

Two-time Best of Show Winner *Chief Mackinac* Returning to Hessel Boat Show

By Jonathan Eppley

Two-time Best of Show winner *Chief Mackinac* will return to the Les Cheneaux Antique Wooden Boat Show this year as one of the show's two featured boats. The boat, owned by John and Becky Allen of Naples, Florida, spent most of its 92-year history in the Les Cheneaux area when it was named Molly. The Allens moved it to their Gull Lake, Minnesota, cottage, which they share with their five children, in 2005.

The boat, a 32-foot 1917 custom Consolidated launch, will return to Hessel Saturday, August 8, for its fourth boat show appearance since being restored in 2004. It won the boat show's top honor in 2004 and 2008.

Mr. Allen said the Les Cheneaux Historical Association, which sponsors the event, invited him to bring his boat back as a feature boat for the 32nd annual boat show because it's a residents' favorite.

The previous three times he displayed the *Chief Mackinac* at Hessel, numerous people introduced themselves to him and told him stories about riding in the boat years ago when it was called Molly.

"I'm bringing it back to the Les Cheneaux show because I think it's the finest show in America," he said. "I think that boat resonates with people from when it



was up there... It's a fun boat to bring back."

Along with *Chief Mackinac*, Mr. Allen owns 14 other classic

wooden boats that he displays at shows around the country. He's shown his boats in New York, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Flo-

rida. John Allen prepares to wipe beads of rain off his 1917 boat *Chief Mackinac* before the start of the 2008 Les Cheneaux Islands Antique Wooden Boat Show. Last year the boat earned the show's top honor for Best of Show. Mr. Allen was invited back to display his boat as a feature boat in the 2009 boat show in Hessel Saturday, August 8. (The St. Ignace News file photograph)

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At the Les Cheneaux show this year, he will be displaying three boats: *Chief Mackinac*, a 1923 Fay and Bowen called *Rusticator*, and a 1928 Dodge Watercar called *Honey Don't*, which is being restored in time for the show by Classic and Antique Boats of Hessel.

"It's kind of become an addiction," he said about his collection of antique boats. "We try to keep it to two or three shows a year. Otherwise your summer gets real short."

The *Rusticator* is being shown at the Antique Boat Show and Auction in Clayton, New York, a week before the Les Cheneaux

show, and will be transported by trailer to Hessel just in time for the show.

The Allens take great care when transporting their antique boats. A custom-made triple-axel, air-suspension trailer will be used to transport the *Chief Mackinac* to Hessel to prevent any damage to the boat.

The boat was originally purchased by the Hardy family of Chicago, owners of a summer cottage on Marquette Island in the early 20th century. It originally came to the Les Cheneaux area around 1919 or 1920, and was used as a go-between from the island to the mainland. The boat was later sold to the Seiberling family, and Ray Ackerman, and was put into storage in 1965, where it remained for the better part of four decades.

There it sat until Dan and Tom Mertaugh of Classic and Antique Boats blew the dust off and began restoring it in 2004. It took them about eight months to restore the boat, Mr. Allen said.

Most of the boat remains original. The only major replacements were the cabin floor, which was more for aesthetics than structural integrity, and the engine, replaced in the late 1940s. The boat's origi-

nal engine, which is believed to be a 70-horsepower Speedway, was replaced with a 115-horsepower Chrysler engine sometime after World War II. That engine was overhauled by the Mertaughs during restoration.

Chief Mackinac returned to the water for the first time after being renovated during the 2004 boat show, winning her first Best of Show. It won Best of Show and first place in the launch class in both 2004, and 2008, as well as was voted by spectators as the People's Choice winner in 2004. Best of Show winners are determined by volunteer judges and Antique and Classic Boat Society members.

"It's a great tribute to Dan and Tom. They just did a marvelous job restoring it," Mr. Allen said. "It was exceptionally well maintained considering its age... It's going to be fun to be up there. It's always one of my favorite shows."

The boat also won top honors at the Classic Wooden Boat Show in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, in 2008.

"Every show I've ever showed it in, it's won Best in Show," he said. "Wherever this boat goes, it wins awards."

Mackinac Island Festival of the Horse

Parade To Show Off Vintage Carriages

By Karen Gould

Elegant antique horse-drawn carriages will parade down Main Street to showcase Mackinac Island's horse culture Friday, July 24. The parade, which starts at 7 p.m., is part of the three-day Festival of the Horse that begins Thursday and runs through Saturday on Mackinac Island.

The antique carriages, tours of Grand Hotel and private West Bluff stables, carriage driving demonstrations, a breed show, horse culture lectures, a live auction, and an old-fashioned barn raising party are planned by the Mackinac Horsemen's Association. Establishing the Island as an equestrian destination through the festival, promotion, and clinics, the association hopes to increase tourism, draw new travelers to the Island, and help raise funds for building a community stable.

Grand Hotel will display about 12 carriages during the festival, although the number could fluctuate depending on use that day, said stable manager Ben Mosley. Daily, the carriages can be spotted around the Island transporting the hotel's owners and special guests.

"I think that carriages are a very important part of history that often times gets overlooked," said Mr. Mosley. "Carriages were very important in the 1800s and early 1900s as part of the history of this country. They are, in my opinion, an art form. As a general rule, most older carriages have nice lines to them, very sculptured lines."

The vintage carriages and the hotel's horses share stables atop a

hill behind the hotel. Antique horse items, an encased wooden horse, and photographs dot the walls of the wooden building.

Three burgundy omnibus carriages are kept busy by hotel guests, including an 1890s Demarest. The other two omnibus carriages were remanufactured in 1987 using old omnibus parts. The carriages are used daily during the hotel's open season.

The hotel also has two private Brewster omnibuses. A smaller carriage, the Brewster often is referred to as an opera bus. Two Brougham carriages made by C.P. Kimball and Company of Chicago around 1900, said Mr. Mosley, are a part of the hotel's collection and are known for their fine interior trim.

Two basket vis-a-vis carriages also were made by C.P. Kimball and Company and date to 1905. Coachman driven, the vehicle is considered a summer carriage. Mr. Mosley often serves as coachman, dressed the part, including a top hat. The carriages are used by the Musser family, owners of the hotel, and special guests.

In the hotel stable, which sits behind the hotel off Cadotte Avenue, also are a 1900 Stanhope gig and a Victoria carriage of the same era. The elegant Victoria, pulled by two Hackney horses, is the symbol used in the hotel's logotype.

A more modern marathon carriage will be used during the driving demonstration scheduled for Friday, July 24, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. as part of the Festival of The Horse.

Grand Hotel horses, said Mr. Mosley, are always show ready. They get brushed at least twice each day, rinsed off after working, and about twice a week they get a full shampoo bath.

"The Hackneys here at the hotel," he said, "live the life of the queen."

The hotel has 10 horses on the Island, six Percherons and four Hackneys. The stable has a staff of seven people, including Mr. Mosley.

Two of the hotel's horses are new to Mackinac Island this year.

"They are coming along nicely," he said of their training. "Horses are every bit as intelligent as a dog. The difference is a horse is much closer to its natural instincts."

The job of a Grand Hotel horse is relatively easy. Mr. Mosley and other teamsters develop a caring relationship with the animals, often referring to them as "my team."

"These carriages do not pull near as hard as a plow does. These carriages, although they look big, it's kind of an optical illusion because they have a top on them; it makes them look bigger than what they really are," he said, referring to the omnibus.

"Horses here on the Island don't have a bad life," he said.

Island visitors generally are courteous, and he recommends those who want to pet a horse to approach the driver for permission. Island businesses do not all have the same policies.

Grand Hotel equines have for-

Turn to page 6: Festival

City Awaits Permits for Sewer Outfall Move

By Mark Tower

The City of St. Ignace is considering a plan to move its sewer outflow into Lake Huron about 400 feet to the north, from treatment lagoons north of Mackinac County Airport, hoping it will reduce the danger caused by birds gathering at the shoreline at the end of the airport runway. The city is awaiting necessary state permits to begin the work, which will be done by city crews and could range from \$40,000 to \$50,000 in cost.

The treated wastewater can reach temperatures of 95 degrees where it enters the lake, which attracts fish and, in turn, birds to the area. Airport manager Paul Fullerton said the discharged water has also caused new plant growth near the end of the runway, creating a nesting habitat for birds.

These birds can be a risk to both planes taking off and landing at the airport, Mr. Fullerton said, with as many as 300 birds grouping near the end of the runway.

"It could be a real disaster," he said. "We're trying to get something that will alleviate this safety hazard."

The city hired URS Corporation, an engineering and planning company based in Grand Rapids,

to study the different options to solve the issue, and this study will soon be presented to the City Council, City Manager Eric Dodson said.

After exploring several options, which included sending the discharge north into wetland areas or extending the pipe farther into the lake, it appears that the most feasible option would be to divert the outflow to a location further down the shore away from the airport's runway.

"The airport, believe it or not, is the busiest airport in the Upper Peninsula," Mr. Dodson said. "We don't want anybody to get hurt. Airplanes and birds do not get along."

The proposed plan of extending the outflow pipe out into the lake would cost about \$3.4 million under current standards, he said, something city officials decided was out of the city's price range. The option of moving the outfall north into the wetland area would have also been expensive and harmful to the natural area, Public Works Director Les Therrian said.

"The impact on the environment would have been greater," he said.

Mr. Therrian said the potential project would be done with the

city's own crews, hopefully before this winter.

The city is waiting for Michigan Department of Environmental Quality permits to make such a change.

Mr. Fullerton said this proposed plan is not the optimum fix, but that it would definitely help to alleviate the problem, if not eliminate it.

"Ideally, we would like the sewer to follow the initial plan of running a pipe all the way out into the lake," he said.

The bird habitat at the end of the runway won't disappear overnight, he said, although he is hopeful that moving the outfall will, over time, keep pilots and passengers using the airport safer.

Wastewater Plant Improvements Near Completion

The St. Ignace wastewater treatment plant has been undergoing renovations since 2008, and Mr. Therrian said the current project, mandated by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), is about five weeks from completion.

Ordered by the State of Michigan to be completed in November 2009, the updates to the more than 20-year-old facility

Turn to page 10: Sewer

School Raises Season Tickets, Hot Lunch Prices

Les Cheneaux Retiring Superintendent Will Return to Teaching in Rogers City District

By Jonathan Eppley

The Les Cheneaux Community Schools Board of Education, meeting Monday, July 20, increased the season ticket package prices for sports in grades seven through 12 to raise more money for the school's athletic programs. The board recently cut district funding to the athletic program by \$15,000, from \$47,000 to \$32,000, when it approved its preliminary 2009/10 school year budget.

Season ticket prices will increase from \$80 to \$95 for adults, from \$40 to \$50 for seniors, and from \$150 to \$175 for a family. Rates for students will remain at \$45. Last year, season ticket sales contributed about \$4,000 to the athletic program. Season ticket packages pay admission to all sports in grades seven through twelve, except for tournaments. Tickets sold at each athletic event will not increase.

The athletic budget is funded through funds raised by the Athletic Boosters, gate and season ticket sales, and the district subsidy. The athletic budget was more than \$104,000 last year.

The board approved the rate increases at the request of district Athletic Director Dave Duncan.

"I think that if it's at the request of the athletic director it's good," said board member Lisa Dunn in support of the rate increase.

rest of Cedarville, who attended the meeting, spoke out against the rate increase. He expects the number of senior residents purchasing season tickets to decrease because many retirees are on a fixed budget and cannot afford to pay \$50 per person for season tickets.

"Those are the key people that show up game, after game, after game," he said. "It's going to go down."

He said he would be more willing to pay the senior price if it were raised to the same level that students have to pay, which is \$45.

The board also voted to continue the district's annual membership to the Michigan High School Athletic Association during Monday's meeting. The membership allows the district to participate in approved inter-school athletic events, such as tournaments. There is no cost to the district for the membership.

Hot lunch increase

The cost for hot lunch will be increased 10¢, the board decided. Elementary students will now pay \$1.85 for school prepared lunches, and middle school and high school students will pay \$2.10. The increase will not affect students receiving free or reduced lunches.

District business manager Kris Hill said the raise in prices is to help increase food services revenues. Last year, the school served

13,600 full-pay student lunches during 160 days of school.

"At this point we are still short, even with reducing the staff," Ms. Hill said. "We are approximately \$1,300 off. If we increase the full pay prices by a dime, we would add about \$1,365, assuming that our student lunches stayed the same. At this point I think we need to do something just to break even with the minimum staff we think we're going to need."

In March, the school board voted to dismiss two part-time food services employees and reduced another from full-time to part-time employment to help balance the 2009/10 school year budget.

Goehmann returns to teaching

Rod Goehmann, who announced his retirement as district superintendent Tuesday, July 7, will return to teaching middle school students this fall in Rogers City. He will teach seventh and eighth grade students at St. John's Lutheran School.

"I've been in a sixth, seventh, and eighth grade classroom scenario before," he said. "It's challenging, but if you motivate them the right way, they do wonders. I'm kind of going back to doing what I was doing before I began superintending."

"That's what got me into this whole business," he noted about his return to teaching. "I'm anxious to get back to working with kids," as a teacher rather than as an administrator.



Grand Hotel Hackneys Jester (left) and Duke are driven by Stable Manager Ben Mosley as they trot in front of the hotel on their way to West Bluff. Riding in the Grand's 1904 Brewster Vis-a-Vis antique carriage are hotel guests Steve Tarachow of Wisconsin and Stacey Smith of California. The carriage will be on display during the Festival of The Horse Thursday, July 23, through Saturday, July 25.