On November 22, 1963, John F. Kennedy, the 35th president of the United States, was assassinated while riding in a presidential motorcade through Dealey Plaza in Dallas, Texas. The Plymouth Mail published three personalized commentaries, exemplifying how the tragic event affected each individual. Commentaries by Plymouth Rev. Hugh C. White, First Methodist Church, and Plymouth Mail Columnist Paul Chandler are shown here on page 1. A commentary by Plymouth Mail Writer Cynthia Eaton is shown on page 8.

Since 1948, the Plymouth Historical Society has operated through the generosity of donors who value the rich fabric of Plymouth's important history. The Plymouth Historical Museum is proud to be a prized treasure in the community.
65 Years Ago
October 1958
Plymouth Historical Society 75th Anniversary 1948-2023

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 $66 per
- IT/Network support $500
- 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.

Plymouth Historical Museum Quotes

News that the Historical Museum was to become a reality was met with great appreciation by all city and township officials and businesses. They see it as another jewel in the city's crown.
—W. W. Edgar, Plymouth Mail & Observer, 1971

It should bring happiness to a lot of people.
—Margaret Dunning, 1971

One of the finest museums for its size in the country.
—Solon Weekes, curator of the Detroit Historical Museum, 1973
Bits ‘n Pieces
By Elizabeth Kelley Kerstens, executive director

A Victorian Home in Plymouth

Charles Draper moved to Plymouth in about 1893 from South Lyon. Draper was a jeweler, an optometrist, and an amateur photographer. His home (above) at 1046 Church Street was built in 1898. The home is described as a modest example of Queen Anne architecture because of its dominant front-facing gable with a Jerkin Head or clipped appearance; patterned shingles on the second floor used as devices to avoid a smooth walled appearance; wrap-around eaves; and a large porch.

The house is still standing and is a wonderful example of Plymouth’s Victorian architecture. Originally it contained four bedrooms and a bath upstairs and a parlor, dining room, pantry, and kitchen downstairs.

Draper was a prolific photographer, using glass plate—and later film—negatives, to record turn-of-the-century Plymouth as well as many facets of his home and family. The Plymouth Historical Museum archive is fortunate to have the Draper photographic collection.

The images of the interior of Draper’s home will be used extensively to recreate the first floor of the home within the Museum. Our idea is to have visitors approach the façade of the “home” from the back yard and enter through the back door. Visitors will be able to walk through the hallways and view the carriage house, kitchen, parlor, and dining room before exiting out the back patio.

This approach allows us to add “windows” to the kitchen and parlor that will appear as if you’re looking out the front windows onto Church Street. You’ll be able to see the park across the street with the gazebo where bands performed and children played. You’ll see the new automobiles drive by and encounter the horse and carriage that was on the way out as a mode of transportation.

We’ve chosen to represent 1915 for this exhibit as that is a great time to experience the change of transportation modes from horse-driven conveyances to cars.

We are also building a second story to this exhibit space to add much-needed storage.

We are taking donations for this very needed exhibit makeover. The Victorian spaces were part of the original Museum that opened in 1976 and haven’t changed much since then. Please consider contributing. You can click on the QR code here or visit www.plymouthhistory.org and select the Victorian Rooms Upgrade. You can call 734-455-8940 x0 or mail a check to the Museum.

Thank You!

Woo Woooo! All Aboard! the CSX Railroad Caboose, permanently on display at the Plymouth Historical Museum.

Happy New Year!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 11</td>
<td>“Remember the Ladies” Tea</td>
<td>Dec 18</td>
<td>Jan 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 27</td>
<td>Ghosts of Plymouth Walk</td>
<td>Feb 12</td>
<td>Feb 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 5</td>
<td>Frozen Princess Tea</td>
<td>Feb 19</td>
<td>Mar 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 18</td>
<td>Junior Comic Creators Workshop</td>
<td>Mar 4</td>
<td>Mar 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2</td>
<td>Wilcox House Tour</td>
<td>Apr 8</td>
<td>Apr 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 29</td>
<td>Murder Mystery</td>
<td>Apr 29</td>
<td>May 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Members: To take advantage of ticket sales to members only during the two weeks before they go public, call 734-455-8940 x0.
Donations Received
September – November 2023 Thank You!

Thank you for the following generous donations that were received between September and November 2023:

**The Dunning ($2,500 +)**
George Thompson

**The Lincoln ($1,000–$2,499)**
Bank of Ann Arbor
Clark Chapin
Chris Huffman

**The Starkweather ($500–$999)**
Cass Hough Jr.

**The Penniman ($250–$499)**
Jim Burroughs
Mary Fritz
Glassline Inc.
Geri Kilsdonk
Stephen Marulis
Mettetal Airport

**The Kellogg ($100–$249)**
Fabian Beltran
Ruth Churley-Strom
Jim Courtney
Patty Graff
Loiselle & Associates
Lowe & Lewandowski PC
Patricia Malcolm
John Marshall
Julie Nyhus
Dan Packer
Barbara Rogers
Jerry Wargo

**Under $100**
Patricia Carroll
Karen Gizzi
Joseph Jandasek
Vickie Krause
Gerald Sabatini
Wise Estate Services
Takeda Yoshido

**Sponsorships**

**Interurban ($2,500)**
Community Financial Credit Union

**Victorian Rooms Upgrade**

**The Dunning ($2,500 +)**
Beth Gordon

**The Penniman ($250–$499)**
Mayflower Enterprises
Cindy Reinhart
Carl Schultz

**The Kellogg ($100–$249)**
Ann Arbor Financial
Fabian Beltran
E & M Properties
Eric & Jamie Borkowski
Ehlers Heating & Air Conditioning
Mary Fritz
Toni Hartke
David Rucinski
Leslie Ryder
Carol Sawyer
Helena Scappaticci
Carolyn Zaborsky

**Under $100**
Virginia Priebe
Cathy Webster

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65 Years Ago
November 1958
Plymouth Mail

Remember the Ladies Tea
Rita Nalodka as Dolley Madison

Sunday, February 11, 2024,
2–4 PM

Tickets $30 members/$35 non-members
Tickets on sale to members Dec. 18; on sale to the public Jan. 2, 2024
Plymouth Historical Museum
155 S. Main, Plymouth, 734-455-8940
A Tale of Two Ebenezers

The newly established Rotary Club of Plymouth continued this tradition of giving in a different way in 1924. Following the custom established by Rotary clubs in other places, the Plymouth club sponsored a community Christmas tree and gifts program. The tree was placed near the information booth in front of Kellogg Park on Main Street. Singing of carols and distribution of sacks filled with candy and fruit were given to children younger than 14 in the program on December 24.

This celebration morphed into a Christmas party with a toy auction that raised funds to ensure underprivileged children had a happy holiday. Auctioneer and Rotarian Harry Robinson died in 1948, which closed the door on that event. Today Plymouth celebrates the arrival of Santa Claus the day after Thanksgiving with a ceremonial tree lighting in Kellogg Park.

Ebenezer Scrooge was the main character in Charles Dickens’s novella “A Christmas Carol”. He was a financier who devoted his life to the accumulation of wealth. He held anything other than money in contempt, including friendship, love and the Christmas season. Scrooge was an old and bitter miser who underwent a profound experience of redemption over the course of one night. On that Christmas day, Scrooge showed generosity and kindness that was later emulated by Penniman.
Helen Farrand, born in 1892, was raised on a farm in Plymouth. She graduated from Plymouth High School in 1911. To prepare for her career as a teacher, she took a six-week teaching course at Ypsilanti Normal (renamed Eastern Michigan University). She later obtained additional teaching credits from the University of Michigan and the Detroit Teachers College. Farrand started teaching in 1912 in Dearborn Township and later at Newburg School, from 1914 to 1918. When young men were called into service during World War I, Farrand accepted the nation’s call to “Do a man’s job,” and worked at the Detroit Post Office until 1923. She returned to teaching in 1923 at Patchen School in the Nankin Township school district. In 1927 she transferred to the Plymouth school system, where she taught for 31 years, retiring in 1958. During her years with the Plymouth schools, she taught at Central Grade School, Starkweather School, and finally at Edna Allen School. Farrand’s name was one of several recommended to the school board by a School Community Planning Committee that sought a name for the new school.

The dedication of the Helen Farrand Elementary School, located in the Lake Pointe Village subdivision in Plymouth, was held on Sunday, December 7, 1958. The school was named in honor of Helen Farrand, who was a school teacher for 41 years. She retired in 1958 after teaching 31 years with the Plymouth school system.
We would like to welcome one of our newer volunteer guides, Ben Hodge. Ben has been onboard at the Museum since April and has shown himself to be a very knowledgeable and reliable guide. Ben took to his position very quickly since he came to us with a background of loving history and visiting many museums throughout the states. He especially likes to visit presidential museums, having visited both Bush’s and LBJ’s museums in Texas with his father, who is also a history buff. He also took a tour of the Herbert Hoover Museum in Iowa. Ben even remembers his first visit to the Plymouth Historical Museum. It was a trip he took in the third grade to during one of the Museum’s “Night at the Museum” parties.

Ben is a graduate of Salem High School and is now attending Eastern Michigan University (EMU) on the path to becoming a nurse. He has always had a great interest in the medical field and even toyed with the idea of studying to become a doctor. His plan is to graduate at the end of 2025 and he stated “I will see at that time where things lead me.” Ben also has a full-time job with Trinity Health as a medical assistant. Much of his job is working at the many Trinity facilities filling in where he is needed.

Ben’s life isn’t all work, school, and volunteering. His other love is music; he enjoys playing the piano and organ. He also mastered the bassoon, which he played in the school band at Salem. At the time of this interview, Ben was preparing to participate in a recital at EMU playing the pipe organ and piano.

Ben thoroughly enjoys his guide position at the Museum. As he tells it, it is a time to meet Museum guests and guides alike who are bonded with a common interest of history. He also likes the fact that most visitors are very knowledgeable in history and enjoys having conversations with them. He stated “there is always something new to learn.”

The Museum is very fortunate to have the services of Ben and we hope he can continue to contribute for a long time.

—Written by Mike Woloszyk, Museum marketing director
60 Years Ago
November 1963
Plymouth Mail

On November 22, 1963, John F. Kennedy, the 35th president of the United States, was assassinated while riding in a presidential motorcade through Dealey Plaza in Dallas, Texas. The Plymouth Mail published three personalized commentaries, exemplifying how the tragic event affected each individual. A commentary by Plymouth Mail Writer Cynthia Eaton is below.

Unbelievably — A Great City Folded. I Know, I Was There
By Cynthia Eaton

A cold, unfriendly, but alive and vibrant city suddenly became solemn, dark, and friendly.
The change came over New York City almost immediately after word was received that President John F. Kennedy had been assassinated.

I was having lunch in the famous Sardi’s, meeting place for New Yorkers when I learned of the assassination. There was no loud announcement, as one might expect. Instead waiters went from table to table, speaking in hushed voices, telling customers of the shocking news. Reactions were almost identical ... first complete disbelief ... then revulsion at a “bad joke” and then shock.

Moments later as I entered the street people were standing in groups talking in hushed voices, tapping passersby on the shoulder to tell them of the news.
The crowded stores of earlier hours were almost empty ... clerks talking among themselves, ignoring would-be customers, who at this point were only superficially shopping.

And then the stores, at least many of them, closed early ... all of Broadway was black that evening ... night clubs and hotels cancelled scheduled entertainment ... fashionable Fifth Avenue store windows were darkened, lights Christmas decorations were turned off.

By Saturday morning most store windows displayed a picture of the late President Kennedy, many draped in black or purple.

Newspapers were late being delivered to the newstands Friday evening, but when they were delivered bold black headlines told the news ... “Our President Assassinated” shouted the Journal American; “President Killed,” said the Daily News; “JFK Shot To Death,” blared the New York Post, and perhaps most impressive of all, to me, was the conservative New York Times’ three-line eight-column wide headline reading, “Kennedy is Killed By Sniper As He Rides in Car in Dallas; Johnson Sworn in on Plane.”

I had arrived in New York Thursday afternoon for a three-day weekend, arranged through the local Travel Centre, including plane tickets, hotel reservations and theatre tickets.

What began as a gay, fun relaxing trip, turned out to be an historical weekend in an international city which mirrored the reaction of the world.

75 Years Ago
September 1948
Plymouth Mail

In 1934, Jacob Stremich (1899-1948) converted his family home on Plymouth Road into the Hillside Inn. After Stremich’s death, the popular restaurant retained the iconic Hillside Inn name for several decades until subsequent owners changed the name. The restaurant closed in 2018 and the building was demolished in 2023. A four-story, 120-unit housing development is proposed for the site.

Known as Hillside Inn from 1934 to 1989
Known as Ernesto’s from 1989 to 2010
Known as Courthouse Grille from 2010 to 2018
65 Years Ago
December 25, 1958
Plymouth Mail

“Peace on earth and goodwill toward men”

By PAUL CHANDLER

WARM SPRINGS, GA.—According to the reporters of that day, when the Babe was born in Bethlehem two centuries ago, angels sang of a new possibility of “peace on earth and goodwill toward men.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt died of fatigue here at Warm Springs in the “Little White House” on April 12, 1945.

He wrote a speech, I just discovered, on April 11—but it never was delivered. Today the typewritten pages lie spread out in a cabinet, penciled corrections imposed on the lines in the author’s handwriting.

That speech talks, too, of peace on earth and goodwill toward mankind.

Until the visit here, I never gave any thought to what might have been on the mind of the President at the moment he slumped in his leather chair, victim of a “massive cerebral hemorrhage.”

It appears that victory in World War II was in sight. The last paper ever read by FDR is on view here and it’s headlines cry:

“9th MILES FROM BERLIN!”

With the war’s end in sight, then, President Roosevelt was going over the lines of a short speech in which he sought to convince his listeners that peace was possible, that war was an outrage, that all should be cast out who doubted the ability of men to find their peace on earth.

And then he died.

To a visitor, perhaps the most lasting impression of the “Little White House” is its stark simplicity.

It was a comfortable, but plain, vacation home, built by FDR in 1932. It isn’t big, its furnishings are inexpensive maple, the walls are dark-pine panel.

President Roosevelt chose this site to build because of beauty and serenity of the natural setting.

In such a place was this last, undelivered speech composed by a tired, worn man whose hand shook when he signed his name and who had deep lines in his face such as most of the world never saw there.

On December 25, 1958, the Christmas commentary by Plymouth Mail Columnist Paul Chandler highlighted the final speech written by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, dated April 11, 1945; the day before his death on April 12, 1945. The speech was never delivered. With victory in World War II inevitable, the message of the speech was peace on earth and goodwill toward men.

80 Years Ago
February 1943
Plymouth Mail

Mrs. E. C. Hough
Dies Suddenly
In Ann Arbor

Residents of Plymouth were both surprised and grieved late Tuesday afternoon to learn of the death of Mrs. Edward C. Hough who passed away suddenly of a heart attack in St. Joseph’s Mercy hospital in Ann Arbor. Mrs. Hough had gone to the hospital on Monday for a routine check-up.

Louise Hough (1872-1943) was the mother of Cass Hough (1904-1990) (left) and wife of Edward C. Hough (1872-1959) (center). Charles Bennett (1863-1956) is shown at right. Photo is from 1956 at the Daisy office in Plymouth.
Plymouth High School football Coach John “Mike” Hoben (1923-1997) gave a rousing cheer as his team defeated previously unbeaten Walled Lake Central 12-7, to claim the Suburban Six League Championship, and finished the 1963 season undefeated with a 7-0-1 record. The league honored Hoben with the Coach of the Year award. From 1972 to 1994, Dr. Hoben served as superintendent for the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools.


Plymouth High School senior Dick Egloff, captain and offensive end of the 1963 undefeated championship football team, was awarded All-State honors by the Detroit News and Detroit Free Press. Egloff’s father, Doug, was a star halfback for Plymouth from 1936 to 1938. In 1959, Egloff’s brother, Randy, a star quarterback for Plymouth, was the first All-Stater in Plymouth High School history.
Harry Robinson, Pioneer Business Man, is Dead

Harry C. Robinson 1863-1948

Mr. Robinson was not yet 21 years of age when he started a livery stable in Plymouth and helped to provide this community with the only transportation it had at that time, except the railroads. He operated the “depot” bus which became as famous in this part of the state as some of the Pere Marquette trains of today. His livery stable, located on Penniman avenue, was long regarded as one of the most up-to-date of any in Michigan.

A lover of sports, he organized the famous Plymouth Business Men’s Baseball team, which season after season captured the championship honors in southern Michigan. Its trips for games in nearby communities became almost a holiday event in the towns where the players went.

Always holding that the Bible and the American flag are priceless, Mr. Robinson during all of the hundreds and hundreds of auction sales he conducted, never sold a Bible or a flag. If there was a Bible or flag to be disposed of at a sale, he would present them as a gift to some one bidding on some other article, but he would never permit bidding on a Bible or a flag, no matter of what value they might have possessed.

The Robinson Livery stable on Sutton Street in Plymouth provided passenger carriage service from the village downtown to the railroad station. The livery was regarded as one of the most up-to-date stables in the state. Sutton Street was renamed Penniman Avenue in 1912. Photo circa 1900.
Calendar of Events

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

December
16, 17, 23—Santa in the Caboose
16—Simply Dickens, 7 pm (Sold out)
31—Last day of “A Dickens of a Christmas”

January
1-30—Museum closed for exhibit changeover
31—“Plymouth Rotary Club: A Century of Service” opens

February
11—“Remember the Ladies” Tea, 2-4 pm

April
27—Ghosts of Plymouth Walk, 4-7 pm

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.