We Are Open and Welcome Our Visitors!

The Marine Museum and the Print Shop Museum are open Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 11am - 5pm
Protar’s House is open for touring Wednesdays 1-3pm.
Greetings to members and friends of the Beaver Island Historical Society. As I sit here contemplating what to share with you, the shadow of COVID is ever present. But it is only a shadow. Our summer may not be what we planned, but there are great things happening behind the scenes. I am thankful for the various COVID grants we received. These funds are helping us to fill in the budget gaps created from reduced tourism, shortened museum hours, and paused donations. COVID slowed our progress on the construction due to shutdowns, but it also extended our timeline to plan more thoughtful and engaging exhibits!

I am excited to tell you about an extraordinary donation of a period-appropriate PRINTING PRESS! The press is a Chandler and Price Platen Press with a patent date of June 10, 1899. While it is not the exact press the Strangites used to publish the Northern Islander it is similar to presses of the period. A complete print case was also donated with drawers full of various letters and fonts.

This generous gift was donated by Jamie McDonough, second generation owner of Johnston’s Printing in Escanaba, MI. Jamie is related to the Beaver Island McDonough’s through Valentine (Val) “Red” McDonough who moved off Beaver Island in the 1920s. Jamie’s father James (Jim) McDonough purchased a print shop in Escanaba. Since then the business has passed through two generations.

In March 2020 the Beaver Islander ferry was sent to Basic Marine in Escanaba for maintenance. The stars aligned and the printing press floated over to its new island home when the ferry returned. The Society asked Karl Bartels to clean up the machine and removed a large wheel of the press so it could fit through the door of the museum. Once the press is set in place, the wheel will be replaced. He did an awesome job – thanks, Karl!

During the construction of the new addition the original log and chink wall was uncovered and identified itself as the perfect spot for the press. It will be displayed in the original Print Shop building.

Kindest Regards,
Lori Taylor-Blitz

(L) Karl Bartels at the Heritage Park working on the Printing Press.
(R) The west wall in the Print Shop proper. Recently the original wall was uncovered and naturally identified itself as the perfect spot for the Printing Press. Photo Credit: Beaver Island Historical Society.
Thank you for your patience this year as we all adjust to the reality of the pandemic. Like many organizations, most of our events are canceled and some events are now virtual. Construction of our Print Shop addition was delayed by a Covid-related work stoppage but is now back on track. The 40th anniversary of Museum Week is on hold until next summer.

We are moving forward securing funds through grant opportunities. We love our members and hope you will be able to continue supporting the Historical Society by renewing your membership or joining our organization. Our membership application is on the back page.

Some interesting events are still scheduled and we hope you can participate.

- We are offering cemetery walks and talks on alternate Sunday afternoons. These are narrated by family members at both island cemeteries at 11:30am. On August 9, and 23 at Holy Cross Cemetery and Sept 6 at the Township Cemetery.
- The restored Sepeshy mural returns to the island.

Archaeological Artifacts from Beaver Island on Display at the Print Shop Museum!

Some of you know that Northern Michigan University archaeology students have been excavating at digs around the Island for several years. The students excavated at the Print Shop, Protar’s House, Coles Bay Fishing Village, the Burke/Egbert Farmstead, and French Bay. These excavations allow the students to develop a timeline of events, life styles, habits and progress on the island. Two classes are still working on this project. Under the leadership of Dr. Scott Demel, the students in the Museum’s Study and Archeological programs gain valuable experience. Mary Simmons, Dr. Demel’s assistant, said that even though they won’t make it back this year, the students are busy putting together several exhibits from previous excavations on the island. Their work will be on display in the expanded Print Shop Museum when it opens. Some of the exhibits will be permanent, but some will rotate because there are so many artifacts to show you!

Example, pictured right is an individual hot-metal letter from the Mormon printing press that was found by the students.

Cookbook & Products Online

We have created an extensive catalog of products available on our website. If you are unable to make it to the island this summer or are looking for that unique Island gift for someone we encourage you to visit our webstore at Beaverislandhistory.org.

Welcome our interns!

Elsie Burton is a permanent resident who graduated from the Beaver Island School this spring. She will be attending Michigan Tech in the fall. She enjoys interacting with the guests and islanders that come to the Print Shop Museum.

At the Marine Museum you are likely to run into Matthew Swarthout. A Sophomore at Kalamazoo College he has returned to us this year for his second summer on the island as an intern.

We welcome our interns and hope that through their positions they grow and gain knowledge that they will carry into their future endeavors.

New members on the Board of Trustees

Some of our board members will be stepping down or timing out of their positions. Elections for vacant positions will be coming up in mid-August. New candidates for the trustee openings are: Joe Callian, Dick Mulvihill, and Jackie LaFreniere.

We thank the “retiring” trustees John Fiegen, Dick McEvoy, and Mike Weede. Their devoted service to the Historical Society can never be repaid. We are fortunate that all three will continue to use their talents and stay active in the society.
BIHS Preserving and Sharing the Unique History of Beaver Island and the Archipelago

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<td>Print Shop Museum  231•448•2254  26275 Main St</td>
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<td>Marine Museum  231•448•2479  38105 Michigan Ave</td>
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MEMBERSHIP YEAR: JANUARY 1 - DECEMBER 31

Become a BIHS member and enjoy and preserve the Island History! Members enjoy free admission to the Print Shop and Marine Museum, special discounts on Museum Merchandise and a one-year subscription to the BIHS newsletter. (BIHS is a 501C (3) non-profit organization, and your contribution may qualify as a charitable contribution)

- Individual $35
- Senior/Student $25
- Couple $50
- Family $100
- Sustaining $250
- Benefactor $500
- Corporate $750
- DONATION $_______

NAME: __________________________
ADDRESS: _______________________
CITY: ___________________________ STATE: ______ ZIP: _______
PHONE: _________________ EMAIL: ________________________________

Amount: _______ CK# _________

Please make check payable to: BIHS
Mail to: Beaver Island Historical Society
PO Box 263, Beaver Island, MI 49782