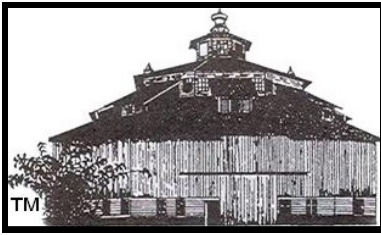


# Thumb Octagon Barn News



## Home of the Thumb Agricultural Museum

*Our mission is to maintain a volunteer group of Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn involved in the restoration and preservation of the barn complex as an educational tool preserving our rural and agricultural history for the benefit of our visitors.*

Winter 2018

## Newly Elected Executive Committee Members

### Executive Committee

#### President

**Martin Kubacki**

#### 1st Vice President

**Dennis Anderson**

#### 2nd Vice President

**Gerald Auten**

#### Treasurer

**Joan Koch**

#### Recording Secretary

**Michelle VanHorn**

#### Corresponding Secretary

**Patti Parker**

#### Past President

**Rose Putnam**

#### Purdy Home Chair

**Marilyn Phillips**

#### Museum Chair

**Connie Osentoski**

#### Grounds &

#### Grain Elevator Chair

**Louis Wehrman**

#### Barn & Float Chair

**Paul Deo**

#### Alert Team Chair

**Norm Parker**

#### Visit our website

**[thumboctagonbarn.org](http://thumboctagonbarn.org)**

#### Facebook

**[thumboctagonbarn](https://www.facebook.com/thumboctagonbarn)**



Back from Left: Norm Parker, Louis Wehrman, Michelle VanHorn, Martin Kubacki, Gerald Auten  
Front from Left: Rose Putnam, Patti Parker, Joan Koch, Marilyn Phillips and Paul Deo. (Missing are Dennis Anderson and Connie Osentoski)

On April 10, 2018 at the Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn, a new slate of officers was presented for four open positions.

Let's welcome our new President, **Martin Kubacki**, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, **Dennis Anderson**, Recording Secretary, **Michelle VanHorn**, and Corresponding Secretary, **Patti Parker**. **Paul Deo** has accepted his new role as Barn Chair along with his role as Float Chair. (see related article on Page 2)

### LETTER FROM THE PAST PRESIDENT

Dear Friends:

It is time for a change. I made a decision two years ago not to seek reelection as President. I have held this position since 1993 for all but two years when Bob Hirn took the helm. I will be staying on the Executive Committee as Past President. So, I am not stepping away totally as I have accepted the role as the new editor of the newsletter as well. I am happy to report that Martin Kubacki is the new President. Martin will be a great leader and he has a lot of new ideas that he would like to implement. So please accept Martin with open arms and provide all the support you've given me over the years.

I am also happy to announce four other Executive Committee positions are filled. Dennis Anderson as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President will be bringing his leader-

ship skills to the committee. Dennis has been a great asset for many, many years. He is currently spearheading the window and roof replacement project in the Barn. Michelle VanHorn is new to the area and has developed a "passion for the barn" as quoted from her acceptance of the position as Recording Secretary. Michelle has filled in the vacancy for the last couple of months and is very excited to be on board. Patti Parker has accepted the role as Corresponding Secretary, and brings her enthusiasm to fill the need for more social media interaction. Paul Deo brings his extensive experience to keep the Barn in good repair. I look forward to all the excitement that is underway in 2018.

As ever,  
*Rose Putnam*, Past President

## Louis Wehrman-Grain Elevator Chair

This past winter, some work has been done to get the Hero corn separator, which was manufactured by Twin City Separator Co. in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in working order. These types of separators were first manufactured in 1905. The separator was donated by **Bob and Don Mantey**, which was originally owned by their grandfather, **Fritz Mantey**, was most likely used in the 1930's on this farm. This antique machine was able to separate round and flat kernels for planting. The better kernels will then produce a better crop thus increasing income for the farmer. Plans are to have this ready for the students to observe it in operation during School Tours.



## Winter Snow Removal

We could not be doing all the winter projects without the help of Bill Shagene who comes out to plow snow. We cannot thank Bill enough for his donation of time and equipment. He keeps the drives open for all to move about. We've had a lot of snow this past winter so this is a big job and Bill is very good at what he does. Again, **Thank you, Bill Shagene!**

## Monday Work Crew

Even though the weather may be cold and nasty during the winter months, this does not deter the dedicated volunteers who come out to work. They have been busy restoring a little sleigh that will be on display in the sawmill and helping **Paul Deo** work on the new float. (See the related article below.)

One of the big projects is the redesigning and building of a new trailer to store and move the 24 new picnic tables. With their ingenuity, all material used for this project was located on site. The great thing about this **new trailer** is the ability to keep the picnic tables off the ground and then move them on and off the trailer without a loader without bending the tables. It has

taken quite a few Mondays to get this done, but it was well worth their time. (See Photos on Page 5.)

**Lew Martin** has been seen out at the Blacksmith Shop working on and off. **Jim Ware** visits and cleans the One Room School Museum. **Byron Arnold** has been busy looking out for the house. The crew also spends a lot of time doing **general maintenance to all the equipment**. They have built 3 drive pulleys to run the sawmill, which needs at least 450 rpms. There are now 3 belts ready for an antique tractor, a modern tractor and a steam engine. These guys are really talented. They also enjoy each other's company in the warm work room at the sawmill, heated by a space heater, during lunchtime. I hear that **George Wilson** calls most Mondays to say "Hi".

## Paul Deo-Parade Float Chair

Everyone loves parades, whether they are watching or actually participating. The Monday Work Crew under the direction of **Paul Deo** has been busy rebuilding a trailer to pull in parades to promote the Thumb Octagon Barn and Fall Family Days. Using an old motorcycle trailer, the crew began by lengthening and raising it. A new floor was built using material from the site. The original float display built by **George Wald**, which was pulled in many parades starting back in 1995, is being restored as the main display. The trailer will be able to be pulled by either a pickup or an antique tractor. So if you are interested in pulling the float in a local parade, please contact **Paul Deo 989-550-0077**. We are also looking for volunteers to walk alongside the parades in Bad Axe, Cass City, Ubly, Marlette, Munger, Fairgrove, Sebawaing, Kingston, and Port Hope to hand out information on Fall Family Days. Would straw hats and bib overalls be the dress for the day?

(Photo is from the Tuscola County Pumpkin Festival Parade in 1995. **Jane Hool** is driving the pickup)



# Teamwork and Timbers Project Coming Back

We are happy to announce that a decision was made to once again build the replica timber framed barn. This project is so much fun and a great learning experience for our young people. The Michigan Barn Preservation Network offers a scale model of a timber framed barn to community groups to teach the skill of timber framing. Our first one day workshop was held on site in August of 2011. The completed barn was on display in the Munro Building dur-

ing Fall Family Days. We also held another workshop at the Tuscola Technology Center for sixth graders in October 2014. This year, a decision was made to build and display the model barn in the arena of the Octagon Barn, which will then remain on display during Fall Family Days. **Paul Deo, Jared Sorenson, Norm Parker and Richard Stacer** will be our volunteer construction crew. We welcome Jared Sorenson to this group, who is thrilled to teach

the children what he is learning about the art of timber framing including all the special tools needed.

This event is open to both boys and girls ages 10 years and older. The date is **Saturday, August 25, 2018 from 9AM to 3PM.** **\$10.00** fee, which includes lunch. For registration, please visit our website at [thumboctagonbarn.org](http://thumboctagonbarn.org) or contact **Rose Putnam at 989-444-9574.**

## 23rd Annual Fall Family Days 2018



Dear Friends:

The first Fall Family days meeting was held March 13<sup>th</sup> at the Elmwood Township Hall. The theme for our 23<sup>rd</sup> event is **THE THUMB: Naturally Sweet.** **Greg Alexander** and **Tammy Grifka** are co-chairs and are very excited as always. They are bringing together resources to show how many products are produced in the Thumb that can be used as Natural Sweeteners.

We will also continue to have harvesting demonstrations and exhibits that are representative of farming. As in years gone by, these will include crops such as sugar beets, planted in our demo plot along with potatoes, corn and sorghum, which have all been planted locally for

many, many years.

Also, don't forget our huge flea market.

This year's Fall Family Days expense budget is in the neighborhood of \$45,000 once again. Our Fall Family Day's Sponsors have been key to our success by helping to cover these expenses. We appreciate the continued support of those who have been sponsors throughout the years. If you or someone you know would like to help by being a sponsor, please let us know by June 1st. This will insure that the sponsor's name will appear in the various advertisements giving them credit for their financial backing.

We would love to become a regular part of your business advertising

budget, a definite win/win for both parties. We have enclosed a Fall Family Day Sponsor form with this newsletter for your convenience.

Fall Family Days will be as always, the weekend after Labor Day, **September 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> with a Fish Fry on Friday night, September 7<sup>th</sup>.** We are planning on making it bigger and better than the last! Our next meeting will be **May 22, 2018 at 7PM** in the Munro Building at the Thumb Octagon Barn site. All are invited and please bring a friend!

FFD Co-Chairs-**Martin Kubacki and Lisa Geiger**

## New Office for Friends the “Purdy Bank”

The Village of Gagetown has generously offered to rent to the Friends a portion of the vacated Bank Building in downtown Gagetown for only \$100 per month. We thank them, This is quite sentimental as this building was originally the home of the P. C. Purdy Bank and then the Bank of James Purdy and eventually became the Gagetown State Savings Bank.

After James & Cora Purdy were married in Cass City on August 30, 1894 they moved to Gagetown where they lived above the Gagetown State Savings Bank. In

1922, they moved to the newly built Purdy Home on the Mud Lake Estate where they lived until 1942 when they moved back to their home in the city of Gagetown.

The Friends now refer to their new office as the “Purdy Bank”. The Friends took possession of the building on February 1, 2018 and have held two Executive Meetings and the Annual Meeting here. The storage space is welcomed for the many documents acquired over the years.

### ELKLAND TOWNSHIP THANKED

We would like to thank the **Elkland Township Board** for their very generous donation of the use of their building since 1994 for meetings held that are too numerous to count. Elkland Township was one of the very first organizations willing to take a chance on the newly formed group to “Save the Octagon Barn.” There were no funds to pay rent and the barn was in desperate shape with holes in the roof letting in rain and snow. We have fond memories of the meetings held in this building.

## Thumb Regional Historical Workshop

The fourth annual Thumb Regional Historical Workshop was held on April 18, 2018 at Sherwood on the Hill in Gagetown. There were 32 in attendance from 12 Historical Societies in Huron, Sanilac and Tuscola Counties. The group was very impressed with the presentation by Erin Schmandt, Director, from the Caro Area District Library sharing resources to digitize school yearbooks and local newspa-

pers. She was able to show us how to navigate and link to other libraries with these resources across the state. Then we were delighted to listen to the story of the **Sanilac Petroglyphs** by Stacy Tchorzynski from the State Historic Preservation Office. A big event is planned for **June 23, 2018** to showcase the Petroglyphs. Please visit their website for more information. <http://www.michigan.gov/mhc>. Following

lunch, Tom Trombley from the Castle Museum of Saginaw County History provided insight on telling the story of an historic item. His reference was the fire of 1893 in Saginaw. **Rose Putnam** represented the Thumb Octagon Barn and **Jim Ware** shared all the new things happening with the Cass City Historical Society. If you would be interested in any of the handouts from this workshop, please contact Rose Putnam. 989-444-9574.

## Annual Volunteer Picnic and Auction 2018

Please set the date **June 10, 2018** for the annual Volunteer Picnic and Auction. Please note that the correct times are as follows. Arrive at **12:00PM** to sign in. We are asking for a donation of items of \$25.00 or more in value for this annual fundraiser. There will be no silent auction. The picnic

starts promptly at **1:00PM**. K&K Catering will be providing the food once again. Wasn't it great last year? **Marty Osentoski**, who brings so much fun, will be with us to provide his volunteer services as auctioneer. The auction will start following a presentation of awards to outstanding volunteers during 2017.

There will also be some raffles to spike the fun. We will need your response by **May 29th** to order enough food for the event. Please contact the **chairman of your committee** to **RSVP** or **Joan Koch 989-665-0081** or **Martin Kubacki 989-551-0526**.



# Future Events—2019 & 2024

2019

Marilyn Phillips, Purdy Home Chair, has a vision of hand crafted quilts hanging from the loft of the Barn encircling the arena. So with that thought in mind, plans are underway for a Quilt Show in 2019. We would like to form a committee for this event and encourage your ideas and participation. If you are interested, please contact **Marilyn Phillips at 989-286-3661.**

2024

Time is rolling along! Each day seems to go faster than the day before. I have been retired for 15 years and where did that time go? The saying that "I don't know how I got anything done when I was working" is so true.

I have been hanging out at the Octagon Barn since 2002. What is that like? There are lots of new friends, many there much longer than I, and there are many "chores" to do. Chores and a farm are synonymous! The days lead into weeks; the weeks

add up to years and the years roll into centuries.

Speaking of centuries! The year 2024 will be here soon. The Octagon Barn will be 100 years young. I wonder what that will be like. What do you think we should do to celebrate?

I have come to the conclusion that I am just passing through. I might as well enjoy it while I can, as long as I can and get my chores done. How is it with you? Stop over and visit sometime. I would like that.

**Dennis Anderson**  
**989-550-4416**

## General Membership

Newsletters that have a membership form with RENEWAL written 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 or \$15.00 for a family, which along with receipt of the newsletter gives you the right and opportunity to hold office. A membership form can be obtained from our website 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. It is important that you indicate how the money included is to be distributed and the total matches the amount of your check.

**Important Notice – 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.**

## This and That

### Dresses missing

The one room school program committee is looking for two missing blue dresses. These are very special as they were handmade by Donna Auten and used for many of the one room school programs. If anyone knows where they may be, **please contact Gerald Auten 989-872-2778**

### Wayne Lenton repairing equipment.



**Jerry Meredith and Terry Keinath working on the new trailer.**



## Winter 2018 Benefactors

The following have made a donation of \$10.00 or more since our last newsletter through March 14, 2018.

Bab Ashmore, Owendale, MI  
 Carolyn Baldwin, Vassar, MI  
 Tom Barton, St. Clair Shores, MI  
 Ralph & Theresa Bielawski, Fraser, MI  
 Bernard & Patty Billingsley, Sanford, MI  
 Scott & Ginny Brundage, Columbia, MO  
 John & Pat DeWyse, Bay City, MI  
 Robert O. & Eleanor McDonald Ethier, Milledgeville, GA  
 Thomas & Elizabeth Fritz, Gagetown, MI  
 Harold & Diana Frye, Mayville, MI  
 Bonnie Gaeth, Owendale, MI  
 Neal J. Hentschl, Harbor Beach, MI  
 Stanley Knopf, Marlette, MI  
 Tim & Debbie Kubacki, Sebawaing, MI  
 Randy Kursinsky, Midland, MI  
 Elizabeth Lambert, Kingston, MI  
 Susan Madonia, Sterling Heights, MI  
 Leslie Markle, Mattawan, MI  
 Mike & Drucilla Pisarek, Cass City, MI  
 Nicholas Posak, Saint Clair, MI  
 Jim & Barbara Prill, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI  
 Judy Ann Rau, Reese, MI  
 Allen & Gloria Thorsby, Colorado Springs, CO  
 Willa Vargas, Bellevue, NE  
 Dorothy Warner, Sandusky, MI

In Memoriam.

**Pat Hester** loved the Purdy Home and worked many hours restoring, cleaning and showcasing this beautiful home. She was instrumental in organizing the first tea in the Home and was a valuable member of Cora's Cleaning Crew. When we received copies of Cora Purdy's diaries from her grandsons, James Purdy, George Richard, Donald Scott Wilson, Pat set about to read all of them from 1895 through 1954. She developed a fondness and appreciation for Cora Purdy who Pat felt was a woman way ahead of her time. The information she gathered was most helpful in documenting when events happened in the Purdy family as well as the Mud Lake Estate.



Pat Hester is pictured with all of Cora Purdy's diaries from 1895-1954. Pat is holding Cora's very first and very last diary.

Donations in memory of Pat Hester were given by Donald Reese, Caro, MI, Diane Rapson Gabil, Essexville, MI, Brian Kitchin, Clarkston, MI, James Ware, Cass City, MI, Cleo Kritzman, Cass City, MI, Duaine & Marilyn Phillips, Caro, MI, Doug & Ardis Monroe, Gagetown, MI & Margaret Sergeant, Gagetown, MI

## Special Donations

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

Donation of vintage baby clothes items was given by the Huron County Baby Pantry, Bad Axe, MI.

Donation in memory of Mike Sullivan was given by Bob Good, Holly, MI.

Donation in memory of Luis Ramon Arroyo was given by his sister Linda Arroyo Devine, Cass City, MI.

A donation was given in memory of Todd Toner's February birthday by Willa J. Vargas of Bellevue, NE.

A donation was given by Margaret Sergeant in honor of Lois Moslander for all her hard work on the newsletter for all those years.

## Piano Donation

Live music is coming to the One Room School Museum. Due to a various generous donation from **Tom Lotter at Lotter Auction Services** in Sandusky, the Thumb Octagon Barn is now the owner of an Ampico reproducing system upright grand piano. **Alex Paladi**, longtime supporter of music at the barn, heard about the possibility of the donation of this piano. So, Alex went to investigate. You may also recall that Alex is the person who spent endless hours restoring the melodeon in the Purdy home, which is an original piece, owned by James and Cora Purdy.

The piano was made by the Haines Brothers Pianos of New York, which was founded in 1851. The piano when it was new, about the late 1920's, was very costly about \$3,975. In today's world, the cost of this piano would be about \$56,972. Wow!

It's not easy to move a piano, but with the help of a trailer and two volunteers, **Greg Alexander** and **Richard Stacer**, who made the trip to pick it up. The piano arrived safely on site. **Jim Ware**, Schoolhouse Museum Chair, will be sure a special space is available to showcase this wonderful piece of history in the one room school museum. With the aid of a volunteer, local children will be the first to observe or actually play the piano during School Tours.

We are looking for some Ampico rolls or standard player piano rolls to add to our collection;



## Museum Donations

Don Olesko, Milford, MI-Rural Mail Buggy

Fred Kapa, Caro, MI-Screw jack, miter saw, coffee table, phonograph, wheelbarrow frame

Randy Kelly, Cass City, MI-Grain Scales

Leroy & Virginia Schluckebier, Frankenthum, MI-Line shaft, wrench, wood barrels, drive belts, pulleys drill & bits, weights, wood box, bottle capper, sausage stuffer

Dr. Paul & Suzie Chappel, Cass City, MI-Apple Peeler



Pictured on the left is the 1888 Rival Apple Peeler donated by **Dr. Paul and Suzie Chappel**. After **Gerald Auten** accepted this unique piece, he set to work doing a few repairs to get it in working order. Gerald demonstrated the use of this peeler for all those in attendance at the Annual Meeting. Wow it was amazing to watch it operate, but it sure looks like a lot of work just to peel an apple, unless of course you might be peeling a whole bushel!

Friends of the  
THUMB OCTAGON BARN  
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## 2018 Upcoming Events

Saturday, May 5	Spring Clean-up Day
May 9, 10 & 11	School Tours (by appointment only)
June 10	Volunteer Appreciation Picnic and Auction
June 20	Southern Sweet Tea & Desserts Tea Party
July 14 and 15	Concerts in the Barn
July 28 and 29	Open House Weekend
August 25	Teamwork and Timbers
September 7	Fish Supper
September 8 & 9	23 <sup>rd</sup> Annual Fall Family Days

## FUTURE MEETINGS

General Membership meetings will be held the second Tuesday every other month at 7 p.m. at the Octagon Barn Bank Building in Gagetown, Feb. April, Oct & Dec. with the August meeting in the Munro Building on Barn site. **Please make note that the June General Membership meeting has been cancelled due to the Volunteer Picnic scheduled for June 10, 2018.**

Photo below is from Teamwork and Timbers in 2011.



### Newsletter

Database and labels.....Dave Eichler  
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Newsletter Coordinator. & Layout....Rose Putnam