

MENOMINEE RANGE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION NEWS – SPRING 2015

<http://menomineerangehistoricalfoundation.org>

As summer begins, the three museums are once again open for the enjoyment of area residents and tourists alike. Hopefully you and your family will find time to visit the museums over the summer and encourage others from the area or visitors to see the outstanding displays located in each museum.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS CHANGES

Three former Board members – Clark Lebo, Rob Koerschner and Greg Harper – have resigned, the latter two due to changes in jobs taking them away from the community for large periods of time.

Two new Board members have been added: Dave Pelto and Jim Hartwell. Dave recently retired and returned to the area. Along with a deep interest in area history, Dave worked as a draftsman in the architectural field. Jim recently retired after 36 years working as an electrician at Dickinson Homes. He, too, is very interested in area history and is also an avid antique collector.

Other Board members include: Joe Warren, president; Bill Cummings, vice-president and historian; Kathie Fayas, secretary and treasurer; Pam Edens, Guy Forstrom, Bob Johnson, Jan Reynolds and Roger Scott, trustees.

MENOMINEE RANGE HISTORICAL MUSEUM

The Menominee Range Historical Museum, located in the former Carnegie Public Library building at 300 East Ludington Street, is open Tuesday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. during the summer. Members of the Iron Mountain-Kingsford Women's Club volunteer to keep this museum open, and additional help is always welcome.

M.J. Electric reviewed the electrical system when some problems occurred at the end of 2014, noting that the original wiring found in a significant portion of the building is a potential fire hazard.

Dianne Castelaz-Chiapusio has made a special display featuring a portion of the museum's map collection which will be exhibited this season.

In mid-May fourth grade school tours were held with 284 students and their teachers visiting.

In early June several Board members will clean out the fenced area on the west side of the museum

and kill the weeds to provide a more presentable view.

CORNISH PUMPING ENGINE & MINING MUSEUM

The Cornish Pumping Engine & Mining Museum, located at 300 Kent Street, is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 4 p.m. Hours are modified in September and October.

Last fall Kleiman Pump & Well Drilling installed a new automated submersible water pump and relocated the existing pump. M.J. Electric Company installed all necessary rewiring and updated the electrical service to meet code. This system worked well over the winter in keeping the water levels low in the two slots where the flywheel and pumping mechanism are located. However, water still seeps in through the foundation walls of the pit, accumulating and freezing on the floor. Kleiman drilled two monitoring wells in May to determine water levels at the north and south of the pump building. Bedrock was located at about 23 to 24 feet, but the water level was located at 5 feet below grade. Funds for this project came from the \$19,825 donation made by the 100+ Women Who Care group in May, 2014. Joe Warren, Board president, diligently continues to resolve this issue, working with professionals to resolve other water concerns.

WORLD WAR II GLIDER & MILITARY MUSEUM

The World War II Glider & Military Museum, located at 302 Kent Street, is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 4 p.m. Hours are modified in September and October.

Last summer the Board became aware of a moisture problem that could lead to deterioration of the glider itself, as well as other display items. In the late fall a Weil McLean boiler including all accessories was installed, as well as three 60" electric ceiling fans to push the heat back down into the building, and the installation of 44 vinyl frame ¾" insulated glass storm windows to minimize heat loss.

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The total cost of the project was \$47,313. A portion of the Cochran Endowment Fund was used to pay for this essential project, as well as a \$15,000 donation from the Friends of the Museum and a \$3,000 grant from the Dickinson Area Community Foundation.

THE DRY

The dry, the large sandstone building across from the Cornish Pumping Engine & Mining Museum, was erected as the “locker room” for miners working from the C Ludington Shaft of the Chapin Mine in 1910. The 103’ by 65’ structure included 660 steel lockers, showers and other accommodations, and was constructed at a cost of \$12,000.

The Friends of the Museum have conducted sales from this building for over 18 years, raising over \$132,500 when coupled with their antique and craft shows and other activities to help fund and expand museum exhibits. The lighting has been inadequate for all those years, and new, more economical lighting was installed this spring to make visibility better in that portion of this historic building.

SIGNAGE PROJECTS

The sign for the Cornish Pump & Mining Museum and the World War II Glider & Military Museum located on north U.S. 2 is being redone to be more visible and appealing to prospective visitors by Baker Signs. The cost to replace this sign is just over \$3,000, but the full color illustration featuring the pump and the glider.

Plans are also underway to have a museum sign at the Lilja Fund’s park on the northeast side of the Chapin Pit and at the Veterans’ Memorial at the top of Pine Mountain.

WEBSITE

For the past several years the Foundation has maintained a website which continues to prove helpful in tourists finding us. The website was just updated to enable people to use their cellphone to find us through Google. The site is readily accessible by searching on line using any of the

museum names or by using the address located at the top of this page.

ARCHIVES CONCERNS

The Board has been concerned about the archives, located upstairs at the Menominee Range Historical Museum. We are bursting at the seams, and maintaining proper temperature and humidity levels in a building now 113 years old is difficult and expensive.

The Board is exploring the possibility of moving the archives to the dry building, modifying an area for proper storage, better accessibility throughout the year and better safeguards against fire. The Menominee Range Historical Museum exhibits would not be affected if the archives were moved to the dry, and Dianne and future managers would have a better office and work area throughout the year.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Without volunteers it would be financially impossible for the museums to remain open. With each passing year finding people willing to devote hours at the museums becomes increasingly difficult. Representatives of the Board just attended the spring Northland Historical Consortium meeting in Ishpeming, and museums throughout the western half of the Upper Peninsula expressed similar concerns.

THANKS FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

Our membership list is dwindling, so we are especially grateful for your continued support which is absolutely essential to successfully maintain our three seasonal facilities, open from June through mid-October. Basic maintenance and utility expenses continue throughout the year. Please encourage others to become members and support our museums.

If you need to renew your membership, a form is enclosed with this newsletter. Membership forms are also available on our website.

Any additional assistance you can provide to help us preserve our area’s rich heritage is always appreciated.