

NOVEMBER 2023

PRESERVE, PROTECT, AND PRESENT



TRAVERSE AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

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& Much More!**

FROM PRESIDENT SICILIANO'S DESK

Iwould like to start my report for the November Newsletter by recapping the past year and sharing my annual report with you.

State of the Society Annual Report

We have met our society mission in presenting history through offering four monthly programs.

These included:

November: Dr. Emily Modrall presented on the “Old Indian Trails” and the Kchi Wiikwedong Anishinaabe History Project. More about the project a little later.

January: Writer and educator Jordan Owen presented on The Mostly True Story of Dick Bassett: Traverse City's First Celebrity; Jordan presented his extensive historical research on Traverse Bay's own hermit Dick Bassett, a Civil War veteran who became a viral celebrity in the 1890s. He provided a fuller picture of the man who homesteaded the small island in the bay that bears his name.

May: Professor Steven Walton of Michigan Technological University presented on the history of the Parsons Corporation, a stand-out part of Traverse City's industrial history. The program was particularly noteworthy for the wonderful interaction of attendees, some of whom were Parson family members and company retirees.

September: Educator Karen Reiser presented on the history of education on the Old Mission Peninsula. In her presentation, she followed the path of educational presentation from the Anishinabek to the present-day European style of education.

We also continued some of our previous historical tours and expanded into new ones. We have continued our regular Oakwood Cemetery tours and will offer our Halloween tours of the Oakwood Cemetery again later this month.

We also offered two new tours. Author and TAHS board member Marty MacLeod provided a new guided walking tour of TC's Old Towne. She shares history and tales of the historic South Side that included the iconic Wilhelm's and Brady's to the Pere Marquette train station and roundhouse.

She and Peg Siciliano have also offered another new tour entitled: Perry Hannah and His Neighbors, A Walking Tour of Sixth Street and Environs. This tour encompasses twelve blocks of splendid turn-of-the-century homes, with a short detour to Central School. With hundreds of historical photos, we cover a bit of architecture, a bunch of local events, and a whole lot of interesting folks (with just a whisper of gossip). Both these tours are based on two recently published books on Traverse City by our own Marty MacLeod.

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FROM PRESIDENT SICILIANO'S DESK CONT.

Our quarterly Newsletter has a new feature: Our "Spotlight on Members from TC Historical Families." It began last November with an article written by member and former board secretary Gini LeClaire.

Another important way of presenting history is through the Kchi Wiikwedong Anishinaabe History Project coordinated by Dr. Emily Modrall. The goal of the project is to bring more attention and awareness to the existing 33 trail markers and to the broader Anishinaabe history of this region. The project will include providing bilingual historical plaques giving historical context for the trail. The project has been made possible with the generous support of several organizations. Four signs are nearly ready for installation in Traverse City this autumn, with five more set to be installed in Leelanau County in autumn 2023 or spring 2024.

Support of History Day Students: In addition to programming, several society board and members participated in the Michigan History Day at West Middle School in March. We had the pleasure of serving as judges, evaluating wonderful student projects, including exhibits, documentaries, posters, websites, and papers. The quality of the projects was shown in that several of the projects advanced from the district to the state finals. Seven have even advanced to the national finals. The presentations today give you wonderful examples of these young scholars' work.

One final example of presenting history was the wonderful and popular WTCM podcast "Grand Traverse Look Back" series created and hosted by fellow board member Jordan Anderson. As part of this project, we also received funding through local sponsorships including the Bill Marsh Auto Group, Golden Fowler Home Furnishings, Cordia Senior Living and Honor Bank.

In terms of preserving and protecting history, our member's generosity helped fund the restoration and purchase of Civil War veterans' headstones in partnership with the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, increased support of TADL's storage, cataloging, and the Julius Petertyl Intern Program of our vast local historical archives.

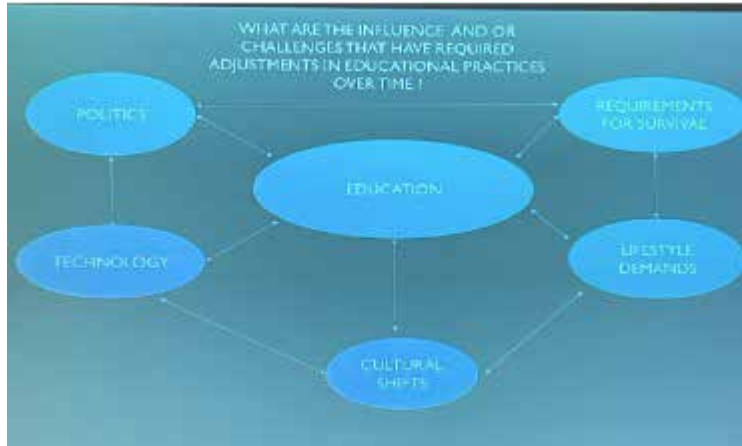
Much thanks to all of you who help us meet our mission of preserving, presenting and protecting the history of our Grand Traverse Region.

Since our last newsletter in August, we continue to offer our tours and programs.

September 17- Educator Karen Reiser presented on the history of education on the Old Mission Peninsula. In her presentation, she followed the path of educational presentation from the Anishinabek to the present-day European style of education. The location of her research and writing was the Old Mission Peninsula. However, this history can be applied to the development of non-Native American education in the Midwest, prior to and during the era of western expansion and beyond.

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FROM PRESIDENT SICILIANO'S DESK CONT.



Influences on Education over time.

A dozen attendees learned about a school on a schooner, in the bachelor quarters of a bull, and more. As a lifelong educator, Karen was motivated to write on this subject as she has watched education evolve during her tenure. The recording of the program can be found at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y0fhag82oX4>

October 15- TAHS Annual Meeting. Two national and state Michigan History Day students shared their research and projects. Junior Division First Place National Finalists Oliva Reding and Tessa Gryc shared their projects on Socrates: An Examined Life and the Formation of American Political Parties: A Frontier of Democracy respectively. (Their pictures along with their Social Studies teachers are below.) This meeting also included our annual meeting with board elections and a small proposal to amend our bylaws to clarify our ability to award student grants. Board members Jim Warner and Jen Loup were reelected and the bylaw amendment passed unanimously. The recording of the program can be found at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R10M-R78eMY&t=19s>



Stephen Siciliano,
Dustin Worm, Tessa Gryc,
Oliva Reding, and Emily Worm

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FROM PRESIDENT SICILIANO'S DESK CONT.



November 19- Local vintage-wear aficionado, Nancy Bordine, shared her passion for fashion in an engaging timeline of 'the way they wore'. She linked the development of different women's fashions from the mid-nineteenth century to the late twentieth century to the history of Traverse City and its surrounding region. Attendees to the program were given boxes of fashion items and all enjoyed opening 'surprise hat boxes' to 'model' the next interactive fashion piece. There were 36 attendees in person and 6 joined us via Zoom.

Nancy demonstrating an 1860s Traveling Coat.

During her presentation, Nancy described the various garments and likely backgrounds of those who wore them. The recording of the presentation can be found at <https://youtu.be/Rvt-7wkFT10>



Nancy discusses a Nursing dress and shoes from the 1900s. (right)

A Flapper's Dress from the 1920s. (left)

Finally, our ongoing support of recognizing our veterans interred at Oakwood Cemetery led the Society to provide funding towards the purchase of a gravestone for one of the last unmarked graves of a Union soldier from the Civil War in the cemetery. In partnership with the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, we participated in the dedication of the new gravestone of Henry Folsom and his wife on October 14th.

The picture to the right is of the new gravesite with the ceremonial artifacts during the dedication.

New Gravestone for Union Veteran Henry Folsom and Mary Jane Folsom - pictured right.



FROM MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR JENNINGS' DESK

Dear Members,

I'm happy to report that our membership now stands at 157. We've added several local history teachers to our membership list and we welcome them on board as well as George Foster, Grace Yakuber, Marilyn Johns and our student member Tessa Gryc.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our members who have ties to TC historical families and have taken the time to share their family stories. Susan Quillman told us about her great-grandfather, Vencle Sleder, who built and operated Sleder's Tavern in 1885. Gini LeClaire wrote about the four pioneer families she is related to, including the Dempseys, the Dugals, the Wilhelms and the Zimmermans. Don Ehrenberger told the story of Joseph Ehrenberger, who with a partner, opened "Nash and Ehrenberger Groceries in 1911 which continued to 1956. Joan Maule told us about her family ties to the Kropp and Atkinson families and the Leelanau Country Inn. Jim Warner is telling about his ties to the past in this newsletter. Again thank you all!

I know you have enjoyed these stories as much as I have and I'm hoping to find more members who will share their families and their backgrounds. Please contact me if you will be part of this effort. (**sharon2331@gmail.com**)

FROM TREASURER OFFENHAUSER'S DESK

The 2024 budget was submitted and approved at our annual membership meeting on November 15th. It is very similar to the '23 budget, though the Society had surpluses in income and limited expenses this year.

As we enter the holiday season, TAHS has much to be grateful for. Recent income from our successful walking tours, book sales, membership renewal and donations were welcomed. The Society thanks the volunteers and members who helped us close out a prosperous year.

NEWS ON THE KCHI WIIKWEDONG ANISHINAABE HISTORY PROJECT

By Emily Modrall

In October, the first of the Kchi Wiikwedong Anishinaabe History Project's signs was installed at Traverse City's Brown Bridge Quiet Area. Visitors will note that, for now, the sign does not have a plaque attached to it. Plaques for all nine signs will be fabricated this winter; the Brown Bridge sign's plaque will be affixed in the spring when the other eight signs (with plaques) are installed in Traverse City and Leelanau County.

In early November, six light pole banners commissioned by the Kchi Wiikwedong Anishinaabe History Project were hung on Front Street in Traverse City. Each banner features a word in Anishinaabemowin with its English translation below. The banners were timed to be displayed during Native American Heritage Month (November). Next year hopefully the number of banners will grow turning Front Street into a more robust dictionary.

Kchi Wiikwedong Anishinaabe History Project's sign.
(photo right)



NEWS FROM THE TRAVERSE AREA DISTRICT LIBRARY

By Melissa A. McKenna, Department Head, Adult Services & Supervisor, Local History Collection

Celebrating 155 Years of Libraries in Traverse City with the Local History Collection!

There is so much to celebrate in the library this season! Thanks to the magnificent efforts of Anne Magoun and Ann Swaney, the Ladies' Library Association of Traverse City is being inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame on December 6th. TADL Director Michele Howard will be accompanying the Ann(e)s to Lansing for the ceremony and accepting the award on behalf of libraries in Traverse City.

This event perfectly coincides with recognizing 155 years of libraries in Traverse City in 2024 (which was the founding of that very same Ladies' Library Association) and the 25 years at the library on Woodmere Ave. These two anniversaries will be celebrated throughout the months of December and January with several exhibits, displays, and events. There will be a walk-through timeline of Grand Traverse County library history in the McGuire Community Room, an exhibit featuring the storytellers that generations of area children enjoyed in the display case outside of the Youth Services Dept, and a display about the building of the Woodmere Library in the Atrium.

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NEWS FROM THE TRAVERSE AREA DISTRICT LIBRARY

By Melissa A. McKenna, Department Head, Adult Services & Supervisor, Local History Collection

Every single one of these displays was made more dynamic and meaningful through the efforts of the two Petertyl Interns, Zoe and Arleta who organized and created a finding aid for the historical items related to TADL's history during their time with us in the Local History Collection this past summer. Because of their work, LHC staff member Robin was able to easily locate pictures, newsletters, and other items of library history to include in these exhibits throughout the library.

So we thank you again for your continued support of the LHC and Petertyl Interns. Together we are preserving, recognizing, and celebrating the important history of our region. We hope you will join us on **Wednesday, January 10th for our Happy Birthday, Woodmere! Silver Celebration. The opening ceremony will be at noon, and drop-in hours are from 1-6pm. Let's celebrate together!**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOLUNTEERS



Would you like to...

- Be a docent on a history walking tour?
- 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](http://traversehistory.org) | LIKE US ON FACEBOOK: TRAVERSE AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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