

FEBRUARY 2019

PRESERVE, PROTECT, AND PRESENT



TRAVERSE AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FEATURED ARTICLE: PIONEER POETRY

by A.A.

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

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- From the Desks' of Our Board Members
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FROM PRESIDENT SICILIANO'S DESK

While 2019 is already off and running, I wanted to take a few moments to reflect on our society's accomplishments in 2018. The last year was been filled with a variety of activities that supported our society mission of preserving, protecting and presenting the local history of the Grand Traverse area.

We presented our history through our monthly programs at the Traverse Area District Library (TADL) and the Dennon Museum Center on topics from the history of Traverse City planning, TC High School student volunteers in the Spanish American War, and the Great Fire of 1896 to the history of the Opera House and the most recent program on the historic rebirth of the West Bay waterfront. We have also worked on continuing to preserve and protect our history through volunteer efforts at TADL in processing the historical archives there and staying involved in building awareness about the preservation of Central Grade School, working with city officials about the future of the Con Foster Museum Collection, and establishing a new historical site for the original homesite of the area's first school teacher in Hickory Hills.

As we look towards 2019 we will build on these activities and projects with downtown businesses and local art organizations to support the placement of ten historic plaques in downtown Traverse City, raising funds for our Petertyl Educational fund, providing greater support for area history students in the Michigan History Day project attendance, and reestablishing the Petertyl History Internship Program. We also look to the next steps in developing the histor-

ic site in Hickory Hills for the nineteenth century Goodale-Hitchcock homesite. Finally, we are engaging with Traverse City Commons to begin exploration of a possible future museum site that presents the history of the Traverse City State Hospital. We welcome member involvement in any of these projects. All support is deeply appreciated!



Class at NMC, 1970s (Photo Courtesy of TADL)

FROM VICE PRESIDENT ANDERSON'S DESK

We are continuing to work with the Traverse City Art's Commission and downtown merchants to finalize a TAHS generated effort to get 10 historic plaques placed in downtown Traverse City on TC Light and Power (TCL&P) light poles. We continue to have meetings and discussions with the aforementioned parties about this project. It appears we are close to getting the formal approval from TCL&P to attach the plaques to the City owned poles. At this point it still seems likely that this joint venture will be completed by Spring.

As part of the TAHS commitment to preserve local history we are initiating discussions with the City of Traverse City as to the future of the non-Native American items that are part of the long-shuttered City owned former Con Foster Museum. Those items that are of Native American origin are by federal law required to be returned to the appropriate native tribes. We want to work in partnership with the City on quickly develop-

ing a plan to get the remaining items available for public display in some forum and also to make the City owned collection accessible for history buffs and historical researchers. As the successor organization the Friends of Con Foster Museum we take seriously our role to keep advocating for this objective.

The state historical marker in front of the former Women's Library on S. Cass street was in some manner removed approximately two years ago. TAHS has been trying to find out what the replacement plan was for this important part of our local history. We were aware that there was likely significant cost in getting the marker replaced. Recently we became aware of the fact that there may be a local sponsor who will pay the cost of the replacement marker. Finally, at this point we are trying to directly contact the potential sponsor to verify their interest and offer to work cooperatively with them on getting the plaque replaced.



Front Street, 1970s (Photo Courtesy of TADL)

FROM MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR JENNING'S DESK

Membership Update

I am happy to report that our membership is now up to 171 members. We are happy to welcome new members Jeff Offenhauser and family, and Kimberly Garlington. At the same time the history community is sad to report the passing of David Lather, Sally Benner and Dean Robb. Our condolences go out to their families.

A memorial donation was made at Christmas by the family of former member, Jim Galligan. Jim always made donations in the names of his children at Christmas and his daughter wanted to honor her dad by carrying on this tradition. Thank you Dawn Lewis, I know your dad would be very touched.

Thank you to all our wonderful members whose support is helping us keep our local history alive. Keep spreading the word and come to our programs this winter and bring a friend!

TAHS - JANUARY 20 TH PROGRAM REVIEW

The TAHS's January 20th program featured board member Peg Siciliano speaking to an audience of over 100 people at the Dennon Museum Center's Milliken Auditorium. The program was crafted to intertwine with the Dennon's presentation of the Detroit Institute of Arts' "Visions of American Life: Paintings from the Manoogian Collection, 1850- 1950."

Ms. Siciliano chose to focus on one of the questions posed by the DIA's exhibit: "How has life in America expressed itself in its public spaces and natural landscapes?" Her presentation examined the transformation of Traverse City's West Bay front and the north end of Boardman Lake, from lumbering and industrial hubs to outdoor meccas for tourists and retirees.



Numerous photographic images of Northern Michigan, some dating from as early as the 1860s, were used to illustrate the changes in this area's

landscapes from natural, to private industrial property, to today's recreational public spaces. The images were used to both create a visual timeline of those changes, and to compare and contrast some of the photos to paintings from the Manoogian Collection.



The presentation was well received, and many queries about this area's local history were asked during the question and answer period at the end of the program. Notably, many of those questions focused on the current circumstances surrounding the City of Traverse City's Con Foster Museum's artifact collection. Ms. Siciliano was pleased to inform the audience that the TAHS is actively engaging with the City both to learn more about the collection's status, and to offer the professional preservation expertise which is available through the TAHS.

NEWS FROM THE LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION, TRAVERSE AREA DISTRICT LIBRARY

There are a lot of new developments for the local history collection! As much of the membership of TAHS knows, I have recently accepted a new position within the Traverse Area District Library (TADL) system, and am no longer responsible for the Local History Collection. This has raised a number of concerns, but please believe that the TADL Board of Trustees, administration, and staff, take seriously our commitment to the Collection.

Long-time reference librarian Katheryn Carrier, MLS, is now the librarian responsible for overseeing the collection, providing access to it, and organizing volunteer efforts. Carrier has been a reference librarian in Traverse City for over 27 years, and is a master genealogy researcher. She was my first mentor in providing reference services, and I have full confidence that she will continue to serve TAHS members and researchers passionately. I will still be assisting with accessioning new collections, digital content, preservation efforts, and grant writing.

Our volunteer corps continues to work hard. We all took a break during the holiday season, but we did manage to complete a few projects (and start a few more!) Jeanne Hurst is nearly complete with indexing the Traverse City police registers from 1913 to the 1940s. The registers include hand-written beat reports from the officers, including community engagement efforts and events, as well as arrests. Want to find out if you've got a black sheep in the family? The registers may be a good place to start!

Janet and Joe Novak have been doing ... just about everything! From building boxes to weed-

ing the newspaper clippings files to evaluating the Traverse Area Foundation Collection for condition and content, the Novaks have proved themselves to be our jacks-of-all-trades.

Bensie Benghauser tackled a highly-used but difficult-to-locate collection of slides. These slides had been collected by TAHS for many, many years, and had been scanned by Dave Pennington sometime in the early 2000s, but our description of where the slides were physically was lacking. Bensie has made it so we can actually find the slides researchers request, hooray!

Judy Kalter finished describing and rehousing a small collection of Traverse City photographic postcards, all in pristine condition. She is moving on to the Greillick Family glass plate negative collection, which we hope will have some images of family members we are missing in the local history collection. We would love to fill in those gaps.

Thank you, TAHS members and board, for your continued support of the Collection. Without you, we would not be as far as we are with rehousing and describing all of our holdings. Look forward to the near future, as we are gearing up for the grant writing season! We are especially interested in finding funding to support our digitization projects and to purchase new shelving.

Amy Barritt
Branch Manager - Kingsley Branch Library

FROM PROGRAM AND EVENTS COMMITTEE CHAIR LOUP'S DESK

I would first like to say a big "Thank You" to all the TAHS members and community members who have attended our programs put on in conjunction with the Dennon Museum Center. This was a great opportunity to collaborate with an area organization to help present topics of historical interest to an increasingly broad audience!

I would like you all to take a special note - our programs for the winter/spring series are changing days! We will be back in the McGuire Room at the main branch of the Traverse Area District Library, and due to some major holidays falling on Sundays this spring, our programs will be held starting at 1pm on the third SATURDAY of every month. We hope that this change will allow more interested people to attend. As always, we welcome feedback and suggestions regarding programming and we strive to offer a wide variety of presenters and topics of interest.

Saturday, February 16, 2019 – 1pm to 3pm

McGuire Room, Traverse Area District Library, Traverse City

Joyeux Noel - The Christmas Truce of 1914 and the End of Innocence

Historian Brian McCall will focus on the first months of fighting that culminated with the fabled cease-fire that ended the first year of the Great War and how it still resonates with us today more than a century after the US entered the War in 1917. World War I has received increased attention and study in the past five years, including the 2018 release of the Peter Jackson documentary, "They Shall Not Grow Old".

Brian McCall has been a member of the Interlochen Arts Academy faculty since 1998 and also has served since 2003 as an adjunct instructor in American History at both Northwestern Michigan College and Ferris State University.

February 16th

Brian McCall - Joyeux Noel - The Christmas Truce of 1914 and the End of Innocence

March 16th

Kathy Firestone - The Maritime History of Greilickville

April 20th

Richard Fidler - How Schools Changed: Traverse City Public: A Case Study

May 18th

Russ Soyering - Traverse City City Planner

THE PRESERVATION CORNER BY PEG SICILIANO

Carnegie Building and Museum Collection

TAHS Board Members Fred Anderson and Peg Siciliano met with Traverse City Manager Marty Colburn and Assistant Manager Penny Hill on Friday, February 1st. Discussions were opened concerning both the current status of the City's Con Foster artifact collection, and the possibility of selected artifacts being displayed at mutually-agreed upon locations around the City. Possible locations for such displays include the upcoming State Hospital museum at the Mercato at the Grand Traverse Commons. Colburn and Hill will look into the logistical and legal issues raised by this proposal. Ms. Siciliano will be assisting Ms. Hill in an examination of the some of the records of the former Traverse City History Center.

Preservation Opportunity for the Foundations of the Hitchcock/Goodale Farmhouse

Tentative plans have been drawn up. They feature a a small park setting and signage at this site, which is near the Hickory Hills parking lot and disc golf course.

This proposal soon will be sent to Traverse City Parks and Recreation Director Derek Melville. Once he agrees to the proposal, it will be presented to the Parks and Rec Commission for approval. The plan is for this work to proceed in the spring of 2019.

Central Elementary School

A decision on an opening date for a new/renovated Glen Loomis/Montessori will be made at the TCAPS School Board meeting in February. It is possible that the future of Montessori will impact the future of Central grade school.

State Hospital Museum

TAHS members continue meeting with representatives of the Minervini Group, assisting them in drawing up plans for this concept. Short term plans are to use one of the Mercato store spaces for a small history display. In the future there are hopes for using one of the yet-to-be renovated State Hospital Cottages for a State Hospital Museum.



State Hospital in Winter, 1980s (Photo Courtesy of TADL)

PIONEER POETRY

Although it hardly qualifies as classical poetry, the following rhyming reminiscence appeared in the Grand Traverse Herald back in 1876. The author, who chose to remain anonymous, is looking back to the “good old days” of 1856 when Traverse City was nothing more than a logging camp. His characterization of the people he is remembering gives us some interesting insights into their lives. Biographical sketches of many of the individual mentioned appear in Volume One of *Grand Traverse Legends*.

I have wandered to the village, Tom, but do not find the tree.
The boarding house is there still, Tom, that sheltered you and me.
The same old bell rings through the hall, men passing to and fro. The
very same as they did, dear Tom, just twenty years ago.

The firm of Hannah, Lay & Co. is moving just the same.
Excepting on a larger scale than when you and I first came.
Thousands since have been employed and still they come and go.
And their pay is just as ready, Tom, as twenty years ago.

Germaine, he is their foreman still and just as prompt as then. You'll
find him where his business calls, quite busy with the men. But now
he has a family, Tom, of boys and girls you know.
The number would have astonished him some twenty years ago.

The old saw mill is standing still, the slides are torn away;
Not the sound of a saw beneath its roof has been heard for many a day.
But near it stands a new one, Tom, which runs full blast you know.
We could not do such sawing, Tom, just twenty years ago.

Tom Cutler was the engineer - you know his word was law.
Remember how he used to swear if by chance we burst a saw?
Old Tom has never joined the church as any of us know.
You'll find him just as blunt today as twenty years ago.

Bill Rennie was star teamster then; you know he never was beat.
You thought him corpulent then? My stars, he now can't see his feet.
He's an honest farmer now they claim, but still I do not know;
We have to watch his jokes the same as twenty years ago.

Old Hopkins – do you remember him? He used to clear the slide. He
and his little grandson then were working side by side.
Now he is hunting for a wife, and is all spruced up you know.
Who'd ever dreamed of that, dear Tom, just twenty years ago.

Continued on next page ...

Bill Fowle, he was the shanty cook and used to feed us well. But now he keeps the Bay House, Tom, it makes a good hotel. If ever you visit Traverse, Tom, you will call on him I know, For he is just as anxious now to please as twenty years ago.

Dr. Goodall kept the boarding house and wore a tall plug hat. I'm sure you do remember him, that stiff old Democrat. The doctor has had his ups and downs, his head is white as snow. I notice quite a change in him since twenty years ago.

H. D. Campbell then was clerk and bookkeeper as well. He still is living in the town and keeps a star hotel. He and Kit were married, Tom, we expected this you know. They seem as happy today, dear Tom, as twenty years ago.

You know you told the boss one day that your mules would not eat oats. That potatoes from the cellar would make them shed their coats. 'Twas there and then you found and stole the doctor's wine you know; And you and I drank it in the barn just twenty years ago.

Squaw Point is sadly altered, Tom. Not a wigwam can be found. A railroad depot is erected on that well known camping ground. When we have to take a journey, Tom, we do not dread it so As when we took the Indian Trail, just twenty years ago.

I visited the camps, dear Tom, and saw big, robust men. They were living here when you were Tom, but were little urchins then. The teamster that averaged best I saw, but him you do not know; For that man was not born, dear Tom, just twenty years ago.

Twenty years have now rolled by, dear Tom, since you and I first came. They tell me I am growing old though I'm feeling about the same. Twenty more will make a change with many of us we know, who are just as strong today, dear Tom, as twenty years ago.

A.A.

TAHS PETERTYL FUND IS POSITIVELY IMPACTING LOCAL HISTORY

The TAHS is utilizing the Petertyl Fund to nurture a love of history in our area youth.

Continued Michigan History Day Support:

In 2018 the TAHS Petertyl Fund covered the fees of eight TCAPS students who went to the State Finals. In spring 2019 the Petertyl Fund will be used to support local students who choose to participate in the Historical Society of Michigan's History Day program. Middle School students who choose to work with their school's History Day mentor will have their \$25.00 registration fee for state competition (should they advance to it) paid for by the Petertyl Fund. Any Traverse Area students who advance to nationals also will have those \$150 registration fees covered.

TADL Intern Program:

The TAHS is happy to announce yet another local history educational effort supported by the Petertyl Fund. In the summer of 2019 the TAHS' Petertyl Archival Internship Program will be reactivated. Based on a program from our time in the Carnegie History Center, this paid internship will give one or two northern Michigan students

a chance both to learn about archives, and to perform needed work in the historical archives at the Traverse Area District Library.

Past TAHS Archivist Peg Siciliano will provide volunteer supervision of the intern(s), under the watch of TADL Librarian Katheryn Carrier. Both Siciliano and the intern(s) will be TADL volunteers, although the intern will receive a stipend from the Petertyl Fund. Siciliano will craft and supervise the internship, with approval from Carrier.

The Society is currently involved in a two year campaign to revitalize the Petertyl Fund in order to find additional projects for the benefit of the community. To make a donation to the Petertyl Fund, simply make your check out to the TAHS with "Petertyl Fund" in the memo line.

Donations can be sent to:

**TAHS, P.O. Box 7051, Traverse City, MI
49686-7051**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOLUNTEERS



Would you like to...

- Help out at the archives under the supervision of Katheryn Carrier, special collections librarian?
- Be an assistant for TAHS downtown or cemetery tours?
- Write an article about history or nature for the TAHS Newsletter or other regional or historical publication.?
- Explore ways of getting local history into the schools?
- Serve on a board committee to work on such projects as newsletters, mailings, programming or maintaining the website?
- Attend TAHS board meetings to find out more about board activities and what you might do to participate?
- Consider being a program presenter at an upcoming monthly program at TADL?
- Or...do whatever job you think would be useful to the Society?

Leave an email at contact@traversehistory.org if you are interested in doing any of these things.

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