

CURIOSITIES

VOLUME XXXIX



2020 ISSUE 2

WELCOME BACK

We're finally here. While it's not the 2020 season anyone expected, Mackinac State Historic Parks' historic sites are now open.

MSHP, with the assistance of Mackinac Associates, had planned a gala year celebrating its 125th anniversary. The Covid-19 pandemic, though, forced MSHP to alter its plans, change the way it presents its historic sites, and take a hard look at how it operates. If 125 years as an organization has taught us anything it's that best-laid plans don't always come to fruition.

We are still going to host multiple events and free activities throughout the summer (see events calendar on back and events article in this issue). We're still going to offer the world-class programming, galleries, and exhibits you have come to expect. Favorites such as the Fort Mackinac cannon firing, Colonial Michilimackinac archaeology program, and the Straits of Mackinac Shipwreck Museum are still here for you to enjoy. The great shopping at our museum stores and visitor's centers is available, and the Fort Mackinac Tea Room still welcomes you with that amazing view.

However, your next visit to one of our historic sites is going to be a little different. We're asking that you wear a mask. We're asking that you keep six feet from other groups. We're asking that you follow the signs and markers through exhibits. There are capacity limits on some exhibits and demonstrations. And, sadly, some programs have been suspended for the 2020 season and some areas will be closed for the time being.

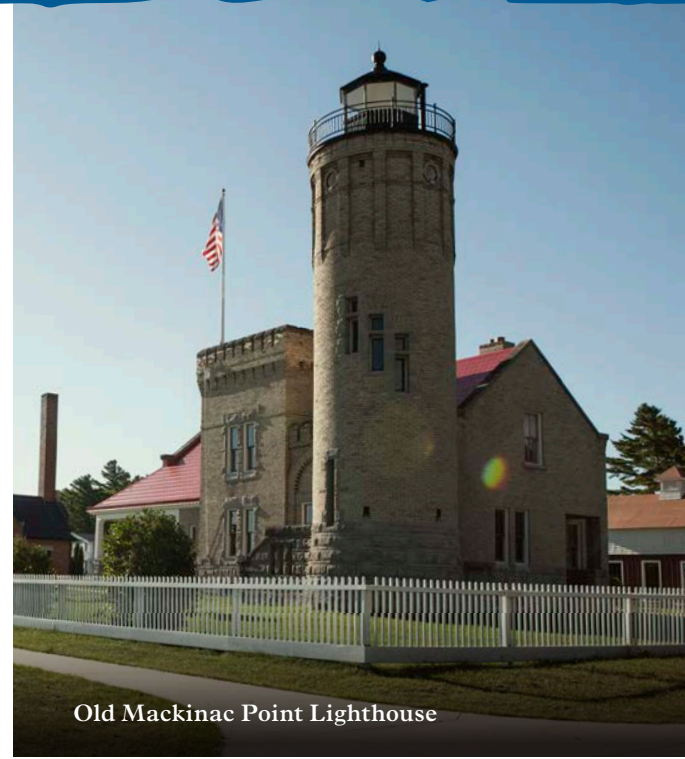
The three major programs suspended for the 2020 season are the Adventure Tour at Historic Mill Creek Discovery Park, tours of the tower at Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse, and the Kids' Art Studio at The Richard and Jane Manoogian Mackinac Art Museum. Additionally, all indoor scheduled interpretive programs at Colonial Michilimackinac will be moved outside where appropriate or suspended for this year. None of these activities can be done while maintaining a

safe social distance. Playgrounds in Marquette Park and at Colonial Michilimackinac and Historic Mill Creek Discovery Park are closed at this time. Other activities may be moved or suspended as well; please visit mackinacparks.com/covid-19 for the most up-to-date information.

However, since we've had to cancel or suspend some of these interpretive programs it's allowed us to look at new and creative ways to explore our history. At Colonial Michilimackinac we've added a program discussing slavery at the site; we're adding more opportunities to hear the Fog Signal Whistle at Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse; new guided hiking tours will take you further into Mill Creek than you've probably been; new programs at Fort Mackinac, such as an "Exercise with the Army" program, that will keep you socially distanced but in the action; and others.

Below are the health and safety guidelines we've instituted for each park that we feel allow everyone to have an enjoyable experience.

- Anyone that has been in recent close contact with a confirmed case of Covid-19, are experiencing a cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat at the time of visit, or has experienced symptoms such as a fever, loss of taste or smell, vomiting, diarrhea or fever in the 48 hours prior to arrival is asked to not enter any sites.
- A face mask is required at all indoor locations.
- A face mask is required at all outdoor locations when a safe social distance of six feet cannot be met.
- A safe distance of at least six feet between guests and staff.
- Hand sanitizing stations are located at key locations throughout the sites, and guests are encouraged to use them frequently.
- Regular hand washing is encouraged, as well as good respiratory etiquette such as sneezing into the elbow.
- The number of guests allowed inside some



Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse

areas will be limited. Guests are encouraged to follow the guidelines posted at the entrance of each building.

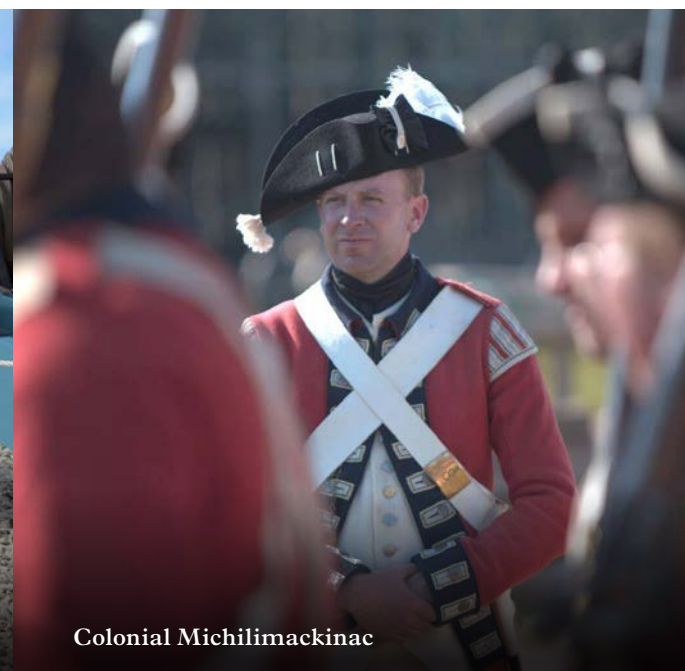
To help ensure physical distancing and limited contact, MSHP has designated entrance and exits at visitors' centers and within the historic sites. Traffic flow patterns have been identified, and signs will be posted. Plexiglass barriers have been erected at all admissions and sales counters, and electronic versions of site maps and schedules of events are available. Guests are encouraged to purchase tickets in advance (mackinacparks.com), or to use credit or debit cards upon arrival to further limit contact.

A robust set of cleaning procedures have also been developed to enhance the sanitization of MSHP's historic sites. Designated staff members will rotate throughout each historic site throughout the day, with half-hour checks on high-touch areas in each site. Restrooms will be sanitized every hour after opening, with deeper cleanings in the late morning and mid-afternoon. More information on cleaning schedules can be found at mackinacparks.com/covid-19.

We look forward to seeing you at our sites. We've worked and are working hard to keep you safe and healthy.



Fort Mackinac



Colonial Michilimackinac

MACKINAC ASSOCIATES 2020 EVENT UPDATE

G. Mennen Williams Mackinac Celebration: This event has been rescheduled from June 20th to September 12th. As long as the event can meet guidelines in place for events at the time, the cocktail reception will still be held at the Governor's Residence and the dinner will take place under the tent next to the Commanding Officer's home at Fort Mackinac.

Red, White and Blue Celebration: This 4th of July event has been canceled for 2020.

125th Anniversary Reception: To celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Mackinac Island State Park Commission and Mackinac Island State Park, we look forward to bringing you a unique after-hours opportunity inside Fort Mackinac the evening of July 24th.

Annual Meeting: August 15th 1:00 p.m. This year's event will be held at the new pavilion just east of Fort Mackinac. In addition to our regular agenda we will be asking members to approve updated bylaws. We will be including the proposed revised bylaws with the meeting notice.

Please note these events may look slightly different for this year as we structure the events to practice safe social distancing, guidelines around serving food, and work to make the events as safe as possible for you and the staff involved in planning and hosting them. More details on what that will look like will be included in the specific invitations for events. We will follow all guidelines set forth by the State of Michigan and Mackinac State Historic Parks and will make any further adjustments as needed or dictated by the guidelines.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Michelle Walk, Membership and Development Coordinator, at walkm1@michigan.gov or 231-436-4100.

SURVEY SUMMARY

On behalf of the Mackinac Associates Board of Trustees, we cannot thank you enough for your tremendous response to the membership survey earlier this year. We had over 500 surveys returned! The response was overwhelmingly positive and included many great comments and suggestions. The strategic planning committee reviewed all the comments and incorporated several items into the strategic plan as a direct result of the feedback received through the survey. The Mackinac Associates strategic plan, which goes through fiscal year 2023, was adopted at the May 22nd board meeting (held virtually). A summary of the plan will be presented at the annual meeting in August. We greatly appreciate how invested Mackinac Associates members are in the organization and could not do what we do without you!

DOCUMENT PROCESSING UPDATE

We just wanted to say thank you to the members who renewed memberships and provided donations during the last few months for their patience while waiting to get their acknowledgment letters and membership cards in the mail. While Mackinac State Historic Parks staff worked remotely during the stay at home order there was a delay in processing and mailing items. We were able to notify most people of the delay if we had a phone number or email associated with their member record. By the time you receive this newsletter we should be caught up on all of the items that needed to be mailed out. If you feel you haven't received something you should have, please contact us at 231-436-4100 and we will be happy to check on it for you.

SPRING APPEAL UPDATE

One of the hallmarks of Mackinac State Historic Parks has been the tremendous success it has had in protecting, preserving and presenting the history connected to the various sites they manage. This success is due in large part to the continued support of Mackinac Associates members through membership dues and donations.

Approximately 70% of Mackinac State Historic Parks revenue comes from the operation of its historic sites. Delayed opening of the historic sites and museums is resulting in the loss of significant admission and museum store revenue.

Your support is important now more than ever. By providing an unrestricted donation, you will help ensure critical interpretation and preservation projects continue. You can make a donation by calling the office at 231-436-4100 or online at mackinacassociates.com/donate.htm.

LEAVE A LEGACY

"A number of years ago Kathy and I constructed a legacy giving plan to share our blessings with people and places that have deeply touched our lives and the lives of others. Mackinac Island has always been high on the list so it was only logical to include Mackinac Associates as a beneficiary. Our thanks to the membership for all you do to preserve the past, present and future of this natural wonder."

— Todd and Kathy Petersen



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DIRECTOR'S OUTLOOK

The COVID-19 pandemic has gripped our world and impacted Mackinac in an unprecedented and dramatic fashion. Our new reality includes delayed openings, closed venues, canceled events and programs, slashed budgets, and the implementation of new sanitary and safety measures. Were this the 18th century, the strains of “The World Turned Upside Down,” a popular British march full of lament, would be echoing from the ramparts of Fort Mackinac. Not since the Great Depression has Mackinac State Historic Parks experienced such troubling times. Perhaps, however, the lessons learned at that time can provide inspiration and direction on how we embrace the current crisis.

The 1929 stock market crash and resultant economic malaise that flowed over the country had a long and profound impact on the Mackinac Island State Park Commission that continued until the end of World War II. The State of Michigan cut the commission’s annual appropriation from roughly \$40,000 in the late 1920s to \$14,500 in 1933 – a reduction of more than 60%. Earned income flagged as well as cottagers were unable to pay their annual lease fees. By the early 1940s, five East Bluff cottages reverted to the commission which, in turn, struggled to resell them, taking as little as \$750 in 1941 for the O’Neil house on lot 25.

Political upheaval accompanied fiscal woes as Governor William Brucker replaced the entire commission in 1930 and established two-year terms which led to frequent turnover (including my grandfather Armin Rickel who served on the commission in 1933–34). The void in leadership was exacerbated when long-time superintendent Frank Kenyon was fired the following year and subsequently replaced by five different superintendents over the next 10 years. Despite these challenges, two commissioners embraced the challenge and provide much-needed leadership.

Roger Andrews served multiple terms on the commission between 1929 and 1938. When funds were no longer available to pay staff, Andrews volunteered to serve as an unpaid superintendent. Managing Editor of the *Detroit Times* and an avid student of history, Andrews authored the popular *Old Fort Mackinac on the Hill of History* and donated the copyright to

the commission. Andrews used his journalistic skills to promote the island and his interest in history to develop the commission’s historic resources. With support from federal relief programs, the commission reconstructed Fort Michilimackinac and Fort Holmes and restored several buildings in Fort Mackinac in the mid-1930s. Historical fairs including the 1934 tricentennial celebration of Jean Nicolet’s passage through the Straits of Mackinac and the 1941 Old Mackinac Lives Again festival, promoted Mackinac’s rich history as a way of attracting visitors. Andrews raised \$13,000 in private donations for the Nicolet tricentennial, an amount equal to nearly \$250,000 today. In 1933–35 the commission generated additional income by charging parking fees at Michilimackinac State Park campground and admission fees to Fort Mackinac.



“NOT SINCE THE GREAT DEPRESSION HAS MACKINAC STATE HISTORIC PARKS EXPERIENCED SUCH TROUBLING TIMES.”

– PHIL PORTER, DIRECTOR

While Andrews promoted history, commissioner W.F. Doyle used his considerable lobbying skills to secure financial support from Lansing and coordinate fund-raising efforts with island leaders. Doyle served on the city’s Park and Harbor Commission which used revenue bond financing to make multiple civic improvements and promote island tourism. One of Doyle’s greatest coups was securing a state appropriation to purchase the Scherer cottage and dedicate its use as the Michigan governor’s summer residence in 1944, thereby creating a productive, decades-long bond between the commission and executive office.

Like the rest of the country, the Mackinac Island State Park Commission has enjoyed

a long and prosperous rebound since the 1950s. The lessons learned and strategies used during the 1930s and 40s provide a roadmap for navigating our way through the current crisis. This includes staying true to our mission of presenting and promoting our unique historic resources, seeking ways to expand earned income, making the case for and securing governmental support, developing and nurturing productive partnerships, and securing the assistance of private donors. It is in the last arena where our friendship with Mackinac Associates has so faithfully supported us in the past and will continue to be crucial to our journey into the future.



PHOTO ALBUM: MACKINAC ISLAND EAST SHORE ROAD, 1925

The construction of a shore road was initially to access a west end subdivision, proposed in 1896. The development was platted, but never materialized. The western shore road, however, was authorized by the Park Commission and constructed in the late 1890s. In 1900 the eastern portion was started. It was a major project and required a \$10,000 loan from the state and an easement from John Early where it crossed his farm at the north end of the island. In their 1901 report to the governor the commission reported that the road “will be unsurpassed for beauty and perfection of road-way by any drive on the earth, and will add greatly to the attractions on the Island for those enjoying driving or wheeling.” Many decades later it was designated state highway “M-185.”

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For membership information,
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Published by Mackinac Associates. Subscription is a membership benefit. Membership levels include Friend, \$70; Mackinac Heritage, \$85; Voyageur, \$95; Sentinel, \$200; Explorer, \$400; Commandant's Circle, \$650; Steward, \$1,000; Guardian, \$2,500; Patron, \$5,000; Benefactor, \$10,000. Other membership benefits include unlimited free admission to Colonial Michilimackinac, Fort Mackinac, Historic Mill Creek Discovery Park, Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse and The Richard and Jane Manoogian Mackinac Art Museum; 15 percent merchandise and publications discount at the six Mackinac State Historic Parks' museum stores; invitation to Mackinac Associates special events; and discounted admission for member's guests (excluding Heritage level).

MackinacAssociates.com



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WISH LIST 2020

If you enjoy programs at Mackinac State Historic Parks and want to make a contribution, a wish list of needed items requested by staff is shown below. Your gift will fulfill a tangible and essential need.

- Female dress form - \$150
- Glass bell jars for fort gardens - \$50 each (can use several)
- Men's linen shirts - \$80 each (can use several)
- Shelving units to store clothing - \$170 each (3 needed)
- 1830s corset - \$350 each (6 needed)
- 1880s corset - \$360 each (3 needed)
- 1830s bonnet - \$219
- Sponsor a library book (name of donor inscribed on bookplate of each title) - \$100-\$500
- Sponsor oak chairs for the library - \$800
- Two picnic tables with benches for pavilion - \$3,375
- Underground utility locator - \$3,000

2020 MSHP CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June

- 18 | Hidden Histories: The Enslaved Community at Michilimackinac, 7:30
- 20 | Movies by the Bridge: *The Incredibles*, Mackinaw City, Dusk
- 23 | Movies in the Fort: *The Wizard of Oz*, Fort Mackinac, Dusk
- 25 | Fire at Night at Fort Mackinac, Dusk
- 27 | Movies by the Bridge: *The Wizard of Oz*, Mackinaw City, Dusk
- 30 | Movies in the Fort: *Frozen II*, Fort Mackinac, Dusk

July

- 3 | Movies by the Bridge: *Frozen II*, Mackinaw City, Dusk
- 4 | A Star Spangled Fourth of July, Fort Mackinac, 2:00
- 5 | War of 1812 Battlefield Bike Ride, meet at Fort Mackinac, 1:30
- 7 | Movies in the Fort: *Mary Poppins Returns*, Fort Mackinac, Dusk
- 9 | Fire at Night at Michilimackinac, Dusk
- 11-12 | Michilimackinac at Work: Labor and Trades Weekend, Colonial Michilimackinac
- 11 | Summer Stargazing at Fort Holmes, 9:00
- 11 | Movies by the Bridge: *Mary Poppins Returns*, Mackinaw City, Dusk
- 13 | Island History Series: View from the Veranda - History and Architecture of Mackinac Island's Summer Cottages, Station 256 Conference Room, 3:00
- 14 | Movies in the Fort: *A League of Their Own*, Fort Mackinac, Dusk
- 15 | Hidden Histories: Marriage and the British Army, Colonial Michilimackinac, 7:30
- 18 | Vintage Base Ball: Fort Mackinac Never Sweats vs. Portland Blue Sox, 6:30

- 18 | Movies by the Bridge: *A League of Their Own*, Mackinaw City, Dusk
- 21 | Movies in the Fort: *Wreck-It Ralph*, Fort Mackinac, Dusk
- 24 | Mackinac Parks: 125 Celebration, Fort Mackinac
- 25 | Movies by the Bridge: *Wreck-It Ralph*, Mackinaw City, Dusk
- 28 | Movies in the Fort: *Space Jam*, Fort Mackinac, Dusk

August

- 1-2 | Robert Griffing Art Show, Colonial Michilimackinac
- 1 | Movies by the Bridge: *Space Jam*, Mackinaw City, Dusk
- 3 | Island History Series: Moviemaking at Mackinac, Station 256 Conference Room, 5:00
- 4 | Movies in the Fort: *Finding Nemo*, Fort Mackinac, Dusk
- 7 | Island History Series: Archaeology on Mackinac Island, Station 256 Conference Room, 4:00
- 8-9 | Gardens and Good Things to Eat Weekend, Colonial Michilimackinac
- 8 | Movies by the Bridge: *Finding Nemo*, Mackinaw City, Dusk
- 9 | S'more... Meteors! Fort Holmes, 9:30
- 10 | Guided Botanical Trail Hike with Jack Barnwell, 1:30
- 11 | Movies in the Fort: *The Mighty Ducks*, Fort Mackinac, Dusk
- 15 | Mackinac Associates Annual Meeting, Mackinac Island, 6:00
- 15 | Movies by the Bridge: *The Mighty Ducks*, Mackinaw City, Dusk
- 18 | Movies in the Fort: *Moana*, Fort Mackinac, Dusk
- 19 | Hidden Histories: The Grenadiers' "Mutiny" of 1780, Colonial Michilimackinac

- 21 | Island History Series: Confederate Political Prisoners at Fort Mackinac, Station 256 Conference Room, 5:00
- 22 | Movies by the Bridge: *Moana*, Mackinaw City, Dusk
- 25 | Movies in the Fort: *The Lego Movie*, Fort Mackinac, Dusk
- 28 | Island History Series: Fudge - Mackinac's Sweet Souvenir, Station 256 Conference Room, 3:00
- 29 | Guided Native American Cultural History Trail Ride, Mackinac Island, 1:30
- 29 | Movies by the Bridge: *The Lego Movie*, Mackinaw City, Dusk
- 31 | Archaeology at Historic Mill Creek, 5:30

September

- 1 | Movies in the Fort: *Star Wars - The Rise of Skywalker*, Fort Mackinac, Dusk
- 2 | Hike to Fort Holmes, 1:30
- 5 | Movies by the Bridge: *Star Wars - The Rise of Skywalker*, Mackinaw City, Dusk
- 12 | G. Mennen Williams Mackinac Celebration, 6:00
- 19-20 | Michilimackinac Secrets and Scandals: History Revealed, Colonial Michilimackinac

October

- 3 | Fort2Fort Five Mile Challenge, Mackinac Island, 9:00
- 9-10 | Fort Fright, Colonial Michilimackinac, 6:30

December

- 12 | A Colonial Christmas, Colonial Michilimackinac, 4:00

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