

Getting into Shipshape

Ranger III spends several weeks
in dry dock in Wisconsin

By Liz Valencia

You might have noticed an empty space at the dock at Isle Royale National Park headquarters in Houghton this fall — *Ranger III* was gone!

As happens every five years, the ship was in dry dock. Dry docking is required by the American Bureau of Shipping and the US Coast Guard. After finishing island service in late October, *Ranger III* sailed to Fraser Shipyards in Superior, Wisconsin. The ship was there for about eight weeks for thorough maintenance and inspections.

After a power washing, the ship underwent a rigorous inspection of its hull, internal structure and machinery, including propeller blades and hubs, propeller shafts, rudder, bow thruster, anchors, mooring equipment, main engines, generators, and auxiliary engine room equipment.

Additionally, various other projects were completed including, most notably, a complete top-end overhaul of the main Caterpillar diesel engines.

Ranger III Captain Aaron Persenaire said a large part of these inspections involved comparing measurements taken in the previous dry docking to current measurements in order to assess damage or wear of the ship's components. "This method allows us to see how various systems on the ship age over time and helps us plan maintenance and renewal work that extends the longevity of the vessel" Persenaire said.

According to the captain, the 66-year-old ship is in great shape which he credits to the fact it stays in Lake Superior. "Operating the ship exclusively in freshwater extends the lifespan of the hull and ma-



chinery by a significant margin compared to ships that operate in saltwater environments. Freshwater ships commonly live two to three times longer than their saltwater counterparts," he stated.

Persenaire said there were no major surprises or issues that came up during the inspections. Smaller issues such as a worn seal on the bow thruster and a sea suction valve that needed to be replaced were to be expected.

"These are examples of typical things that we expect to find during dry docking," Persenaire said. "Many items like this are only able to be accessed when the ship is out of the water. So we look carefully at everything."

Ranger III is set to sail to Isle Royale in April.

Artist program launched



By Brett Boyles

The Quincy Dry House represents the transition between the domestic and industrial sides of copper miner's lives. When the mines were in operation, miners changed into their work clothes at a dry house before walking down to the shafts. After work they would change clothes and wash up before heading home.

The Commissioned Artist Program, developed by Keweenaw National Historical Park, the park's Advisory Commission and IRKPA will use art to return the presence of people to these historic landscapes.

The program will challenge artists to use the medium of their choice to enliven the experience of historic Keweenaw. Hopefully this is the first year of many for the program.

A total of nine artists have applied for the Commissioned Artist Program by the late February deadline. While the artists come from around the country, several do have Copper Country roots.

Proposals for works ranging from murals, wood panels, photography, metalwork, ceramic and more have been submitted. The top projects will advance to the interview stage with one project selected for the initial piece.

More information on the program can be found on the Keweenaw National Historical Park website, www.nps.gov/kewe.

Spreading the word

By Mark Wilcox, Executive Director

It's been an exciting few months here at IRKPA, as we have been spreading the word about our organization and its mission.

We took part in three Christmas events in the Keweenaw where we sold a variety of holiday-themed gifts as well as apparel, books, games, toys, ornaments and more. In addition we spoke with hundreds of people about IRKPA and our mission of supporting Isle Royale National Park and Keweenaw National Historical Park.

We returned to the Home for the Holidays Show at Michigan Tech and the Poor Artists Sale at Calumet High School and for the first time we had a booth at the Keweenaw Arts Affair held in the Houghton High School. It was a great show with more of a fine arts focus, but we were quite successful.

Prior to our November membership drive, I made several appearances on regional radio and TV. An unexpected surprise was hearing from my high school basketball coach Roy Aho of Trenary who saw the TV6 interview and joined IRKPA. That was special.

During the spring weeks we will have booths at Canoeecopia in Madison, Wisconsin and the Quiet Adventures Symposium at Michigan State. Again the purpose is to share IRKPA's mission.

Looking ahead I'll be spreading the word about IRKPA and in particular how we support Keweenaw National Historical Park while participating at the Upper Peninsula History Conference in Sault Ste. Marie in June. The past months have been fun and it looks like the excitement will continue.

Rachel Taylor named Mellon Fellow for KNHP

A graduate student from the University of Washington will spend the next two years conducting research into the history of gender and sexuality in Michigan's historic copper mining district.

Rachel Taylor has been selected to receive a fellowship from the National Park Service's Mellon Humanities Postdoctoral Fellowship program. The program places recent humanities PhDs with National Park Service sites and programs across the nation.

Taylor is a PhD candidate at the University of Washington where she studies US history with a focus on the environment and energy technologies.

She describes herself as a "dedicated public historian with a passion for place-based research."

Taylor's previous projects have examined the infrastructural supports behind immigration at Ellis



Island and the architectural evidence of sex work during and after the gold rush in Skagway, Alaska.

She will join KNHP as a Mellon Humanities Postdoctoral Fellow this August where she will conduct a two-year research project that will look at the area as it grew from a frontier mining camp in the 1860s to a cosmopolitan and diverse copper producing district at the turn of the 20th

century.

To date, histories of the area have not explored concepts of masculinity, femininity and gender as they relate to industrial history. Local archives and museum collections will be important sources of information. Part of this background research will include visits to the park's formal partners to learn how they interpret gender and where it is reflected in their collections.

The research will result in a written report which will provide the background and context for completing the activities for the second year of the research project.

The program is a signature element of the National Park Service's commemoration of the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, during which NPS will join with other agencies to celebrate and contemplate the meaning of the Declaration.

Emission reduction plan launched

The National Parks of Lake Superior Foundation (NPLSF), working with the National Park Service (NPS), launched a plan to decarbonize the operations of Lake Superior's national parks.

NPLSF Executive Director Tom Irvine said "Visitors will hear fewer gas-powered chain saws, see more park equipment powered with clean electricity and notice super-efficient air source heat pumps heating and cooling park buildings."

Isle Royale National Park Supt. Denise Swanke said Lake Superior's five national parks are early adopters of the NPS's Green Parks Plan goals. "Each park is moving forward based on its needs, budget and capacity."

More information can be found at nplsf.org





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IRKPA is the membership-based nonprofit partner of Isle Royale National Park and Keweenaw National Historical Park. gifts, bequests, memorials, and membership are U.S. tax deductible.

Membership Categories

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

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***Ranger III* in winning snow statue**



The National Park Service vessel *Ranger III* was the focal point of the winning snow statue in this year's Winter Carnival at Michigan Technological University. The creation of Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity, the statue, "The Lighthouse Shines the Way as the Ranger Heads to Bay," took first place in the month-long statue competition. This year's Winter Carnival theme was "From Forest to Shores, We Love the Outdoors."