

Wolf's Eye



Isle Royale & Keweenaw Parks Association

2012 No. 3

Keweenaw National Historical Park Celebrates 20th Anniversary

Like a gem, Keweenaw National Historical Park has many facets. It tells a powerful story of hope and opportunity as well as struggle. Most of all, it offers us an appreciation for our past and an inspiration for our future.

~ Sen. Carl Levin

Keweenaw National Historical Park recently celebrated its 20th anniversary in a fashion true to its roots—bringing Upper Michigan's Copper Country community together to celebrate the grassroots struggle to establish the park, the tenacious effort to save and preserve the thousands of historic resources, and the many accomplishments during its short 20-year history.

The National Park Service and the Keweenaw NHP Advisory Commission invited the entire Copper Country community to participate in celebrating the park's 20th anniversary in a day of family fun and celebration.

Community events were held at Agassiz Park in the Calumet Unit and in the Quincy Unit at the historic Quincy Mine & Hoist. They gathered at each site for a few hours of sharing local heritage through music and dance and a host of activities for the whole family.

The Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Dance Troupe kicked off both events by sharing their rich cultural traditions, reflecting the thousands of years of copper mining heritage along the Keweenaw. The KBIC Cultural Committee encouraged the

drum circle and dancers to not only demonstrate but also to draw in the broader community to join them in language, dance, and homage.

There were also historically themed games for kids, cookies and warm cider, door prizes provided by park partner Isle Royale & Keweenaw Parks Association and generous business partners, craft vendors, and live music. A 20th anniversary heritage scavenger hunt and a Keweenaw NHP historical quiz were featured, tying "Call to Action" themes into the mix by immersing the community in historical elements of its heritage.

U.S. Senator Carl Levin (D-MI) and NPS Midwest Deputy Regional Director Patty Trap spoke to the passion, innovation, and collaboration that not only made this region nationally significant during the American Industrial Revolution but also has served it well as a partnership-based national park. Senator Levin went on to call out the significance of the historic Quincy Smelting Works, the most intact late nineteenth century copper



Speakers celebrating the park's anniversary (L to R): Rev. Bob Langseth, Sen. Carl Levin, Steve Albee, NPS Deputy Regional Director Patty Trap, Virginia Jamison, Supt. Mike Pflaum, Bill Fink, and Kim Hoagland. Photo courtesy Bob Guiliani, used by permission.

smelter remaining in the world, and a primary feature of the Quincy Mining Company National Historic Landmark District.

Superintendent Mike Pflaum extolled the economic benefits of Keweenaw NHP to the Copper Country region as it has invested more than \$45 million in park development and operations, leveraging additional private investment and heritage tourism impact. Advisory Commission Chair Kim Hoagland emphasized an equivalent investment on the part of the park's nineteen non-federal Keweenaw Heritage Site organizations, preserving their historic resources and providing the primary visitor experience at Keweenaw National Historical Park.

This was a great opportunity for the community to share its passion and pride for the historic resources and rich heritage of Upper Michigan's Copper Country. The NPS and their Partners in Preservation together certainly lived up to their motto—"Celebrate YOUR National Park"—in celebrating Keweenaw NHP's 20th anniversary.



Keweenaw Bay Indian Community drum circle and dancers performed during Keweenaw National Historical Park's 20th anniversary celebration on October 13. Photo courtesy Alan West.

Reprinted from *Inside NPS* and www.levin.senate.gov/newsroom/

Where's the Beach? Archaeological Testing of Isle Royale's Nipissing Shoreline

Isle Royale's Nipissing shoreline is one of the most prominent relict shorelines found on the remote island archipelago. Resting 14m (46 ft.) above today's shoreline, the Nipissing was active 5,000 years before present (ybp). Now high and dry, and sometimes well inland, it reflects a dramatically different island landscape with its own unique inventory of islands, bays, and peninsular features. Numerous relict shorelines trace themselves across the archipelago, including those much older than the Nipissing. The Minong, for example, rests 22m (72 ft.) above the modern shoreline and was active 10,700 ybp. What distinguishes the Nipissing, however, is its association with the first known human endeavors on Isle Royale. That is, the Nipissing version of Isle Royale was active when the first canoe reached its shores.

Beginning 4,500 years ago, the first island visitors experienced an archipelago quite different than the one we know today. Geographic features, through time and a combination of rising landmass (isostatic rebound) and receding lake levels, have taken on new appearances that stray far from those witnessed five millennia ago. The bays are now inland, either dry (innocuous valley floor or swampland) or landlocked (Feldtmann and Halloran Lakes). The peninsulas have become inland hills or resemble elongated versions of their former selves.

At first glance these features seem nondescript, resembling many other inland island locations. Further scrutiny reveals distinct terrace-like features, sometimes cascading down a forested hillside. Such terraces are in fact beachheads, relicts of a previous Lake Superior shoreline. More importantly, they would have served as occupation sites, much like today's beachheads where more recent prehistories were situated.

Most of what we know about island prehistory derives from activities that took place along the island's present coastline. These activities were associ-

ated with Woodland cultures, the earliest appearing in the region about 3,000 ybp, when ceramics are first seen in the artifact assemblages. Subsequent Woodland cultures took the form of many groups and continued into the EuroAmerican contact period. The island's archaeological inventory reflects many of the activities associated with such groups.



Seth DePasqual (center) and crew working a shovel test pit.

Yet relatively little is understood about the earlier Archaic-period cultures on Isle Royale. This culture (specifically late-Archaic) was likely the first to have visited the island. However, related peoples would not have encountered today's shoreline, as it was then submerged. Instead they would have been greeted by the Nipissing beachhead, which today rests uphill and inland from the island's modern shoreline.

The terraces mentioned above are unique in that they are often level, providing ideal conditions for human habitation. Some would have been more exposed, bearing the brunt of Lake Superior winds and storms. Others were likely more protected, sometimes offering expansive views of the lake or perhaps an inland valley.

Recognizing these differences, NPS archaeologists scrutinized detailed topographic imagery (2004 LiDAR), selecting survey polygons where conditions seemed ideal. Washington Harbor was deemed a good starting place, primarily

based on the region's expansive soils relative to the island's eastern side where bedrock is often more prominent. Moreover, the west side of the island featured an interesting collection of bays, peninsulas, and inland drainages associated with the Nipissing. The 2012 Relict Shoreline Survey employed a shovel testing procedure, where shovel test pits (STPs) were sunk on the terrace/bench tops to locate evidence of past human use. All told, 385 STPs were dug during the Washington Harbor survey (May 2012). The Rock Harbor survey (July/August 2012) placed 24 STPs.

The surveys yielded seven new archaeological sites, all in the Washington Harbor area. Six of these sites are prehistoric, found in five separate survey polygons. The other is a historic prospect pit. All were found above the Nipissing shoreline, which may indicate an Archaic period culture. The artifacts are primarily comprised of lithic waste material from the production of stone tool implements. Most of this rock material is non-native to Isle Royale, suggesting human transport.

Two copper implements were identified in two separate survey polygons. The first was a small, unworked copper nugget. It appears to be natural, with no obvious markings or modifications on its surface. However, its association with lithic materials found at the same location suggests that it may indeed be a cultural artifact. The second copper item was a small, 6 cm chisel that features obvious edges and a sharp working end, a rare find considering the limited size of the test units. It was likely set within a wooden or bone handle.



Three survey polygons tested in the Rock Harbor/Moskey Basin area produced no artifacts. This side of the island



features many bedrock exposures when compared with the Washington Harbor survey area. Shovel testing here is often difficult with shallow or absent soils.

In conclusion, the Relict Shoreline Survey proved successful. Seven new sites were located, six of which are likely associated with early island habitation. Prior to the 2012 survey, only fifteen Archaic-period sites had been confirmed. If indeed Archaic, the 2012 discoveries are significant in that they add to our limited understanding of early island use and occupation. The finds this year hint of a larger story resting undisturbed at each location. It is our intent to continue research efforts at some of the new sites in 2013.

~Seth DePasqual, Cultural Resource Manager
Isle Royale National Park

The 2012 survey was a collaboration between Isle Royale National Park and Grand Portage National Monument. Many thanks to the volunteers involved and to the Great Lakes Research and Education Center for supporting Isle Royale's cultural resource intern.

Dassler Cabin Crew 2012 Service Trip Accomplishments

During three weeks in 2012, twelve "Dassler Cabin Crew" volunteers completed 748 hours of volunteer service. They also donated \$1,200 to IRKPA's Isle Royale Historic Preservation Fund, which is used to purchase materials and supplies for the projects.

As in previous years, major accomplishments of these service trips included cleaning, repairing, and maintaining the Dassler cabin and other structures used by the Isle Royale Artists-in-Residence—down to details like filling the wood rack.

This year's crews also reglazed all windows in the Stack-Wolbrink cabin

Repatriation of Shipwreck Artifacts

In July 2011, retired Great Lakes ship captain Richard D. Metz returned to Isle Royale with a substantial collection of shipwreck artifacts he gathered in the 1960s. A few notables include brass gauges from the *America* engine room, a pewter milk urn from the *Monarch*, the Chadburn telegraph and bearing indicator from the *Emperor*, and a custom's press from the *America*. Perhaps the most impressive is the brass helm from the wreck of the steamer *Algoma*, a tragedy resulting in the loss of 46 people.

Metz worked for Isle Royale National Park in the early 1960s as captain of the Joseph E. Colombe, the park's previous tugboat. While off duty, Metz dove many of the island's shipwrecks, collecting numerous artifacts along the way. Having the items for years in his private collection, Metz decided to repatriate everything to the park. The

park is working to exhibit some of these artifacts in the near future. The *Algoma* helm is scheduled for permanent display at the Rock Harbor Lighthouse Museum in 2013.



Helm from the *Algoma* shipwreck off of Mott Island.

Gift Idea: Give an Isle Royale Workshop This Year!

Looking for a special gift for someone (or perhaps yourself)? Consider a spot in IRKPA's popular Isle Royale botany or photography workshops next June! The **Isle Royale Botany Workshop** takes place June 10-15. Taught by botanist Janet Marr, the workshop will introduce those with beginning/intermediate plant ID skills to the island's spring flora.

Want to improve your photographic skills with Isle Royale providing the in-

spiration? Then the **Isle Royale Photography Workshop** from June 14-19, led by professional photographer Bob Guilian, is for you.

For either workshop, register with a \$200 deposit by March 5 to get the early \$674 rate, including the \$25 IRKPA member discount, which covers instruction, transport to and from the island, meals, and camping. Email kbradof@irkpa.org for a flyer with more details.

Landscaping work to protect the structures included removing a fallen tree near the Dassler solar panel, cleaning the French drain, and installing water bars behind the cabin.

Hats off to these dedicated volunteers, many of them returnees, who pay their own expenses while performing vital work to preserve the cultural resources of Isle Royale National Park and support the Artist-in-Residence Program! To volunteer or learn more about the service trips for 2013, contact leader John Dunn at jdadunn@gmail.com.



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Call for 2013 Artist-in-Residence Applications

Professional visual and performing artists, writers, and composers are invited to apply for Isle Royale National Park's 2013 Artist-in-Residence Program, cosponsored by IRKPA and the Copper Country Community Arts Council. All art forms are acceptable except those that manipulate or disturb the park's fragile environment.

Selected artists will have use of a canoe and rustic cabin during two- to three-week residencies from mid-June through early September. A panel of professionals from a variety of art disciplines and a park representative will select the artists based on

artistic integrity, ability to live in a wilderness environment, willingness to donate a finished piece of artwork inspired by the island, and the artist's ability to relate and interpret the park through their medium.

Applications must be postmarked by February 16, 2012. The National Park Service will notify artists of their acceptance by May 1. For more information or an application packet, contact Artist-in-Residence Program, Isle Royale National Park, 800 E. Lakeshore Dr., Houghton, MI 49931-1869, call 906-482-0984 or email ISRO_parkinfo@nps.gov.

Sweepstakes for Island Trips

Watch for an IRKPA mailing this month that will include tickets for our 2013 sweepstakes. First prize is a night's stay for two at the Grand Portage Lodge & Casino, paired with a day trip to Isle Royale (Windigo) on the *Sea Hunter*. Second prize is a round trip for two to Rock Harbor on the NPS *Ranger III*. Third prize is two IRKPA books. Suggested donation is \$5 per ticket or 3 for \$10. The drawing will be held at the Isle Royale Visitor Center in Houghton on February 25, 2013.

Event Volunteers Needed

For several years, board and committee volunteers have staffed booths at community events and festivals in the Keweenaw, to increase awareness of IRKPA and our two national parks. If you are interested in helping here or at events in other areas where an IRKPA presence would be desirable, such as the Quiet Water Symposium in East Lansing on March 2, please contact Alan West at alanwest.west@gmail.com.

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IRKPA is a nonprofit membership organization that assists Isle Royale National Park and Keweenaw National Historical Park by publishing and selling educational materials for park visitors. Gifts, bequests, memorials, and memberships are U.S. tax deductible.

Membership Categories

Individual \$25	Household \$35
Supporting \$50	Sustaining \$100
Patron \$250	Life \$1,200*

*may be paid in four annual installments

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