

Les Cheneaux Maritime Museum Adds Mackinaw Boat Model to Display

Paul Wilson has won his third Gold Award at the Wisconsin Maritime Museum's annual Midwestern Model Ships and Boat Contest for his entry, *The Swan*, a model of a Mackinaw boat. The Gold Award is the top award in the contest.

Mr. Wilson has loaned the model to the Les Cheneaux Historical Association to display, along with more than 20 other boat models at the Maritime Museum. All represent historic vessels, significant periods of time, or the craftsmanship and skill of their builders.

Mr. Wilson's model is made from plans the late Oliver Birge drew from the original boat named *Wabesi*, which is the Native American word for "swan." *Wabesi* was built in 1845, in either St. Ignace or on Mackinac Island by a boat builder named Hyacinth Chenier for a fur trader on Mackinac Island.

The vessel was later sold to Joseph Osogwin in the Les Cheneaux Islands to be used as a fishing boat. Family members said *Wabesi* transported summer residents from Mackinac Island to the Les Cheneaux Islands around 1890. *Wabesi* stayed in the



An early 1900s photograph shows a Mackinaw boat tied up at a Les Cheneaux Islands dock. (Les Cheneaux Historical Association photograph)

Osogwin family until she was beached in about 1920, Mr. Wilson reported. Mr. Birge measured and drew



Paul Wilson's Mackinaw boat model, *The Swan*, won a Gold Award at the 2008 Wisconsin Maritime Museum's annual Midwestern Model Ships and Boat Contest. (Photograph courtesy of Moira "Pat" Wilson)

Wilson said. His model has polished river stones to represent those rocks. Ropes, tiny fittings, and hand-sewn sails were made by Mr. Wilson to accent the boat, and a friend is making a scaled fishing net for the boat which should be finished by the Les Cheneaux Antique Wooden Boat Show in August.

A set of Oliver Birge boat models made from scaled plans of other actual boats has been moved from the Les Cheneaux Historical Museum in Cedarville, and joins the other models at the Maritime Museum. Mr. Wilson's award-winning model of a Friendship sloop, called *Perseverance*, is also at the museum.

The museum's display includes a collection of Chris Craft cruiser and runabouts owned by the late Reverend George Murray; a Frank

Roemer model of the freighter *Cedarville*, which sank in the Straits of Mackinac; H.B. Geary's battery-operated model tugboat; a 1952 model sailboat made by Bruce K. Patrick for his son, Bruce W. Patrick; a toy boat made by William Dunbar for his four-year-old granddaughter, and six models from a collection owned by Ben Morse, including a fishing boat, 1901 package freighter, passenger ship, another freighter, an 1873 schooner-berge, and the *St. Ignace*, a radio-controlled model of a ferry steamer formerly used to transport railroad cars between Mackinaw City and St. Ignace.

Maritime Museum hours through Labor Day weekend are Tuesday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. The museum is closed Mondays.

Law Enforcement Can Help With Safety Seats

Parents in Mackinac County now can get assistance with properly installing their child safety seats and by October, seats and booster seats will be available free from the St. Ignace Police Department and the Sheriff's Office.

City Officer Allen Mitchell and Trooper Dustin Stempki from the Mackinac County Sheriff's Office each have become certified child passenger safety technicians after completing a four-day course in Marquette.

Les Cheneaux Library Offers Kids' Movies

Les Cheneaux Community Library in Cedarville has been showing children's movies since June 14, and will continue the Saturday movie showings through August 2.

The Saturday Kids' Flicks program offers free movies to children of all ages every Saturday at 11 a.m., after the children's story hour and craft.

The next movie to be presented is "Snow Buddies" July 5.

"Alvin and the Chipmunks" will be shown July 12.

"Underdog" will be presented July 19.

"The Seeker: The Dark is Rising" will be shown July 26.

"Water Horse: Legend of the Deep" will be the final movie of the season August 2.

Outdoor Concert Benefits Friends of Animals July 2

A live, outdoor concert by the band Breathe Owl Breathe will be presented Wednesday, July 2, at the Village Idiom bookstore in Hessel at 7 p.m. The event is a fundraiser, and the cost will be \$15 for adults. Children can attend free of charge. Proceeds will be donated to the Friends of the Animals and Les Cheneaux Community Schools music program.

Breathe Owl Breathe is an East Jordan band with roots in independent, classical, and traditional music.

People attending are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets to sit on.

St. Stanislaus Hosts Picnic Saturday

The St. Stanislaus Catholic Church picnic will be Saturday, July 5, at Maple Grove on M-48 in Goltzville. Mass will be at 11 a.m., followed by a barbecue chicken dinner from noon to 5 p.m. Hamburgers and hot dogs will also be available. Cost is \$9 for adults.

A rummage sale and children's games will also take place. The public is welcome.

Beginning July 1, 2008 a new Michigan law requires all children to be secured in a booster seat until they are eight years old, or reach four feet, nine inches tall.

"Research has shown being properly restrained in a child safety seat can save children's lives," said Sheriff Scott Strait. Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for children. In many cases, he said, these deaths could have been prevented by the proper use of a booster seat.

"Booster seats are designed to lift children up and make safety belts fit properly," he said. "Without the booster seat, young children can suffer serious internal injuries due to the improper fit of a safety belt that is designed for adults."

Citations for violating the new law could cost parents from \$65 to \$165 for each unrestrained child in

the vehicle. Booster seats are priced from \$20 to \$100, depending on the style.

The City Police and Sheriff's Office are planning an event October 4 to give away child safety and booster seats, said Police Chief Tim Matelski. He also said parents should check any child safety seat they have in vehicles, as seats now come with an expiration date. Over time, he said, the plastic of the seats breaks down. Parents can call the department with questions, at 643-6077.

Parents needing help securing child safety seats in a vehicle or who would like a seat inspected can call the St. Ignace Police Department to make an appointment.

Funds for the officers' training and purchasing the seats came from a \$5,000 grant from the Michigan State Police Office of Highway Safety Planning.



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the lines and working drawings for *Wabesi* from the actual boat around 1930. Her rigging was determined from a conversation with John Osogwin, the last surviving Osogwin family member who actually sailed the boat.

Mr. Wilson describes Mackinaw boats as "the 18 wheelers of the upper Great Lakes from about 1850 to early 1900s." They were used to transport fish, furs, coal, baskets, people, mail, and cargo from northern Lake Huron to Detroit, and all over the Straits of Mackinac to the eastern shore of Georgian Bay.

Mr. Wilson's boat is rigged as if starting out on a fishing trip, and he made scaled net boxes based on an actual fish box at the Maritime Museum. Mackinaw boat operators typically used rocks for ballast, and the rocks were thrown overboard as fish were brought into the boat, Mr.

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