

**LAKE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
AND
LIGHTHOUSE BED AND BREAKFAST**

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Summer Hours June 25th - October 20th:

Museums	Thursday	Fri through Sun
3M Birthplace	CLOSED	11 to 4
Depot	10 to 4	10 to 4
Lighthouse	10 to 4	10 to 4

The mission of Lake County Historical Society is to preserve the history of Lake County, Minnesota through the study and interpretation of artifacts, documents, and photographs that tell the story of our past and present culture.

Lake County Historical Society
PO Box 128
Two Harbors, MN 55616

Lake County Historical Society

The Iron Port

Summer 2020



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Museum Happenings

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic the Lake County Historical Society closed its office and sites starting March 17th, 2020. During the 3 months, staff and board members have been working behind the scenes to help our 95 year old institution through these historic times.

The pandemic had a large impact on earned revenue sources that we rely on including membership, admissions, store, and Lighthouse Bed and Breakfast sales. LCHS pivoted towards direct appeals to our membership to help us cover overhead expenses. We had to layoff all staff due to the sudden drop in income and experiment with online

and mailing campaigns.

A huge thank you to Dory Pearson, Secretary of the Board, who spearheaded the campaign in April 2020. This effort raised over \$3,000. I thank you for your support of our organization as we work through these uncertain financial times. All donations, no matter how small, help us ensure we can continue to preserve and share the history of Lake County for generations to come.

Hayes Scriven, Jennifer Neimi, and David Johnson pulled together to bring a Facebook Live Concert with John Cron May 13th. Special thank you to Castle Danger which hosted a watch party on their Facebook Page. The

concert had a reach of 1,474 with more than 1,000 views, 899 engagements, and 108 comments. This endeavor raised \$1,000 during the hour long concert which continued to help fund overhead costs for maintaining our 3 historic sites.

Through community, board, and staff support the Lake County Historical Society opened its 3 historic sites with reduced hours and safety measures in place Thursday, June 25th. Despite being in the midst of a pandemic, the historical society is in the initial stages of getting the Two Harbors Lighthouse beacon lit again!

History in the Making

Our historical archives have hundreds of documented examples of hard-ship, and heroism. Challenges our ancestors faced with courage and fortitude are visible in our collections, and photographic history. We are grateful for their determination and foresight.

Our organization collectively faces a new and

unprecedented challenge for the foreseeable future. Let history be told that our front-line staff and managers have stepped up with educated courage, and can-do attitudes to reopen our sites. Board members have worked with staff to prepare our sites, and develop safety procedures to keep staff, and guests safe. Local business leaders, and partners alike have solidified their support.

Members near and far have updated their memberships, increased donations, and shared our social media links with friends and family. The word is spreading, and history is in the making.

Samuel J. Gangi
LCHS Board President

Re-lighting the Two Harbors Lighthouse



Leon Jacobson, Tom Koehler, and Todd Ronning prepare the drums for belaying.

On July 11th, the non-functioning beacon housed at the top of the lighthouse tower was dismantled. The drums of the beacon, too large to fit down the narrow interior staircase, were manually belayed down the side of the tower by our 4 volunteer keepers. A huge thanks to Brad Ronning, Leon Jacobsen, Todd Ronning, and Tom Koehler for helping the historical society maintain the beacon for the past 20 years. We are working to re-light the lighthouse and will keep our members and the community updated on our progress both on our Facebook Page and website.

The beacon that we are putting into the tower is a temporary loan. Although it is an upgrade from the 1969 era beacon currently in place, the Maxiluna 300 is itself older technology. Loaned for display from the US Coast Guard on a 5 year term, this is a stop gap measure while we raise \$50,000 for a replacement beacon. A campaign has been set up at givemn.org/keepthelightlit to help the historical society with fundraising for the new beacon.

The replacement beacon is a flashing stationary beacon rather



Belaying beacon from the crow's nest down the East side of the Two Harbors Lighthouse.



Image of old DCB 224 Aerobeacon (left) as compared to the Maxiluna 300 beacon.

than a rotating one that creates an iconic sweep. The next iteration would seek to restore the sweep of the light with a modern, rotating beacon. The Historical Society has been advised by the US Coast Guard on suitable replacement beacons that would be energy efficient, low maintenance, and long lasting. Our beacon runs continuously 24/7 which is highly strenuous on any mechanism installed in the lighthouse. Let this be a beacon of hope in the midst of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Inventory of 3D Collections Complete!

In January of 2019, the Lake County Historical Society began the lengthy process of inventorying its 3-D and Archival collections. Contract workers Katie Witzig, Nick Riordan, and Brittany Plachecki measured, photographed, described, and entered data for over 9,300 artifacts. The work finished up at the end of June, after a temporary stop due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The work was made possible by a \$75,270 Legacy Grant funded through the Minnesota Historical Society and helps LCHS identify

items to be rotated out onto display and utilized in future exhibits.

LCHS collects, preserves, and shares the history of Lake County to the best of its ability. The inventory process is a huge step in fulfilling this mission.

A selection of interesting items re-discovered during the inventory are on display in the Depot Museum. Mukluks, cameras, and flares! Learn about these items and more at the Depot Museum.

The Society plans to apply for another grant to complete the inventory its estimated 7,000 photographs in the near future. A few photographs have been added to Minnesota Reflections, a virtual database that shares photographs, archival documents, and other materials from over 197 institutions. In November, the Society added 50 photographs to the site.

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