

July-September 2021

## Museum Archive Welcomes Major Archival Collection

A major archival collection has arrived at the Plymouth Historical Museum (PHM). An agreement was signed on August 6, 2021, between PHM and the Pere Marquette Historical Society, Inc. (PMHS) to permanently house the PMHS archive at the Museum.

The PMHS archive was established in 2001 with the donation of several PMHS archival collections from its membership. At that time a formal agreement was set up with the Joint Archives of Holland at Hope College. In 2003 the archive made its first major expansion with the donation of the Henry J. Walhout negative collection. The PMHS archive was vastly expanded in 2006 with the acquisition of Art Million's personal collection.

The archive was then formally named the "Arthur B. Million Memorial Archive of the Pere Marquette Historical Society," following his death that year. Because of a variety of factors, the decision was made to remove the PMHS archive from the Joint Archives of Holland in 2011. It has remained in storage in various locations and somewhat dormant since that time, with limited accessibility to either researchers or the public. A renewed effort began in 2019 to find a permanent home for the archive, culminating in the agreement with PHM in August 2021.

"As someone who has been a member of the society since the very beginning and was fortunate enough to know several of the founders of the society who have since died, it's wonderful to know that we finally have a home for all the material they worked so hard to preserve," said PHMS President Thomas J. Gaffney.

"As we now move into our 26th year of existence, we can begin to look to a much more stable and rewarding future that not only encompasses the heritage of the Pere Marquette itself but encourages the preservation of material from the successor companies that continued to operate its former lines. The fact that we now have a home for that heritage in one of the most important crossroad communities that the Pere Marquette served is a huge win for everyone involved."



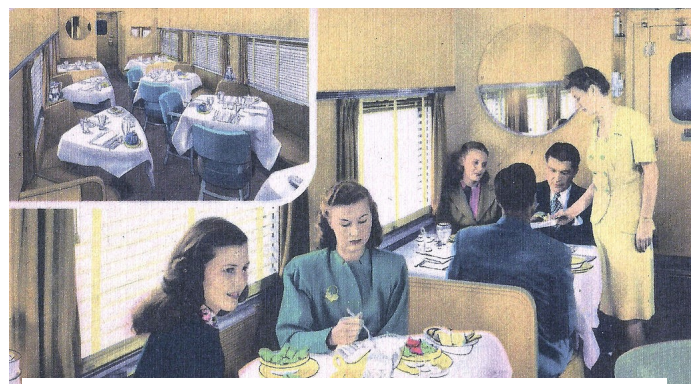
*Pere Marquette Locomotive No. 1199, shown in Plymouth, Michigan, November 1937. (Courtesy of T.J. Gaffney.)*

PMHS was founded in 1995 as a means of collecting and disseminating information regarding the Pere Marquette Railroad. PMHS membership is made up of historians, former employees and their relatives, modelers, and railfans. (*See archival collection photos on page 4.*)

The Pere Marquette Railroad Company (PMRR) was formed in 1900 by the merger of numerous Michigan railroads, the most prominent of them being the Flint and Pere Marquette, the Detroit, Grand Rapids and Western, and the Chicago and West Michigan. During its existence, it came under the control of several other railroads at one time or another, including the Baltimore & Ohio and the Erie. Over the years, the Chesapeake & Ohio gained more and more control over the PMRR, until on June 6, 1947, the PMRR was formally merged into the Chesapeake & Ohio.

The Pere Marquette operated over trackage stretching from Buffalo, New York, to Chicago, and from Bay View (Petoskey), Michigan, to Toledo, Ohio, with trackage in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Ontario. In addition to its strictly rail operations, the PMRR also operated railway car ferries on the Detroit and St. Clair rivers, and a fleet of car ferries from Ludington across Lake Michigan to Milwaukee, Kewaunee and Manitowoc, Wisconsin. Nearly all of the trackage CSX operates in Michigan today is former PMRR trackage.

"We are excited to welcome this wonderful addition to the PHM archive," said PHM Executive Director Liz Kerstens. "Plymouth was a hub for PMRR as both north-south and east-west tracks crossed here. Once the collection is processed, researchers will be able to delve into the rich railroad history of Plymouth and Michigan."



*Pere Marquette Streamliner Dining Car, circa 1946.*

**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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**Museum Memo Editor**

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The Museum Memo is printed four times a year.

**Monthly Drawing**

Grace Colter, Sandy Bonavero, and Nancy Navarre are the respective winners of the July, August, and September 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 participate in the program, visit [www.krogercommunityrewards.com](http://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!**

Nancy Augier, Grand Blanc  
 Jane Fry, Plymouth  
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 Noreen Miller, Plymouth  
 Tiffany Moss, Plymouth  
 Marion Rosinski, Canton  
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THANK YOU  
 FOR SUPPORTING  
 THE PLYMOUTH  
 HISTORICAL MUSEUM



Become a Member

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 **\$58 per**
- IT/Network support **\$300**
- ½ month heating bill **\$375**
- ½ month electric bill **\$475**
- 1 month employee salary **\$600**

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

# Bits 'n Pieces

By Elizabeth Kelley Kerstens, executive director

It's hard to believe that it's almost October. As usual, we keep busy at the Plymouth Historical Museum.

As you can see by the first page, we've received a major archival collection of the Pere Marquette Historical Society. For those of us who are historical researchers, this is very exciting! The collection is being reviewed and will be processed over the coming months.

We've had some very successful events this year, including the Grand Opening of the Caboose in July! If you haven't been in the caboose yet, it's open during Museum hours, but you must check in with the cashier first.

Our biggest event of the year is approaching on Saturday, October

23 at Riverside Cemetery. The Plymouth Ghosts Cemetery Walk usually sells out, so please don't hesitate if you need to buy tickets. We usually have about 380 people visit with our "ghosts" who bring to life residents from Plymouth's past. And, we serve cider and donuts, donated this year by Busch's.

Following on the heels of the cemetery walk, we will again present "Things That Go Bump in the Night." This event was a sell

out last year and was very popular with adults and children. You might see ghosts within the various storefronts on the Museum's Main Street. I've also heard that we might have a Headless Horseman!

The Museum's current exhibit, "Roaring '20s," will be decorated for Halloween during October, so if you've been waiting to see the exhibit, now is the time! We love the month of October at the Plymouth Historical Museum!

## Ticket Sale Dates for Upcoming Events

| Date    | Event                            | Members    | Public     |
|---------|----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Oct. 23 | Plymouth Ghosts Cemetery Walk    | Now        | Now        |
| Oct. 29 | Things That Go Bump in the Night | Now        | Now        |
| Nov. 18 | Members-only Reception           | October 11 |            |
| Dec. 4  | Enchanted Winter Wonderland      | October 11 | October 25 |
| Dec. 10 | Simply Dickens                   | October 18 | November 1 |

The Plymouth Historical Museum presents

Event Sponsored by: 

**THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT**

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2021 6-8 PM**

**\$10 AGES 11 + UP; \$5 AGES 6-11 AGES 5 AND UNDER FREE**

- Take Home Halloween Craft & Candy
- Surprise Characters Throughout
- Halloween costume is optional but encouraged!

TIMED TICKETS CAN BE PURCHASED AT [HTTP://PLYMOUTHHISTORY.ORG/EVENTS/UPCOMING-EVENTS/](http://plymouthhistory.org/events/upcoming-events/)

PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL MUSEUM  
155 S. MAIN STREET, PLYMOUTH  
734-455-8940 X0






**Donations Received  
June – August 2021 Thank You!**

Thank you for the following generous donations that were received between June and August 2021:

**The Lincoln (\$1,000+ )**  
Plymouth Lions Club

**The Starkweather (\$500–\$999)**  
Dorothy Grant  
John Krieman

**The Penniman (\$250–\$499)**  
Gary Gray  
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**Chessie (\$1,000)**  
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Specialists (Escape  
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**Family Fun (\$300)**  
DJL Builders (Caboose Grand  
Opening)



*Photos of the Pere Marquette Historical Society archival collections received at the Plymouth Historical Museum.*

*The Plymouth Historical  
Museum presents  
historic figures from  
Plymouth's past in...*



**PLYMOUTH GHOSTS  
CEMETERY WALK**

**Saturday, October 23  
at Riverside Cemetery  
Walks begin at 4:00 PM**



**Walks last up to 90 minutes.  
Wear walking shoes.  
This event is rain or shine.**

**Tickets \$15 in advance  
\$20 on Oct 23  
Purchase tickets  
through EventBrite**

For group reservations  
of 8 or more at \$12 each please  
call the Plymouth Historical Museum.  
734.455.8940 x0

*Sponsored by Fox Hills Golf & Banquet Center*



## Plymouth Days Gone By

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

65 Years Ago -  
September 1956

### Community Mourns Loss of Charles H. Bennett

Time has taken the life of Charles Henry Bennett, industrialist and philanthropist, whose 93 years of life and service in the community had earned him unofficial recognition as "Mr. Plymouth."

He passed away quietly early Monday morning at his home along North Main street—only a block away from where he was born nearly a century earlier during the height of the Civil War.

His presidency of the Daisy Manufacturing company and affiliation with scores of community projects, organizations and businesses throughout the years had made his name widely known.

While the name of Charles Bennett was known by many, few of the newer residents of Plymouth had the opportunity of meeting him. Frail health during the past three years had confined him to his home at 134 North Main street. He made infrequent trips to his office at Daisy during that time. Infirmities associated with old age became increasingly worse during the past three weeks. He died at 1:45 a.m. Monday.

On November 1, 1888, he started out with a traveling bag in one hand and a canvass case containing Daisy air guns in the other. His first trip, he recalled, was to contact retail dealers in the "big cities" of Saginaw, Grand Rapids, Jackson and "all whistle stops between."

It was in 1892 that he married the former Carrie Peck. She preceded him in death in 1939.

Plymouth Iron Windmill company changed its name to Daisy in 1895 and the business continued to thrive. Mr. Bennett was named president of the company in 1912 and has retained the title during these 44 years.

The often-told story of his investment in the Ford Motor company began in January 1903. The Plymouthite turned down a 49 per cent interest in return for money to produce 250 cars the first year. Instead, he bought 50 shares for \$5,000, becoming one of the dozen original investors.

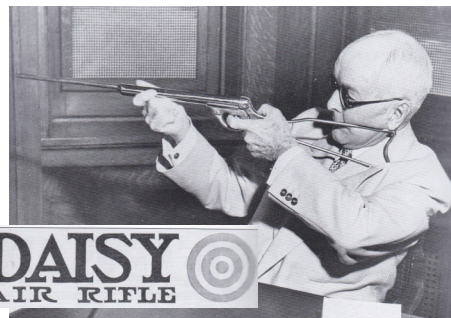
He is credited with actually organizing the Ford Motor company with Ford and Alex Y. Malcomson, and served on its board of directors for the first two years. A disagreement with Malcomson about company policy resulted in Bennett's sale of his shares for about \$35,000.



Charles H. Bennett  
1863-1956

In 1895, Charles H. Bennett (1863-1956), was an original member of the Daisy Air Rifle Company's executive team. He served as the company's president from 1912 until his death in 1956. He began his business career in the early 1880s, selling wheat fanning mills, produced at his father's factory. In 1888, he started selling air rifles. As a global traveling salesman, he introduced

the air rifle into every civilized country in the world, except Russia. In 1903, Bennett was one of the original 12 investors in the Ford Motor Company. He sold his Ford shares in 1905.



In 1956, the year of his death, Bennett was photographed at his office, aiming a Second Model Daisy, as he reminisced about his many hours spent on the road during the early 1880s as a traveling salesman for the Plymouth Iron Windmill Company. In 1895, the company name was changed to the Daisy Manufacturing Company.



Through his sales charisma and popular leadership, Bennett helped place the Daisy Manufacturing Company on the global map, with the sale of the Daisy Air Rifle. The company was based in Plymouth from the late 1880s until 1958, when it relocated to Rogers, Arkansas. In 1901, during Bennett's early years as a company officer, and because of the high demand for more office and sales space, the Daisy Manufacturing Company built a large office building to the left of the main manufacturing building in the center of this photo from about 1918.



## Mrs. Alice Strong Is Stricken At 80

Mrs. Alice Strong, 80, of 1251 William, Plymouth, long time leader in women's activities in the Plymouth Community, died Saturday in St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Ann Arbor following a short illness after suffering a fracture of a hip.

Mrs. Strong, who celebrated her 55th wedding anniversary two years ago when all of her five children were in attendance, had resided in Plymouth since June 1920, when her husband, Sidney, became the Village Manager.

She and Sid have been leaders in community activities ever since they first arrived in Plymouth.

Mrs. Strong was a graduate of Kalamazoo College and the University of Chicago. She was a member of

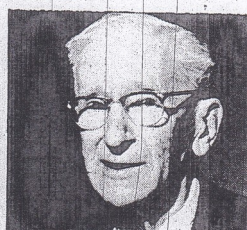
*Alice Strong (1886-1966), was a long time leader in women's activities in Plymouth. She was the wife of Sidney Strong, who served as Plymouth's village manager from 1920 to 1927.*

55 Years Ago  
August 1966

St. John's Episcopal Church and of the Episcopal Church Women and the St. John's League of the Church.

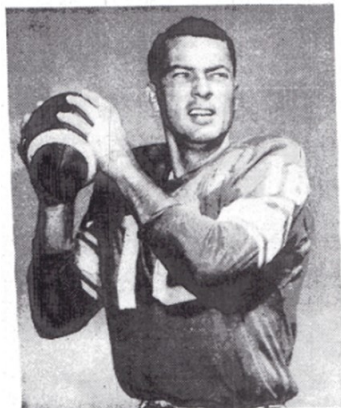
**She was a charter member of Sarah Ann Cochrane Chapter of the DAR and a past regent. She was a member of the Plymouth Historical Society and with her husband, a past president.**

She was a member of the local branch of the Garden Club and of the Rotary Anns. She served with the Plymouth Community School Board for nine years and for two years of that period was secretary of the Wayne County Association of School Boards.



Sidney Strong  
1884-1969

58 Years Ago  
September 1963



Q.B. MILT PLUM, Detroit Lions

*To the excitement of Detroit Lions fans, Big George's Home Appliance Store on Plymouth Road announced that Lions quarterback Milt Plum would visit the store to talk with fans and sign autographs. The Lions finished the 1963 season with a record of 5-8-1. Plum, who began his career with the Cleveland Browns in 1957, played for Detroit from 1962 to 1967. His best year with the Lions was in 1964 when he threw for 2,241 yards and 18 touchdowns. He retired in 1969 after 13 seasons in the NFL. Plum's passer rating of 110.4 in 1960 was the best single-season mark until 1989 when San Francisco quarterback Joe Montana surpassed it with a rating of 112.4. Plum played quarterback at Penn State and was a second round draft pick.*

92 Years Ago 1929  
Plymouth Mail

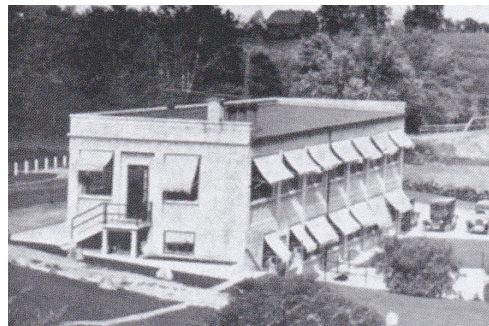
## HENRY FORD IS A PLYMOUTH VISITOR

SECURES TWO OLD ENGINES AND  
ANCIENT STREET LAMPS FOR  
HIS MUSEUM.

Henry Ford was a caller at the office of the Daisy Mfg. Co., last Tuesday morning. Mr. Ford came over to look at the engine that furnished the power to turn the wheels of the machinery in the Daisy plant over a period of twenty-five years. After looking the old engine over, Mr. Ford expressed a desire to E. C. Hough that he would like to have it for the museum he is constructing at Dearborn. Mr. Hough informed Mr. Ford that the engine was his, and it will soon be removed to Dearborn where it will be set up, and will bear a card with the name of the donors.

Mr. Hough also showed Mr. Ford an engine that at one time furnished the power for the village lighting plant, and this, too, will be removed to Dearborn, and placed in the museum.

Stored in the old electric light building, now owned by the Daisy Mfg. Co., were about thirty of the old kerosene street lamps, that at one time graced the streets of the village. These proved of considerable interest to Mr. Ford, and he was delighted to get them, and they will once more be brought into service in the great museum at Dearborn.



*Henry Ford's Plymouth factory was in operation from 1923 until 1948. The factory manufactured taps for the Ford Rouge Plant.*



## Pere Marquette Starts Top-Rate Train Service

75 Years Ago  
August 1946  
Plymouth Mail

Plymouth Gets  
All Stops of Beautiful  
Streamliners

Beginning tomorrow, Saturday morning, the fortunate city of Plymouth will be favored by the inauguration of the finest train service any city of its size in the country can boast.

The Pere Marquette will put into permanent service its new streamline trains, regarded as the most modern ever produced. Every Pere Marquette train, to the west or east, will stop in Plymouth to serve the public. This is the only city on the entire system, outside of Lansing and the two terminals, Detroit and Grand Rapids, that will have this ideal service.

Plymouth, too, had a part in the ceremonies on Tuesday when the pre-inaugural demonstration run from Grand Rapids to Detroit was made.



In 1946, the new Pere Marquette streamliner passenger trains included revolutionary dining table arrangements and hostesses. Unfortunately after World War II, train passenger service began to decline because of the increase in automobile and air travel. The railroad industry's investment to promote the advantage of streamliner train service proved unsuccessful.

In 1971, the old familiar cry of the railroad conductor became a thing of the past in Plymouth. As too often was the case on the daily train ride from Plymouth to downtown Detroit, the only people getting on the passenger train at the Plymouth station were the trainmen, conductor, and less than 20 passengers.



80 Years Ago  
December 1941

The Penn Theatre on Penniman Avenue in downtown Plymouth opened on December 4, 1941, three days before the attack on Pearl Harbor. The premier movie was, Weekend in Havana, starring John Payne and Carmen Miranda. The photo on the lower left is an image of the area along Penniman Avenue, circa 1920s, where the Penn Theatre was eventually built. Images from the Plymouth Historical Museum archive.



65 Years Ago 1956

THE  
**PENN THEATRE**  
PLYMOUTH, MICHIGAN  
— for the best in entertainment —



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

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## Calendar of Events

Events are at the Museum unless otherwise specified.  
Tickets can be found at <http://plymouthhistory.org/events/upcoming-events/>.

### October

23—Saturday, “**Plymouth Ghosts Cemetery Walk**,” 4-9 PM. Tickets are \$15. Riverside Cemetery. Sponsored by Fox Hills Golf.

29—Friday, “**Things That Go Bump in the Night**,” 6-8 PM. Tickets are \$10 for ages 11 and up; \$5 for ages 6-10; children 5 and under are free. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Sponsored by Highway Media.

### November

7—Sunday, last day of “Roaring ‘20s” special exhibit.

8-18—Museum closed for exhibit changeover.

18—Members-only Reception, 6-8 PM.

19—“Twas the Night Before Christmas” special exhibit opens.

