



*Message from the President . . .*

Update on the museum construction . . . you know, we have completed the construction of the addition, which includes a new large exhibit room and storage area. The hardworking team of volunteers have been busy cataloging and moving many of our artifacts from our collection to the new space. They have created new displays, with expanded historical information for everyone to enjoy.

With this new space, we can now rethink and reuse the original space. The old Tashmoo Room has been renovated, complete with new flooring and paint.



This space will be our new library and research room with all our books and reference materials available to visitors, with tables and chairs to spread out and do research. We can also use the room to hold meetings (including our Board meetings) comfortably.

*continued on page 2 . . .*

*Feature Column*

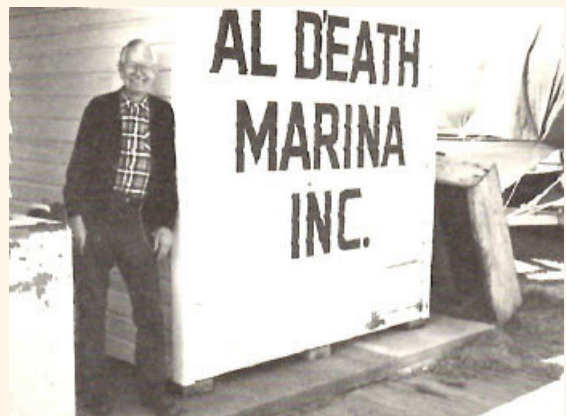
*- Harsens Island Businesses -*

This year our newsletter's feature column will highlight island businesses from years gone by.

The Al D'Eath Marina, on South Channel just opposite the Basset Channel in Canada, was purchased by Al D'Eath in 1961. Al, whose love, and interest in boats dates back 67 years, operated the marina with his two sons (Tom and Roger). Tom D'Eath was the service manager and the master mechanic of motors, woodworking, refinishing and fiberglass.

Roger D'Eath was the Sales Manager looked after the sales of the two main lines of boats: Lancer Yachts and Sutphen High Performance Deep Vee Offshore.

Al D'Eath Marina was a full-service marina and also had a mini party store. The Marina was easily recognized by the red and white striped building.



*continued on page 4 . . .*

*President's Letter . . . continued from page 1 . .*

We recently received a grant that will specifically be used for children's activities . . . stay tuned as plans are being finalized for that space.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 29th as we will be celebrating the opening of the new space with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony. We will also have room dedications and a surprise artifact that will be unveiled.



**The new artifact is on loan from The Henry Ford and it weighs about 400 pounds. Hmmm . . . what could it be?**

The next page has the details for our event on May 29th. We are all excited to share all the improvements of our island museum. Hope to see you there.

As always, thank you for your support.

*Joyce*

*Joyce Hassen, President*

# Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Harsens Island

Historical Museum  
3058 S. Channel

Saturday, May 29, 2021



## Event Starts at 10:30 AM

- ❖ Blowing of J.B. Ford Steam Whistle ❖
- ❖ Ribbon Cutting for Museum Expansion ❖
- ❖ Clayton Evans Room Dedication ❖
- ❖ Karen and Drew Pesler Library Dedication ❖
- ❖ Author Art Woodford ❖
- ❖ Unveiling of The Henry Ford Artifact ❖



For the safety of all visitors, vaccinated and unvaccinated people, masks must be worn in the museum.




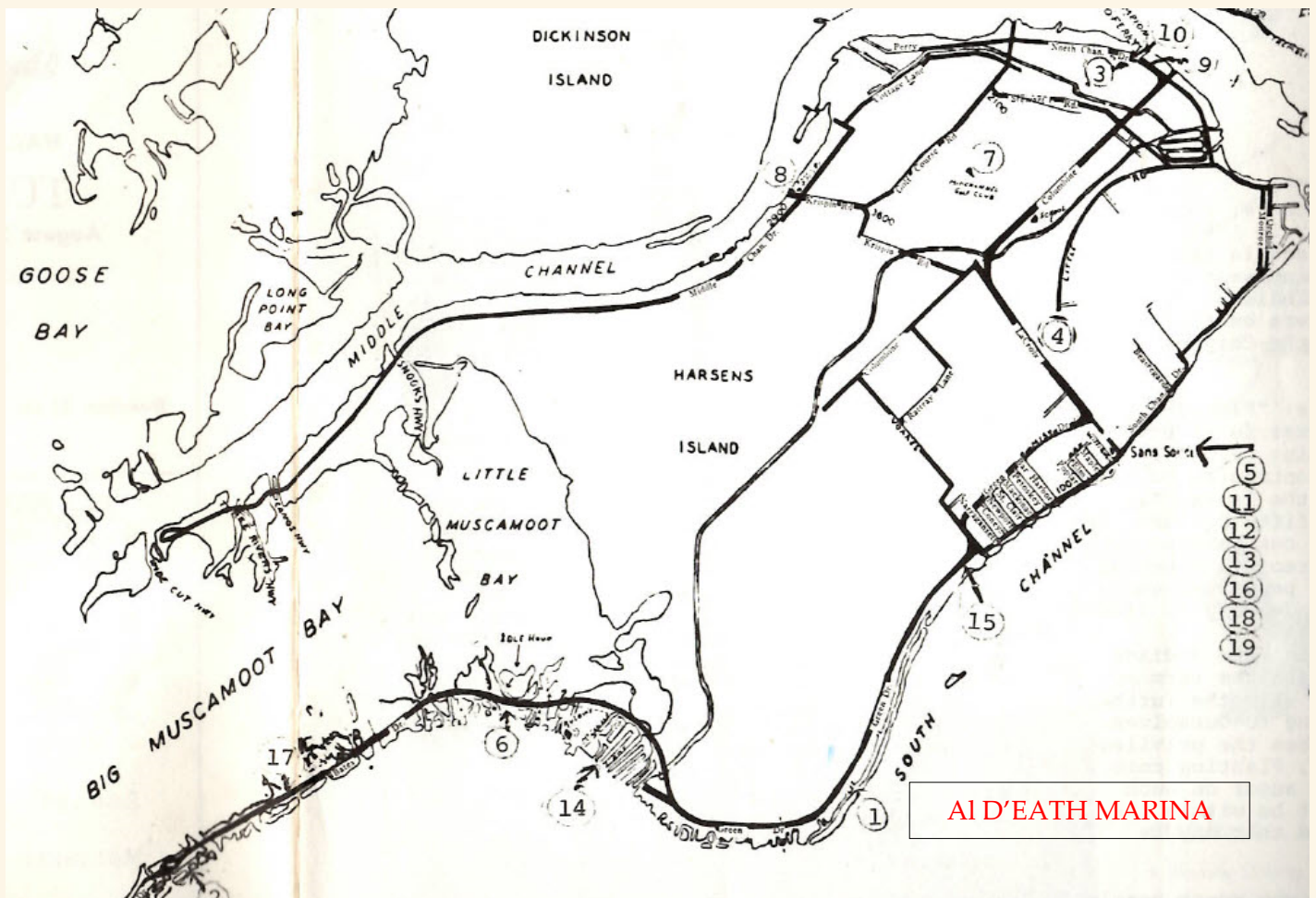
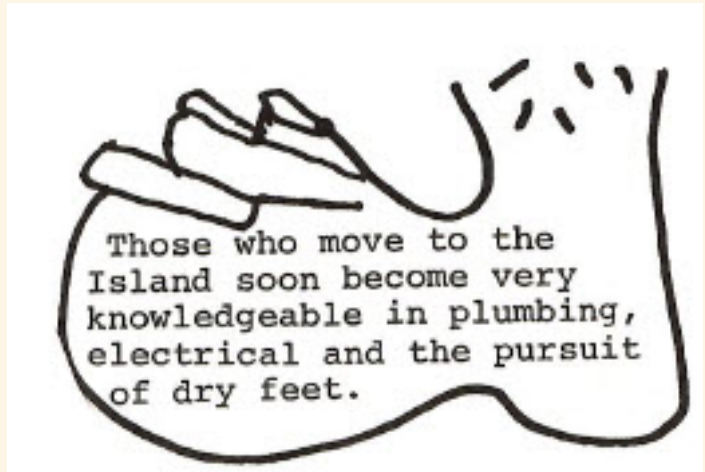
*Harsens Island Businesses . . . continued from page 1 . . .*

INSIDE WINTER STORAGE

CLEAN, SAFE, SECURE!  
BEST ANYWHERE.

**AL D'EATH MARINA, INC.**  
5555 GREEN DR. HARSENS ISLAND, MICH.  
748-9943

South Channel                      Opposite "Bassett"  
COMMODORE AL and HELEN D'EATH

Map Source: 1975 Harsens Island Guide

## The International Picnic at Tashmoo Park in 1921

By Chris Knight

Over 100 years ago, in 1897, a river resort was established on Harsens Island. Tashmoo Park was created to accommodate any steamer which brought thousands to the park every summer. Some of the biggest draws for Tashmoo Park were the athletic events and the baseball games. Of the countless number of events held at Tashmoo Park, there was one in August 1921 that stood out; the International Picnic. The International Picnic had over 1,300 excursionists in attendance.

Here are a couple of partial articles copied from Michele Komar's Tashmoo Park Timeline compilation highlighting the picnic. The Tashmoo Park Timeline is on display at the museum.

Aug 11, 1921 – *The Times Herald (Port Huron)* - Page 6

### MERCHANTS GIVE 101 PRIZES FOR PICNIC FRIDAY

Valuable Rewards Await Winners of  
Athletic Events at Tashmoo

Every sort of athletic event, together with a baby show, special games for the kiddies, dancing and two base ball games has been arranged for the International Picnic tomorrow at Tashmoo Park.

Never in the history of the city, the committee states, has there been such an array of prizes, as are assembled in the windows of the Knox Dry Goods company to be given to the winners in the contests.

Donated by the merchants and banks of the city, these favors range from a hat to a pair of shoes, and from half a ton of coal to toilet water. The complete list announced by the committee follows:

#### Events For Men

- Broad jump—1st prize, 1/2 ton coal—Miller Coal & Dock company; 2nd prize, pair golf hose, Springer & Rose; 3rd prize, slippers, Brophy Bros.
- 50 yard dash—1st, pair pants, Mitchell the Tailor; 2nd, shoes, Co-Operative Show Co.; 3rd, tie tin, H. E. Runnels & Son.
- 100 yard dash—1st, basket of groceries, Smith Bros.; 2nd, basket of groceries, Smith Bros.; 3rd basket of groceries, Smith Bros.
- Sack race—1st, desk lamp, D. J. Stephenson Elec. Co.; 2nd, hat, Water Street Garment Co.; 3rd, ink stand, K. H. Hubbard.
- Jockey race—1st, box stogies, Pelso Bros.; 2nd, belt, L. Higer & son; 3rd tie, L. Higer & son.

Aug 12, 1921 – *The Times Herald (Port Huron)* - Page 1

### EVERYBODY IS SMILING AT TASHMOO

Over 1300 Excursionists in Attendance  
at Big Outing

"Everybody is having a dandy time" was the word sent to Port Huron from Tashmoo Park this afternoon by a Times-Herald reporter in outlining the details of the international picnic in which citizens of Port Huron, Sarnia, Marysville and St. Clair joined today.

The steamer Wauketa moored at her dock at Tashmoo Park on schedule time this morning, and about 1300 people immediately scattered about the beautiful park to get the most happiness possible out of the day's outing.

Of this number about 700 were from Port Huron, 50 from Marysville, 400 from St. Clair and the balance from Sarnia.

S. A. Graham, of the Federal Commercial & Savings bank was missed after the boat left St. Clair and a report was in circulation that he had returned to Port Huron to get his golf clubs, and would appear later at Tashmoo Park in his "knickers."

Members of the Royal Black Knights, No. 60 L. O. L. were aboard the steamer, and joined other Orangemen from Detroit at Tashmoo Park.

#### Sarnia Band on Hand

The Sarnia Citizens band furnished music on the trip to Tashmoo Park, and included in the Sarnia delegation were Gordon Storey of the Chamber of Commerce and Mr. and Mrs. Harry Watson.

At Marysville W. H. Watkins, A. T. Miller and Walter K. Sumner and their merry band of joy makers joined the excursion party, and soon everybody on the boat knew that Marysville was on the map.

Mayor Milton Gearing and Joe Gannon headed the St. Clair delegation.

At Tashmoo Park everybody was "tagged," and as a result there were no strangers at the event. The picnic took on the form of a big neighborly gathering with everybody calling everybody else by their first name.

The business streets of the city present a deserted appearance today and practically every business house is closed.

The weather conditions at the park are good and up to two o'clock no rain had fallen.



## Another Notable addition to the Tashmoo Collection

By Chuck Miller

The Harsens Island St. Clair Flats Historical Society is always seeking to expand our collection of Tashmoo art and artifacts. Our goal is to capture the essence of that great period in our Island's history. Another very special and rare item is now on exhibit: a water color painting of the Tashmoo, done by Father Edward Dowling. According to the archives of the Dowling collection (described in detail below). The painting featuring the Tashmoo is one of only three water color pieces done by the artist among a huge collection.



Fr. Edward J. Dowling was a noted Great Lakes historian, an associate professor of engineering graphics at the University of Detroit, and a special lecturer in marine travel and commercial shipping on the Great Lakes. He authored *Lakers of World*, published by the University of Detroit Press in 1967 and numerous journal articles on Great Lakes shipping.

A charter member of the Marine Historical Society of Detroit, Fr. Dowling served for many years as the group's president, secretary and monthly magazine editor of the Society's publication, *The Detroit Marine Historian*. He served as the president of the Great Lakes Maritime Institute, Detroit and vice president of the Steamship Historical Society of America. For ten years he served as Great Lakes Sectional Editor of *Steamboat Bill* writing approximately one column for each issue. In 1973, the Detroit Historical Museum bestowed on Fr. Dowling their Patriotic Award for his work.

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*Another Notable Addition to the Tashmoo Collection . . . continued from page 6 . . .*

Born in 1906, he received an A.B. in Classical Languages in 1930 from Loyola University (Chicago), an A.M. in Classical Language in 1933 from Xavier University, and a S.T.D. in Theology in 1941 from St. Louis University. Fr. Dowling joined the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in 1930 and was ordained in 1940. From 1942 to 1973 he taught full-time at the University of Detroit and then served twenty years as University Archivist before retiring. Fr. Dowling passed away May 18, 1996.

An Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree was presented to Fr. Dowling in 1977. As noted in the citation read during the presentation of the award: "Your life-long interest in Great Lakes shipping and history has become, through the years, much more than an association. Thousands have learned from you of the magnificent ships which plied Michigan's waters. Through your beautiful paintings and photographs, teaching and service to numerous marine organization you have shared your love for the lakes and her vessels with many. Your detailed and dedicated scholarly research has added tremendously to Michigan's history of its great waterways."

A university professor, authority on Great Lakes marine history, photographer, and model ship builder, Fr. Edward J. Dowling, S.J. was also an artist. He created numerous paintings, pencil sketches, landscapes, and water scenes of Great Lakes ships in oil, watercolor, crayons, and pencil. The amazing array of his individual works is complemented on a grander scale with his murals in St. Ignatius High School in Chicago.

When Fr. Dowling honored the university with his collection in 1993, he provided a document listing the number, medium, size, date created and original owner of his artwork. Unfortunately, there are numerical gaps on the list and the disposition of some of the pieces is blank. No attempt has been made to verify the current ownership of these works or the location of the original owner.

If you are in possession of one of Fr. Dowling's pieces that is not identified in the list and wish to be recognized, please contact the Instructional Design Studio at [IDS@udmercy.edu](mailto:IDS@udmercy.edu) or 313 578-0580.

- 587 Tashmoo Watercolor - 16 x 20 – 1960 – Known R. Nisky
- 656 Tashmoo Watercolor - 19 x 24 – 1967 – Known J. O'Driscoll
- 949 Tashmoo Watercolor - 16 x 21 – 1976 – Known Fr. Donahue

## **Volunteer to be a Host at the Museum this Summer**

**Volunteer for 3 (2 hour) shifts  
and get a **Free T-Shirt** from  
the Museum Gift Shop**

**Contact Corinne Trexler for additional information 313-530-9173**

# Harsens Island Historical Society Calendar 2021

**PLEASE NOTE:** All events and locations in the following schedule are **tentative**. This schedule will be updated in the spring as more is known about COVID safety guidance from the State of Michigan.

Date	Day	Time	Event
May 8	Saturday	10:30 AM	Board Meeting at the Museum or Zoom
May 29	Saturday	10:30 AM – 4:00 PM	Museum Opens and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
May 30	Sunday	12:00 PM – 4:00 PM	Museum Hours
May 31	Monday	11:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Museum Hours
June 5	Saturday	9:30 AM	Museum Host Orientation at the Museum
June 11	Friday	6:00 PM – 8:00 PM	Social Hour at the Museum
June 12	Saturday	10:30 AM	Board Meeting at the Museum or Zoom
July 9	Friday	6:00 PM – 8:00 PM	Social Hour at the Museum
July 10	Saturday	10:30 AM	Board Meeting at the Museum or Zoom
August 13	Friday	6:00 PM – 8:00 PM	Social Hour at the Museum
August 21	Saturday	4:30 PM – 5:00 PM 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM 6:30 PM	Wine and Appetizers at the Museum Annual Membership Meeting (Election results) Board Meeting
September 10	Friday	6:00 PM – 8:00 PM	Social Hour at the Museum
October 9	Saturday	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Pie Sale at the Museum
October 16	Saturday	10:30 AM	Board Meeting at the Museum or Zoom
December 4	Saturday	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Cookie Walk at the Museum
December 11	Saturday	10:30 AM	Board Meeting at the Museum or Zoom



## Museum Hours - Tentative

<b>Memorial Weekend May 29 – 31</b>
Saturday 10:30 AM – 4:00 PM
Sunday 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Monday 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM
<b>Summer Schedule (June, July, August, September)</b>
Second Fridays 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Saturdays 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Sundays 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM
<b>Winter Schedule (October through April)</b>
Closed but Open by appointment





A publication of the Harsens Island St. Clair Flats Historical Society

**Mailing Address:**

PO Box 44  
Harsens Island MI 48028

**Museum Address:**

3058 S. Channel Dr.

[www.harsensislandhistory.org](http://www.harsensislandhistory.org)

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The historical society is looking to add to its collection. We accept donations of artifacts, photos, documents, and stories related to the island and surrounding area. If you would like to add your family history to the museum archives, we can help you capture your memories for future generations.

Please contact our curators; Chuck Miller and Chris Knight ([chris.knight@comcast.net](mailto:chris.knight@comcast.net)).

**Preview of Museum Exhibits**

Visit us to see the new and improved exhibits and displays.



*Building the Future ~ Preserving Our Past*