



P.O. Box 177
Empire, Michigan 49630

1999/2000 Vol.10, No.3

November 1999

GREETINGS FRIENDS!!

SOUTH MANITOU MEMORIAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES JULY 31, 1999

President Don Morris called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. (Social time 9:45-10:15). Introduction of the 20 members attending included their relationship to the island. Minutes of the 1998 meeting (published in Nov. 1998 Newsletter) were approved with a motion by Paul Rocheleau, seconded by Harvey Rocheleau and was passed by members present.

Announcements: Secretary Judy Fogle recovering from July 9 surgery, Lynn Roe will take minutes for her. Duane Pearson, Assistant Superintendent of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore (SBDNL) will join us at 11:30 to correct misinformation in the last newsletter. Deaths: George Thompson in March; Joan Carlson on July 12; and Lou Raynor on July 29.

Meeting turned over to Paul Rocheleau, past-president, for Election of Officers. Running for re-election are Don Morris, President; Joe Orbeck, Treasurer; Judy Fogle, Secretary. Jack Kolasinski declined Vice-President and Lynn Roe accepted nomination. Floor opened for more nominations - none given. Marie Smith moved the Slate of Officers nominated be accepted, it was seconded and was passed.

Don opened a discussion on moving the Annual Meeting time to follow the Picnic at the Town Hall at 1:30 p.m. Reference was given to a letter by Glenn Furst in which he stated the Annual Meeting would be at 1:30 p.m. The social time would begin at 10:00 or 10:30 a.m. allowing more time for people who drive long distances. Also more people could get involved in both set-up and the business meeting if under one roof. Members commented favorably on this concept. (It was later brought up at the Picnic and was also favorably received. It was decided to try it next year.) Ethel Stormer mentioned trying a catered meal by Deering Grocery which was very good at the Stormer reunion. Discussion followed on the difficulty of getting an accurate head count. (50 attended this year).

Don Morris gave an update on the status of our proposal to become partners with the National Park Service (NPS) to restore the August Beck and George Conrad Hutzler Farmsteads. In January two letters crossed in the

mail - Don's to Ivan Miller, Park Superintendent and Mr. Miller's to Don. Don was asking for information on our partnership proposal and Mr. Miller was letting Don know the restoration proposal was not possible. Mr.

Miller seemed critical of the Society's interest and involvement in island projects. He suggested we "prove ourselves" by applying ourselves to this list of projects which would "boost members interest and commitment": 1) Paint Schoolhouse exterior (lead-based paint must be removed first by Park Maintenance staff). 2) Restore Lifeboat in Boathouse on the island (requiring many hours of skilled labor - do we have?). 3) Staff Visitor Center. 4) Do the daily Lighthouse tours (requires 10-15 trips a day up the tower - 168 steps). 5) Clean Lighthouse interior. 6) Staff Schoolhouse. 7) Trim & remove vegetation at various sites around the island.

Kathy Bietau passed out a list of our Society's accomplishments, beginning in 1976 up to the present time. She commented that even though this lists 26 projects, it is not all inclusive. (NOTE: If you would like a copy of this list - please contact Kathy at her address on the last page of this newsletter). Discussion ensued regarding other projects which Society members had performed over the years. Ethel Stormer stated that her late husband Joe, and Ethel and Glenn Furst had begun work on cleaning the Cemetery in the late 1960's. They enlisted the help of the Riker boy to cut trees with a chain saw. Lynn Roe mentioned that Jerry Crownner and Myron Vent would go to the Cemetery together to clean gravesites in the early 1970's. Marie Smith commented how island residents were assured the island would remain a "Historical Island" with the farms attended by the Amish, using horses and that there would always be a place for the elderly to stay who could not camp. This has not happened.

Don summarized by saying our Society must choose what direction to take to preserve our history. We have several options: 1) should we do the NPS task list? (note: our skills inventory did not get high responses - we have many older members). 2) should we go back to where we began and do only cemetery and other gravesite work. 3) should we be visible and vocal in support of the history of South Manitou and advocate the preservation of its historical and cultural features and structures. Kim Mann told of an opportunity for us to be involved in the drafting of the General Management Plan (GMP) of Sleeping Bear. This document will decide what direction the NPS will take in managing SBDNL. A plan for historic properties has been drafted, but not signed. She strongly urged our members to attend the next meeting, December 3, 1999.

Paula Leinbach provided information on a new group which has been formed. "Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear". Two exciting projects underway are the restoration of a mainland farmhouse in Port Oneida and the preservation/restoration of the August Beck cedar wood barn foundation on the island. A video, published by their group was shown at the Picnic. Our Society is being invited to become partners with this group to accomplish the Beck barn restoration. There is a need for a contribution of \$2,000 for supplies and materials. Work is to begin this fall with the cutting and drying of the cedar wood - the actual restoration will take place next spring on the island. Mike and Beth Grosvenor have offered to provide transportation of materials to the work site. Joel Wright, Traverse City, has offered his expertise - he is the Vice-President for the Michigan Barn Preservation Network. NPS would provide housing, some tools, etc. Informal discussion and favorable comments followed.

Duane Pearson joined us at this point. Kathy Bietau inquired about the Schoolhouse Grant the Society had written. He gave a detailed report on the Schoolhouse exterior restoration project. Detailing costs and labor requirements. He mentioned that volunteers were not allowed to work on scaffolding, which limits the quantity of work we could actually do. He said the NPS was experiencing difficulty maintaining work crews on the island. He said the project could not take place this fall, due to the time and labor required by the NPS to remove the lead-based paint. Volunteer housing could be provided for this project.

Mr. Pearson continued with a discussion concerning the reasons why the August Beck Farm restoration project was a "bad idea". He explained the NPS philosophy regarding occupancy of inland houses on the Island, saying that it is disruptive to the solitude of the islands interior. This philosophy, as stated in the GMP is: "a sense of discovery and a feeling of solitude will be integral to the visitor experience ... the sense of exploration should increase as visitors move inland through the fallow farmlands". The parks "interpretive method" for this area is "discovery and exploration". NOTE: Please reference Bill Herd's comments in this Newsletter. Mr. Pearson suggested the use of the unused rooms in the island visitor center as a place for interpreting island life.

Mr. Pearson gave the following figure for restoration of the Lighthouse: \$1,444,937.00. The North Manitou Cemetery sign was also discussed. There is a question as to whether the sign that the Society agreed to fund has been made and placed at the North Manitou Cemetery. Kim Mann did not think the sign had been made

yet and the Memorial Society has never paid the bill. Mr. Pearson asked Kim Mann to look into this.

Meeting adjourned 12:05.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn Roe, Secretary Pro Tem

News from Our President

The Board of the South Manitou Memorial Society held a meeting on October 4th at the home of Treasurer Joe Orbeck, in Plainwell, MI. Vice-President Lynn Roe and I were also there as were Margaret Orbeck and Zella Morris. Secretary Judy Fogle was unable to attend.

We discussed a wide range of issues including the delay of the project to stabilize the barn foundation on the August Beck Farm to next spring or summer to allow the cedar lumber to age; the related issue of gifts to Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear apparently being funded to the National Park Foundation in Washington D.C. and our concern about our gifts, if any, being dedicated to projects on South Manitou. We also discussed the lack of handicap access to and from the island and on the island itself; and the poison ivy on South Manitou which appears to be expanding without any spray treatment. Also discussed was an August 11, 1999 article on Rita Rusco being "forced off" North Manitou Island and that her home was demolished by the Park Service a few days later.

Most of our board meeting was devoted to where the Society goes from here, since the Park Service has rejected our proposal to refurbish the August Beck and George Conrad Hutzler Farmsteads. Our options, as discussed at the Annual Meeting are to: 1) do the Park Service's work list within the Volunteers in the Park Program. 2) return to our original task of preserving the cemetery and other grave sites; or 3) be visible and vocal in supporting and defending the island and its history and culture.

The board unanimously chose the third option. The motion made and passed is: "For the South Manitou Memorial Society to be more visible and vocal on behalf of South Manitou Island with the Park Service, the media, and members of Congress."

What does this mean? That we will be proactive and not reactive to actions by the Park Service (or more precisely the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore) as to how they impact on South Manitou Island and its historical and cultural preservation.

A model for this might be the British Parliament system in which the political party out of power is called the loyal opposition, that is, it is loyal to England and is in opposition to the party in power. In our case, we will be loyal to the island and watchful of the Lakeshore on policies or actions which might impair the Society's commitment to preserve the history and culture of the island.

In many ways, the September 27, 1999 letter from Ivan Miller, Lakeshore Superintendent, inviting the response from our members on the demolition and removal of the buildings on the Theodore Beck Farmstead is related to this board action. (See letter from Mr. Miller in this Newsletter).

Another motion passed unanimously involves the book on the people of South Manitou that Society member, Linda Henry is working on. She is, in fact, about 85% finished with the first draft and hopes that the rest will be written this winter. The motion indicates the board's "100%" support of her finishing the book and our pledge to participate in its publication."

As always, I invite your response to these issues.

Donald A. Morris, President

TREASURY REPORT
South Manitou Memorial Society
September 30, 1999

<u>ASSETS</u>	<u>5-31-99</u>
Glenn Furst Memorial Fund	\$ 10,000.00
Fred Burdick Memorial Fund	3,187.25
Jack Phillips Memorial Fund	1,644.97
Empire National Bank C.D.'s	11,419.01
Empire National Bank Savings Account	3,918.13
Empire National Bank Checking Account	1,255.96
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 31,775.32

Submitted by Joe Orbeck - Memorial Society Treasurer. 7/31/99

**The following is a letter which was written to Den Morris from Ivan Miller,
 Superintendent of Sleeping Bear Dunes N.L. on September 27, 1999.
 (the letter has been retyped word-for-word by the editor).**

Dear Don:

The National Park Service (NPS) proposes to demolish and remove buildings and ruins at the Theodore Beck Farmstead on South Manitou Island. We will be notifying the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) concerning this adverse effect to a significant cultural resource. We hope you will inform your members through your newsletter about this undertaking, allowing us to comply with our responsibility, under Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act, to notify and consult with interested parties.

The National Lakeshore is currently working on a Historic Properties Management Plan, which will determine the long-range future of the many historic buildings and their associated cultural landscapes on both islands and the mainland. The Theodore Beck Farmstead will be added to this plan, and we anticipate that the plan will be completed in fiscal year 2000.

The structures located at the Theodore Beck Farmstead were determined eligible to the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 by the Michigan State Historic Preservation Officer. The structures include the Farmhouse, Pump House, Honeymoon Cottage, and the Barn Ruins. The structures were built in the 1870s for the farmhouse, the 1880s for the barn, and the 1910s for the shed and cottage. The current physical condition for all structures is poor. The barn has completely collapsed and is a pile of rubble. The structures are in a remote area of South Manitou Island, and need to be removed due to safety concerns. Additional information on the structures located on South Manitou Island is included in the report *Coming Through with Rye* written by Brenda Williams and Professors Alanen and Tischler, 1996. This report is made available to your membership each year at your annual picnic.

The National Park Service is proposing mitigation factors to minimize the impact to the loss of the cultural landscape by proposing that all structures be removed down to their concrete or stone foundation walls. We are also suggesting that materials that can be

salvaged to repair other historic structures be collected and utilized to stabilize neighboring structures. Examples of important historic features and construction techniques will also be collected and tagged as part of the park's artifact collection. Of course, these suggestions will have to be approved and included in the Memorandum of Agreement we will be preparing in consultation with the SHPO and the ACHP.

We are forwarding photographs of the structures and have included site plans and location maps for your review. We would appreciate your membership comments on the undertaking. Copies of comments should also be sent to the SHPO and the ACHP. We also want to invite your membership to the next public meeting of the Historic Properties Management Plan in which this undertaking will be discussed. That meeting will be December 3rd at 9:30 a.m. in the Headquarters Auditorium in Empire, Michigan. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,
Ivan D. Miller

Here are the addresses to write your comments:

Brian Conway, SHPO
Michigan Library and Historical Center
717 West Allegan
Lansing, MI 48918-1800

Sleeping Bear Dunes N.L.
Mr. Ivan Miller, Superintendent
9922 Front St. (Hwy M-72)
Empire, MI 49630-9797

Don Klima, Chief
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Eastern Office of Review
Old Post Office Building, Room 809
1100 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

Editor's Note:

Please consider a comment to express your feelings about the demolition of the Theodore Beck Farmstead structures. Many of you have not visited this farm for many years. While it is true that the barn is now a pile of rubble and the Honeymoon Cottage has fallen apart, the farmhouse is still structurally square with a good roof.

The farmhouse windows were boarded up many years ago to prevent entry and to stabilize the building. These boards have either deteriorated or have been removed, allowing animals, weather, etc. to enter the structure. However, the building is in much better than "poor" condition. Please remember that the entire farmstead was determined eligible to the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 by our State Historic Preservation Officer. These structures were historically significant at that time, but were not properly cared for by our National Park. These structures were not safety concerns in 1978, but have become of concern due to negligence since that time. We all know there are many areas on the island (man-made and natural) which could be considered "safety concerns". We should not have to lose additional historic and cultural resources on South Manitou Island. I have the photos and maps from the Park which I would be happy to send to anyone who is interested. Please send a letter or email me and I will send them your way! My address is on the last page of this newsletter. Let's become advocates for the island! Please consider writing to the above addresses. Thanks!

THOSE WHOM WE WILL MISS ...

We lost three South Manitou Islanders this spring whom we will miss very much.

George Thompson

George Thompson died in Muskegon on March 18, 1999 leaving his wife Rula, a son, four step-children and several grandchildren. He was 92 years old. George was born on South Manitou Island on March 1, 1907. The following is the Story of the Tom Thompson drowning in 1910 (as written by Ethel Stormer):

Benth Johnson of South Manitou Island, had two step-sons, Theodore Thompson and Thomas Thompson. These two men married two of August Beck's daughters, Matilda and Hattie Beck. Theodore married Matilda and Thomas married Hattie. The Thompson brothers earned their living, at this time, as fishermen. They lived over on the North Point of the South Manitou harbor, until Theodore joined the U.S. Life Saving Service and Thomas got the job of carrying the mail to and from the Island and Glen Haven. He named his Mail Boat the "Beatrice", after his daughter. He was also very proud of his son, George, and often took him with him on his trips across the lake to Glen Haven.

When weather permitted, Tom kept the "Beatrice" anchored out in the harbor of South Manitou and he rowed ashore in a skiff. That was his plan on the summer day he and three-year old George returned from getting the mail. He tied the "Beatrice" to her anchored buoy, put young George in the skiff and started to row ashore, when suddenly the skiff capsized, throwing both of them into the water. Tom grabbed George and put him on his back. Of course, young George was so frightened he wrapped his arms tightly around his fathers neck, choking him. Hattie was on the beach, saw what was happening and started screaming for help. She was able to wade out to where Tom was struggling and she rescued George, but Tom had sunk below the surface. The U.S. Life Savers soon arrived and retrieved Tom's body.

Thomas Thompson is buried in the South Manitou Cemetery. Many times George told me he wished that he had drowned that day instead of his father. He always felt that his Mother, Hattie, and sister, Beatrice needed his father, Thomas, more than they needed him, a three year-old boy.

George Thompson went on to marry and raise a large family of his own. He worked for the Santa Fe Railroad which ran between Chicago and Los Angeles. He also worked in the tool and die field for a number of years

before his 23 1/2 year employment with General Motors Corporation in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He was a valued member of the South Manitou Memorial Society and provided much historical information about his days on the island. George's family and friends will miss him very much!

Lou Raynor

Lou Raynor passed away on July 29, 1999 at Leelanau Memorial Health Center. He was born in Long Island, New York in 1917. He was the son of Fletcher William and Louise (Benjamin) Raynor. On August 12, 1959 he married Sherry Nevans in East Lansing MI. Lou taught ceramics at Michigan State University. He was a longtime South Manitou Islander who built a beautiful home on the island and raised his children there, teaching them to love the island. He was the "island artist", and enjoyed creating his artwork on the island, incorporating the island's unique resources. He loved South Manitou's harbor, which his home overlooked. He was blessed with eight children, one brother, one sister, and eight grandchildren. We were all blessed to have known Lou, and many will miss him.

(Agnes) Joan Olsen Carlson

Joan Carlson, a former landowner and long-time friend of South Manitou Island, passed away July 12, 1999. She was born in Frankfort, Michigan on Dec. 2, 1919, to Emma (Nelson) and Ole Olsen. Her father was a commercial fisherman and businessman in Frankfort, and her mother was a school teacher and education instructor at the County Normal School. She graduated from Ferris Institute (now Ferris State University) in 1942 with a degree in Pharmacy. She was a registered Pharmacist for 53 years, working in retail and hospital settings. She retired from Butterworth Hospital (now Spectrum Health), Grand Rapids, in 1982, and then worked part-time for another 10 years at Paul Oliver Hospital in Frankfort. She married Nels Carlson, a dairyman, on June 30, 1946. He passed away in 1981. She is survived by her two children, Jonelle, of South Bend, In., and Edward of Frankfort, MI; brother and sisters-in-law, cousins, nephews, nieces, and many friends.

Joan's connection to South Manitou Island stretches back to her childhood. Her father and grandfather sometimes fished off South Manitou, and occasionally had to "weather-in" there. (A picture of one of her father's fishing tugs appears in Gerald Crouner's book). She and her family were also friends of the Anderson and Johnson families of South Manitou. In the 1930's her father purchased Seagull Point, intending to fish off the property, but never did. When her parents died in the mid-1960's, Joan inherited Seagull Point.

After an initial visit to see just what it was they had inherited, Joan and her husband and children spent almost every subsequent vacation on South Manitou. Joan thoroughly enjoyed being on South Manitou and meeting and making friends with almost anyone connected to the island.

Following her retirement to Lower Herring Lake near Frankfort, she made frequent trips to South Manitou and visited and corresponded with many friends from "the island". These friends were often overnight guests at her cottage as they went to or from South Manitou. Joan also hosted several winter-time chili parties/South Manitou reunions. A bout with cancer did little to slow her down; she continued to visit South Manitou whenever she could, and was active in the Memorial Society.

Joan dearly loved South Manitou Island. She supported preservation of both its natural and human history. One of her favorite pictures was of her and her husband Nels walking on the dunes on the west side of the island, silhouetted against the sky and water. She is greatly missed.

(written and submitted by Jonelle Carlson)

(Below is a photo of Joan with George Grosvenor and Lynn Roe in Leland Harbor on May 16, 1998.)



This is the letter which was written by Bill Herd, Sleeping Bear Dunes N.L. Cultural Resource and Interpretive Ranger - and was mentioned by Mr. Pearson at the Annual Meeting:

The proper question is not whether preservation of the August Beck farm was a good idea a year ago or if the South Manitou Island Memorial Society should spend their money on the schoolhouse. The real question is do we want people living at the August Beck or George Conrad Hutzler farms and do we want them interpreting the sites for the visitors. The answer to both parts of this question is NO.

The management philosophy for South Manitou Island is clearly stated in the GMP (General Management Plan) and is just as correct today as it was twenty years ago. "A sense of discovery and a feeling of solitude will be integral to the visitor experience ... The sense of exploration should increase as visitors move inland through the fallow farmlands ..."

When the park first put maintenance crews on the island, they were housed in the August Beck house. It was apparent from the beginning that this was not a good arrangement. Using the August Beck house for quarters disrupted the solitude of the interior of the island with road traffic, generator noise, radios and just having someone living in the place people backpacked and biked to get to so they could explore. We moved park staff to the village for just this reason. It would be a step backwards to have people living in the Beck house again.

Similarly, each year for the past twenty years we have had a proposal from someone to live in one of the island farms to provide interpretive tours. We have always turned them away since the interpretive method for this area is discovery and exploration. This interpretive method was selected not because of a lack of money or staff, but because it is a valid and powerful education technique and is consistent with the overall management philosophy. The effectiveness of this method is indicated in nearly every newspaper and magazine article that has been written about South Manitou Island.

The proper place for a more formal interpretive approach to the parks agricultural history is on the mainland where more people can have access to it and it does not disrupt wilderness values.

While it is desirable to have partnership help in restoring the farm buildings on South Manitou (and it might be necessary to have a group stay at the August Beck house for a time while this work is being done), having permanent residents in the Beck or Hutzler farm is not to the benefit of the visitor or the interpretive program.

HAPPY BAPTISM ECHOES SOUTH MANITOU'S FORGOTTEN COMMUNITY

Phoebe Sarah Hughes, daughter of Robert and Jennifer Hughes, was Baptized August 17, 1999, by Rev. John F. Cenmak on the beach of South Manitou Island. Before family and friends and in the shadow of the South Manitou Island Lighthouse, Phoebe received the Reverend's blessing with the water from Lake Michigan.

In attendance were Phoebe's Grandparents, John and Suzanne Hughes and her Godparents, Polly and Peter Peltier. Also present were Phoebe's aunts and uncles: John and Andrea Hughes, and Bob and Sarah Ek (their children Chris and Maddie), Bob and Carrie Richard's (and their children Lauren, Callen and Helen). Phoebe's second cousin Peter Jenks and his wife Katy, their daughter Brandi and other friends were also witness to this event.

"We chose South Manitou because it is special to all of us," said Phoebe's father Rob. "She was a real sport and didn't even cry when the cold Lake Michigan water was splashed on her head."

Phoebe and her family will be allowed to return to their cabin on South Manitou for only two more years before the National Park Service takes possession of the property.

submitted by John Hughes, with our thanks!

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The deadline for articles to be included in the next Newsletter is February 15, 2000. Please submit to Newsletter Editor: Kathy Bietau at: 11196 W. Clear Lake Cir. Branch, MI 49402. OR E-mail to bietau@CARRINTER.net

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Lynn Roe
Treasurer: Joe Orbeck
Secretary: Judy Fogle

FORWARDING & RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED

The South Manitou Memorial Society
 Newsletter is published three times
 a year. In March, July , and
 November. Ideas, suggestions,
 research, stories, photographs,
 illustrations, etc., are encouraged.
 Send to above address.



**SOUTH MANITOU MEMORIAL SOCIETY
 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

DONATION: _____ **\$10.00** _____ **\$25.00**
 _____ **\$50.00** _____ **\$100.00** _____ **\$OTHER**

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