**Annual Meeting**

CCHS’s Annual Meeting will be held at our building at 115 Ashmun Street on Wednesday, April 5 at 7 p.m. Mary Jo DuVall, Sault Events coordinator for the Sault Convention and Visitors Bureau, will be the speaker. She will share with us what is in the works for the 350th birthday of Sault Ste. Marie in 2018.

The steering committee for the 350th celebration has been working hard on planning a yearlong celebration of our city’s birthday. 350 years is noted by the anniversary name of Semisepctcentennial. The year will kick off with a family event downtown with some great winter activities and food during the day on New Year’s Eve. As darkness approaches, we will celebrate inside with a Dinner and Dance to be followed by a champagne toast, a ball drop, and fireworks to kick off 2018.

The early months will be filled with educating our children on the history of the Sault. We will engage the arts as well in various projects. We will be celebrating with the I-500 as they celebrate their 50th anniversary in 2018. The summer months will keep us busy as we work along with Music in the Park to provide a children’s history event 30 minutes prior to the start of the music. We will continue with Rendezvous in the Sault and add a festival type of event prior to Rendezvous to celebrate our community. Events will continue throughout the year, with a final performance at the Pullar Stadium in December.

The CCHS annual meeting is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be provided. Bring your ideas that evening or share your ideas and assistance by contacting Mary Jo DuVall at Sault Events; 906-632-3366 or events@saultstemarie.com.

**“The Demise of the Andrea Doria”**

Our January general meeting with Tom Kelly was very well-attended, with 115 people filling the Community Room at Bayliss Library. Tom, a retired Professor of Sociology and Psychology at Lake Superior State University, told about his experiences on the Italian passenger liner *Andrea Doria* that was hit by the Swedish liner *Stockholm* in 1956. His vivid memories and stories captivated the audience. Tom prepared a binder of information on the ship which may be borrowed from CCHS. In gratitude for his presentation, CCHS made a donation to Hospice of the EUP, where he volunteers. The library’s video of his talk will soon be available on YouTube. The PBS film series Secrets of the Dead features “The Sinking of the Andrea Doria” that may be viewed online.

**Train Displays**

Due to the popularity of CCHS’s train displays during December, they were on view in January and February during the Downtown Winter Ice Festival and the I-500. There was a great turnout with involvement by the Board, other volunteers, and students. Thank you to everyone who assisted. We will continue this annual tradition next winter.

**Protestant Potter’s Field**

The Detroit *Free Press* recently picked up on the story of Caroline Grabowski’s research and fundraising effort to erect a memorial plaque for the Potter’s Field in the Protestant section of Riverside Cemetery. To read the article, “Forgotten mass grave in the U.P.
finally gets recognition,” see http://on.freep.com/2kB31PA. The article has prompted renewed interest in her books that are available from CCHS’s Gift Shop and on our website.

**Catholic Potter’s Field**

The Knights of Columbus, Council 649, are currently raising funds for improvements to the Catholic Potter’s Field at Riverside Cemetery. They hope to raise $5,500 for signs, fencing, and a bench.

Donations may be made to: Potter’s Field Project, Knights of Columbus, 2755 Ashmun Street, Sault Ste. Marie. Please make out your check to: Knights of Columbus Potter’s Field. Questions may be directed to Jim Hendricks, KC Committee Chairman, by calling 906-630-3519.

**History Camp 2017**

By Patty Olsen

History Camp this summer will be held from June 19th through 23rd, and will focus on the 350th birthday of Sault Ste. Marie. Our students will investigate how the Native Americans lived here at the time that Father Marquette established his mission here in 1668. We will continue to study about the fur traders, fort builders, and settlers that followed and the businesses that they established. We plan to conclude this summer’s camp with the building of the first lock, which opened in 1855. The curriculum for the 2018 camp will continue on from this point to present-day Sault Ste. Marie. Children who have completed third grade through sixth grade or are ages 9 to 12 are welcome to attend.

Camp will meet in the Historic Water Street Homes from 9 a.m. through 3 p.m. The cost of the camp is $75. There are some scholarships available. For further information or registration forms, contact Ginny Cymbalist, 906-632-9523 or ggymbalist@yahoo.com or Patty Olsen at 906-632-1309 or polsen604@gmail.com. You may also contact CCHS, 906-635-7082 or cchs@sault.com. Our thanks to the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs for their continued support of our History Camp through their $2,000 grant.

**New Year, New President (of CCHS)**

Carolyn Person, newly retired from Bayliss Public Library, has taken on the task of steering the ship that is CCHS. She has been involved for many years in organizing the collections and the volunteers aiding in the venture. She has also overseen much of the recent work on the News Building. CCHS would like to thank her for taking on these challenges and wishes her well in her new role. (Thank you to Paul Sabourin and Caroline Grabowski who helped us out last year.)

**New York Times Wrote about the Soo in 1953**

By Jim Dwyer

On August 30, 1953, a *New York Times* writer wrote a lengthy article about the plight of “Negro” airmen stationed in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. It was reprinted in the *Sault Evening News* on September 3rd. The writer had visited the area, and reported concerns expressed by Negro or “colored” troops stationed in the Soo in the Air Force or U.S. Army.

Troops interviewed had expressed shock that on the nation’s northern border, barber shops, restaurants and taverns refused them service. They were reported to be “pleased, but somewhat baffled” by the relative “color blindness” of the Sault Ste. Marie on the Canadian side of the St. Marys River. They were resentful of having to leave the United States to get a haircut or a beer.

Mrs. Edward Krieger, Director of the United Service Organizations (USO), said that white and black troops tend to be bored if they were from a big city. She added that it was much harder for the black troops as there was no one they can associate with among the local people.

C.A. Paquin, Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, stated, “we didn’t know how to treat them. Everybody has the jitters.” He also opined that it wasn’t fair to the boys to keep them here but the Air Force had refused transfers for them.

Brigadier General, Edwin Tucker Commander of the Thirtieth Air Division acknowledged he received a great many requests for transfers from black troops stationed near the Soo. He went on to state that if he were to remove them that would be discrimination against the whites. The U.S. Army was described as taking the “easy course,” regarding the racial issue. “They didn’t use Negroes to man the anti aircraft weapons.” Some were assigned to that battalion for very brief periods.

The writer opined that there had been no racial incidents in the Soo and attributed it mostly to the “self-restraint of the Negro servicemen.”

Two of the ten black airmen at the radar site were married, but they hadn’t been able to bring their wives to the Soo. Progress had been made to find housing to rent for white servicemen.

Community leaders, such as *Evening News* editor George Osborn, were described as being concerned about the racial problem, but saw no solution.

This brief narrative hasn’t attempted to provide any interpretations or perspective regarding a “then and now” view, or subsequent developments. It might provide a good starting point for an historical update.
Historic Sault Newspapers

Bayliss Public Library and other Superior District Libraries have digital access to Sault newspapers through a trial subscription that will continue through June. You will need to have a library card from a Superior District Library. You may access late 19th and 20th century newspaper articles by clicking on the NewsBank icon on Bayliss Library’s home page. Contact the library at 906-632-9331 if you need assistance or would like to be involved in helping the library community maintain this subscription.

MCACA Grant Workshop

Bayliss Library will host a Grant Informational Workshop on Thursday, April 27 from 4-7 p.m. for those interested in applying for grants through the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs. To sign up, contact the library.

Spring Cleaning?—Consider Donating
By Carolyn Person

In almost every River Soundings newsletter, the reminder goes out to remember the Historical Society when downsizing, moving or just house cleaning, as we are always looking for memorabilia and “old historic” items. That request puts a puzzled look on many faces.

First of all, we are asking for anything that represents the history of Sault Ste. Marie and Chippewa County. For instance, recently we were gifted Rudell Drug Store receipts from the Richard Trautwein Estate; the Pulfreys donated a plaque from the Soo Bottling Co.; and the Gianakuras gave several ledgers from their American Café business. Then there are the regular antique items. Shirley Howie gave us a Rayo chrome oil lamp that was popular in the early 1900s. Mary Trageser sent excerpts from the diary her great grandfather, Alois Goetz, kept recounting his early years in the Stalwart area before becoming a businessman in the Sault. (See an excerpt on page 3-4 that makes our recent storms seem tame.) John Stevens’s family gave us a Victor adding machine from the time when his family had a store. It is a large, heavy piece that is remarkable when compared to the calculators and phone apps of today.

In the 1940s and early 1950s, when the pioneer families were dying out, several groups gave furniture and artifacts to the Society. Judge Steere, Governor Osborn and other individuals gave us papers and articles. That is the ongoing job of the past several years—cataloging those gifts, as detailed records were not kept or were lost. Please—don’t discard before contacting the Chippewa County Historical Society!

Fading Photos Workshop

In March, Robert Myers from the Historical Society of Michigan presented a History Skills Workshop on “Fading Photos: How to Identify, Scan, Restore & Archive Historic Photographs.”

Three CCHS Board members were among the attendees at the useful and entertaining workshop. It is likely that Bob Myers will return next year for a talk or workshop at Bayliss Library around Michigan History Day.

“A Terrible Experience on the Ice in a Fearful Storm” from the 1882 Autobiography of Alois Goetz, Pioneer Life in Chippewa County U.S.A.

Editor’s note: Alois Goetz ran the mail between Goetzville and DeTour. He references: Carltons for the lumber town Carltonville; Swede’s Islands, now referred to as Sweet’s Islands; and Gatesville, the earlier name for Goetzville that was named for his family.

The later end of Feb. a trip to De Tour was especially hazardous as not only was the snowfall deep, but the ice bending under the heavy weight, caused much flooding underneath the deep snow, which made travelling very hard and slow in the terrible cold weather. In the early morning, it was bright and calm, and it was only sometime outside, that one became aware of the intense cold about 50˚ below zero. On account of the heavy loads, I could not dress any too heavy, as I usually was warm enough on account of the strenuous travel. To Carltons, the going was fairly good, but on the ice and away from the shore was heartbreaking work as the flooded areas could not be seen
until you plunged into them. On my homeward trip, and about 2 miles out from De Tour, a sudden and terrible storm broke loose, the flower-like whirling snow driven by the screaming wind was so dense that I could not see anything at all except the snow in front of my eyes, quite often I had to clean the freezing snow from my eyes and face to keep it from being completely covered. At times, I was forced to walk backwards, and also sideways in order to keep my face open at all and also that the piercing wind might strike me at a different angle on my body and to keep it from freezing, tho I had to be very careful in doing this as the direction of the wind guided me on my course. I had been heading for the Swede’s Islands less than a mile away when the storm, bad enough from the start kept increasing in fury until it could not get any worse for it had reached its limit. Often before, I had practiced walking in a straight line from the Swede’s Islands to Carltons in storms less violent by the direction of the wind on my cheek, and so became efficient in this kind of ice craft, and today, I reaped a life harvest by my forethought. Presently, I ran up against the outer island and here I spent some time in obtaining an accurate direction and then laid my course straight for Carlton. It was awful slow work heading into such a hurricane in the deep snow and frequent flooded areas underneath, and I remember reaching the shore just a little below the Carlton trail and shelter of the woods. I never rested on my trips and this probably urged me on, on my way. It was long after dark when I came to Carltons and from there I remember nothing as all was a blank. On the east end of the little clearing wherein Gatesville lay, I found myself on my mittened hands and knees crawling along to an overhung curled snowbank into the breast of which I drove my mitten hands and rose to my feet in which there was little if any feeling and staggered to the little log shanty post office about 800 ft. away, rested the empty mailbag on a suitable log and slipped from under the shoulder straps, crossed the road to my father’s house and with my shoulders broke open the door with a loud crash, which woke mother up and she wanted to know who came in and said that my supper was in the oven. She had waited a long time for me but fell asleep as it was near midnight, long past my usual arrival time. Not receiving any reply, but a muffled moaning, she sprang out of bed and saw that I was frostbitten, she pulled me away from the stove and out of doors, and quickly rubbed the slightly frost bitten spots out of my face and upper front part of my body, but the pants, stockings and Mocassins were a solid frozen mass and could not be removed from some time. Finally, by a little twisting, all came off and the flesh to the front part of both big toes and both toe nails came off too as they were frozen fast to the garments, my limbs were not touched much, but they were numb. The quick snow bath saved me from greater injury and pain as the frost had not gone very deeply.

Save the Dates

May 6—EUP History Consortium Spring 2017 Meeting at the Whitefish Point Shipwreck Museum
July 12, 7 p.m.—Tom Farnquist will speak about the Fred and Audrey Warth Bottle Collection

Gift Shop

The 1991 book, Karelia: a Finnish-American Couple in Stalin’s Russia by Lawrence and Sylvia Hokkanen, is back in print. In 1934, Russia invited many Finnish-American couples to accept jobs in Karelia, Russia. In 1941, the Stalin purges resulted in the arrest and death of many from that community. The Hokkanens had close ties to the Finnish community on Sugar Island. You may purchase the book through CCHS for $12.95 plus tax and postage. The CCHS Gift Shop will reopen in May. You are welcome to visit the shop via the back door during Office Hours, by appointment, or during our events. Please call 635-7082 or check out our online offerings at cchsmi.com.

Thank you to the following people and businesses that responded to our outreach in January. We greatly appreciate your support.

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Linda Beaumont
Anthony & Margaret Bosbous
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- Family $30
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- Contributing $50
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Make checks payable to: Chippewa County Historical Society, P.O. Box 342, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Office Hours:
Mondays and Fridays and by appointment at back door

Gift Shop Hours:
Closed until May 15. Open during office hours and by appointment at the back door and during special events.

Upcoming Events

Join us on Wednesday, April 5 at 7 p.m. to hear Mary Jo DuVall of Sault Events speak about plans for the 350th birthday of Sault Ste. Marie in 2018, at CCHS, 115 Ashmun Street.