WCHM Receives Ojibwe Birchbark

The Wisconsin Canoe Heritage Museum (WCHM) in Spooner (WI) has received the donation of a 75+ year old birchbark canoe from Rochelle Lamm. According to Lamm “The canoe was constructed by one or a group of Ojibwe Indians from the Grassy Narrows Indian Reservation located on the English Wabigoon River System in Ontario Canada. The canoe was given as an expression of appreciation to my parents Barney & Marion Lamm, who built and operated the largest fly-in hunting and fishing resort in Canada for over 25 years.” The canoe hung in the main lodge of Barney’s Ball Lake Lodge until 1975, and has since been stored by Lamm in Appleton (WI) and subsequently Milwaukee where she has lived and worked. “Our family was very close to the Ojibwe Indians, who were the mainstay of our guiding staff for over 25 years. My father was singled out and inducted as an honorary chief of the Ojibwe (Chief Thunderbird Continuous Day), an honor shared only with President Calvin Coolidge.”

WCHM received the birchbark canoe on September 29th, and welcomed it to the museum exhibit hall when it arrived the next day during an informal ceremony occurring in conjunction with the last open day of the season and the drawing of the annual canoe raffle winner. There was no information available at press time about any plans as to when or how they might be displayed.

WCHM To Receive Jensen Designed & Built Cedar Strip Racing Canoes

“Gene Jensen, premier canoe designer, bentshaft canoe paddle designer, winner of four International Classique marathons, and several USCA men’s masters championships, leaves a rich legacy of creativity, imagination, inspiration, and joy for countless canoe paddlers everywhere.” Such was the legacy of Gene Jensen, who passed away in 2004, as described by his friend Dick Ulbrich.

The Wisconsin Canoe Heritage Museum (WCHM) in Spooner (WI) has made arrangements to acquire three of Jensen’s last cedar strip racing canoes from his shop in Inverness, Florida. Each canoe was designed and constructed by Jensen in the late 1990’s. They include an 18’6” C-1, a 21’ painted ICF, and an 18’6” V-1 Pro Boat. WCHM expects to receive the canoes sometime in late 2017. There was no information available at press time about plans as to when or how they might be displayed.
2017 Regional Canoe Assembly A Wash?

The 2017 Upper Great Lakes Regional Canoe Assembly was held on August 25-27. The main activities took place on Saturday in Memorial Park & Campground on the shores of Shell Lake in Shell Lake, Wisconsin. Unfortunately, high winds, steady rain, and cold temperatures forced many of the planned activities to be canceled and others to be moved indoors. “The wind and waves on the lake were such that we could not hold any on-the-water activities that we had planned,” explained Jed Malischke, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Canoe Heritage Museum (WCHM), which was hosting the event. “We moved as many activities as possible into the park shelter building, and the assembly of wooden canoes itself had to be packed into the lee side of the building to keep out of the wind.” Needless to say attendance was lite, few campers stayed through the night, and there were many no-shows.

Overall, however, the event was considered to be successful. There were other, well attended activities in a variety of locations during the two days preceding the assembly, including several paddle trips, two tours of area facilities, and an evening presentation on wild ricing. And Saturday was one of the busiest days of the year for the museum exhibit hall, as assembly visitors choose to visit during the poor weather.

Financially, the event turned out OK for the museum as well. Many exhibitors had registered in advance for their booth spaces, folks on paddle trips and tours made donations and purchased assembly shirts in advance, and those who did attend Saturday or visited the museum bought raffle tickets and merchandise. “We collected enough to cover our costs of going into the event,” says Malischke, “so for the museum I guess it was pretty much a wash.”

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News Briefs & Upcoming Events

Dave O’Malley Wins 2017 Canoe Raffle

Dave O’Malley from Waunakee (WI) is the lucky winner of the 2017 WCHM canoe raffle. His winning ticket, which he purchased in Madison at Canoecopia, was drawn by WCHM Secretary Debbie Koehn during a ceremony at the museum on Saturday September 30th at 4:00 PM. It was the last regular season open day for the museum, and the ceremony was held during a small party celebrating the conclusion of the season as well as the arrival of a new Ojibwe birchbark canoe that was recently donated to the museum.

Look For The WCHM Booth At Canoecopia 2018

The WCHM traveling promotional booth will be attending Canoecopia at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison WI (1919 Alliant Energy Way) on March 9-11, 2018. Canoecopia is the world’s largest canoe, kayak, and standup paddle expo. There is no other venue that has this breadth and depth of outdoor knowledge in one spot for three days. We expect to have our new 2018 raffle canoe on display there, among other items, and it’s a great place to renew your WCHM membership, pick up some souvenir WCHM merchandise, and get that first raffle ticket of the year.

Canoe Shop Getting Busy For Winter

The WCHM canoe shop is starting to buzz with activity this fall, and a busy winter is anticipated. Ron Carlson of Spooner (pictured far left) has an ongoing restoration he is working on. Ken Jones of Webster, Mike Johnson of Spooner, and Bob Jankowski of Eau Claire all have new projects in the works. Jankowski is starting the restoration of a 1946 OldTown Yankee. If you are interested in using the WCHM canoe shop for your project, contact WCHM Shop Chair Jamie Dunn at 715-931-0034 to get started. You can also request a copy of the “Shop Project Intiation Documents” from WCHM Executive Director Jed Malischke at info@wisconsincanoeheritagemuseum.org.

Volunteers Needed

WCHM is looking for new volunteers to join the “Keymasters” for 2018. The Keymasters are the folks that dedicate three or four hours every couple of weeks during the summer to open the museum exhibit hall to visitors. Volunteers are also needed to join the Opening Day Committee to help organize and execute Wisconsin Canoe Heritage Day on May 26, 2018. Call or write if interested to 715-635-2479 or info@wisconsincanoeheritagemuseum.org.

Meet WCHM Board Member Jim Czajkowski

Jim Czajkowski resides with his wife, Joyce, in the Town of Wauzeka, Crawford County, Wisconsin where they have lived for the last 40 years. He is retired from the position of Crawford County Circuit Judge since August of 2016. Prior to that, Jim practiced law in Prairie Du Chien for 35 years and served for 4 years in the US Air Force as a Judge Advocate. During his years on the bench and as a practicing attorney he served on the Wisconsin Bar District VII ethics committee and on the Judicial Juvenile Jury Instructions Committee. Jim has also served with multiple organizations, including the Crawford County Bar Association, the PDC Rotary Club, and the Mississippi Valley Conservancy, a land trust centered in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Jim has agreed to serve the WCHM as chair of the new endowment fund stewardship committee.
WCHM Establishes Endowment Fund

The Board of Directors of the Wisconsin Canoe Heritage Museum (WCHM) has approved a resolution to establish an endowment fund for the museum. Called the WCHM Perpetuity Endowment Fund, the purpose of the fund is “…to ensure the WCHM’s financial stability and continued operations over the long term…” According to WCHM President Rich Taylor, “The board is being proactive and taking steps now to insure that the museum will survive and still be here ten, twenty, even fifty or more years from now.”

A financial endowment fund is created with donations of money or property to a nonprofit organization for ongoing support of the organization. It is structured so that the principal amount (the donated monies) is kept intact and invested, and only the investment income is available for use by the institution. This allows the donors contributions to the fund to have a lasting impact over a longer period of time than if it were spent all at once.

An initial fundraising goal of $30,000 has been set to establish the WCHM fund. This is the minimum amount needed to place the management of the fund with a foundation such as the Wisconsin Historical Foundation (WHF), which has a program for administering endowment funds for museums. The managing foundation invests the capital along with that of other endowments, enabling higher yields to be realized, and releases a steady annual stream of funds for use by the endowment organization, even while the principal of the fund continues to grow in size.

“We’ll be putting together a fundraising campaign yet this year,” says WCHM Executive Director Jed Malischke, “And hope to raise that initial $30,000 so we can establish the fund in 2018. A longer term goal, say over 10 or 15 years, would be on the order of $150,000, which would generate significant annual revenue that could make the difference in a lean year between keeping the doors open or having to shut down. Adding the endowment fund to your estate planning is a great way to help us reach that long term goal.”

Donations to the fund can be made in cash, securities, or any marketable items of value (such as a canoe that can be sold). They can be sent to WCHM Endowment, PO Box 356, Spooner WI 54801. Donations can also be made online at www.WisconsinCanoeHeritageMuseum.org. For more information about making donations or adding the fund to your estate plan, contact WCHM at info@wisconsincanoeheritagemuseum.org or 715-635-2479.

Get Ready For 2018 Heritage Day Canoe & Wooden Boat Show

It’s not too soon to start planning for the 8th annual Canoe & Wooden Boat Show, to be held in conjunction with Wisconsin Canoe Heritage Day on May 26, 2018 (the Saturday of Memorial Day Weekend). This one day free event will also include museum tours and open house, the unveiling of new displays, ongoing activities in the workshop, and live music and food and beverage in the beer garden.

Now is the time to make plans to be an exhibitor and display your canoe, wooden boat, or other canoe related items of interest. Exhibitors can include individuals, commercial entities, non-profits, authors, government agencies, educators, crafters, and businesses whose products or services are relevant to boaters and wooden boats and canoes. Booth space is free, and reserving a space is easy. You can download a booth reservation form from the WCHM website at www.WisconsinCanoeHeritageMuseum.org, or request one vy contacting WCHM at info@wisconsincanoeheritagemuseum.org or 715-635-2479.

Contact WCHM
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