

# Summer Hessel Resident Shares Collection of Vintage EUP Postcards

By Ryan Schlehuder

In his attempt to learn more about his family history in the Les Cheneaux Islands, David Brobst of Hessel and Pickerington, Ohio, along with his daughter, has been sorting many old postcards that his great grandparents collected during their travels throughout mostly the mid-western states. He stores the postcards in a plastic container, organized by state.

Mr. Brobst knows people are fascinated by old images that depict how communities used to be, which also show how far they have advanced today.

"I think it's important to show the history of these places to people," he said, in sharing the collection with readers of *The St. Ignace News*. "We can not only enjoy these old postcards, but we can learn from them. I think it's important for me, my family, and others to share stuff like this with everyone."

The postcards include St. Ignace, Mackinac Island, Mackinaw City, Les Cheneaux, Sault Ste. Marie, Tahquamenon Falls, and Pellston.

He also has a small collection of oversized postcards that measure more than 11 inches by five inches. The pictures on large postcards depict Les Cheneaux scenes.



David Brobst, a retired Ohio school music teacher, holds a collection of vintage postcards his great-grandparents collected during their travels throughout the United States, including a few from Michigan's Eastern Upper Peninsula. Mr. Brobst and his family have been long-time summer residents of the Les Cheneaux area.

Mr. Brobst has been able to trace his father's side of the family in the Les Cheneaux area to 1850 and on his mother's side, the Wagners, to the 1840s.

His great-grandparents, the Reverend Harry and Mrs. Elizabeth Brobst, were in the area since the turn of the century. Rev. Brobst pastored a Catholic church in Coldwater, Ohio, from 1905 to

1924, and finished his career in Columbus, visiting the Les Cheneaux area every summer. Both were originally from Ohio, but had traveled to many states, and the collection of postcards tells the story.

The Brobst family established a home in Hessel in 1907-08, while the Wagners built a cabin in Hessel in 1922. The two families lived



## The Old Halfway House on U.S. 2

Nes-Wab No-Quay, Proprietor

Box 54

St. Ignace, Michigan

One of the postcards in the Brobst collection depicts an old log house on US-2 in St. Ignace that was called "The Old Halfway House," which sold Native American hand-made crafts. The proprietor of the business was Nes-Wab No-Quay, according to the postcard. (Postcard courtesy of David Brobst)

right across from each other on Pickford Avenue.

Elizabeth Wagner Brobst purchased land near the water in Hessel but, fearing the water would rise too much, she sold it and purchased property farther up the hill, near M-134. The shoreline

property was purchased by Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Church.

Mr. Brobst's oldest daughter of three, Deanna Wilson of Lewis Center, Ohio, has been helping her father track their family's history at courthouses here and in Ohio.

Mr. Brobst is a retired elementary and secondary music teacher for schools in Whitehall, Ohio, a suburb of Columbus. He taught for 30 years. He resides in Hessel in the L.A. Wagner cabin with his sister, Lenore Lutz of Columbus, every summer.

## Looking Back

Compiled by Ryan Schlehuder

90 Years Ago

*The St. Ignace News*

Thursday, August 8, 1918

The *Chief Wawatam* leaves Tuesday to go into the Detroit dry dock for repairs. The *Sainte Marie* will be placed in commission during the Chief's absence.

This old town [St. Ignace] is a busy little place. The buzzing of the mills, the puffing of the yard engine, the chugging of the fish tugs, and the whistling of the car ferry with a full cargo every two hours indicates that we are affected by the war energy that is manifested all through the country. Happily we are not neglecting farming.

Miss Genevieve McCann of St. Ignace, sister of Mrs. J.F. Darby and Miss Cassilda McCann, has been appointed chief clerk of the state game, fish, and forestry department to succeed Charles K. Hoyt, deceased. Miss McCann is the first woman to hold the position to which she has just been appointed.

Frank Koblinski of Duluth accepted a position as telegraph operator at the depot [Trout Lake].

Tuesday and yesterday were soldiers letters days for the parents and friends of our boys in service. Hundreds of letters were received, some telling of the safe arrival of members of the 85th Division in France, and other general news from the front and cantonments. No casualties were reported in any of them and thus far Mackinac county has cause for great rejoicing.

There is a family on what is known as the old Sam Allen place with eighteen horses for sale; anyone wanting a good work team or drying horse, call on him [Curtis].

50 Years Ago

*The Republican-News*

& *St. Ignace Enterprise*

Thursday, August 7, 1958

Joseph Thibault, former state ferry service cook, has purchased the restaurant equipment and business of the Gateway Cafe at Burdette and US-2 from Mr. and Mrs. Walter Gosdin.

"One of the most difficult, and perhaps the most important, problem faced by the Mackinac County Chamber of Commerce has been the handling of traffic going to and from Mackinac Island. I refer particularly to the parking of cars. Our experience in the early weeks of the summer led us to the conclusion that the parking space needed to be organized with a plan for supervision and control." - Emerson R. Smith, Mackinac County Chamber of Commerce manager.

The tenth annual Father Marquette Day Pageant will begin at 12:00 noon, Sunday, August 10, opposite Father Marquette Park and museum on

the shores of Moran Bay with the traditional Indian ceremonies that precede the landing of the famous Jesuit missionary priest and explorer as it happened in the year 1671.

New all-time records were established by the Mackinac Bridge during July, as 307,838 motor vehicles crossed the span during the 31-day period, bringing in gross revenues totaling \$1,082,885.

The new M-134, which leads from US-2 north of St. Ignace to Les Cheneaux, is a boon to the eastern upper peninsula, according to opinion voiced by Marvin Winkelman, president of the Mackinac County Chamber of Commerce.

35 Years Ago

*The Republican-News*

& *St. Ignace Enterprise*

Thursday, August 9, 1973

Joseph Lawson, 23, who escaped from the Mackinac County jail about 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 2, turned himself in by calling the State Police from a State Street pay phone about 3:15 a.m. Friday morning. He was taken into custody and is now lodged in the Chippewa County Jail. Lawson, a native of New Orleans, La., was charged in the stabbing death of Larry

Jackson on Mackinac Island on July 1.

He made his escape by breaking the food service window in his cell. He then got into the adjoining cell and summoned the turnkey, asking for medication. He then shoved the turnkey against the cell wall with the door and got away by breaking a second story window and sliding down the flagpole.

15 Years Ago

*The St. Ignace News*

Thursday, August 5, 1993

Governor John Engler cut a red ribbon dedicating St. Ignace's new Michigan State Police Post on Friday, July 30, one of the two progressive Straits of Mackinac facilities for which ribbons were cut within a one-hour period.

An Ontario man died Sunday night, July 31, when the plane he was piloting crashed into Lake Michigan near Naubinway, but his wife survived by clinging to the plane's pontoons for several hours before a canoeist saved her. Authorities say the pilot lost control of his 1964 Cessna 180 seaplane in spotty fog near the Rock River, and crashed into the lake sometime Sunday afternoon, overturning the plane.

It is now official that Mackinac Straits Hospital broke

even in the fiscal year ending March 31 - the first time it has not suffered heavy losses in at least six years.

With finishing sweeps in both the Chicago and Port Huron races by the new maxi boats *Windquest*, *Renegade*, and *Trader*, it appears the beginning of a new era - or at least the end of an old one - has occurred in Great Lakes sailing technology. The heyday of the Santa Cruz 70s - boats like *Pied Piper*, *Stripes*, and *Cynosure*, that have dominated the Mackinac races for years - may be over.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *The St. Ignace News is seeking original prints or reprints of old photographs depicting areas in the Eastern Upper Peninsula to be scanned into the archives and for the Looking Back column. Photographs to be loaned or donated to the Michilimackinac Historical Society can also be sent or dropped off at The St. Ignace News.*

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