Dennis Merkel Will Speak at Annual Meeting

CCHS annual meeting and elections will be held on Wednesday, April 6, at 7 p.m. Following a brief meeting and elections, Dr. Dennis M. Merkel, Associate Professor of Biology at Lake Superior State University, will be our speaker. His topic will be "Chippewa County and the Land Economic Survey." Dr. Merkel provided the following essay about his topic:

He will bring with him some of the maps from his March display at the Art Gallery in LSSU's Kenneth J. Shouldice Library (see exhibit flyer at right). The CCHS display will be on view through April during Gift Shop hours. Dr. Merkel's program is open to the public and will take place in the front of CCHS's building at 115 Ashmun Street. You may park on Ashmun Street or in our parking lot off of Portage Avenue and enter from the handicap-accessible rear entrance. Refreshments will be provided.

"Chippewa County and the Land Economic Survey" by D.M. Merkel

Michigan's land policies until the middle 1920s were ad hoc affairs that were aptly characterized as being "ragged." They left in their wake 15,000,000 acres of idle lands, which included tax-reverted lands and whose productivity had been so depleted by logging and repeated fires so as to be submarginal in productivity. The magnitude of the crisis was beyond both the capacity and the inclination of private landowners to address.

This changed with the advent of the study of land utilization which, for the first time, considered the history, natural resource base, economic reality, and economic potential of the land. In a perfect storm of bureaucratic initiative, academic inquisition, and public demand, the Michigan Land Economic Survey (LES) was launched in 1922. The LES was an unprecedented, cooperative effort incorporating State Departments of Agriculture and Conservation, the U.S. Geological Survey, the Forest Service, the Bureaus of Plant Industry, and Soils, Departments of Agriculture and Conservation, the U.S. Geological Survey, the Forest Service, the Bureaus of Plant Industry, and Soils, the State of Michigan, allows for the first time the oils of Chippewa County. The acquisition of the 1926 field journal of Jethro Otto Yeatch, soil survey leader for the State of Michigan, allows for the first time a presentation of his evaluations and notes regarding the soils of Chippewa County during the summer of 1926. These will be presented along with a brief introduction to the soils of Chippewa County.

The LES received its last appropriation in 1933, effectively ending it. The only products for Chippewa and the counties done afterward would be blueprint copies of their maps.

Before the 1930s, the LES data were published to the public. This presentation will examine the contributions of the founders of the LES, outline the techniques of the LES, identify the LES workers, and present LES results with emphasis on LES products from Chippewa County.

Note: Baylis Public Library and LSSU's Shouldice Library each own a copy of O. Yeatch's 1953 book Soil and Land of Michigan.

Upcoming Event

Join us on Wed., April 6, at 7 p.m., at CCHS for Dennis Merkel's talk on "Chippewa County and the Land Economic Survey." For directions: See locks Park, Water Street, Ashmun Street, Portage Avenue.
Photo Talk by Jim Dwyer

Photo collection: Jim Dwyer discussed his "Adventures in Old UP Photos and Archives" talk held at Bayliss Public Library. Assisting him was Sterling McGinn, a Newberry High School student. Over 80 people attended. Jim and Sterling told amusing and informative stories about the people and locations in the photos of the UP that Jim has collected. Jim also told of fortuitous circumstances that led to many of his acquisitions. He also shared his collection in a changing display in Bayliss Library's lobby over several weeks in January. Ed Johnson filmed the talk for CCHS and Bayliss Library. Refreshments were provided by Leanne Barnes Deuman, Bernie Arbic, Robert and Margaret Money, Mary M. June, and Marie Carter. Thank you to everyone for their help and attendance at the successful program.

New Website... www.cchsmi.com

We finally have a website thanks to Derek Jenkins at Northern Computer Repair in Sault Ste. Marie, and the Website Committee of Mary M. June and Susan James. Ginny Cymbalist and Bill Gerrish have also provided assistance in recent years. Jan and Gary Huttonstine, Dave Biglow, and Jim Couling recommended Northern Computer Repair's web services to us. Derek has come to the office for meetings and has been patient with our many questions. We hope you will visit our website to see our events listing, books available in our gift shop, newsletters, and share it with family and friends. We are also on Facebook.

500 Block of Ashmun Street circa 1935

CCHS has limited edition prints of the 500 Block of Ashmun Street circa 1935 by Sault artist Genevieve Usmaki available for sale in the gift shop. They are a stop back in time for those who remember Sault Ste. Marie's downtown businesses such as Callaghan's, the Karmendom Shop, Krempp Drugs, the Soo Theatre, the American Café, Montgomery Ward, and Kresge's, among others. The print is four feet long, like the original watercolor in the collection of Marian and Jon MacLeod that is currently on loan to CCHS. The prints are $75 if shrink-wrapped on foam core; $70 if rolled. The streetscape comes to life through the stories Peter Gianakura tells in his book An American Café: Reflections from the Grill (2009) that is available in the Gift Shop for $15. The original watercolor has been a popular exhibit at CCHS and now you may own your own copy. This is the first time that Gene Usmaki has had prints made of her artwork. We are grateful to her for her support of this fundraiser to support CCHS.

Jan Huttonstine at Genealogy Meeting

Author Jan Huttonstine, who spoke at CCHS in October, will speak at the May 17 meeting of the Chippewa County Genealogical Society, held at Bayliss Public Library. Her topic will be "Genealogy Gems & Cranberry Jam: Adding Spark to Family History." The meeting will take place at 7 p.m. and is open to the public. Janis book Remotely Yours: A Historic Journey into the Whitish Point Area is available for sale in CCHS gift shop. According to Jan's website www.westeprogress.com, she has changed her original plan for two additional volumes, to one larger volume. "Original plans for the second volume of Remotely Yours have been revised to include the sawmill town of Sheldrake and Paradise. In addition to the original focus on the Tahquamenon River and falls regions, including the sawmill town of Emerson, the author will be connecting history from Hubert, Ederman, and Strong."