64th Annual

Michigan in Perspective

Local History Conference
VIRTUAL - March 25-26, 2022

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9-10 a.m. Opening Keynote

Riverfront Reborn: The Renaissance Center and Detroit River
Matthew P. Cullen, JACK Entertainment

Situated on the Detroit International Riverfront, the seven connected skyscrapers of General Motors’ Renaissance Center make up a striking portion of the city’s skyline. Hear from the chief architect behind GM’s acquisition and development of the complex about establishing the automaker’s global headquarters in Detroit and launching a billion-dollar transformation of the city’s riverfront—from an abandoned industrial site to a destination for entertainment and recreation.
The Gotham: Detroit’s Legendary Hotel
Jamon Jordan, Association for the Study of African American Life and History

Learn about Detroit’s historic Gotham Hotel—once one of the country’s leading Black hotels and the gathering place for a who’s who list of visitors, including Jackie Robinson, Langston Hughes, Ella Fitzgerald, Sammy Davis Jr., and Billie Holiday.

A Window Into History: Vintage Detroit Postcards
Dan Austin, Vandyke Horn

Offering a glimpse into the past, from familiar sights to long-lost Detroit landmarks, speaker Dan Austin examines historic postcards from the Motor City during the first half of the twentieth century, a time of tremendous growth and change.

Read All About It: El Central Newspaper
José Cuello, Wayne State University

The oldest and only bilingual newspaper in Michigan, El Central Hispanic News has been covering Hispanic society and culture for more than 30 years—since 1988. Learn about the history and reach of the pioneering Detroit-based periodical.

Wailing Wall of Detroit: Segregation on Eight Mile
Erin Einhorn & Olivia Lewis, NBC News & BridgeDetroit

Built in 1941 to physically separate African- and European-American homeowners, the Detroit Eight Mile Wall, also known as the Wailing Wall of Detroit or the Birwood Wall, symbolizes the city’s history of racial segregation.

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11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Lunch Keynote

Barbara McQuade:
Breaking the Glass Ceiling
Barbara McQuade, University of Michigan

In 2010, Barbara McQuade made history when she became U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan. As the first woman to serve in that capacity, she oversaw cases relating to corruption, civil rights, terrorism, and more. Even before that standout national appointment, McQuade was active both in Detroit’s legal circles and in national political conversations. Learn about her life, career, and Michigan roots at this keynote session.

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detroithistorical.org
A Life in Review: Henry Ford
Matt Anderson, The Henry Ford
This year marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of Henry Ford’s death. Join us for a retrospective of the auto magnate’s complex life and career, from his rise to prominence to his enduring legacy in Michigan’s automotive and cultural landscapes.

Building Corktown: The Architectural Fingerprint of a Detroit Neighborhood
Brian Hurrinienne, Christian Hurrinienne Architects
The oldest existing neighborhood in Detroit, Corktown has a rich cultural history—one that is revealed on the facades of the community’s buildings. Explore the architectural styles and influences in this area of Detroit.

Fore! Ben Davis and the African American Golf Hall of Fame
Shaun Thomas, Fred Hart Williams Genealogical Society
Learn about Michigan members of the African American Golfers Hall of Fame (AAGHOF) who helped shape the game of golf. The AAGHOF was organized to honor achievements of African Americans who made it possible for everyone to enjoy the sport.

Motor City Pride: 50 Years of LGBT Activism
Tim Retzloff & Isabel Clare Paul, Michigan State University & Artist
Motor City Pride traces its origins to 1972, when participants marched in downtown Detroit to protest homophobic laws and advocate for LGBT rights. Held annually in June, the event endures as a place of commemoration, celebration, and activism.

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Learn more about our memberships at hsm.pub/member
Nearly Nuclear: A Mismanaged Energy Transition
LeRoy (Lee) Smith, Optimal Value Energy LLC

In 1967, Consumers Power announced the construction of two nuclear reactors in Midland. Hear the story of the financial difficulties, bureaucratic hiccups, and citizen protests that ultimately resulted in the project’s cancelation after nearly 20 years of work.

Temple Beth El: Michigan’s First Jewish Congregation
Laura Gottlieb, Temple Beth El

Established in 1850, Detroit’s Temple Beth El began as a gathering of 12 Jewish families seeking community in the city. Learn about the history of this landmark congregation, which has occupied several architecturally significant buildings in and around Detroit.

Under the Table: Numbers Running in Detroit
Ken Coleman, Michigan Advance

Before Michigan ran a legal lottery, there existed underground numbers games operated by organized crime members and entrepreneurial individuals alike. One of those resourceful individuals was Fannie Davis, who started her own numbers-running enterprise in 1960s Detroit.

Stroh’s Story: A Detroit Brewing Legacy
Jeremy Dimick, Detroit Historical Society

Founded in 1850 by Bernhard Stroh, a German emigrant to Detroit, the Stroh Brewery Company created classic Michigan beers using recipes developed in Germany. Once sold door-to-door in a wheelbarrow, Stroh’s beer quickly became a Detroit staple.

Be a part of history today with Legacy Circle.

The Historical Society of Michigan recognizes people who have included our organization in their wills, living trusts, and other estate-planning vehicles. We are grateful for gifts of all sizes—it is for everyone who values history. Even a small gift can make a difference.

Learn more at hsm.pub/legacy
Sharpshooters of Company K: Anishinaabek in the Civil War
Michelle Cassidy, Central Michigan University

Organized in 1863, Company K of the 1st Michigan Sharpshooters consisted of 139 Anishinaabe men from Michigan. Those highly skilled sharpshooters were present at many of the Civil War’s well-known battles—making their mark on Union efforts.

A Seat at the Table: Councilwoman Erma Henderson
JoAnn Watson, Detroit City Council (Ret.)

Erma Henderson was one of Detroit’s most powerful women of her time. In 1972, she became the first African-American woman elected to the Detroit City Council. Henderson’s commitment to people continued as she served 17 years on the council, 12 as president.

The Jones School: An Anchor of Ann Arbor
Omer Jean Winborn (and Panel), Fred Hart Williams Genealogical Society

Jones School was considered an anchor of the Ann Arbor African-American neighborhood—now known as Kerrytown—until 1965. Learn how discriminatory housing practices led to the school being considered a “de facto” segregated school and its ultimate closure.

Fishy Business: Restoration of the Great Lakes Sturgeon
Kathy Johnson, Great Lakes Now

As the largest freshwater fish native to the Great Lakes, lake sturgeon are an important part of the region’s ecosystem. Trace the story of these ancient fish from their historical abundance to their near eradication to today’s restoration efforts.

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4:45-5:45 p.m. Afternoon Keynote
Chuck Stokes’ Spotlight: Biggest News Stories of My Career
Chuck Stokes, WXYZ/WMYD-TV7&20

If you live in Southeast Michigan, you’ve likely spent a Sunday morning with Chuck Stokes. As the current moderator and producer of Spotlight on the News, the longest-running weekly news segment in Detroit, he has spent years covering local, national, and international happenings on WXYZ-TV. This keynote will explore some of Stokes’ biggest and most memorable news stories, including past interviews with Michigan leaders, larger-than-life personalities, and more.
9-10 a.m. Morning Keynote

Revolutionary Change:
Karen Batchelor and the D.A.R.
Karen Batchelor, Genealogist & Family Historian

Founded in 1890 by women directly descended from people who aided in the United States’ independence, the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) did not have any Black members until 1977—when Detroiter Karen Batchelor joined the DAR as member number 623,128. Following Batchelor’s admission, her story received attention from national news outlets. Hear from Batchelor herself about her family research and historic role in the 131-year-old organization.
The Elusive Griffon: A Maritime Mystery
Bob McGreevy, Marine Artist

The largest sailing vessel on the Great Lakes in its time, Le Griffon disappeared after its maiden voyage in 1679. Over the years, many have theorized about the ship’s fate—yet the story of Le Griffon remains a mystery.

Michigan Terror: America’s First School Bombing
Arnie Bernstein, Author

On May 18, 1927, Andrew P. Kehoe detonated explosives at the north wing of Bath Consolidated School—ending the lives of 38 children and 4 adults. This session examines the deadliest school massacre in U.S. history.

No Equal Justice: The Legacy of George W. Crockett Jr
Peter Hammer, Wayne State University Law School

Civil Rights icon, attorney, judge, and congressman George W. Crockett Jr. represented Michigan’s thirteenth district from 1980 to 1991. Learn how he spent his life fighting racism and defending the constitutional rights of the oppressed.

Perspectives in Print: The Toledo War
Alexandrea Penn, Wayne State University

There are two sides to every war—including the bloodless border dispute between Michigan and Ohio known as the Toledo War. Learn more about the struggle for the Toledo Strip by examining the perspectives of the reporters covering the story.

Calling All Volunteers!
The Historical Society of Michigan is looking for volunteer judges for the 2022 Michigan History Day® academic competition. No experience or history background necessary—all you need is a passion for history!

Learn more about MHD and becoming a judge at hsm.pub/judge
Engagement and Empowerment:
The Urban League of Detroit

N. Charles Anderson, Urban League of Detroit & Southeast Michigan

Since its establishment in 1916, the Urban League of Detroit has served a pivotal role in the community by providing services for African Americans and other persons of color. In this keynote, N. Charles Anderson—who served as president of the league for several years—will provide a comprehensive history of the organization, including the ways it has supported and empowered Black Detroiters for more than a century.
On the Air: Radio in the Motor City
Tim Kiska, University of Michigan—Dearborn

Detroit’s oldest radio station, WWJ, went on the air in 1920. Since that first broadcast, dozens of stations have risen to entertain and inform city residents. Learn about the stations, stories, and melodious voices of Detroit radio.

From Slavery to Service: The Life of James Robinson
Dale Rich, Photo Journalist

The Reverend James Robinson—who was born enslaved—was given military honors 151 years after his death. With the promise of freedom he did not get until the 1830s, Robinson served valiantly in both the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812.

Joining Forces: Intersectional Activism in the UAW
James McQuaid, Wayne State University

In 1973, Gary Kapanowski, a gay man, began his campaign for a UAW position. His leadership was instrumental in forming working-class solidarity among the rank-and-file employees threatened by the relocation of the Briggs Beautyware plant.

Hail to the Victors: Black Athletes at U-M
Rashid Faisal, University of Michigan—Dearborn

African-American athletes have been breaking barriers at U-M since Moses Fleetwood Walker joined the baseball team in 1882. Learn about the various Black athletes who fought against discrimination in the hope of achieving their academic and athletic dreams.

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Telling Our Stories: The Fred Hart Williams Genealogical Society

Leslie Williams (and Panel), Fred Hart Williams Genealogical Society

Learn more about the first genealogical society in Michigan dedicated to the preservation of African-American family histories. The panel will share narratives collected for a book celebrating the group’s fortieth anniversary.

The Indian Boarding School: Its Creation and Impacts

Eric Hemenway, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians

Indian Boarding Schools were institutions of forced assimilation across the United States, with several operating in Michigan—part of a plan to “civilize” Native people. Learn about the policies that created the schools and their ongoing repercussions.

Reaching for the Rings: Detroit’s Olympic Bids

Stefan Szymanski, University of Michigan

For more than five decades, avid Detroiters tried—and repeatedly failed—to capture the honor of hosting the Olympic Games. Learn about the contentious local, national, and international politics that hindered the city’s hoped-for hosting duties.

Classy Chassis: The Fisher Body Corporation

Bill Pringle, Detroit Historical Society

The Fisher Brothers opened Fisher Body in Detroit in 1908—producing auto bodies for Cadillac, Buick, and Ford before General Motors purchased the company in 1919. Learn more about the family business that evolved into a central pillar of General Motors.

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3:30-4:30 p.m. Closing Keynote

The Detroit Historical Society: A Century of History
Joel Stone, Detroit Historical Society

In 1921, several prominent Detroiter founded the Detroit Historical Society. Over the last 100 years, the organization has grown to include award-winning exhibitions, programs, tours, publications, and online content—all aiming to preserve and share the stories of the city’s people, places, and events. Explore the legacy of the Detroit Historical Society, and 100 years of Detroit history, during this keynote celebrating the society’s centennial year.
Register online at hsm.pub/lhc2022

Conference Registration

Friday-Saturday, March 25-26, 2022

Registration Deadlines:
Early-Bird Registration Ends: February 13, 2022
Standard Registration Ends: March 24, 2022
Late Registration: March 25-26, 2022

MEMBER REGISTRATION

- Early-Bird Registration $59 $______
- Standard Registration $65 $______
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- Early-Bird Registration $69 $______
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