



volume 15 / number 6

August 2024

Message from the President . . .

Happy August!

August is always that transition month, between summer wildflowers, boating, swimming, and fall starting to show with pumpkin spice in the stores, hints of yellow/orange leaves on trees and back to school sales. Despite fall being right around the corner, we still have plenty of summer left at the museum with our annual meeting on August 17th, the Labor Day weekend festivities in Sans Souci, Bob Williams' encore presentation of the History of Harsens Island on September 29th . . . and we're open every weekend through September just to visit! We look forward to seeing our members and guests at one or all the upcoming events for some fun and knowledge.

The annual membership meeting will be at 10:00 AM on August 17th at the museum, with our regular Board meeting immediately following. As always, all members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

As always, thank you for your continued support!

Joyce

Joyce Hassen, President

History of Harsens Island Presented by Bob Williams

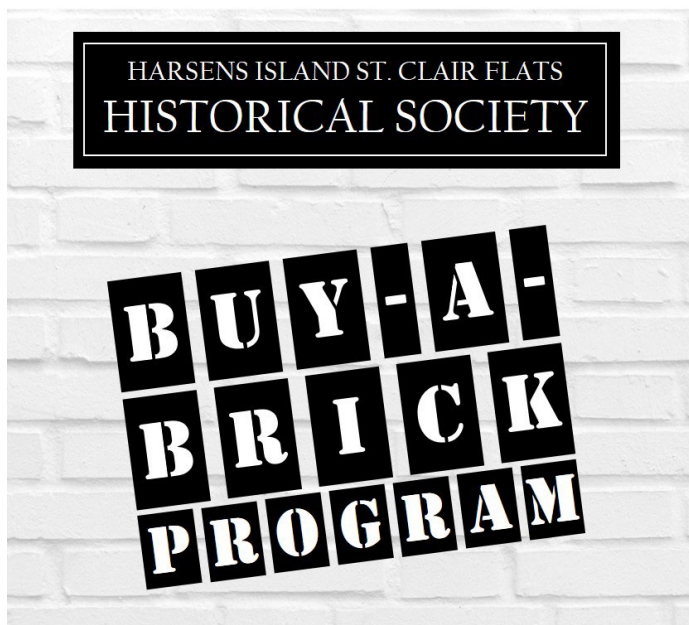
On July 20, Bob Williams presented the History of Harsens Island. It was standing room only and well received. Bob will be presenting an encore presentation on Sunday, September 29 at 4:00 PM.



Harsens Island St. Clair Flats Historical Society Building Renovation BUY-A-BRICK Program

The past three years we celebrated the completion of several renovation projects; in 2020 the Clayton Evans Room Addition, in 2021 the Karen and Drew Peslar Library and in 2022 the large exhibit space at the entrance to the museum named the Nancy Boulton / Gary Grout Room.

To help maintain the museum's infrastructure and a healthy financial position for our Historical Society, we are reactivating our BUY-A-BRICK Program.



Members and friends can support the Historical Society and assure the continuance of the museum by donating \$350 to our BUY-A-BRICK program. Donors will be recognized or may designate a memorial on one of the bricks inside the museum. Of course, they may remain anonymous if they wish. Donations of any amount to support the renovation efforts are welcome and appreciated. To sign up, or if you have questions, contact Bob Williams at 248-388-0465 or xharpspah@aol.com.



BUY-A-BRICK Order Form is included at the end of this newsletter.

**Join us on September 29 for an Encore Presentation of the History of Harsens Island
at the Harsens Island Historical Museum**

So . . . you think you know the history of Harsens Island?

Bob Williams will be presenting a History of Harsens Island. Bob will take us on a journey through history. From the creation of Harsens Island thousands of years ago to today, where he showcases some of the people, places, and businesses that make the Island special.



HARSENS ISLAND / ST. CLAIR FLATS - Historical Society Museum

2024 SPEAKER SERIES

BOB WILLIAMS

presents . . . **The History of Harsens Island**

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

4:00 PM

*Free Refreshments || Suggested donation: **Ten Dollars***

HISTORICAL MUSEUM HOST VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Harsens Island Historical Museum opened for the season on Memorial Day weekend. We are open every weekend throughout the summer, Saturdays from 10-3, and Sundays from Noon – 4pm. We need volunteers to work as hosts this summer to maintain these hours. If you would like to volunteer for two or three hours on any Saturday or Sunday this summer, please contact us. Hosting simply means being there to greet visitors, answer questions if you can, and record sales in our Museum Shop. Many volunteers have found that it is also an opportunity to spend a little time learning more about our interesting Island history!

If you are interested in volunteering, or would like more information, please contact Corinne Trexler at 313-530-9173, or Ellen Probst at 772-766-2912.

Visitors at the Historical Museum - StoryPoint Chesterfield

On July 18, some of the residents from the StoryPoint Chesterfield came to visit Harsens Island, to escape the hustle and bustle of city life and enjoy a slower pace in a picturesque setting! They visited the Sans Souci businesses, and of course stopped in at the museum to learn about the Island's rich history.



Visitors at the Historical Museum – Clinton Township Senior Adult Life Center

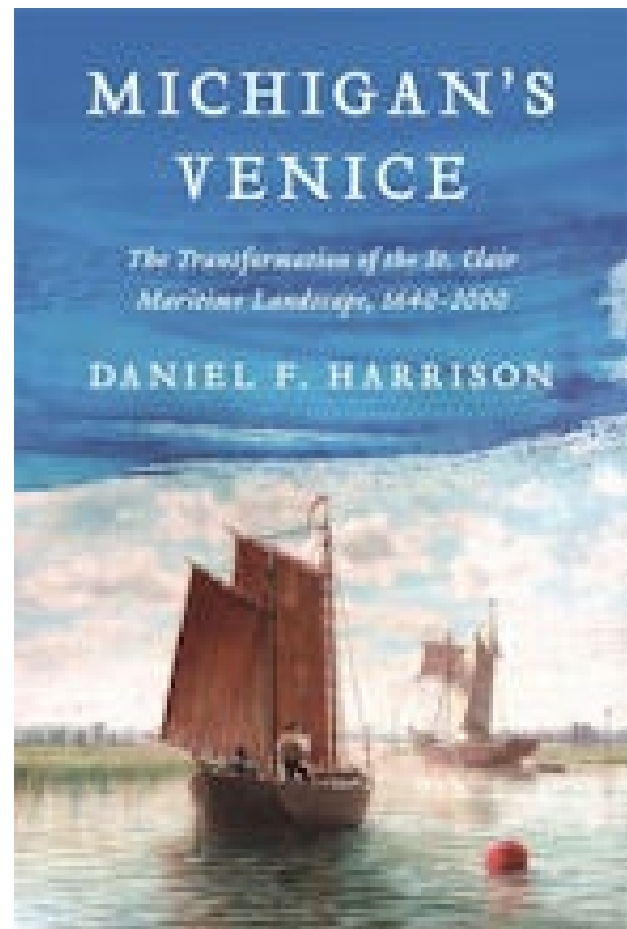
On July 31, residents from Clinton Township Senior Adult Life Center came to visit the Harsens Island Historical Museum. They enjoyed learning about the Island’s rich history and stopped at the Sans Souci Market for some ice cream.



Partial Excerpt from the book Michigan's Venice (Chapter 10)**Author Daniel F. Harrison printed by Wayne State University, April 2024****Recreation as Industry**

"With a ready consumer market, skilled labor, and the means of industrialized production close at hand, it is no wonder that the St. Clair region became to the recreational boating industry what Detroit was to the automobile. Beginning in the 1920s, three of the greatest names in modern wooden boatbuilding had their origins there: the popular Chris-Craft brand in Algonac, the high-performance Gar Wood in Marysville (Mollica 1999), and the luxurious Hacker, "the Steinway of wooden boats" in Mt. Clemens (Barry 2002). In one sense, they followed the Detroit auto boom by couple of decades; in another these maritime communities merely revived a local industry that was over a century old – much older if one considers that among the skilled workers in Chris-Craft's Algonac plant in Anishinaabeg, crossing the river from Walpole Island each day (Nin.Da.Jig 1987, 86: Martin 1971).

This was particularly true during the Secon World War, when there was both a manpower shortage and a need by the military for highly maneuverable, shoal-draft boats that could be built quickly and cheaply – precisely the qualities that had traditionally distinguished the boats of the St. Clair maritime landscape. Moreover, wooden hulls, once a liability, were once again an asset, being less likely to trigger magnetic mines. Chris-Craft produced at least 243 wooden landing craft in its Algonac plant under contract to the US Army and served as the testing facility for an additional 12,000 boats built at its larger Cadillac and Holland, Michigan plants. With Gar Wood contributing an additional 188 units, and Hacker a limited run of high-speed picket boats (Barry 2002, 100), the St. Clair locale's boatbuilding industry was briefly remilitarized, albeit for combat on distant shores."

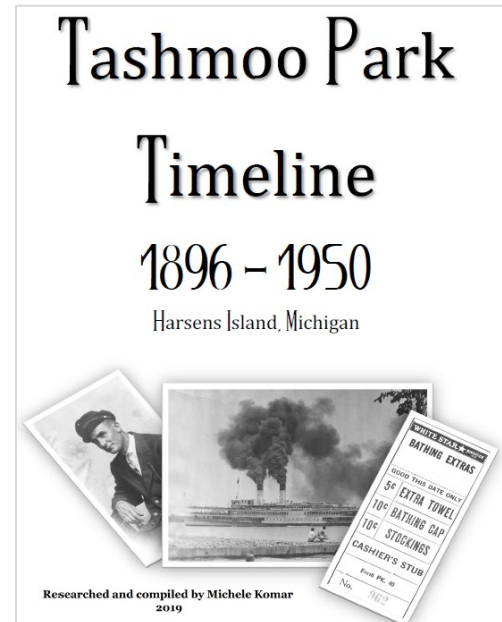


Available for purchase from [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

The Summer of 1924 was Busy

The Tashmoo Park Timeline by Michele Komar is a chronological compilation of articles, booklets and photos that are mainly about Tashmoo Park, the White Star Line and its properties, people, and boats. Originally estimated to be 500 pages, it turned into 1,916 pages comprised of 4 volumes with thousands of articles and would take 2 ½ years from start to finish.

There are countless articles from the Detroit Free Press and The Times Herald in this compilation. I thought you might be interested in reading some of these articles from a 100 years ago!



June 26, 1924 – Detroit Free Press - Page 26

Orphans Get Picnic Candy

The old adage concerning the misanthropic breeze that blows nobody good is also applicable to early morning downpours.

When the time for departure of the Detroit jobbing confectioners on their annual picnic arrived yesterday the heavy rain, caused some hasty changing of plans among the candy dealers and their friends, with the result that at the end of the day the committee in charge of the event discovered they had a large quantity of candy left over.

The problem of what to do with the 3,000 packages was solved when Charles F. Bielman, Jr., general manager of the White Star line, suggested that the candy be distributed among the little inmates of the various orphan asylums of the city.

As a result of the rain that marred an outing, each orphan in Detroit was given a box of candy.

Distribution of the gift will be made through the agency of the Detroit Community union.

July 27, 1924 – Detroit Free Press - Page 50

DETROIT GROCERS PICNIC WEDNESDAY

More Than 3,000 Expected to Attend Tashmoo Outing.

Wednesday, July 30, many of the groceries of the city will be closed while their proprietors and their families and clerks enjoy their annual excursion to Tashmoo Park. Joseph A. Martin, acting mayor; Richard Lindsay, city clerk; Thomas A. Farrell, county clerk, several circuit judges and other prominent in the city's activities plan to attend.

The grocers' outing has always been the largest excursion leaving Detroit during the season. Last year more than 3,000 attended. More than \$1,000 worth of grocery products will be given away in prizes to the winners of the contests and athletic events.

Among the chief events will be a tug-of-war between grocers of the east and west sides, a similar event for clerks, and championship ball games between crack amateur teams, the Risdon Cremery, Grennan Cake, and Skrzycki Pie nines.

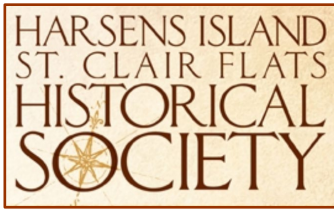
Harsens Island Historical Society Calendar 2024

Date	Day	Time	Event
August 17	Saturday	9:30 AM	Board Meeting at the Museum
August 17	Saturday	10:00 AM	Annual Membership Meeting
August 31	Saturday	11:00 AM	Labor Day Parade
September 21	Saturday	9:30 AM	Board Meeting at the Museum
September 29	Saturday	4:00 PM	Special Event – Bob Williams History of Harsens Island
October 5	Saturday	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Annual Pie Sale
October 19	Saturday	9:30 AM	Board Meeting at the Museum
November 16	Saturday	9:30 AM	Board Planning Meeting via Zoom
November 10	Sunday	TBD	Remembrance Edmund Fitzgerald
December 7	Saturday	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Cookie Walk
December 21	Saturday	9:30 AM	Board Meeting via Zoom



Museum Hours

Summer Schedule (June, July, August, September)
Saturdays 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Sundays 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Winter Schedule (October through April)
Closed but Open by appointment



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

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 44
Harsens Island MI 48028

Museum Address:

3058 S. Channel Dr.

www.harsensislandhistory.org

HISCFHS Board of Directors 2024

Chairman of the Board
Bob Williams

President
Joyce Hassen

1st Vice President
Chris Knight

2nd Vice President
Ellen Probst

Treasurer
Corinne Trexler

Secretary
Rebecca Verschave

Directors
Terry Wiggins
Sue Wrobel
Nancy Bonacquisti



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 curator; Chris Knight at
chris.knight@comcast.net

Is your house more than 100 years old?

The Michigan Heritage Home™ program recognizes houses that were constructed at least 100 years ago and are in substantially original condition. That designation comes with a handsome cast-aluminum plaque that lets everyone know that your home has its own rich heritage and historical significance. This distinguished plaque, authorized by the Historical Society of Michigan, will remind both new and longtime community members of your home's contribution to your shared heritage.



For more information click here to go to the

[Michigan Heritage Program](https://www.hsmichigan.org/awards/michigan-heritage-home)

<https://www.hsmichigan.org/awards/michigan-heritage-home>

Harsens Island St. Clair Flats Historical Society
Building Renovation BUY-A-BRICK Order Form

I / We would like to ‘BUY-A-BRICK’ to support the Museum.

Indicate on the three lines below the inscription you would like on the brick using up to 25 letters, spaces, or special characters per line.

Print Your Name _____

Your Phone Number _____ - _____ - _____

Your email address _____ @ _____

_____ **Enclosed is my check for \$350 made payable to HISCFHS.**

_____ **I will not be purchasing a brick at this time but have enclosed a donation for the renovation.**

Payments should be made payable to “HISCFHS” with “BRICK” on the memo line and mailed to the HISCFHS at P.O. Box 44, Harsens Island, MI 48028.



PO Box 44
Harsens Island
MI 48028
www.harsensislandhistory.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2024

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Primary Mailing Address: _____ Member No. _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Spouse Cell: _____

E-Mail Address: _____ Spouse E-Mail: _____

Additional Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Additional Phone: _____ Membership Type: _____

Annual Renewal Dues:

- | | |
|--|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual (1 Member Only) | \$20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family (1-2 Adults + Children < 18) | \$30.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business | \$50.00 |

Lifetime Dues:

- | | |
|--|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime Individual | \$300.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime Family | \$500.00 |

Building Donation / Roof: \$ _____ Other Donation: \$ _____

(* Original Building Roof)

If desired, please specify use:

Newsletters are emailed to members. If you require newsletters via postal mail, please write a note on your returned application.

Please complete and send with a check made payable to: **Harsens Island Historical Society.**
Mail to: Harsens Island St. Clair Historical Society, P.O.
Box 44, Harsens Island, MI 48028

OFFICE USE ONLY:

Date received: _____

Check # _____ Amount \$ _____