

October-December 2020

Caboose Grants Help Finalize Project

Two grants in recent months are allowing the Plymouth Historical Museum to finish the renovations of the CSX caboose received in 2019.

In August, the Community Foundation of Plymouth gave the Museum a \$1,500 grant to create a caboose documentary. That documentary is now available for viewing in a stand-alone kiosk next to the Museum's replica caboose on our Main Street. The intent of the documentary is to provide a tour of the



caboose, inside and out, for those who are unable to access the caboose. Jonathon Leese, a former railroad engineer who worked on our CSX caboose 904151, provides viewers with walking commentary.

In December, the Margaret Dunning Foundation gave the Museum a grant of \$28,000 to complete the remaining renovations on the caboose, to create two more documentaries, and to create the labels for inside and outside of the caboose to provide context for visitors. We are hoping to be able to have the grand opening for the caboose in Spring 2021.

"We are so grateful to the Margaret Dunning Foundation for the support of our caboose project, as well as all of the support it has provided the Museum through the years," said Executive Director Liz Kerstens.

The Margaret Dunning Foundation was founded by Dunning in 1997. She was born in 1910 in Redford Township and moved with her mother to Plymouth in the 1920s. Margaret died in 2015 at the age of 104. Her estate provided additional funding for the Margaret Dunning Foundation, which continues to support her charitable interests, including the Plymouth Historical Society, and her legacy.



**A Flapper Murder at the 1920's Speakeasy
(via Zoom)
Saturday, February 20, 2021, 6 PM**

Join us for an evening of suspense via Zoom on Saturday, February 20, 2021, at 6 PM. Help us solve this dastardly murder! Tickets are \$20 per person. Event is limited to 50 people.

The Roaring 20s are in full swing, giving birth to the rise of jazz music, flappers and, with the end of the war. It's the era of prohibition. Organized crime is at an all-time high.

The Half Moon Club is one of just two Speakeasies in town, fighting prohibition by serving alcohol illegally and offering patrons the type of fun that can't be had when the sun is up. Despite the constant threat of a raid, business at The Half Moon Club is lucrative, as men and women stream through the doors each night.

When a flapper is found shot to death outside the club, the management and loyal patrons of The Half Moon Club scramble to identify the killer before the police catch wind of the killing and shut down the juice joint for good!

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)

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The Museum Memo is printed four times a year.

Monthly Drawing

Pam Piendel, Shane Miller, and Cathy Webster and are the respective winners of the October, November, and December drawings for a \$25 gift certificate.

Kroger Plus Card Donations



Thank you to those who have added the Plymouth Historical Society to their **Kroger Plus Card**. The Museum receives a small percentage from any purchases made by those who have an up-to-date registration on their cards.

To participant in the program, visit www.krogercommunityrewards.com. Click on "Michigan" and click on "Enroll."

You must have a valid online account at Kroger.com to participate. If you need help, give us a call at 734-455-8940 ext. 9. We'll be happy to help you get enrolled.

New Members—Welcome!

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 Wendy Goodnow, Plymouth
 Brandy Michaels, Plymouth
 Andy Milewski, Canton
 Miller & Calabrese, P.C., Plymouth
 Cheryl Pond, Plymouth
 Kathleen Sleek, New Hudson



Support the Plymouth Historical Museum

The Plymouth Historical Museum is a privately funded 501(c)3 charitable organization. We receive no government funding. We always have a "wish list" of things that help us as we work to preserve and share the history of Plymouth.

Here are some of our common purchases to provide inspiration:

- 1 Roll Postage Stamps **\$55 per**
- IT/Network support **\$250**
- ½ month heating bill **\$375**
- ½ month electric bill **\$475**
- 1 month employee salary **\$500**

To donate, make your check payable to the Plymouth Historical Museum.



SUPER HERO ENCOUNTER



MARCH 20, 2021



1 - 4 PM

TOURS START EVERY 15 MINUTES

TICKETS GO ON SALE JANUARY 18, AND CAN BE PURCHASED AT

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PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL MUSEUM 155 S. MAIN STREET PLYMOUTH, MI 48170 (734)455-8940

80 Years Ago
November 15, 1940
Plymouth Mail



The first Thanksgiving was observed during the fall season of 1621, by the pilgrims from England who had established a colony in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620. The event was considered a harvest celebration. The city of Plymouth is named after the historic Plymouth, Massachusetts settlement.

Plymouth Is Namesake of Original Thanksgiving Place of Pilgrim Fathers

Next Thursday will be a day of special significance in the city of Plymouth, because it has been designated as Thanksgiving day and the first American Thanksgiving day was observed by the Plymouth Colony November 26, 1621 in Plymouth, Massachusetts, the historic place after which this city was named.

After the first corn crop had been gathered, Governor Bradford and the Pilgrim Fathers decided to have a feast of ingathering—a day of thanksgiving. They invited Massasoit, a friendly chief of the Wampanoags, to join them. These Indians taught the Pilgrims how to set their corn and where to take their fish. From the Indians they learned also to place a fish in each hill of corn to enrich the soil. The chieftain and his braves, ninety strong, came with venison and wild turkey. The surrounding woods

OUR TIME, OUR HISTORY. PLYMOUTH, MICHIGAN

yielded the housewives wild fruit, and the waters supplied fish and clams. No room or home in the colony was large enough. The children gathered wood; fires were built out-of-doors. The housewives united their efforts. They cooked, and baked pastries, corn bread, and puddings in kettles. Wild turkeys, geese, ducks, and venison were hung on poles and roasted over open beds of coals.

Fifty-five English - speaking people and ninety Indians sat down to tables set under the pine trees. What with preaching, feasting, talking, and games, the ceremony lasted three days.

A day set apart in these United States on which to give thanks for the blessings of the year, Plymouth is privileged to bear the name of the original Thanksgiving site, and to count God's bountiful gifts.

Donations Received
September – November 2020 Thank You!

Thank you for the following generous donations that were received between September and November 2020:

The Dunning (\$2,500+)

Delores Guenther

The Lincoln (\$1,000+)

Community Financial
 Mary Fritz
 Allan Leonard
 Fred Priebe

The Starkweather (\$500–\$999)

James Burroughs
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 Ann Wood-Alatalo
 Takeda Yoshido

90 Years Ago 1930

SMILE—AND THE WORLD IS YOURS

“Smiles” is the longest word in the world—there is a mile between the first and last letter of the word.

He smiled—and his home was a place of happiness.

He smiled—and the children ran out of the way to meet and greet him.

He smiled—and his co-workers in business worked better than in any other place of employment.

He smiled—and his business clients and callers spoke well of him, and business increased.

He smiled—and all who entered his office door were pleased to be greeted as friend and equal.

He smiled—and followed the smile with a brotherly handclasp; and those who were discouraged and downcast went out and took a new grip on life and their work.

He smiled—and while the years rolled on he grew younger, because—he smiled.

80 Years Ago 1940

Millions Spent On Football Games, No Money To Aid Crippled Children

Something is wrong with this thing we call government and the methods by which the things which government undertakes are supported through taxation and imposts.

Never was this more plainly demonstrated than last Saturday in Michigan.

On that day more than 65,000 paid to see the Michigan-Michigan State football game. And on that day more than 55,000 paid to see the Detroit Tigers play ball with Cincinnati. And later that evening another 25,000 are reported to have paid their money to watch two teams of professional football players match brawn on a Detroit field. Of course a lot of other less important games were played that same day, but a conservative estimate of what 150,000 paid admissions to the three major Saturday attractions amounts to will run the figures well toward three-quarters of a million dollars. Travel and other expense would run the totals to well toward a million. The figures would easily pass a million if the minor Michigan sports events of last Saturday all were counted in.

The legislature appropriated only \$800,000 for crippled and afflicted children. Another \$800,000 would have done a good job. A mere \$50,000 is urgently needed right now — not next year, but today!

Something is wrong with this thing we call government. Someday a wiser generation will devise better methods of spreading taxes. Then money for worthwhile enterprises will be available.

Certainly none can argue that when the public on a single day can dig up a million dollars for entertainment on the field of sports, that a million a year for saving manhood and womanhood for useful living is impossible.

Modern society needs a better perspective and a better balance to its spending.

Plymouth Days Gone By

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

80 Years Ago 1940

Plymouth Resident Receives Letter From Relative in Concentration Camp

A citizen of Plymouth who came here from Austria after the first World War has received a letter from a sister and family who have been removed from their home in Poland to a concentration camp in the north of East Prussia.

The letter postmarked from Hohenstein, Ernstthal in East Prussia arrived with heavy censor's stamps marked all over the envelope, and the censor's initials are marked at the end of nearly every sentence throughout the letter.

The section in which these relatives lived was originally Austria, but, after the first war, was partitioned into Poland. Now that Poland is extinct, the residents of the conquered territory are being removed under German surveillance. The writer of the letter had four sons in the war of Polish resistance against Germany, all of whom have been taken prisoners. The writer's husband who was ill at the time of the invasion was taken by the German soldiers to a hospital while the rest of the family including a six-months-old baby were moved north to the concentration camp. The writer of the letter reports "We were allowed to take almost nothing along—only a little in one suitcase—and we had to leave all

our furniture and household goods."

Leaving their home in the middle of January the family was four months until early May traveling through devastated Poland to the camp in the cold north country. Meanwhile, a friend of the family reported seeing the writer's husband in a hospital where he was very ill. Shortly after, the family received notice of his death and whereabouts of his grave. With no money to travel, each of the children got odd jobs to earn train fare and finally all but the youngest had earned enough money to visit his grave. The family sent pictures of the simple rites held by a young priest for the deceased husband and father in an unidentified burial place.

The family then continued on their journey out of Poland arriving at the camp in May to find most of their friends and neighbors from the small village in which they had lived. The writer reported 40 persons living close together in the camp.

No description of the camp or their life there was contained in the letter, but the letter ended with the promise that the woman would write details later. Since then a more heavy censorship restriction has been imposed, and the Plymouth residents have received no further word.

National Draft Registration at City Hall

By Presidential Proclamation the registration hours will be from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. All young men who are 21 years of age and have not yet reached their thirty-sixth year are required to register

Between 800 and 1000 men are expected to register here Wednesday. The city manager urges as many as possible to register in the early hours to avoid a last minute rush and long waiting line. It is estimated that 15 minutes is required for each registration.

80 Years Ago
1940

Volunteer Spotlight



Samantha Joseph

Samantha Joseph, shown here portraying an actor from the popular television series, Downton Abbey, during the Museum's Teatime Tragedy at Downton Abbey.

Samantha has been volunteering with the Plymouth Historical Museum for about seven years. She is a part of our Plymouth Living History Troupe of actors. She enjoys working with us; her favorite events are the murder mysteries.

One in particular that stands out for Samantha was Teatime Tragedy at Downton Abbey, where she and fellow actor Sofia Malynowskyj played sisters who didn't like each other—they played their parts so well that guests thought that Samantha disliked Sofia in real life too.

Growing up in the San Francisco Bay area, Samantha moved around a lot with her mother. She appreciated living in such an ethnically diverse area, allowing her to have friends from many different backgrounds. She misses the ability to go from spending time at the ocean and the beach and within a drive hit the mountains and enjoy the views and snow.

After high school, Samantha toured quite a variety of colleges before she chose to attend Hillsdale College. She loved the location immediately and knew that she would get the educational experience she was looking for. Her Grandmother had advised her not to go to Michigan because she wouldn't come back to California. Well, Samantha has been in Michigan for twenty years, so Grandma was right.

Samantha has been doing consulting and sales work, but recently went out on her own as an independent consultant, which was fortuitous, heading into this year, as she had already been working from home. While working for a company, she met a fellow Hillsdale alum. They became friends and over the course of a few years he finally convinced her to join him at a reenacting event, the Civil War Muster at Greenfield Village. She's glad she finally did, as over time she has met so many wonderful people and even her best friend!

Samantha got married two years ago and her family currently lives in Milford. She has a 24-year-old step-daughter and a 9-year-old step-son. She and her husband love to travel, cook and try new recipes. This year while everyone has been getting "COVID pets," Samantha's family got COVID chickens and have been enjoying learning how to raise chickens.

Samantha's favorite thing about working is being able to "teach" through living history, an element of her work through consulting. She enjoys being able to teach about history especially to the kids who attend the Night at the Museum parties. She is impressed by the Plymouth Historical Museum's creativity in programs and offering interactive experiences. We are so grateful to have Samantha as part of our living history troupe.

—Written by Rennae Green, marketing director

Volunteers Make a Difference!

80 Years Ago
1940

Gehringer to Attend Scout Court of Honor

Troop P-2 to Present Bronze Plaque to Tiger Star Friday



Charles Gehringer will attend a Court of Honor for the Boy Scouts of the Plymouth district at the Wayne County Training school gymnasium Friday night at 7:30 o'clock. This is the first of the year's events which take in all of the 400 boys and men who belong out in this area.

The Tiger second baseman will be presented with a bronze plaque from Scout Troop P-2 by Captain Charles Thumme, of the troop committee. The inscription on the plaque reads as follows: "His quiet common sense, his clear life, and, not incidentally, his ability to play ball have made him the inspiration of Detroit and Michigan boydom. — Iffy. Awarded by the Boy Scouts of America to Charles Leonard Gehringer." Gehringer's business partner, Mr. Forsyth, and other notable baseball figures from Detroit will be at the court also.

Charles Gehringer, 1903–1993, was a star second basemen with the Detroit Tigers for 19 seasons, 1924-1942. He had a career batting average of .320, including seven seasons with over 200 hits. He was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1949.

90 Years Ago
1930

OFFICIALS CONSIDER QUESTION OF MAKING PLYMOUTH CITY

Through the action taken by the Plymouth village commission at its meeting Monday evening, the citizens of Plymouth may soon be called upon to consider the advisability of passing from the class of a village to that of a city.

It has long been felt by many that Plymouth has for some time gone way beyond the village class and that it should become a real city and adopt some of the many advantages that are granted to cities under state laws.

At its regular semi-monthly meeting held last Monday evening the Village Commission received from Village Manager A. J. Koenig a report of the advantages and disadvantages which would result if the Village of Plymouth should take steps to abandon its village status and reincorporate as a city. The report was based on the results of several weeks of careful study of the question, which study was undertaken because of the general and widespread interest now manifest in ways and means of reducing the tax burden upon our local citizens.

Preliminary to the presentation of his report the Manager cited the fact that Farmington, a few years ago, and South Lyon within recent months, have reincorporated as cities, and that much interest has been indicated among local citizens in the advantages which these nearby municipalities enjoy under their new status.



Plymouth Village Hall, S. Main St., circa 1900. Plymouth was first settled in 1825, and incorporated as a village in 1867. The village of Plymouth was reincorporated as a city in 1932.

Volunteer Spotlight

Sue Seelye



Sue Seelye, shown here portraying an Erie Canal boat captain. The students are lined up as if they are passengers on a boat on the Erie Canal.

Sue Seelye started volunteering with the Plymouth Historical Museum after retiring from the Plymouth-Canton Schools. She has volunteered teaching our educational programs, working with Leslie Ryder, our education coordinator, to teach programs that include Victorian, toys, Erie Canal, and quilts. She has also been a character and a guide for our annual cemetery walks.

Sue's connection to the Museum overall started back when her parents were a part of the original group that started the Museum. Her family moved to Plymouth when she was in middle school, and continues to live in the area. Sue has two sons, four grandchildren, and three (soon to be four) great grandchildren. One of her sons is quite the world traveler, travelling in Portugal and South Africa; he has also visited his daughter in Scotland, who is attending the University of Edinburgh.

For 28 years Sue taught in the Plymouth-Canton schools, mostly teaching second and third graders. She likes this age of children the most she said, as the kids tend to be the most creative and independent. Sue also has taught for the Mercy Educational Program, teaching classes for women who were getting their G.E.D.

In other volunteer work, Sue has been a guide for Northville's Mill Race Village for its school programs. Sue enjoys travelling with the Roads tours for seniors; this has allowed her to travel in a group to places she wouldn't visit otherwise. She has been on more than 50 trips with the group. Her most memorable trip was white-water rafting in the Grand Canyon, where they slept under the stars on the floor of the canyon. Another standout trip of note was one to Utah mining for stones. Sue has accomplished a variety of things over her life, one of these being that she crewed on a hot air balloon.

Sue really enjoys volunteering with the education programs here—it allows her to continue working with students on a limited basis, enabling her to engage with students and teach. She also gets to help in the development of the educational programs that the Museum offers. We are glad to have Sue volunteering with us, and so grateful for her and our retired educators working with our school classroom programs.

—Written by Rennae Green, marketing director

Volunteers Make a Difference!

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

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Calendar of Events

January 2021

10—Special exhibit, “**Christmas with the First Ladies**” ends.

11–26—Museum closed for exhibit changeover.

26—**Members-only Preview**, 6-8 PM.

27—Special exhibit, “**First Ladies, Fashion Setters**” opens

February

20—“**A Flapper Murder at the 1920s Speakeasy**” Murder Mystery via Zoom, 6 PM. Tickets are \$20 per person and are on sale now to membes; tickets go on sale to the public on January 4, 2021.

March

20—“**Super Hero Encounter**,” tours every 15 minutes, 1-4 PM. Tickets go on sale January 18, 2021. Ticket prices are \$10 for ages 11 and up; \$5 for ages 6-11; free for children 5 and under; all children must be accompanied by an adult with a ticket.

April

9 & 10—**Nostalgia Sale**, 10 AM-4 PM.