

# CURIOSITIES

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Friends Preserving and Sharing Mackinac's Heritage

## G. MENNEN WILLIAMS MACKINAC CELEBRATION HIGHLIGHTS 2023 EVENTS

### NEW WEBSITE

Mackinac Associates is very excited to share the launch of a new website design and refreshed logo! In November of 2022, Mackinac Associates began working with Novum Productions, LLC of Traverse City, Michigan to build a visually stunning, easy to maneuver website, along with a refreshed color palate and logo. After a successful collaboration, the new website and design elements were debuted to the public in April. We are so pleased with our refreshed look that captures the beauty and historic nature of the Straits of Mackinac, and why working together as Mackinac Associates to preserve this special place is so important. See for yourself at [www.MackinacAssociates.com](http://www.MackinacAssociates.com)!

Mark your calendars: the 2023 G. Mennen Williams Mackinac Celebration will be held at Hedgecliff Cottage, home of Dan Musser and Marlee Brown, on June 24, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

The Mackinac Celebration serves as the unofficial kick-off to summer. Grand Hotel will cater the party, with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres beginning at 5:30 p.m. Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. on the lawn. The home will be available to tour during the event.

"We thank Dan and Marlee for graciously agreeing to open their home to us and welcoming our friends and supporters in," said Steve Brisson, Mackinac State Historic Parks Director.

"We look forward to seeing friends old and new at this beloved annual event."

For more information on the G. Mennen Williams Mackinac Celebration, such as arranged taxis, or to purchase tickets, visit [mackinacassociates.com](http://mackinacassociates.com) or call 231.436.4100.

Later this summer, the annual Red, White, and Blue event will be held at the Huron Road Pavilion, adjacent to Fort Mackinac, on July 4 at 5:00 p.m. The Mackinac Associates Annual Meeting will take place at Wawashkamo Golf Club on August 20 at 4:00 p.m. More information on these events will be available on [mackinacassociates.com](http://mackinacassociates.com) and in the e-news.



Photos: G. Mennen Williams Dinner: The G. Mennen Williams Mackinac Celebration will take place at Hedgecliff Cottage, home of Dan Musser and Marlee Brown.

# NEW JURIED EXHIBITION *A MACKINAC DAY* NOW OPEN AT ART MUSEUM



Winner of the 2022 juried art exhibition, *The D.M.C.*, by Kelly Heck.

*A Mackinac Day*, the new juried exhibition at The Richard & Jane Manoogian Mackinac Art Museum, is open for the 2023 season.

There's always something special about being able to spend a day on Mackinac. The sun seems to shine a little brighter. The sky seems a little bluer. Even days where things don't go according to plan can seem perfect. Everybody has their "Mackinac Day." We encouraged artists working in all media to share with us their artistic visions of what *A Mackinac Day* means to them.

"The annual contemporary art contest continues to support the mission of The Richard & Jane Manoogian Mackinac Art Museum by encouraging new artistic creations

inspired by Mackinac Island," said Steve Brisson, Mackinac State Historic Parks director. "I invite residents and visitors alike to tour the exhibition and enjoy this show during the 2023 season."

Nathan Kemler, Director of Galleries and Collections for Grand Valley State University, serves as juror of the show. Grand Valley State University holds the 2nd largest art collection in Michigan with over 27,000 works of art. Kemler also serves on the Michigan Museums Association board of directors and as a peer reviewer for the American Alliance of Museums Assessment Program. Before GVSU, Kemler was the Project Curator of Ethnology at the Public Museum of Grand Rapids and Curator of Historic Sites and Collections at the Holland Museum. Kemler received a B.A. in World History with minors in Art History, Archaeology, and Studio Art from Calvin College and an M.A. from the Historical Administration graduate program at Eastern Illinois University while being awarded the History and Technology assistantship.

"I'm thrilled to be invited to serve as the juror for this year's Mackinac Contemporary Art Show. Steeped in history and natural beauty, people from around the world journey across the straits to experience and make memories in a place like no other," Kemler said. "The theme of this year's show is *A Mackinac Day* and I look forward to seeing these narratives of what this means to our artists, our collective storytellers."

Kemler will select a single Best of Show, second and third place, and three honorable mention awardees from the pieces displayed in the exhibition. Winners will be announced at

the June 21, 2023 awards ceremony at the art museum. The Best of Show winner will receive The Richard & Jane Manoogian Mackinac Art Museum Gold Medal and \$2,500 cash prize. Their name will be added to the list of annual Gold Medal winners, which is displayed at the museum. The second and third place winners will receive cash prizes of \$1,000 and \$750, respectively, and the three honorable mentions will receive cash prizes of \$250 each.

Mackinac Associates, along with the Mackinac Arts Council, donated the prize money. Associates members are welcomed and encouraged to attend the awards ceremony on June 21.



Juror for the 2023 exhibition, Nathan Kemler.



## PLANNED GIVING

"Erin and I have been members of Mackinac Associates since our children were young. Our love of history has been passed on to our children and the family memories we have enjoyed are incalculable.

The opportunity to serve on the board was one way to give back. Having the ability to pass on funds through our trust is a way to preserve the straits area's historical legacy for future generations. We are thrilled to join the Legacy Society and thank the staff and Board of Trustees of Mackinac Associates for creating this new opportunity to give."

– *Jeb & Erin Burns*

## SAVE THE DATE

Join us this fall for a new event – **Mingle at Michilimackinac**, Saturday, September 16, 2023, at Colonial Michilimackinac

This after-hours event will feature fun appetizers and drinks, an engaging program, and a chance for you to have your name drawn to fire one of the black powder weapons used at Colonial Michilimackinac. Watch the website and your mail for more information mid-summer.



You could have the chance to fire Michilimackinac's cannon!

# DIRECTOR'S OUTLOOK: AN AUTHENTIC BAN

In 1898 horses were everywhere, not just on Mackinac Island, but in towns and cities throughout the nation. While most of the long-distance travel and freight was then by rail, most daily movement was by foot and horse. Literal horsepower accounted for most of the movement, pulling carriages, horsecars, wagons, and cabs. Despite this, with booming populations, it was becoming clearer that horses could no longer fill this need, and a mechanized alternative was sought. A variety of cars were introduced by the late 1880s, but by 1898 the automobile had barely made an impact on ordinary peoples' lives. Early cars were so expensive that they, like a private carriage, were largely only owned by the upper classes.

In retrospect it is thus shocking that, 125 years ago, the Mackinac Island village council moved to ban automobiles. Several horseless carriages appeared here that summer and spooked the horses. The carriage tour men, for safety and perhaps fearing a cut in their livelihood, petitioned the council to enact the ban. Two years later, following several similar incidents in their jurisdiction, the Mackinac Island State Park Commission banned them from the park.

In our newest publication, *Where Horse is King*, Phil Porter chronicles the history of the ban on motorized vehicles. As Phil details, some would defy the ban in its early decades, and it was not a given that it would survive. The city and park held their ground, and the ban was eventually enshrined in state law. Phil's vignette is fascinating, and I will not repeat the full story here. However, I would like to reflect on what the lack of automobiles has meant to Mackinac Island.

Cars took over American life at a fantastic pace. In the late 1890s it is estimated there were only 8,000 cars in the country; by 1915 there were over 2.3 million. The presence of horses, once a commonplace occurrence everywhere, quickly became a novelty. Mackinac Island, already famous for so

many things, began to become famous as the auto-free island. For the earliest generations of car owners, the lack of cars and presence of horses was tinged with nostalgia, as they recalled the presence of horses on the streets of their childhood hometowns. For later generations, it allowed a chance to experience a pace of life found only in books and movies.

Most visitors today likely suspect that the lack of cars was cooked up as a tourist draw to create a sense of history. But, as noted, this is not the case. Our ban on motor vehicles is, in a word, authentic. It is like so much else that makes the island special. Mackinac Island is not a theme park. The streets you walk on are as they were laid out by the British in 1780. The cannons you hear resound from the walls of one of the nation's best-preserved forts. We have the greatest concentration of late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century historic structures of anywhere else in the upper Midwest. While not initially created to enhance such an atmosphere, the auto ban did just that.



**“THE STREETS YOU WALK ON ARE AS THEY WERE LAID OUT BY THE BRITISH IN 1780.”**

– STEVE BRISSON, DIRECTOR

The benefits of living without autos have been highlighted for generations. It creates a slower-paced lifestyle. It allows for our historic streets to remain narrow, with no stop signs or traffic signals. One truly gets the sense of what life was like before the car came. The automobile ban is a key aspect of what makes Mackinac special. Can you imagine the island with cars? A nightmarish thought.

It is good to pause during this 125th anniversary year to reflect on the ban and what it has meant to the island. We hope to help you commemorate it. In addition to our new publication, this will include special events on the weekend of July 22. You will have a chance to take a ride in the type of vintage vehicle that started the whole thing back in 1898. Rest assured; we will be careful not to spook the horses.

## ONAWA SAILBOAT, EARLY 1900's

The Tootle family has owned several cottages on Mackinac Island since 1900. One of the favorite pastimes of cottagers is sailing and the Tootle family is no exception. Built in 1902, the 50-foot, gaff-rigged Onawa was purchased by the family in 1936. For many summers, it was anchored off Bennett Hall and used by several family members, including Jack Tootle. The family sailed the boat until 1954 when the vessel burned. Several photographs of the *Onawa* and *Lady Bug* have recently been donated to the commission by descendants of the Tootle family.



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*Published by Mackinac Associates. Subscription is a membership benefit. Membership levels include Friend, \$75; Voyager, \$100; Sentinel, \$225; Explorer, \$450; Commandant's Circle, \$750; 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, The Richard and Jane Manoogian Mackinac Art Museum; and the Mackinac Island Native American Museum at the Biddle House; 15 percent merchandise and publications discount at the Mackinac State Historic Parks' museum stores; 15 percent discount on the Adventure Tour; invitation to Mackinac Associates special events; and discounted admission for member's guests. Heritage membership (\$85) is a seasonal membership that only includes unlimited admission.*

MackinacAssociates.com



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## 2023 MSHP CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### June

10 – The King's Birth-day Celebration, Colonial Michilimackinac  
10 – Maritime Michilimackinac, Colonial Michilimackinac  
12 – Creating the Village of Mackinac Island Walking Tour, Meet at Windermere Pte., 5:30 p.m.  
13 – Mackinac in the 1830s Walking Tour, Meet at Mackinac Art Museum, 5:30 p.m.  
17 – Lilacs and Warblers Birding Adventure! Meet at Marquette Park, 9:00 a.m.  
21 – "A Mackinac Day" Open House, The Richard & Jane Manoogian Mackinac Art Museum, 6:30 p.m.  
24 – G. Mennen Williams Mackinac Celebration, Hedgecliffe Cottage, 5:30 p.m.

### July

3 – Michilimackinac Fire at Night, Colonial Michilimackinac, Dusk  
4 – A Star Spangled Fourth of July, Fort Mackinac, 2:00 p.m.  
4 – Red, White & Blue Celebration, Huron Road Pavilion, 5:00 p.m.  
8 – Maritime Michilimackinac, Colonial Michilimackinac  
13 – Behind the Scenes Collections Tour, Heritage Center, 3:00 p.m.  
22 – Automobile Ban Event, Fort Mackinac, 7:00 p.m.  
29 – Vintage Base Ball, Fort Mackinac, 6:30 p.m.

### August

5-6 – Askin's Men and Women at Michilimackinac, Colonial Michilimackinac  
5 – Mackinac's Forgotten Features, Meet at Fort Mackinac, 5:30 p.m.  
12 – Maritime Michilimackinac, Colonial Michilimackinac  
12 – Mackinac Associates Annual Meeting, Wawakashmo Golf Club, 4:00 p.m.  
18 – Behind the Scenes Garden Tour, Colonial Michilimackinac, 7:30 p.m.

### September

3 – Michilimackinac Fire at Night, Colonial Michilimackinac, Dusk  
16 – Mingle at Michilimackinac, Colonial Michilimackinac, TBD  
23 – Equinox Audience with Forest King, Meet at Fort Mackinac, 1:00 p.m.  
29 – Arch Rock by Moonlight, Meet at Fort Mackinac, 7:00 p.m.

### October

6-7 – Fort Fright, Colonial Michilimackinac, 6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

### December

9 – A Colonial Christmas, Colonial Michilimackinac

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