p><b>Michigan Science Center</b></p> <p>Free Admission to the Museum</p> <p>mi-sci.org</p>	<p><b>August</b> <i>New Partners!</i></p> <p><b>Michigan Flight Museum</b></p> <p>Free Admission to the Museum</p> <p>miflightmuseum.org</p>	<p><b>September</b> <i>New Partners!</i></p> <p><b>History Center at Courthouse Square</b></p> <p>Free Admission to the Museum Grounds &amp; Buildings</p> <p>new.berrienhistory.org</p>	<p><b>September</b></p> <p><b>White River Light Station</b></p> <p>Free Admission to the Lighthouse and Museum</p> <p><a href="https://lakeshorekeepers.org/white-river-light-station/">https://lakeshorekeepers.org/white-river-light-station/</a></p>

# MUSKEGON HERITAGE MUSEUM OF BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

Muskegon's Car Culture

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Muskegon County was settled because the lakes, rivers and streams provided ready access to raw materials and made it easy to ship finished goods to markets around the world. The one mode of transportation that is arguably the most associated with summer in Michigan — the automobile! It's hard to imagine a trip to the beach or a state park without the windows down and your favorite summer anthem on the radio.

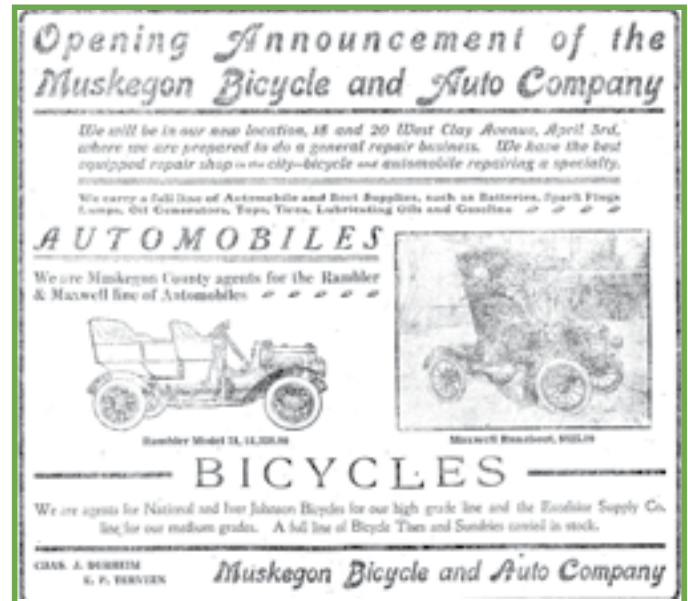
Car culture came to Muskegon fairly early. Wood's Motor Vehicle Company electric car appeared in the Memorial Day parade on May 30, 1900. Local resident Frank D. Smith, an insurance and real estate agent, purchased the city's first automobile in October 1900. It was manufactured by the Mobile Company of America and powered by steam. He purchased it after test driving one at the Chicago Auto Expo that summer. His first drive up Terrace Street occurred on October 15, 1900, followed closely by a group of boys on bicycles.

In 1905, Continental Motor and Manufacturing Company built the city's first auto parts factory. Their initial 16,000-square-foot building at the foot of Market Street began Muskegon's involvement in the auto supply chain that continues with companies like ADAC, Pace, and CWC Textron.

The Muskegon Bicycle and Auto Company opened its doors in April 1907, selling Maxwell and Rambler automobiles at 18 to 20 W. Clay. They split time selling and servicing both bicycles and automobiles. The site is now part of the parking lot between Terrace and Jefferson Streets.



Picnickers and Beachgoers line Pere Marquette Park in this June 1957 photo.



Ad for the Grand Opening of Muskegon's first car dealership.

Auto tourism began to slowly grow in popularity in the final years of the "aughts." In 1914, the West Michigan Pike opened as a lakeshore driving destination. The route would eventually extend from Chicago to Mackinac City. Tourist cabins, motels, campgrounds, restaurants, and attractions sprung up to separate families from their vacation money. You can pick up a turn-by-turn pamphlet at the Muskegon Heritage Museum of Business & Industry and follow in the footsteps (or tire tracks) of our automotive ancestors.

Kirk Bunke, Site Manager

## Upcoming Community Day Themes:

- July 18—Motorcycles & Bicycles
- August 1—Rail Travel, Trains & More
- September 5—Ships & Ports
- October 3—Air Travel

# PLAN YOUR VISIT

## Calendar of Events

### Muskegon Museum of History & Science



### Muskegon Historic Sites



### Muskegon Heritage Museum of Business & Industry



#### All Sites Closed

July 4

September 7

#### June 11

Play and Learn

10:00am

#### June 12

\*All Access Tour

7:00pm-8:30pm

#### June 13

Knit in Public Day

#### June 17-18

\*Nature Cat Camp

#### June 17

Tally Ho! Nature Adventures Await at Dune Harbor Park

9:30am

#### June 18

Invasive Species Lecture

#### June 20

Ships Along the Shoreline at Mart Dock

11:00am-3:00pm

#### June 20

\*Roaring 20s Tea

1:00pm-4:00pm

#### June 21

Father's Day

1:00pm-4:00pm

#### June 25

Play and Learn

10:00am

#### June 27

Native Americans and European Traders: America 250th Program

#### June 26-27

\*Hackley Attic Escape Room

5:00pm-6:30pm

#### June 30

\*History Walking Tour

10:00am

#### June 30

\*Maintaining American Independence Tour (MAIT)

1:00pm

#### July 2, 7, & 9

\*Maintaining American Independence Tour

10:00pm

#### July 2, 7, & 9

\*History Walking Tour

1:00pm

#### July 9

Lake Michigan Coastal Dunes: History, Science, and Protection

6:00pm

#### July 10

Nature Cat Watch Along

5:30pm

#### July 10

\*After Dark Tour

9:00pm-10:00pm

#### July 11

Michigan's History on Maps and Becoming a State: America 250 Program

#### July 15

Cat Adoption Day

1:00 PM-3:00 PM

#### July 18

Nature Cat Day at the Museum

1:00pm

#### July 18

\*Maintaining American Independence Tour

1:00pm

#### June 18

Community Day: Motorcycles & Bicycles

#### June 27

Antique & Vintage Motorcycle Display

#### July 21

\*Tally Ho! Nature Adventures Await at P.J. Hoffmaster State Park

10:00am

#### July 21

Play and Learn

10:00am

#### July 24

Member Appreciation Event

#### July 27-31

Enviroworks Camp

#### August 1

Community Date: Travel: Trains & More

#### August 6

Tally Ho! Nature Adventure Awaits at Thatcher Park

9:30am

#### August 7

Purple Heart Day

#### August 7

\*After Dark Tour

9:00pm-10:00pm

#### August 13

Play and Learn

10:00am

#### August 15

\*Maintaining American Independence Tour

4:00pm

#### August 15

\*Dog Days of Summer

11:00am-3:00pm

#### August 18 & 20

\*History Walking Tour

10:00am

#### August 18 & 20

\*Maintaining American Independence Tour

1:00pm

#### August 21

Nature Cat Watch Along

8:00pm

#### August 27

Play and Learn

10:00am

#### September 5

Community Day: Ships & Ports

\*Program has a cost to participate, please visit our website calendar at [www.lakeshoremuseum.org](http://www.lakeshoremuseum.org) for details.

Muskegon Museum of History & Science  
430 W. Clay Ave., Muskegon  
231.722.0278

Hackley & Hume Historic Site  
484 W. Webster Ave., Muskegon  
231.722.7578

Fire Barn Museum  
484 W. Webster Ave., Muskegon  
231.722.7578

Scolnik House of the Depression Era  
484 W. Webster Ave., Muskegon  
231.722.7578

Muskegon Heritage Museum of  
Business & Industry  
561 W. Western Ave., Muskegon  
231.722.1363

www.lakeshoremuseum.org



LAKESHORE  
MUSEUM CENTER



WATCH MUSKEGON READ  
HACKLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY

SCAN ME  
Download the Beamstack app by scanning the QR code!

Summer Reading Program 2026  
June 1 - August 1 | Hackley Library  
FREE - All ages are encouraged to sign up, participate, and earn prizes!  
Find more details at [hackleylibrary.org](http://hackleylibrary.org)

SUMMER Jazz  
Wednesdays  
July 1, 15, 29  
7:30pm @ The Block

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ON SALE NOW!

MUSKEGON MUSEUM OF ART  
Mike & Kay Oltorf Present  
Her Story of Animation  
Mary Blair & Beyond  
June 6 - Sept. 27 2026

Nickelodeon  
THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL  
YOUTH EDITION  
Sept. 12-13, 2026  
Frauenthal Theatre

FOR MORE INFO