

Looking Back

Compiled by Ryan Schlehuber

115 Years Ago

February 7 to March 28,
1891

The ice between here and the Island is perfectly safe.

St. Valentine's day the 14th. Select your victims, people.

It becomes our painful duty to chronicle the death of one of our oldest citizens, Mr. Jasper Bezeau, who died at his home at the north end of State Street Tuesday last. Deceased was born at Montreal in 1840, and was therefore 51 years of age at the time of his death. He went to Mackinac Island when he was only 10 years of age, and his first work was on the Dousman Farm, now known as the Early Farm, where he labored for a number of years.

He later ventured into the butchering business, which he remained for 14 years, which time he bought and sold furs, and had quite extensive dealings with the Indians. He was laid to rest Thursday morning in the Catholic cemetery and had one of the largest funerals ever seen in St. Ignace.

Miss Margaret Chambers of Mackinac Island is learning telegraphy in St. Ignace with Miss Donnelly.

Several sleigh-loads of St. Ignace young people attended the masquerade ball at Mackinac Island last Monday evening and say it was far ahead of anything of the kind ever before attempted in this section. When the Islanders undertake anything, they all pull together and success always follows.

Mackinac Island people were quite numerous on St. Ignace streets last Sunday.

The young ladies of Mackinac Island are said to be greatly taken up with a new dance called "Duchess."

A team of horses belonging to Fort Mackinac went through the ice in the Straits Wednesday and were drowned.

Benoni Lachance is filling the Grand Hotel ice houses.

When in Detroit last week, F.R. Hulbert of St. Ignace said to a *Free Press* reporter, "We are getting ready for an era of prosperity, a sort of boom, at Mackinac Island, and all around that picturesque section. That country has an increased number of visitors every season, and during the two seasons of the World's Colombian Exposition, on account of its easy access from Chicago, things are bound to be lively."

Lieutenant Smith of Fort Mackinac was a caller to *The St. Ignace News* office Monday.

A number of soldiers from Fort Mackinac come over almost daily to St. Ignace to do their trading.

S.J. Smith, Stellwagen, and Kynoch's tinner is busy on an order for a 35-barrel galvanized iron water tank for a Mackinac Island party. This firm has filled orders for several tanks for Island people this winter, with a total capacity of 225 barrels.

90 Years Ago
February 3 to March 28,
1916

Mrs. Anthony Corrigan and little son Ralph, returned home Thursday from New York City, where they enjoyed a six



A few Mackinac Island residents may remember when people used to ice skate on Haldimand Bay, as this February 1952 photograph displays. Tom Pfeiffelmann remembers that year vividly, stating the ice was so clear and smooth that people could see the bottom of the lake. (Photograph courtesy of Tom Pfeiffelmann)

weeks' visit with relatives.

A large crowd attended the basketball games given Friday night. The high school girls defeated the elementary girls with a score of 17 to 10, and the high school boys scored 19 to 14. After the game, dancing was enjoyed.

Mr. Frank Kenyon, park superintendent, has been confined to his bed for nearly a week.

The Island, which had seemingly been immune from the grippe, has been having a siege, few households escaping. Sometimes several members were attacked at once.

James Doud made a trip to St. Ignace Saturday, bringing back a load of flour for the Doud Mercantile Company.

Early in the week Dr. Bogan received word of the death of Mrs. Frances Balbridge of Jersey City, New Jersey. It occurred there January 11 after a long illness. Mrs. Balbridge was the owner of the log cabin near British Landing called "Fan Wood" and has been a visitor to the Island for a number of summers, even spending the last one here, though not being able to be very active.

Ice shifting in the Straits according to the winds prevents Harry Betts and his dog-team carriers of mail between Cheboygan and points on Bois Blanc Island from starting out, though he made several attempts before deciding to wait until an ice bridge forms. He reached Cheboygan Sunday after a hard trip on the ice from Mackinac Island, by ferry to Mackinaw City and by dog team from there. — *Cheboygan Tribune*

The ice harvest is about to begin.

The old saying, "it's an ill wind that blows none some good," was proven to the better satisfaction of all when the city, under the supervision of City Marshal Lapine, was forced to put a crowd of men at work shoveling snow from the sidewalks Tuesday.

The Enterprise is pleased to learn that Edwin O. Wood and family will occupy their summer home on Mackinac Island the coming season. Mr. Wood is intensely interested in the State Historical Museum to be opened in the old state officers' quarters. The Michigan Historical Commission is cooperating with the Mackinac Island State Park Commission and the purpose is to have one of the most complete state historical museums in the United States. Already several valuable collections have been promised to be delivered as soon as the building is ready to receive them. A fine historical library is also assured to be placed in connection with the museum.

This was quite a busy week for traffic between here and St. Ignace, the following with their teams were busy hauling freight of one kind and another. R. H. Benjamin, John McCarty, J.W. Davis and Sons, J.A. Hoban, Henry Donnelly, Frank Hoban, and James Doud Jr.

Mackinac Island column — The basketball team of the M.I.H.S. are contemplating a public game this coming Friday evening. Miss Murray is the coach for the elementary department and Miss Norton of the high school team. The old commissary has been given to the pupils and Harold Kenyon wired it for them. The teams are most enthusiastic.

50 Years Ago
January 5 to March 29, 1956

During 1955, the Michigan state ferries established an all-time record for the number of vehicles and people transported across the Straits of Mackinac with a total of 907,720 motor vehicles. This compares with 853,337 during 1954.

The Mackinac Bridge Authority is now building a bridge to span the Straits of Mackinac between the two cities now linked by the State Ferry fleet. When this bridge is opened to traffic in 1957, the State Ferry fleet will pass into history after having carried some 11 million vehicles and 30 million people across the

Straits since service was inaugurated in 1923.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Pfeiffelman and son, Edward Lee, left Monday for Chicago where they will attend the boat show and the Schwinn bicycle show.

Morton Pero and son have opened their new tavern, which was built last fall and is located across from the Michigan state liquor store. It is a modern, one-story cinder block building.

Arnold Transit Company is now negotiating a contract for the building of an additional diesel-powered all-steel boat. This ship will be a sister of the motor vessel *Huron*, which was constructed by Paasch Marine Service at Erie, Pennsylvania last winter and placed in the Mackinac Island ferry service July 1, 1955.

The Mackinac Island life boat station control house started tests of its fog signal on Saturday.

The Mackinac Island airlift began in earnest today. Nearly 100 workers on Moral Re-Armament construction were ferried across the frozen Straits. One-hundred-thirty-five workers are participating in the project, which is expanding the dining and residence facilities there.

Mayor Sam McIntire is opposed for re-election by Stella King. Miss King is the Island's public health nurse. John Chambers, who was a likely candidate for mayor, pulled out of that race to seek an aldermanship. Incumbents

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