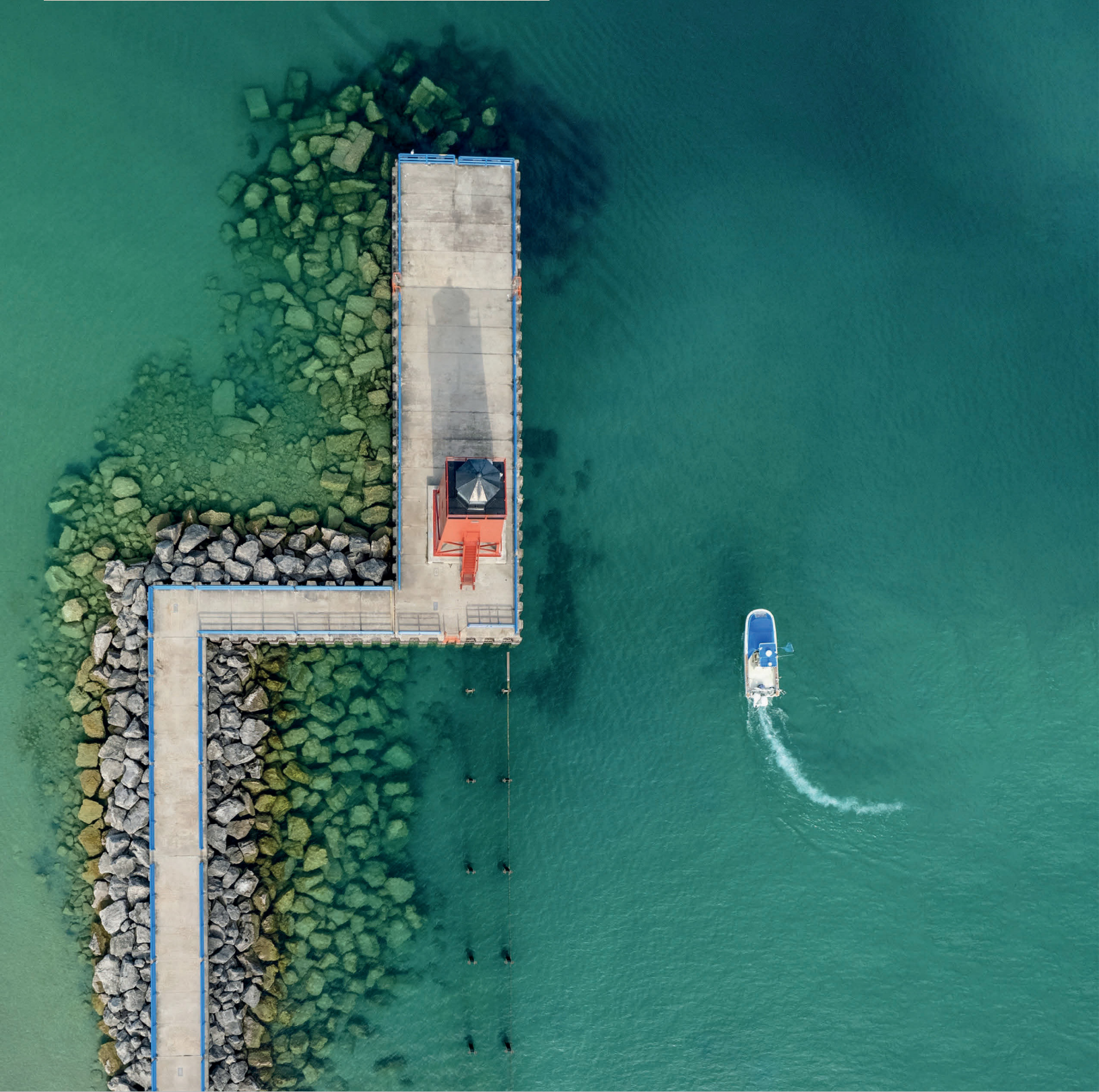




CHARLEVOIX HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Bridging our past with our future

Newsletter Summer 2026





A Season of Stories & Events: Celebrating the Launch of *The City on Three Lakes*

This summer, Charlevoix comes alive with a season built around one extraordinary milestone: the release of *The City on Three Lakes: A Maritime History of Charlevoix & the Surrounding Region*. After years of research and collaboration, we're marking the moment with a lineup of programs that bring its stories, themes, and voices into the community in fresh and exciting ways.

At the heart of the season are two major events. First, our Members' Launch at the Depot offers an early, insider celebration — the perfect way to open a summer devoted to history, storytelling, and the people who make our work possible. Then, in August, the spotlight shifts to the Great Lakes Center for the Performing Arts, where all contributing authors will gather for a ticketed, on stage conversation led by preface writer Charles Eisendrath. It promises to be one of the most memorable events of the year and a rare chance to hear the full creative team together.

Surrounding these anchor events is a dynamic series of programs featuring some of the most respected voices in Great Lakes history. Maritime historian Valerie van Heest brings her signature storytelling and underwater discoveries to the Library, while Theodore Karamanski, a leading scholar of the Lake Michigan frontier, offers a vivid look at the schooner era that shaped the region. Their programs — along with talks by other leading local historians and subject matter experts, including our own David Miles — create a rich tapestry of perspectives that echo and expand the themes of the book.

And mark your calendars now for a special fall cruise on Lake Charlevoix with the Little Traverse Bay Ferry Co., where guests can experience the historic sites and stories recounted in the book — a memorable way to learn about the region's past traveling on the very waters that defined it.

A Behind the Scenes Collaborative Journey: Bringing a New Book to Life

At Mission Point Press, we believe the strongest books grow out of true collaboration. Our work with the Charlevoix Historical Society on *The City on Three Lakes: A Maritime History of Charlevoix & the Surrounding Region* has embodied that spirit from the start. The Society's remarkable photo archive — paired with the scholarship of David L. Miles and Ole Lyngklip — laid the foundation for a project of rare depth and community significance.

Large format, image-rich historical books require exceptional care, and this one is no exception. With more than 875 images and extensive archival materials, every detail matters. Our team guided image management, layout, color accuracy, typography, and production oversight to ensure the book meets museum quality standards. This spring, Mission Point Press will oversee the manufacturing of the book by one of the country's leading art book printers.

Working with the Charlevoix Historical Society has been an honor. The depth of research, the richness of the archives, and the passion behind this book are extraordinary. Our role has been to shepherd that work through the publishing process with care and respect for its historical importance.

As publication approaches, we're proud to stand alongside the Society in bringing this landmark volume to the community. *The City on Three Lakes* represents years of research, collaboration, and dedication to preserving Charlevoix's maritime legacy for generations to come. We look forward to celebrating its arrival with you.



Jen Wahi, President & CEO, Mission Point Press, Publisher of *City on Three Lakes*



*Mission Point Press is the publisher of the first edition of **The City on Three Lakes**. A Michigan-based hybrid publisher, Mission Point Press partners with authors and organizations to create high quality books.*



It's a season designed to spark curiosity, deepen understanding, and celebrate the waterways and communities that define Charlevoix and the surrounding region. Whether you join us for one event or all of them, we hope you'll be part of this remarkable moment.

Ralph Hamilton Circle Celebrates in June!



Rhea Dow, member of the Charlevoix Historical Society & Charlevoix Area Garden Club

Thursday, June 25, 4-6 pm: The Historical Society will roll out a wonderfully busy schedule of programs and celebrations this summer, beginning with the annual Ralph Hamilton Circle Reception. In addition to honoring the Society’s most generous members, this year’s gathering will also celebrate the 25th anniversary of the beautiful Depot Heritage Garden, which is maintained by the Charlevoix Area Garden Club. Thoughtfully designed in 2001, the Depot gardens encompass four “rooms” of colorful perennials and a planting border of bright annuals. The beautiful pergola at the rear of the garden often serves as a backdrop for weddings and special events. The Historical Society is deeply grateful to the Garden Club for their ongoing dedication in maintaining the Depot gardens – as well as the lovely flower beds at the Harsha House Museum. We look forward to marking the Silver Anniversary of this unique setting among our RHC members and the Garden Club leaders this June.

Tuesday, July 14, 3 pm: Book signing with the authors of *The City on Three Lakes*, Ole Lyngklip III and David Miles, Train Depot
Tuesday, July 14, 4 pm: Annual Meeting/Board Meeting, Train Depot
Friday, July 24, 7 pm: The Venetian Fireworks Potluck, Train Depot

Tuesday, July 28, 6 pm: Patrick McCleary
 History of Boyne City
 Charlevoix Public Library

Patrick McCleary is a Certified Genealogist and historian. As a fourth generation Boyne City resident, he avidly pursues the identification and preservation of that community’s early photographic records and has amassed a collection of several thousand local images of individuals, families, businesses and industries. He currently works with the Charlevoix County History Preservation Society (CCHPS) promoting the understanding and appreciation of the heritage of the people of Charlevoix County and its townships. (Photograph by Karen Walker)



Monday Mornings, June 22 through Labor Day, 9 am
 Yoga with Heidi Deitrich at Train Depot Heritage Gardens, If the weather is inclement, yoga will be relocated indoors. To register: <https://charlevoixyoga.com>



Saturday, August 1: Maritime Book Author Event, Great Lakes Center for the Arts, Bay Harbor *Details for this afternoon event will be announced closer to the date. Join us at the Great Lakes Center for the Arts, where all contributing authors represented in *The City on Three Lakes* will gather for a ticketed, on stage conversation led by preface writer Charles Eisendrath. It promises to be one of the most memorable events of the year.

Tuesday, August 4, 6 pm: David Miles
 The Glorious Rise and Epic Decline of the Charlevoix Beach Hotel, Charlevoix Public Library

This program will concentrate on one of Charlevoix’s big three resort hostelries, The Beach Hotel, that was here from 1899 to 1967. The Beach quickly grew into one of the most successful businesses ever to be launched in Charlevoix, and by a woman at that, way ahead of her time. The hotel gained a sterling reputation from coast to coast under her guidance, until it commenced its slow downfall beginning in the early 1920s.



Tuesday, August 11, 6 pm: Jessica Dominic
 Jessica Dominic, granddaughter of Indigenous rights activists Waunetta and Robert Dominic, will share the history of their work to uphold the United States’ treaty obligations to the Native Odawa peoples of Michigan. The couple is shown here with fellow members of the Northern Michigan Ottawa Association in 1948.

Tuesday, August 18, 6 pm:
 Theodore J. Karamanski
 Schooners & Lake Michigan Frontier
 Charlevoix Public Library

This program invites you to return to the early days of the Lake Michigan frontier. A time when the schooners served as the covered wagons of the coastal region and the forests of Michigan supplied the lumber necessary to build cities and prairie farmsteads. Meet the crews of the three-masted vessels that crisscrossed the inland seas and learn what it was like to make your living before the mast.



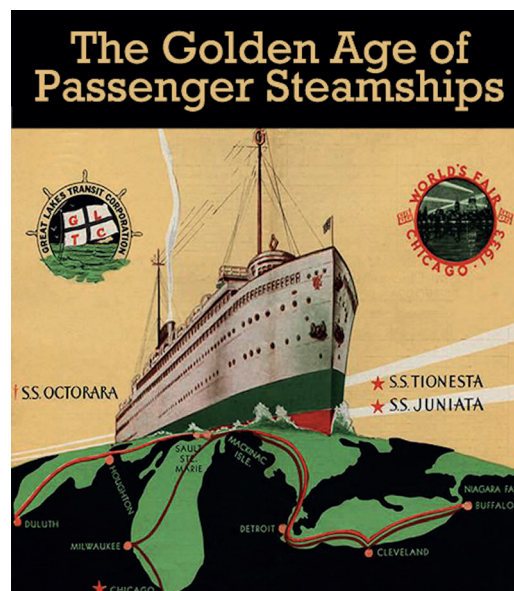
Tuesday, August 25, 6 pm:

Valerie van Heest

The Golden Age of Passenger Steamships

Charlevoix Public Library

Maritime Historian and museum exhibit designer Valerie van Heest will take you back to the late 19th century when STEAM powered industry, STEAM drove the economy, and STEAM created a growing prosperity that generated a demand for recreational travel on luxurious passenger steamers circling the Great Lakes. Valerie van Heest is a dynamic speaker who shares the fascinating stories of her underwater expeditions to discover and explore Great Lakes shipwrecks. She offers a wide variety of programs designed for adults and children that enlighten, inspire, and offer a “deeper” look at Michigan’s rich maritime heritage. Adventure and intrigue fill each program and provide a tantalizing peek back in time and beneath Lake Michigan as she brings these stories alive with fascinating historic photographs, spectacular underwater images, and intriguing commentary.



Historical Society Awarded Grant from America250MI Program

The Charlevoix Historical Society has been awarded a \$28,760 grant from the State of Michigan’s America250MI program. The projects covered include a new portable exhibit for the Train Depot, titled “Tracks to Tourism” which will explore the profound role the railroad played in transforming Charlevoix from a fishing and lumbering settlement into one of Michigan’s premier resort communities. In keeping with the themes of the program, the exhibit will incorporate the voices of Indigenous peoples of the area and their role in the railroad as well as the impact of the railroad on them. We will also be developing a Land Acknowledgment Statement with area Tribal representatives, as the property upon which the depot sits was once part of local Chief Louis McSauba’s land.



Other projects covered have to do with restoration and preservation of the Depot, including the pillars, the flagpole and the signal tower. The total project costs are over \$38,000.

About the Program:

America250MI is Michigan’s statewide initiative coordinating programs, partnerships, and storytelling for the United States Semiquincentennial. Together with communities across the state, America250MI celebrates Michigan’s past, present, and future through the 250th anniversary and beyond. Learn more at www.America250MI.org, and follow us at: Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/America250MI> or Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/america250mi>

The Historical Society has formed a Charlevoix Area America250MI committee in partnership with other area organizations who either received a grant or will participate in conducting or promoting events surrounding America250MI. These include the Beaver Island Historical Society, Bay Township, Charlevoix Chamber of

Commerce, Charlevoix Public Library, City of Charlevoix, Greensky Hill Indian UMC, and Visit Charlevoix. We have agreed to participate in the statewide simultaneous reading of the Declaration of Independence on July 8, 2026 at 6 pm in Odmark Pavilion in East Park. Area Tribal representatives will also provide their perspective.



We are very honored to have received this grant, and to participate in the statewide program!

President’s Message from Geoffrey Reynolds

In March, we said goodbye to Trevor Dotson, Operations Manager. Dotson joined us in 2017 after earning his master’s degree in Historic Preservation from Eastern Michigan University. His main responsibilities were the care of and cataloguing of the Society’s three-dimensional artifacts and ephemera, as well as administrative duties. During his nine years with the Society, he has catalogued hundreds of objects and photographs into the Society’s collections database to make research easier for future visitors and historians.

Dotson also gave history lectures on Charlevoix and Michigan history to community members and provided lectures as a representative of the Historical Society to organizations around Charlevoix. He also oversaw the Society’s social media accounts and helped grow the Society’s followers on Facebook, and also created Instagram and YouTube pages.

He assisted in planning and executing annual fundraisers and in the planning and installation of two feature exhibits at the Harsha House, “150 Years of Photography at the Charlevoix Historical Society” and “A Maritime History of Charlevoix: The City on Three Lakes,” as well as several smaller rotating exhibits.

Dotson greatly enjoyed assisting visitors, community members, and historians with their research inquiries. He helped countless people find the information they were seeking or provided resources or contact information for those who could assist further. We wish him all the luck in his new position at the Charlevoix Public Library.

We are grateful for Dotson’s time with us. He will be missed. The Society began a search for his replacement in March.

Two very important donations to the Historical Society have arrived in recent years, and they have both just been sorted down and organized to reveal the full extent of their importance. First to arrive were documents and photographs from the estate of Edith Gilbert, local author and longtime contributor of columns to the Charlevoix Courier, numbering in the hundreds. Edith never threw anything out, including her research, so what we now have are priceless nuggets pertaining to Charlevoix people, places and events. Included is her correspondence with Jules Stein, once a budding ophthalmologist who had a sideline representing musicians, which he did for the local Beach Hotel, located at the far end of West Dixon Avenue, in 1919 and 1920. Edith needed to know about his dealings with the hotel owner, the legendary Martha Elston Baker. He was able to provide copies of the two years of contracts. Stein never did go into medical practice, but instead, in 1924 founded what turned into the massive showbiz representation giant MCA, the Music Corporation of America that in its prime dominated the American entertainment scene.

Also, a thank you note from renowned historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., who actually visited Charlevoix and became a friend of hers. Schlesinger was the author of the 1965 blockbuster megahit “A Thousand Days, John F. Kennedy in the White House,” which won a Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award, one of the most talked-about books of the era. Also revealed from her researches was the fact that famed Osage Indian prima ballerina Maria Tallchief (1925-2013), who was the country’s first of that rank, came to Charlevoix for the sole purpose of visiting the sacred Indigenous grounds outside town at Greensky Hill. She and legendary choreographer George Balanchine are widely considered to have revolutionized American ballet in the mid-20th century.



Edith Gilbert

The second donation was documents, photos, negatives, and slides from the Earl Young estate that had been kept at Interlochen, as mentioned in a previous newsletter. Close examination has revealed that the negatives alone number in the hundreds, almost all of them taken by Earl, a priceless account of decades of Charlevoix’s history. Also revealed were his personal relationship with Ransom E. Olds, founder of the Oldsmobile auto company, a Charlevoix resorter for a quarter of a century; with the Teasdale family of St. Louis, whose daughter Sara became one of America’s leading poets in the late 1910s and 1920s; with Albert Loeb, vice president of Sears, Roebuck, who built what is now Castle Farms south of town; and with a host of summer visitors. Best of all, the revelation that Earl did provide the answer to the mystery of the near-calamitous loss of his realty license in 1926, as related in the Society’s biography of the man, called Boulders, that came out in 2020. Almost four legal-size, single-spaced typed pages of dictation to his secretary of his version of what happened. If all that he said was true, Earl almost became the victim of a con job.

CHARLEVOIX, MY CHARLEVOIX

*Proudly she stands beside her inland sea,
Tending her hands to all enticingly.
Admiring millions doff to thee,
My Charlevoix, my Charlevoix, the Beautiful.*

*Her fertile lands with milk and honey flow, Her
forests, fruits and flowers perennial grow; Not
many lands are favored so,
My Charlevoix, my Charlevoix, the Beautiful.*

*Her nipping frost, her rime, invigorates; Her
balmy air, like wine, intoxicates; It cheers, but
never dissipates,
My Charlevoix, my Charlevoix, the Beautiful.*

*She wears a spotless ribbon at her breast, Her
valiant sons arise at her behest And scorch the
viper in its nest
In Charlevoix, my Charlevoix, the Beautiful.*

*She stands for honor, faith and purity, Teaching
her rising youth sobriety; No power from Hell
shall sully thee, My Charlevoix, my Charlevoix,
the Beautiful*

*She welcomes to her shores the sore oppressed;
The weary, heavy-laden here find rest. Who
knows her most must love her best, My Charlev-
oix, my Charlevoix, the Beautiful.*

*Proudly she stands beside her inland sea; No oth-
er lands have half the charm to see. I sigh, I live, I
die for thee,
Hurrah, Hurrah for Charlevoix, the Beautiful!*

Read to the Charlevoix Historical Society at the Washington-Lincoln banquet, year unknown but prior to 1937



Earl Young

Included in the documents that came with the donation of Earl Young memorabilia was this over-the-top poem extolling the virtues of Charlevoix. The writer, whose descendants still live in the area, shall remain anonymous. He was obviously inspired by the famous Emma Lazarus poem, “The New Colossus,” that graces the foundation of the Statue of Liberty. It begins: “Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.” That sentiment hardly applies to Charlevoix, but in his enthusiasm for the place he got rather carried away.

SAVE THE DATE! SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, AT 2 PM

The Charlevoix Historical Society is partnering with the Little Traverse Bay Ferry Company to bring you a boat tour-fundraising experience. A historical presentation of Round Lake and Lake Charlevoix will be given by David Miles as we cruise along the inland waterways. David Miles will tell tales of the lakes and give us a greater perspective of two of the three lakes highlighted in our new publication, *The City on Three Lakes*. For more information please go to our website at: info@chxhistory.com

Cover photograph & photograph below by: John Doskoch



Another Treasure Reaches the Harsha

In 1972, Charlevoix photographer Bob Miles retired after a 41-year career. Besides his regular photography work, all of that time had also been concentrated on a thriving postcard business that began with black and white images in the 1930s, then gradually shifted into full color work in the 1950s. Over four decades, he sold hundreds of thousands of them that took Charlevoix's name all over the world. Upon retirement, Bob sold the entire postcard business to Helen Gaskin, sister of one-time Historical Society President and decades-long volunteer John Gaskin. After that, The Society never found out what happened to the remaining postcard stock, film negatives and positives, and color slides Helen had purchased. All of Bob's personal collection, plus much photographic equipment, he donated to the Harsha House.



Recently, the Historical Society was contacted by Jamie Gaskin, Helen's nephew, son of longtime employee of the Charlevoix County Register of Deeds Office Charlene Novotny (Gaskin), that he had found them. Negatives, positives, and color slides, almost all of Charlevoix scenes, plus a lot of vintage black and white postcard stock and a few vintage cabinet cards, surfaced in his deceased aunt's home downstate when he cleared it out to settle the estate. Hundreds of them. Jamie consulted with his mother, and it was decided that everything belonged with the Society.

Shown are Charlene Novotny and Harsha House Curator David Miles on April 10, jointly holding one of the three boxes that says "slides" on the top. This is one of the most important donations the Charlevoix Historical Society has ever received.



David Miles and Ole Lyngklip III review book proofs in the final stages of *The City on Three Lakes* publication.





CHARLEVOIX

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Bridging our past with our future

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Charlevoix Historical Society loyal & active member Bill Gnodtke succumbed to cancer. Condolences are extended to all friends and family.