Annual Meeting: Nominations and Elections

Elections of Board members and officers will take place at CCHS's Annual Meeting on April 8, 7:00 p.m., at 115 Ashmun Street. The nominating committee was composed of Mary M. June, Ginny Cymbalist, and Matt Zook. The terms for the following board members are expiring in April 2009: Susan James, Robert Money, Janet Russell, Karen Sabatine, and Anthony Stockpole. All are interested in continuing on the board for a three-year term ending in April 2012, except for Karen Sabatine who is away due to a family illness. We are grateful to Karen for her many contributions as a Board member, including managing the gift shop and helping with the "Dinner with the John Johnstons."

Officers being nominated are: President, Mary M. June; Vice President, Membership and Fundraising, Nancy Steinhaus; Vice President, Programs and Publications, Susan James; Treasurer, Bernie Arbic; and Secretary, Virginia Cymbalist. Tim Ellis is a candidate for a three-year term ending in April 2012. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the Annual Meeting.

We are extremely grateful to Nancy Steinhaus for her six years of service as President. She expertly guided us through the challenges of purchasing and owning a building, represented the society in the community, spearheaded the capital campaign fundraising efforts, and made innumerable other contributions of time and effort — from committee work and great writing to shoveling, heavy lifting, and bailing. Nancy will be a tough act to follow, but we are pleased that she will continue as a Vice President and that Mary June has generously agreed to serve another term as President.

John FierstTalk on John Tanner

On Wednesday, April 8, after CCHS’s annual meeting, John Fierst, the Special Collections Librarian for the Clarke Historical Library at Central Michigan University, will present a talk on John Tanner. His talk is titled "When the Sugar Season Arrived, I went to Elk River: Making Sense of Time and Place in John Tanner’s Narrative." Mr. Fierst is also the director of the John Tanner Project, a project funded through the National Historical Publications and Records Commission to prepare a documentary edition of The Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner. John Tanner was captured as a nine-year-old and lived for thirty years (1790-1824) with the Anishinaabe—the Ojibwe and the Odawa (or Ottawa) of the Great Lakes region. His narrative was recorded in 1827 on Mackinac Island, where Tanner was working as an Indian interpreter. For more information on this period of our history, see Mr. Fierst’s article "John Tanner’s Narrative and the Anishinaabe in a Time of Change" at http://www.archives.gov/nhprc/annotation/June-2002/john-tanner-narrative.html. The talk is free to the public. Refreshments will be provided. We are grateful to Board member Bob Money for suggesting this speaker; Bob and John serve together on the Board of the Michigan Oral History Association.

Remembering Chuck Payment by Mary M. June

Charles "Chuck" Payment, 95, passed away on January 29, 2009, in Orlando, Florida. He was born in Sault Ste. Marie and was a sports and marine editor for The Evening News. He moved to Jacksonville, Florida, in 1947 and to Orlando in 1949. There he founded Allco Concrete Products. Chuck was a member of Ellis Lodge 1079, the Knights of Columbus, and the Downtown Rotary Club.

After retirement, Chuck spent his summers in the Sault. During those summers, from the early 1980s until the late 1990s, he lived in a houseboat, which was tied up to the dock at the Soo Locks Campground. Each summer he renewed his many friendships, visited with family and watched the freighters go up and down the river. Interested in local and maritime history, Chuck was a supporter of the Chippewa County Historical Society and Sault Historic Sites. He was a close friend of John Wellington.

Chuck grew up a block or two down the street from Chase Osborn’s family home and always had interesting stories to share about Osborn and things that had occurred in the Sault during his youth and while working for The Evening News. In 1997, Chuck graciously consented to be interviewed by Yvonne Hoger-Peer for CCHS’s MCA/CA-funded Oral History Project. He later donated a sign for the CCHS entrance when its office was located in the 400 block of Ashmun Street. Part of the sign is still in use at our back door.

Chuck was CCHS’s first New Millennium donor in 2000 (and again in 2002), and he also donated photos and information about Francis Xavier Payment, Chuck was CCHS’s first New Millennium donor in 2000 (and again in 2002), and he also donated photos and information about Francis Xavier Payment, who was his great-grandfather. In 2003, the CCHS recognized him for his assistance to the Society and for the wealth of stories and history he shared.
Osborn Trust Digitization Project

CCHS's Digitization Project is proceeding through the recent efforts of Project Director Bernie Arthel, and volunteers Mike Bennett, Fred Farmer, and Dee Stevens. The project is supported by a grant from the city of Sault Ste. Marie Chase S. Osborn Historic Trust. Currently, we have about 450 images that have gone through the complete process: assessment, scanning, and entry into the searchable database, which means they are easily accessible to researchers and other interested folks.

The Dionio quintuplets are shown on the back of a special railroad car as it paused for a welcome ceremony in the Sault on January 24, 1952. The girls were headed for St. Paul, Minnesota, for an appearance at the Winter Carnival there. Although it is not apparent in this black-and-white photograph, according to the newspaper coverage, they were wearing identically cut cloth coats, but each was a different color. They were not quite 18 years old at the time of the picture.

The Emma Nason Home was located at 2205 Ashmun Street, approximately where Pizza Hut is now found. This photograph was taken in 1929. From CCHS's Walter Materna Collection is now found. This photograph was taken in 1929. From CCHS's Walter Materna Collection.

An additional 250 Walter Materna negatives and prints were recently donated by his daughter, Gene Usimaki. We are grateful for this collection of images of Sault businesses that are also being scanned as part of the digitization project. The volunteers have been delighted to uncover new views of the Sault. A display will be prepared from the scanned images for viewing in the fall and a booklet to accompany the exhibit is being contemplated.

Gift Shop

The gift shop reopened on a more regular schedule in March with volunteer hours provided by Dee Stevens and Mike Bennett. We expect to continue to be open Monday through Friday, 1-4 p.m. Please call ahead to be sure that the shop is open or that volunteers are working in the office. We are still in need of volunteer help, so please contact CCHS if you are interested in donating a few hours. You may now use a credit card to charge your purchases, membership renewals, dinner tickets, and capital campaign donations at the shop and by telephone. We have historical books, shirts, photographs, and note cards as well as paintings, crafts, prints, jewelry, and other gift items on consignment from many of our talented area artists.

Soo Super Value Photo Display

The Soo Super Value store has recently completed much of the work on its new addition at Ashmun and Easterday. The addition features large-scale photographs of Sault street scenes and the Soo Locks. Most of the images are from CCHS's collection, along with several from Bayliss Public Library and Lake Superior State University.

“Dinner with the John Jonstons”

Tickets Now Available: Our annual dinner theatre is scheduled for June 27 and 28, with the public invited to the first night, and the second night reserved for SSUS’s Upward Bound students and staff. Tickets are on sale at the Sault Area Chamber of Commerce, the Soot Theatre Box Office, and the CCHS Gift Shop. You may also ask a CCHS Board member to help you secure tickets. Tickets must be purchased in advance for $30 each; they can be obtained by phone using a credit card (906-635-7082) or by sending a check payable to CCHS. If you want to see what the dinner is all about, we have a DVD available for viewing. Several actors are still needed, so give us a call if you would like to participate.

TRACES Bus-eum on June 5

CCHS and the American Legion Post #3 are co-sponsoring the exhibit “Held in the Heartland: German POWs in the Midwest, 1943-46” that will be traveling to Sault Ste. Marie, Friday, June 5, from 3-6 p.m. The display comes to us via a Bus-eum from TRACES Museum for History and Culture in St. Paul, Minnesota. It will be open for free viewing in CCHS’s Portage Avenue parking lot, as it was last year. We hope to be able to again offer a coolout in the parking lot area.

During World War II, the Midwest was home to about 250 prisoner-of-war camps, which held tens of thousands of German POWs. The exhibit and its multimedia components will be on view in Sault Ste. Marie for one day only, for three hours, so please put it on your calendar. CCHS exhibits and the gift shop will also be open for viewing. We are grateful to Walter Babcock and Jack DeWeese for the American Legion's co-funding of this year's Bus-eum.

Water Street Historic Block Update

Progress continues to be made on the overall rehabilitation plans for the Water Street Historic Block homes. A historic architect has been hired to help with the work on the Baraga House. The City has established funds for each of the four buildings on Water Street, so donations can be designated for a specific building if desired.

Capital Campaign

Our capital campaign continues. With the current state of our economy, we are in need of assistance now more than ever. Please consider a donation or pledge, if you haven't done so. Our note to Old Mission Bank is due this summer.

Building Work

Work is progressing on our kitchenette and front bathroom. A small water heater was donated by Baril Plumbing and Heating. Thank you to Baril and to Jack DeWeese, Mike Bennett, and Nancy Steinhous for their continued work on building projects.

Historic Churches

CCHS’s annual “Historic Churches of Sault Ste. Marie” program will be held in July and August, with five churches participating. There will be a variety of lectures, music, and historic commentary, with an opportunity to tour each of the historic buildings. The program will again take place on Monday evenings, which has proven to be successful. The programs are free, with donations helping to cover costs of publicity. The program schedule will be available in our July newsletter. Please join us again this year.

Preserve America Community

The City of Sault Ste. Marie was awarded the designation of a Preserve America Community by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in Washington, D.C. News Building was highlighted in the application. We are pleased that the City of Sault Ste. Marie is being honored for its heritage tourism and efforts to preserve and promote our area's history.

Bayliss Public Library Events

April 9, 7 p.m. Author Doc Fletcher will discuss his book about his canoeing Michigan's rivers

April 23, 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. Detroit poet M.L. Liebler and The High Strung band will host a poetry/songwriting workshop and a poetry reading/performance, sponsored by a grant from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs

May 8, 7 p.m. Library of Michigan’s 2009 Michigan Notable Author Jamie Smith will speak about his book Roulde: The Misunderstood World of a Bike Racer

June 25, 1 p.m. Author Uncle Ake (Mark Larson) will speak about his book Uncle Ake’s Field Guide to Infrequently Found Animals on the Shore of Lake Superior

The library is located at 541 Library Drive, Sault Ste. Marie. For more information, call 906-632-9331 or check www.baylislibrary.org.