

AUGUST 2022

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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FROM PRESIDENT SICILIANO'S DESK

We had the final spring program since our last newsletter. Our May program featured Anna Rowe Love and Linda Forwerck, president of the Grand Traverse Area Genealogical Society, who presented on developing genealogical skills to find information focused on local history. Anna presented a case study of her research into the Carothers family.

Her 2nd great grandfather homesteaded 80 acres in 1878 in what is now Union Township in Grand Traverse County, Michigan. Anna and Linda discussed the do's and don'ts of genealogical research. One important lesson in research is always check and cite your sources. While such records as the census, marriage records, death certificates and newspaper obituaries are important, it is always good to crosscheck these records so that the occasional mistake can be discovered. Linda provided an extensive handout that included sources for their research that others can use in exploring their family histories.

We held the program in-person and via zoom. About twenty attendees joined us through either format. The recording of the presentation can be found at the TADL website at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mq8-kETF3M4>

Our tour season resumed this summer. Our Oakwood Cemetery Tours began on **June 25th**. They will continue through the summer on the second and fourth Sundays of the month starting at **4:00 P.M.** Our regular downtown tours meet at the statue of Perry Hannah on the corner of Union and 6th Street in Traverse City at **10:00 A.M.** The upcoming tours are on **August 27th** and **September 24th**.

We also have developed a new tour this summer. Author and TAHS member Marty McLeod is providing a new guided walking tour of TC's Old Towne! The tour will be 1.7 miles, meeting at the statue of Perry Hannah. These two-hour tours begin at **10:00 A.M.** The upcoming tours are on Saturdays, **August 13th** and **September 17th**.

Our monthly program schedule is set for the fall. Our next monthly program will be Sunday, **September 18th** at **2:00 P.M.** Our annual meeting will be Sunday, **October 16th** at **2:00 P.M.** Our final autumn meeting will be Sunday, **November 20th** at **2:00 P.M.** All meetings will be held in person at the McGuire Room in the Traverse Area District Library and available on Zoom. They will also be recorded for future viewing. The topics for these programs and news on our tours will be provided through our email blasts and our website.

We hope you can join us for our tours and programs.

FROM MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR JENNINGS' DESK

Our membership stands at **146 members**. We are always hoping to see this number grow, so please encourage your friends and family to join us in preserving the history of this great area. In this newsletter we are honoring the pioneer family of our member Susan Quillman. We hope you enjoy reading about Susan's great grandfather, Vencil Sleder and his legacy to this community, Sleder's Tavern.

Vencil Sleder 1850-1904

Vencil Sleder was born in Klantor, Bohemia in 1850. At age 29, in 1879, the single wheelwright, married a young widow, Kathleen (Kate) Janda Novak who had two young sons, Lewis and Joseph from her first marriage. After they married they had two more children, Ondre in 1879 and Margaret in 1881. Life was not easy in Bohemia so in 1882 the family immigrated to America. Vencil arrived in New York and was processed at Castle Gardens in June 1882 and then traveled to Traverse City, Michigan. Kate and the children followed in November 1882.

Vencil was employed as a wheelwright at Peter's Blacksmith shop but he also had a dream of opening a tavern where residents of the community could gather and socialize. The tavern was built in an area called "Slabtown" and was constructed from slabs from the neighboring sawmills. It took three years to complete as his crew could only work on Sundays, which was their day off from their other jobs. Sleder's Tavern opened its doors in 1885.

In 1902 Vencil became a citizen of the United States and in May of 1904 Kate and Vencil celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary. Then on December 17, 1904, at age 54, tragedy struck. Vencil was thrown from a "cutter" (large sled) and died from his injuries shortly after. It is interesting to note the word "Schleder" in German, means someone who makes or drives a sled. He was buried three days later in Oakwood Cemetery, in Traverse City, in the Sleder plot.

Vencil Sleder was an early pioneer of Traverse City who has left behind a legacy, Sleder's Tavern, which is Michigan's oldest, continuously operated restaurant.

Continued

FROM MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR JENNINGS' DESK CONT.

Susan Margaret Hubka Quillman is a current TAHS member who is the greatgranddaughter of Vencel and Kate Sleder, the granddaughter of Margaret Sleder and Anthony "Tony" Hubka of Traverse City and daughter of their only child. Susan is a retired registered nurse who currently resides in the beautiful mountains of western North Carolina. She also enjoys genealogy, reading, gardening, and traveling.



Sleder's Tavern



Vencel Sleder and Family

FROM TREASURER BOWERS' DESK

This quarter the Traverse Area Historical Society was proud to sponsor local students for Michigan History Day. We paid the registration fees for 33 local students that progressed to the state level of the completion, and the registration fees for 7 of those students that passed to the national level.

We have also received more grant funds for Emily Modrall's Indian signage project and will continue to be her fiduciary for the duration.

Our cemetery tours have also started for the year and we are starting to see some revenue from the tours. Overall, the society is still in good financial standing, and we look forward to supporting local history and those who enjoy it.

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

This spring the Kchi Wiikwedong Anishinaabe History Project was awarded three additional grants. An Assets for Thriving Communities Grant from Rotary Charities and generous support from the Michigan Humanities Council and the Indian Land Tenure Foundation will facilitate signage fabrication and installation. Also thanks to these grants, project collaborators will spend the coming months finalizing research to create a website, develop curriculum, and write project summaries. My sincerest thanks go to these funding organizations and to individual supporters and collaborators. I would like to express specific thanks to Liam Berigan for his diligent and meticulous volunteer work on this project this summer. I am deeply grateful to Liam for his help turning hard copy primary source material - mostly written between 1880 and 1905 - into a set of digital files.

Any and all who are interested in further information about the project are welcome to get in touch at any time: [**emily.modrall@gmail.com**](mailto:emily.modrall@gmail.com)

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

This summer we had two Petertyl Interns at TADL. One was a returning intern from last year, Ted Arnold that had just graduated high school and one was a Master of Information student, Nerissa Godfrey, from the University of Michigan. Both of the interns have been going through the pamphlet files upstairs in the Reference Department.

Ted has been inventorying the Biography files. Nerissa worked on the Places files. This process involved them creating spreadsheets of the file contents, going through the files, piece by piece, making sure each item in the file is noted on the list by title and description, citing the source of the items, and doing research to determine such, as well as identifying items that might need further conservation.

The benefit of this work is to assist the reference staff with being able to identify subjects that have files before directing patrons to that resource, as well as an inventory of file contents, which we currently do not have. While this is not glamorous work, I think both found it exciting and learned much about Traverse City's history.

Thank you again to TAHS for supporting this internship program and supporting both our young people's appreciation of Local History and helping us conquer some projects!

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!

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