

FEBRUARY 2022

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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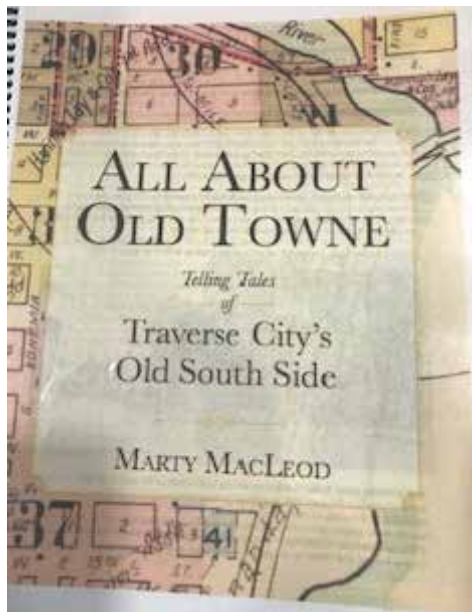
Jim Warner

INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER

- **From President Siciliano's Desk**
- *Recent Programs & "All About Old Towne"*
- **From the Desks' of Our Board Members & Much More!**

FROM PRESIDENT SICILIANO'S DESK

We had two programs since our last newsletter. At our November program, Old Towne Neighborhood Association President and TAHS member Marty MacLeod presented on Old Towne—or, more correctly—all about the old South Side. Marty MacLeod drew from the research for new book and provided wonderful history and pictures about this vibrant Traverse City neighborhood.



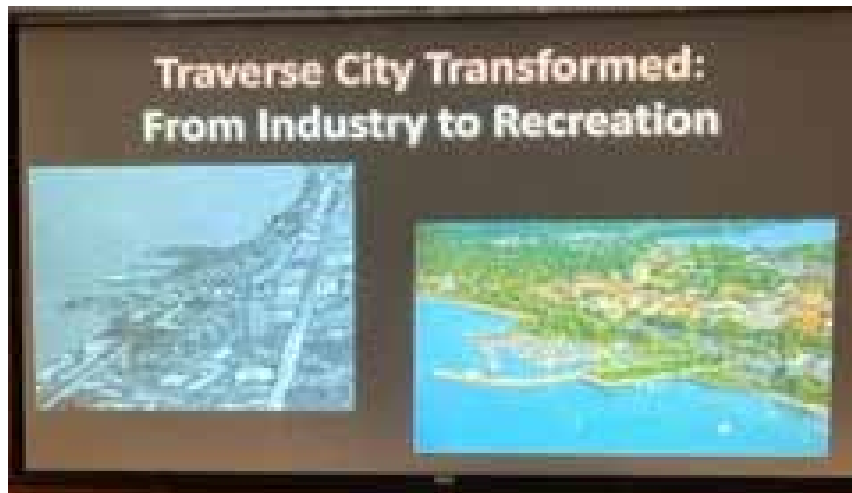
Her accounts and research span from 1865, when the Union Street bridge first spanned the Boardman River, to 1965, when the area first became known as Old Towne. Her presentation discussed businesses and industries past and present, arts and entertainment such as baseball, and important people that enriched the community. About two dozen members and society friends attended in person and a half dozen through the virtual offering. For those who would like to see a recording of the presentation, please go to

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZz3j4KetWY>

Continued ...

FROM PRESIDENT SICILIANO'S DESK CONTINUED

This year's first program was held in January. Society Board member and past archivist Peg Siciliano presented on the topic "Traverse City Transformed: From Industry to Recreation." This wide-ranging program weaved striking local art and historical photos with images of paintings from the Detroit Institute of Art. The presentation gave clues as to how and why Traverse City changed so much over the past 150 years. It was an expanded version of a 2019 program presented as part of Northwestern Michigan College's Dennon Museum's 2018 - 19 "Visions of American Life" exhibition, which was loaned from the DIA.



Peg shared how the waterfront with all the ills of industrialization at the turn of the twentieth century impacted our waterfront and then was transformed through dramatic community efforts to clean up the spaces that have become the beautiful natural features of our city. Nine attendees braved the frigid weather to view the presentation in person, but thirty-five attendees viewed the presentation through Zoom. For those who wish to see a recording of Peg's presentation, please go to

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3VYtiXk3qs>

FROM PROGRAM AND EVENTS COMMITTEE CHAIR LOUP'S DESK

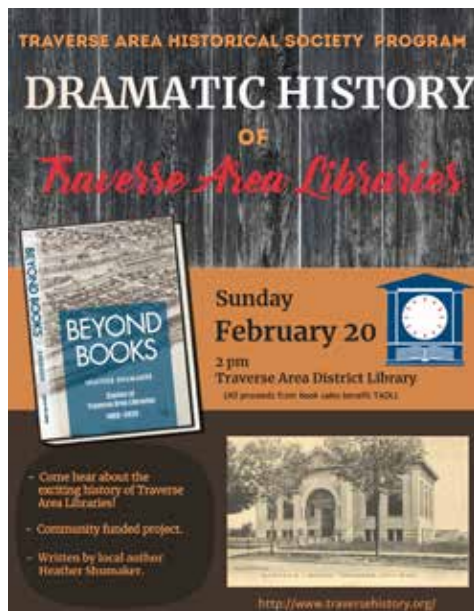
We have three upcoming programs scheduled. Our February program will highlight the history of libraries in Traverse City. On February 20th at 2:00 PM, Anne Magoun and Ann Swaney, Co-Coordinators of the Committee to Record the Story of Traverse Area Libraries, will present on the new book *Beyond Books: Stories of Traverse Area Library History 1860-2020*.

Our beautiful, dynamic library on Woodmere Ave. and the other vibrant member and branch libraries of the Traverse District Library System are taken for granted now, but there is an interesting history of how they became that way. *Beyond Books: Stories of Traverse Area Library History 1860 - 2020* tells that story. It was written by noted local author Heather Shumaker, who also did much of the research. The story of the development of libraries in the Grand Traverse area begins with the very early Traverse Township Library and the 1869 formation of the Ladies Library Association. Eventually the Carnegie Library on 6th Street was built to house a growing public library. We discovered that the story of library development, at least in our area, was political, sometimes controversial, and even in some cases very dramatic -- with fights over where libraries should be located.

The program will be held at the McGuire Room of the Traverse Area District Library. There will also be available via Zoom by registering at this link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_zQ13la94SsG60rbR59BgOg

Here is the poster for the February Program:



Our March Program will be a presentation on the history of the Clinch Park Zoo. TAHS Board Member Jen Loup will share her research and program. It will include the origins of the zoo, its main features and what led to its ultimate closure. It will be held in the McGuire Room and be available on Zoom through the Traverse Area District Library.

Our April Program is entitled "Voices from the Horn." TAHS Board member Jim Warner's presentation will feature three antique phonographs and the associated recordings. These recordings, of course, are small history capsules of society at the time He will also have a Power Point presentation with pictures and song lyrics.

It will be held in the McGuire Room and be available on Zoom through the Traverse Area District Library.

FROM MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR JENNINGS' DESK

The current number of TAHS members is 157. We are happy to welcome new members Tom Gardner, Sondra Hardy, Karla Stretten and James and Cathy Modrall. Sadly, we recently learned of the passing of Life Member, Joy Wilson. Joy was a past president of our society and a devoted member. She was the wife of Bob Wilson, also a past president, and author of the series "Grand Traverse Legends." Both Bob and Joy were passionate about the history of this area. The history community has lost two great friends who are now legends in their own right. We are happy they are together again. Rest in peace Joy and Bob and if heaven has a history section, we know you are there! We were happy to see some of our members return for our January program at TADL and hope we'll see even more at the February program. It's because of you loyal members, that our history is alive and well and being shared with the community. Thank you for your loyalty and support!

FROM TREASURER BOWERS' DESK

As the new year began, we have had to make some changes to our 2022 annual budget as we became aware of a circumstance that will result in a loss in revenue. But with the support of our members and the community, paired with the surplus the society has had for the past few years, I am happy to report the historical society is financially sound. The changes made to the budget will not affect our mission to preserve, protect and present local history.

Our 2022 Budget can be found at

<https://traversehistory.org/about/board-meetings-minutes-and-agendas/>

One current project we are supporting is Emily Modrall's effort to add new signage for local Native American history. The Society acts as the fiscal agent for the project, which received planning funding from a Rotary Charities seed grant and secured additional grant funding over the summer. This project has thus far received over \$10,000 in support for this effort.

In addition, we continue to provide our yearly support for TADL interns and local students for their Michigan History Projects.

In addition to the new budget, the society has moved financial institutions. We are now banking at the local TBA Credit Union

NEWS ON A NEW PROJECT HIGHLIGHTING LOCAL NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY

By Emily Modrall

The Anishinaabe History Project made a significant step forward this month with official approval from Traverse City's City Commission. The Commission's approval paves the way to work with City staff to establish specific sites and parameters for the signs planned for installation. The sign design is in progress, as is the preparation of the text for each sign.

The Leelanau County arm of this project -- which currently includes a much-appreciated partnership with the Northport Public Schools -- will include presentations to teachers and students by Grand Traverse Band community members this month. The subject is local Anishinaabe history -- how people gather information about the past, and how those stories are told.

For more information on this project, please see this Ticker article at

<https://www.traverseticker.com/news/anishinaabe-history-project-liquor-license-transfers-river-wall-contract-top-city-agenda/>

NEWS FROM THE TRAVERSE AREA DISTRICT LIBRARY

By Michele Howard, TADL Director

Shortly after the November newsletter, we received notification that the mobile shelving was going to arrive and be installed after Thanksgiving. It was a couple-week project but I have to thank TADL staff for all jumping in together to get the current area cleaned out safely and quickly. It involved myself, Scott Morey, Aaron Olson, Bruce Bennett, Melissa McKenna, Amy Barritt, Robin Stanley, and a team of library pages who efficiently and carefully moved everything out of that room. The carpet was removed and the walls painted before the shelving went in! Phew.

Continued ...



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

The shelves are beautiful! Thank you so very much for the generous support of TAHS, the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa, and Chippewa Indians 2% grant, and of course many local donors, including my father-in-law, William Howard. Dr. Howard was Julius Peteryl's physician and remained close friends with Julius throughout his life and loved to listen to the many stories Julius would tell about local history.

Now that the shelves are in, Robin is working on re-housing some of the bound Record Eagles to protect them. We still need to put in the flooring under the new shelving, but protecting the materials is the primary goal right now for spending. We'll also need to relocate some filing cabinets, and a shelving/work area. All in all, we are very excited about the progress and what it means for the preservation of items in our region. Thank you again for TAHS's support.

One last thing, we will gain possession of the new local book, Beyond Books. Ann Swaney and Anne Magoun have been wonderful to work with and all proceeds from the book will go to the Local History Collection. Things are looking bright for 2022!

I REMEMBER WHEN....

By Julius Petertyl

Our newsletter concludes its four column writings by our wonderful late benefactor and community historian Julius Petertyl. Enjoy his column again. This column shares his thoughts of Central School in Traverse City. It was written in 1989.

The first Central School building was a two-story wooden structure located at the current playground. An artesian well, located on what Wadsworth, was piped through this school and the new brick building as well.

The first brick structure was built in 1886 of common clay brick, light in color. The belfry was ornamental slate of red, grey, and green and quite striking. The floor plan for the lower grades was similar to what it is today with the big exception of the high school classrooms which were interspersed with the upper elementary classrooms on the first and second floors. The building was very comfortable in the hotter months due to the high ceilings in the classrooms. A well-groomed lawn with flowerbeds and shrubbery surrounded the school. Red park benches lined the walkways on Seventh St. In winter, a horse drawn plow remove snow from sidewalks before children began their often long trek to school.

A student's school equipment consisted of a cloth bag made of fabric scraps, sometimes very decorative, which was tied to the side of the desk. These bags held students' personal supplies: pencils, writing tablets, etc. A 10 cent leather strap carried books home and served as a snappy source of disruption when the teacher turned his back to the class. Repeated disruptions of any sort often led to a ruler over the hands, a pointer across the back or an even a slap on the face.

The school band practiced, perched on crates, in a former boiler room. Graduation exercises took place on the school lawn. On Memorial Day, though school was not in session, children would meet at their school and march, carrying a small flag to the cemetery with drummers keeping step.

The 1922 red brick addition, including Lars Hochstadt Auditorium and the "big" gym, were built to accommodate the growing high school population. The gymnasium hosted noon hour dances where students could practice the two step, foxtrot and waltzes as other students played their favorite dance tunes on the piano. When the auditorium hosted programs, the school band played marches as students paraded into their assigned seats. Penny socials, similar to today's school, carnivals were popular. The "mother's club raised funds for the school and conducted other activities similar to our PTO.

Students who drove cars to school were allowed to park their cars next to the building on Pine St. Lunches were frequently eaten in students' cars. Rumor has it that a certain group of female students were severely reprimanded for sitting with their feet up, a behavior that was considered very unladylike. At one point school uniforms were discussed, however, the most popular students spoke out against the idea and it was dropped.

Classes were canceled for variety of reasons, including the boiler going out. A quarantine due to scarlet fever, smallpox or diphtheria could close school for several weeks, so the entire building could be fumigated. Occasionally a certain foul-smelling chemical from chemistry class would find its way onto a radiator, causing the school day to come to an abrupt end.

In 1936, a red brick. Central School was rebuilt on the ashes of the original light brick school after a devastating fire.

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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