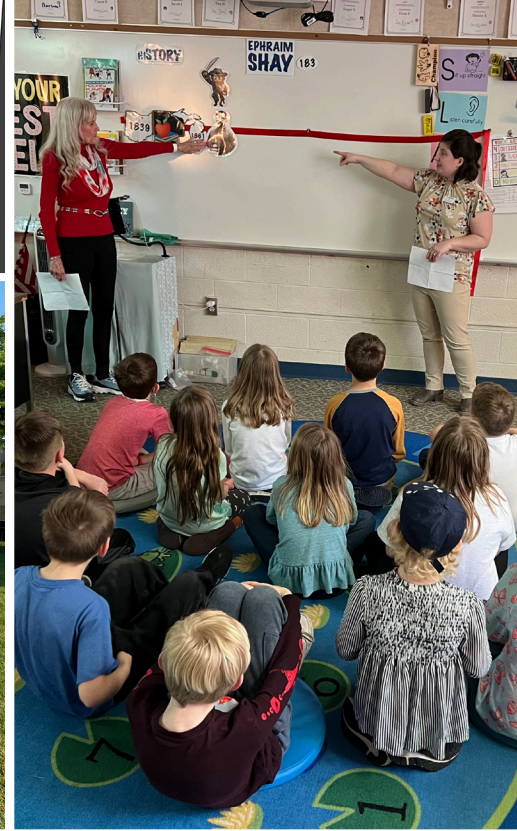




HARBOR SPRINGS AREA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



"Harbor Springs is resplendent with a rich and colorful history, and this museum is a place for everyone to follow the roots of those who came before them and grow their own branches and leaves."

- Jay Neff, lifelong Harbor Springs resident and Historical Society trustee

2023 REPORT
TO DONORS &
SUMMER 2024
NEWSLETTER

HARBOR SPRINGS AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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HARBOR SPRINGS MI 49740-0812

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MISSION

To preserve, interpret and share the history of the Harbor Springs area, while encouraging curiosity and promoting an understanding of how the lessons of the past can foster an informed community.

VISION

To ensure that our collections and the stories they tell are accessible to all people. To be recognized regionally as a center of learning, imparting historical knowledge that shapes, informs and inspires the present and future.

STRATEGIC PLAN | 2023-25 GOALS

Financial Sustainability

Adjust the financial model to achieve sustainability through a variety of revenue streams.

Programming Growth

Expand curation and programming for the Harbor Springs History Museum, the new Ephraim Shay Innovation Museum, Shay Park and the Andrew J. Blackbird Museum.

Recognition and Awareness

Expand marketing and communications to build recognition of the Historical Society as a center of learning, reaching broader geographies.

Staffing Sustainability

Add staff to support growth objectives. Maintain a dynamic compensation and benefit structure to ensure fair and competitive employee packages, and establish and monitor an organizational succession plan.



*Downtown Harbor Springs c. 1969,
Virgil D. Haynes Collection*

An unwavering commitment ...

In 2023, more than 5,400 adults and schoolchildren visited the Historical Society's properties, attended Harbor History Talks and participated in events and workshops to learn the compelling back-stories of Harbor Springs and the surrounding region, representing a 16% increase over 2022.

Most of you reading this report have been stalwart supporters of the society's dual mission of education and preservation. Make no mistake; your ongoing support is critical. Our history, small-town traditions and architectural legacy can only be preserved with an unwavering commitment to, and investment in, our shared values.

I hope you will consider contributing to our "Bringing History to Life" campaign. Donations thus far have allowed us to make significant strides in pursuit of our goals, which you will see on the following pages.

But much more work needs to be done inside and outside the Shay House, on exciting new exhibits in the History Museum and to build an endowment to ensure the long-term sustainability of the developing Historical Corridor on Main Street.

Should you wish to invest in our mission, I am happy to host you for a tour of our efforts at these historic sites and answer any questions you might have.

Together, we can save our unique history!

Kristyn

Kristyn Balog
Executive Director
May 2024



Make a donation to the society using the QR code above.

2023 & 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

BLACKBIRD MUSEUM

The Historical Society has entered into an agreement with the City of Harbor Springs to expand services at the city's Andrew J. Blackbird Museum beginning spring 2024. Located at 368 E. Main Street, the Blackbird now joins the History Museum, the Ephraim Shay Innovation Museum and Shay Park as critical pieces in the society's emerging Historical Corridor.



Considered the oldest existing residential building in Harbor Springs, the c. 1858 building was home to prominent Odawa leader Andrew Blackbird, who also operated the Little Traverse post office there as postmaster. Plans include fully staffed open hours and presentation of a special Odawa exhibit in 2024.

VISITOR SERVICES

The Historical Society is pleased to welcome a full-time Visitor Services Director, Melissa Wiatrolik. Wiatrolik will be responsible for the customer-facing experience with the society's properties, including delivery of educational programming, management of the volunteer program and revenue development.



The newly created position reflects the society's increased scope of activities with its augmented oversight of the Blackbird Museum, opening of the Ephraim Shay Innovation Museum in Fall 2024 and a growing slate of public programming.

Prior to joining the society, Wiatrolik served in a variety of roles for the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians for 17 years, most recently as the tribal historic preservation officer. She was responsible for identifying and nominating eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places and managing a comprehensive tribal historic preservation and archaeological plan in coordination with federal and state agencies, private organizations and individuals.

She holds business, technology and historic preservation degrees and certificates from Bay Mills Community College; Ferris State University; the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums; and Andrews Cultural Resources.

COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN

The Historical Society's "Bringing History to Life" comprehensive campaign was publicly launched in 2022 to "Save the Shay," but expanded in scope to embrace development of a Main Street Historical Corridor on the eastern approach to downtown – including:

- converting the Shay House to a regional museum of innovation, based on the entrepreneurial spirit and accomplishments of its builder and owner
- creating new experiential exhibits in the History Museum
- addressing pressing History Museum building preservation maintenance needs
- and establishing an endowment as a long-term hedge against ever-increasing operating expenses

Fundraising efforts, led by a volunteer campaign cabinet, surpassed \$2.6 million toward the \$3 million goal in December 2023, with donations from more than 200 individuals and organizations. Join that number by donating at HarborSpringsHistory.org or by scanning the QR code.



Left: The lower-level kitchen floors after sanding and refinishing. Right: The new stairwell to the lower level.

Shay House Renovation

Much of the society's work to date has addressed the Shay House's conversion to a museum of innovation. Major infrastructure improvements continued in 2023-24, with a focus on the design and functionality of the space:

- Insulation installed for sound and heating properties
- Lower level ceiling installed
- Electrical updates for technology and exhibit designs
- Bathroom upgraded and two additional public restrooms added in lower level
- Kitchen layout designed, equipment / fixtures and appliances ordered and floor refinished
- Main Street and Bay Street garden plans commissioned

Physical plant work planned for 2024 includes:

- Building a first-floor deck facing Bay Street
- Redesigning parking lots, adding permeable grass pavers
- Repairing front walkway and railing
- Layout of new gardens and landscaping

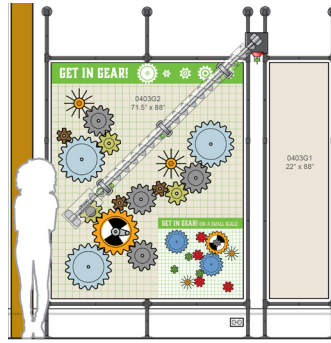


Exhibit Design

The new museum's purpose has been defined, characterized by establishment of the formal name: "Ephraim Shay Innovation Museum."

This spring, Good Design Group and society staff will be finalizing conceptual storylines and the design of interactive and hands-on exhibits based on the elements of Ephraim Shay's work. Underlying themes will reveal the importance of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) to economic and societal progress.

Leading up to the projected fall 2024 museum opening:

- Final engineering drawings – including component sizes, materials, finishes and exhibit operations – will facilitate bid requests to chosen fabricators and A/V vendors
- Exhibits will be fabricated in July and August, with installation expected in September/October
- All aspects of ADA will be incorporated – including restrooms, entrances, exhibit viewing, graphic readability and interactive exhibit usability



SHAY LOCOMOTIVE

Restoration of the Historical Society's 1907, 36-ton Shay Locomotive at the Industrial Arts Institute (IAI) in Onaway is under a full head of steam. Led by a volunteer committee, IAI and Historical Society staff, work continues apace

with ongoing fundraising efforts. The latest project, restoring and painting the cistern (pictured), was finished in March. Next up: reassembly and fabrication of a new cab.

Critical funds are still needed to complete the restoration. Scan the code at the right to donate.



GRANTED, IT HELPED!

The society was awarded a grant of \$13,500 in 2023 for operational support from the State of Michigan Arts and Culture Council (MACC), including \$3,250 from the National Endowment for the Arts. The grant was awarded through the MACC peer review process and was one of 711 applications to compete for MACC fiscal year 2024 funding.

BRINGING HISTORY TO LIFE CAMPAIGN DONATIONS

The list below includes all gifts and pledges to the comprehensive campaign since its inception in 2018 up to May 1, 2024.

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Thank you for your generosity for these gifts made in 2023.
Bringing History to Life Campaign gifts are listed on page 3.

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Members of the Michigan Small Scale Live Steamers group pose in front of their tent at Shay Days 2023. Thank you for 25 years of service!

\$75 - \$149

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Metal detectorist Alex Fitol attended our "Digging History" open house to showcase dozens of fur-trade-era finds from Emmet County.

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2023 MEMORIALS AND HONORARIA

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In Honor of Ann Baruch

To invest in our mission by making a donation to the Historical Society, visit us online or scan the QR code below.



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

LITTLE TRAVERSE SAILORS

Thursday, July 18 | 5:30 pm | History Museum

For over 60 years, the Little Traverse Sailors has offered a community program for area youth to learn the art of sailing. In this presentation Merritt Keffer, board president, relates the intriguing history of the organization.

MARGARET BOYD AND ODAWA QUILLWORK

Thursday, July 25 | 5:30 pm | History Museum

A look at the life and work of Margaret Blackbird Boyd and her impact on local history. The sister to Andrew Blackbird, Margaret was a teacher and artist who was a fixture in the community in the mid 19th century.

RESEARCHING HISTORIC HOMES

Tuesday, August 20 | 5:30 pm | History Museum

Local historian, genealogist and archivist, Patrick McCleary will lead this presentation focused on effectively researching historic homes. The talk will explore the process of historic house research, the particulars of architecture and style, and how to understand the various source documents used in this avenue of research.



Did you know? "Ottawa Quillwork" and many other books (often related to previous History Talks) are available in our Museum Store. Shop in-person or online by scanning the QR code above.

Advanced registration for History Talks is strongly encouraged as they often sell out. Visit HarborSpringsHistory.org or call 231-526-9771 to register and save your seat today!

DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR

Tuesday, June 11

11 am, 1 pm & 3 pm | Meet at the History Museum

Explore the rich history of our downtown during this 90-minute guided walking tour along Main and Bay Streets. Some of the buildings included will be the First Methodist Church, First Community Bank and the Library, along with a dozen others. Registration is required.



Visit our Events Calendar to see upcoming programs.



NM SLOOP EXHIBIT & PRESENTATION

Friday, June 28 | 4:30 pm | History Museum

The NM, or Northern Michigan sloop, is perhaps the best known of the racing sailboats on Little Traverse Bay. The original fleet of 18 boats was designed and built by Russell J. Pouliot in the early 1930s for yachtsmen in Charlevoix and Harbor Springs.

Learn more about the history and building of these unique boats during this reception and presentation. The 4:30 pm reception and exhibit tour includes wine and light refreshments. At 5:30 pm, guests will enjoy a talk by Dick Babcock, who was involved in the construction of a dozen new NMs in the 1960s, '70s, and '80s. Registration is required.



BLESSING OF THE FLEET

FLEET WEEK EVENTS JUNE 25-28

History on the Harbor ... Journey on a Jiimaan

Free display and hands-on jiimaan (canoe) rides out on the water aboard handcrafted birch bark canoes with Anishnaabe tales of life on the Great Lakes by the Odawa elders and youth.

June 26 ~ 11:00 am - 3:00 pm

All Ages Welcome ~ Josephine Ford Park

History of the Harbor ... Narrated Sunset Cruise

Reservations are \$75. Board the Harbor Princess for this history tour of Little Traverse Bay. Includes a full-service cash bar, snacks and music.

June 26 ~ 8:15 pm departure

Reservations Required ~ Josephine Ford Park

Cruise aboard ... the 65' Harbor Princess

Reservations are \$150 and include a full-service bar, music and light snacks to enjoy while viewing the boat parade.

June 27 ~ 5:00 pm departure

Reservations Required ~ Josephine Ford Park

Get on board ... your boat, kayak or paddleboard

Summer begins with this annual tradition in the harbor, the blessing boat parade. Join this celebration on the water, to receive your blessing for a safe boating season.

June 27 ~ 5:30 pm Water Ceremony, 6:00 pm Parade

Register for Water Safety ~ Little Traverse Bay

History at the Museum ... NM Sloop Exhibit & Presentation

Reservations are \$25 and include wine and light snacks. Explore the history of the iconic NM sloop in celebration of its 90th anniversary with historian and long-time Irish Boat Shop employee Dick Babcock.

June 28 ~ 4:30 Reception, 5:30 Talk ~ Reservations Required ~ History Museum



SHAY DAYS

JULY 12 & 13 | 10 AM - 3 PM | SHAY PARK & HISTORY MUSEUM

This two-day, family-friendly event celebrates inventor and Harbor Springs resident Ephraim Shay, most famous for the patented, geared locomotive he invented. Explore Shay's life and work during a host of activities and educational programs including:

- Live model steam trains with the Michigan Small Scale Live Steamers
- Historic toys and games with reenactors from Hartwick Pines State Park
- Children's crafts, games and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) activities
- Logging demonstrations with Kyle Bagnall of Mackinac State Historic Parks
- Model electric train layouts upstairs at the History Museum with the Northern Michigan Railroad Club

Admission is by donation with all proceeds benefiting the Historical Society! To sponsor this event, please contact Program Coordinator Beth Wemigwase at beth@harborspringshistory.org.





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Fair
Winds
and following
Seas

The NM Sloop at 90

Opening at the Harbor Springs History Museum, May 2024.

MUSEUM HOURS
Tuesday-Saturday | 10 am - 4 pm