

# G.A.R. Dispatch

Newsletter of

## MICHIGAN'S GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC MEMORIAL HALL AND MUSEUM

224 S. Main Street  
Eaton Rapids, MI 48827

[www.GARmuseum.com](http://www.GARmuseum.com)

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### *HANDMADE MODELS FIND HOME AT GAR*



The largest display we have at the museum has been the main topic of many discussions since its arrival. Michigan's Grand Army of the Republic Memorial Hall and Museum is the new home for three 7-foot handmade models of the three most innovative ships to come out of the civil war. The CSS H. L. Hunley, (also known as The Hunley) the USS Monitor and the CSS Virginia. These models were made and donated by Kim Rosenthal of Bad Axe.

The Hunley was the first combat submarine to sink an enemy warship, the USS Housatonic on February 17, 1864. The Hunley did not survive the attack and sank for the third time. This time like the two times before, taking all her crew with her to the bottom of the sea.

The USS Monitor and the CSS Virginia (often called the Merrimack) were the first two ironclads to do battle with each other when they fought to a draw at Hampton Roads on March 9, 1862. Both ships came to rather inglorious ends. Threatened by Union forces and constrained by its deep draft, which prevented retreat up the James River, the Confederates faced the difficult decision of scuttling the very vessel that had provided them with a glimmer of naval superiority. On May 10, 1862, the Virginia met its end, not at the hands of the enemy, but by its own forces, to prevent it from being captured.

Following the seizure of Norfolk by the Union forces, the strength and power of the *Monitor* and her now famous Ericsson turret was needed further south. On December 29, 1862, she left Hampton Roads, along with the aid of a tug, the side-wheeler frigate *USS Rhode Island*. All was well until New Year's Eve when they were off the coast of Cape Hatteras, N.C. The Wave grew and the wind howled. With each pitch and roll, the shock waves ravaged the crew and the hull of the little ship. Leaks developed, flooding the engines and reducing steam pressure needed for propulsion. The crew tried using pumps and even bailing with buckets, but the distress was too great. The "*Monitor Boys*" raised the signal of distress, a red lantern, and the *Rhode Island* deployed their lifeboats in an effort to rescue the crew. The turret was the only escape hatch from below and as they attempted dashing across the deck, many of them were swept into the unknown by the treacherous waves. In the end, 16 of the brave men onboard the *Monitor* never met the year 1863.

*Submitted by Board Vice President, Bob Griggs*

## **CIVIL WAR DISCOVERY CAMP**

August 13 – 10:00am to 3:00pm – Civil War Camp of Discovery (\$20.00) for children Ages 7 to 14 years. Starting on G.A.R. Island Park, planned activities include learning the Civil War manual of arms with wooden muskets, how to march, how Civil War soldiers lived and much more. Students will also be allowed to fire a reproduction Civil War musket (with prior parental approval). Lunch is provided on the Island. After a mock battle, students march to the Museum where they will be discharged from the army and paid \$13 in replica 1860's federal money.



## *Eaton Rapids Memorial Day Commemoration 2024*

We continue to honor and memorialize our Fallen Veterans with new ideas! We tried a black bunting on the Blue Star Memorial (a popular tradition in the early 1900's was to hang black on every storefront, lamppost etc.) The weather had better ideas for it, but we'll try something very similar next year.

Board Member Kira O'Donnell portrayed a widow in mourning for the parade and at the island ceremony. We're hoping more living historians will join her next year to help show and explain this part of the mourning process in the early 1900's.

Museum President Chris Allen was the speaker for the ceremony on the island. His stories of the sacrifices of these heroes choked him up while telling them. The audience was very patient while he regained his composure.

The reading of the Veteran's names and the ringing of the bell is a very appreciated part of the ceremony. Museum Volunteer Mark O'Donnell and his daughter, museum Board Member Kira O'Donnell participated in this part of the ceremony. The bell was loaned to us from the Grand Ledge Fire Department.

Seeing the success of this part of our ceremony, the museum was pleased to accept the donation of our own bell for future ceremonies. This was graciously donated by Mark and Janice O'Donnell.

Lastly, the label of Memorial Day Parade will now be changed to the Eaton Rapids Memorial Day Commemoration. This is to better represent the sentiment and purpose of the day.



## *UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL EVENTS*

### **Museum Hours**

The museum is open every Wednesday plus the third Saturday of each month, 10:00am to 4:00pm, along with patriotic holidays and by appointment.

Beginning Memorial Day, the museum will be open every Wednesday, thru Labor Day. Feel free to call and make an appointment, we provide tours regularly for groups as large as one! **Also in 2024, the museum is open the third Saturday each month from 10:00am to 4:00pm.**

#### **August 2024**

Wednesday, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Museum Open

Tuesday, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 AM – 3:30 PM, Kids' Discovery Camp

Wednesday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Museum Open

Saturday, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Museum Open

Tuesday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM, Speaker Matt VanAcker – Michigan in the Civil War

Wednesday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Museum Open

Wednesday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Museum Open

#### **September 2024**

Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Museum Open

Wednesday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Museum Open

Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Museum Open, 11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM, Speaker Ron Carley – Abraham Lincoln

Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Museum Open

Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Museum Open

Wednesday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Museum Open

A complete Calendar of Events is available [online](#).



## *GAR Board Annual Elections*

In June the Board of Directors held their annual elections. We welcome long-time volunteer and former Board Advisor Bob Griggs as our newly elected Vice-President.

Bob brings to us extensive knowledge of the Grand Army and of the museum and will undoubtedly help us as we continue to grow both in our collections and in our outreach.

We also welcome our new Member-at-large Lillie Morse. We are looking forward to working with her.

## *11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, September 14, 2024*

It's amazing to see how far we have come in just 11 years! From an empty building to the premier showplace for the history of the Grand Army of the Republic.

Join us on Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM as we celebrate our 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We will be joined by special exhibitors who are well-versed in the artifacts in their collections and the history of the Grand Army.



*Meeting Hall in September, 2013*



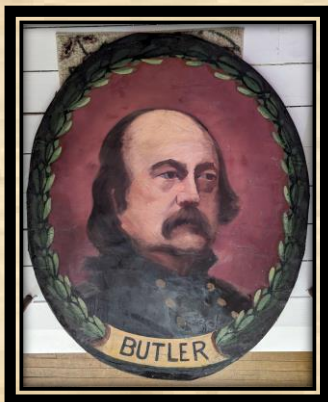
*Meeting Hall in 2024*

## *Need Meeting Space?*

Consider holding your next meeting or event at the G.A.R. Hall and Museum.

Contact the museum at [GARmichigan@gmail.com](mailto:GARmichigan@gmail.com) – rates vary depending on the type of organization and the length of the event. Museum volunteers will be on hand during your event to provide tours of the museum.

## *Restoration Project Completed*



The restoration of the General Butler painting is complete, and the results are amazing.

We invite you to come see the finished restoration for yourself.

## *GAR Island Park Brick Program*

We have been asked over the years about the possibility of placing additional bricks around the gazebo on the G.A.R. Island Park. After discussions with the City of Eaton Rapids Parks Department, the museum is now selling bricks for placement on the island.

Two sizes of bricks are available - 4x8 and 8x8, along with two colors. You can honor anyone you choose. Bricks will be ordered in batches and then installed by museum volunteers two or three times per year. Proceeds will help the museum in their mission of preserving the history of the Grand Army of the Republic.



# G.A.R. Island Park Memorial Brick Program

*To honor and remember while beautifying our island park.*

G.A.R. Island Park is a gem in our town. We're continuing the memorial brick program on the island since there seems to be so much interest. Please help the museum with it's goals of honoring and remembering our Civil War Veterans by placing a memorial brick on the island. Monies raised will go toward the mission of the museum to educate and teach the history of the Grand Army of the Republic.

## 4 x 8 Bricks

- 3 lines of 15 character personalization  
includes spaces and punctuation
- Choose between two color options: Red Rustic & Regimental Red



4x8 Red Rustic  
Sample Brick



4x8 Reg. Red  
Sample Brick

## 8 x 8 Bricks

- 6 lines of 15 character personalization  
includes spaces and punctuation
- Choose between two color options:  
Red Rustic & Regimental Red



8x8 Reg. Red  
Sample Brick



Bricks provided by:



## Replica Bricks

Want one for yourself? Order an exact replica of the installation brick ordered, except it has rubber feet to easily display on a desk or mantel. Replicas ship directly to address provided

## Ordering Process

For your convenience, attached to this flyer is an order form. Fill out the attached portion and drop off or mail to:

224 S. Main St.  
Eaton Rapids, MI 48827

To order online please visit:  
[thatsmybrick.com/garmi](http://thatsmybrick.com/garmi)

## Contact Information

Contact for questions:

Chris Allen  
517-922-6427

## Order Form

	Character Limit	Donation	Add Replica
<input type="checkbox"/> 4x8 Red Rustic Brick	3 lines of 15	\$50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$65*
<input type="checkbox"/> 4x8 Reg. Red Brick	3 lines of 15	\$50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$65*
<input type="checkbox"/> 8x8 Red Rustic Brick	6 lines of 15	\$100	<input type="checkbox"/> \$65*
<input type="checkbox"/> 8x8 Reg. Red Brick	6 lines of 15	\$100	<input type="checkbox"/> \$65*
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Donation		\$ _____	

\*Direct Ship: Replicas ship directly to your home of office

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_


Payment Types: Cash, Check, Money Order, or Credit Card

■ Order online to pay with Credit Card: [thatsmybrick.com/garmi](http://thatsmybrick.com/garmi)

■ Checks made out to: Michigan's GAR Museum

■ Drop off/Mail Payment to: 224 S. Main St.  
Eaton Rapids, MI 48827

Total

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*MICHIGAN'S*  
*G.A.R. MUSEUM*  
*BOARD OF DIRECTORS*

*President - Chris Allen*

*Vice President - Bob Griggs*

*Secretary - Vacant*

*Treasurer - James Kaiser*

*Directors:*

*David Kimble*

*Ron Tyrl*

*Matt Allen*

*Pam Colestock*

*Kira O'Donnell-Allen*

*Lillie Morse*

*Special advisor:*

*Howard Lloyd*



*We now accept credit cards*



*Thank you to all who  
have visited the museum  
and who generously gave  
a donation or became a  
Sponsor!*







# MICHIGAN'S GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC MEMORIAL HALL & MUSEUM

224 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids, Michigan 48827

Grand Army of the Republic, Michigan Department,  
James B. Brainerd Post #111 Memorial Hall and Museum, Inc.  
Email: GARMichigan@gmail.com Web: <https://GARmuseum.com>  
Telephone: 517-922-6427

Face Book: GARBrainerdPost111MemorialHallAndMuseum

This collection of post-Civil War history is displayed on the two floors of the original James Brainerd Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) Post #111 in downtown Eaton Rapids. The 1886-built G.A.R. Hall is just a short walk from G.A.R. Island Park where annual G.A.R. encampments were held in August in 1886, 1893, 1901, and then each year from 1908 until 1929. Your support is needed to help us chronicle and preserve the significant contribution of the G.A.R. to our state's and country's history.

## ANNUAL SPONSOR LEVELS

\$ 200	President Abraham Lincoln G.A.R. Post	_____
\$ 175	Governor Austin Blair G.A.R. Post	_____
\$ 150	Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant G.A.R. Post	_____
\$ 125	Major Gen. William T. Sherman G.A.R. Post	_____
\$ 100	Major Gen. Philip Sheridan G.A.R. Post	_____
\$ 75	Bvt. Major Gen. Alpheus S. Williams G.A.R. Post	_____
\$ 50	Bvt. Major Gen. Russell A. Alger G.A.R. Post	_____
\$ 25	Lt. James B. Brainerd G.A.R. Post	_____

## OTHER SPONSOR LEVEL

\$1,000	Life-time Patron	_____
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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**If paying by check, make your check payable to *G.A.R. Museum*. If you wish, you also may pay by credit card by filling out the bottom of this form. Mail completed form and payment to address above.**

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_  
(3-digit code-back of card)

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card Billing Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

The Museum is open the first two Wednesdays each month, patriotic holidays, **and by appointment**.  
Museum Admission is Free.

The Michigan's G.A.R. Memorial Hall & Museum is a federally recognized 501 (c) (3) tax exempt, Michigan nonprofit corporation.  
All donations to Michigan's G.A.R. Memorial Hall and Museum are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowable by law.