Memories of Camp Raco

CCHS and Bayliss Public Library are co-hosting an event at the library on Wednesday, September 27, at 7 p.m. The public is asked to bring to the event their memories, stories, photos, and documents relating to Camp Raco, south of M-28 in Superior Township. Greg Swallow, an M.A. Candidate in Cultural Resource Management at Central Michigan University will be there. He is interested in collecting material from the public for his thesis. This past June he worked on an archaeological dig there; he will share information on his work there.

Camp Raco was originally known as the “Lone Pine Camp.” On May 2, 1933, it was founded as the first CCC camp in the U.P and became home to Company 667. They did tree planting, truck trail construction, telephone construction, stream improvement, campground construction, fish planting, and fire suppression. After the camp was closed, the facilities were used during World War II as a German prisoner-of-war camp.

The public is encouraged to attend. Refreshments will be provided. Bayliss Public Library, a Superior District Library, is located at 541 Library Drive in Sault Ste. Marie. Please enter by the front door as the rest of the library will be closed that evening. Thank you to Janet Russell, CCHS Board member and President of the Bay Mills-Brimley Historical Society, for her help with planning.
History of Dunbar
By Carolyn Person

On September 8, CCHS President Carolyn Person gave a presentation at the Sonderegger Symposium held on Northern Michigan University’s campus in Marquette. The daylong event hosted U.P. area speakers for a 20-minute discourse on each of their topics. Forty to sixty people were in attendance. The Dunbar talk was the only one from this end of the U.P. and it was appreciated as an introduction to another little known historic place.

Carolyn Person will be giving her program on “History of Dunbar Chipewa County, Michigan: Farm to Recreation Area” on Wednesday, October 18 at 7 p.m. at the Chipewa County Historical Society.

The Dunbar site on the St. Marys River in Bruce Township has had a full history in the area. Its transformation from forest land to recreation area involves over 125 years of changes, progress, and diversity. The program will describe the ups and downs of the area and the varied enterprises that were undertaken on the land. The CCHS program will be held at 115 Ashmun Street and is free to the public. Refreshments will be provided.

Celebrating the
Fred and Audrey Warth Collection
By Mary M. June

CCHS had a full house, 80+ people in attendance, at the formal celebration and official opening of the Fred and Audrey Warth Collection. Items in this collection, which consists of antique bottles, crocks, and clay pipes, were recovered over many years by Fred and Audrey while scuba diving in the St. Marys River around Sugar Island. A portion of the collection of over 300 items, will be on permanent display at the Society, housed in an elegant custom-made cabinet designed and built for us by retired LSSU Professor Tom Boger. Most of the pieces were donated to the Society by Mr. Warth in 2015, a year prior to his death. Since then his sons, James and Eric, have added to the gift.

In celebration of the Collection opening, the Warths’ son, Eric and their daughter-in-law, Sonja, married to son James, were able to attend. Also in attendance were a group of friends who used to dive
with the Warths and who shared a few memories. Tom Farnquist, also
a friend of the Warths and instrumental in helping CHS acquire the
collection, described some of his experiences with them and diving in
the St. Marys River. Tom also presented a talk entitled, “Ghost of the
Shipwreck Coast: The Art and Science of Mapping Lake Superior
Shipwreck Secrets,” in which he described the interesting story about
the founding and beginning of the Shipwreck Museum at Whitefish
Point.

2017 Model Train Layout
By Ginny Cymbalist

115 Ashmun Street will again be decorated and ready to welcome
visitors for this year’s Downtown Holiday Open Houses, Sault Ice
Festival, and I-500 weekend. Last year over 400 people visited and
for many this was their first time at CHS. Our “engineers” will be
building an even bigger and better model train layout, the gift shop
will be open, and refreshments will be served.

Date for these events are:
Downtown Open House(s)—December 9 and, possibly, December
16. (Tentative dates)
Sault Ice Festival—January 27
I-500—February 6

If you’d care to volunteer to help at any of these events, please phone
CHS.

Harold C. Lawrence Descendants Visit CHS
By Bernie Arbic

On August 28, we were pleased to welcome again some descendants
of the surveyor Harold C. Lawrence. Several years ago, the Society
was very fortunate to acquire a collection of surveying artifacts
“harvested” in the Upper Peninsula and beautifully enhanced by Mr.
Lawrence over a period from the 1920s thru the mid-1940s. We
published a full background story of this collection, and how it found
its way to CHS in our newsletter for January, 2017. Since our
newsletters are now available on our website, if you are interested in
this “back story,” you can access it at
http://cchsmi.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/2017-CHS-January-
News.pdf.

Thanks to generous support from the Lawrence family, we have
created a permanent display of a portion of the remarkable artifacts.
In this author’s opinion, they help portray a significant part of the
history, not only of our region, but of the United States as it grew and
was settled. Because of this collection, I became interested in
the public land survey system. Eventually, I came across a book entitled
Measuring America: How an Untamed Wilderness Shaped the United
States and Fulfilled the Promise of Democracy, by Andro Linklater. I
highly recommend the book to anyone interested in learning how the
method employed to survey most of the United States outside of the
original thirteen colonies is an important legacy of Thomas Jefferson,
dating back to the Land Ordinance Act of 1785. The book helped me
to appreciate the significance of the pieces of wood that Lawrence
salvaged from witness trees, bearing trees, and line trees that had
been marked originally by the first surveyors to work in the Upper
Peninsula, in the 1840s and 1850s, only a few years after Michigan
achieved statehood.

Harold’s son Tom visited us a year ago from Waunakee, Wisconsin.
He and other family members came to see the collection that they had
lost all contact with decades ago. This year Tom, his son Bill, and his
son-in-law Mike Siehoff returned for a second look, and they brought
Tom’s brother Larry, who lives in Stevens Point, Wisconsin. Larry
had not seen his father’s handiwork for many years, so it was a treat to watch him get reacquainted with the pieces, and to hear him tell stories of how his father was such an exacting (and at times, almost secretive) craftsman. Larry and Tom both were children or early teens when the family moved from Newberry to Wisconsin, after Harold’s employer, Newberry Chemical and Lumber Company closed in the 1940s.

We’re happy to have facilitated the reunion with their father’s legacy. We’re looking into ways that the artifacts might be used to help area school children connect with a part of their history. We also may try to find a suitable location where one or two of the artifacts could be loaned out, for a display that more people would have a chance to see and appreciate.

Osborn Preserve
By Carolyn Person

Bernie Arbic and Carolyn Person were part of a group to tour the Osborn Preserve on Sugar Island on August 30. Great grandson of Chase Osborn, George “Nick” Pratt and Carol, Tom Patton and Linda Alice Dewey, retired Biological Station associate director Mark Paddock, Stephanie Fortino of the University of Michigan Biological Station, Vicki Miller caretaker of the Preserve, and Gary and Barbara Slover of Sugar Island walked the area from the cabins called “Gander” and “Little Gander,” which was the original caretaker’s residence. Both buildings are occasionally used by researchers associated with the University of Michigan.

The group then walked the forest path, crossing a footbridge to Duck Island. Mark Paddock knew much about the history of the Osborn legacy as he has been involved with the Preserve since the early 1950s. We passed the huge boulder that marks the resting place of both Chase and Stellanova to the remains of the cabin that was the home site of Chase and his friends. We were allowed into the cement structure that was the Library that housed at one time over 7,000 volumes. It was built to withstand any fire as the first Library had burned early in the history of Duck Island.

Circling around the property we walked past the smaller, collapsed work cabin and building that held the Delco generator. It was a perfect Sugar Island Day and the group was interesting and enthusiastic.

Osborn had given the 3,000 acre property to the University of Michigan in 1929 with the agreement that he could live on the property until his death (1949) and Stellanova lived there until 1989. There are many legends, stories, and memories revolving around Duck Island. The Preserve has historical significance and the visit was filmed as a record of the Osborn Legacy.
Rendezvous in the Sault 2017
By Ginny Cymbalist

The last week in July was a busy one on Historic Water Street when more than 160 reenactors gathered for Rendezvous in the Sault 2017. There were more merchants, demonstrators, musicians, and encampers covering a large percentage of the City Hall grounds. This year, we were fortunate to have a British regiment here to stage a battle reenactment with the French. Two food tents and the root beer booth were kept busy. Attendance was up with approximately 1,700 visitors enjoying the events on the City Hall and at the Water Street Historic Homes. More than 325 children participated in the voyageur log program, visiting and learning at 10 different sites, churning butter, and playing historic games.

This event wouldn’t be possible without planning by Angie Patterson and the expertise of Harry and Rose Burgess from Port Huron, and support from the Sault Convention and Visitors Bureau and the City of Sault Ste. Marie. Thank you to the many CCHS members who helped with setting up, selling tickets, cooking/serveing food, and working at the Kid’s Tent and to the docents who volunteered extra time working in the historic buildings. Mark your calendars for July 28 and 29, 2018 so you don’t miss Rendezvous in the Sault 2018.

Historic Water Street Homes & the Kemp Industrial Museum
By Ginny Cymbalist

The summer at the Water Street Homes and Kemp Industrial Museum started with volunteers cleaning the buildings, bringing the display
pieces from the CCHS building, and setting-up to have the buildings open for Engineer’s Day. Twelve experienced docents staffed the buildings and welcomed more visitors than in past years.

The Johnston House is looking spiffy with a new ramp and a coat of paint and there were some new displays at the Baraga House. Both of these buildings have structural issues that need to be addressed and decisions will be made in the coming months. The Schoolcraft House remains much the same with major cleaning and construction needed on the main structure.

The Kemp building saw the most changes. Existing displays were rearranged to make the story of the Sault’s industrial history easier to tell, all the pictures and descriptions were framed and rehung, and additional display items were added. As a class project, an LSSU student developed a kiosk that will add much more information about the development of industry and commerce in Sault Ste. Marie as well as important people in Sault history. Throughout the winter, work will take place on further improvements to the Kemp building with a goal of having a grand re-opening in summer 2018. Watch for updates on this project in future newsletters.

Saturday, September 23 is the date set to remove the displays from the houses and return them to CCHS. If you’d like to volunteer to help with this, contact Ginny Cymbalist at 906-630-2858.

Find a Home for Your Treasures at CCHS
By Carolyn Person

Each newsletter, I remind people not to dispose of any Sault area memorabilia and I realize that is a very broad and mysterious request. How can I explain but to give examples of a few of the donations that have found their way to our collection rooms. Recently we were given an old steam iron, the kind made before 1930 when old overcoats and wool trousers were cut up and dyed and braided into thick carpets. We have in the collection some pieces of iron and wood that came from the old Independence that ran into trouble above the locks. The story makes interesting reading and makes one shake their head at the courage of the old people. A bag of hats from the 1940s was brought in. Does anyone remember hats? How about telephones and telephone books? How many times have visitors enjoyed looking up their old numbers or family names? Well, you get the drift—if it’s old (remember old is 50 years to some people) and you or family have no interest in keeping “stuff.” CCHS would like to see you.

We do not have to “have” the actual contribution as we can scan and photograph letters or articles. A member had a rather interesting letter from a family member in the 1930s where the will was written on the back of a grocery list. The item was scanned and documented and the original was returned to the family. It is an interesting story.

We are hearing more and more that “the children and younger relatives do not want to house this old stuff” and those family treasures (to us) have no place to go. Why not CCHS and our collections of the Soo? Yes, any donations will be cataloged under the donor’s name or family, and yes, will be put them in an archival storage container and the information will be entered into the computer database. Maybe someone will be doing research on a historical event, looking for the grocery store that a past generation owned or want to know about the history of hospitals in the Soo. Volunteers are steadfastly entering data so that in the near future we can say we have some information and it can be found at such and such a place in the building.

We are working on preserving and we need your help and input. Please remember us when cleaning out that old stuff.

Volunteer at CCHS
By Carolyn Person

Every organization worldwide asks, begs, entices, and campaigns for money and volunteers. CCHS is very fortunate in the response for both important facets of organizations. CCHS has paid off the building loan and the façade loan and can meet yearly expenses through the generous support of our members and donors. We are now gearing up for renovating the inside of the building which will entail another great amount of dollars. Your support is vital in keeping history alive.

Dawn Aldrich, Eileen Jokinen, Kathy Newcomb, Marian MacLeod, Joyce Mansfield, Hank Jones, Shawn Durham, and Karen Finke are currently devoting an afternoon a week to entering data into the catalog. It’s a great group and they are learning to read (my) hand-
writing. Board members have been busy all summer with various projects. CCHS would not exist without the hours these volunteers contribute.

Now here is the pitch: we need YOU, interested people in Soo history for a few hours this winter. There is filing, listing of items, sorting and organizing, and dear knows what else. Maybe you there in the shop have already made all the grandkids toys and furniture and need another project. We have furniture that needs some care and replacement parts that if you love challenges we would have some great jobs to test your woodworking skills. There are even dishes to wash and clothing to mend. We can find something to keep you busy and the tea pot and peanut bowl is usually filled. Come in or call and make your winter a little more interesting.

Cemetery Tours
There will not be an October Cemetery Tour this year. We will let you know in future newsletters whether or not the tradition will continue.

Save the Dates:
Sept. 27, 7 p.m., “Memories of Raco” program, at Bayliss Public Library
Oct. 18, 7 p.m., “History of Dunbar” program, at CCHS
Dec. 9 and 16, Holiday Train Displays, at CCHS (tentative dates)

Gift Shop this Fall
By Mary M. June

The CCHS Gift Shop will be open Mondays through Thursdays, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. through October 15. After October 15 it will be open by appointment (email cchs@sault.com or call 906-635-7082), or for special events. You may also visit our website www.cchsmi.com to purchase books online, ordering through PayPal.

Available again in the Gift Shop is Mike McCarthy’s first book which was reprinted this year, The Sounds and Smells of My Childhood: Growing Up in the Soo’s East End in the 1950s. His book is a nostalgic journey back to a place that was unique, very historic, and a hustling and bustling community in the 1950s. Also available once again, is Upbound Downbound: The Story of the Soo Locks, by Bernie Arbic and Nancy Steinhaus that was also reprinted this year.

CCHS would also like to thank its dedicated volunteers, Karen Sabatine, Ruth Neveu, Shawna and Rowan Maudlin, Michael Bennett, and Susan James, who work in the Gift Shop. Keep an eye on announcements about our annual Model Train display and the holiday open houses we will be hosting in December.

Thank you to the following people and businesses. We greatly appreciate your support.

Membership Renewals:
Ruth Johnston-Pike
Ann Pollman
Alfred Stevens
Shirley Stevens

Donations:
Mary Bray
Ruth Johnston-Pike
Alan Knight
Sault High Class of 1947
Shirley Stevens

Volunteers:
Dawn Aldrich, Bernie Arbic, Mike Bennett, Roger Blanchard, Ginny & Gil Cymbalist, Sharon Dorrity, Shawn & Mindy Durham, Jim Dwyer, Karen Finke, Dennis Hank, Susan James, Eileen Jokinen, Hank Jones, Mary M. June, Marian MacLeod, Joyce Mansfield, Rowan Maudlin, Shawna Maudlin, Ruth Neveu, Kathy Newcomb, Patty Olsen, Shirley Patrick, Carolyn Person, Karen Sabatine, Tony Stackpoole of Cup of the Day, Dee Stevens

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Bernie Arbic, Treasurer
Virginia Cymbalist, Recording Secretary
Susan James, Corresponding Secretary

Robert Aldrich, Sharon Dorrity, Jim Dwyer, Dennis Hank, Shawna Maudlin, Patty Olsen, Janet Russell, Karen Sabatine, Mark Van Doren
Upcoming Events

Join us on Wednesday, September 27 at 7 p.m. at Bayliss Public Library for a “Memories of Raco” event.
Join us on Wednesday, October 18 at 7 p.m. at CCHS for “History of Dunbar, Chippewa County, Michigan: Farm to Recreation Area.”

YES! I want to be a CCHS Member!

Membership Rates
- Individual $20
- Family $30
- Student $10
- Senior $10
- Contributing $50
- Business/Corporate/Org. $50
- Lifetime $200+
- New Millenium $1000+
- Additional Donation $_____
- Façade Project: $_____

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Please keep me in mind for: ☐ Volunteer Work ☐ Board Member

Make checks payable to: Chippewa County Historical Society, P.O. Box 342, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783