

Pack your wooden shoes, it's tulip time in Holland

BY MARY QUIMLEY
CORRESPONDENT

If you and yours need an excuse to get out of town, consider Holland, a fun destination on Michigan's sunset coast. Here's a sampling of what's happening:

TULIP TIME

"During Tulip Time, visitors have an opportunity to experience the Dutch heritage that this community has been able to hang on to for the past 150 years," said Sally Laukitts, executive director, Holland Area Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Tulips highlight the fest that runs May 3-10. There are more than six million planted throughout the community.

Equally impressive, dressed in authentic Dutch garb and wearing wooden shoes, are the Klompen dancers. Watch them perform throughout the town. Entertainment runs the gamut from singers and dancers, to jazz, show tunes and barber-shop concerts.

There are three parades. On May 7 the Volksparade begins with the "Dutch Cleanliness" tradition when hundreds of Dutch-costumed townspeople, armed with brooms and pails, precede the parade and scrub the route clean. The Kinderparade takes place on May 8. And, the grand finale, with floats, bands and Klompen Dancers, happens on May 10 with the Muziekparade.

WINDMILL ISLAND

Pack a picnic lunch. Then, head just a stone's throw from the downtown district to Windmill Island, home to this country's only authentic operating Dutch windmill. The island, decked with 90,000 radiant spring tulips, furnishes an ideal backdrop for picnics and family relaxation.

For starters, join a guided tour of the windmill. "It is so incredible to watch the grinding process," said Laukitts, referring to the working gears that change Michigan wheat into whole wheat flour. Save time to ride the 1895 carousel. Or, browse through the shops that feature candle carvers, fudge and Dutch souvenirs.

PARKS

The Holland State Park provides a favorite hideaway for the Cytacki family of Livonia. "When we camp in Holland, it feels like we're visiting two



PHOTOS BY MARY QUIMLEY

Visitors can purchase a pair of wooden shoes and have them personalized at the DeKlop Factory & DeKlomp Wooden Shoe Factory.

different parks," said Maggie Cytacki, who has camped a handful of times at the park with family members.

Holland State Park, the most popular state park in the mitten-shaped state, not only offers typical wooded camping areas, it provides spectacular lakeshore beaches.

Sporting frontage on Lakes Michigan and Macatawa, travelers are treated to stunning views of Big Red, Holland's harbor lighthouse. Rent a bicycle, inline skates or a personal watercraft. kite flying, paddling, swimming and fishing are other popular activities for campers.

If you head north of the campground you'll discover another shoreline treasure, Tunnel Park. Named for the unique tunnel built through the dune, this 22-acre park supplies fun-in-the-sun adventures. And, according to Cytacki, it offers "one of the prettiest views of Lake Michigan."

DUTCH VILLAGE

Enjoy a time-travel journey at Dutch Village, a theme park and wooden shoe

IF YOU GO

For information on Tulip Time activities, call Tulip Time Festival, Inc., (800) 746-9294 or visit www.tuliptime.org. For information on Holland attractions, call the Holland Area Convention and Visitors Bureau at (800) 506-1299 or visit www.holland.org.

Dutch roots," said Mary Lynne Mount, docent. The Archives and Research Library provides a great tool for genealogy buffs. If you visit before June 1, check out *Promised Land, Chosen People: The Bible and Dutch Identity, 1500-1900*. This exhibit traces the evolution of the bible from the 16th century to its manifestations in the 19th century Dutch settlements of Michigan.

The Cappon House Museum features one of the country's largest collections of early Grand Rapids furniture in its original setting. And, if you drop by the Settlers House, you'll get a taste for the many hardships that early settlers faced.

DEKLOMP, DELFTWARE

Ever wonder how wooden shoes are made? Are they comfortable? Find out at the DeKlomp, Delfware & Wooden Shoe Factory where travelers are invited to watch craftsmen carve shoes.

"We shape it, we rough it, we finish it," said Kurt Freeman, vice president of the complex, referring to the poplar that begins as two wooden blocks and ends up as a pair of shoes. If you're so inclined, try on a pair. Wooden shoes, from doll sizes to a man's size 13, are available to purchase.

Also on the premises is the only Delftware factory in the United States. A Pot Room, Kiln Room and Paint Room offer visitors a peek at how the traditional process of hand-painted blue and white porcelain is completed. The gift shop features a diverse selection of Delftware. There is no admission charge to watch the factory workers or artists.

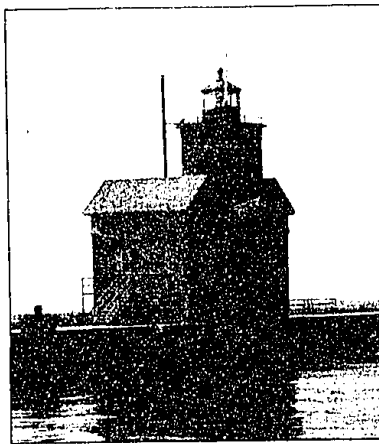
MUSEUMS

A great way to learn fascinating tidbits about the city's history requires a trek to one of the local museums.

The Holland Museum covers events from "settlement to city."

This museum is a hidden treasure, especially if you have

Mary Quimley is a Livonia resident and writes about food and travel for the *Observer & Eccentric* newspapers.



Big Red, the most photographed lighthouse in Michigan, can be viewed from across the channel at the Holland State Park.

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Embrace boating season at Dossin Great Lakes Museum

The boating season is near, so embrace it early at the Great Lakes Maritime Institute's annual *Fitting Out* party.

Scheduled noon to 4 p.m. Saturday, April 26th at the Dossin Great Lakes Museum on Belle Isle in Detroit, the event features a new exhibit called *City on the Straits*.

The exhibit chronicles three centuries of change on the Detroit River, exploring the historical and ecological factors that impacted Detroit and southeastern

Michigan's economic development.

Exhibit features include a microscope showing examples of the smallest forms of life in the river, a three-chime steam whistle from a Great Lakes vessel, a tug boat steam engine and a swan boat from the old Bob-Lo Island amusement park.

At the dock, you can tour the Sea Scout boat Gray Fox, a sea cadet training vessel. Tours are 2-4 p.m.

Permanent attractions at the

Museum include the S.S. William Clay Ford Pilot House, the beautiful Gothic Room from the City of Detroit III, the anchor from the S.S. Edmund Fitzgerald and the Working the Inland Seas exhibit, which shares the untold stories of black sailors on the Great Lakes.

Dossin Great Lakes Museum hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday.

By Nicole Stafford

CALLING ALL BOATERS

What: Great Lakes Maritime Institute's annual *Fitting Out* party. When: Noon to 4 p.m. Saturday, April 26. Where: Dossin Great Lakes Museum on Belle Isle, 100 Strand in Detroit. Tickets: \$3 for adults, \$2 for seniors and children age 5-18, and free for children age 4 and under. Call (313) 852-4051 or visit www.detroitshistorical.org.

Advertisement for Fox Theatre. Features a large letter 'a' and text: "MAY 13 - 18 FOX THEATRE", "Arrive Early! Seats are limited prior to showtimes.", "Great seats are available at the Fox Theatre and Fisher Theatre box office (for service charges), and at all Michigan theatres including Marshall Field's. Charge by Phone 248-443-1818. Or online at www.foxtheatre.com. Group call 612-471-2009.

Advertisement for Spring Art Camp. Text: "Spring Art Camp April 21-25, 2003. Stay in Town and Have an Artistic Vacation! Register Now! Your children will combine creativity and fun, develop artistic talent and explore new media with the guidance of professional art instructors. Before and After Care Available. MAKE ART EVERYDAY! 1818 South Cranbrook Road, Birmingham, Michigan 48009. 248.644.0886."

Advertisement for Meshuggah-Nuns. Text: "WIN FREE TICKETS Meadow Brook Theatre. OAKLAND UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONAL THEATRE COMPANY. Meshuggah-Nuns Musical. Tickets start at just \$19! MBT BOX OFFICE (248) 377-3300. www.mbttheatre.com. THE ECUMENICAL NUNSENSE GROUP DISCOUNT 750-3316. By Dan Goggin. MICHIGAN EXCLUSIVE! The NoweNunsensical Musical Directed by Dan Goggin. APR 23 - MAY 18. COUPLES NIGHT one ticket, second half priced Wed, Thurs. WEBSTER KNOW FROM YIDDISH? Suitable for middle-school age and up."