



## *Manitou Islands Memorial Society*

# Manitou Memories

### **A visit with Joanna (Stormer) Smith...**

Contributed by Lynn (Crown) Roe

On March 13, 2011 Joanna and I spent a pleasant afternoon together at her lovely home in Lansing. We reminisced about family ties and the business of living.

Joanna has a strong connection to both of the Manitou Islands through her parents. Her mother, Ethel Paulina (Furst) Stormer was born on South Manitou Island where her father Martin Christopher Furst was in the Life Saving Service (later Coast Guard). When Ethel's mother, Zella, was widowed, she married Earnest George Hutzler, Keeper of the Light on North Manitou Island. That is what made it possible for Ethel to meet Joe Stormer! Joseph Stormer lived on North Manitou with his mother Helen Voice Stormer and his father, Peter Stormer, a logger.

When Joe was 21, he declared he was in love with Ethel; but she was only 14 and he would wait until she grew up! He did! They married June 16, 1926 (refer to Glenn Furst's book, "My Point of View", pages 86-87). Later, Joe took a job in Coloma, MI as an Orchard Manager and it was there that Joanna was born, September 1, 1928.

The little family moved to Empire so Joe could help his Dad at the farm on Stormer Road. While there Joanna remembers her mother making lunch for the mail carrier, Norman Welch. As his father failed, Joe would stay overnight so his mother could get some rest.

In 1933, when Joanna was 4 ½, a baby sister joined the family! They were living in Benzie County. Joe was working

at Willard Fruit Farm which was on the north shore of Crystal Lake. He also worked as bookkeeper for Benzie Co-op. Joanna remembers that "Mom took care of the baby" while she roamed the orchard with Dad!

Joe made sure Joanna learned to swim. She had to prove it by swimming from "post to post" along the Beulah Dock!

Joe and Ethel bought the house in Benzonia in 1936 and Joe made it a home for her. Joanna went to school in Benzonia through eighth grade. Sister Zella shared the 3-quarter bed with her. She had a flashlight in case she had to get up in the night. Often, she would use it to read under the covers! When cousins came to visit, there were three in the bed!

Some men from the area were going to Detroit area to find work and the Stormers went too! Joanna graduated from the 12<sup>th</sup> grade in Van Dyke (near Detroit). She went to Michigan State Normal College, which later became Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti.

Joanna met Don at Shade Trails Speech Improvement Camp where she was Secretary and Don was counselor. They were married on April 7, 1951. They have one daughter, Denise Lore who married Phillip A. Brown II. They live in Lansing. The four of them are a close-knit family.

Joanna was a docent for 20 years at the Michigan Historical Museum in Lansing.

I asked Joanna three questions:

1. What is the best thing you have ever done? She replied, "Being a Mom!"



2. How would you like to be remembered? She replied, "For caring about others!"
3. What is your fondest memory? She answered, "So many! Too many to label! I've had a full and rewarding life! I couldn't have asked for more!"

Joanna has given permission to share a story from her mother, Ethel (Furst) Stormer's writings. It tells of the birth of Ethel's half sister, Leota Violet Hutzler. Ethel's mother, Zella Furst Hutzler went into labor before the "due date" and Ethel was called upon to be "mid-wife" at a young age! The account is as follows:

### **Ethel the Midwife**

Written by Ethel P. (Furst) Stormer in 1984

We were living at the Lighthouse on North Manitou Island. We had moved there from South Manitou on February 19, 1919, when my step-father, Ernest Hutzler, was promoted from first assistant keeper on South Manitou to Keeper-in-charge at North Manitou Lighthouse. On July 10, 1920, my Mother's thirty-fifth birthday, she was nine months pregnant for her fifth child, and was hoping to get across Lake Michigan to Empire where she had made arrangements to stay with Mrs. Anna Getman, a midwife, to have her baby. However, she postponed her departure from the Island one day too long and on this beautiful July morning, as the Lighthouse boat lay moored to the dock out in front of the Fog Signal and the first assistant, Mr. Charles Linsmeyer, was standing by waiting to help operate the boat to take my Mother across to the Mainland, she quietly told us that she was having labor pains and she knew that she would never get across the Lake before her baby was born.



**Ernest George and Zella Hutzler with children Glenn, George, and Leota.**

I lacked ten days of being fourteen years old and I knew absolutely nothing about "birthing babies," so of course, I became very frightened, but Mother told me where

to find clean bed linens and padding and how to prepare a delivery bed for her on our sofa-bed in the living room. Our bedrooms were all upstairs and she felt it would be easier to care for her and the baby if they were on the ground floor. In those days, all mothers were expected to remain in bed, off their feet, for ten days after delivery of a baby.



**North Manitou Lighthouse  
E.G. Hutzler's home from Feb. 1919 until Feb. 1928**

Ernest, my step-father also panicked and he ran down to the dock where Mr. Linsmeyer waited and told him to leave immediately in the boat to go over to South Manitou Island and get his Mother, Grandma Hutzler to come and help us.

Grandma Hutzler had served as mid-wife for many years and had delivered many babies on the Island, including my little half-brother, George, who was now nearly two years old. Ernest also called South Manitou to have Robinettes' tell Grandma Hutzler to be ready and down on the dock as soon as the Lighthouse boat arrived there.

My brother, Glenn, nearly seven years old, was told to take the smaller children out toward the woods and watch over them until they were called to come home. Of course, he didn't understand why such a request was being made, but did as he was told.

In the meantime, our neighbor, Lillian Marsh, and I prepared "the delivery bed" and Mother's pains were coming closer together and more severe. As we helped her to lie down on the bed on her back, she cried out in pain. Ernest ran out of the room to the telephone in the hallway and called Ray Robinette on South Manitou again to tell him to hurry and get a Doctor as quickly as he could. However, in his haste and excitement, he didn't tell Ray where to go or what Doctor to go after. Ray ran down to his boat at the dock and hurriedly started the engine, cast off the lines and headed out into the Bay before he realized he wasn't told whether to go to Glen Haven or Leland for the Doctor. But by that time he could see the Lighthouse boat coming into the harbor, so he headed toward it and when he came along side, he stuck his head out of the cabin window and yelled at Mr. Linsmeyer, "Where am I supposed to go?" Charlie, not knowing what the



situation was, answered "Well, how in hell do I know?" Ray explained that he was going after a Doctor. Charlie advised him to go back to the dock, call Ernest and find out where he was supposed to go.

By the time he did get back to his house and called North Manitou Lighthouse for that information, my little half-sister, Leota, had been born and my Mother was resting quietly, so Ernest told Ray we didn't need a Doctor. Grandma Hutzler arrived shortly afterward and she took over the clean-up job.

Later on I went out to find Glenn and George, so they could be introduced to their new baby sister.

This summer she celebrated her sixty-fourth birthday and I had my seventy-eighth!



Ernest George Hutzler with daughter Leota.



## From: the President's Desk, Rhonda Kruch

Hello fellow MIMS Member:

Manitou Islands Memorial Society is a heritage –based group that is brought

together by our desire to preserve the historic and cultural resources of North and South Manitou Islands with each of us having our own "special memory" and/or "connection" to the islands. The MIMS Board would like to thank each of our members for their generous donations that make our mission statement possible.

Many wonderful things happened last summer on the Islands. Each of us help make our preservation work possible from donations, sharing of pictures and/or memories, to hands on work to help complete one of our on-going projects.

### Current projects:

August Beck restoration will continue next summer during the month of July with a goal of completing downstairs restoration.

Theodore Beck restoration will continue next summer with wall and door restoration.

The Haas Cottage Exhibit will continue as the remaining funds from the Americana Grant will be used to create a display that will be opened to the public inside that historic home.

Many hands make lighter work! Volunteer work looks different for each MIMS's volunteer. Some volunteer on the islands, but much of MIM's volunteer work can be completed at home on your own time schedule. We are currently organizing next summer's projects. Please consider volunteering. MIMS needs your help.

Please contact Rhonda Kruch at 989-345-1778 or [kruchr@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kruchr@sbcglobal.net) to volunteer. Thank you for your continued support!

## MIMS Changes for 2012

Contributed by Linda Henry

At our Annual Membership Meeting on, July 30, we consulted the membership about switching the day of our next meeting to Sunday and that of the Island Cruise to Saturday. Initially, this was suggested by Manitou Island Transit. For MIT, Sunday is a day when large numbers of weekend campers depart SMI. As a result, they can only take a limited number of day-trippers who require transportation to and from the Island on that day. Our cruise has always been out to the Island and back on the Sunday following our annual meeting. Reservations are often not available for the people who would like to go.

After an engaging discussion, the membership decided that it might be better for MIMS members as well to switch the days. Since the Island cruise doesn't return until around 6:00PM, out of town members may choose not to go because that is so late to head home. The Annual Meeting is usually done earlier and members are free to leave when they like. Therefore, in 2012, the Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, July 29<sup>th</sup> and the cruise to the Island will occur on Saturday, July 28<sup>th</sup>.

Judy Fogle asked at the 2011 Annual Membership Meeting whether we had any local members who might be able to help out-of-town members by providing them a place to stay. This idea was discussed and we thought it was a great suggestion. So we have revised our membership/volunteer form to include this information. The



MIMS Board will keep a list of members who are willing to open their homes for visitation for the Annual Membership weekend. Out-of-town members will be able to contact a Board member to discover what's available. See the revised form in this newsletter.

## **MIMS Annual Meeting:**

Contributed by Judy A. Fogle

This year's MIMS Annual meeting on July 30<sup>th</sup> was a great success. Many regulars, many returnees, as well as folks we hadn't seen in years were able to attend. About 40 people in all. The food, conversations, lots of pictures to both view and scan, and door prizes were fabulous!

Gena Culver shared a story of her relatives: Brothers Theodore and August Beck were actually headed to Traverse City Bay from Germany not SMI. It turns out that the captain of the ship didn't know how to find the Bay, so he said, "They need people on the Island, so you stay here instead!"

Rich Riker was raised on SMI in the George C Hutzler Farm House. Rich Riker told about the night the Morazan was grounded on the southwest side of the Island during a very powerful, early winter storm in 1960. The Coast Guard called his father about 2 a.m., for assistance. His Dad was told to go to the bluff and see if there was a freighter stuck out there. Rich was 12 years old at that time. During this very strong storm, Rich went with his Dad as he drove the Jeep to the bluff. The road on the bluff, which made this trip possible, was made from logs that were hauled and rolled down from the top of the bluff. This trip took 2 hours in both directions, just to let the Coast Guard know that the Morazan was in fact stuck out there in Lake Michigan.

Many descendants of the Benth Johnson family came and shared stories and pictures, with a small group of us touring SMI the following day.

## **A message from your treasurer:**

### **Linda Henry**

The Manitou Islands Memorial Society remains in excellent financial condition. We have over \$18,000.00 in our various bank accounts. Of that around \$3,000.00 is allocated. This

money is the remainder of a grant that we received from the Americana Foundation to restore the Haas Cottage. We have completed the structural foundation and this winter we will use the remaining funds for an interpretive display in the two front rooms.

We continue to work towards paying off the loan that was incurred in the relighting of the South Manitou Lighthouse in 2009. Although repayment of this loan is not our obligation, we are committed to seeing it paid in full. The loan originally was for \$22,500.00 from the Will Larson Foundation. With fundraising efforts spearheaded by Mike and Beth Grosvenor of the Manitou Island Transit, we now owe less than \$6,000.00.

We continue to use our own funds for restoration work on two other Island projects. The Theodore Beck house on the south shore has been an ongoing project for several years as well as the downstairs interior on the August Beck farm, which should be finished during the summer of 2012.

For those of you who have not yet paid your 2012 dues, they are always due January 1st of the each year. They are still only \$10.00/year, which mostly covers the cost of newsletters that come out 2 times per year.

Despite these various expenditures, we remain in excellent financial health because of the generosity of our members. Although sadly, we lose a few of our elders every year, new members are continually joining. Most of our Board and membership are still descendants of Island settlers and we are the only historical organization in the area that has such a base. Many thanks to everyone for helping keep the poignant history of the Islands alive.

## **The current MIMS Board Members are:**

President: Rhonda Kruch  
Vice President: Paul Rocheleau  
Treasurer: Linda Henry  
Secretary: Jeff Reuteler  
Member-at-Large: Lynn (Crown) Roe  
Member-at-Large: Gena Culver  
Member-at-Large: Robert Beck  
Member-at-Large: Judy Fogle  
Member-at-Large: Carol Ann (Drew) Sanctorem



## The newest members of the MIMS

### Board are:



Carol Ann Sanctorum with Aunt Ruby Drew Omell-Jackman

### Carol Ann (Drew) Sanctorum— Member-At-Large

Carol is the great granddaughter of Peter Drew (Drow), granddaughter of Edward Drow and Josephine LaVanture, Daughter of Gordon V. Drew and Anna P Bojarski.

Peter Drew arrived at the North Manitou Island Wooding Station pre-1860 census with his wife, governess and children. He was an Island Blacksmith and fiddled for the Islands' inhabitants.

Years ago, I corresponded with the late Rita Hadra Rusco, preeminent historian/author for NMI, MI who informed me that the Peter (Drow) Drew family was the only descendants of French ancestry.

The Leelanau Historical Society's annual field trip to NMI was my first once a year opportunity to spend a day on NMI, Land of my forefathers-my heritage.

As I told the late Paul Maleski, NMI represents a slice of God's Heaven on Earth as well as a taste of Hell. I love the Islands and will serve MIMS to the best of my abilities.



### Judy Fogle— Member-At-Large

My husband and I first visited SMI in 1974 and I returned with my children in 1981

through 1998. During those years, I made friends with Island alumni, wonderful, gentle people. They all gave me great history. If only I could have remembered all they taught and places shown me. I have rejoined the MIMS Board to help restore and find that history.

## MIMS Volunteer Project at the August Beck Farm 2011

Contributed by Judy A. Fogle and Joe Kruch

Stepping off the ferry boat onto South Manitou Island is always a thrill to me.

Whether it is to camp, do

maintenance, or a MIMS tour; it means that I made it. Such occurrences happened in July and September, 2011. Our group accomplished a major amount of work in, out, and around the August Beck house/farm. The clearing crew of two, removed brush, weeds, and poison ivy from the farm machinery (with some long lost relics moved to the barn), along with mowing the hillside down from the grave at the Conrad Hutzler Farm. At the old Beck farm house, we painted the living room, bedroom, and closets, with drywall installed on the ceiling in the dining room, flooring removed by the layers in the kitchen, and the cast iron stove moved. This iconic old farmhouse long shuttered and forlorn, with the

smell of fresh paint and upkeep, may now have a new life retelling of past lives that passed through its doors, calling it home. Outside, an old sidewalk was uncovered leading to where a door used to be, but where now for over a half a century has been a kitchen



August Beck Farmhouse  
Photo courtesy of Jeff Reuteler



Matt and Carl Luther working in the dining room  
Photo courtesy of Jeff Reuteler



window. MIT tours and campers were able to come through for a tour, encouraged to become MIMS members and come back as a volunteer.

We came back in September armed with a professional drywall and now friend, to plaster the drywall, finish painting, and tackle a huge job of scraping tar paper from the kitchen floor, scrubbing/washing the hardwood bedroom floors, and storing the paints for next year.

The remnant orchard to the west of the farmhouse has now been essentially cleared after several years of clearing choking thickets of woody growth and regrowth, culminating with the adjacent clearing of the earlier Christoph Beck hilltop homestead site, revealing a beautiful vista of the farmscape from this small knoll. The long fallen structure, considered a random outbuilding when viewed in old photos taken from a distance of the farm, fueled speculation of being a homestead site with its gone wild presence of domestic roses, lilacs, and periwinkle as the area was gradually cleared. This coupled with Park Service records of a Homestead Application No.153 made on Feb.25, 1863 at the Traverse City Land Office, of a homestead home being built that measured 14'x18' made of wood, similar to what was in the photo. Verification was made while having the good fortune

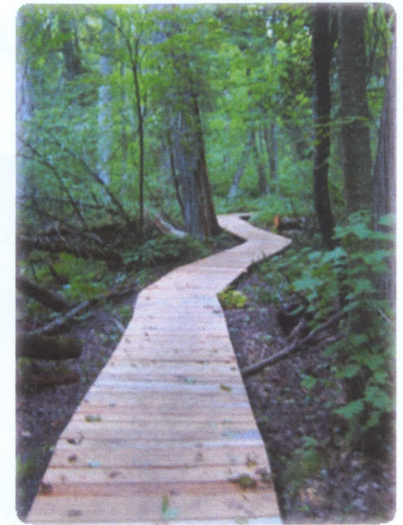


**Volunteers at August Beck**  
Photo courtesy of Jeff Reuteler

of viewing Bob Becks (Great Grandson of August Beck) photo collection of a photo titled "Our homestead", taken in front of the log structure from a short distance away, a very valuable find.

August eventually acquired this adjoining farm plus additional acreage forming the now known farmstead. On our off time we squeezed in a climb to the dunes from the "bone boat" trail, visited the cemetery, Johnny Hutzler farm, and the Theodore Beck house meeting Paul Rocheleau's group rebuilding the porch on the east side. A walk along the new boardwalk at the old growth cedars was doubling rewarding as the apparent intricacy, skill, and labor put into this structure complimented the beauty and majesty of the old forest. The SEEDS Youth Conservation Program, modeled after the 1930's Civilian Conservation Corps, built this boardwalk with milled black locust trees from the Glen Haven area. Making the walk essentially handicapped accessible when motorized tours to the site are soon reopened, with virtually no impact to the forest floor from foot traffic.

All and all, wonderful meals were eaten while meeting new people, sharing Island history/stories, with lots of camaraderie and laughter.



**Boardwalk through Cedars**  
Photo courtesy of Joe Kruch



**Volunteers at Theodore Beck**  
Photo courtesy of Joe Kruch

## **MIMS Volunteer** **Project at the** **Theodore Beck** **Farm 2011**

Restoration work on the Theodore Beck Farm House on SMI continued this past September. Paul Rocheleau traveled to the Island with Ross Browne and Steve

Sowmick, and was joined later that week by his brother, Mike Rocheleau, and some of his friends Doug Schumacher, John Hardy, and Damien Allen. Their task was to rebuild the east porch next



**Another view at Theodore Beck**



to the kitchen, replace some missing cedar siding, reinforce the south porch, fix some open window covers, and uncover some buried sidewalk next to the house. Progress was made with the majority of the work completed, but restoration work will continue next summer with walls and door. Please contact Paul Rocheleau at [prochel@mt-pleasant.org](mailto:prochel@mt-pleasant.org) to volunteer for this project in the future.

## **MIMS Volunteer Project at the NMI Cemetery 2011**



**Paul Rocheleau and Susan Wasserman**

Paul Rocheleau with friend Geoff Quick traveled to NMI in early August last summer to install a grave marker in the NMI Cemetery. Once on the island, they met Susan Wasserman, daughter of Josephine Alford Hollister, Susan's son Brian Bassett, and grandson Henry Bassett. Together, they placed a cement cross with a brass name plate on the grave site of Josephine Alford Hollister in the NMI Cemetery. The weather cooperated and a good time was

enjoyed by Susan's family and new friends.

## **Ronald William Rosie, Jr.**

Ronald W. Rosie, Jr. was born on November 22, 1925 and passed away on Thursday, July 14, 2011 at the age



of 85 in Holland, Michigan. He was the eldest son of South Manitou Island's last light keeper, Ronald, Senior.

Ronald and his wife Angelus were residents of

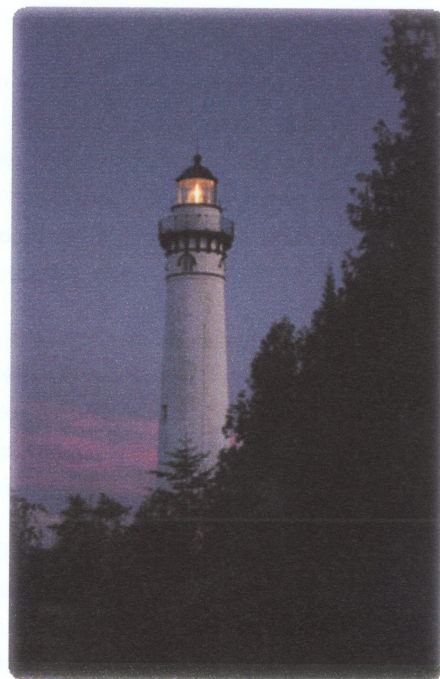
ackatawa, which is a small village near Holland. His

wife, Angelus, passed away five years earlier, following a lingering illness.

Ronald attended grade school on South Manitou Island and graduated from high school in Manistique. His parents were light keepers on both South Manitou Island and Seul Choix Pointe. Ron was a veteran of World War II, serving in the U.S. Navy, and fought in the Pacific Theater. After the war, Ronald married Angelus LaRose and moved back to Macatawa Park into the home that he was born. He was employed by Georgian Bay Line as a carpenter and wheelsman on the Great Lakes Passenger Liners North American and South American. He was plant manager at River Queen Boat Works and was later employed by Big Dutchman, where he retired.

Ronald is survived by his younger brother Roger Rosie, his two sons and two daughters, eight grandchildren, and ten great-grandchildren.

Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Rosie, Senior came to South Manitou Island from Holland with their two boys, Ronald, Jr. and Roger, on October 17, 1938. This was Ronald, Senior's first time as a light keeper, but he would also be the last light



**SMI Light Photo courtesy of Jeff Reuteler**

keeper for SMI Light House. The

U.S. Coast Guard would take over the light station 3 years after they arrived at SMI. Ronald, Jr. remained sentimental about his connection to SMI after spending 3 years there from the ages of twelve until fifteen. His last trip to SMI was in July of 2009 as a special guest of the National Park Interpreters and volunteers.





Manitou Memories—Winter 2012 Newsletter

MIMS

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