



QUINCY MINE HOIST ASSOCIATION

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2007

A REFLECTION ON THE PAST & VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Quincy Publishes *New Perspectives on Michigan's Copper Country*



Portage Lake 1925 from "American Themes/Keweenaw Stories: Introductory Essay," Larry Lankton, *New Perspective on Michigan's Copper Country*.

The Quincy Mine Hoist Association is pleased to announce the publication of a new collection of essays examining the history of Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula. Entitled *New Perspectives on Michigan's Copper Country*, the volume collects together some of the best recent scholarship on the history, industries, culture, and people of the Keweenaw Peninsula.

The ten articles grew from presentations given during a two-day historical symposium -- "Michigan's Copper Country: History, People & Place" -- held on the campus of Michigan Technological University in 2004 as part of the Copper Country Homecoming and Old Settlers Ball. This volume collects some of the best papers from that symposium.

"We realized that there was so much good research that was surfacing for the first time in the symposium," said Michigan Tech University professor Kim Hoagland, one of the book's co-editors. "It was important work and we wanted to get it out."

An opening essay, by well-known regional historian Larry Lankton, places events in the history of the "Copper Country" in their national context by pointing out where events in this region embodied national trends and where, due to geography and other factors, the region bucked national trends. Its reference notes were designed to provide the reader with an entrée to some of the best previously published scholarship on aspects of local history. Other articles were selected from the symposium following a few

general criteria. First, the editors looked for well-documented, original scholarship based on work in primary sources such as archival records, oral histories, and government documents. Authors were drawn from a wide range of backgrounds and experience. "There are some academics, history buffs, long-time residents, some people writing with first-hand experience, graduate students, a very wide range," Hoagland notes.

The editors also looked for papers dealing with subjects and chronological eras that have not previously received much attention. One of these eras, for instance, was the earlier days of copper mining, and an essay by Joseph Wilson that examines mining at the Huron Mine south of Houghton, one of the places that has received little attention in historical publications to this point.

(cont. page 3)



KITCHEN EXHIBIT OPENING

"KEY INGREDIENTS MICHIGAN FOODWAYS"

SATELLITE EXHIBIT

 **GRAND OPENING** 

HORS D'OEUVRES AND REFRESHMENTS

6:00 PM FRIDAY, JULY 20TH

PROF. HOAGLAND TO SPEAK

ALL ARE WELCOME

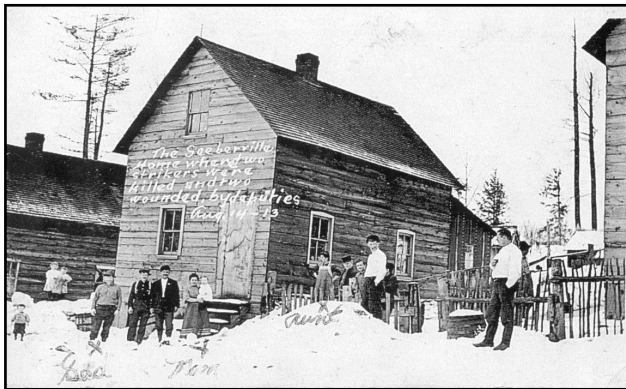


Kitchen Project in a Company House

Period Furnishings in a Restoration Project “in Progress”

In historic preservation and particularly history courses, momentous events of our past have traditionally been emphasized. Wars and laws, technological advances and economic crises, ideas and ideologies, and the roles of famous or infamous villains have been central to these studies. Yes, our understanding of the past in this place is broadened by learning that the Quincy Mining Company’s no. 2 shaft boasts both the largest steam hoist engine ever built and was not surpassed in depth until 1939, yet what made events momentous is the impact they had on society at large, on people from all walks of life. Modern scholars’ growing attention to social history and material culture is in part recognition that knowledge of the experiences, values, and attitudes of people, including the Martin family who lived, worked, and in the father’s case died here, is crucial to gaining an understanding of our past.

Professor Kim Hoagland (MTU), an historic preservation specialist with a particular interest in vernacular architecture, lead students in her “Material Culture” course through a process of furnishing a Quincy Mining Co. house kitchen to ca. 1910-1920. All Master of Science candidates in Industrial Archeology, the students used historic photos, period sales catalogues and references like Foy & Schlereth’s *American Home Life, 1880-1930: A Social History of Spaces and Services* (Univ. of Tenn. Press 1992) to find accoutrements appropriate to this time and place. One student, Dan Trepal, was assigned the summary interpretive plaque for the project:



Putrich House from “The Seeberville Murders: Death and Life in The Copper Country in 1913,” A.K. Hoagland, *New Perspectives on Michigan’s Copper Country*:

A Mining Family’s Kitchen c. 1910-1920

This company-built house has been occupied by a number of mine employees over the course of more than a century of mining in the Keweenaw. In 1913, Joshua Martin, his wife Flora (both English immigrants) and nine children began living here. The Quincy Mining Company hired Joshua as a laborer in 1886; in the course of his 35-year career at the mine, company records indicate only two instances where Joshua was away from work – once for “good time” (perhaps an earned holiday?) and once for a fractured skull after an accident. Joshua was killed in a mine accident in 1921, but according to company records the rest of the family remained in the house until 1925.

The kitchen reconstructed here represents the period 1910-1920, during which the Martins occupied the house. There is a sink with running water but no electricity or gas. Heat was provided by the coal-burning stove, which also served as the source of hot water for the entire house. Oil or kerosene lamps were a source of light.

At this time working-class kitchens were more multifunctional than kitchens are today – because there was no bathroom (the family used the privy in the back yard), bathing took place in tubs in the kitchen, near the stove where water could be heated. Similarly, Flora would have done the laundry in the kitchen with water heated on the stove. She would have used a tub and wash board like those visible here; though automatic “washing machines” had been available for a few years by 1910, Joshua Martin’s modest wages could never support the purchase of such an expensive luxury.

Keeping a family of eleven clothed and fed would have been a full-time occupation for Flora, and the bulk of her day would probably have been spent in the kitchen.

Besides bathing the children and laundry, Flora had to keep the family fed. With no refrigeration, all perishable food had to be bought fresh and consumed quickly. As a result, dry goods like flour formed a staple of the family’s diet. Barrels and sacks held bulk food items, and canned goods were in common use.

Joshua Martin himself would spend little time in the house he worked so hard to maintain; he worked long hours in the mine to pay for the rent and food his family depended on. When he left for the mine every day, Flora would prepare a lunch for her husband and pack it in a tin pail.

The new exhibit represents a partnership effort between the Social Sciences Department at MTU, the Houghton County Historical Society who so generously loaned most of the objects on view, and the Keweenaw Heritage Center (KHC) at St. Anne’s (Calumet), whose exhibit “Key Ingredients/Michigan Foodways” served as an inspiration. The exhibit at KHC runs from July 13th through August 26th 2007. The Quincy Mine Company House Kitchen exhibit is a new permanent exhibit emphasizing regional foodways as well as glimpsing into the domestic labor of women. Women did not work underground at this mine. This exhibit approximates a place and time when Flora Martin, an immigrant from Cornwall, England, mother of nine, domestic laborer in her rented company-house, and wife-turned-widow of Joshua Martin spent hours of arduous work to make a home centered around this center of domestic work, the kitchen.

The Association’s thanks goes out to those who lent historic objects to make the exhibit possible: Susan & Pat Martin, Kim Hoagland, John & Judy Griebel, Yvonne & Ed Yarbrough, and the Board of Directors of the Houghton County Historical Society. Their trust and generosity, combined with the diligence of the students (in no particular order): Nikki Drenning, John Griebel, Alessandra Brignola, Dan Trepal, Sarah Minnaugh, & Carmelo Davila make this exhibit a thoughtful and careful representation of Flora Martin’s kitchen. Dan Johnson of Keweenaw National Historical Park designed and constructed our interpretive panel; Thank you.

Please join us on Friday, July 20th at 6 pm to hear Professor Kim Hoagland speak to the new exhibit and help us celebrate with hors d’oeuvres and refreshments. We will gather at the company house. If you drive to our lower parking area, in front of the hoist houses, you will see us. In case of foul weather, we will meet inside the 1894 Hoist House (sandstone structure with “welcome flag” at the door. Please call me, Ed Yarbrough, Mgr. (906) 482-5569, if you would like more information about this event or the exhibit. All are welcome!

Quincy Publishes *New Perspectives on Michigan's Copper Country*, continued from front page

Another section, entitled “Cultural Identities,” contains papers that take very different approaches to examining the region’s culture. One article explores the experience of Cornish immigrants in the region, particularly their leadership in the regional Methodist church. Meanwhile, Arnold Alanen and Suzanna Raker review the history of Finnish farm settlement in the region, examining surviving farm buildings as documents of the ethnic group’s experience in the Keweenaw. An essay by Kathryn Remlinger looks at the Copper Country’s prevailing dialect today, discussing how it originated from the region’s mix of ethnic groups.



Children’s Parade, Strike of 1913-1914 from Lankton’s Introductory Essay, *New Perspectives on Michigan’s Copper Country*.

Three papers take a new look at the 1913 copper miners’ strike. Timothy O’Neil’s profiles Patrick O’Brien, a working-class Irishman who became a prominent lawyer in the area by pushing personal injury lawsuits against mining companies, was elected judge, and played a critical role in the region’s 1913-1914 strike. Larry Molloy’s paper focuses on the incident which cost the greatest loss of life during the strike, the Italian Hall tragedy. His close study of the transcript of the coroner’s inquest illustrates the difficulty of determining exactly what happened. A third essay takes another fatal incident that occurred during the strike, the shooting of two strikers by company security men in the hamlet of Seeberville, and uses the testimony and publicity about the event to understand the role of the company house in the daily life of immigrant, working-class people in the region.

New Perspectives also provides insight into another era which has not been well covered – the post-1920 period, during which the area’s copper industry and its economy went into decline. One response to this decline was the promotion of regional tourism. Aaron Shapiro’s article charts efforts to boost tourism as a replacement for the mining industry in the Copper Country both before and immediately after World War II. An article by Tom Scanlan examines, in the context of the Cold War and the local economy, the Calumet Air Station, a regional radar-detection and early-warning post where over 300 personnel were stationed in the 1950s and 1960s. “One of the more exciting aspects of this volume is that it includes work on the post-copper period, which has been a long-neglected area of study here,” she said. “We wanted to focus on brand new work that has been unexplored territory and bring it to the public.”

Finally, following a long decline, the native copper-mining industry in the Copper Country ended in 1968. Little known is the fact that an outside mining company invested considerable capital in the following decade in the hope that the region’s mining industry could be revived. Ross Grunwald and Andy Anderson, two participants in that effort, describe the ultimately unfruitful efforts of the Homestake Mining Company to find economically viable copper deposits and revive the local mining industry.

Published in a soft cover format, with 180 pages and more than 50 illustrations, *New Perspectives on Michigan’s Copper Country* offers something for everyone. “It’s scholarly enough to be reliable so others can build on this work, but the articles are written in a very accessible manner, and the illustrations are great,” Hoagland said. “It’s something anyone interested in Copper Country history would enjoy.”

Factoids: Quincy and Beyond

- **Current U.S. Department of Interior statistics show that Chile’s mines supply 30% of the world’s copper. No latecomer, the narrow nation occupying most of South America’s Pacific seaboard and of the Andes Mtns. was a significant exporter as early as 1825. English companies developed Chile’s northern, desert copper mining district using the technical know-how of Cornish miners.**

- **“...a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig copper. And thou shalt eat and be full, and thou shalt bless Jehovah thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.” (American Standard Version of the Holy Bible, 1901. Deuteronomy 8: 9b., 10.)**



- **Three bats fly on a late 17th century Chinese porcelain plate. The Chinese word for bat is pronounced “Fuh,” the same sound as the Chinese word for “happiness.” Therefore, from very early, bats were associated with the five blessings of happiness, viz. 1. longevity, 2. riches, 3. peacefulness, 4. love of virtue, and 5. a happy death.**

- **The historic copper mining town of Butte, Montana’s location near the Continental Divide can offer greater climatic challenges than Michigan’s Copper Country. In 1989, Butte set a record wind chill of -91 degrees Fahrenheit. Enjoy your summer along Lake Superior!**



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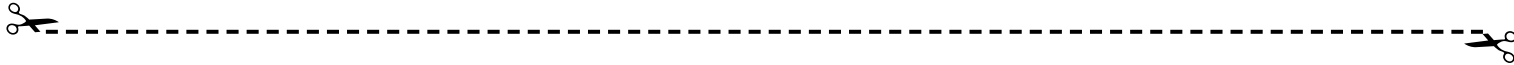
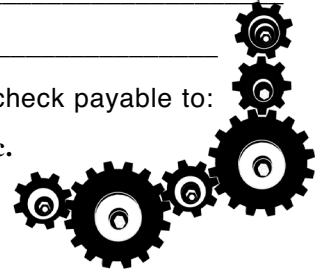


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