

*Gary Nyberg*

## Gary's Life Story

From his farming, fishing and hunting, to his ability to make and fix anything, Gary Nyberg was a self-made man. There was nothing

he couldn't do and nothing he wasn't willing to do, especially if it would save him money. He was so frugal that he would purposefully not buy anything new that he could buy used in perfectly good condition.



Gary was the fourth of six children born to John and Florence (Young) Nyberg in Watson Township, MI on February 24, 1915. World War I had begun a year earlier in 1914 and continued until 1918. America was becoming known as a world leader. The Nyberg family owned a farm in Plainwell and that was where Gary and his siblings, Forrest, Marjorie, Barbara, Ina and Naomi created many lasting childhood memories. The farm required lots of man hours, so by the time Gary was in the ninth grade, he left school to help his dad work the family farm.

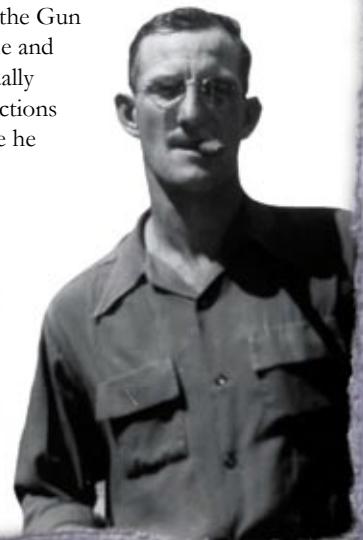
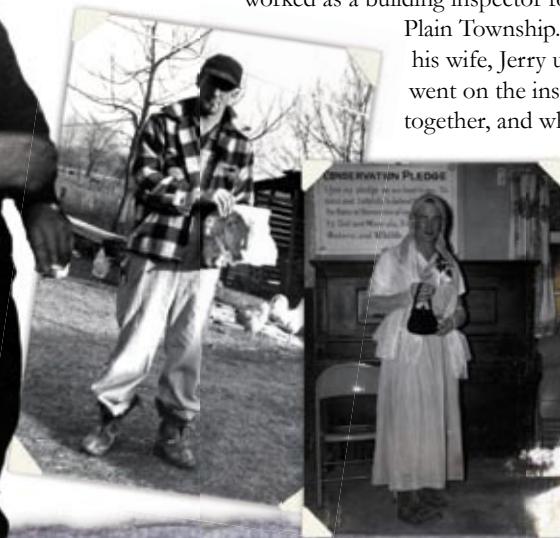
At nineteen, Gary took time out from farm life to cut loose and enjoy some night life. He loved to go out dancing and one night when he was out, he met the woman who changed his life, Geraldine Bodine. The young dancing doux tied the knot on October 25, 1934 and spent the rest of their years waltzing through life together. Their favorite song was the Tennessee Waltz.

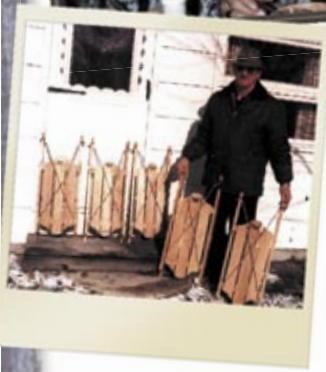
Gary and Geraldine found their own farm on M-89, and together they raised their three children, Marilyn, Larry and Butch. World War II began in 1939 and many men were drafted into the army. Gary had so many skills and abilities to help America thrive during the painful effects of war that he was able to stay home.

He worked as a welding supervisor for Angle Steele, as well as ran his farm. The war ended in 1945 and after that, Gary found work as a carpenter for VanBruggen Construction. He loved working outdoors and using his construction abilities on the building projects. During his time with VanBruggen, Gary helped build the Plainwell fountain and brick the downtown hardware store. The year 1973 was the beginning of Gary's retirement, but not even close to the end of his participation within the community. For the next twenty years Gary

worked as a building inspector for the Gun

Plain Township. He and his wife, Jerry usually went on the inspections together, and while he





inspected, she took notes. By the time they returned home, Jerry had written enough data for Gary to prepare his reports. Gary spent time working with the zoning board for the township and he was also one of the founding members of the Gun River Conservation Club. He helped build the building where the organization was held and over the years he held every office there was. Another membership Gary enjoyed was with the Fraternal Order of the Knights of Pythias.

Somehow, in his fifties, he found time to begin new hobbies. He learned how to play the organ and he picked up on the game of golf. When Hidden Valley Golf Course was first

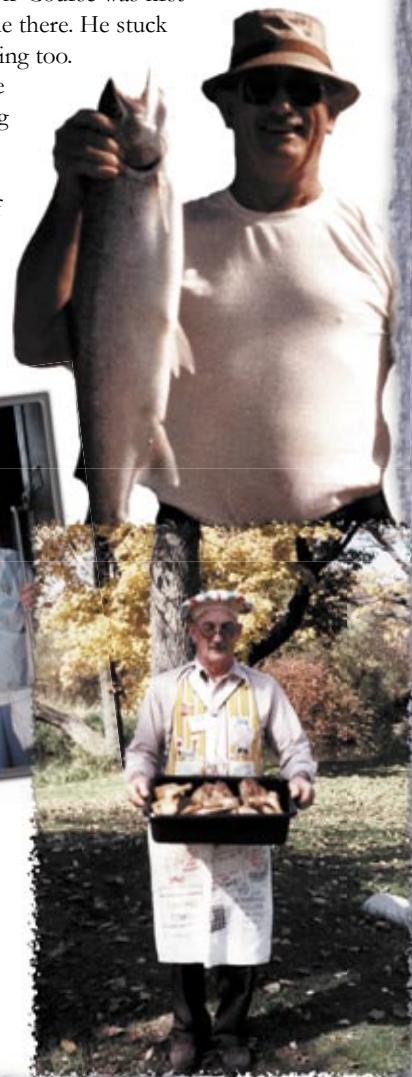
built, Gary was the first one to hit a hole in one there. He stuck with his life long pastimes of fishing and hunting too.

He was never willing to tell where his fish were caught in fear of someone catching "his" biting fish. His usual reply was that he caught them about a foot and a half from the bottom or he caught them in the lip where he caught most of his fish.

Gary loved his family and he was glad to be able to provide for them. Every year he planted, harvested and sold corn, besides

his full-time employment. Gary's passion for farming was known by everyone in the community and he was a life member of the Michigan Farmers Hall of Fame. He was flattered by their gesture and it was truly a great honor for him. Because of his hard-work, he missed out on times in his children's lives. When his adoring great-grandchildren arrived, Gary was available and willing to attend their sports and activities. He became a huge Martin High School Clippers fan. Gary watched so many basketball, baseball, softball and football games there that he became known as a grandpa to many of the other athletes.

Never slowing down, Gary was often using his woodworking skills. He created beautiful cradles for his grandbabies and sleds for the grandkids. He also made cupboards and other creations from wood for his family and friends. Gary was well known by many throughout the Plainwell area. Although he was frugal and sometimes stubborn, he was well-liked and admired. Gary will be remembered as a hard-working, loving husband, father and grandfather. He will be dearly missed and fondly remembered.

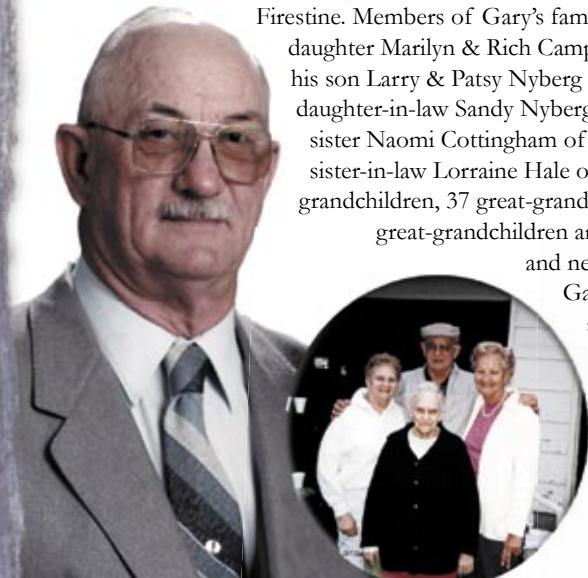
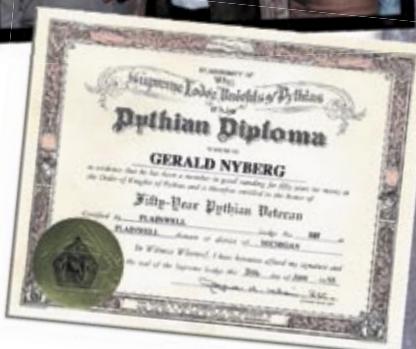




Gereld "Gary" Nyberg, age 91 of Plainwell, died May 13, 2006 at Life Care Center of Plainwell. To learn more about Gary, view his life story film and visit with his family and friends Tuesday from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Life Story Funeral Home, Rupert, Durham, Marshall & Gren, Plainwell, 120 S. Woodhams where funeral service will be held on Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. Gary was preceded in death by his wife, Geraldine in 1993, his son Butch in 1999, his brother Forrest Nyberg,

his sisters Marjorie Welcher, Barbara Welcher and Ina Firestine. Members of Gary's family include his daughter Marilyn & Rich Campbell of Plainwell, his son Larry & Patsy Nyberg of Plainwell, daughter-in-law Sandy Nyberg of Plainwell; his sister Naomi Cottingham of California and sister-in-law Lorraine Hale of Plainwell; 17 grandchildren, 37 great-grandchildren, 11 great-great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews. Please visit

Gary's memory page at [www.lifestorynet.com](http://www.lifestorynet.com), where you can read his life story and archive a favorite memory. Memorial donations may be made to the Gun River Conservation Club.



Visit [www.lifestorynet.com](http://www.lifestorynet.com) to connect with your friends and family, share stories, and sign the guestbook. Life Story Funeral Homes® are the exclusive providers of the Life Story Experience™.

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