

MAY 2021

PRESERVE, PROTECT, AND PRESENT



TRAVERSE AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FEATURED ARTICLE:

I Remember When.... by Julius Petertyl

The Traverse Area Historical Society Newsletter is published quarterly.
The four issues are published February, May, August, and November.

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INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER

• From President Siciliano's Desk

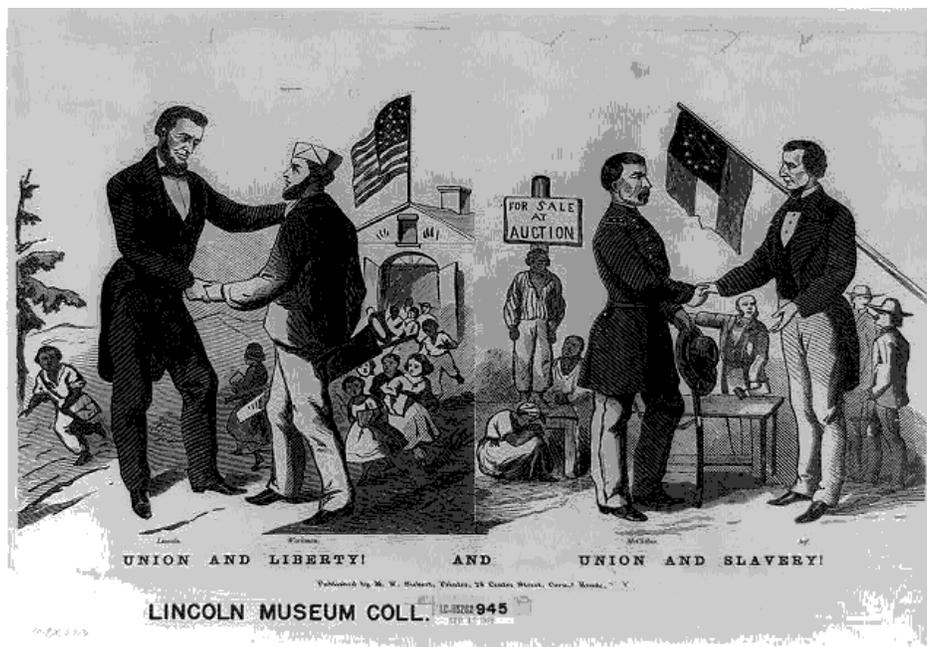
- *Working Around the Current Health Crisis*

• From the Desks' of Our Board Members & Much More!

FROM PRESIDENT SICILIANO'S DESK

Our society continues to work within the limitations placed on us due to the pandemic. Our programs remain virtual and widely successful in conjunction with the Traverse Area District Library.

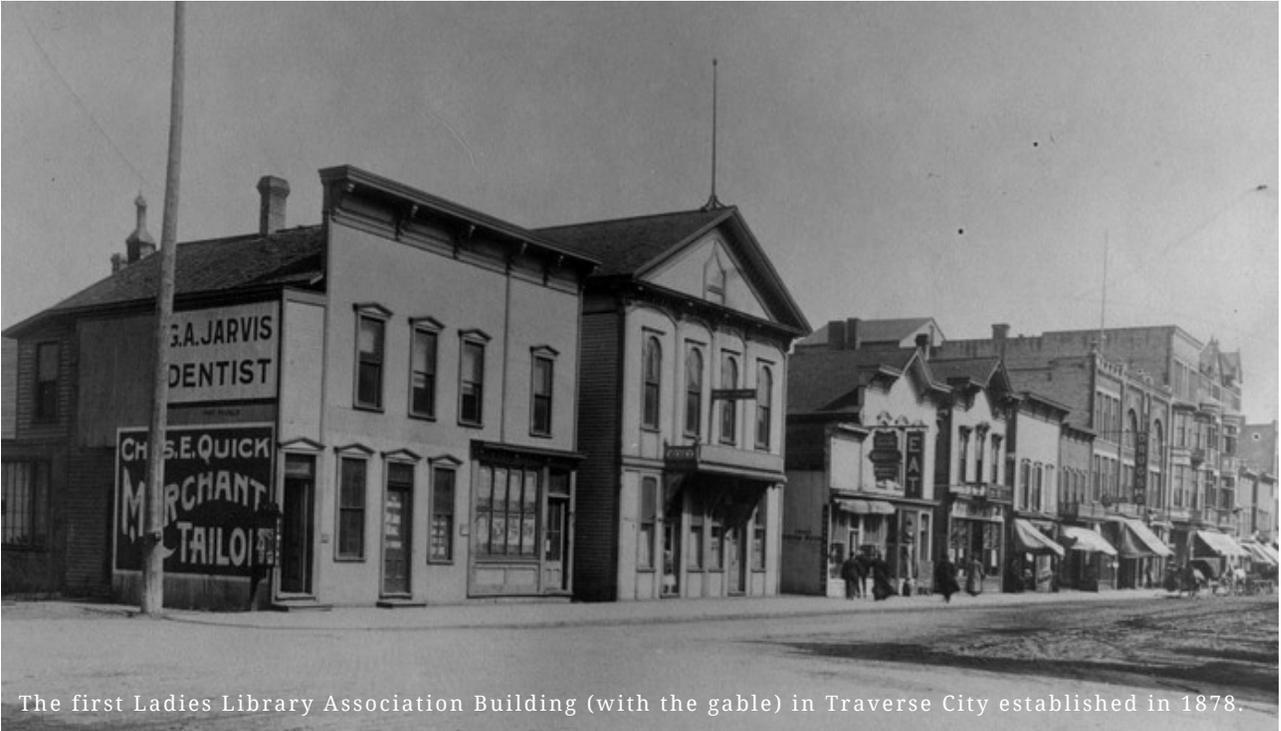
They are also now available at any time because our programs are now recorded and available on our the society home page for your viewing. For our February program Traverse Area Historical Society Board Vice President and Interlochen Arts Academy and Northwestern Michigan College History instructor Brian McCall presented “Reelecting Lincoln” — The 1864 Presidential election that saved the Union”. Brian discussed how Abraham Lincoln’s bid for reelection was one for the ages. The fate of the Civil War resulting in Union victory and the future of slavery in the United States hung in the balance. With thousands of young men in camps or on the battlefields, Lincoln and the Republicans found the way to count their votes. The soldiers responded by using absentee ballots and voted for Lincoln by a ratio of 3-1 over his Democratic opponent and former Union general, George B. McClellan. Lincoln’s victory sealed the fate of the Confederacy and ensured the death of slavery in America. Brian’s shared multiple images of the election to over twenty attendees. Here is one favoring President Lincoln:



For our March program, Board member Peg Siciliano joined with members Ann Swaney and Anne Magoun to talk about historical women’s groups in Traverse City as well as the Ladies Library and how important women were in the building of the “new” library on Woodmere Avenue. Ann provided the history of the Ladies Library Association first established in 1871. The women who led the association provided important library services to the community through the time that city finally established its own library. Their first building served as the home of many community activities, including bringing in important speakers. One of these was Susan B. Anthony. It also served as the location for the Hannah Rifles, the famous local unit to served in the Spanish American War, to drill. The photo below shows this first location. The association leadership ultimately moved to the Ladies Library on Cass Street...

FROM PRESIDENT SICILIANO'S DESK CONTINUED

This building was donated to the city when the association ended in 1945. Another important organization promoting libraries was our local chapter of the League of Women Voters established in 1960. Its work helped to lay the groundwork for a new organization, Citizens for Libraries, that ultimately led the successful 1996 campaign for funding the building of our current library.



The first Ladies Library Association Building (with the gable) in Traverse City established in 1878.

Peg Siciliano then presented on broadening the view of the role of women in local society and history. She pointed out the important role women played in establishing and sustaining family life from the early days of settlement. She also highlighted several women organizations whose archival materials are located in the Traverse Area District Library. These included the Traverse City Women's Club who worked on a number of civic efforts including clean water for the community; the Friendly Garden Club that continues to assist with beautification in the city; the local chapter of the AAUW, and the Women's History Project. In regards to the last organization, they were responsible for several programs on women's history and the conducting and documentation of 125 oral histories of a variety of women in our community. Our March program was well attended by two dozen community and society members.

Another way our Society meets its mission is preserving our local history. The Society regularly inquires about the progress being made on the uses of the Con Foster Museum Collection. Traverse City Commissioner Roger Putnam has been very helpful in sharing our inquiries on this issue with the City Administration. Assistant City Manager Penny Hill reports the following on the status of the collection:

"As of now, it is status quo, except that I will soon be working with Crooked Tree on a potential grant application for some additional HVAC or other long-term building maintenance, including exploring the possibility of getting fiber to the [Carnegie] building and connecting via the fiber to the City's IT network, so inventory work on the collection can be accomplished more easily."

FROM PROGRAM AND EVENTS COMMITTEE CHAIR LOUP'S DESK

Summer Tour Teaser Program ... and reintroducing TAHS 2021 tours!

Look out for an upcoming date for our Summer Tour Teaser! The TAHS virtual May program will feature video and narration of our popular downtown and Oakwood Cemetery tour stops, along with tour guides present live to go more in depth and answer your questions. This program will be presented in conjunction with Traverse Area District Library and will take place on Saturday, May 22nd at 2:00 P.M

TAHS Summer Tours are back! Both the Oakwood Cemetery tour and the Downtown Historical tours will be coming back in 2021. All tours will adhere to social distancing guidelines. \$10.00 fee/person. All proceeds will go to TAHS.

Downtown Tours: Meeting at the Statue of Perry Hannah on the corner of Union and 6th Street in Traverse City. Fourth Saturday of every month, June - September, 10 am - 11:20am. June 26th, July 31st, August 28th and September 25th.

Oakwood Cemetery Tours: Meeting at the entrance to the Oakwood Cemetery off of 8th Street in Traverse City. Second and fourth Sunday of every month, June - September, 4pm - 5:30pm. June 13th, 27th; July 11th, 25th; August 8th, 22nd; September 12th, 26th.

Please visit traversehistory.org for more information closer to tour dates. Also check Traverse Area Historical Society on Facebook for up-to-date tour and program information, including the Halloween-themed Oakwood tours in October.

FROM MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR JENNINGS' DESK

As of April, 2021, our membership stands at 154 members. We are happy to welcome new members W. Peter Doren and Stewart & Marty MacLeod. It is with great sadness that we report the passing of long-time member, volunteer, and friend Joe Novak. Joe and his wife, Janet, volunteered countless hours when our historical collection was housed at the History Center. Anyone who worked with Joe was drawn in by his kindness and fun sense of humor. Joe served on the TAHS Board and he and Janet are fondly remembered for hosting a party and history tour for the Board at their farm in Omena. The Traverse City history community has lost a great friend and we send our deepest condolences to Janet and family.

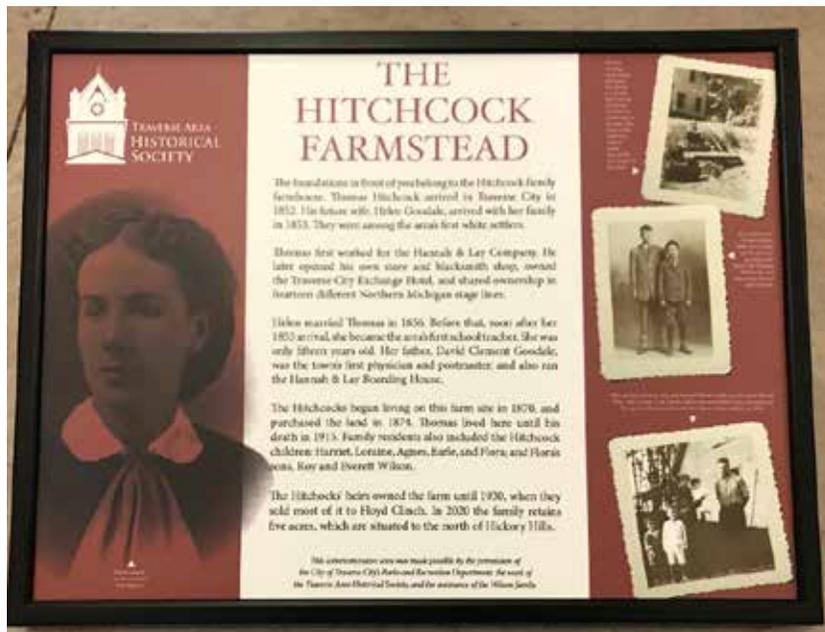
FROM TREASURER GROLEAU'S DESK

As your Historical Society navigates its way through the impacts of the pandemic, we are happy to communicate that we continue to be in a sound financial condition and are operating according to plan. In fact, because of our healthy position, the society's Board has voted to update our 2021 Budget to include support for some additional expenditures to further our organization's mission.

First, we approved up to an additional \$1,250 in support to the archives at the Traverse Area District Library support the microfilm recording of yearly Record Eagle papers. This contribution will cover 50% of the anticipated yearly cost to digitize these important records.

In addition to this, the Board approved expanding the budget for the Petertyl Internship program to cover expenses for up to 4 interns for 2021. Since we were unable to have interns in 2020 due to Covid, we did not incur the budgeted expense for 2 Petertyl Internship Program last year. The amount of work needing to be done in the archives, however, continued to grow. Once TADL informed us that we could move forward with the internship program this year, a discussion ensued and subsequently had unanimous support to expand the budget for the program in order to support improvements in the archives.

Finally, progress has continued on the Goodale Hitchcock foundation preservation project. The signage, sign frame, and benches have all been delivered and assembled as far as possible in preparation for installation at the site. With an additional donation from the family ancestors, we have successfully covered all anticipated expenses under budget for this project. The final piece we are waiting to hear is when the Traverse City Parks & Recreation Department can take care of the sign installation so that we can have an unveiling ceremony.



The Hitchcock Farmstead Plaque

NEWS ON COMMUNITY HISTORIC PRESERVATION
By Peg Siciliano

The Future of Central Grade School

The future of Central Grade School's buildings and campus is once again being discussed by the TCAPS administration and board.

The oldest part of the current school dates back to 1922, so it will be celebrating its centennial next year! Furthermore, Traverse City schools have graced that block continuously since the 1870s. Hence the future of Central Grade is an important historic preservation issue.



Central Grade School

The TAHS is in contact with the Central Neighborhood Association, and both groups will continue to monitor the situation. You can access a Record Eagle article on this issue with this link: https://www.record-eagle.com/news/tcaps-weighing-options-on-central-grade-renovations-future-bond-proposal/article_d664f4ae-75f0-11eb-a121-abad940e74bb.html

Coming Update of Traverse City Master Plan

Mention of notable historic buildings is typically included in a municipality's Master Plan, and so it is with the Traverse City Master Plan. The City is looking update its current plan, which dates back to 2009 (with reviews having been done every five years). The TAHS will be contacting the Historic Districts Commission to determine what their plans are for updating the portion of the master plan that deals with historic preservation.

For more on this issue, access this Ticker article:
<https://www.traverseticker.com/news/traverse-city-eyes-new-master-plan/>

NEWS ON A NEW PROJECT HIGHLIGHTING LOCAL NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY
By Emily Modrall

Over the past year, I have been preparing a new project focused on Traverse City's indigenous history. Existing historical markers and signs with photos and text in Traverse City almost exclusively refer to European settlement and the beginnings or highlights of industry here. Meanwhile, the much longer history of the First Nations people gets hardly a mention. It goes without saying that Traverse City's public presentation of our history deserves better balance -- residents and visitors alike could benefit from a more complete picture of the history of this land and the people who have lived here.

This project will begin with the three "Old Indian Trail" markers in Traverse City. Perhaps you've noticed one of these white concrete markers in town, either on Cass Street or at West End Beach. Installed in the 1980s, the markers trace the route traveled by the Odawa/Ojibwa people from Lake Mitchell (in Cadillac) to West Grand Traverse Bay. While the route itself is no longer navigable, all of the markers between Cadillac and Traverse City are accessible. The first goal of this project is to install explanatory signage and maps next to the three trail markers in Traverse City. (The new signs will tell both the history of the trail and the more recent story of the concrete markers!) The signs -- like all written products of this project -- will be bilingual.

I'm very grateful to the Historical Society board for agreeing to 'house' this project. Grant applications are in the works, and I am already benefiting from the experience and knowledge of Historical Society members as well as many community contacts. I welcome input and will solicit collaboration from people whose personal histories or backgrounds are tied to the long Native American history of northern Michigan. Please get in touch directly if you would like to chime in: emily.modrall@gmail.com.

NEWS FROM THE TRAVERSE AREA DISTRICT LIBRARY
By Michelle Howard, TADL Director

TADL continues to look for ways to improve access to the Local History materials. We recently added returning staff member Robin Stanley for 10 hours a week to help with processing and organizing materials in the collection and add any new additions we've received. We continue to have Katheryn Carrier who provides excellent reference services to people stopping in, emailing, and calling with Local History Collection questions. We have also trained our Computer Center staff at tagging our already digitized content to make it more "findable".

A team of TADL staff is finalizing requirements for the new shelving and are looking forward to getting a revised quote from the company they would provide the compact shelving. Thank you to the Tribal for providing us with grant funds to help accomplish this! Finally, we are hoping to have the digital content of the scanned microfilm of the Historical Records of the Immaculate Conception Church in Peshawbestown from 1850-1948, in the library soon. We are grateful to the TAHS for funding the internship this summer because the bulk of the work will be making those records accessible. We are excited about all these projects!

NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE TO RECORD THE STORY OF TRAVERSE AREA LIBRARIES
By Ann Swaney & Anne Magoun, Co-Chairs

The history book about Traverse area libraries is coming along nicely, although slower than expected. Woodmere being closed for so long really hampered our research. TADL staff and community members have been very helpful as we try to track down bits of arcane information. All the chapters have been proofed by several volunteer readers, who were assigned to look for both historical and grammatical inaccuracies. Included in the list of readers were current and former TADL librarians, as well as local historians.

We are currently wrapping up review of the third draft of the manuscript and by the time you read this, the manuscript will be in the hands of author Heather Shumaker for a final rewrite. Designer Angela Saxon (Saxon Design) has received sample chapters with accompanying illustrations, so design work is beginning as well.

We exceeded our initial fundraising goal, thanks to the Traverse Area Historical Society and others who gave generously. Unfortunately, printing costs have skyrocketed over the past year and the scope of the book has grown, so we continue to seek funds to ensure we can afford an excellent, yet affordable book. We have chosen to print a good quality softcover book, rather than hardcover. This was decided after consultation with a local bookseller who advised us that with a tight budget, we'd be better off choosing to have color inside a book in place of a hardcover binding.

Heather has written a fascinating story of the development of libraries in Traverse City, neatly woven into the history of the Traverse area. With an eye to future historians looking back at this time, the book includes a description of the impact of COVID-19 on library services.

We look forward to sharing this book full of local stories with all of you soon, and we hope you will help spread the word about the book as it gets closer to publication.

I REMEMBER WHEN....

By Julius Petertyl

Our newsletter for the next year will bring you four columns written by our wonderful late benefactor and community historian Julius Petertyl. Enjoy his columns again. This column shares his thoughts of spring in Traverse City in the early 1900s.

There was very little ready-made clothing in Traverse City so in the spring young girls and their mothers would purchase fabric from Milliken's or some other mercantile. They could choose from bolts and bolts of colors and patterns. Then they would call one of the 26 dressmakers listed in the city directory or who advertised in the newspaper. The dressmaker would then come out to the house and using the household sewing machine or one that was brought along stitch clothing for the ladies measuring individuals as she went along. In rural areas the dressmaker would sometimes stay the night until her work was completed.

Spring also meant the closing of lumber camps for the season. The men would then come into town with rakes and shovels to spade gardens and clean up yards. They would split wood for the household stove and as vacuum cleaners were not popular beat the carpets to clean them.

Back in the teens years of the 1900s there were 38 neighborhood grocery stores. Some were downtown, three or four were very close to each other on Union Street, and the rest were scattered throughout the neighborhoods. Most stores carried the same basic merchandise and most families lived above their businesses. Many households would telephone in their grocery orders in the morning and deliveries by horse and wagon were made in the afternoon.

There were 22 saloons plus the Eagles and Elks Lodge which served liquor beer and wine. Some saloons were a "free lunch" where, for a 5 cent beer, you could make your own sandwich at a counter laid out with baloney, salami, cheese, pickles, onions and other condiments. The men never abused this special complimentary service.

Twenty blacksmiths and horseshoeing shops lined the streets of State, Front and N. Union, while eight livery barns provided horse and buggy service. Many families did not own their own horse and buggy. If the family decided to go visiting or on a Sunday picnic out in the country, they would telephone the livery barn and give their name and address and the time of their departure. The horse and buggy would then be delivered to their door at the appointed time period when the family returned, they had the option of returning their rental to the livery barn or having it picked up. Farmers who came to town during inclement weather would often leave their horses at the livery barn. They would pay a small fee for the hay and feed depending on their length of stay.

The 18 physicians and 11 dentists almost always occupied the second or third floor of the downtown buildings. In those early years the dentist drill was operated by a foot pump.

There were also 11 cigar manufacturers in Traverse City . It is surprising for such a small town that one manufacturer had eight employees and many people made cigars in their homes. Four ice dealers handled the refrigeration for the town. Residents had a cardboard sign that was placed in the window. On each sign was a number indicating the amount of ice needed by household. Most home ice boxes required 25 to 30 pounds of ice. Nine hotels started Traverse City on its road to resort status they included the Campbell House Hotel Leelanau and the Hotel Whiting.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOLUNTEERS



Would you like to...

Be a docent on a history walking tour?

Help out at the archives under the supervision of Katheryn Carrier, special collections librarian

· **Explore ways of getting local history into the schools?**

Serve as all-around helper with regard to tasks that must be carried out regularly—newsletters, mailings, or maintaining the website?

Attend TAHS board meetings to find out more about board activities and what you might do to participate?

Attending TADL board meetings to let that board know we have a keen interest in maintaining the archives at the library.

· **Or...do whatever job you think would be useful to the Society?**

Leave an email at traversehistory@gmail.com if you are interested in doing any of these things. We can always use more help to preserve, protect, and present history!

CONNECT WITH US ONLINE!

TRAVERSEHISTORY.ORG | LIKE US ON FACEBOOK: TRAVERSE AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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