



*Message from the President . . .*

Happy Spring!

Despite the fluctuating temperatures, we're starting to brave the elements and begin the tasks of opening our cottage for the season. Always a lot to do, and always lots of projects to complete, some we knew about last fall . . . some we didn't!?! Getting excited about the upcoming summer season and all the great times ahead.

Similarly, we begin the long list of tasks to open the museum. Finishing the projects required over the winter and starting the ones that had to wait until spring. The Board is also finalizing our plans for activities and events, with the return of annual favorites and some new speakers that will share fascinating and interesting information! Continue to watch our newsletter for dates and details.

Membership renewals were mailed to members earlier this year and once again we have a strong renewal rate! Thank you to those who have renewed your membership, we truly appreciate your support . . . we can't do this without our members!

*Joyce*

*Joyce Hassen, President*

We encourage, and would like to assist, islanders in getting their old photos, slides, negatives, and historical documents into digital format to preserve and/or display them. In addition, the Harsens Island Historical Society would like to collect digital copies of historical photos and documents of the island for the museum's collection.

You can bring photos, slides, negatives, or historical documents to the Museum to have them scanned and the digital copy put on a USB flash drive to take home along with the documents you brought for scanning. Some photos or documents may be of historic interest, and with the owner's permission, a digital copy would be retained by the Harsens Island Historical Society for the museum's collection.

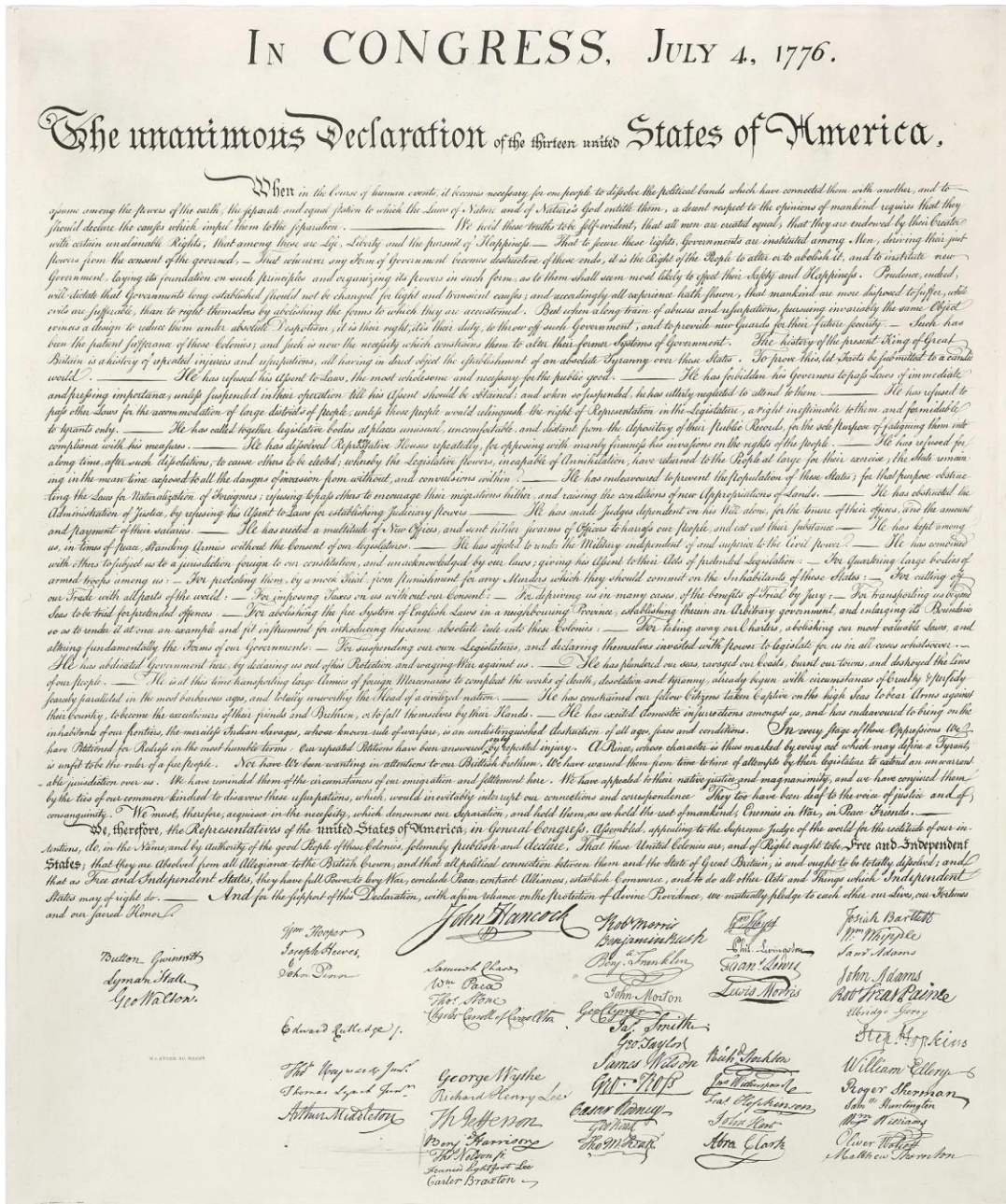
The Harsens Island History Society is also looking for 8 mm or super 8 mm home movies taken on the island prior to 1960 for segments to be digitized and place in the archives. There would be **no fee for members**, but non-members would be asked to make a small donation. You can make an appointment for scanning with Bob Williams at 248-388-0465 or email him at [xharpaspah@aol.com](mailto:xharpaspah@aol.com).

**PRESERVE YOUR HISTORY**



### Celebrating 250 Years of American History

On July 4, 2026, America will celebrate 250 years of independence. A single sheet of parchment and 56 signatures, America began the greatest journey in human history.



### What was happening during the 1700s on Harsens Island?

Continued on page . . . 3

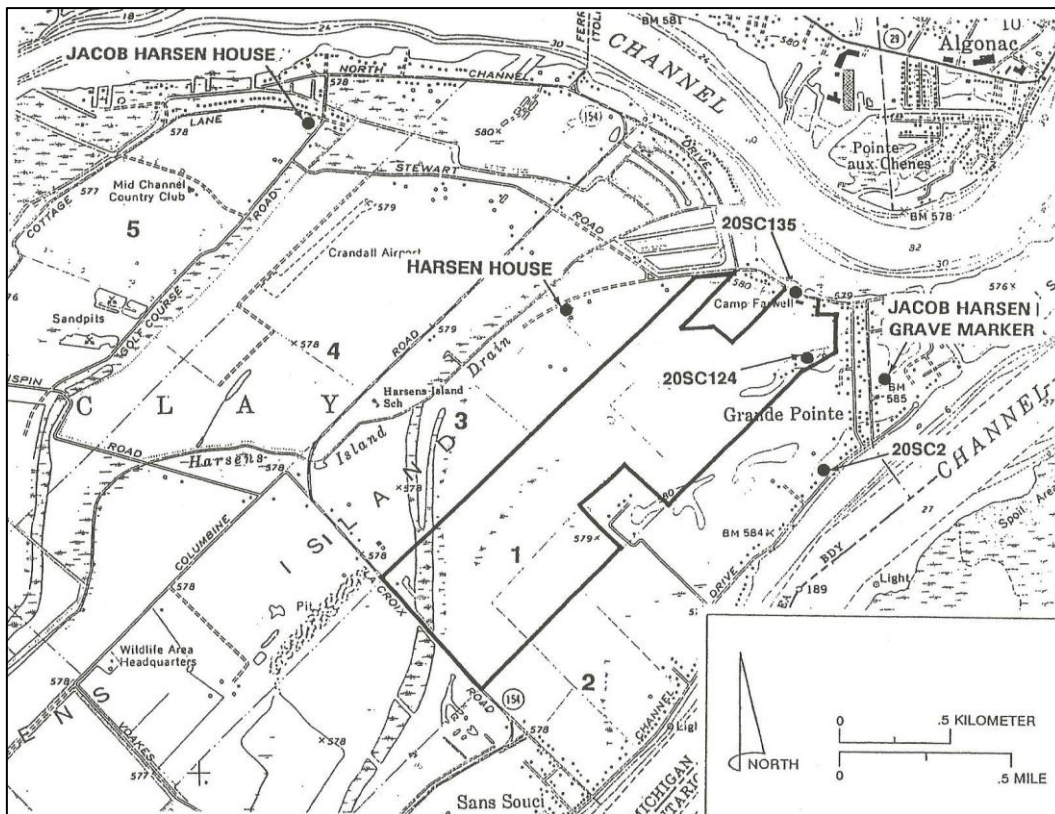
Continued from page 2 . . . 250 Years

In 1766, Jacob worked as a blacksmith / gunsmith at Fort Niagara. He was appointed by Sir William Johnson.



*Image created by AI. It is a representation of a colonial blacksmith It is not Jacob Harsen.*

In 1785, Jacob Harsen settled on the North Channel which was known as “Jacob’s Island”.



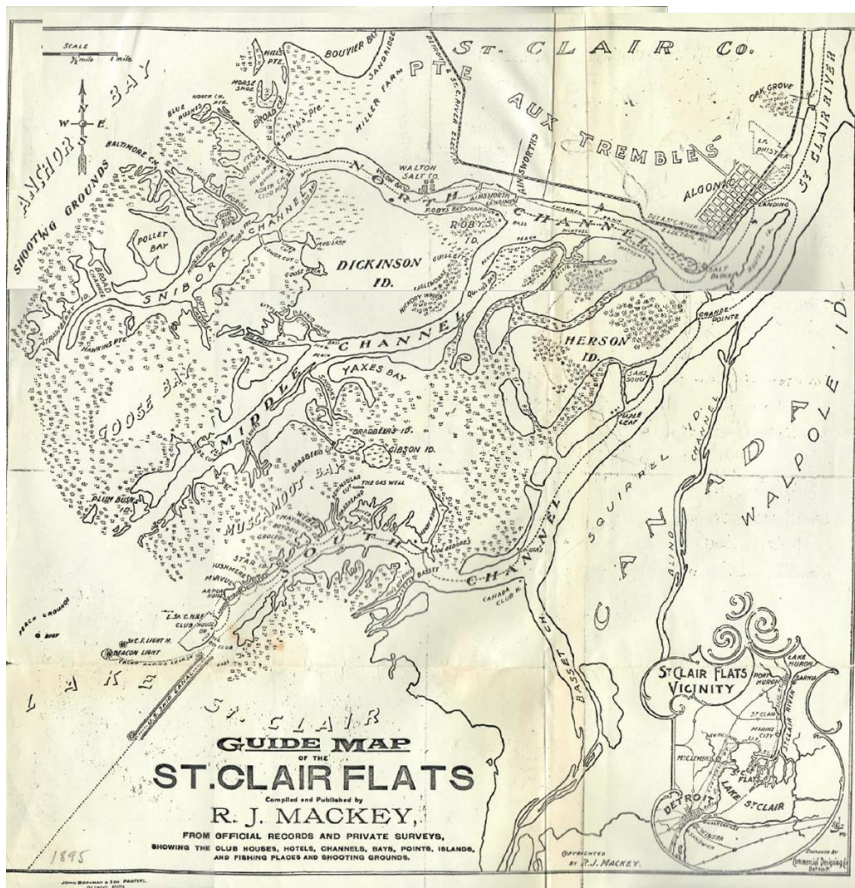
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Continued from page 3 . . . 250 Years

In 1797, the deed for Harsens Island was signed by five Indian Chiefs and given to Jacob.



Image created by AI. It is a representation of Indian Chiefs meeting with a colonial.



In 1809, the name of the island was changed from Jacob's Island to Harsens Island.

*Tashmoo Park Timeline*

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 1/2 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 the year 1926 . . . 100 years ago!

Aug 6, 1926 – *The Times Herald* (Port Huron) - Page 1

***Boat Hand, Unused to Sea Life, Take  
"Water Route" For Shore and Is Saved by  
Tashmoo Park Party***

St. Clair, Aug 6.–William Pritchard, 18, son of Charles Pritchard of Newark, O., is today at the summer home of Mrs. S. H. Heath in Orchard beach, after a thrilling experience in St. Clair River, opposite Russell Island, near Tashmoo Park.

He jumped overboard from the steamer Leonard B. Miller, ore carrier, bound from Ashland, Wis., south to Cleveland 6:30 p.m. Thursday, in order, he said, to escape the wrath of the steward of the boat whose ways the youngster was unable to become accustomed to.

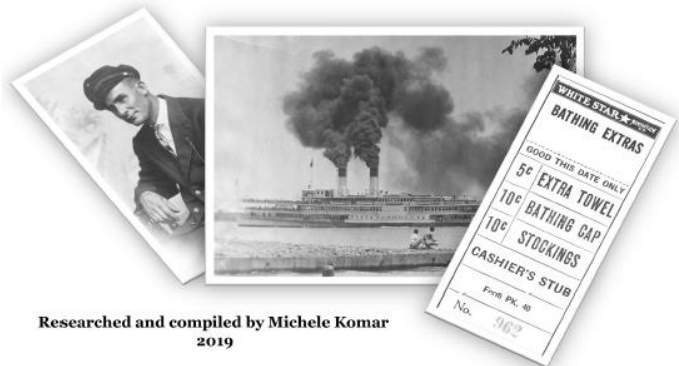
**Rescued by Dinner Party**

After floundering in the water with a life preserve on, Pritchard was rescued by Forrest Heath, 20, University of Michigan student, in a launch. With Heath were Miss Eleanor Cady, Miss Marvel Mann and Franklin Mugavero, all of Port Huron, Charles Moore and Blanchard Cleland, of St. Clair. The party was on its way to Tashmoo where dinner was to be served. Nearing the steamer, the girls saw a man swing from the upper deck and drop into the water unobserved by deckhands. They shouted: "Man overboard!"

# Tashmoo Park Timeline

## 1896 – 1950

Harsens Island, Michigan



Researched and compiled by Michele Komar  
2019

The launch was steered for the form struggling in the water. Heath pulled him into the launch.

**Given Food, Clothes**

Pritchard was taken to Tashmoo Park, where he was served a dinner and given dry clothes. He was brought to the summer home of Mrs. Heath, grandmother, of Forrest. Today he is awaiting an answer to a telegram he sent his father in Newark, O., asking for money to return home. Pritchard said he decided he needed a vacation, so he engaged as a steward's helper on the Leonard B. Miller, ore carrier. He made a trip from Huron, O., to Ashland, Wis., and was on his way back with the boat when he decided it was better to struggle with the waters of St. Clair River than to put up with the strenuous labor of a steward's helper.

So, he slipped quietly into a life preserver and jumped into the water, hoping the current would land him ashore a short distance down the river.

*Continued on page 6 . . .*

Continued from page 5 . . . Tashmoo Timeline

**Took "Water Course"**

Pritchard said he decided on the "water course to shore" after the Steward had informed him, he would be on duty all night Thursday.

"I was not accustomed to the language of the sailors," Pritchard said. "My boss nagged me and drove me from morning till night. I could not stand it longer. I complained but that did no good. I was told to obey my boss. Things became unbearable and I figured the easiest way out was to 'swim for shore.' I did not see the launch when I jumped but I am now glad it was near, for the water was so cold I was nearly chilled when rescued. I am deeply thankful to those who saved my life for I could not swim to shore. The current was swirling around me something awful."

Aug 22, 1926 - Detroit Free Press - Page 12

**INDIANS ON WALPOLE GIVE FAIR THIS WEEK**

Steamer Tashmoo will make special stops at Walpole Island, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, this week, for the accommodation of those who annually visit the island to enjoy the great Indian fair and exhibition, staged by the Chippewa, Pottawatomie and Ottawa tribes, which reside in this famous Canadian Indian reservation.

"The Walpole Island fair affords wonderful opportunity to see real Indians, in real Indian costumes, working and playing as they did when Detroit was a village," said C. F. Bielman, Jr., general manager of the White Star Navigation company. "Among the special attractions are Indian bareback pony races; the war dance and snake dance; and a thrilling sham battle.

"Saturday will be children's day—a day when the little redskin boys and girls will engage in foot races, coat races, soda biscuit eating contests, and singing competition. Steamer Tashmoo will leave the foot of Griswold Street at 9 a. m. and arrive at Walpole Island at noon. It leaves Walpole Island at 5 p. m. on the return trip and arrives back in Detroit at 8 p. m."

**Come let's Go for a Sail!**  
 Through the old Land of the Chippewas!

up the **ST. CLAIR** to **Tashmoo Park** or **PORT HURON**  
 St. Clair Falls, Algonac and Sarnia

**on the big Steamer TASHMOO**

At Tashmoo Park you can see the native Indians every day, and get from them quaint souvenirs of your trip—interesting products of the Indian handiwork. Here, too, you can have a wonderful time picnicking, swimming, boating, dancing, etc. Your children can have the time of their life in perfect safety.

**Str. TASHMOO** Leaves Daily from Griswold St. Wharf 9 a. m. Back 8 p. m.  
**Str. WAURETA** for Tashmoo Park 1:30 p. m. Back on Tashmoo 8 p. m.

**Dine and Dance As You Sail Along**

Free dancing in the Str. Tashmoo ballroom and at Tashmoo Park to the music of Finzel's famous Tashmoo Syncopators. Splendid meals in the ship's dining room. Lunch counters. Soda Fountains.

**Concert Orchestra on Board**

A special concert orchestra plays for your entertainment in the main cabin while you lounge at ease. Private parlors available for parties.

Round trip fares: Fort Huron or Sarnia, \$2; Tashmoo Park or St. Clair Falls (week days), \$1; (Sun. and unlimed), \$1.50; Algonac, \$1.50 R. T. Phil. Ten 5 to 12 half fare.  
 Fort Huron & Sarnia, One Way, \$1.10

The All-day Cruise to Port Huron is the Finest River Ride in America  
 WHITE STAR NAVIGATION CO.  
 Ft. of Griswold Randolph 9532

**GREAT INDIAN FAIR!**  
 Walpole Island, Aug. 26, 27, 28

**80c** Take STR. TASHMOO  
 ROUND TRIP **CHILDREN 40c**

Visiting this genuine Indian Fair will prove one of your most unusual experiences. You'll see Indian bareback pony races—the Indian papoose show—war dance and snake dance—and the great sham battle of these survivors of the famous Chippewa, Pottawatomie and Ottawa tribes. By all means attend this Indian Fair—you'll be glad.

There will also be a Special Children's Day on Saturday, Aug. 28th—a day when the little Redskin boys and girls will engage in foot races—coat races—soda biscuit eating contests and singing competition. Bring the children along—they'll have the treat of their lives. Str. Tashmoo leaves Detroit 9 a. m.; arrives Walpole Island 12 noon. Leaves Walpole Island 5 p. m.; arrives back 8 p. m. Fare—80c round trip. Children 40c.

**White Star Navigation Co., Ft. of Griswold St.**

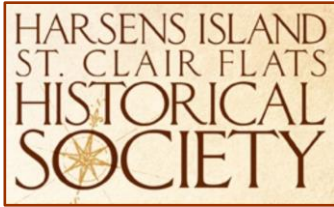
## Harsens Island Historical Society Calendar 2026

Date	Day	Time	Event
April 18	Saturday	9:30 AM	Board Meeting via Zoom
May 16	Saturday	9:30 AM	Board Meeting at the Museum
May 23	Saturday	TBD	Museum Opens
June 20	Saturday	9:30 AM	Board Meeting at the Museum
July 18	Saturday	9:30 AM	Board Meeting at the Museum
July 18	Saturday	9:30 AM	Election Ballots Due
August 15	Saturday	10:00 AM	Annual Membership Meeting
August 15	Saturday	10:30 AM	Board Meeting at the Museum
September 19	Saturday	9:30 AM	Board Meeting at the Museum
October 3	Saturday	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Annual Pie Sale
October 17	Saturday	9:30 AM	Board Meeting at the Museum
November 8	Sunday	TBD	Remembrance Edmund Fitzgerald
November 21	Saturday	9:30 AM	Board Planning Meeting via Zoom
December 5	Saturday	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Cookie Walk
December 19	Saturday	9:30 AM	Board Meeting via Zoom



### Museum Hours

Summer Schedule (June, July, August)
Saturdays 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Sundays 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Winter Schedule (September 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](http://www.harsensislandhistory.org)

**HISCFHS Board of Directors 2025**

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President

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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 curator; Chris Knight at [chris.knight@comcast.net](mailto:chris.knight@comcast.net)

**Harsens Island Historical Society**

The Harsens Island St. Clair Flats History Society has a quilt block on the building and a QR code is mounted next to the side door. Using the camera app on your phone, scan the code and it will show the link to the Historical Museum page in the [Quilt Trail](#) site.

The [Historical Society of Michigan](#) published their 2024 Winter Issue of the Chronicle. The new Harsens Island Historical Society Quilt Block was mentioned in the magazine.





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

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2026

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:

- Individual (1 Member Only) \$20.00
- Family (1-2 Adults + Children < 18) \$30.00
- Business \$50.00

Lifetime Dues:

- Lifetime Individual \$300.00
- Lifetime Family \$500.00

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

(\* The necessary roof replacement in 2024 has left reserve funds low)

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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would be interested in volunteering as a museum host this summer (greeting visitors, answer questions, if possible, & record museum shop sales).