

**EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY'S GRADUATE PROGRAM
IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

"URGENCY, APPLICATION, AND INCLUSION"

THE PRESERVATION EASTERN POST

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FIELD SCHOOL IN BEAVER ISLAND

May 21-May 29, 2022



In December 2021, Lori Taylor-Blitz, a 2015 graduate of Eastern Michigan University's Graduate Program in Historic Preservation and Director of the Beaver Island Historical Society, contacted Nancy to invite our program to come to Beaver Island for our summer, nine-day field school. She said she had work for us to do on the Beaver Head Lighthouse and in the Beaver Island Historical Society's collections; however, we'd have to work with a few regional partners for approvals and some funding. While at first it seemed a bit daunting, and certainly was a stretch for us financially even with some help from these partners, the HP faculty was enthusiastic about finding a way to bring a group of graduate students in Historic Preservation to Beaver Island for 2022 field school. Would COVID upend it? Could we do meaningful work there? Could we keep everyone safe and busy?

We decided we could not miss the opportunity to work on this beautiful, remote island. With support from Charlevoix County, we were able to hire Alec Jerome, Director of Facilities Management at The Henry Ford (Dearborn, Mich.) as the field school's contract field school manager (he uses the big heavy equipment—the HP faculty doesn't). Additionally, with significant donations from Beaver Island Historical Society, donors Sally and Ian Bund and Sara Sporka, Networks Northwest (a regional planning consortium up north), Beaver Island Boat Company and Island Airways (free transportation to and from the Island), we brought sixteen graduate students to Beaver Island for nine days of work without breaking the bank. Another huge win: Lori worked with Central Michigan University's Biological Station to secure economical food and housing for us. This site included rustic cabins (far from their professors) communal bathing facilities, and a great campfire area behind the housing.

What did we do on Beaver Island?



- Alec Jerome's Preservation Hands-On Team repaired and repainted the wainscoting in the lantern room, scraped, strengthened, and repainted the screen doors, and completed a conditions assessment of the lighthouse interior and exterior.
- The Digital Heritage Recording Team, headed by Dan Bonenberger, completed field sketches and floor plans of all buildings, along with basic measurements of and between buildings. They produced photographs recording each building (elevations, obliques, and selective interior views) and overall views of the campus.

• The Collections Team, led by Nancy Bryk, inventoried over 130 boxes of artifacts in the Beaver Island Historical Society, added

information to the collections records, and created a final draft for a Collections Policy for the museum that reflects current and best practice.



While we worked hard, the community ensured we enjoyed the Island after our work day was over. They rolled out the red carpet and devised special events just for us! We were invited to a community clubhouse to watch the sun go down on the west side of the Island (serenaded by Dr. Dan and Taylor Williams), were

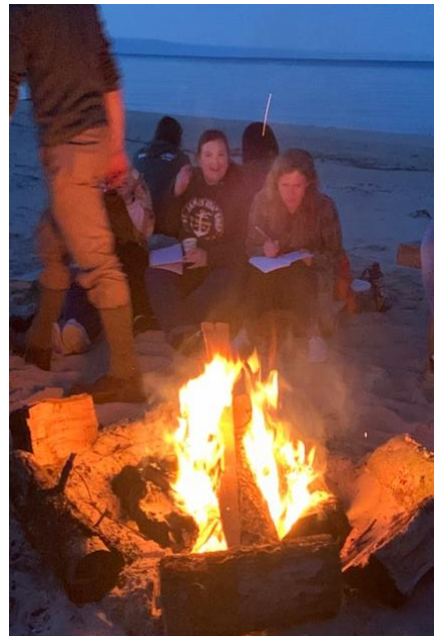
hosted for lunch by neighbors of the Beaver Head Lighthouse, had a fabulous homemade pizza dinner at the Beaver Island Historical Society, feted by their donor support group, and were invited to special tours of Beaver Island's historic houses and the Maritime Museum. We loved our time on Beaver Island and cannot wait to return; we've promised to return for at least three more years! We enroll undergrads as well as our



grad students; students are allowed to take field school more than once. **Join us next year!**



We are so grateful to Lori Taylor-Blitz and Kevin Shepard for their hard work to bring us to this beautiful place. There's much more to do there but, once again, we'll be digging for funding so students don't bear all the costs of lodging and transportation as they have to pay tuition, too. **Alumni:** we're considering an alumni reunion on the Island in summer 2023, in late May.



Please let us know if you think you'd be interested!