

P.O. Box 177  
Empire, Michigan 49630

1999/2000 Vol.10, No.2

July 1999

**GREETINGS FRIENDS!!**

**SOUTH MANITOU MEMORIAL SOCIETY  
ANNUAL MEETING  
SATURDAY, JULY 31, 1999  
EMPIRE METHODIST CHURCH  
9:30 A.M.**

**SOUTH MANITOU ISLAND  
ANNUAL PICNIC  
EMPIRE TOWNSHIP HALL  
SATURDAY, JULY 31, 1999  
12:00 NOON**

**ANNUAL MEETING**

**AGENDA**

EMPIRE METHODIST CHURCH:  
9:00 A.M.: Meeting comes to order.  
Introduction of Board Members and Members present.

Old Business:

New Business:  
Treasurer's Report  
"Where the South Manitou Memorial Society is at ... Where are we going?"  
Painting the Schoolhouse  
Nominating Committee/Election of New Board Officers

Additional items from the floor

12:00 Noon: Adjourn

**News from Our President**

"It was a bad idea a year ago and it is a bad idea now!" So said Duane Pearson, Assistant Superintendent of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. This was in response to the question I posed, after hearing that the preservation of the August Beck and George Conrad Hutzler farms on South Manitou Island were no longer a possibility. My question was: "If it was such a good idea a year ago, why is it such a bad idea now?"

This discourse took place on June 22, 1999 in the office of Ivan D. Miller, Superintendent of the Lakeshore. It lasted for an hour and 50 minutes. Although the three of us all joined in the discussion, Duane did most of the talking. It centered on his strong belief that the Society's interest in preserving and refurbishing the Beck and Hutzler Farmsteads was to provide vacations for our members without doing the chores of meeting the boats, conducting tours of the Lighthouse and doing the projects shared with you in the last Newsletter (March, 1999). Nothing I could say would change his mind; such as the vision that our members would conduct historical and cultural education/interpretation at the Beck farm, schoolhouse, the visitor center, and the Keeper's Quarters in the Lighthouse (after restoration).

Duane also criticized the Society and its members for how little work we have done on the island. I listed Glenn Furst, Fred Burdick, Kathy Bietau, Patty Kelly, etc. off the top of my head, knowing there are many more! He said the Society had not given very much in the form of financial support. He was particularly uninformed about the sign at the North Manitou Cemetery listing the persons buried within, which he said we pledged only \$100. I corrected him that it was \$400 and then he said that was only half the cost. I informed him that was all the Lakeshore had asked for.

Then the discussion turned to the real issue. Duane said that the Society should use its financial resources to pay for the projects that the Lakeshore is interested in and not for the restoration of the Beck and Hutzler farmsteads or other issues that we are interested in. He first cited the schoolhouse. A crew under Kathy Bietau's leadership had discussed painting the outside of the building last fall, but the Lakeshore canceled it because of the discovery of lead paint. That paint will be removed by the island maintenance crew, but only after we set a date when our painting crew will be on the island to complete the job (this project will be discussed in greater detail at the Annual Meeting). In addition to the labor, we are supposed to pay for the paint. On a roll, Duane then suggested that the Society use some of our financial resources, and raise the rest, to take on the total restoration of the schoolhouse. An estimate that I have, dated August 11, 1997, lists that cost at \$60,000. I did say that I felt we could continue our commitment for the outside painting.

I did inform Ivan and Duane that in my substantial years of raising money in higher education, that one of the rules is that the organization asking for the gift has to match the need to the donor's interests, which may be substantially different.

Duane even suggested that the Society might want to take on the project of restoring the Lighthouse and Keeper's Quarters. Although no estimate is available, he was sure that the cost would exceed \$1,000,000.

Well, I could continue, but we will have much to talk about at the Annual Meeting on July 31st. Please give some thought to the future activities (as you see them) of the South Manitou Memorial Society. I look forward to our discussion and to seeing you there.

Donald A. Morris, President

**TREASURY REPORT**

**South Manitou Memorial Society**  
**May 31, 1999**

<b><u>ASSETS</u></b>	<b><u>5-31-99</u></b>
Glenn Furst Memorial Fund	\$ 10,000.00
Fred Burdick Memorial Fund	3,152.00
Jack Phillips Memorial Fund C.D.	1,690.00
Empire National Bank C.D.	11,419.00
Empire National Bank Savings Account	4,623.00
Empire National Bank Checking Account	690.00
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 31,574.00</b>

Submitted by Joe Orbeck - Memorial Society Treasurer

**SOUTH MANITOU MEMORIAL SOCIETY**

**ISLAND OUTING**

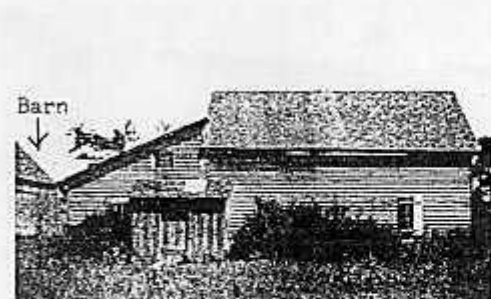
**SUNDAY, AUGUST 1, 1999**

Make your reservations today!!!! Call the Manitou Island Transit at 616-256-9061. Make your reservations under your own name - but please tell them you are with the South Manitou Memorial Society.

The boat leaves Leland at 10:00 a.m. (be there by 9:00-9:30 to park your vehicle and board) and returns at 6:00 p.m. Bring a picnic lunch, warm clothing and rain gear. We plan to visit the historic farms, schoolhouse, cemetery, lighthouse, etc. Invite your family and friends! We'll see you there!

**"I Remember When ...."**

This story was told to us by William E. "Bud" Vent. He wished to express his recollections and his research on this story. He wrote of his island experiences in the book, "Pioneer Tales and Other Stories of South Manitou Island". Also contributing to the book was Myron H. Vent.



The old Hutzler home shortly before it was torn down.



Stanley Hutzler, son of Bertha and John Hutzler.

**Stanley and the Bull**

I'm the Hutzler heir who took Don Roy with me to South Manitou Island in 1960. I loaned him a bicycle that enabled him to pedal around the area and see the places he heard about in bedtime stories.

I have visited the island and lived there part time almost yearly since I was about four years old. My mother, Louise Hutzler Vent, who was born on the island in 1868, took me with her to the old family homestead until my Uncle John Hutzler built his new farmhouse in 1920.

We also spent time with two of his older sisters in Empire. They in turn visited my family in Chicago, and along with Uncle John, spent much of the colder season with us to escape the harsh Northern Michigan winters. I came to cherish and know them quite intimately, as well as our many other Hutzler relatives, as did my brother, the late Myron Hutzler Vent, author of "South Manitou Island, From Pioneer Settlement to National Park", Published in 1973..

Since early childhood we were familiar with the tragic story of Stanley and the Bull. The essential details coming from widely separated areas never varied.

The enclosed photo shows the pasture and barn where the cattle came for food and water, also how close it was to the old farmhouse. There is not the slightest doubt that Bertha heard Stanley's screams as the unattended child wandered into the pasture and the enraged animal attempted to stomp out what life remained in his little body. She paid dearly for those few minutes inattention.

The local Doctor could do nothing for Stanley so Bertha took him to Chicago hoping for a miracle. He died a few days later on July 5, 1901. The death certificate, which mentions "Leucemia" as a cause of death, also states that hemorrhage

was the "contributing and consecutive cause." (This vital bit of information, was omitted from your correspondence's well-written, but flawed, 1998 commentary.)

Because of Bertha's irrational and unpredictable behavior, and faced with a looming inheritance problem, the Hutzlers decided that the marriage should be terminated. Uncle John applied and was granted a divorce.

With her world collapsing about her, Bertha suffered acute spells of hysteria, including a seizure that prompted John to request help at the Coast Guard Station. It is recorded in the Life-Saving Station journal discovered by Myron during countless hours spent researching at the Library of Congress.

The Hutzlers approached Bertha with compassion and understanding. John agreed to cut firewood for her and she baked his bread to free him for his daily farm routine. Bertha also had access to the Hutzler's garden produce and their orchard.

My mother was saddened by the breakup of her brother's marriage. After moving to Chicago she corresponded regularly with Bertha who kept her abreast of island news and added her version of John's health. When my mother's frailty intervened I did her writing for her and gradually inherited the task along with Bertha's complete trust. She always referred to me as "Buddy, her nephew" and closed her letter with "lov lov".

Later, I acquired a Jeep that made it possible for my mother to once again visit her childhood home and friends, including a memorable meeting with Maggie Haas who was her best friend when they attended the one-room island schoolhouse around 1880.

My young nephews, anxious to drive the Jeep, were willing to accompany me and lend a hand where needed. An occasional visit from Bertha with a surprise gift of fruit she discovered on her daily excursion broke our routine. She enjoyed riding in the Jeep and her rambling tales amused the boys while driving her back home.

Having heard us complain as we arrived on the island about the time lost hiking to the shelter for the Jeep to haul our supplies, Bertha concluded that we should leave the Jeep with her in a small shelter on her lot, only a stones-throw from the dock. She slowed down a bit as she neared her eighty-third year and no longer roamed all over the island. But she persisted in making the long walk for the farm, as she did one warm midsummer's day with an offering of sweet, juicy blackberries she picked along the way.

My nephew was with a companion at the old dock for a swim in the numbing cold harbor water, so I insisted on driving her home. As we neared the cemetery I was startled when Bertha asked me to stop near Uncle John's grave. I followed as she led the way to the far side where she selected a space next to a child's grave and announced that she wished to be buried there, with a headstone like the one I placed on my Uncle's grave.

Bertha was not at the dock to greet us the following year, and a very precious part of the island died along with her.

We perceive the tragedy to be a family matter and regard with disfavor a recent misguided attempt to rewrite our century-old Hutzler family history.

It is our fervent desire that this dear woman-child who brought joy and laughter to so many island visitors, at least be permitted to rest in peace.

William E. "Bud" Vent  
February 4, 1999

**THE LIGHTKEEPER WONDERS**

The light I've tended for 40 years  
is now to be run by a set of gears.  
The Keeper said, And it isn't nice  
To be put ashore by a mere device.  
Now, fair or foul the winds that blow  
Or smooth or rough the sea below,  
It is all the same. The ships at  
night will run to an automatic light.

That clock and gear which truly turn  
Are timed and set so the light shall burn.  
But did ever an automatic thing  
set plants about in early Spring?  
And did ever a bit of wire and gear  
A cry for help in the darkness bring?  
Or welcome callers and show them through  
The lighthouse rooms as I used to do?

'Tis not in malice these things I say  
All men must bow to the newer way.  
But it's strange for a lighthouse man like me  
After forty years on shore to be.  
And I wonder now - will the grass stay green?  
Will the brass stay bright and the windows clean?  
And will ever that automatic thing  
Plant marigolds in early Spring?  
Edgar Guest

The South Manitou Memorial Society Newsletter is copyrighted 1999/2000 Vol.10 No.2  
The deadline for articles to be included in the next Newsletter is October 15, 1999. Please submit to Newsletter Editor: Kathy Bietau  
at: 2400 N. Morse Rd. Fountain, MI 49410. OR E-mail to [bietau@carrinter.net](mailto:bietau@carrinter.net)