

Village Fountain Plans Move Forward

The Portage Lake Garden Club has recently taken several huge strides toward fulfilling their plans for restoration of the historic fountain in Onekama's Village Park. The beautiful cast iron fountain was a fixture at the Manistee courthouse for 63 years until a fire destroyed the building in 1950. The following year ladies of the Portage Lake Garden Club purchased the fountain and relocated it to our park as a memorial to local servicemen who had lost their lives in war. The Club has routinely cared for the fountain ever since.

Today this 130-year old treasure is showing some signs of age. Last Fall the Garden Club embarked on a project designed to repair the fountain's defects and restore it as the beautiful centerpiece for our Village Park. A preliminary budget of \$15,000 will allow for construction of an attractive and more functional retaining wall for the fountain and for installation of a safe and historically appropriate brick walkway.

The fifty-five members of the Portage Lake Garden Club have made a significant commitment to this project. Individual member pledges and an anonymous donor match have raised \$7,700 to date. The Club was also honored in January to receive a \$1,000 contribution toward the project from Plant America, the national garden club in America. Another \$1,500 has been pledged by the local landscaping service that will likely perform the work.

On July 12th the Club is sponsoring a unique event called "Men Dig Gardening and Art". The \$10 per ticket tour will feature seven local gardens, and all proceeds will go toward the fountain project. The Garden Club has already reached two-thirds of its fundraising goal and is optimistically hopeful that community support will be sufficient to allow completion of the project this summer/fall.

At this time donations are being actively solicited from area residents and businesses. Anyone interested in supporting this worthwhile program is encouraged to contact project chairperson Shirley Brooks at 727-637-4374 or send a contribution to Portage Lake Garden Club, P.O. Box 494, Onekama, MI 49675.

The Portage Lake Garden Club, Inc. is a 501c3 non-profit organization under the auspices of Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc. Donations made to the Portage Lake Garden Club may be tax deductible - please consult with your tax advisor.