

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.

SPRING 2010

Annual Meeting, Banquet and Benefit Auction

Lila Arroyo, Chairperson

Our Annual Meeting was well attended and all seemed to enjoy the evening. **Lila Arroyo**, Chairperson had taken care of every detail for the Dinner and for the Auction. We thank her very much for her efforts. Lila's daughter, **Linda Devine** and her friend, **Rob Cook**, both from Cass City, did an excellent job of monitoring the food table and then cleaning up after the meal and that was greatly appreciated.

Following the meal, **Rose Putnam**, our President, conducted a short business meeting and gave special recognition to individuals and businesses who had supported the Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum over the years. **Lois Moslander** was recognized for the many years of volunteering that she has given to the Octagon Barn by providing the layout for our quarterly newsletter and other pieces of printed material. **Kappen Tree Service** was honored for donating the manpower and equipment to cut down trees that needed to be removed on the Barn grounds. Foreman, **Pete Cody** accepted the award. **Doug Monroe** was presented with a certificate recognizing his years on the Executive Board serving as 1st Vice President. Doug has moved on and is now working with a committee developing the

museum concept for the Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum. Also, **Agnes Talaski** of Elkton representing the **Farm Women's Symposium** presented the Friends with a check for \$161.00 in thanks for the guided tour previously conducted for 120 women.

Beginning in 2002 the Friends have been recognizing the **Barn Friend of the Year** which is always a difficult task since we have so many outstanding **volunteers**. We also realize that there is no limit to what you can do if you don't care who gets the credit. So following the tradition the committee, **Gerald Auten, Wayne Lenton & Margaret Sergeant** looked at the twelve individuals suggested for recognition. There was one individual who stood out as deserving of this yearly award. **Louis Wehrman** from Reese was selected as the **2010 Barn Friend of the Year** for the following reasons. Louie is a forward thinker who shares his insight at the Executive Board level and his networking skills are inval-

able. As Grounds Chairperson he worked with County Drain Commissioners to decrease the easement along the Purdy Drain thus giving us more usable land. He is a faithful volunteer on "Boys Day Out" driving 30 miles one way to help in a way that exemplifies what it means to be a true volunteer. He seems tireless and willing to tackle any task and is knowledgeable on how to do so many different things that he is invaluable and all this is accomplished while having a great sense of humor. When asked how he became involved Louie jokingly said that it was when **Martin Kubacki** contacted him for some parts for an Oliver tractor. Martin told him about FFD and encouraged him to bring one of his many tractors over for display and the parade. When talking tractors it is great fun for Louie who is a red tractor man rather than one of those green and yellow guys like so many seem to be. Congratulations Louie, we're so glad that Martin talked you into coming to FFD with your red tractors and thanks for bringing your very active wife, Linda, too.

(More pictures on page 2.)



Rose Putnam is presenting the certificate of recognition to **Lois Moslander** for her continued support of our project by providing her time and talent to do the layout for our quarterly newsletter and other advertising.



Pictured are **Louis and Linda Wehrman** because as Louie said it should be their plaque. Louie felt that his wife Linda also needed to be recognized as the Wehrmans work together each year masterfully organizing the many vendors that participate during FFD and the Barnyard Sale.



Ruth Ann Brown, Kingston, quilted this beautiful wall hanging of the Octagon Barn using 157 pieces of fabric. The highest bidders (\$185.00) were **Ann & Doug Kalis** of Unionville who have quite a collection of unique art pieces of the Octagon Barn from previous auctions to display at their Gagetown Funeral Chapel. Pictured are Ruth Ann, Ann & Doug Kalis.

Executive Committee

President
Rose Putnam

1st Vice President
David Jaroch

2nd Vice President
Gerald Auten

Treasurer
Doris Schember

Recording Secretary
Ardis Monroe

Corresponding Secretary
Norma Wallace

Past President
Bob Hirn

Grant Writing Chairman
Dennis Anderson

One Room Country School Chairman
Leo Bob Gengler

House Chairperson
Marilyn Phillips

Grounds Chairman
Louis Wehrman

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

Letter From the President

FRIENDS of the THUMB OCTAGON BARN
Rose M. Putnam



Dear Friends,

Wow, 2010 is well underway and so are all the projects on our project list. Everyone is just as busy as the bees. As we've grown, so have the tasks to keep everything maintained. Mondays have become a regular working day at the site. It is so wonderful to see all the activity going on. We recently held the annual school tours. We are happy to report that we had more than 1628 students and parents attend. To organize and manage this large number of visitors took a lot of planning and volunteer help. We had over 146 volunteers during the three-day event.

Now comes the however. We still need more help. Fall Family Days is coming up and we are desperately in need of people to help make phone calls, to organize help at the gate, to recruit more help in the parking lots, to locate compact tractors, to sell raffle tickets, to drive tractors, to help prepare and serve the fish dinner, to relieve workers at lunch time, to help set up tents, and to help clean up on Monday and Tuesday after Fall Family Days. Do you have just a few more minutes? Do your neighbors or friends like to work a little and have a lot of fun? Do your relatives owe you any favors?

We are reaching out to you for help. Please call our phone line at 989-665-0081 and leave your name and phone number and what you might like to do and we will have someone call you back. Or if you know a barn committee member, give them a call.

We are also trying our best to reach out further into the surrounding communities. To assist in this task we became members of the Thumb Volunteer Alliance and participated in the open house held on April 22nd. The Alliance is new to the Thumb region and the goal is to connect residents to volunteer experiences and to provide agencies with volunteer support. National Volunteer Week was celebrated in April so a lot of media time was spent reminding people nationwide to volunteer. For more information, you can visit their web site at www.thumbvolunteer.com.

Enjoy the warm weather and come up to the barn for a visit during the summer anytime from 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. .

Your Friend and President,

Rose M. Putnam

Site

Dennis Anderson, Chairman

Setting the Stage for Sustainability

Over the past several years we have seen significant growth at the Octagon Barn. First, we have added 7 new buildings, including renovations, and plans are in the works to add 3 additional buildings to the site. The grain elevator was started this past winter and should be completed this summer. The sugar shack is currently under construction. Second, we have seen record numbers in attendance at Fall Family Days for the past 3 years. With success comes new challenges! Mainly, where are we going to put everything and where are we going to park everyone?

In 2004 we asked the DNR to sell us 35 acres. We were only able to purchase 26 acres. While this has been helpful we have limited use of this land because 6 of the 26 acres are declared a wetland area. The other 9 acres, the more desirable parcel, was not available to us. In 2009 we asked to lease that parcel for two days, simply for parking, but again regulations would

not permit the DNR to help us further. We talked of purchasing land from our neighbor with the potential life lease back to the family and this was not possible.

Currently, and for the past several years, we have been leasing the field across the road. This has been good but there is no guarantee that the lease can continue and the space be adequate to hold the numbers of visitors we have been seeing. We want to set the stage for sustainability into the future. When things were looking rather doubtful, an opportunity to purchase 25 acres just south of the Octagon Barn, on the west side of Richie Rd. became available to us. After much discussion and research we decided to move forward with the purchase. Our plans are to continue working with our neighbors as long as possible. The 25 acres gives us much more flexibility and provides space for future expansion.

Below are photos from Annual Meeting, p. 1



The silent auction tables were organized and managed by **Julie Bills** from Frankenmuth, **Sue (Bills) Wade** from Essexville and **Linda Matuzak** also from Frankenmuth. At the VFW Hall where the Dinner was held, Julie and Sue are proudly standing by the memorial plaque in honor of their father, **Herbert Bills**, for his military service during WWII.



Marty Osentoski, our auctioneer for the evening, is preparing his plate while visiting with server **Linda Devine** who is tending to the food table.

Steam Power School

Paul Deo, Chairman

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.**

Newsletter

- Database and labels.....David Eichler
- Editing.....Bob Hirn
- Design Layout.....Lois Moslander
- Newsletter Coordinator.....Margaret Sergeant

The Purdy Home

Dale Churchill, house committee volunteer reports that fifteen new basement windows have been ordered and received from Harbor Millworks in Holland, MI. Ed Bastian has been hired to rebuild the window frames where needed. He will install the new windows after they are trimmed to size and painted. Ed will also build new storm windows for each basement window. This project will start towards the end of May. We also hope to be working on the house screen and storm doors this summer.

John "Wes" Martinez has volunteered to

finish the two upstairs bathrooms by installing the fixtures needed. John works for Human Development in Caro & the former Cass River Construction. We hope to have this project completed by FFD.

Marilyn Phillips & Pat Hester have been working in the basement to organize and clean up. We have collected quite a few things and organization will help with knowing where things are.

Volunteers with general maintenance experience are always needed. Contact Dale Churchill at 989-872-4429.



Taylor Donley attended the Tea with her grandmother, Linda Donley, from Marlette. Linda loaned Marilyn some of her dolls from her collection for display purposes and also gave little snippets of the history of dolls and doll collecting.

Activities in the Purdy Home

The Purdy Home was showcased during our first Tea on May 1st when Marilyn King hosted a "Grandma's Tea". Marilyn had 16 guests who were treated to a delicious meal, entertainment and a wonderful keepsake of a handmade booklet in the shape of a teapot. The booklet had some appropriate poetry, the menu and recipes for

those items served, the program and recognition of those who helped in one way or the other.

In the box below is a list of all the activities planned in the Purdy Home this summer, dates and times, the hostess and phone numbers on how to reserve a place at the table. Space is limited so reservations are a must.



Cora's kitchen was buzzing as Marilyn's helpers worked to prepare the various food items for the Tea. In the left hand corner is Valerie Smith from Eaton Rapids, seated is Beverly Rockefeller from Cass City, hostess Marilyn King from Kingston, Mary West from Lansing, Linda Cleaves from Albion and Marilyn's Mom, Edna McLachlan of Cass City.

☞ **Wednesday, June 9th, Louise Buehry** 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. **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 summer newsletter for dates and times or our website at www.thumboctagonbarn.org

Letter to the Membership & Future Volunteers

Over the years, my involvement has grown from a paper member interested in observing things getting accomplished to becoming a current board member. The first years were more curiosity than contribution.

Looking back over the years it is evident that every member is important. Members that renew their membership and read the newsletter often help spread the mission of the Barn. It is always a welcome site to see

new faces getting actively involved even if it takes several contacts to find a place they "fit".

Thank you for keeping "The Barn" a part of your interest. It would be nice if everyone carried a sign that listed all of their talents. Since this is not possible, give us a call and become a more active volunteer. Maybe you will be the next person to catch the volunteer spirit.



Dave Jaroch, recently retired from the Ubyly Public Schools, was able to participate in School Tours for the first time this year. He caught the eye of many as he came dressed in period attire and filled in wherever needed.

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. **Aaron Davis**, Web Manager, has updated our membership form that will appear on our website as well as with our newsletters when memberships need to be renewed. We hope that the changes will clarify the levels of membership and/or contribution. As always it is important that you indicate how the money included is to be distributed. **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.

When our VOLUNTEERS are the TEACHERS

School Tours 2010

Diane Rapson Gabil, Chairperson



Our School Tours were held in early May and we were pleased that the final numbers were **1200 students** and at least half again as many chaperons that accompanied the students from five different counties. To guide them and teach were 146 volunteers that provided this educational experience. We know that students can learn while still having fun away from the classroom. Our Volunteers who come forward to teach do an excellent job and we're sure that the students will be able to say that they have learned a thing or six while visiting the Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum & Village.

We would like to thank all the volunteers that helped out before, during and after School Tours. **Our 2011 School Tours will be held on**

Wednesday, May 11th, Thursday, May 12th & Friday May 13th. Early next year, this year's volunteers will be receiving a post card reminding them of the School Tour dates for 2011 so that they can plan accordingly. Every volunteer is important and we don't want to miss anyone because they weren't contacted. **Questions and comments may be directed to Chairperson, Diane Rapson Gabil at 989-892-3105 or drapsongabil@charter.net**

So let's get started on our tour of our **teacher volunteers** teaching. **Doug Monroe** has spent many hours preparing individual schedules for each school group to assure smooth movement around the grounds while they are visiting. Also, included are some "Just for Fun" pictures.



The hatching chicks are always a big attraction and our young students could just watch and watch. **Cathy Healy**, teaches about the hatching process, the incubators, the required temperatures and different kinds of chicks. **Jack Laurie & Doug Monroe** get the incubated eggs from Michigan State University and almost every egg hatched right on schedule.



Maplewood Farms Petting Zoo, Kinde, under the new ownership of **Bobby Peters** brought their animals and **taught** students about the different animals and their special characteristics. Pictured are Gretchen a Llama, Bobby Peters, Port Austin, and helping Bobby with the animals is **Bonnie Zeill**, Kinde. Sorry, we don't know the name of the little person whose hand is petting Gretchen.



Marilyn DeSimpelare, Unionville, is **teaching** about the toys of the past, how they were made and how different toys are today.



Norma Baur, Unionville, is in the Purdy Home and is **teaching** about the utensils used in Mother's kitchen years ago emphasizing how difficult it was to prepare food.



Aaron Davis, of Marshall, is demonstrating the process of making rope and **teaches** about the many ways in which rope was used on the farm as well as the different knots and their uses.



Bob Hirn, Cass City, is in the sawmill building and **teaches** about the process used to build barns and homes and emphasizes how difficult the job was.



Jerry Auten, Cass City, is **teaching** how an ear of corn becomes corn meal using the gristmill. Not pictured is **Ed Nicholson** of Fairgrove who worked with Jerry. Each class took home a bag of ground corn and teachers were encouraged to make corn bread for their students.



Joan Koch, Gageton, who is in charge of Souvenirs, had great fun selling treasures to the little folks as a remembrance of their visit to the Barn. Notice the Red Cross hanging on the wall that indicated our First Aide Station manned by nurses who had volunteered their time to be available should the need arise. The volunteer nurses were **Dee Garety, Gayle Nicol & Cathy Tomlin**.

More School Tours 2010



Jane Mitchell, Cass City, is **teaching** about home remedies that were used years ago and of course are still good solutions to minor medical problems today. **Mary Ann Hirn** also **taught** one of the days and wore her nursing uniform that looks nothing like what a nurse wears these days.



Jacqueline Koch, Vassar, is **reading** the story written by another Vassar resident **Sandy Sheppard** with illustrations by her young daughter **Laura**. Jackie reads the story but also **teaches** about being an author and illustrator and emphasizes that when Laura did her illustrations she was only 13 years old.



Bud Inbody, Snover, is **teaching** about the dairy industry and sharing with students how milk gets from the cow to their glass. Bud shares the scene with Earlene the replica of a dairy cow made by the late **Earl Schadd**.



Lila Arroyo, Cass City, is **teaching** students, using the Victrola that belonged to James & Cora Purdy, how folks listened to music years ago and is showing an old, very thick record. She cranked up the Victrola and played some music.



The **One Room Country School** provided a classroom where students were **taught** as they would have been years ago. Students are pictured saying the Pledge of Allegiance before their class began.



This little guy came prepared and was having a grand time taking pictures of the newly hatched chicks.



Ardis Monroe, Gagetown, is **teaching** about diaries and shares some passages from **Cora Purdy's** diaries from 1895 through 1954. She has great fun showing students the accounting of expenses that Cora had each month which are so different from the prices of similar items today.



On Wednesday of our School Tours it was **Doug Monroe's** Birthday so school groups sang Happy Birthday to Doug. After one of the groups a little fellow came up to Doug and was so excited because it was his birthday too. Pictured are the birthday boys, the big guy is Doug and the little guy is Nathanael Anderson, Applegate, who turned seven years old that day..



Bob Wood, Cass City, is **teaching** about the process of making maple syrup using an evaporator.



Dean Hutchinson of Cass City, left, is **teaching** about bees and honey and emphasizes some of the benefits that bees provide for us while also cautioning students to have respect for them. Dean got a lot of attention with his "Bee Hat".



Diane Rapson Gabil from Essexville, chairperson of School Tours, is pointing out the toys that she brought for display from her collection of doll houses and farms.

15th Fall Family Days - Here before we know it!

Bob Hirn & Martin Kubacki, Co-chairmen

Plans for the upcoming Event are moving forward. Our second meeting in May was well attended and ideas for new additions to the Event poured in. Hopefully we will have the manpower and "lady power" to pull them off. As mentioned in the previous newsletter the **Steam Power Theme** has attracted a lot of new interest. At this time we have the promise of eight steam engines on site with the possibility of four more.

The **Vintage Toy and Doll Theme** likewise has excited many folks. At the School Tours Event, the first of May, we wanted a small display of toys and dolls and we were surprised and quite pleased with the amount of items that

showed up. I think our Theme Tent will be full if this is any indication. As a result of this we are looking for more display cases. **If anyone has or knows of someone that has a display case and would want to donate or loan to us for the weekend, it would be greatly appreciated. Contact Bob Hirn at 989-872-3761.**

Once again we will be holding our ANNUAL RAFFLE that has proven to be one of our most successful fund-raisers. **Rose Putnam & Doris Schember** are co-chairing our 2010 raffle. The tickets are being printed and the prizes have been determined. We'll have **Mildred Spiekerman's** traditional handmade afghan, a handmade quilt pieced by **Alzina Stratton** and quilted by **Marcia Hammerbacher** using the "Hole in the Barn Door" pattern, two Crafts-

man tool sets, a JD & an IH pedal tractor and four cash prizes. Tickets will be sent to **MEMBERS ONLY** in the next few weeks. We appreciate your assistance selling our raffle tickets but you always have the option to return them if you do not care to participate. Once you make that request Doris, who mails the tickets, honors that request each year. If you would like additional tickets or don't receive any, contact **Doris Schember at 989-665-2500.**

The next planning meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 27 at 7:00 p.m. at the Barn site. Come join us. Everyone is welcome and needed.

Our 15th Annual Fall Family Days is being held, as always the weekend after Labor Day, September 11 & 12 with a Fish Fry on Friday, September 10th.



Boys Day Out

The Boys, co-chairmen

Monday has continued to be a volunteer workday at the Barn Site. Lately we have had between 10 and 16 guys show up and a lot has been accomplished. The following is a list of some of their accomplishments: new wiring in the Munro Kitchen and the Grain Elevator has been completed, lumber for the Sugar Shack siding and roof sheathing is milled and ready to apply, the interior of the Garage is finished, the roof shingles and ceiling in the temporary One Room School Museum Building has been repaired, more clean up has been done on the east side of the ditch, cleaning and sorting on the north loft of the Barn has taken place and drywall in the Munro Kitchen ceiling and east wall is completed. Now that warm weather is here we are starting to erect the Sugar Shack and the ramp and deck on the outside of the Grain Elevator. By Fall

Ron Hoffman, garage chairman, is applying drywall to the interior garage walls. Mr. Purdy originally had this garage finished off just as it is now. The original beaded tongue and groove ceiling was duplicated, but the walls originally were wood lath and plaster. We were forced to use drywall to restore the walls. Very fancy for a garage!

Family Days both of these buildings will be ready for demonstrations.

The "Boys" that gather are: **Dennis Anderson, Byron Arnold, Jerry Auten, Ray Caverly, Ron Coltson, Paul Deo, Karl DeSimpelare, Howard Gehrls, Tony Grifka, Jack Hill, Bob Hirn, Ron Hoffman, Bob Humpert, David Jaroch, Wayne Lenton, Richard Stacer, Louie Wehrman and George Wilson.** If you would like to join this group of guys, please contact **Louis Wehrman**, 989-693-6743, **Wayne Lenton** 989-658-8283 or **Bob Hirn** 989-872-3761.

The big attraction this past winter was the food. Some of the guys would bring, thanks to their wives, rolls, cake, cookies and pies for coffee break. Then Lila started bringing soup or chili along with a pie or cake for Louie's birthday. He had a birthday every Monday. For some reason the numbers for "Boys Day Out" started to climb.

One Room Country School & Museum

Bob Gengler, Chairman

The School Museum fund raising project continues through the summer of 2010 with an anticipated start date for construction in the spring of 2011. Building designs are being prepared for a 24' by 28' initial building with arrangements for future expansion. As planned, the museum will be the first of a row of buildings west of the trees and going south from the school.

Recent additions to our fund-raising for the Museum Building include \$2,000 from family members of Clayton Turner & \$100 grants from two retired educators groups. Acknowledgements will be included in future Newsletters and permanently displayed at the building. **Our current total donated is just under \$25,000.**

Additional grant sources and individual contributions are being pursued this summer. Contact us at our Barn address, PO Box 145, Gageton, MI 48735 or contact Bob Gengler at 989-872-4530 or gengler@avci.net

Grant Writing

Dennis Anderson, Chairman

Thanks to a grant from the **Janks Foundation** for \$2000 and a grant from the **Andrews Foundation** for \$1400, a new Sugar Shack will be constructed at the Thumb Octagon Barn this summer. Both grants are through the **Tuscola County Community Foundation.**

The sugar shack is a designated building that will be fully operational as a traditional sugar shack replicating the production of maple syrup. Why a sugar shack? Sugaring is a major part of our agricultural history in this country. First learned from Native Americans, the process of making maple syrup is the oldest agricultural enterprise in the United States. Michigan ranks 5th among the states that produce maple syrup. Maple syrup is the first farm crop to be harvested in Michigan each year. The average maple syrup production in Michigan is 90,000 gallons per year with a 2.5 million dollar contribution to our economy. The sugar shack will serve as a stage to illustrate how maple syrup was and still is made today. You will be able to visit the sugar shack during Fall Family Days September 11 & 12 of 2010.

Grounds

Louis Wehrman, Chairman

Our Clean-up Day, May 1st, was a big success. Chairpersons were responsible for organizing their area by listing tasks in need of attention and completion in preparation for our upcoming School Tours. It seemed to work and areas were well on their way to being ready for our young visitors. We had many volunteers and as the old saying goes, "Many hands make light the work." We thank all that helped out during our clean-up day.

We had some new volunteers and this is always pleasing. **Edward Nicholson**, Fairgrove, has volunteered to bring his professional lawn-care equipment and cut all the grass north of the Munro Building. It is amazing to see how much grass he can cut in a short period of time.

The pictures on this page showcase some of our new volunteers and, as always, we can use all the help that we can get. If you can volunteer to help with the care of the grounds during the summer months, Louie can be reached at 989-693-6743.

Museum Committee

Doug Monroe, Chairman

The Museum Committee met for the first time on April 24th to establish our property as a registered museum in the State of Michigan and give our buildings the feel and look of a Museum. We took on two projects, first was to rewrite the Barn Narrative so it's updated and ready for our first caretakers in May. This was done and is now in place for this year's activities.

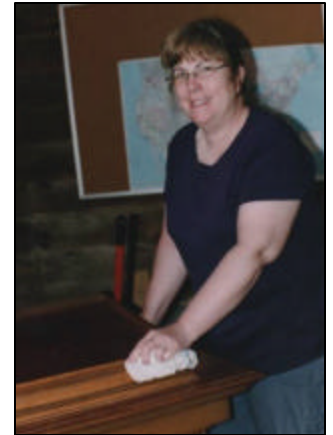
Secondly, we accepted the project of starting the exterior signage for our buildings on the grounds. Our second meeting was held on May

19th when we selected the actual design for the signs that we would like to see in front of the buildings on the site. We are starting by placing signs in front of the Purdy Home, the Barn and the Powerhouse. We would like to have this sample signage in place for our summer visitors.

We also have ideas of doing some interior changes that will give our visitors a good education and sense of the past here in the Thumb's farm area.



Jack Hill's grandson, **Zack Hughes** of Sandusky, is pictured vacuuming the webs out of the windows in the granary in the southwest corner of the Barn.



Carolyn Mittlestat of Cass City came just around the corner from her home on Bay City-Forestville Rd. to help with cleaning in the Barn. She's cleaning the podium stored at the main entrance of the Barn that has accumulated a heavy coating of dust over the winter months.



Pictured are three gals cleaning one of the 30 windows that encircle the lower level of the Barn. They polished the 180 individual panes of glass but showed no interest in cleaning the 32 windows in the upper level. On the inside is **Marie Jaroch**, Ubly, and on the outside is **Kensi DeSimpelare**, Frankenth, working with her grandmother, **Marilyn DeSimpelare** of Unionville.

MUSEUM DONATIONS

Gerald Auten, Museum Records

The following donations have been made since our last newsletter:

- Jim & Joann Ware, Cass City, MI donated a milk can and pail and a hand leather stretcher.
- Albert & Ruthann Brown, Kingston, MI donated a 14ft. Shoe Finishing Machine, a curved needle stitcher and a shoe sole press.
- Jayne Mills, Lincoln Park, MI donated a fox stole.
- Gary Volmering, Ruth, MI, donated an Oliver 99 walking plow
- Lanny Bensinger, Ubly, MI donated a 52" insert tooth sawmill blade & a 1952 Meadows #2 sawmill.
- Bradley Stine, Ubly, MI donated a John Deere Roughage mill & a two man cross cut saw.
- George & Glenda Wilson, Gagetown, MI donated fox, beaver and squirrel stoles, a number of kitchen items for our kitchen in the Munro building and numerous items from the Purdy family.
- Doug & Ardis Monroe, Gagetown, MI donated a Sunbeam electric iron made by Chicago Flexi.
- Walter Murawski, Kinde, MI donated a GE 2 HP, 3 phase electric motor.
- Bartnik Service, Cass City donated an 8' x 15' truck cargo box.
- Dwight Thabet, Thabet Funeral Home, Cass City, MI donated a soap stone foot warmer.
- Aaron & Dorothy Davis, Marshall, MI donated a 10 HP single-phase electric motor.
- Russ & Erma Hazard, Bad Axe, MI donated a honey centrifuge.
- Ray & Carol Caverly, Gagetown, MI donated a bedroom set for the Purdy Home.
- Shelly Corsini, Bad Axe, MI donated an all original 1920's composition & cloth Boudoir doll & a small antique spinning wheel.

4th Annual Barnyard Sale

Lila Arroyo, Chairperson

The sale will have taken place by the time you receive this newsletter so we will highlight the event in our Summer Newsletter.

**Friends of the
THUMB OCTAGON BARN
PO BOX 145
GAGETOWN MI 48735**

989-665-0081

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Gagetown, MI
Permit No. 3

In Memoriam

The Friends were saddened to learn of the sudden passing of **James Purdy Wilson** the eldest grandson of James & Cora Purdy. Jim died on February 14, 2010 at the age of 77. He was born in Elkton, MI on April 1, 1932 to Donald & Carolyn (Purdy) Wilson. In 1993 he married Barbara Sterker and they resided in Cass City. Jim's brother, George lives in Gagetown and another brother Scott preceded him in death.

Jim was very generous with the memorabilia from his grandparents that he had preserved for all these years. We thanked him for sharing these wonderful keepsakes with us especially his Grandmother's diaries that she had kept from 1895 - 1954, their Victrola, many items from the Gagetown State Savings Bank that James Purdy owned, and the Melodeon. We are so grateful that he had carefully kept all these treasures that are now on display in the Purdy home. Now, Barbara has donated the sign that was on Jim's welding shop and we plan to use it on one of our Village buildings. We will miss Jim and know that he was pleased that his grandparent's Mud Lake Estate has been so beautifully restored.

Lost, But Not Found

At our Annual Meeting on April 17th at the VFW Hall, someone accidentally took the wrong coat. The missing coat is a beige three quarter length style with a button down hood and black lining. The owner would love to have the coat returned as there were some very important keys in the pocket. Call 989-665-0081.



Jim loved to dance and fish. Several years ago, Jim and Barb danced in the Barn during Fall Family Days and you can see how much they enjoyed dancing together.

Donations in memory of James Purdy Wilson, oldest grandchild of James & Cora Purdy, original owners of the Mud Lake Estate.

Gerald & Donna Auten, Cass City, MI
Mr. & Mrs. W. W. Barker, Dalhart, TX
Naomi Barnes, Cass City, MI
T. Brinkman, Caro, MI
Dale & Louise Buehrly, Cass City, MI
William & Nancy Burrows, Gagetown, MI
Coffee & Stockyard Friends, Cass City
Ernie Carpenter, Caro, MI
Bob Dunn, Gagetown, MI
Jon & Charmaine Fahmer, Cass City, MI
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Herron, Cass City, MI
Patricia Hester, Cass City, MI
Robert & Mary Ann Hirn, Cass City, MI
Dean & Diane Hoag, Caro, MI
Larry & Anne Homrocky, Cass City, MI
Paul Hunter, Gagetown, MI
Dean & Nancy Hutchinson, Cass City, MI
Ed & Dot Knight, Cass City, MI
Ross J. Kraft, Owendale, MI
Ted J. LaFave, Caro, MI
Paul & Beverly Leyva, Gagetown, MI
Bob & Edna McLachlan, Cass City, MI
Jonathan, Alex, Eustace & Tom Nizzola, Cass City, MI
Georgene Palmer & Frances Lovejoy, Cass City, MI

Arnold & Reita Maxfield, Dade City, FL
Joan R. Merchant, Cass City, MI
Janet Muntz, Cass City, MI
Jerry & Karen Nicol, Cass City, MI
Barbara Otulakowski, Snover, MI
Larry & Harriet Peters, Cass City, MI
Bernie & Leonard Pisarek, Gagetown, MI
Dale & Janet Reed, Vassar, MI
Carol & LaVern Rutkoski, Cass City, MI
Clarence & Opal Schneeberger, Cass City, MI
Margaret Sergeant, Gagetown, MI
J. E. Smith, Cass City, MI
Dan Toner, Cass City, MI
Richard & Norma Wallace, Cass City, MI
John M. Wald, Cass City, MI
Louis & Linda Wehrman, Reese, MI
Robert & Barbara Wood, Cass City, MI

Children of Barbara & Jim Wilson.
Chris Anderson, Cedaredge, CO
Pat Colman, Blackfoot, ID
Kathy Manyik, Fort Collins, CO
Mike Sterker, Fort Collins, CO

Up Coming Events

- /// **July 24**..... **Steam Power School** - See article page 2.
- /// **Sept. 10**..... **Friday Fish Fry** featuring Greg Talaski's famous fish
- /// **Sept. 11 & 12** **15th ANNUAL FALL FAMILY DAYS** at the Thumb Octagon Barn
- /// **May 11, 12 & 13, 2011**..... **School Tours** by reservation ONLY.

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 & August meetings are held on site in the Munro Bldg.

We're on the Web!

<http://www.thumboctagonbarn.org>
Aaron Davis, Web Manager

SPECIAL DONATIONS:

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

- Donation given by Sally J. Brauer in honor of Mary J. Brauer the best sister ever!
- Donation in memory of Harold L. Boyse of Birch Run given by Gordon & Dolores Merchant of Ocqueoc, MI
- Donation in honor of Harold Kunder's 90th birthday given by Ron & Arloia Lutz, Sebewaing, MI
- Donation in memory of Ruth Hoffman given by Eleanor Truemer.
- Donation of straw bales for school tours valued at \$158.00 given by Morell Hay Farms, Ubyly, MI
- Donation in memory of Earl Schaad, Kinde, MI, who made Earlene the life-size replica of a cow in the dairy display, given by Martin & Luci Kubacki, Ubyly, MI, Robert & Marlene Smithers, Bad Axe, MI and the family of Earl Schaad.
- Donation for the Schoolhouse Museum given by Lyle & Gladys Klein, Atlanta, MI
- Donation of equipment & services used during school tours valued at \$364.00 donated by DJ's Portable Toilets Rentals, Owendale, MI
- Donation for the Country School Museum given by the children and grandchildren of Clayton & Margaret Turner in their memory. Don & Jan (Turner) Severance, Jr., Palm Harbor, FL
Don Severance III, Virgin Islands
Gustavo & Kasey (Severance) Leon, Naples, FL

BENEFACTORS: The following have made a donation of \$10.00 or more since our last newsletter through May 20, 2010.

Laurence Beatenhead, Unionville, MI
Paul Begick, Bay City, MI
Jacqueline Bennett, Standish, MI
Harold & Ruby Boyse, Birch Run, MI
Jim & Judy Brown, Cass City, MI
Bruce & Marjorie Coleman, Rochester Hills, MI

Robert O. & Eleanor M. (McDonald) Ethier, Milledgeville, GA
David & Marie Jaroch, Ubyly, MI
Walter Krol, Warren, MI
Bob & Diana Leipprandt, Williamston, MI
Glen & Maxine Moore, Unionville, MI

Nik's Hunting Supply, Marlette, MI
Charles & Thomas Pardee, Lake, MI
Donald R. Ramaut, Harbor Beach, MI
Kitten Little Smith, Cass City, MI
Dan Toner, Cass City, MI
Vincent Weiler, Oscoda, MI