

Thumb Octagon Barn News

Home of the Thumb Agricultural Museum



The Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn are area volunteers committed to the restoration and preservation of the barn complex for the community.

WINTER 2010

The Purdy Home

Marilyn Phillips, Chairperson

The house committee is pleased to report that all windows on the 1st and 2nd story have brand new storm windows. This will certainly help with heating efficiency throughout the house.

This year the committee would like to begin working in the basement of the house. They want to sort through all of the stuff that has been accumulating in the storage rooms over the years, clean the items, repair any in need and, while the rooms are empty, whitewash the walls. Then they would like to put

the items back as they were used years ago using the appropriate pieces to the era. They would set up one room as the laundry room and another as the "summer" kitchen.

They also want to begin sorting through things that have been donated through the years and make some decisions about how best to use them. Marilyn would especially like to see the stovepipe put in place above the kitchen range and the glass back in the door of the ice-box.



During FFD **Alex Paladi**, of Deford, entertained visitors to the house by playing this beautifully restored melodeon (circa 1850-55) that had been in the Purdy family for years and is always passed on to the oldest son. **James Purdy Wilson**, Cass City, as the oldest grandson, had the melodeon passed to him and he donated it to the Friends. It was in need of considerable attention and repair. So in 2006, we were so fortunate to find Alex and he agreed to restore it. After almost 125 hours of work by Alex, this little melodeon, that had been silent for 85 to 100 years, is now playable. What a treasure and we once again thank the **Wilson Grandsons (James, George & Scotty)** for sharing so many things from their grandparents with the Friends.

Executive Committee

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Rose Putnam

1st Vice President
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2nd Vice President
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One Room Country School Chairman
Leo Bob Gengler

House Chairperson
Marilyn Phillips

Grounds Chairman
Louis Wehrman



Pictured are **Pat Hester**, Cass City, MI, **Pat Young**, Upper Sandusky, OH & **Betty Armstead**, Zephyrhills, FL working on applying first the sealer, then the primer and the final coat of paint to the 68 storm windows. That means that these windows were handled 204 times before being put into place by **Ed Bastion** a professional carpenter. Also, painting but not pictured were **Duaine & Marilyn Phillips**, **Madelyn Skaggs** and **Norma Wallace**. They did their painting in the garage and you can see in this picture the terrible condition of the garage walls. Plans are to restore the interior of the garage to recreate what it looked like when Mr. Purdy had his fancy garage.

Contributions to the Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn, a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization, are tax deductible according to the IRS guidelines.

Web Site
www.thumboctagonbarn.org

↓ Wanted ↓ Cora's Cleaning Crew

Cora Purdy's beautifully restored twelve room, three bathroom home needs major cleaning throughout the year before and after events. It is a big job and we need help. Therefore we are looking for volunteers to become part of **Cora's Cleaning Crew** that can help with this task. If you'd like to join this group, please let us know by calling **Pat Hester** at **989-872-5668**. Also, Pat said we need a couple of vacuum cleaners that are in good working condition so we can have one upstairs and one on the main floor.

*Letter From
the President*
**FRIENDS of the
THUMB OCTAGON BARN**
Rose M. Putnam



Dear Friends,

Can you believe it? It is now 2010! The first decade has passed by so quickly. We have seen many changes in our world. Some not so good and yet, even though our economy is distressed in the Thumb region, our project continues to grow. We have such a dedicated group of volunteers who feel it is important to tell the story of our rural heritage. Each committee has been hard at work planning for the coming year. Budgets are in place and the project list has been compiled. All events are set and we are ready to roll. The work crew has been working steadfastly through the winter months completing some old projects and starting new ones.

Also, statewide there is a lot of activity going on about barns. The **Barn of Ken Hecht of Reese** has been nominated as **Barn of the Year** by the upcoming Michigan Barn Preservation Conference to be held on **March 12 & 13, 2010** in East Lansing. I never miss it. If you don't know this great organization, please take a few minutes and visit their web site at www.mibarn.net.

If you've been watching any television, you may have seen the Campbell soup commercials about barns. Unfortunately, the Thumb Octagon Barn does not qualify for their project as it is not a working farm, but it's great to see the efforts nationwide to preserve our great barn heritage. For more information go to www.growyoursoup.com.

Let's continue the message that barns are alive and well in the Thumb, in Michigan and across the United States.

Your Friend and President,

Rose M. Putnam

Annual Meeting, Banquet & Benefit Auction

Lila Arroyo, Chairperson

Everything is in place for our Annual Meeting, Banquet and Benefit Auction on **Saturday, April 17, 2010** at the **VFW Hall in Cass City**. The evening will begin with a social hour starting at 5 p.m. This will be a time when folks can look over the items for the silent and the traditional auction and visit with others. A buffet dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m. prepared by **McDonald's Food & Family Center** in Bad Axe. Following dinner there will be a short business meeting including the election of officers, special recognition of our barn friend of the year and then a look back at our accomplishments of 2009 and our ambitious goals for 2010.

Then the fun will begin with our Benefit Auction handled by **Dave & Marty Osentoski Auctioneers**

who, as always, will be donating their time. We are requesting that folks donate one or two special items for the Benefit Auction and please bring them the night of the event. Auction items can be new or used in saleable condition and can include antiques, humorous items, baked goods, crafts and items for everyday use. There will be a silent auction throughout the evening as well as our traditional auction.

A reservation form is included with this newsletter with all the pertinent information. It's a fun evening and we hope to see you there as we begin our 2010 activities. The deadline for reservations is April 3, 2010. If you have any questions, you can contact **Lila Arroyo** at **989-872-2658**.

One Room Country School

Bob Gengler, Chairman



We were saddened to learn of the passing of **Clayton Turner** who had made our dream of a One Room Country School Museum seem possible when he made a \$10,000 donation for this effort in memory of his wife **Margaret Glougie Turner**. We have been able to match his gift with donations from individuals and businesses. However, our fund raising is continuing, as we must have at least \$30,000 in order to proceed with the construction of the building. Our goal is to construct a 24' by 24' building to recognize early one-room public education schools in the Thumb. It will include artifacts from Huron, Sanilac and Tuscola counties. Donations may be mailed to Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn, P.O. Box 145, Gageton, MI 48735. For more information contact Bob Gengler at gengler@avci.net or Katie Jackson at jacksonk@tband.net

In Memoriam

Clayton Turner, 85, of Penney Farms, FL passed away on November 13, 2009. He was born on March 12, 1924 in Cass City the son of Aaron & Grace Turner. He grew up on a farm in Ellington Township. He married **Margaret Glougie** on August 12, 1944 in Chicago, IL. Clayton had an engineering degree from GMI and worked for General Motors for 23 years but left to pursue a career in secondary education. He taught for 15 years at the Flint/Fenton Schools and then became involved with the Lapeer Intermediate School District where he retired as Superintendent in 1979. After retirement, Clayton returned to the farm just west of Cass City where he had a small tool and engineer-

ing business and also served as township clerk of Ellington Township until moving to Penney Farms, Florida in 1990.

Turner's daughter, **Janice Severance**, of Palm Harbor, FL shared some memories of her parents with the Friends. She said that the gift for the Country School Museum Building in memory of her Mother was understandable as her Mother's best childhood memories were spending time with Mrs. Purdy doing household chores. Janice also said, "I know that my Mother would think this is totally fitting and proper for the kindest and quite possibly the most generous family in the area to be able to have their most unusual barn, house and land be the home of this grand venture in little Gageton. Who would have imagined?" Janice especially wanted folks to understand why her Dad chose the Octagon Barn for his memorial to his wife of 65 years.

On behalf of the Turner Family, Clayton's son **Eric Turner**, from Flint, MI, wants to thank everyone who embraced their Father's challenge to raise money, in memory of their Mother, Margaret. Eric said, "To have their spirit for teaching a part of the school museum is a fitting tribute. Thank you again for all your support, and to everyone who works so hard to make the Octagon Barn what it is today."

Donations in memory of Clayton Turner for the Country School Museum

Gene & Joyce Tabor, Flint, MI - "Clayton was fond of the Thumb Octagon Barn. He and his wife cherished memories there."

Dr. & Mrs. Fred Terry, St. Petersburg, FL
Jeff & Christa Thompson, Flint, MI
Margaret Sergeant, Gageton, MI

Activities at the Purdy House

The beautifully restored Purdy Home will once again be host to a number of activities during our 2010 calendar year. It is very rewarding to be able to showcase this very important part of our Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum & Village.

We are grateful that all three hostesses from last year's Tea Parties have once again decided to schedule an activity this year. We also have a new hostess and each occasion has its own theme, however, several have chosen our FFD theme of Antique Toys and Dolls. The

Purdy Home can only accommodate about 24 guests so reservations are a must and they do fill up quickly. Following is a list of the dates, hostesses, cost and the **non-refundable** reservation deadlines. **For all but the Grandma's Tea the minimum age for attending an activity is 12.**

☞ **Saturday May 1st, 12:30 p.m. Marilyn King** will host a "Grandma's Tea". The cost will be \$15.00 for 13 and older & \$7.00 for 4 – 12 year olds. **Contact Marilyn at 810-672-9687 and the reservation deadline is April 20.**

☞ **Wednesday, June 9th, Louise Buehrly** will host a dinner at **6:00 p.m.** for couples or singles and the theme is "The Return of Cora". The cost per person is \$10.00 and the deadline for reservations is May 31, 2010. **Contact Louise at 989-872-2748.**

☞ **Saturday, July 24th, Judy Wallace** will host a Tea at 12:30 p.m. and her theme will be "Christmas in July highlighting antique Toys". The cost will be \$15.00 per person and the deadline for reservations is July 10th. **Contact Judy at 989-872-2766.**

☞ **Saturday, August 28th, Michele Szostak** will host a Tea at 12:30 p.m. and her theme will be "Antique Toys". The cost will be \$15.00 per person and the deadline for reservations is August 14th. **Contact Michele at 989-672-0052.**

☞ **Marilyn King** is also planning an October Tea with the date to be determined. Check our Spring newsletter for dates and times or our website at www.thumboctagonbarn.org



Truly these activities at the Purdy Home are elegant affairs. Pictured is the dining room table prepared by **Michele Szostak** just waiting for guests to arrive.

4th Annual Barnyard Sale & Swap Meet

Lila Arroyo, Chairperson

The 4th Annual Barnyard Sale & Swap Meet will take place over Memorial Day Weekend, Friday, May 28th, Saturday, May 29th and Sunday May 30th at the Thumb Octagon Barn Site starting each day at 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

Visitors will be able to purchase collectible farm items, period household items, vintage farm machinery & implements, antiques, garage sale items and Octagon Barn souvenirs and also swap meet stuff. Vendors have been signing up already. All spaces are \$20.00 for the entire sale period. Bring your own table or tables. **Contact Louis & Linda Wehrman at 989-693-6743** to reserve a space or for information.

There will be food available on site in the Munro Building. Coffee & doughnuts will be available each day starting at 8 a.m. The food concession will be open each day from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m.

The food items that will be available are: homemade soup, hot dogs, sloppy joes, ice cream, assorted desserts and, of course, Lila's delicious French Fries.

Lila has challenged members to bring an item for the sale to our monthly General Membership meetings. So far she has received something at every meeting. She feels that we must have more quality stuff for our garage sale to assure the success of the event. Also, **Lila will be accepting sale items at our clean-up day at the Barn on May 1st or you can call her at 989-872-2658 and 989-912-0405.**

All proceeds from the event are used for the restoration & maintenance of the Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum & Village.

Remember – NO PETS ALLOWED due to sanitary guidelines as well as safety concerns.



Pictured is **Lila Arroyo**, chairperson of the Barnyard Sale, relaxing last year on Sunday afternoon and she is very pleased and contented that the 3rd Annual Barnyard Sale is history. She is now hoping that the 4th Annual Sale will see an **increase** in the number of items to be sold and many, many **volunteers** will come forward to help take care of maintenance, food preparation and other activities. Cashiers for the food area and the sale in the barn are also needed. If all

these things happen Lila will be just as happy this year when Sunday rolls around.

“Boys Day Out” and Want List

The Boys, Co-Chairmen

This winter a group of volunteers have continued to get together one day a week to work at the Barn Site. Commonly referred to as “Boys Day Out”, a lot has been accomplished. In the west addition to the Sawmill we have installed about 28’ of line shaft to run some of the old woodworking equipment that has been donated. We need some electric motors to run this and other line shafts we intend to install. We are still looking for single-phase, 2-5 horsepower electric motors that are either 120 volt or 240 volt and more line shafts.

This fall and winter we have also finished the addition to the **Grain Elevator**. The exterior is done except for some painting we will get done this summer. We have installed an oak tongue and groove finished floor inside and are now in the process of arranging equipment for permanent installation inside. Hooking these pieces of machinery up will also take some line shafts and motors. Your help in this regard would be greatly appreciated.

The third project we have been working on is the **Sugar Shack**. This fall we got the foundation in and the stonecrete floor hauled in. Then we went inside and started building wall panels for this 18’ x 24’ building. The walls are complete, the rafters are cut and the framing for the ridge vent is done. All of the material we have used is rough sawn lumber that was cut on site in our Sawmill. This was made possible through the donation of pine logs that were used to demonstrate the Sawmill in operation and now the lumber is being used to

build an early 1900’s building. We are waiting for better weather to start putting it together on site. Our intent is to have it ready for demonstration in September.

We have acquired the 1x4 tongue and groove boards to replace the ceiling in the garage. Now that the exterior is completed we want to concentrate on finishing the interior. By the time you receive this Newsletter the ceiling should be done. How to restore the interior walls of the garage is still in the thought process. **Ron Hoffman**, Bad Axe has agreed to Chair the Garage Committee. He is going to put together a plan for decorating the interior of the Garage to be period appropriate.

Another project for “Boys Day Out” this winter is to finish installing lights in the kitchen of the Munro Building so we can put up the ceiling. Hopefully we will have enough time that we can also get the east kitchen wall finished as well.

In the last Newsletter we mentioned **collecting pictures of local lumberyards and sawmills** that were once part of the Thumb Area of Michigan. We have four lumberyard photos and one sawmill photo. Having these photos and some history about each of them will be a great asset to our Museum Goal. We also asked about yardsticks that you might have that were given out by local lumberyards. To date we have one from the **Fred S. Lenton Lumberyard in Ubley, Mich.**

Now that the Grain Elevator is enclosed it would be nice to collect pictures, history and yardsticks from hometown Elevators around

the Thumb as well. Be on the look out for any of these items that you might find at a local auction. The Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum and Village would appreciate your help in locating any of these items.

Some of the “Boys” show up when they are able and some are working away week after week. It’s wonderful how they work together and get so much accomplished and claim they are having fun while working in freezing temperatures. **The “Boys” are: Dennis Anderson, Ray Caverly, Paul Deo, Howard Gehrls, Jack Hill, Bob Hirn, Ron Hoffman, David Jaroch, Wayne Lenton, Richard Stacer, Louie Wehrman and George Wilson.** Thanks to one & all.

(More pictures on p. 5)



The steel from the building that had been the warehouse for C.R. Hunt Construction in Cass City was donated to the Friends if they would tear it down. The Village of Cass City had purchased the property to provide additional off-street parking for the downtown area. **Barn volunteers, Amish men and Jeff Parsell** of D/S Services, Inc. who provided the crane and operator to remove the steel trusses, accomplished the task. All material including the corrugated steel that covered the building was given to the Friends and brought to the site. Pictured is the new section of the Grain Elevator with that corrugated steel covering the sides of the building and it looks old and most appropriate for a new/old building.

MEMBERSHIP

Newsletters that have a membership form with **RENEWAL** written in **RED** are either past due or will be due before our next newsletter. If **FINAL NOTICE** is stamped on the form this means that this will be your **LAST REMINDER** to renew your membership before being removed from our mailing list. The levels of membership are: **Associate Membership** - \$5.00 and brings you our quarterly newsletter. **General Membership** - \$10.00 for an individual and \$15.00 for a family, which along with receipt of the newsletter gives you voting rights and the opportunity to hold office. A membership form can be obtained from our web site at thumboctagonbarn.org. Also, when you receive notice that your membership needs to be renewed, please feel free to renew for more than one year and know that our records will reflect your wishes. **Important reminder** – If you have a new address or a seasonal change of address, it is important that you let us know as bulk mail is NOT forwarded. Please indicate how money included is to be distributed.



Pictured is the Grain Elevator Building in the east field across the ditch that is part of our Village plan. To the left is the older 18 x 24’ building that was donated by **Ron & Brenda Brakenberry** of Bad Axe and moved on site by **Russ Hazard** in 2008. The two-story section is new and was constructed by **Tracy Moore of TDM Construction** who has done previous construction of the Munro Building and the Sawmill Building.

Fifteenth Annual Fall Family Days Event

Bob Hirn and Martin Kubacki, Co-chairmen

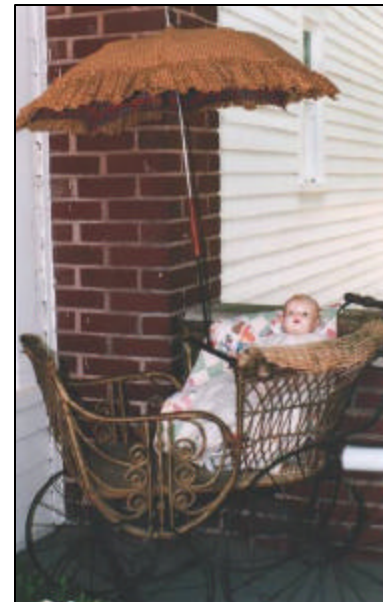
It's hard to believe that this upcoming Event will be our 15th year. Time sure flies when you're having fun, as the old saying goes. This year will be an exciting one for a variety of reasons. The themes, **Old Steam Power** and **Vintage Toys and Dolls**, have already sparked a lot of conversation and some new ideas. The article included in this Newsletter about the upcoming **Steam Power School** obviously came about because of this year's theme. We hope the Vintage Toys and Dolls Theme will bring some old toys and dolls out of the woodwork. This Theme has made Bob start looking for an old American Flyer train that was given to him for Christmas back in 1951. (That has taken and will take some looking.)

As we have said many times, we truly appreciate all the volunteer help that comes forward to help pull off this Event. If it weren't for the volunteers, this Event would not be where it is today. As always we can certainly use more help and if you would like to get involved please give us a call and we can talk about where your interests lie so we can assign you a job that fits you. The income from this Event plays a big part in reach-

ing the goals we have for this Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum and Village.

We want to again thank those of you that have given a financial contribution in the past to help with this event. It clearly is important. In 2009 the Sponsorships helped pay 43% of our expenses for the weekend. This obviously allowed us to have more profit to keep this project alive. We are including a **Fall Family Days Sponsor Form** with this newsletter for your convenience. This may seem early to you but because the names of sponsors are listed in our flyers and advertising, we need your commitment by **May 1st**. If you have been a Sponsor in the past, we would appreciate your continued support and of course we always welcome new businesses and individuals to become Sponsors for 2010.

We will be having a kick off meeting on **Tuesday, March 23, 2010** at the **Gagetown Village Hall at 7:00 p.m.** If you have any questions or to volunteer, please don't hesitate to call **Martin Kubacki at 989-658-8450** or **Bob Hirn at 989-872-3761**



For one of the Teas held last year, the gals put this buggy with umbrella, and of course a baby doll, out on the porte-co-chere entrance to the house. **Jon & Char (Yackle) Fahrner** of Cass City donated the buggy. This 1890's buggy belonged to the Yackle Family of Pigeon and had been in the Pigeon Museum for years. Char remembers being pushed in the buggy in Pigeon's Golden Jubilee Parade in the 50's. It is a very unique wicker buggy in good condition and we are delighted to have it be a part of our museum. It can be seen on display in the nursery in one of the upstairs bedrooms.



Pictured are **Howard Gehrls, Wayne Lenton, Bob Hirn & George Wilson** working on the foundation for the **Sugar Shack** that is just south of the **Grain Elevator Building** and another of the buildings that will be a part of our Village. They are installing the treated lumber foundation to support the rough sawn lumber building and act as a retaining wall for the stonecrete floor.

- Souvenirs - Gifts for all Occasions



Joan Koch, Chairperson

Joan reminds folks that you can get gifts for any occasion by shopping for our souvenirs year round. They make great gifts and are appreciated by supporters of our project.

Call 989-665-0081 to order souvenirs or to schedule an appointment to shop.

VG's Community Share Points

Mary Ann Hirn,
Chairperson

Another check from VG's Foods has been received in the amount of **\$97.04** bringing the total received to date to **\$762.04**. That's amazing! In 2003 Mary Ann contacted VG's to assist our organization in raising funds for our project. All you have to do is simply cut off the bottom portion of the VGs cash register receipt that states the number of **share points**. Then send that portion to **Mary Ann Hirn, 6622 Kelly Rd., Cass City, MI 48726**. VG's donates 1% of all purchases made at any of their 15 stores located in southeastern Michigan. Thank you Mary Ann and all who gather their receipts and send them to her.



Richard Stacer and Dave Jaroch, both of Ubyly, are applying the corrugated steel sheeting to the older section of the Grain Elevator Building. First felt was fitted and stapled to the walls and then the steel was nailed in place. The building is now completely covered with the steel as the Boy's Day Out Crew has continued to work throughout the winter months.

Our Summer Host Couples

In 1999 we started the Host Couple program for three main reasons. First, we have many visitors to our site on a daily basis and we needed folks to be able to greet these visitors and share some of the history of the barn. Also, we felt the need to have some presence on site to protect these historic structures and lastly our beautiful grounds need attention throughout the summer months as any yard does.

The answer to these concerns was solved by inviting couples to come with their RV (Recreational Vehicle) for a month at a time from May through October to fulfill these responsibilities. We have been very fortunate

that we have some couples who return year after year and we are delighted that we have a few new couples as well.

We'd like to thank the couples who helped us out in 2009.

✂️ **Arnold & Reita Maxfield**, Dade City, FL arrived in late April and stayed until October. Don't know what we would do without their continued help through the years.

✂️ **Rob & Marjie Hendershot**, Livingston, TX were with us in 2007 and returned staying for the month of May.

✂️ **Duane & Gail Osbourn**, New Baltimore, MI were first timers & on site in June. They plan to return this year.

✂️ **Mike & Shirley Richey**, Summerfield, FL were on site for July and were newcomers.

✂️ **Leon & Lillian Farmer**, Runaway Bay, TX were with us last year & returned for August & through the middle of September.

✂️ **Tom & Pat Young**, Upper Sandusky, OH have been with us for several years and came to our rescue when we needed someone to fill in for several weeks in August after a cancellation.

✂️ **Russ & Wanda Johnson**, Davison, MI previous caretakers in 2005, returned this year staying for the month of October.



Mike & Shirley Richey arrived at the Barn in July and Reita Maxfield was delighted. Shirley took very good care of the flowerbeds and checked with Reita for guidance in planting and caring for the flowers. Shirley worked very hard to see that the flowers donated by **Jim & Linda Will of Will's Greenhouse of Vassar** were watered and the beds weeded.



Arnold & Reita Maxfield have been coming each year to the Barn to help us out since 2000. In the early years they stayed the whole summer as did **Ray & Betty Armstead** until we changed to the host by the month program. Shortly after the Maxfields arrived in May of this year, Reita took a bad fall and broke her shoulder. We were all very worried about her but it was amazing to see her progress throughout the summer. Reita is our Master Gardener and we missed her loving, tender care of our flowerbeds and she missed it even more.



Russ & Wanda Johnson could not believe the growth that had occurred since their previous stay in 2005. Russ was delighted with the Welcome area and felt that the information displayed was excellent and made it much easier to talk with visitors about the history and facts of the Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum & Village.



Duane Osbourn, June host and previously from Akron, Michigan couldn't believe his eyes when he saw the fire truck that had been used by the Akron Fire Department at the Octagon Barn site. He remembered that the truck had been stored in the Akron Community Building that served as the fire hall. One day the building caught on fire. The fire truck would not start and had to be pushed out to save it. In 2007, Community Bank now known as **North Star Bank** donated the 1944 Chevrolet truck to the Friends. Recently the students at the **Tuscola Technology Center** did some mechanical repair work on the engine and brakes.



Duane & Gail Osbourn of New Baltimore, MI (pictured to the left) enjoyed their first visit in June to the Octagon Barn as a host couple greeting visitors and sharing some information. They plan to return this year for a repeat performance.

Museum Committee

Doug Monroe, chairperson

As our site continues to grow and the Friends move towards their goal of establishing the Thumb Agricultural Museum, the executive board felt the need to form a new committee whose task would be to develop a strategy and guidelines towards that goal. Doug Monroe has accepted this responsibility.

The Museum Committee will start its development in February 2010. Our first challenge is to pull together those who want to serve on the committee and then hold our first meeting. The first few meetings will be to set a list of goals for the committee and establish a set of standards that will benefit the Agriculture Museum concept. We are excited about

getting this phase of the Barn's existence going and would ask that anyone with artifacts, pictures, or ideas to please contact any of the officers of the Friends or call direct to Doug Monroe at 989-665-9948 or email at douglasmonroe@att.net

Doug demonstrated his dedication to the Museum concept when he worked with others to develop the Welcome area in the northwest corner of the entrance to the Barn. This area tells the story of the original owners, builders and future plans for the Thumb Agricultural Museum. Doug is very interested in our agricultural heritage and loves the history and stories of the past.



Doug Monroe (left) is pictured working with Bud Inbody to create the Dairy Display on the south side of the lower Barn. They are just starting work on the display designed to educate and inform visitors about the equipment and the process of obtaining milk, butter and cheese. Much that is on display has been donated to the Friends and was stored throughout the Barn. Bud, Mark Battel and Doug gathered up all dairy related items and created the display. It's very educational and visitors enjoy it.

School Tours 2010

Diane Rapson Gabil, Chairperson



School Tours 2010 at the Thumb Octagon Barn will be held **Wednesday, May 5th, Thursday, May 6th and Friday, May 7th** during the school day. To date approximately 644 students are registered. There is room for many, many more pre-school through 8th grade students. If you know of school groups that would enjoy this guided educational field trip with up to 22 informational areas that depict rural life in the early 1900's, please

contact **Diane Rapson Gabil at 989-892-3105 or drapsongabil@chartermi.net.**

School Tours 2010 committee meetings are scheduled at Rawson Memorial Library in Cass City at 12:30 – 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 17th, Wednesday, March 17th, Wednesday April 14th and Thursday, April 29th. All volunteers are welcomed and encouraged to attend.

Steam Power School

Prelude to Fall Family Days

On **Saturday, July 24, 2010**, the Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn are hosting a **Steam Power School** as an introduction to Fall Family Days 2010. As you know, Steam Power is one of the two themes for this year's Event. **Paul Deo, Dave Kemler and Bob Bennatts** will run the class from **9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** at the Octagon Barn Site. Part of the day will be in the "classroom", so to speak, and the rest of the day will be actually working with steam engines, focusing on safety, maintenance and operation with hands on experience.

The cost for the day will be \$20.00, which will include a copy of "The Steam Engine Guide", by Prof. P.S. Rose, handouts, other information and lunch.

Pre-registration is required. We are limiting the number to 25 participants. So if you are interested please call **Paul Deo 989-658-2206 or 989-550-0077** to reserve your spot at the Steam Power School. **An adult must accompany participants 14 or younger.**

MUSEUM DONATIONS

Gerald Auten, Museum Records

David and Betty Russell, Port Austin, MI donated a red fox stole from the 1930's that belonged to Betty's mother, Anna Fako of Snover.

The Messing Family, Thumb Area, donated in memory of Leonard and Theresa Messing many items including block and tackle fence stretcher, barn door rollers, hay rope pullies, horse harnesses, grain bags and others.

Glen & Maxine Strieter Moore, Unionville, MI donated augers, old machinery catalogs, garden cultivators, 2 cross cut saws, 1940's newspapers-(one with a Florence Purdy article), a corn sheller and a variety of other items.

Dan Toner, Cass City, MI donated a wood grain bag holder.

Tom Fritz, Gagetown, MI donated four storage racks and baskets for the kitchen in the Munro Bldg.

St. Pancratius Catholic Church, Cass City, MI donated a yardstick from the Hart Brothers Elevator.

Gary and Kelly Zurek, Harbor Beach, MI donated a 14ft. line shaft with brackets and pulleys, McCormick Deering Hammer Mill, 2-6" flat belts and a hand water pump.

Newsletter

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THUMB OCTAGON BARN**
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Up Coming Events

- ⚡ April 17Annual Meeting Dinner & Auction at the VFW Hall, Cass City
- ⚡ May 5, 6 and 7School Tours 2010 by appointment only
- ⚡ May 28, 29 & 304th Annual Barnyard Sale & Open House
- ⚡ Sept. 10Friday Fish Fry featuring Greg Talaski's famous fish
- ⚡ Sept. 11 & 1215th ANNUAL FALL FAMILY DAYS at the Thumb Octagon Barn

FUTURE MEETINGS

General membership meetings are held at the Gagetown Village Hall on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. June, July & Aug. meetings are held on site in the Munro Bldg.

We're on the Web!
<http://www.thumboctagonbarn.org>
Aaron Davis, Web Manager

BENEFACTORS: *The following have made a donation of \$10.00 or more since our last newsletter through February 10, 2010.*

Bernard Billingsley, Sanford, MI
Ray Christie, Freeland, MI
Tom & Liz Fritz, Gagetown, MI

Janet Ihle, Caro, MI
Donna Johnson, Boone, IA
William Kaake, Woodsboro, TX

William Kadish & Marie Hobart, Worcester, MA
Johnnie M. & Louise Leathers, Centerville, TN
David LeValley, Bay City, MI

Jim & Betty Parker, Saginaw, MI
Frank & Ivernia Schwartz, Gagetown, MI

SPECIAL DONATIONS:

Following is a list of memorial donations, acknowledgements and items donated for use on the site.

- TDM Construction gave back \$500 in labor costs for work on the Sawmill Building and the Grain Elevator.
- Brad & Beth Kitchin, Mesa, AZ donated on behalf of Pat Hester, Brad's mother.
- James & Joan Ware, Cass City, MI donated for the Country School Museum Building in memory of Mardell Ware who taught at the Quick & Cedar Run Country Schools.
- Bill & Kathy Thomas, Silverwood, MI donated in memory of Loretta Thomas, Bill's Mom.
- Dick & Vivian Smith, Gagetown, MI donated a telescopic flag pole, flag and the men to install the pole by the One Room Country School valued at \$400.
- Caro Arbor #106 of the Gleaner's Life Insurance Society donated for our School Tours.
- Earl & Evelyn Schadd, Fillion, MI donated in memory of Evelyn's uncle, Albert Boogaard, Ironwood, MI
- Frank Franzel of Franzel Well Drilling plugged and sealed an abandoned well discovered while working on rebuilding the Powerhouse. Frank gave back the \$500 cost of this operation.
- Donations in memory of Donna Mae (Smithers) Muchler given by Orville & Katie Smithers, Vernita Armstead, Robert M. & Arlene Smithers, Mary Michalski and Kathryn Hunger.
- The following made a donation for the One Room Country School Museum at the DONOR level (\$100 to \$249)
 - Marvin K. Binder, Caro, MI
 - The Koenig & Bothwell families, Farmington Hills, MI
 - Arnold & Dorothy Myszier, Albuquerque, NM
 - Mike & Drucilla Pisarek, Gagetown, MI
 - Doris & Earl Schember, Gagetown, MI
 - James & Joan Ware, Cass City, MI

Grounds

Louis Wehrman, Chairman

The grounds have been well cared for by Mother Nature who has provided a picturesque covering of snow. We haven't as yet had the heavy snows of last year and that in some ways is helpful, as we won't



Dick & Vivian Smith, Smith's Alpaca Acres near Gagetown, are pictured with several of their alpacas that they had on display during Fall Family Days. In 2009 they made special donations to the Barn when they donated bales of straw for use during School Tours and a flagpole and flag installed near the One Room Country School.

end up with as many muddy spots when thawing takes place.

Saturday, May 1st has been set for our **Spring Clean-up Day** when we prepare the site for opening to the public and for beginning our 2010 calendar of events. The clean-up will go as scheduled should the weather be inclement as we have much work to do under cover. After all, the Octagon Barn is the biggest umbrella in all of Tuscola County. There is as always so much to do and the greater the number of volunteers that show up the quicker we'll be able to have things in tip-top shape for our first big activity, School Tours starting on May 5th.

If you can bring rakes, cleaning supplies, window cleaner and anything that you think might be needed as we spruce things up at the Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum & Village, please bring them with you. Louie also reminds folks to bring their lunch should they be able to stay for the entire day. So mark your calendar for **Group Clean-up Day at the Barn on Saturday, May 1, 2010.**