



# Newsletter

March 2013

Issue #3

## Operation Petunia—The Story

One of Charlevoix's main points of identification to the outside world is the colorful array of petunias planted along both sides of U. S 31 North and South that have greeted visitors every year since they were first placed in the ground in 1982, just after the Keep Charlevoix Beautiful group was organized. Brainchild of Dale Boss, Operation Petunia, after some initial doubt that it would ever fly, quickly grew into one of the most cohesive community-wide volunteer projects ever initiated in Charlevoix. Hundreds of people of all ages turn out the Thursday before Memorial Day to plant the flowers, then Dale takes to the watering truck, the Petunia Limousine, to make sure they're well watered and nourished over the summer. He hasn't missed a day, getting started at 4 a.m., in thirty-one years. The project has been emulated in communities around the country.

Join us as Dale recounts the story of how Operation Petunia got started, who was involved, some astonishing statistics along the way, and what it has meant to Charlevoix.

**When: Tuesday, April 5  
@ 7:00 p.m.**

**Where: The Depot**

No admission charge, but donations in support of the Society appreciated.

## **MUSEUM HOURS**

The Harsha House will be open up to April 27 Thursday through Saturday from 1 to 4 p.m. As always, the side office door facing the bank remains open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. for anyone who needs to conduct Society business, wishes to see an exhibit, do research, or make a store purchase.

## **VISITORS FROM AFAR**

While preparing the guest register in the Harsha House entry parlor for the coming year, it was discovered that last year the Society welcomed visitors from Istanbul, Turkey; Wurzburg, Germany; Sydney, Australia; Arrano, Italy; and the island of Macau.

## **GENEALOGY WORKSHOP**

On April 27, the Society will be participating in a day-long program titled "Honoring Our Ancestors: Genealogy Talks" at the Charlevoix Public Library conducted by family history research expert Megan Smolenyak. Further details in the April newsletter.

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Dear Members:

Well, this is turning out to be one of the most persistent winters in northern Michigan I have experienced. Thank goodness I got to Texas to bask in sunny 80 degree weather for a few days and play some golf—very therapeutic.

As you can imagine, snow removal becomes an issue for us with the amount we have had, to keep our properties cleared when in use. I want to take this opportunity to thank Chief Petty Officer Charles Burleigh and his crew from the Coast Guard Station in Charlevoix for helping out with plowing the Depot lot this year, which saves considerable expense.

The weather hasn't slowed us down a bit at the Society. Preparations are being made for participation in the library's "Genealogy Talks" workshop on April 27, our annual geranium sale slated for May, and hosting the Chamber of Commerce First Friday Business Breakfast in May at the Depot. These events exemplify our interest in reaching out to partner with other organizations to showcase what we do for the community and the resources we have available.

Denise Fate

Donation (unrestricted) received in February from: *Bob & Wally Klein*  
Donation in honor of Mr. & Mrs. John Danly received in February from:  
*Gary & Denise Fate*

Donation in memory of Robert Pew received in February from: *Don Smith*

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Dear Members: Those of you basking in the warmth of a southern climate surely know by now how much snow has blanketed Charlevoix in the last month. It is beautiful and of course good for our recreation and water levels.

I want to report to you that one of our Co-Directors, Steve Goslee, has decided to retire this year after many years of dedicated service. Steve has been a very valuable asset for us in keeping the affairs of the Society running smoothly, and for that we are very appreciative. We have begun searching for a replacement for this paid, part-time position which involves, in addition to museum duties, bookkeeping and maintaining membership records. Referrals are always the best way to make a hire, so should you know anyone interested, please have them check out the position posting on our website: [www.chxhistory.com](http://www.chxhistory.com)

We have booked an interesting line-up of programs for this year, as well as projects. Have a look at our website under Events for the program topics, dates and times. We'll be able to share more with you on the special projects over the coming months. Denise Fate

Donations (unrestricted) received in January from: *Charles Hall, Norman & Marilyn Wise, Mike & Kim Foster, Jonathan & Lynn Friendly, Anonymous, Charlevoix County History Preservation Society, Carl & Barbara Roehling, Jeff & Nancy Porter, Charles & Nancy Harpham, James & Barbara Capolongo*  
Donation in memory of Robert Pew received from: *Paul & Mary Ann Stephan*  
Donation in memory of Richard A. Marra received from: *Ellen Goldstick*  
Donation in memory of Tom Carey received from: *Patrick McGarry*  
The Society welcomes new members: *Dave & Nancy Suzor*