I became President of the La Grange Area Historical Society in 2016. As I look back, I am amazed at all we were able to accomplish during my term. We hired our Executive Director, Sarah Parkes, created a summer student intern program, increased our membership, updated our filing system, created a museum programming space, installed a kitchenette, and launched a new full newsletter (now printed on our new copier). We've initiated new events and exhibits as well as virtual programming in an attempt to reach our members and our entire community during the Covid-19 crisis. I also believe that we have created a greater awareness of who the La Grange Area Historical Society is and why it is vital to our community.

There is still work to do! We desperately need a climate controlled storage facility for our collections, our historic building needs improvements and our membership should better reflect the population in the area.

Now it is 2022, and my term is up. It is time for new leadership to take us forward into a new era for the Historical Society. I am eager to see where we will go next. I know that there are great things ahead for the Historical Society and I look forward to help the next president accomplish their vision. I look back at my term and feel very proud and lucky to have been part of such a prominent organization, providing a great community service and working with such a dedicated group of volunteers. It has been an honor serving as your president. Thank you.
DID YOU KNOW? THE 1950 CENSUS IS COMING SOON! By Tom Vesser

Tom Vesser is a volunteer Genealogist at the La Grange Area Historical Society.

The 1950 population census is going to be released on April 1, 2022. This is a big day for genealogists and family historians as details about the 151 million Americans alive in 1950 are made available. In addition, 30 million Americans living today will see their name for the first time on a census.

The Census Bureau’s National Processing Center (NPC) in Jeffersonville, Indiana, maintains copies of all census records. Seventy-two years after a census is taken the records are transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). NARA is responsible for making the records publicly available. Currently, the National Archives has the 1790 and 1940 census records available to the public. Federal censuses take place every decade, as required by the Constitution, but the information collected is not immediately made public. Instead, access to census records is restricted to the individual whose name is on the record, or their legal heir, for 72 years. This is due to the “72-Year-Rule, which became law in 1978 and requires that the National Archives wait that length of years after Census Day prior to release census records to the public.

The 1950 Census, the last one done completely in-person, contains 7.9 million pages of information. This data was collected from April 1 to April 15, 1950, by 142,000 census workers (called “enumerators”). This census gives us a snapshot of the country at one of the most interesting points in American history, just after the Second World War and before a decade of advances in science, civil rights, and entertainment. The census was taken roughly a year before the first color television program was broadcast. Three years later, scientists would discover the structure of DNA, and by mid-decade, on December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks would refuse to vacate her seat on an Alabama bus.

The 1950 Census also provides rich details about the lives of Americans. In addition to biographical details such as age, address, gender, race, and marital status, the 1950 Census also provides a detailed picture of occupations, birthplaces, and highest grade of school attended. College students were counted where they were living while attending school, not necessarily at their home. Veterans were asked questions about their military history, and Americans who were not living on U.S. soil were counted for the first time. War deaths, family separations, and the general mobility of the population affected many people and is reflected in the census data.

The release of the 1950 population census on April 1, 2022, will be an exciting time for genealogists. With the amount of data that will be available. It will keep genealogists busy for a long time.

References:
1. U.S. Census Bureau (www.census.gov)
2. The National Archives (www.archives.gov)
3. Family Search (www.familysearch.org)
We Send You Our Very Best Wishes For A Safe Healthy New Year From All Of Us At The La Grange Area Historical Society!

The COVID-19 pandemic has created special challenges for the La Grange Area Historical Society, including intermittent closures. For those of you who have generously donated, we thank you whole heartedly as you remain the champions of our mission to serve the community during these trying times. We are grateful for your support and look forward to welcoming you to our esteemed museum during open hours or by appointment.

We are always proud to support our community. Monetary donations, large and small, continue to be greatly appreciated. As this year begins anew, we ask you to consider reaching out to neighbors and friends to encourage them to become a member with the La Grange Area Historical Society. We are closed for the month of January as a Covid-10 precautionary measure, however we look forward to the time when we can open the house once again to visitors providing memorable exhibits and experiences to you and your families.

Over the past year, we have made a dedicated effort to research and add to our Black History Archives. We are working with the Community Diversity Group and interfaith community partners, organizations and churches to deepen our understanding of Black history, their experiences and the contributions they have made to our community. We would be appreciative of any information you could share with us. Please contact us at www.lagrangehistory.org.

EXPANDING OUR ARCHIVES - BLACK HISTORY

This is Anna May Romanski Ferguson. She is one of notable women who is featured in our 2021 Remarkable Women of La Grange exhibit. Anna was born in the La Grange area in 1930 and graduated from Lyons Township High School in 1948. She was accepted to the Cook County School of Nursing in the fall of 1949, one of only a few African Americans to be accepted. In 1963 she was recruited by Electro Motors as a registered nurse and retired as medical supervisor many years later. She had several appointed commissions and worked and served on many organizations throughout her life. A more complete snapshot of Anna May can still be seen at the La Grange Public Library’s one of six wall display cases located in the stairwell.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2022

Join Us For Our Annual TEA WITH YOUR DOLL set in the 80’S
Come learn about the bodacious fashion and radical dance moves of the Eighties! March 12th and 13th Registration open now! lagrangehistory.org

STATE of the LAGRANGE AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Join our Annual March Meeting to look back on what we have accomplished last year and where we are heading. All members of the Historical Society are welcome to attend and give us feedback on how we are doing. Please check our website for details. www.lagrangehistory.org

As COVID-19 Protocols Dictate
WINTER EVENTS

PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR UPDATES AND REGISTRATION
www.lagrangehistory.org

TEA WITH YOUR DOLL

STATE OF LA GRANGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT OUR VIRTUAL HOME AND HISTORY TOUR 2021 IS AVAILABLE THROUGH 2/1/22

SELF-GUIDED WALKING TOURS

VISIT OUR ONLINE GIFT SHOP!

ALL BEST WISHES IN 2022!