

OVERLOOK

Cook County Historical Society

Summer 2019

LIVES SAVED AND LIVES LOST

The Superior North Coast Guard Station in Grand Marais became a reality when it was fully staffed in April of 1929. The commercial fishermen along the North Shore were glad to see some protection and assistance given to them. However, Lake Superior's extreme weather still existed and fishing was a dangerous business. The local fishermen relied on each other for assistance; often they attempted rescues first and alerted the U.S. Coast Guard later because they knew that time was their enemy.



Coast Guard surfboat (Eliassen Collection)

The patrol boat, USCGC *Crawford*, spent time along the North Shore and, if it was stationed in the Grand Marais Harbor, got involved in rescues. Normally it was stationed in Two Harbors and took almost four hours to get to Grand Marais once it was notified of an emergency. In the frigid waters and winds, it would usually be too late, the incident becoming a recovery rather than a rescue.

The following are lesser-known stories of the early years, illustrating the bravery and determination of both the fishermen and the Coast Guard crews that had to venture out in all weather to rescue others.

"You have to go out, but you don't have to come back." -The Surfman's Motto

(Continued on page 4)

FIFTY YEARS OF WORLD'S BEST DONUTS!

It's been 50 years since Merieta Engel Altrichter started selling her hand-made donuts in downtown Grand Marais. Her daughter, Sherrie, recalls the very beginning of the business when her mom would make donuts early in the morning and then go to her regular job at Joynes' Department Store. Once the business grew, Merieta made donuts her livelihood with a busy season lasting from mid-May to October.



Merieta with one of her early batches of donuts (site of current Dockside Fish Market)

The very first donuts were sold from a cement block building (now the site of Dockside Fish Market) that had no running water! After a few weeks,



Four generations of World's Best Donuts: Sherrie, Ruby, Dee, Max and Kyler

Merieta moved the still brand-new business to a building called "The Bargain Barn" where the current Joynes' parking lot is located.

Over the years there has always been family to help with the donuts - starting with Merieta's two daughters to today's great-great-grandchildren. In the early days a tackle box was used as a cash register, and granddaughter Stacey recalls having to stand on a box as a small girl to wait on customers.

In 1978 the shop moved to its present location at the corner of Wisconsin Street and Broadway Avenue, next door to the Historical Society Museum. Over time a coffee room has been added with seating for customers in addition to an array of photos visitors have provided through the years. Looking to the future, owner DeAnn Brazell (Merieta's granddaughter) says she looks forward to the day when her nephew and his children are able to be the new bosses - making it the third and fourth generation in charge of Grand Marais' donut dynasty!

World's Best Donuts will celebrate their 50th anniversary on Saturday, June 22, with party games, music, and refreshments.

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L.K. JOHNSON FOUNDATION PROVIDES LARGE GRANT

The Cook County Historical Society requested and received a \$50,000 grant from the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation which is the largest they have provided to this organization. These funds are dedicated to improvements to the JHP Art Gallery including (among other things) repair to the building which has some rotten logs, and an update to the landscaping. Improvements are designed to draw in more visitors, attract new uses of the site, and provide a public place for everybody to enjoy wonderful art and a view of the Grand Marais Harbor!



Wayne Anderson, Leonard Sobanja, and Eleanor Waha - as well as Dean Einwalter - were honored as Honorary Board Members

COOK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD AND STAFF

Alta McQuatters Acting President
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Carrie Johnson Executive Director
Robert Spry Office Manager
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 in this 2019 issue of the *Overlook*

CHIPPEWA CITY NEEDS YOUR HELP

The Cook County Historical Society continues to raise funds for the St. Francis Xavier - Chippewa City Church. With your dedicated donations, an historic architect has been hired to assess the structural needs of the church. Once his report has been completed, we will have costs associated with proper repairs of the church. These repairs are based on standards outlined by the Department of the Interior for the building which is on the National Register of Historic Places. This church stands the test of time holding the stories of the village of Chippewa City - an important landmark to many Cook County residents and visitors. Visit the church on Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 2 p.m. through the summer.



Oil painting of Chippewa City Church by Ade Toftey, 1982. Donated by Cheri Toftey.

PASSPORT WEEKEND EVENTS

On June 14-16 Cook County's History Museums and Heritage Sites will celebrate the start of another summer with a special Passport Weekend of events. The Passport to the Past program began as a way to engage elementary students in local history and over the years, with funding from Visit Cook County, has been expanded to be shared with residents and visitors alike. The program represents a collaborative effort between all the heritage and historical organization throughout the County. Be sure to join Dan Helmerson on June 15 at 4 p.m. at the JHP for his presentation on "Hovland: The Unintentional Settlement." Visit cookcountyhistory.org for weekend activities at Cook County's museums and heritage sites.

RENT THE GALLERY

The Johnson Heritage Post Art Gallery is available for private party rentals. You can rent one room or the full facility for your event needs. The large log space is a perfect place for holiday parties, weddings, baby showers and other events...and includes a full kitchen! With its premiere location on the harbor everyone will be impressed by your private gathering. Stop by the Gallery to receive an application or go online at johnsonheritagepost.org and print a copy for yourself.

If you have any questions please contact the Johnson Heritage Post Art Gallery at:
 218-387-2314 or jhp@boreal.org.



Johnson Heritage Post Art Gallery

115 Wisconsin St., Grand Marais
 jhp@boreal.org -- 218-387-2314
www.JohnsonHeritagePost.org

Exhibit Schedule (gallery is closed between exhibits)

<p>June 7 - June 30 Opening Reception: June 7 from 5 - 7 pm</p>	<p>Calling <i>An Exhibition of Works by Alexa Carson</i></p>
<p>July 5 - July 28 Opening Reception: July 5 from 5 - 7:30 pm</p>	<p><i>An Exhibition of Works by Tara Lynn Austin</i></p>
<p>August 2 - September 8 Opening Reception: August 2 from 5 - 7:30 pm</p>	<p>The Circle Tour <i>An Exhibition of Works by Douglas Ross</i></p>
<p>September 6 - 13</p>	<p><i>Plein Air Painting Competition</i></p>
<p>September 12 Join us at Artist's Point from 3 - 5 pm</p>	<p>Annual Plein Air Competition <i>"Birney Quick, Quick Paint"</i></p>
<p>September 13 5 - 8 pm with Award Ceremony</p>	<p><i>Plein Air Grand Marais OPENING RECEPTION</i></p>



"Tugging"
 by Greg Lecker

The Memorial Weekend is in full swing as I write this, and Grand Marais is busier than ever. We had a great weekend for Greg Lecker's Plein Air Painting demonstrations and his show was fantastic! To view photographs from our past exhibits or to see the rest of the 2019 schedule please visit: johnsonheritagepost.org. Greg's opening was a hit with our local crowd. A number of new visitors stopped into the Gallery expressing wonder at the space and artwork!

Alexa Carson's exhibit titled "Calling" runs from June 7-30. Alexa Carson is a native of Duluth, Minnesota, and her paintings evoke the call of our wilderness – the call of the chickadee, the loon, the wolf. We are called back to our natural spaces to reconnect with wildlife, and to reclaim our role as nature's stewards. If you haven't been to a JHP exhibit opening, you really should attend! You'll be in good company, including the exhibiting artist! JHP also serves great food, punch, and wine. Alexa's exhibit opens on Friday, June 7, from 5-7 p.m.



"Fox Gaze"
 by Alexa Carson

Next on our schedule is an exhibit by one of Cook County's very own artists, Tara Lynn Austin. Tara has been busy creating artwork for exhibits at such places as the Duluth Institute of Art and now she is returning to Grand Marais for a large exhibit at the JHP Art Gallery. She has also been busy creating pieces of jewelry that will be included in this exhibit which opens July 5 from 5-7:30 p.m., and Tara will be in attendance. Her exhibit will run through July 28.

If you missed last year's Plein Air Grand Marais competition or exhibition, this year's dates are coming up fast! Mark your calendars: the Plein Air Competition is from September 6-13 with the Opening Reception and Award Ceremony to be held on Friday, September 13, from 5-8 p.m. The famous "Quick Paint" this year, titled the "Birney Quick, Quick Paint" in honor of Plein Air Painter Birney Quick will be held on Thursday, September 12, from 3-5 p.m. The Exhibition will run from September 13 to October 6. If you are interested in donating to the event please contact the Gallery.



Ecuador II by
 Tara Lynn Austin

There will be more information regarding the event schedule (the locations for artist paint-outs, artist socials and mini-workshops for the public to enjoy). For more information on the happenings at the Gallery or to rent the Gallery please visit: johnsonheritagepost.org.

(Continued from page 1....Lives Saved and Lives Lost)



U.S. Coast Guard Station and fish houses on dock just inside the Grand Marais Harbor (Marvin Kruskopf Collection)

On Saturday, January 12, 1929, fisherman Magnus Martinson, his brother, Berger, and friend, Gus Johnson, set out from Hollow Rock about 35 miles east of Grand Marais. They were rowing two fishing skiffs and the weather was a typical January cold snap of 35 to 40 degrees below zero. A sudden gale blew up, and Magnus anchored himself to his nets as he watched his brother and friend be swept farther and farther out into the lake. By the time the wind died down, he was severely frostbitten but still managed to row to shore.

Art Eliassen, a fisherman from Hovland, alerted the *Crawford*, then gathered a crew and an outboard motor for his skiff and set out to find the two men. His crew and skiff

became coated in ice, and they nearly didn't make it back to shore. By the time the *Crawford* arrived, Captain C.T. Christianson and his crew of 17 men and six fishermen did not hold out much hope for the two lost men in the extreme cold. They searched the area Saturday, and all day Sunday and Monday. Berger Martinson and Gus Johnson were never found. The *Crawford* continued the search, even as they headed to Isle Royale to rescue Arthur Anderson, another storm victim, who was reported stranded on the island without provisions.

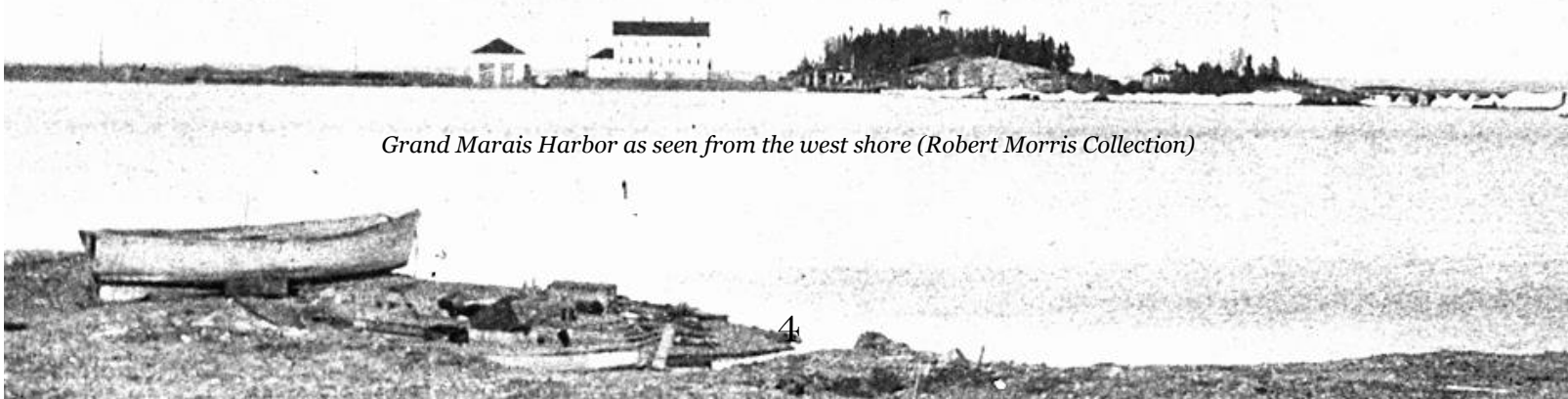
Local fisherman, Ole Kreutzer was one of the first to be rescued by the new Coast Guard Station crew. While rowing back to his home east of Grand Marais in February of 1930, he encountered a large ice jam preventing him from getting to shore. Attempts to cut through the ice were unsuccessful and a strong wind was pushing him out into the lake. People on shore called the Coast Guard who sent out the "lifeguards" in a truck towing a boat. Unsuccessful attempts were made to row out to him and "taking chances by walking on the ice." The crew finally used a shoulder gun to shoot a line out to Ole and pull him to shore.

Kreutzer was not so lucky in 1943 when he and his partner Elmer Schupp were thrown out of their skiff while checking their nets about a half mile out on the lake near Croftville. The motor continued running with the boat going in circles, but Schupp managed to grab the skiff. By the time he climbed into the skiff, Kreutzer had disappeared. Eventually, Schupp had to throw the motor overboard to keep the skiff from sinking from the extra weight. Without anything to row with, Schupp tore up a seat in the boat and used it to paddle to shore. It took over two hours to get to shore, where he alerted the Coast Guard who had been unable to see them in the high waters. They attributed Kreutzer's inability to stay afloat to the heavy rubberized boots and clothing he wore.

On November 28, 1931, a group of fourteen in two boats left Grand Portage for Isle Royale early on Thanksgiving Day, escorted by a Coast Guard cutter. On board the two boats were three fishermen, one of whom had his wife and five children, ages seven to 16 years old. They were towing a third boat with supplies. The party reached the island just as a November gale hit, with the waves coming over the sides of the boats. The cutter could not return until the winds calmed so it sheltered in a bay. Meanwhile, three cutters were sent from stations in Michigan. Concerned for the safety of the party, they searched around Isle Royale. The cutter that had escorted them returned safely to Grand Marais after a very stormy night. November was traditionally a lucrative time of year for commercial fishing and worth facing the dangers of Lake Superior storms.

On June 24, 1932, local fisherman Karl Johnson was setting nets when he broke one of his oars and did not have an extra pair. Many fishermen at the time did not own a gasoline engine and relied on rowing ability. A strong wind was rolling in from the east, and he made the decision to hang on to his anchored nets to wait out the storm. This was a common practice of fishermen to help anchor their boats and keep from being swept farther into the lake. Captain Rogers and three crewmen were out patrolling in their gas launch and saw Karl's signal. They were able to throw him a line and tow him to shore.

Grand Marais Harbor as seen from the west shore (Robert Morris Collection)



(Continued from page 4....Lives Saved and Lives Lost)



Wallace Larson, early 1940s

In February of 1933 a young fisherman, Wallace Larson, whose brother George was a member of the Coast Guard crew, was tending his nets when the wind became too strong to return to shore. He held onto a buoy until three members of the Coast Guard came to rescue him. Larson seemed to be especially unfortunate, when the next day he was skating on the ice and fell into 20 feet of water. He managed to pull himself out of the water. However, Larson lost his life ten years later in October of 1943, while fishing with John Zimmerman off Monker Point by Chippewa City. Large waves washed the men overboard, but they managed to cling to the overturned skiff for a time. Zimmerman lost his hold and was lucky to be swept into shore, while Wallace disappeared. He was 35 years old.

Small incidents would happen near Grand Marais such as when Leonard Ronning and Gordon Sandeno found themselves a half-mile out and the bearing on their gas engine burned out. Fishermen would signal the watch-person stationed in the tower on the Point near the station and hoped they would be seen.

Changing winds would blow in ice floes and block the fishermen from returning to shore.

"The fishermen of Croftville wish to thank Captain Rogers and his crew of the Coast Guard for coming to their shore to help break ice on Tuesday, and also for coming to help in rescuing Joe Croft from the lake."

-March 1933,

Cook County News-Herald.



Coast Guard rescue, flooding in downtown Grand Marais, 1938

Many of the successful rescues probably went unreported in the papers, since the Coast Guard routinely assisted fishermen who were in distress and it was not noteworthy for the paper. Captain George Hill stated at a 20th Anniversary event in 1949, when he estimated over 60 persons had been saved since the opening of the Station, "the number of deaths have been greatly reduced due to the presence of the Coast Guard station."

Over the years, the Coast Guard in Grand Marais has had a great impact on the town. Coast Guard crews have assisted other government agencies in many local emergencies. In the early years, they were always called out to fight fires in Grand Marais and even the Maple Hill area. The crewman in the watchtower was the first to signal the alarm when the Sjoberg's Restaurant caught fire in December, 1934, and the crew helped to stop the spread of the fire to other buildings. Over the years, they have assisted in accidental drownings along the rivers that flow into Lake Superior; and crewmen have provided security and assistance at public events, such as the Fisherman's Picnic boat parade, Dragon Boat Festival, canoe races, and snowmobile water-skipping in the harbor.

The daily operations and events of the Coast Guard are in the logbooks, but the location of those early logbooks remain a mystery. -article by Dorie Carlson

After learning that the Coast Guard is interested in identifying a new residential facility in Grand Marais, the Cook County Historical Society has been exploring the possibility of using the station as a site to share the rich maritime history of our area. Since the city of Grand Marais may be a leader in the potential acquisition, we have also met with them to discuss their needs and interests related to public spaces. The Grand Marais lighthouse lens, the Hammer family collection and the contents of the Scott Fish House are among our important collections that would be appropriate for display at the historic U.S. Coast Guard station!

THE TARALDSON COLLECTION: FUR TRADE TREASURES



Superior National Forest Archaeologist Lee Johnson giving a presentation on the Taraldson Collection to a full house at the JHP

A remarkable archaeological collection was recently gifted to the Cook County Historical Society. Consisting of approximately 880 historic and prehistoric artifacts from the Border Lakes region of Minnesota and Ontario, the collection had been in possession of Robert Taraldson until his death in 2018 at the age of 90. Taraldson lived in Minneapolis but also had a cabin near Hovland. A bachelor, he spent many years of his life exploring the Border Lakes region, and had collected the artifacts primarily during the 1960s and 1970s.

In the opinion of Lee Johnson, Superior National Forest Archaeologist, the Taraldson Collection is “one of the largest and best preserved private artifact collections from the Quetico-Superior region.” The majority of the artifacts relate to the fur trade era (ca. 1720-1860), with a small number believed to be pre-1700s. The collection was gathered from many locations along the “Voyageur’s Highway” between Grand Portage and the Rainy River, with some sites previously unconfirmed as fur trade posts.

Since arriving in Grand Marais, the Taraldson Collection has been sorted and secured in archival quality bags at the Gunflint Ranger District office. Many artifacts have a clear record of provenience (which refers to the location where an item was found), and continue to add to knowledge of the fur trade in the Border Lakes area.



A portion of Taraldson Collection artifacts



Fur trade axe expert David Peterson taking measurements with Carrie Johnson

The collection is notable also for its diversity and state of preservation. Many items have “maker’s marks” which aid in identification relating to manufacturers. Table-ware, knives and axes are examples of ferrous (iron) items that came from Sheffield and Birmingham, England, during the 18th and 19th centuries. Other artifacts include rings, brass buttons, forks, spears, nails, files, and building hardware such as window pintels and door latches.

Recently a Duluth-based expert on fur trade axe heads, David Peterson, traveled to Grand Marais to look at the collection. He examined four axe heads: Two were most likely American-made during the first half of the 19th century, one was hand forged of wrought iron from Spain’s Bay of Biscay during the 1600s, and one was made in the Netherlands (Holland) between 1700-1760.

The Taraldson Collection is a remarkable assemblage of primarily fur trade artifacts. However, it should be noted that removal of items of historical significance from federal, tribal and provincial lands is a violation of laws protecting these archaeological resources. The Historical Society is currently working with the Superior National Forest and others to complete a formal analysis of the collection, consider long-term curation needs, and develop a plan for public interpretation and display.

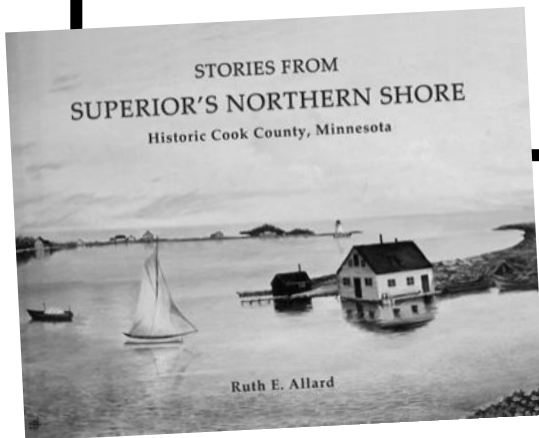
GET YOUR OVERLOOK NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL!

Please consider having your quarterly newsletter delivered via email. When you choose this option, you save the time, money, and resources involved in the production of a paper version. Email Bob@cookcountyhistory.org to request a digital version. Of course, if you prefer a hard copy delivered to your door, we understand, and will happily keep sending it your way.

PLEIN AIR AT JHP—A COOK COUNTY TRADITION

Plein Air Grand Marais will be hosted at the JHP Art Gallery for its 16th year, keeping a tradition alive that goes back to the earliest days of the Grand Marais Art Colony, and perhaps even further back to the days when Anna Johnson was painting her beautiful surroundings. Historic Cook County continues to build its relationship with the Outdoor Painters of Minnesota—a nonprofit group whose members enjoy creating art in the great wide open!

With your Historic Cook County membership you are invited to a **SNEAK PREVIEW** of the exhibition opening night one hour early! Arrive **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, at 4 p.m** for a chance to be the first to purchase one of these freshly painted scenes of our beautiful county.



NEW STORYBOOK AND HISTORIC PHOTO PRINTS

The JHP and Museum both have gift shops where you will find new items for sale this summer...or visit our website.

Ruth Allard has written a lovely tale featuring historic people and places of Cook County. She uses each of our five historic sites as the setting and inspiration for each chapter. Historic photographs and art history are also on display in this work including a painting by Anna C. Johnson on the cover.

Maude “Molly” Small Toftey was a teacher who arrived in Grand Marais in the early 1900s. Her glass plate negative collection is one of the greatest treasures among our collections! Prints and greeting cards will be sold in the Museum and JHP gift shops and online.



BECOME A MEMBER OF HISTORIC COOK COUNTY

One membership supporting all of our sites: the History Museum, Bally Blacksmith Shop, Chippewa City Church, Johnson Heritage Post, and the replica fish house with *Neegee*

Benefit from your annual membership!

- \$20 Individual** Quarterly newsletter the “Overlook” delivered to your mailbox or inbox and 10% off one gift shop purchase.
- \$30 Family** Three digital photo reproductions.
- \$50 Friend** Half hour sneak peek prior to all openings at the Johnson Heritage Post.
- \$100 Patron** 20% off a gift shop purchase.
- \$200 Business** Your business or organization mentioned in our newsletter.
- \$300 Advocate** One free four-hour rental at the Johnson Heritage Post.
- \$1000 Lifetime** Name on permanent display and the book *Pioneers in the Wilderness*.

All Membership level benefits include the benefits of preceding levels.

**CLIP AND RETURN THIS FORM ALONG WITH A CHECK TO:
COOK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PO BOX 1293, GRAND MARAIS, MN 55604**

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Address: _____

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Please send my *Overlook* newsletter by email

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Lifetime	\$1000	___
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COOK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 1293

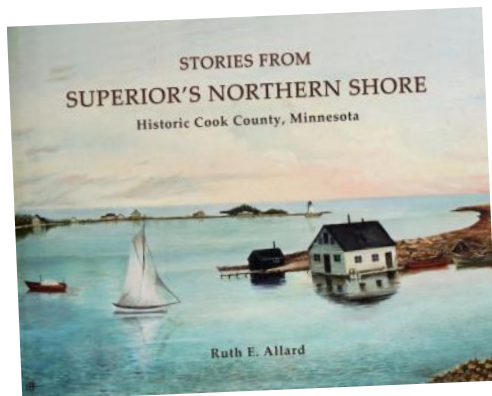
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Summer Events

(see also JHP Exhibit Openings on page 3)



NEW BOOK FOR SALE!
Read more on page 7

***Hovland: The Unintentional Settlement* by Dan Helmersen**
Saturday, June 15 - 4:00 p.m. -- Johnson Heritage Post Art Gallery

Annual Planked Trout Dinner
Friday, July 12 - 5:30 -- RV Park Recreation Hall

Stories of Superior's Northern Shore
book release presentation by author Ruth Allard
Saturday, July 20 - 4:00 p.m. -- Chippewa City Church

Bally Blacksmith Shop Demonstrations
Friday & Saturday, August 2 & 3, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Memories of Growing Up & Vacationing in Cook County
Thursday, August 1 at 4 p.m. -- Johnson Heritage Post Art Gallery

HISTORY MUSEUM SUMMER HOURS

Tuesday - Saturday
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Research by Appointment

JOHNSON HERITAGE POST ART GALLERY SUMMER HOURS

Monday & Wednesday - Saturday -- 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Sunday 1 to 4 p.m. -- Closed Tuesdays & between exhibits

Summer hours start June 10