WOW! What a Space, What a Place.

We look forward to seeing you when we open in the spring.

Save the date:
MUSEUM WEEK 2021 July 18-24 2021

Fall 2020
Director's Note

Happy Holidays to members and friends of the Beaver Island Historical Society. I would like to personally thank each of you for your continued support. 2020 has certainly been a year with abundant surprise. The beginning of the season looked dismal. But our interns and docents showed up and did a fantastic job! The reduced museum hours and increased cleaning services were a challenge, in addition to the uncertainty, “are we doing enough to keep our island safe?”

One thing I have discovered, COVID is an opportunity to rethink how tourism interacts with communities and their economic sectors. For example, Beaver Island saw a steady flow of visitors traveling to the island to embrace solitude and enjoy the natural resources of our beautiful island. In 2020, data gathered from the local business community demonstrated the public’s desire to safely engage in outdoor recreation.

Based on these results, the Historical Society partnered with the Chamber of Commerce and submitted a grant that (if funded) will shift the paradigm of our museum model beyond our walls. It will place more interpretive signage around our island, both on and off the trails and produce a new mobile app that will benefit the entire island economy. Visitors will enjoy a cultural experience in a COVID-safe environment by being outdoors, whether it’s enjoying the historical walking tour in town, hiking the trails, or biking or driving a new historical tour with interpretive signs. These are just a few of the grant objectives.

Another COVID outcome was a redirection of our efforts away from public events which allows us to spend more time developing exhibits, organizing collections and focusing on new grant opportunities. Hopefully, next summer we can have more of a traditional summer, but if not, we are more confident about hosting virtual programming and embracing our visitors from a safe social distance. Please stay safe, I wish you good health in the New Year and look forward to your visit next season.

Kindest Regards,
Lori Taylor-Blitz
Hello From Your New President

2020 certainly has been an interesting year! Beaver Island experienced many changes this year. For me, one of the highlights was the day I walked into the museum front door after the mural arrived. To stand in the original building, next to the Native America basket display, looking at the circa 1940 WPA mural “Hauling in the Net” hanging in the new museum — I was simply stunned! It is beautiful. The completion of this addition is one of the most exciting and encouraging events to happen on Beaver Island this summer. While the pandemic provided challenges to sharing this new addition there have been opportunities to see the completed project and view the progress on social media. It is our hope that in spring 2021 we can host the grand opening event this amazing new space deserves.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Lori Taylor-Blitz, the Beaver Island Historical Society Board of Directors past and present, McDonough Construction, and all who donated to the project to make the addition a reality. Thank you so much for your contribution, hard work, and vision to create this amazing addition to Beaver Island.

Many people have asked: “What is next?” We would like to complete much needed upgrades to the original museum building (also known as the “post office”). The historical society board has prioritized these projects as follows:

• Repair / upgrade outdated electrical service
• Add electric heat (this area is currently unheated)
• Insulate all possible areas of the building for greater energy / heat efficiency
• Repair all damaged / rotted /unsafe flooring
• Resurface flooring (or replace flooring if damage/rotted areas are too extensive)
• Repair all unsafe flooring in second story

Most of these repairs are safety related. We estimate the price to complete all this work is approximately $35,000. This summer, Lori Taylor-Blitz applied for and received an $8,000 grant from the Charlevoix Community Foundation for the work on the floor. In early 2021 we are going to apply for a Great Lakes Energy People Fund grant for the electrical improvements and electric heat. There are several other grants we are going to pursue as well over the coming months with a goal of paying for up to 75% of these project costs with grant funding.

Another question I am asked frequently is “are you going to ask for more money from the people of Beaver Island?” My answer to this is, “No, not right now and not in the near future.” The economic fallout of COVID is huge and far reaching. I am not in favor of asking for additional funding for these projects during these trying times. We are only going to undertake projects we can afford or projects funded by grants. We have prioritized the projects so we can undertake them as we have the funds available.

Although the Historical Society is not asking the community for additional money this year, I want to emphasize that your membership is important and is a significant part of our revenue. Annual memberships account for 25% of our annual budget. We are fortunate that our Executive Director is successful procuring grant monies, but the foundation we build on is your membership and generous donations.

Now is the time to renew your annual membership with the BIHS. On the back cover of this newsletter is a membership form. Thank you in advance for renewing your membership in BIHS.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss any of this information in greater detail, please call me (231 448 2374 home) or e-mail me (angel@islandairways.com).

Angel Welke
President
BIHS Board of Directors

Cookbook & Products Online

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

This is a perfect time to order your BIHS Holiday Gifts!
April 13, 1949

Election day on the Island placed in office two new Justices: Fred Spalding and Vernon LaFreniere. Road Commissioner, an office dusted off and rejuvenated this election, was won by Pat LaFreniere.

Pat made no pre-election promises, but since he's in, he's casting glances around for improvements. Voters marked their ballots in two new election booths set up in the Parish Hall. A certain truck owned by a local candidate had been put into use to transport voters to and from the polls on election day. During the afternoon, something went wrong with the starter, so Tom Gatliff was called into service. Under the truck with his head as far up into the motor as possible, opposition forces saw a good chance to play a trick on Tom and at the same time slow down operations. Cautiously, the valves on the rear tires were loosened and BOOM! down went the truck and WHOOPS! up went Tom's head into a space too close for comfort. Getting Tom extricated took some maneuvering, according to Johnny Green, who engineered the maneuver. Withal Tom got the starter fixed, the tires refilled and said candidate won the election.
PRINT SHOP EXPANSION!

The oldest part of this building was built in 1850 by followers of James Strang who led a group of Mormons to Beaver Island in 1846. Self-proclaimed “King” Strang printed a daily newspaper here until 1856. After the Mormons left the island this building housed several businesses including a boarding house, a post office, and a cobbler shop. In 1957 a group of citizens saved the building from demolition and created the Beaver Island Historical Society which still owns and operates the Print Shop Museum.

The front porch was replaced Fall 2018-Spring 2019. The Print Shop addition was completed Fall 2020 and new exhibits will be installed for our 2021 season. The original Print Shop building will be refurbished, in keeping with its historic value, Winter 2021.

Initial funding for our expansion came from the George and Joanne Bisbee Trust and other Beaver Island benefactors. Generous on-going support comes from Society members, residents, and visitors.

IN GRATEFUL APPRECIATION TO THOSE WHO HELPED MAKE THIS PROJECT POSSIBLE:

ARCHITECT, CONTRACTOR, CONSTRUCTION OVERSITE
Ebersoldt + Associates Architecture:
Vincent W. Ebersoldt

McDonough Construction, Inc:
Kevin B. McDonough

Construction Engineer:
Roberta S. Welke

FOUNDATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS
Charlevoix County Community Foundation
Cranbrook Institute of Art: Gregory M. Wittkopp
Great Lakes Energy People Fund
Hunting Foundation: Alan & Cynthia Hunting
Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs
Michigan Humanities Council
National Endowment for the Arts

MAJOR SUPPORTERS AND CONTRIBUTORS
The George and Joanne Bisbee Trust
Raymond and Priscilla Becker, in memory of Philip Becker
Ann Broder and sons George, Josh, Matt, and Mike
Vincent W. Ebersoldt
The Henry L. Hill Estate
The Hunting Family
Raymond and Anne Stanhope
The Taxpayers of Peaine Township
The Taxpayers of St. James Township

BEAVER ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD MEMBERS PAST AND PRESENT
Executive Directors: Bill Cashman, Kitty McNamara, and Lori Taylor-Blitz
Welcome to Our New Space!  Come In and See What’s on Display

Sybil Tilley Larsen’s Friendship Quilt
as noted by Joyce Bartels in 2005

According to Sybil’s daughter, Doris, Sybil bought the pieces of material in a kit from Sears Roebuck and started collecting the blocks in 1933. She continued until at least 1935. When someone visited, she would ask them to write their name on one of the pieces of material. She would then embroider the signature and sew the block into the quilt top she was making. Around 1984, Doris added filling and backing and completed the quilt. Doris wanted the Beaver Island Historic Society to have this treasure, but felt it was too valuable to be mailed or sent UPS, so insisted it be picked up and delivered by someone coming directly to the Island. Jean Carpenter was that person. When Jean drove her granddaughter back to Holland after her visit in the summer of 2005, Jean stopped to see Doris. Doris entrusted the quilt to Jean who brought it back to Beaver Island and gave it to Joyce Bartels, BIHS volunteer archivist.

Following is the list of names we were able to find and decipher:

- Flora Adams 1933
- Ella Alden
- Margaret Anderson • Shirley Ashdon (Coast Guard)
- Freda Bamhart
- Mae Barnhart
- Alice Belfy
- Sylvia Bennett 10-22-35 (Coast Guard?)
- Edna Mae Belfy
- Emma Boyle
- Irene Boyle
- Helen Collar
- Leona Erickson
- Evelyn Forshee • Dr. Raymond Somer (in same square)
- Edith Gallagher • Elizabeth Gallagher • Kitty Gallagher
- Marquerite Gallagher • Lillian Gallagher • Lizzie Gallagher
- Christine Gowman • Marian D. Gowman (Christina Larsen’s mother-in-law) • David (Gowman, Christina Larsen’s son)
- Rae Gilden • Stella Greene • Mary Grosskopf
- Ella Hoffman • Lorraine Johnson • Donna Kinne
- Emily Kinne • Doris C. Larsen • Sybil Larsen 1933
- Irene Ludwig (Coast Guard) • Ada Martin • Marion Martin
- Nellie Martin • Rosamund Martin • Annie McCann
- Ethel McCann • Mary G. MacDonald • Ann Mielke
- Mary Miller Oct. 30/35 • Dorothy Morcher
- Mary E. O’Donnell • Suzanne Palmer • Evelyn Pischner
- Alice Poulin • Mayme Rouch • Della Stover • Irene Schiele
- Myrtle Stafford • G. Irene Tilley July ’33
- Emma Tilley 1934 • Katherine Tilley • Winnie VanErkle
- Emma Vandenberg • Harriet VanderBerg 12-3-1933
The framed drawings on the wall in front of you reflect a portion of Helen Collar’s incredible work through the years documenting the history of Beaver Island’s early Irish settlers.

Helen Hoffman Collar was born on January 4, 1902 and died on January 9, 1996. This outstanding island historian first visited the island in 1915 with her parents and sister. Her family built one of the early island vacation homes. She studied geology as her major at the University of Chicago and began working in the Texas oil fields in the 1920s. Widowed while in her 30s with two small children, she supported them with the income from their Indiana farm. It was said on the island that summer truly started when Helen arrived.

Daily afternoon tea was held at various homes of island matriarchs and survivors of early settlers. She documented their memories of storms and illnesses, of weddings and births, of celebrations and scandals. Helen created these sensitive sketches from faded family photographs and verified the accuracy of the likeness with her teatime sources.

In the winter, she would check out this anecdotal history against immigration, land records, and census documents. She visited the National Archives and …

...For the rest of this fascinating story, stop by in 2021. We’ll look forward to seeing you!
BIHS Preserving and Sharing the Unique History of Beaver Island and the Archipelago

Admission
Your Free-Will Donations are Appreciated

Contact Information

Print Shop Museum
231•448•2254 • 26275 Main St

Marine Museum
231•448•2479 • 38105 Michigan Ave

Protar Home Sloptown Rd

Heritage Park Donegal Bay Rd

beaverislandhistory.org

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: __________

Join and/or Donate online at beaverislandhistory.org or

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