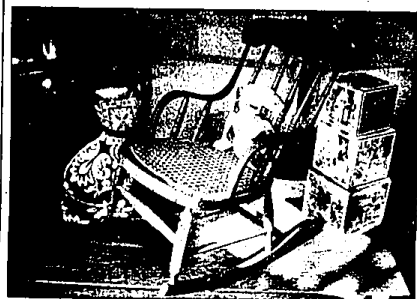




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(F1E)



This child's American rocking chair dates back to the 1880s.

## Antique show helps to fund musicmakers

By Linda Ann Chomlin special writer

**I**F YOU are searching to escape for a day from the gray Michigan doldrums, then circle Jan. 11-12 on your calendar.

That's when the Plymouth Symphony League presents its fifth annual winter antique show to benefit the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra (PSO) in the warmth of the Plymouth Cultural Center.

The show features 25 antique dealers from Grand Rapids to Toledo, specializing in prints, primi-

tives; Victorian, classic country, English country; lamps; estate jewelry, silver, linens and lace; English brass, copper and wood; and European antiques.

"We're real excited about the winter show. We're bringing in three dealers from Grand Rapids," said Peggy Blaisdell of Plymouth, who chairs the antique show dealers.

"I'll be featuring a whole oak booth this time," she said. "A big oak kitchen cupboard, an oak dressing table and a princess dressing table are a few of the items I'll have. Oak is the hottest trend in



Antique collector/dealer Peggy Blaisdell cleans and polishes a set of late-Victorian English candlestick holders. photos by GUY WARREN/staff photographer

home decorating right now."

Blaisdell and husband, John, have been antique dealers for five years and collectors for 15. Their antique business is appropriately named, "Blaisdell Antiques."

"I'll have tin cookie cutters, chocolate molds, coffee grinders and kitchen items," Blaisdell said. "Also, children's toys — a chalkboard and a red, riding horse from the 1920s and '30s."

Prices overall at the show will range from about \$10 to \$2,000, she said.

ANTIQUE SHOW favorites such as Pauline and Jacki Work of

Farmington Hills are among the dealers who will display their wares in Plymouth. The Works are well known to area antique jewelry collectors because of their array of estate jewelry and silver.

For the last three years, Brookville Gardens of Plymouth has added a special touch to the show by selling homegrown herbs and wreaths.

"I'll have dried flowers, potpourri, herb wreaths and teas," said Cindy Brautigan, who owns the wholesale and retail herb business.

The 9-year-old business grows 250 varieties of herbs. It sells live

plants in spring to gardeners, fresh-cut herbs to restaurants about town and dried flowers and herbs at shows.

"I also take special orders for the wreaths," Brautigan said, "if they'd rather have a different herb or flower."

Brookville Gardens prices range from "\$2 for a scoop of potpourri to \$30 for a wreath, 75 cents for tea and \$5 for cut flowers."

THE PLYMOUTH Symphony League presents an antique show to benefit the PSO twice a year in fall and in January.

Representing the Plymouth Symphony League on Dec. 1, Linda Hart, league president, awarded a check for \$10,000 to help support the PSO's operating budget for the 1990-91 season.

"The Penman Deli will be running a mini deli, serving sandwiches, hot soups, salads and desserts," Blaisdell said.

The Plymouth Symphony League Winter Antique Show hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 11, and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 12. General admission is \$3.

## Arts group will host opera theater revue

By Linda Ann Chomlin special writer

If you swoon over George Gershwin tunes, love the music of Irving Berlin and positively adore the scores of the Broadway shows "Phantom of the Opera" and "Les Miserables," the Livonia Arts Commission has the ticket for you.

For one night only, Friday, Jan. 18, the commission presents the musical revue, "Broadway Babies and Phantoms," by the Michigan Opera Theater in the Livonia Civic Center Library Auditorium, Five Mile and Farmington Road. Show time is 8 p.m.

The fully staged and choreographed revue features "four singers and a piano player," said Mark Vondrak, baritone voice of the Michigan Opera Theatre production.

Along with Vondrak, the company includes tenor Karl Schmidt, mezzo-soprano Chris Jones, soprano Betty Bronson and accompanist Roger Bingham.

On the program for this Broadway evening are song medleys by George Gershwin, Irving Berlin and Harold Arlen, plus music from Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Phantom of the Opera," Stephen Sondheim's "Into the Woods" and Schonenberg's "Les Miserables."

**'Part of the purpose of the arts commission is to bring the arts to the community. We think we're doing this fairly well at ticket prices all of the community can afford.'**

— George La Forge, arts commissioner

DURING THE production, the Michigan Opera Theater company will sing such universal standards as "That Old Black Magic," "Fascinating Rhythm," "Embraceable You" and the song and dance that Fred Astaire popularized, "Top Hat, White Tie and Tails."

"The show runs about an hour long," Vondrak said. "It'll be a nice, entertaining evening with the audience singing and humming along."

The Michigan Opera Theater was founded 20 years ago by general director David Bichner. Today, MOT is one of the 10 largest in the country.

The full company is celebrating its 20th anniversary, said Vondrak, who

has been with the Michigan Opera Theater for 10 years. MOT's Community Services Department is 12 years old.

"We do a lot of children's shows, traveling and bringing music to the schools," Vondrak said, referring to the programs run by the Michigan Opera Theater's Department of Community Services.

The revue, "Broadway Babies," now in its second year, "is so popular with audiences, it's been presented all across the state of Michigan," Vondrak said.

"We did a three-work run at the Marquis Theater in Northville this fall," Vondrak said. "In New Year's eve, we did two shows for 'First Night Birmingham.'"

TO KEEP the revue fresh, they switch around their sets and choreography, Vondrak said.

Although the production is aimed mostly at an adult audience, Vondrak said that the younger audience enjoys the music of "Phantom of the Opera" and "Les Miserables."

The show is being underwritten in large part by the Livonia Arts Commission.

"Part of the purpose of the arts commission is to bring the arts to the community," said Livonia arts commissioner George La Forge.

"We think we're doing this fairly well at ticket prices all of the community can afford."

Tickets for "Broadway Babies and Phantoms" are \$3. The tickets are a bargain when considering that seats for a Michigan Opera Theater production run on the average from \$11

to \$57.

Tickets are available at the Livonia Civic Center Library and on the fifth floor of the Livonia City Hall at Community Resources.

There is limited seating for the event.

If Michigan's "Stormy Weather"

has you down, get hold of some of "That Old Black Magic" by buying tickets to hear the "Fascinating Rhythm" by the Broadway Babies of the Michigan Opera Theater.

For tickets or information, call 421-2000.

## Watch as young artists compete for Livonia Symphony's acclaim

The public is invited to hear a record number of young artists compete in the annual Livonia Symphony Orchestra Young Artists Competition Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 12-13, said Nancy Richards of the LSO.

Set to begin at 8:30 a.m. each day in Madonna College's Kresge Auditorium in Livonia, the competition will award two first prizes of \$1,000 each in vocal and instrumental categories and \$500 each in second prizes in the same categories.

In addition to area middle and high school students, the 46 competitors will include musicians who have studied or are studying at Wayne

State University, the University of Michigan, Oakland University, Michigan State University, Columbia University, Oakland Community College, Cleveland Institute of Music, Indiana University, Juillard School of Music, Eastern Michigan University, Western Michigan University and the Himsy-Korsakov State Conservatory in Leningrad.

In addition to 16 scheduled vocalists, young people will perform on the violin, viola, flute, piano, oboe, double bass, euphonium, saxophone, cello, clarinet and trombone.

Judging the competitors will be Dr. Janice Fulbright, professor of

voice at Wayne State, Tomoko Mack-Brozowski, Schoerdt College music faculty, and Francesco DiBlasi, LSO conductor and music director.

The four winners, in addition to receiving prize money, will be invited to perform this year with the LSO.

Funding for the event is provided by the Women's Association of the Livonia Symphony, Livonia Symphony Society, Nelda DiBlasi Memorial Vocal Fund and private individuals.

Madonna College is at Livonia and Schoerdt

## Historical reminders are plentiful along our roadsides

OUR ROADSIDES yield a wealth of local history.

• For more than 100 years, descendants of slaves who fled the South before the Civil War lived on the land now called Freedom Acres in Farmington Hills.

Aaron and Ellen Wilson came from Fremont, Va., to Farmington Township on the Underground Railroad in the early 1850s. They went on to Canada to secure freedom.

After the war, they returned to Farmington, where people had been so friendly, to make their home, a city historic marker along 11 Mile roads.

Four generations were respected community members as the only black family in Farmington Township. Grandson Claude, a Detroit

United Railway worker, became Oakland County's first black deputy sheriff. Wellington Hullin, Claude's cousin, is remembered as the beloved operator of Pete's TV & Repair Service.

• In 1819, Chief Tonquish was killed in a futile bid to save his son's life in an uprising with pioneers in what's now Westland.

A series of clashes between the Potawatomi Indians and new settlers culminated in the death of a white man. Angry settlers pursued the Indians along the Rouge to where it branches into what's now Tonquish Creek.

There, the chief and his son were killed. Their deaths marked the end of significant Indian battles in southeast Michigan.



Bob Sklar

The episodic "reflected many of the tensions and conflicts between Indians and settlers over such matters as food and territory, which occurred during the westward movement in America," reads a state historic marker on Wayne Road.

• Marcus Swift, the first white man to settle within the borders of Garden City, built a log cabin in a densely wooded area overlooking the

Rouge. The year was 1825.

In 1827, Swift, who came from Palmyra, N.Y., was elected the first supervisor of Bucklin Township, which is now what became Redford, Dearborn, Livonia and Nankin townships.

A year later, Gov. Lewis Cass named Swift justice of the peace for the township.

"He was also a Methodist a circuit rider and a vociferous opponent of slavery," a state historic marker near Warren and Merriman roads reads.

"Before he died in 1865 at age 72, Swift said, 'The great principles for which I have labored and fought, amid reverses and persecutions, are now the ruling sentiments of the people. I have lived in a glorious age, and my eyes have seen the powers of

darkness give way before the coming of the reign of liberty."

• An organization later known as the Newburgh Union Cemetery Society was formed in 1832 to establish and maintain a cemetery, the first in what became Livonia Township.

The burial grounds, on Ann Arbor Trail, grew around the grave of Salmon Kingsley, a Revolutionary War veteran who died in 1827.

"In the century that followed, three other Revolutionary War veterans, more than 50 Civil War veterans and other early residents were buried here. The grounds, a treasured reminder of the pioneer era," offers a state historic marker.

• It's called Old Village. And it's one of the oldest parts of Plymouth, a 165-year-old town and one of the

first settlements in western Wayne County.

The town developed around two major Indian trails, the old Ridge Road (Potawatomi Trail) and Ann Arbor Trail.

Old Village grew up near the historic Plymouth (Wilcox) Mill site at Wilcox Road and Edward Hines Drive. The mill site dates back to at least 1850.

The 160-year-old, Greek Revival-style farmhouse atop a rise on Hardenberg just west of the mill was originally the miller's residence.

Incidentally, Old Village, which dates to pre-Civil War days, was once called Lower Town because it sits lower geographically than downtown Plymouth.

Bob Sklar is assistant managing editor for special projects.