

SOUTH MANITOU MEMORIAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Dedicated to the preservation of our history in order that we may pass the light of our symbol to the future generation.

P.O. Box 177
 Empire, Michigan 49630
 1992/1993, Vol.3, No.1

March 1, 1992

Dear Friends:

Greetings!!

The South Manitou Memorial Society at present has two big projects: maintaining the Island's grave sites; encouraging the restoration of the Lighthouse which would include a room dedicated to the memory of Jack Phillips. I would like to see the Society membership grow. Perhaps a current member will design a pamphlet which could be used to make island visitors aware of our organization. Our long-term mailing costs for the Newsletter will drop considerably if we have over 200 members. Many Society members, such as myself, have an affiliation with the North Island, A few members, however, have only a North Manitou connection. That's fine with me. Perhaps in time we will be able to address some of the concerns of that island as well.

Shortly after the annual reunion picnic in Empire, my wife, Yvonne, and I spent several days camping in Great Smokey Mountains National Park. We spent part of our time in the area known as Cades Cove. While there, we arranged to be at the Primitive Baptist Church for an interpretive talk and a ranger-led walk through the adjacent Cemetery. As your newly elected President of the South Manitou Memorial Society, I thought this would be a great opportunity to see if we had a sister organization in the Smokies. (We don't). I would like, however, to relate one comment which Ranger Martini made as we moved through the churchyard. He said, "These people are no different - neither better nor worse - than your

ancestors. They just had the good fortune - or misfortune - to be buried in a National Park." No doubt this could also be said about those buried on the Manitou Islands.

Admittedly my association with the Manitou Islands is small when compared to some of my friends who grew up on the Islands or have family and friends buried on them. Still, I have had the pleasure of knowing some folk now interred there. Think for just a bit. Would the significance of these people be any less had they been buried elsewhere? I doubt it.

What then makes a place such as South Manitou's Cemetery special? Perhaps the greatest factor is its location. For whatever reason, islands have special appeal to us. Likewise, almost anything found on them, which may have been overlooked on the Mainland, becomes special. Thus while part of the importance of a place such as South Manitou's Cemetery is imparted by the living friends and relatives of those buried there, whether we like it or not, a great significance is bestowed by strangers. I cannot fully explain why campers on either island would hike seven miles to a place marked "cemetery" on a map. Perhaps cemeteries are a visible link to the islands' history. By maintaining island grave sites, the South Manitou Memorial Society continues to keep these links to the past strong. The Society, however, should not be content with that mission alone. Visitors

will continue to be enchanted by the Manitou and they will want to know more about their history. What better group to take an active role in this endeavor other than the South Manitou Memorial Society, "dedicated to the welfare and preservation of the history of South Manitou Island in order that the light of our symbol will be passed on to the future generation"?

Brian Hazlett

As you know, a new Society Board was appointed at the July reunion. I would like to introduce these members to you, including a brief biography on each. The following were elected:

President: Brian Hazlett
 Vice-President: Margaret Braden
 Secretary: Joanna Smith
 Treasurer: Connie Phillips

I have great great grandparents and great grandparents buried on South Manitou Island, my maternal grandfather and my mother were born there, and my paternal grandfather was born on North Manitou. I feel very strong ties to the islands and I keep trying to get to know and keep alive the history of the people of the islands. It has become more meaningful to me as I act as a volunteer at the Michigan Historical Museum in Lansing. I have come to believe it is important to preserve the history of the people as well as the natural history of the islands as the State of Michigan has developed and continues to develop. I would like to use whatever abilities I have to help with this task. I am a wife, mother of an adult daughter, former teacher, former secretary, an amateur historian/genealogist and presently volunteer quite a bit of time to various community agencies. My husband and I enjoy boating and look forward to doing more of it after he retires from Michigan State University in a couple years.

Joanna Smith

to the island from Glen Arbor in his kayak. The island was a paradise to him and he just couldn't wait to get back to it after the long winter. My grandfather, Phillip Tobin, was brother to John Tobin, former lighthouse keeper on the island. John was married to Lottie, the postmistress of the island.

I have been employed at Amway Corp., in Ada, Michigan for 14 years. I have worked in Accounting, Purchasing, and Transportation. I am presently attending Davenport College, part-time and hope to receive my Associates Degree in general business this March, 1992.

After Jack's death, I suggested memorial contributions be made to the Memorial Society, in his behalf. I designated the funds be used to restore a room in the Lighthouse on South Island. Work is being done to see if we can coordinate this idea with the National Park Service. I am pleased to report, that at this date there is \$1,217.70 in the fund!

Connie Phillips

Additional Financial Information:

Jan.31, 1992 - Savings Account: \$1,671.13
 Perpetual Fund: \$5,000.00

Our MEMBERSHIP is currently at 118 members. To utilize the third-class non-profit bulk mailing rate, we need 200 members, minimally. Of course, we dream of numbers much greater, however, at 200 members we could save our Society considerable expenses in postage.

In July 1988, at a reunion of former South Manitou Island residents in Empire, Michigan, Glenn Furst suggested that a society be organized to provide on-going care of the cemetery and the outlying grave sites, and to otherwise promote the preservation of the history of the island.

"OUR FRIENDS . . . WHOM WE WILL MISS"

Anthony J. Schillizzi, 66, died of cancer in his home in Bay Village, FL Jan.15, '92. He was born in the Bronx in New York. He served in the Navy during WWII, then earned a degree from the Parsons School of Design. He had been an advertising art director and the chairman of the American Bureau of Investigation in Lakewood. He was art director for U.S. Camera in New York and the Warren Advertising Agency in Cleveland.

Tony Schillizzi is survived by his wife, Glenda; daughters Joy Johnson of Sheffield, and Meri Jo of Bay Village; a son, Anthony III of Bay Village; three grandchildren, a sister and four brothers.

Tony's passing is also a great loss to the South Manitou Memorial Society. It was he who designed our membership cards, our beautiful Newsletter masthead, and the logo for the Sandhill Savage Certificate.

Glenn Furst has passed along this quote of Tony's as a last reference to the Society, "Dad, when I get better I want to take a more active part in the South Manitou Society."

Glenda, his wife, has asked that memorial contributions be donated to the Society and/or to Hospice as desired.

The South Manitou Memorial Society Secretary would like to acknowledge with appreciation those members whose generous contributions were placed in memory of Tony Schillizzi.

VOLUNTEERS, ANYONE?

If you would like to become more involved in the Memorial Society, please let us know. As Newsletter Editor, I welcome all suggestions, comments and contributions. In July, the Society established several different Committees to better guide our Society. If you would like to become involved with those Committees, please write Joanna Smith: 1612 Pepper Tree Lansing, MI 48912 . . . or myself at P.O. Box 99 Empire, MI.

We look forward to hearing from you!!!

Our Series "I REMEMBER . . ."

HOW TO CATCH A FISH, SOUTH MANITOU ISLAND STYLE

by Roy Kramer

Some years ago during the fall, Mike Smith decided to spend the winter on South. And when the subject got out, John Ingerson said he would like to spend the winter also. I'm sure all of you knew Mike. Who could forget him? Perhaps not as many knew John. A young man, free thinker, writer and intellectual. Well, Mike and John agreed and moved into Bill Harris' house, as they deemed it best insulated and suited for a long, cold winter. Whether Bill Harris was informed, I never determined.

Well, the two settled in and occupied themselves with all sorts of projects, not the least of which was the making of some spiritus frumentis; but that is the subject of another tale at a another time. The delightful days of fall and the serious days of winter came in on them and they endured perhaps five months of isolation and solitude. Towards the end of this period, that disease of the frozen north began to set in, and contagious it was. CABIN FEVER! Mike told me later that even the only other resident of the island, with whom there was little contact, began to seem like an agreeable conversationalist.

The winter had been entirely too long. Fireside chats dwindled down and dried up. Silence prevailed, and both Mike and John looked for spring.

April finally arrived. In the open areas snow melted. Ice on the big lake grudgingly thawed and moved restlessly.

One day in April, the sun shone brightly, and with that hint of warmth that is always so welcome, Mike stirred, rose, picked up a wooden club about like a baseball bat and started for the door. John looked up and said, "Where you going?"

"Think I'll catch some fish" was the reply.

"Don't think you have the right tackle, can't catch 'em with a club" was John's brusque retort, and resumed his reading.

After several hours, Mike returned with a string of elegant fish, mostly sizeable bass. John's eyes widened, and he gasped,

"Where'd you get 'em, Mike?"

"Lake Florence".

"How'd you catch 'em?"

"If I told you, you'd never believe me".

Some time passed and John couldn't stand it any longer,

"Aw, C'mon Mike -- "

If I told you, you'd never believe me".

This went on at intervals until Mike finally conceded:

"Waal," drawled Mike with that innocent twinkle we all knew so well, "You know how fish are, They've been locked up under the ice all winter, and when the sun finally comes and the ice goes, they're so darn glad to see it they come and poke their noses out from the edge of the ice and enjoy the sunshine."

"Yeah," John said, "I think I've seen 'em do that."

"Waal, I take my club and with the sun in front of me and tippy toe across the ice. When I see the nose of a fish, I WHACK the ice with my club and the fish jump right on the shore."

"I d-d-d-don't believe it!"

"Knew you wouldn't." was Mike's only reply.

All was silent the rest of the day. The following morning after breakfast John spoke up for the first time,

"M-M-Mike, can I b-b-borrow your c-c-club?"

End of story, except that Mike never told me or any one else if that was the way it really happened.

How often have you heard the words, "I Remember . . ." preceding a fantastic tale surrounding the Manitou Islands? I recall hearing those words many times at the annual reunions. I wish I could remember them all. However, I'm unable to without your help. Please consider relating your stories in writing or on cassette tape (I will transcribe).

Remember . . . in order to preserve South Manitou Island's history, and pass the light of our symbol on to future generations, we need not only preserve the cemetery and gravesites, but also the "historic record." These pieces of "historic past" are an integral part of our Society's mission. Thank you for your contribution!

SOUTH MANITOU CEMETERY FENCE: RESTORED

From: Glenn Furst

14 September 1991

A couple of weeks ago Pamela Puntenney, George Hutzler and myself spent five beautiful days on South Manitou Island restoring the front of the Cemetery fence. During the five days, we were helped periodically by National Park Service members (Warren Putney, Bob Burnett, Veri Koski, Bob Buchnort, Greg Rickett and Jilia case-Dahels) as they had time.

Unfortunately, we ran out of materials before we completed our project, but this is not considered an important factor, we can finish on a later date.

As our project progressed I would, from time to time, raise my eyes to observe and appearance of a nicely mowed Cemetery and compare that image with the one George and I faced some eighteen years ago.

A wonderful feeling of satisfaction and pride would surge through my being as I realized our efforts had not been in vain and we were moving in the right direction by correlating our efforts with those of the National Park Service. I recalled an earlier trip to the Island on the 22nd and 23rd of May of this year when my wife Ethel and I visited the Island to represent the Society while the LeCman Alternative Education School of Traverse City erected a picket fence around the outlying grave site of Conrad Hutzler. This was a voluntary project undertaken by students under the direction of George Sarns. It was arranged by supervising personnel of the National Park Service. It was wonderful to see the pride in the faces of these young men as they performed their work on that picket fence.

The Society extends a heartfelt thank you, to Glenn, George and Pam for their ongoing efforts toward preservation of South Manitou's historic past. We can be proud of the progress our Society has made!!



AFTER RESTORATION

HISTORIC PRESERVATION NEWS

The Michigan Department of State offers Historic Preservation grants which operate on a 50-50 reimbursement basis. Surveys and planning subgrants are also available through this program. This may be one avenue to use when attempting to raise monies for feasibility studies, preservation projects, etc. of any of the historic structures on the Island while maintaining the original purpose of the Society, namely the care and upkeep of the Cemetery. Details have been forwarded to the Finance Committee (Dick Halk, Richard Riker, Co-Chairs).

That's the news from the Memorial Society! Look for our Summer Newsletter in June. Remember, the last Saturday in July is close at hand! See you all there!

Sincerely,
 Kathy Bietau, Newsletter Editor

SOUTH MANITOU MEMORIAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 177
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Membership Application

DATE:

NAME:

ADDRESS:

CITY, STATE:

ZIP:

TELEPHONE:

DONATION:

\$100.00 \$ 50.00 \$25.00

\$ 10.00 OTHER

RELATIONSHIP TO SOUTH (OR NORTH) MANITOU ISLAND:

The South Manitou Memorial Society is a non-profit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.