



Cathy Poulos is surrounded by history in her Rochester Hills home. An avid genealogist, she's methodically helping preserve accounts from the area's past for Rochester-Avon Historical Society.

Digging through past delights Hills genealogists

BY ANNETTE KINGSBURY
ECCENTRIC STAFF WRITER

Cathy Poulos can trace her family's presence in Rochester back to 1830, just 13 years after the town's founding. Of Scots-Irish and English descent, she's working on going back further — much further.

"My goal has been to get as many lines as I can back to the boat," she said. When she hits a roadblock in one branch of the family, she starts on another, "because you have that craving."

Genealogy is something of an addiction for Poulos, who lives in Rochester Hills. So much so that it doesn't even have to be her own family she's researching. A member of several heritage groups, Poulos has been working to secure the community's historical records for future generations.

She has digitized the records of veterans buried at Mt. Avon Cemetery.

Last year she began methodically reading, retyping and digitizing records of births, marriages and

deaths in Rochester, starting with copies of the *Rochester Era* newspaper going back to 1883. Her work is being added to the Web site of the Rochester-Avon Historical Society as it becomes available.

"It's going to be a slow process," Poulos said, adding that she hopes to complete the records to 1914. She enjoys reading the flowery language of the time and has come to the conclusion that the more lavish the language, the more well-liked was the dearly departed.

"I really love reading these obituaries; they're a delight," she said. "And when you transcribe them, you transcribe them as written. So it looks like you're making a lot of grammatical errors, but you're not."

FILLING IN GAPS

Poulos' home is filled with photos and mementoes of her family and boxes containing research projects in process. She started getting interested in genealogy at age 16 and says her grandfather left complete records, though they were a bit hard to decipher.

"I kept hearing these names as a child, but didn't know who they were," she said. Several other family members contributed notes and old newspapers.

"That's what really got me started thinking, 'I've got to do something about this,'" she said. "I was able to fill in a lot of gaps, learn a lot of new things. If my father was alive he would say, 'I don't believe this.'"

Today she spends time at the library, viewing microfilm, printing out announcements, then taking them home to type. She also helps others research their own family histories.

Over the years she's learned a lot about good and bad sources for doing genealogical research. She said knowing the difference is crucial.

"Do not take everything you see on the Web as gospel, especially if it's not sourced. Some of it is fiction," she said.

You can't document your geneal-

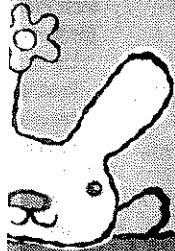
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PHOTOS BY JOHN STORMZAND | STAFF PHOTOS

Some research materials are tucked away for safekeeping in Poulos' informal filing system.

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...s, we'll be offering
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...ed on a bed of field greens,
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...

2:00 p.m.
3:00 p.m.
4:00 p.m.

5:00 p.m.

ENDED



JOHN STORMZAND | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Tracing historical roots is an enjoyable pastime for Cathy Pouls of Rochester Hills.

GENEALOGIST

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ogy with sources that are not acceptable."

For anyone just starting the process, she suggests starting with census information: "Start with yourself ... and work your way back."

After a decade of doing this kind of research, Pouls said every new find of good, verifiable information is a joy.

"It's kind of fun," she said. "I love it."

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Wedding recap a window into history

Here is an example of the announcements Cathy Pouls is digitizing for the Rochester-Avon Historical Society. It's a wedding notice from the Oct. 8, 1886, Rochester Era newspaper.

E. T. Wilcox, Miss May Wilcox, Miss Linda Hankinson, Miss Sarah Pixley, Miss Emma Harvey, Rochester; Miss Nettle Weir, Detroit.

Rochester people were agog on Thursday at the happy home wedding which took place at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Martin Wilcox, south and east of the village, their eldest daughter, Miss Naomi, becoming the bride of Mr. Oliver S. Bristol, a prominent and successful young farmer from Almont. Rev. Wm. Hollinshed officiated, and a company of family friends from the village and other places rendering also most happy assistance.

Among the company were noticed Mrs. Jos. Bristol, Mr. Roy Bristol, Mr. Geo. Bristol and wife, Mr. Sheldon Bristol and wife, of Almont; Mr. and Mrs. Ward Bristol, Marlette; Mrs. W. R. Kendrick, East Saginaw; Mrs. C. Hopkins, Mr. Frank Hopkins, and Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Hopkins, Romeo; Mr. and Ms. S. S. Hopkins, St. Clair; Mr. and Mrs. E. Crawford, Ray; Mr. and Mrs. Will Voorhes, Troy; Mr. and Mrs. Hermann Bennett, Mrs.

The company left with the bride an elegant list of presents of practical value, note the list, being a complete set of crockery, lemonade set and table lamps from the brothers of the bride; set of gold bracelets from brother Newell; plus album, a long list of handsome articles in table linen, sets of silver spoons, silver sugar bowl and spoon holder, water set and tray, crumb-pan and brush, toilet set, and many others of equally appropriate value.

A handsome dinner was served to the company and Rochester people can testify that this was in no wise lacking in the elements to make the feast an enjoyable affair.

Mr. and Mrs. Bristol left by the evening train for a few days visit with friends in East Saginaw, and will be at home on the farm of Mr. B., near Almont, after the 15th, whither the host of friends of the lady in Rochester will follow them with wishes for continual happiness and prosperity.

MANAGER

FROM PAGE A1

begin the next chapter of our lives in a place with excellent schools and in a community that we can be proud to call home," he wrote.

Bikson said Vettraino was the unanimous choice of council for several reasons.

"The cities were somewhat similar. His education was outstanding. But just his ideas on moving the city forward, using

technology, were just extremely, tremendously impressive. He said all the right things, made everybody feel he was just clearly the right guy," Bikson said.

"I think everybody was hoping somebody would be the obvious choice. I think people thought this guy was maybe the top choice from his resume, but we were all waiting to see what he was like. He was very, very impressive."

Bikson said the only thing council members didn't agree

on is pay and benefits, but he called their closed-door debate on the matter "very congenial." Officials have a backup plan, he said, in case an agreement cannot be reached with Vettraino.

But Bikson is clearly hoping a deal can be reached.

"It feels like a breath of fresh air," he said. "He seemed an antidote to what we had. ... He's also extremely bright."

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