

# STRAIGHT FARMHOUSE CRIER

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## We Have a New President!

Mark Hammar retired from his job as Facility Manager of the Community Center in Plymouth, Michigan after 30 years. Before he held that job, he was the Assistant Director of Public Works. As Facility Manager, he was also the coordinator of grant writing. Mark joined the Friends in July and immediately began volunteering to help wherever and whenever needed. He has made himself invaluable to us in operating the Straight Farm House, and we can't imagine how we got along without him for so long. Shortly after Mark joined us, Mary Jane Schildberg found it necessary to resign as President of the Friends Board of Directors. When asked by the Board to consider becoming our President, Mark readily agreed to assume the President's position. The improvements he has undertaken to better our entire facility are many. His presence -- and not just on days we are open for visitors and customers -- is gratefully appreciated. Our gain is Plymouth's loss!

In his spare time (!) Mark enjoys gardening and yard work. We try to help him further his "hobbies" at the Straight Farm House on occasion. Mark -- we're very happy to have you with us!



## Did You Know?!

... that the *michigan.org* website was the #1 state tourism site in the country -- and we are on this site, too! Just "Select a City", click on "Attractions" and you'll find us. We are also in the newly published state directory of museums, historic sites, archives, historic societies, agencies and commissions. We have a copy available for your use at the Farmhouse. The directory can be purchased from the State of MI Historical Society at [www.hsmichigan.org](http://www.hsmichigan.org).



## Brand New Display!!

Our display of a unique and privately owned collection of approximately 200 Nativity sets begins on Saturday, November 29, 2008 and will run through Saturday, January 31, 2009. We are purposely holding the display over until the end of January so that members can tour the display on the first floor of the Farmhouse when they attend our General Membership and Thank You meeting on January 30, 2009 at 7 P.M. (Please plan to attend this meeting!)

You can view the display during our regular "Open for Business" hours, too, every Wednesday and Saturday from noon to 3 P.M. Admission is free, but all donations are gratefully received.





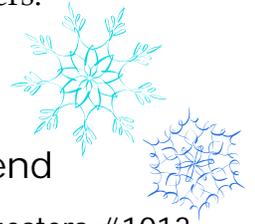
## THE TITANIC SURVIVORS

The Petticoat Ladies of the Garden City Presbyterian Church did it again! They presented an excellent program of survivors' stories of the sinking of the "Unsinkable" ship, Titanic in 1912. Guests at this event had to request permission to come aboard, were given a boarding pass ~ on the back of which was the name of a passenger who had been aboard on that fateful night. At the end of a most dramatic and fascinating program, the guest could locate his or her passenger's name and find out if they had survived or not. Wine, cheese, and other tasty refreshments were enjoyed by all ~ especially by those who discovered they had "survived"!



## Our Flowerbeds Are Put To Bed!

Thanks to Dottie Vega, President of the Garden City Garden Club, her husband, Don, Darlene Reeser and Linda Noble, our flower beds were given a final weeding, planting, and "chipping" for the winter. Advice given to our new Friends President to remove spreading ivy and add more chips by Dottie was heeded -- to the Club's delight and approval. An anonymous donor stopped by to plant some holly bushes and more perennials. If you haven't seen our flowerbeds in the Spring, you really must. We've had passersby stop to tell us how beautiful the plantings are. Thank You, faithful Garden Club members!



## Memorial to a Friend

The Northville Waterford Bend Questers #1013 made a generous contribution to the Friends of the Garden City Historical Museum in memory of one of their members, Gerald Heaton, who died this Fall. Gerald and his wife, Marianne, have also been members of the Friends since we first organized our organization. We appreciate tremendously all that the Questers have done for us and hope that their support will continue for many years. Thank You, Questers!



## We Lost Another Friend

Frieda Affholter, one of the first members of the Friends of the Garden City Historical Museum, also a member of our Board of Directors, passed away November 14, 2008. Frieda had been a volunteer in our Museum when it was located in the Log Cabin in our City Park and served in this capacity for 10-12 years. She assumed the cataloguing duties for the Museum when she began helping John Niemi, Chairman of the Historical Commission, to keep the collection "alive" until more members joined the Commission. In the past, she was very energetic, but was unable to be at the Farmhouse as much as she would have liked this past year. She will be missed!

## Headstone & Civil War Dog Tag Identified

Years ago, a headstone was given to the Historical Museum by a Garden City resident who had no idea whose it was. He had dug it up in his yard! Commission member Bill Brooks asked a friend of his, Rick Danes, if he could research and unearth any information about this headstone. Mr. Danes is Vice-Chairman of the Dearborn Historical Commission and a Past President of the Sons of Union Veterans. Mr. Danes came to the Farmhouse and did a chalk rubbing of the headstone, which revealed enough information for him to pursue on the Internet. The headstone was for two children who died in 1860 and 1863, daughters of Samuel N. Brady, born in Pennsylvania in 1833 and his wife, Louisa Van Akin Brady, born in Michigan in 1833.



The children's names are unreadable, but Mr. Danes researched U.S. census records from the 1850's - 1870's to discover the Brady's identities. "Early Days in Garden City" sold in our Lathers General Store features a photo of the "Van Akin House at 7130 Venoy and Warren Avenue, between being built c. 1833 and no later than 1850".

The Civil War era metal dog tag inscription reads: William A. Showers, U.S.A. Mr. Danes found two possibilities for its original owner.

The first is a gentleman born in 1840 who resided in Parma in Jackson County, Michigan. He was later a Corporal in the Michigan 20th Infantry. He was killed in action at Spotsylvania Courthouse, Virginia in May 1864 and is buried in Fredericksburg National Cemetery in Virginia.

The other possibility, William Showers, was born in New York in 1843 and enlisted at Nankin in February 1862. He was a member of the 1st Michigan Sharpshooters, and was killed in action in November 1863 at Locust Grove, Virginia. He is also buried at Fredericksburg National Cemetery in Virginia.

Mr. Danes' complete reports are available in our Research Room at the Straight Farm House. We are very, very grateful for his research on our behalf!

## Michigan Ghostwatchers

The two-day conference held by the Michigan Ghostwatchers in our Farm House was declared a success by their leadership. Speakers were well received, the Ghostly Talk live broadcast from the Farm House was very good, and the team of Michigan Ghostwatcher member-presenters did a fine job. The conference was followed one week later by their special presentation done at the Farm House as a fundraiser for the Friends. The topic was "Ghosts in Michigan and Beyond" and attracted a fascinated audience. Many thanks for your fundraising help, Michigan Ghostwatchers!

## Gold Parties

Our fundraising Gold Parties in September and November and hosted by the Friends with appraisals done by Orin Jewelers of Garden City were very successful. If you still have any gold or sterling silver items you would like to trade for cash, you can use the coupon below. Just present it to Orin's Jewelers when you go in for an appraisal and hopefully -- sale, and the Friends will receive a portion of the proceeds donated by Orin's back to the Friends. This is definitely a win-win-win situation!!



**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP &  
THANK YOU MEETING  
ON JANUARY 30, 2009,  
7 P.M.!!!!**



## VALUABLE COUPON!!

Exchange your old, broken, or no-longer-wanted gold or sterling silver jewelry for cash at Orin Jewelers in Garden City!



Orin's will generously donate a portion of the proceeds to the Friends of the Garden City Historical Museum at the Straight Farmhouse, 6221 Merriman Road in Garden City.

*Hurry! -- before this generous offer expires!*

Orin Jewelers  
29317 Ford Road  
Garden City, MI 48135  
(734) 422-7030

