

May/June 2012

## Inaugural Gowns of the First Ladies

Just in time for the finale of a protracted presidential election campaign, the Plymouth Historical Museum opens its special exhibit, "Inaugural Gowns of the First Ladies" on Friday, June 29 at 1 p.m. This exhibit showcases 14 reproduction inaugural ball gowns of presidential first ladies from Martha Washington (1789-1797) to Rosalyn Carter (1977-1980). The gowns were commissioned by the Republican Party in 1971 and were created by a team of designers under the direction of Don Nagel and David Zeese of Frankenmuth, Michigan. The design team was sent to Washington, D.C., to view the dresses at the Smithsonian in the Hall of the First Ladies as they were being restored. The team was allowed to sketch each gown but not permitted to photograph them.



*Eleanor Roosevelt waits on the platform of the Museum's caboose with her dog Fala.*

Each gown took approximately eight months to research and design, as no patterns existed for any of the ball gowns. Fabrics also had to be matched as closely as possible, making reproductions on this scale very difficult. The gowns chosen were selected for two reasons. One, to show the progression of fashion, and two, to give insight into the various periods. In addi-

tion to Washington and Carter, the following first ladies are featured: Dolley Madison (1809-1817), Louisa Adams (1825), Sarah Polk (1845-1849), Abigail Fillmore (1850-1853), Julia Grant (1869-1877), Helen Taft (1909-1913), Florence Harding (1921-1923), Grace Coolidge (1923-1929), Lou Hoover (1929-1933), Anna Eleanor Roosevelt (1933-1945), Lady Bird Johnson (1963-1968), and Patricia Nixon (1969-1974).

The exhibit also highlights dolls of the first ladies, or women who acted in the place of first ladies, in inaugural gowns, as well as other representative political objects. The exhibit runs through November 7, 2012.

**MEET ANNIE OAKLEY &  
FRANK BUTLER**



**SATURDAY  
AUGUST 4  
1-4 PM**



**WILD WEST DAYS**

- DAISY TARGET SHOOT
- CHUCKWAGON SNACKS
- STORYTELLING
- BRANDING (TATTOOS)
- PHOTOS (WEAR YOUR COolest Duds)
- GAMES

**SADDLE-UP PARTNER AND BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!**

**\$25 PER BUCKAROO OR PURCHASE A NEW OR  
RENEWED DAISY-LEVEL MEMBERSHIP (\$50) AND  
2 BUCKAROOS GET IN FREE**

(ADD \$5 AFTER JULY 30)

**PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL MUSEUM  
155 S. MAIN STREET, 734-455-8940  
WWW.PLYMOUTHHISTORICAL.ORG**

**Plymouth Historical Museum**  
 155 South Main Street  
 Plymouth, Michigan 48170  
<http://www.plymouthhistory.org>  
<http://www.facebook.com/plymouthhistory>  
 734-455-8940 Fax: 734-455-7797

**Hours**

Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday  
 1-4 PM all days  
 Open year round (except some holidays)

**Board of Directors**

Pam Yockey	President
Mike Pappas	Vice President
Sally Fedus	Secretary
Jim Burroughs	Treasurer
Bee Friedlander	Past President
Jeff Ashton	Director
Margaret Dunning	Director
Aaron Frank	Director
Wes Graff	Director
Dan Packer	Director
Jim Vermeulen	Director

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Donna Keough	Exhibits Coordinator
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Allen Odell	Program Chair
Barb Peterson	Hospitality Chair
Leslie Ryder	Education Coordinator
John Schmidt	Maintenance Coordinator
Kay Strobl & Paula Holmes	Museum Store Mgrs

**Museum Memo Editor**

Gerry Sabatini <[gsabatini@comcast.net](mailto:gsabatini@comcast.net)>  
 Proofreaders—Bill Keough, Elizabeth Kerstens

The Museum Memo is printed six times a year. Friends of the Plymouth Historical Museum meetings are open to members, their guests, and the public and are held on the second Thursday of each month, September through May, at 7:30 PM, unless otherwise scheduled. Please enter on the Church Street side of the building.

**Monthly Drawing**

Merrilee Zawadzki and Cecile Keshishian are the winners of the May and June drawings for a \$25 gift certificate.

**Plymouth Historical Museum  
 50th Anniversary**

The Plymouth Historical Museum opened its doors to the public in 1962. Although it's in a different building fifty years later, the Museum still offers unique and engaging exhibits as an educational and historical destination in downtown Plymouth.

You can help the Friends of the Plymouth Historical Museum celebrate the 50th Anniversary in our "\$50 for 50 Years" campaign. Donate \$50 to the Museum in support of ongoing operating expenses and your name will be entered in a drawing for a generous basket of Plymouth goodies donated by the benevolent Plymouth community. Items in the basket include tickets to a Detroit Tigers game and gift cards to myriad locations around town.

Donations are tax deductible, and can be sent directly to the Plymouth Historical Museum, a 501 (c)3 charitable organization. We appreciate your support!

**New Members—Welcome!**

Paula Boucher, Plymouth  
 Scott Jones, Plymouth  
 Richard Tabaczynski, Plymouth

**Plymouth Historical Museum Wish List**

The Plymouth Historical Museum has an ongoing need for the following items. If you choose to donate for one of these items, please let us know on your check which item you are donating for, so we use the money appropriately.

Thank you for your continuing generosity that helps keep the Plymouth Historical Museum one of the best museums in the area! To donate online for these items and other items, please visit the Museum website at <http://www.plymouthhistory.org/support-us/donate.html>.

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|---|-------------------|
| <b>Surge protector strips (need 20)</b>   | <b>\$30 each</b>  |
| <b>1 Roll Postage Stamps</b>              | <b>\$45 each</b>  |
| <b>Computer battery backups (need 10)</b> | <b>\$100 each</b> |
| <b>1/2 month heating bill</b>             | <b>\$375</b>      |
| <b>1/2 month electric bill</b>            | <b>\$500</b>      |
| <b>1 month employee's salary</b>          | <b>\$500</b>      |

# Museum Trends

By Mike Gillett, PHM administrative assistant

## New Membership Categories and YOU!

**A**s most of you know, as of January 1 the Museum membership categories were changed. What might need to be pointed out, however, is how those categories affect new and renewing couples and families.

A greater part of the change has been the elimination of the “Family Membership” category. What that means is that every membership—from the \$25 “Kellogg Park” up to the \$300 “Lincoln Club”—is an INDIVIDUAL membership. What differs are the benefits, of course, including the number of guests that you may bring (from none to unlimited).

For example: in previous years, Dick and Jane Smith, under the \$40 “Family Membership,” both received free admission, along with both Dick and Jane having voting privileges at our annual membership meeting.

Now, if Dick and Jane Smith become new members or renew their membership with the Museum as a single \$50 “Daisy” category, Jane can come and tour the Museum as a guest of Dick. But only Dick is able to vote at the meeting. Dick is the sole member of the Museum and sole voter.

If both Dick and Jane want to be members in their own right, with voting privileges, both should join or renew as two \$25 “Kellogg Park” members. One membership for each. Both now get to vote. If both want to be able to bring a guest when they come to the Museum, they should each join or renew at the \$30 “Main Street” level.

Of course, this is only an example. A couple can renew (or join) with two “Daisys,” two “Alter Cars,” and so on.

If you’ve already renewed (or joined) as a “Daisy,” and both would like to vote, please contact Mike at 734-455-8940 or at [secretary@plymouthhistory.org](mailto:secretary@plymouthhistory.org), and he will be more than happy to change your one “Daisy” into two “Kellogg Parks.”

Listed below are the benefits of each type of membership. Basic membership benefits for all levels (except Lincoln's Kids) include the bi-monthly newsletter, *Museum Memo*, a 10 percent discount in the Museum Store, reduced rates on some Museum events, free admission to the Museum during the membership year, and monthly educational programs.

- **Lincoln’s Kids: \$15** Benefits: Museum t-shirt, PDF newsletter, free museum admission with an adult.\*
- **Kellogg Park: \$25** Basic member benefits.\*
- **Main Street: \$30** Basic member benefits PLUS bring 1 guest to the Museum and get reduced rates for member and guest for Museum activities.\*
- **Daisy: \$50** Basic member benefits PLUS bring up to 3 guests to the Museum and get reduced rates for member and guests for Museum activities.\*
- **Alter Car: \$75** Basic member benefits PLUS bring up to 5 guests to the Museum and get reduced rates for member and guests for Museum activities.\*
- **Pere Marquette: \$150** Basic member benefits PLUS unlimited guests accompanying member to Museum and get reduced rates for member and guests for Museum activities, reduced rates for room rentals and annual subscription to *Michigan History* or a copy of Sam Hudson’s *Story of Plymouth*.\*
- **Lincoln Club: \$300** Basic member benefits PLUS unlimited guests accompanying member to Museum and get reduced rates for member and guests for Museum activities; reduced rates for room rentals; annual subscription to *Michigan History* or a copy of Sam Hudson’s *Story of Plymouth*; two tickets to annual auction/dinner.\*

\*Members are required to bring their membership cards with them in order to receive free admission to the Museum.

**Please look at your label on this newsletter. It will tell you the expiration date of your membership. If your membership has expired, please take the time to renew as this will be your last issue. We appreciate your support! If you receive this newsletter by email, thank you for helping us save money and trees. If you don’t receive this newsletter by email, please give us your email address so we can reduce our paper and postage expenses. If you go away from home and forward your mail, this newsletter will not be forwarded as we use bulk mail. Please notify us of temporary address changes!**

# Volunteer Gregg Packard

By Dianne Griswold

**M**ost of us seem to have a brief idea as to our heritage. We can date our family back a bit. Some of us have delved into genealogy.

In fact, workshops on it have been presented at the Museum. Nevertheless, it is a rare person who was born and lives in a town where his entire family played such an enormous part.

Gregg Packard is one of the maintenance men and his ancestry goes back to the early 1800s in Plymouth. In fact, his family is one of the founding families that we can thank for this wonderful little town.

His great grandparents on both sides lived here. There was the Durfee family, residing in a white house on the corner of Penniman and Sheldon roads that is still standing.

His great-grandfather on his mother's side, Elias Briggs, fought in the Civil War. He is buried in Riverside Cemetery, but others in the family are buried at I-275 and 6 Mile Road, near a little theatre. Another great-grandfather, William Burrows, was the superintendent at Daisy Manufacturing Company.

Gregg was also born in Plymouth. His parents met at Plymouth High School. And he mentions that at one time his father dated our own Margaret Dunning. Unfortunately on a date their car got into an accident that knocked out his teeth. What a date!

There was a warming shelter built for the public at Wilcox Lake. Gregg's Grandma Zaida Burrows and her brother Arthur Briggs took him there when he was just 14. They were to have a little picnic with the Plymouth Historical Society and just enjoy the day.



*Museum maintenance volunteer Gregg Packard, has ancestry that dates to the early 1800s in Plymouth.*

When they arrived, they met Clarence Stevens, who was the oldest person in Plymouth at the time. Stevens said, "Why Art Briggs, I haven't seen you in 75 years." That statement fascinated the young Gregg and it also grabbed his interest in history. He mentioned that Arthur Briggs donated his apothecary license dated 1901 to the Museum.

About 15 years ago, Gregg was laid off from work. He decided to venture to the Museum and volunteered under Bruce Richard in the maintenance department. At that time they had to take all the stuff out of a small closet area and put it away each day.

He says that now the maintenance area is a wonderful room in which to work. Gregg's favorite activity is working on artifacts and restoring them to their original (or as close as possible) condition.

## New Board of Directors

**A**t its annual meeting in May, the Friends of the Plymouth Historical Museum members elected a new slate for its Board of Directors. This year's election incorporated staggered terms for the directors, in accordance with bylaws changes instituted in 2011. The newly elected Board of Directors for 2012-2013, and their terms are: Jeff Ashton (2012-2013), Jim Burroughs (2012-2015), Sally Fedus (2012-2015), Aaron Frank (2012-2013), Bee Friedlander (2012-2014), Wes Graff (2012-2013), Daniel Packer (2012-2014), Mike Pappas (2012-2013), Jim Vermeulen Jr. (2012-2014), and Pam Yockey (2012-2015), as well as

permanent director Margaret Dunning.

The Board of Directors elected its officers for the coming year at its meeting Wednesday: Pam Yockey, president; Mike Pappas, vice president; Sally Fedus, secretary; and Jim Burroughs, treasurer. Bee Friedlander now serves as past president after serving as president for the past four years.

The Board would like to thank outgoing board members Stella Abraham, Gary Stone, and Avani Saraiya. While Stella and Avani served as board members for the past year, Gary has been serving as a board member for at least the past twenty years.





## Volunteers Make a Difference



### Heidi Nielsen U of M Dearborn Mentor of the Year



*Heidi Nielsen, archivist for the Plymouth Historical Museum, was recently awarded the U of M Dearborn Mentor of the Year Award. Nielsen was recognized for the excellent guidance and experience she gave to two U of M Dearborn students, Megan Seiler*

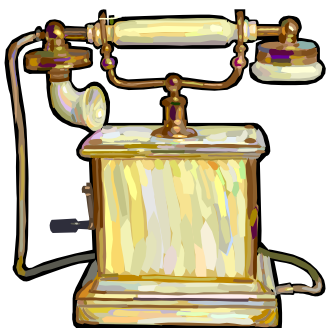
*and Christina McElroy, who were serving as interns at the Museum. A UM-D spokesperson said the university is grateful for the Museum's faith in the value of experiential education, as demonstrated by the Museum's contributions to the university's student internship program.*



### Dan Packer Museum Volunteer of the Year



*Dan Packer, right, was the Plymouth Historical Museum's "Volunteer of the Year" during the Plymouth Community Chamber of Commerce's Showcase of Plymouth recently. He received the award from Wes Graff, president of the Chamber and a new member of the FoPHM's Board of Directors. Packer has been a FoPHM member for 20 years and has served on the board for the past 5 years. Packer has extensive knowledge of the American Civil War and World War II, and is a volunteer in the Museum archives.*



### Nostalgia Sale — Fall Festival Weekend September 6, 7 & 8, 2012

**Where: 345 Sunset Street, Plymouth**

Come buy some treasures and support the Plymouth Historical Museum. This sale is *NOT* at the Museum, but rather is located at 345 Sunset Street, about a half mile from the Museum, during Plymouth's Fall Festival. Items for sale include donations and vintage collectibles no longer needed by the Museum.



# Plymouth Days Gone-bye

Compiled by Gerry Sabatini from the newspaper archives at the Plymouth District Library

## 100 Years Ago (May 1912)

A door-to-door salesman was arrested for defrauding 70 residents in connection with selling phony magazine subscriptions. The solicitor pleaded guilty and was sentenced with a \$50 fine or sixty days in jail. He selected jail.

\* \* \* \* \*

Two prominent businessmen from Milford who transported livestock, were fatally injured at the Plymouth railroad yard when, during the process of searching for their livestock railcars, they stepped into the path of a moving train engine that was approaching from behind.

\* \* \* \* \*

A team of horses pulling a delivery wagon on Main Street was frightened by the noise of a passing automobile and ran away. The horses bolted across Kellogg Park and separated from their harnesses when the wagon struck a tree. The wagon driver was seriously injured when he was thrown to the ground.

## 50 Years Ago (May 1962)

A Plymouth resident at the city's annual budget meeting voiced his concerns about the increased expenditures. The resident questioned the need for a proposed budget of \$618,000, and suggested that the city should only offer the minimum amount of services. He said that in 1935, the city was able to operate with a budget of only \$70,000.

\* \* \* \* \*

A grand opening was held for the new Arbor Croft Subdivision at Hartsough and Sheldon Roads in the City of Plymouth. With 53 home sites, it was the last large subdivision built in the city. The home designs featured tri-level, ranch, Cape Cod, and colonial. The colonial model was listed at \$26,500.

\* \* \* \* \*

To the delight of Plymouth-area children, TV personality Poopdeck Paul, host of the popular Popeye the Sailor cartoon show on CKLW-TV, was a special guest at Fisher's Shoes on Main Street.

\* \* \* \* \*

The featured motion pictures at the Penn Theatre were *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, starring James Stewart and John Wayne, *The Horizontal Lieutenant*, starring Jim Hutton and Paula Prentiss, and *Cape Fear*, starring Robert Mitchum.

## 100 Years Ago (June 1912)

For the second straight year, the oiling of the dirt surface on Penniman Avenue was favored by the homeowners along the street. It was determined that spraying oil over the street surface helped reduce the clouds of dust that would permeate into the homes. A number of citizens praised the cleanliness of the oil method in keeping the dust down.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Plymouth council approved a levy of 10 mills on the assessed valuation of the village for the annual property tax rate. Because of an increase in the number of factories and residential homes, the levy would raise an additional \$30,000 in tax dollars over the amount received from the prior year.

\* \* \* \* \*

A passenger in a railroad vehicle was struck with a pellet from an air rifle, when a resident, who was target shooting in front of Schroeder's Market, fired the rifle at the moment when the vehicle was passing near the store. The passenger received no serious injuries. It was recommended to the shooter that the next time he fired his rifle, he should look first.

## 50 Years Ago (June 1962)

By a margin of 183 votes, Plymouth voters rejected a school millage proposal of 5½ mills. The 5½ mills consisted of 3½ mills for the renewal of an expired millage and 2 mills for an additional increase. The proposal was placed on the ballot as one item.

\* \* \* \* \*

For the third year in a row, and finally with perfect weather, the graduation ceremony of the Plymouth High School seniors was held outside at the football field. The first year it rained during the ceremony, and the second year the temperature was cold. The only annoyance during the ceremony was the frequent blast from several train whistles.

\* \* \* \* \*

Red carpets were unfurled throughout the state as hundreds of Michigan cities celebrated Mayor Exchange Day. Plymouth Mayor Robert Sincock was in Troy for the day, while Troy Mayor Robert Huber was in Plymouth. Mayor Huber noted the difference between the small historical City of Plymouth and the expanding city of Troy that was newly incorporated in 1955.

## Museum Store News

The Museum Store has added many new items recently. For example, several new Images of Motoring books including General Motors, Ford and Chrysler; Detroit, Our Greatest Generation DVD; and other World War II pieces.

Artist Pierre Bataille's original pencil drawings of Abraham Lincoln, General Sherman and Mount Rushmore are also new additions to the store.

The Museum Maintenance Department men have crafted a unique table from the salvaged wood of an early 1900s piano. This table is also for sale in the store.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank members for their donations of dishes, jewelry, books, and family treasures. We so appreciate your support.

Lastly, thank you to all of our Museum Store volunteers--we appreciate all of your work!

### The Museum Store is online!

<http://www.plymouthhistorystore.org/>

## Tea & Toy Thyme



A tea for kids and dolls, and their escorts

Friday,  
July 20  
12-2 PM

- Enjoy tea delicacies
- Fun activities include:

- ☺ Make and take craft
- ☺ Learn about and play with historic toys

Tickets are \$15 for members; \$20 for non-members.  
Add \$5 to ticket prices after July 6.  
Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Plymouth Historical Museum  
155 S. Main Street  
734-455-8940  
[www.plymouthhistory.org](http://www.plymouthhistory.org)

### Plymouth, Once Upon a Time

*A timeless photo, dated 1909, of the Plymouth Band in front of the band shelter in Penniman-Allen Park. The park was located at the west end of Church Street and Penniman Avenue. The band performed from 1905 until 1913. Image from the Plymouth Historical Museum archives.*





**Friends of the Plymouth Historical Museum**  
155 S. Main Street  
Plymouth, MI 48170

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## **Calendar of Events**

For a detailed list of events, please visit the Museum website at [www.plymouthhistory.org/events.html](http://www.plymouthhistory.org/events.html).

### **Special Museum Exhibits**

“Ration Stamps & Bombers: WWII at Home,” until June 17, 2012.

“Inaugural Gowns of the First Ladies,” June 29–November 7, 2012.

### **June**

18–28—Museum closed for exhibit changeover.

29—“Inaugural Gowns of the First Ladies” opens.

### **July**

20—Tea and Toy Thyme, Noon–2 PM, a tea for kids and dolls, and their escorts. Tickets \$15 for members & \$20 for non-members. Add \$5 after July 6.

### **August**

4—History Kids Kamp, 1–4 PM, Experience the Wild West. Tickets \$25 per child. Add \$5 after July 20.

### **September**

6–8—Nostalgia sale at 345 Sunset Street, Plymouth;  
**Vintage donations welcome (no junk please)! Donations should be brought to the Museum, not to the sale during the sale, please. Items need to be priced in advance.**

## **Rent a Room for Your Next Function**

The Plymouth Historical Museum is the ideal setting for weddings, showers, receptions, corporate functions, club meetings, funeral luncheons, and many other events. Our Sanford Burr Meeting Room can comfortably seat up to 100 people and has wireless Internet access. Prices are reasonable, and for an additional fee, rental includes use of the kitchen and/or a private tour of the Museum. For more information, visit the Museum or phone 734-455-8940.

