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UPS Marks Century Milestone This Summer Island Deliveries Still Resemble Those of 100 Years Ago



Passing by summer cottages Brigadoon and Anne Cottage on Main Street is the Mackinac Island UPS team on the way to make deliveries Wednesday, August 8. Pictured (from left) are dray horses Queen and Red, driver Eddie Wilson, bicycle and cart driver Keith Jordan, and shipping manager Sara Chambers. Missing from photograph is seasonal helper Holly Cole.

Commission Drafts Land Lease for Community Stable

By Karen Gould

A community stable to accommodate up to 20 horses is being planned for approximately three acres of Mackinac Island State Park land. The Mackinac Horsemen's Association will build the public facility if it can work out a lease with the Mackinac Island State Park Commission. A lease is now under review by the Michigan Attorney General and is expected to be presented at the commission's September 20 meeting.

Commissioners said they liked the idea when they met Friday, July 20, at Fort Mackinac, although some are concerned about possible contamination at the site, which was used 40 years ago by the City of Mackinac Island to incinerate garbage.

The Horsemen's Association wants to provide corrals and stalls for public use and provide a place for the 4-H program and stalls for the association's 10 horses, which it keeps for horseback riding lessons and use by Island children. The proposed stable will also have an apartment for a full-time caretaker.

About 50 students participate in the 4-H program, the association reports, and the nonprofit

group conducts about 400 riding lessons each summer.

Horses are now stabled at a barn on Mission Hill, owned by the Chambers family. A corral there, owned by Robert G. Benser, will eventually be converted to a three-unit site condominium, and when that happens, the exercise yard will be much reduced, so the Horsemen's Association has been seeking land for a new home.

"We have nowhere to go," said Steve Rilenge, a Horsemen's Association board member who addressed commissioners July 20.

A community stable, he added, will attract families to Mackinac Island, which bans motorized vehicles but which has little private land available for housing horses.

The land the association wants to lease from the state park is an old city incinerator site just west of Harrisonville, and access to it would be from the ends of Fifth and Seventh streets.

The commission, which manages 83% of the land on Mackinac Island, leases land reluctantly, but the Horsemen's Association has argued that it cannot obtain private land else-

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Blacksmiths Forge Fence for Memorial

By Eric Fish

The sound of hammers clinking on iron and cheerful conversation echoed down Market Street Saturday, August 4, as 25 blacksmiths gathered at the Benjamin Blacksmith Shop for the 23rd annual Mackinac Island Blacksmith Convention.

Working as a unit, the blacksmiths, who range from full-timers to hobbyists, heated, twisted, reshaped, and bent iron for a fence to be installed at the veteran's memorial in the city park off Market Street. They worked most of the day Saturday and finished Sunday morning before passing visitors.

The Benjamin Blacksmith shop has a long history on the Island. It was purchased by Robert H. Benjamin and a partner in 1885 and remained in the Benjamin family until 1965. Today, it is one of the downtown museums operated by Mackinac State Historic Parks.

Blacksmith hobbyist Lyle Cline has attended all

23 conventions on Mackinac Island. His love for the craft started in the 1960s when he and his family stopped on Mackinac Island while on vacation.

"Various guys like me caught the interest in it," he said, nodding to others working in the building.

Over time, Mr. Cline became more skilled in the craft, thanks to seminars, books, and peers. He's now a retired history teacher from Mio and has more time to spend on his favorite hobby.

"I had a feeling for it in a historical sense," he said of his love for blacksmithing. "Taking steel, which is so stiff and unforgiving when it's cold, and heating it up, you can make it do an enormous amount of things. It's a very intriguing medium to work with."

With their medium of wrought iron, the blacksmiths have completed numerous projects in the convention's 23 year span

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By Karen Gould

United Parcel Service delivery on Mackinac Island is a reflection of the company's early operations, which began 100 years ago in Seattle, Washington, August 28, 1907. Back then, the company was called American Messenger Company, and it delivered messages by bicycle and horse-drawn carriages. Today, UPS has grown to a \$42.6 billion corporation, operating a fleet of aircraft and trucks in more than 200 countries and territories, but on Mackinac Island, where motorized vehicles are banned, delivery is still by bicycle and horse-drawn wagon.

Here, during the summer, UPS trucks are ferried to the Yoder Dock near the Island House Hotel, where their packages are unloaded onto drays and bicycle carts for delivery to businesses and homes. As they move along two manual conveyor belts, they are sorted by shipping manager Sara Chambers of Mackinac Island, seasonal driver Keith Jordan of Kincheloe, seasonal driver Eddie Wilson of Long Beach, California, and seasonal helper Holly Cole of St. Ignace.

The group works together and independently to organize all of the boxes so they can be placed on a dray, cart, or bicycle basket and taken to their destination. Shipments are divided

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