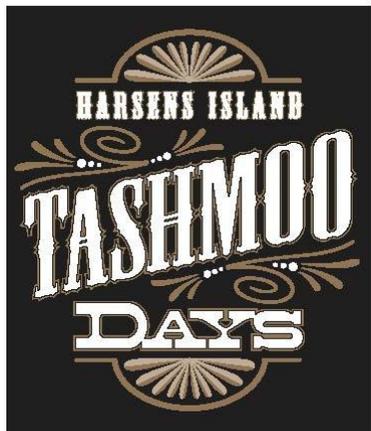


The SOCIETY PAGES

HARSENS ISLAND / ST. CLAIR FLATS HISTORICAL SOCIETY



The Historical Society is pleased to report a successful first-ever **TASHMOO DAYS** event on Harsens Island.

The weekend launched with a gathering with the elders of the families of Tillie Esper and Selina Pramstaller Friday afternoon at the Licata home where Pam Leander of Great Lakes Divecenter delivered the "Message-in-the-Bottle" (***Having a good time at Tashmoo, June 30, 1915.***) to Patricia Esper Leone, 88 year-old daughter of Tillie Esper and William Morrisroe, 85 year-old nephew of Selina Pramstaller. See photo on page 2.

The gathering was graced with a strong rain shower and concluded with an incredible rainbow that appeared over the South Channel of the St. Clair River that reached from Walpole and Squirrel Island to Harsens Island. It was a full rainbow and truly beautiful.

continued on page 2

From the President

TASHMOO DAYS 2013 could not have been better. We were spared the ravages of severe weather that blew thru Friday night and the weather cleared for us on Saturday. If you missed this event you missed a "good time" as Tillie and Selina said a century ago: "Having a good time at Tashmoo". Most attendee's walked away from this event saying: ***"Had a good time at Tashmoo Days 2013"***.

While final tally is not completed it appears The Society will have a positive financial outcome from the event. Your Board, after consulting with community participants, will make a decision in the upcoming months on how to proceed for 2014.

The process of acquisition of the historic fire hall continues. Details of the final package will be disclosed upon completion. At this moment we can inform you that a land contract with favorable terms and interest rate on a 5-year contract term and longer amortization schedule are being finalized. If all goes well, the closing should be scheduled in the next few weeks.

Our thanks to The Society Board that worked tirelessly to bring Tashmoo Days to the streets of downtown Sans Souci on July 20. Many thanks to our members who volunteered their time and to the community that supported the event. We especially thank those who made donations and contributions to The Society to help make this event a reality.

The **Message-in-the-Bottle** story went viral and has been literally "heard around the world". If you take a moment to Google "message in a bottle harsens island" you will find **10 to 15 pages of returns** that show the story has been published in the UK, Germany, Nigeria, Korea, all across the US, Canada and on and on.

It has been a very ***"Good day at Tashmoo Days 2013"*** for our Island Community.

thank you
Bernard

The Society Pages

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Mailing Address: PO Box 44
Harsens Island MI 48028

Museum Address:
3058 S. Channel Dr.
Email@hiscfhs.org



www.HISC FHS.org

scan the code to go to the HISC FHS
website

Editor: **Michele Komar**
734-620-3769

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Join us on Facebook!

l to r, **Bernard Licata**, President
Patricia Esper Leone, daughter of
Tillie Esper
William Morrisroe, nephew to
Selina Pramstaller,
Pam Leander, wife of David
Leander, owners, Great Lakes
Divecenter

Tashmoo Days wrap-up *continued*

The Saturday **Tashmoo Days** event was spared the ravages of the severe weather that caused significant damage to a large portion of Harsens Island; most of which was without power the entire day. There was however, power in Sans Souci as the weather cleared and delivered a delightful day for the nearly 2,000 people that attended the Tashmoo Days first-ever event on Harsens Island.

Approximately 1,500 people queued up to visit the museum and the **Message-in-the-Bottle**, which was on loan from the Great Lakes Divecenter for the day.

In addition to great music, lectures, First Nation and Native American dancers, arts & crafts and square dancing, **Governor Snyder** sent representatives to present a Special Tribute on behalf of the State of Michigan for the 98th Anniversary of "Message-In-A-Bottle".

Congresswoman Candice Miller's office presented The Society Museum with a framed photo of the *Tashmoo Steamer* from the Library of Congress and presented a **Letter of Congratulations** to Pam and David Leander and the crew at **Great Lakes Divecenter** on this very important and amazing discovery of this piece of Great Lakes history.

About 100 descendants and relatives of **Tillie Esper** and **Selina Pramstaller** and the last Captain of the Steamer *Tashmoo*, **Captain McAlpine**, attended the event. All in all it was a very good first Tashmoo Days and a really exciting day for the descendant's families.

continued next page



Tashmoo Days wrap-up continued

The families very much enjoyed Harsens Island and rumor is that they have made reservations at the island **Maple Leaf Bed & Breakfast** to return for the 100th Anniversary of the "Message-in-the-Bottle" in 2015.

Due to the "Message-in-the-Bottle", Harsens Island and The Society gained great exposure to a worldwide audience. This extended to the island business owners as well. Local businesses report that this event was a positive for the island and expect that this will be good for future business.

Dollars were raised and added to the building fund to purchase the historic fire hall to be our permanent museum. (The fund has not yet reached its goal. Contributions may be made to The Society, PO Box 44, HI, MI 48028).

A meeting will be scheduled in the upcoming weeks to discuss the second annual Tashmoo Days Event for any who wish to offer opinions or participate. Notice will be provided via the *Harsens Island Flyer*.

All those attending had "***A good time at Tashmoo Days, Harsens Island 2013***".



photo credit: Ron Robinson

Tashmoo Days Raffle Ticket Winners

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| 1st Prize | Cruise for 6 | Steph Spencer |
| 2nd Prize | Tashmoo Watercolor by Crowley | Steve Schribner |
| 3rd Prize | Tashmoo Days- Enhanced Poster By Z | Richard Stouer |
| 4th Prizes | Commemorative Bookmark 100 yr old Merry-Go-Round Ticket Laminated | |
| | 4 Winners: | |
| | Fred Roberts | |
| | Joe Kapinski | |
| | Katy Russell | |
| | Mike Bradly | |

Pictures From The Attic

Our Trip to Harsens Island

By Dan Harm

(Editor's note: Dan had contacted The Society to find out if there were any of the Harm Family left on the island that they could visit on their trip to Michigan from their home in Indiana. I discovered that we are cousins as our grandfathers, Bill and Norman, were brothers and lived next to each other for a time on the island. I would like to personally thank those on the island that extended that famous island hospitality to them.)

Our recent trip to the island with my oldest son and his family brought back many fond memories of childhood visits to the home of my grandfather Norman Harm, Sr. and Evelyn, his wife, who we considered our grandmother since my father's mother Viola, had died in 1950. I can still recall the excitement of taking the ferry across the channel and the short trip from there to San Souci where they lived on the corner of LaCroix and South Channel Dr. At that time their front porch served as the post office and the glass panels on the back of the post boxes allowed us to observe people coming in and getting their mail.

Saturday night was a time for early baths so we could have ice cream, popcorn and of course for everyone to watch Evelyn's favorite show, Lawrence Welk. The second story front room over the front porch facing the channel had screened windows and a feather bed. We would often sleep there and when the weather permitted, the windows would be opened and allow the low mournful sound of the passing ships fog horns to pierce the dense fog of those warm summer nights. Combined with the feather bed and an active day of swimming and/or fishing in the channel, it was a lethal formula for a deep and dreamy sleep.

My grandfather was a sign painter for the GSA and I was fascinated with the myriad of small paint bottles he kept in his little shed immediately behind the house. The many colors and aromas of turpentine and enamels were quite compelling to a young, very curious boy.

Our evenings on the island during the summer would consist of visiting (great) Uncle Bill and Aunt Minnie to hear stories of Tashmoo and times past along with tracking the ships passing and checking them against a book they kept which listed details about country of origin etc. When my grandfather sensed that we were getting restless he would give us some change or bills and off the market we went for some candy or ice cream.

I would like to publicly thank Michele Komar, Nancy Boulton, Chris Wludyka, the DeMunniks and the Lions Club for all the help and hospitality they extended during our trip. We felt very welcomed and connected while on our visit.



Group photo L – R Derek Harm (oldest son and his family), Joshua, Adam, Jessica, Jonathon, Andrew, Shirley Harm, Dan Harm. Photo by Robin Harm, Derek's wife.

Museum Donation

The museum was recently presented with a donation from the Dan Harm Family. Dan's grandmother, Evelyn Harm, was postmistress on the island for many years. The commemorative plate was presented to her at the 1963 Postmaster's National Convention in Hawaii.

Presentation photo L – R Chris Wludyka & Nancy Boulton from The Society and Dan Harm.



Tashmoo Days Commemorative Bookmark

is available for a \$10 donation to the Building Fund. Features an authentic Merry-Go-Round ticket from Tashmoo Park.

For Sale in the museum store

We have recently acquired 60 copies of the **Steamboat Bill** magazine, Number 240, Winter 2001 through a very generous donation. They are \$10 each.

This very special issue of *Steamboat Bill* offers nearly two-thirds of the magazine (52 pages) devoted to covering the steamer *Tashmoo* and Detroit's White Star Line and fleet, and their local steamboat predecessors.

- 52-page special feature written by the late Gordon P. Bugbee, world renown scholar in the field of maritime history.
- 4 full-color illustrations: Includes full-color front cover illustration of the *White Star Magazine* of 1916 and the back-cover features a full-color reproduction print of the Steamer *Tashmoo* by marine artist Paul C. LaMarre.
- 97 photos, pictures, diagrams, and illustrations.
- 8 full pages of photographs showing the interior of the *Tashmoo*.

Also . . .

- **The Society Pages July 2013 Commemorative Issue** featuring Tashmoo Park for only \$5 donation to the Building Fund. Supplies are limited.

ANNUAL MEETING & Spaghetti Dinner

August 17

\$10 per person - 5pm

Lion's Hall

reservations requested,
call Nancy Licata at 810-748-1825





PO Box 44
Harsens Island MI 48028

Harsens Island St. Clair Flats Historical Society 2013 Calendar of Events

subject to change

Members are welcome to attend any Board / Membership Meeting to keep apprised of Society activities and to bring issues before the Board.

Museum Hours

Aug, Sept - Saturday 10 AM - 3 PM and Sunday Noon - 4 PM

Oct, Nov, Dec - closed - open by appointment and for Christmas Sale (Dec)

August

3rd - Saturday - Society Booth at HISCFA Field Day (Browne's Field)

11th - Sunday - 10:00 AM - Board / Membership Meeting (Museum)

14th - Wednesday - Social Hour - 5 to 7 PM (Museum)

17th - 5PM Annual Meeting followed by Spaghetti Dinner (Lions Hall) \$10 each, reservations requested

31st - see September Labor Day weekend

September

1st, 2nd (with Aug. 31) - Saturday, Sunday, & Monday - Labor Day Weekend - Museum open

7th - Saturday - 10:00 AM - Board Meeting (Museum)

11th - Wednesday - Social hour - 5 to 7 PM (Museum)

14th - Saturday - 3 to 5 PM - Lecture Series III (Lions Hall) **Jim Clary presents the Storm of 1913**

October

12th - Saturday - 11:30 AM - Board Meeting (Lions Hall)

12th - Square Dance with Chicken Dinner - 5 PM dinner, 6 PM dancing (Lions Hall)