



# Town Crier 75¢

A weekly newspaper serving the Mackinac Island Community

Volume 52, Number 16

Mackinac Island, Michigan

August 13 to August 19, 2005

## Maritime Museum Opened in Mission Point Tower

By Jessica Delaney

"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

This quote by George Santayana, a Harvard professor and philosopher, hangs in front of the door to the maritime museum in the Mission Point Resort observation tower.

The tower has been completely remodeled and engineered to serve a new purpose: a history museum dedicated to the Straits area, from freighters and lighthouses to the Mighty Mac Bridge.

The tower, itself, is a study in history. It was constructed with the sound stage in the 1960s by Moral Re-Armament and was used as an observation tower. It has been closed for the most recent decade.

The engineering department at Mission Point Resort began redesigning the tower interior seven years ago, but the project was put on hold for several years. Work began again in



The fifth floor of the new maritime museum is called Water, Wind, Waves, and Wakes and features several models of Great Lakes freighters. Pictures line the walls.

2003.

Today it is nearly finished, and was opened to the public Tuesday, August 9. The exhibit has four floors on straits history

and a floor on Mission Point and the Moral Re-Armament. Each floor of the exhibit has a separate and unique theme: water, wind, waves, and wakes; shipwrecks

of the straits; building the Mighty Mac; lighthouses of the straits.

The water, wind, waves, and wakes exhibit features pictures and replicas of Great Lakes freighters, including a video on shipping in the Straits of

Mackinac. The floor is mostly completed, although one chief exhibit is missing, which has staff very excited. The exhibit will feature a three-dimensional replica of a freighter on the Straits and will include wave

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## Blacksmiths Share Their World of Work

### Convention Showcases Historical Art, Science of Iron Craft

By Jessica Delaney

Movies depict blacksmiths in heavy leather clothing, slaving amidst flying sparks over a hot forge, but according to the two dozen blacksmiths assembled at the Benjamin Blacksmith Shop last weekend, that's not quite true.

"Forge welding is the only time you'll have sparks, if you're doing it right," said Tim Carr, a professional blacksmith from the Muskegon area.

Mr. Carr joined 24 amateur

and professional Michigan blacksmiths Saturday, August 6, for the annual convention, hosted by Mackinac State Historic Parks. This year, blacksmiths continued their work to manufacture portable iron gates that will be used in the state park. They also spruced up some of the tools used at the shop, and many of the blacksmiths stayed around after the shop closed to work on personal projects.

Tonya Grupp of St. Joseph likes to create a trinket or two

for her son and daughter at home. This year she made iron leaves for them. Small iron-work like this is considered "fussy work" by many of the male smiths, but Ms. Grupp said she enjoys the more detail-oriented work, a particularly good skill for a female blacksmith to possess.

"I can't handle the heavy hammers," said Ms. Grupp. "There are some things that require lots of arm strength that I can't do. But with a medium-sized hammer, I get along just fine. I like doing leaves and little rosebuds."

Although strength does count for something in the smithing world, it certainly doesn't count for everything. Lyle Cline, one of the convention's most devoted smiths, refers a reporter to a Longfellow poem, "The Village Blacksmith," pointing out, "That poem is not it. Granted, if you work full time, that will enhance your size, but not for a hobby."

Many of the blacksmiths at the convention are men and women intrigued by the art of metalworking, who spend their days at other jobs. Though blacksmithing is steadily growing in popularity, it is still not a regular career consideration for most people.

Mr. Cline became interested in blacksmith work after stopping in at the Benjamin Blacksmiths shop on Market Street, one of the museum exhibits maintained by Mackinac State Historic Parks. Watching the smith there, he said he "caught the bug" and

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## Citizens Direct Mackinac's Future at Master Plan Hearing

By Leslie Rott and Karen Gould

More than 50 Mackinac Island citizens took advantage of an opportunity to help steer the future direction of Mackinac Island during a public hearing Thursday, August 4, as city planners review and revise the city's master plan, which was last updated in 1999.

"I think the harbor side of the downtown shops should be spruced up with a boardwalk," said city planning official Dennis Dombroski during the group discussion period at the hearing. He was participating as a citizen and suggested a downtown boardwalk along the shore could enhance the Island's waterfront area, reduce traffic on Main Street, and potentially offer more shopping and eating possibilities, he explained.

Similar comments could be heard around the room, all focused on how to make the Island a better place for residents and visitors, either by preserving good things that already are here or by addressing problem areas.

"What about preserving some more old buildings on the Island?" asked John Huibregtse. "People come here not to see new hotels, but old buildings. There's a lot of old buildings that are gone. We need to protect the integrity of older buildings," he said. "When they're gone, they're gone."

"It saddens me that the State Park does not have the funds to restore Fort Holmes," said resident Kent Weber.

Michigan communities are required by the state to have a master plan and to update it every five years. A city's master plan serves as a basis for its zon-

### Historic Building Preservation, Waterfront Boardwalk Among Ideas Voiced in Public Hearing

ing ordinance, which guides development to conform to what the community desires.

A final master plan should protect cultural and environmental areas and could determine the housing densities and types of development in the future. Improvements to the infrastructure, such as water, sewer, and electricity, can be directed toward areas where the master plan predicts future growth and development.

"This is for you and us to join in this master plan effort and it's the only way we can get it done right," said Mike Hart, Master Plan Committee chairman, addressing the crowd and offering background information on the planning process.

"It's everyone's plan," agreed Mary Dufina, a member of the ad hoc committee.

Those attending the workshop quickly became involved in the process by dividing into

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Steve Neumann of Saginaw uses hot coals to heat iron for portable fencing.