

June 10, 2016



TRAVERSE AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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person

Jim Warner, vice chair

Gini LeClaire, secretary

Larry Hains, treasurer

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Marly Hanson

Julie Schopieray

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From Chairman Siciliano's Desk

Greetings to our members:

Our biggest news is that we are changing our name from the History Center of Traverse City to the Traverse Area Historical Society (TAHS). This new identity has been adopted while our group maintains the same core mission: preserving, protecting and presenting the Grand Traverse area's rich local history. The TAHS will continue to offer regular history programming at Traverse Area District Library (TADL), publish historical accounts, offer exhibits and tours out in the community, and assist with TADL's enlarged local history archival collection. While the Society will remain in the lower level of the Carnegie Building on Sixth Street for the near future, its emphasis will shift from being a location, as it was in the past, to being an active force engaging the community. The TAHS Board of Directors believes that the change of name highlights a promising future. At our membership meeting on April 17th, the membership endorsed the adoption of the new name.

The Historical Society has been active in meeting our mission of preserving, protecting and presenting our local history. In March, we joined with the Historical Society of Michigan to raise concerns about Senate Bill 720 which would have restricted the preservation of historic districts. With the support of Senator Wayne Schmidt for our position, the bill was dropped.

We have also been working on making our organization more sustainable. Part of that effort has been to work with the City of Traverse City to reduce our office spaces and thus our monthly rent. The City Commission approved in April an amendment to our Carnegie Building lease that allowed us to maintain the large office in the southwest corner of the lower level at less than half our original rent. At the same time, we received two grants from the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation and the Caterpillar Foundation that have helped fund our operations. We continue to primarily rely on the generosity and support of our members.

The most significant work on preservation has involved reestablishing the historical archives at the Traverse Area District Library (TADL) under the direction of Librarian Amy Barritt. The Historical Society volunteers have moved to the Library to assist in the organization of the new Library archives. Again, many thanks to Team Elmer's for generously providing this move gratis.

The Historical Society completed its new marketing work with two Northwestern Michigan College Visual Communications students, Nichole Hartley and Emma Smith. As the result of this spring project, the organization has a new logo, stationery, and rack cards for public distribution. This helped us to launch our new name for our organization.

Stephen Siciliano

Report from the Archives (Now the TADL Local History Collections)



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Hello TAHS Members! For those of you unable to attend the Grand Opening Celebration of the archives, now the Traverse Area District Library Local History Collections (TADL-LHC), on May 20th, you might be curious to know what is happening with those collections. Several long-time volunteers of TAHS have been assisting with changing boxes and other rehousing, sorting and refileing photographs, sorting supplies, and general cleaning and inventory duties. I owe them a big thank you, for sticking with the collection as it made its cross-town journey!

Peg Siciliano has been hard at work, continuing the sorting of those collections that have yet to be accessioned, as well as working on a special project for the Traverse City Arts Commission. Her project involves choosing photographs from the LHC historical image collection that are representative of Traverse City, to be printed and hung on Traverse City Light & Power poles throughout the city. An example of the project can be found by looking for "Look Here! Cincinnati" online. Look forward to seeing those up this summer, as long as everything goes well!

We are now ready to begin accessioning materials again. We have a backlog to accomplish first, constituting about 20% of the collection. We are still accepting new donations, but the priority is describing and cataloging the materials we already have. If you are interested in volunteering to assist in this effort, I am looking for people who would be interested in describing and rehousing the Arnell Engstrom collection, adding to the Rotary collection, and a few other odds and ends. You should be detail-oriented, be able to use a word processor on a computer, and be comfortable with using scissors. I would recommend that you plan about 3 hours per session that you work, and expect your project to take multiple sessions. If you have a friend that wants to volunteer with you, processing a collection can be fun to do as a team!

I am also looking for volunteers who would enjoy working with our newspaper clippings files. The clippings are deteriorating, and I would like to get them photocopied onto acid-free paper, so that they might be more stable. I am also interested in finding someone who might want to try something novel with the newspaper collection: either scan or photograph them, and post them online, so that researchers can search for them.

The last project I need help with concerns the History Timeline of Traverse City, now available at the TAHS website. The information on the timeline has been gathered over many years, by several different people, and only covers Traverse City. As far as we know it is accurate. We have been getting a lot of questions about where to find the article a particular date comes from, and so I am soliciting for volunteers interested in doing research. If there is someone that would like to build a timeline for a neighboring town, that would also be quite welcome! The job would be to find a resource (perhaps a newspaper article, or a diary entry found in the LHC) that would verify the date on the timeline, which we would make a copy of and file together. Expect this job to take several months. Please review the timeline here:

<http://traversehistory.org/tours/historical-timeline/>

I look forward to seeing you at the Library!

Amy

Grant Received to Support Move to TADL

The Rotary Club of Traverse City awarded the History Center (TAHS) a grant of \$2,000 toward the purchase of storage items and archive materials for the collection's new location at TADL. We want to thank the Club's Good Works

Committee for its recommendation to fund the project and for The Rotary Club to approve it. Special thanks to Board Member Marly Hansen for authoring the successful grant proposal.

Past Historical Society Monthly Programs

February 21, 2016 “Preserve, Protect and Promote Our Local History.” Marly Hanson, retired librarian, and Amy Barritt, Special Collections Librarian, presented on TADL’s local history collections, the Digital Public Library of America, The Making of Modern Michigan, the Fading Memories Project, and other efforts to preserve, protect and promote our history locally and nationally. This program introduced members and interested persons to the newest incarnation of the archives at TADL’s Woodmere branch.

March 20, 2016 “A Mile in Their Shoes.” Nancy Bordine, local textile and costume collector, brought in parts of her collection, and discussed the evolution of footwear. Nancy described how social history could be revealed by the different generations of footwear. Attendees also brought in historical costume items of their own to share. Several family stories were recounted linking family clothing items to members' ancestors.

April, 17, 2015 “Northern Michigan During the Second World War.” Tom Gordon, professor at Northwestern Michigan College, presented on events in our local area during World War II. The presentation featured Tom's interview with Olin Benedict, a B-24 Liberator Pilot, who described his experiences as an aviator in the war. Tom's presentation was a great opportunity to hear from one of our WW2 veterans and to have the interview recorded to preserve this important story of our history.

May 1, 2015 “Seeking a Fair Contract: Labor Struggles of Traverse City Teachers in Past Decades.” Irene Brown, former teacher and Traverse City Education Association president, presented on the history of the Michigan Education Association and on Michigan’s first teachers’ strike as well as later efforts to secure a fair teaching contract.

Recent Historical Society Events

The Historical Society presented its new face at the Senior Expo on May 18 at the Civic Center. We got two new memberships and 170 dollars in donations from interested persons. Thanks go to Marly Hanson, Larry Hains, Richard Fidler, Gini LeClaire, Sharon Jennings, and Jim Warner for help with the exhibit.

On May 20th the Traverse Area District Library celebrated the arrival of the Traverse Area Historical Society's archives with a party held at the McGuire room. Invited guests included members of the board of both organizations, administrative staff of the library as well as all those with a special interest in Traverse area history. Amy Barritt, special collections librarian, led informal tours of the new archives. There was much joy among guests that the collection was in safe hands.



Party time!



Part of the collection in its new home

Coming Events, Summer 2016

Saturday, June 26, 12:00 to 4:00 PM at the Civic Center Pavilion: Historical Society picnic: Bring a dish to pass. Fun and games, remembering the past year, and perhaps some surprises.

History walks around Traverse City and Oakwood Cemetery: Currently three walks are being planned: Sixth Street, Downtown, and Oakwood Cemetery.

- The Sixth Street walk details are to be announced.
- Downtown walks will begin in front of Horizon bookstore at 9:00 AM on Saturday beginning June 25th. Walks last approximately one and one half hours. Cost is ten dollars per person, payment to be made by cash or check. All proceeds go to the Historical Society. Rain or shine.
- Oakwood cemetery tours begin on Sundays, beginning on July 3rd at two different times of day, 2:00 and 7:00 PM. Participants should meet at the northwest corner of the cemetery at the intersection of Steele and 8th Street. It is best to park on Steele street. Cost is ten dollars per person for the one-and-a-half hour tour, payment to be made by cash or check. All proceeds go to benefit the Traverse Area Historical Society. You may preregister by sending an email to contact@traversehistory.org (preferred) or phoning (231) 995-0313. Drop-ins accepted if numbers permit. Rain or shine.

Opportunities for Volunteers

Would you like to...

1. Be a docent on a history walk?
2. Set up historical exhibits at the Traverse Area District Library?
3. Help out at the archives under the supervision of Amy Barritt, special collections librarian (see her report in this issue for possibilities)?
4. Write an article about history or nature for the Grand Traverse Journal?
5. Explore ways of getting local history into the schools?
6. Serve as all-around helper with regard to tasks that must be carried out regularly—newsletters, mailings, maintaining the website, taming the clutter at the Carnegie building?
7. Attending TADL board meetings to let that board know we have a keen interest in maintaining the archives at the library.
8. Find ways to honor local businesses that pay attention to their history—awards, recognition in the newsletter and newspaper, etc.?
9. Provide transportation to members who may not wish to drive to meetings, etc.?
10. Participate in the publishing arm of the Historical Society in helping us to produce Bob Wilhelm's last book *Then and Now*?
11. 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.

Historical Society in the News

Our organization has been in the news. First, several news outlets reported on our successful move of the historical archives to TADL. Second, our name change to the Traverse Area Historical Society was shared in the Traverse Ticker.

On the Move:

- <http://www.traverseticker.com/story/history-center-archives-moved-to-library>
- <http://photos.record-eagle.com/Week-In-Photos/Week-in-Photos-Feb-14-20-2016/i-WzHkL97> (you may have to copy this link into your browser)
- <http://www.teamelmers.com/archives/view?id=94>
- <http://www.9and10news.com/story/31213425/traverse-city-historic-archive-collection-gets-new-home>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4_nemW8q6s

On the New Name:

- <http://www.traverseticker.com/story/history-center-changing-name>
- <http://aboutnorth.com/tc-history-center-changing-name/>

Notes about the Society

The Historical Society misses Steve Terry who recently moved to Texas. Come on back, Steve—it's too hot and too wet down there!

The Society is seeking funds to publish Bob Wilhelm's book, *Traverse City, Then and Now*. Members who wish to contribute should send checks made out to the Traverse Area Historical Society with a memo, "Bob Wilhelm Book Fund." The address is Traverse Area Historical Society, P.O. Box 7051, Traverse City, MI 49696-7051

And a Little Local History



Main Street Kingsley (Mich.), 5 September 1908. The business district at the time included Valentine Linden's Saloon, Ed Brudy's Meat Market, Aaron Box Hall, Charles Box Store, Bell's Barber Shop, A.B. Sinson's Store and Post Office, Joh Huff's Boots & Shoes Store. Men in picture are Pete Kirk, Grant Rollo, Valentine Linden, Cap Little, Pete Carlback, Anthony Weber, and Jessie L. Vasser. [submitted by Amy Barritt]