

Ishpeming

Area
Historical
Society &
Museum

WINTER 2019

Edited by
Karen Kasper

Cemetery Tour

Over 80 people went on the cemetery tour this summer and learned about prominent citizens from earlier times. The outdoor tour period has ended, but indoor presentations can happen at anytime during the winter. If your group would be interested in hearing about some of the people featured in the tour, please contact the Historical Society via the Facebook page.

Next summer's tour is already being researched, so watch for further details. It will be presented during July and August this year.

Winter Schedule

The museum is closed November through March, although we will open upon request. In April and May, we will be open on Mondays only, from 10-4.

Volunteers needed

As a non-profit organization, we rely on volunteers to keep our museum open and our board fully staffed and more. We can always use museum volunteers. While we had enough volunteers to keep the museum open this summer, if someone could not make their assigned session, we usually had to close. More volunteers mean we can rotate the responsibility and maybe even have a couple of people to fill in.

We are looking for a secretary for our board. Its not a time consuming job, but requires attendance at our meetings, taking and writing the minutes and putting the agenda together.

In addition, we are looking for people who would be interested in working on our yearly Historic Places and Interesting Spaces tour. This job would include finding homeowners willing to have their houses on the tour, publicizing the tour, distributing flyers and more.

Become a Member

For just \$10 a year, you can become a member of the Historical Society and help support our mission of preserving the history of Ishpeming. Remember that your membership is good for one year and must be renewed every year. If it has been several years since you've paid for your membership, consider renewing today.

Ishpeming Area Historical Society Board

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Ishpeming and the Spanish Flu

Ishpeming wasn't the first UP town to deal with an outbreak of the Spanish flu in the fall of 1918, nor was it hit the hardest. But there were deaths and other consequences because of it.

By September of 1918, the flu had found its way to the east coast and also the military camps scattered around the nation. Indeed, the trenches of France, holds of the ships steaming their way across the Atlantic and the crowded barracks of the army cantonments were ideal breeding grounds for the epidemic. Large numbers of people living in close proximity to one another meant the flu spread fast in those areas.

The first residents of Ishpeming to succumb to the flu were not residing in Ishpeming. Cecil Fowler, a 1916 graduate of Ishpeming High School and stationed at a military training camp on the east coast was stricken in September and died from a combination of pneumonia and the flu.

Gordon Jaedecke, who was in Ann Arbor as part of the Student Army Training Corps also died from the flu in mid October.

In late October of 1918, the mayor and the city health officer, Dr. G.G. Barnett took the precaution of closing "schools, churches, movies and all other places where people have been in the habit of collecting in large numbers." The article published in the October 19th issue of the Iron Ore proclaimed "While Ishpeming does not have a single case ..."

That same October 19th issue featured the obituary of David Anderson, 33. That article specifically stated, "It was reported that he had influenza, but this is not true." However, the following week the obituary of David's sister, Anna appeared, and stated. "Her brother David died of the same disease (influenza) a week previously." Her obituary goes on to state that she contracted the disease while nursing her brother.

However, the Mining Journal reported events in a slightly different fashion. An article in the October 15th issue stated that "The Spanish influenza scare has reached Ishpeming, as a result of the death of David Anderson, a well known young man, which occurred yesterday morning after three days illness." Also closed in the proclamation were dance halls, the Y.M.C.A., city library, and also forbid the meetings of all fraternal organizations.

The state began requiring weekly reporting of the number of cases of both influenza and pneumonia

On the 26th, a new order came from the mayor, closing all the billiard and pool rooms. The article further stated "barbers and dentists, bank cashiers and many others are wearing masks as a preventative." The old hospital was put in readiness to receive any flu victims and vaccine had been ordered.

A second article detailed precautions. At that time, there were 10 cases of the flu in town, all mild. "In the case of David Anderson he had been very sick with a severe cold for a couple of weeks before he was taken with influenza and did not give himself the care he should."

Many governments across the country, both local and state, instituted bans in an effort to curb the spread of the flu. As a result, the entertainment industry was especially hard hit. Live entertainment, which was still hugely popular in those days, suffered. According to a Mining Journal article from October 31, 1918, "Many of the road shows were laid off just where they were when the ban was placed on theaters, and they are still waiting for orders to resume. In most instances the owners of the shows are paying the board and an average

of 50 percent of the salaries of their people.”

For the government, the loss of the ticket tax revenue was difficult. “The motion picture and trade journals say that the revenue from the ticket tax greatly exceeds \$1,000,000 a week, and the closing of the theaters for a period of even a few weeks is going to eliminate, in many instances, all chance of getting an excess profit tax from individuals and corporations operating theaters.” (Mining Journal, October 31, 1918)

Locally, Ed Butler, owner of both the Ishpeming Theater and the Butler Theater, put the downtime to good use by giving both establishments a through cleaning and general sprucing up.

The ban was very unpopular. Many comments were made about the fact that retail establishments and restaurants were allowed to remain open and were crowded. Pastors complained that any funerals during the ban were held in private homes, which also got crowded.

By the beginning of November, Governor Sleeper had raised the ban on amusements, churches and schools, although the Ishpeming officials decided to keep it for awhile longer.

There were specific instructions though: “The mayor wishes the people to not crowd in the seats, but to scatter about the church as much as possible that there may be the least possible danger from communicating the disease.” (Iron Ore, November 16, 1918)

In Ishpeming, the schools did not open until after New Year’s Day. Teachers and students alike were glad to get back and teachers had special instructions to report any child who appeared ill. School would go until July 25th of the following year to make up for the long absence. Saturdays were also turned into school days , although just a half day.

All in all, Ishpeming did not fair too badly during the epidemic. While some people did die, the death toll could have been much higher. Whether the lower toll was due to the precautions, or other circumstances isn’t known.

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100 Years Ago

From the Iron Ore, November 16, 1918

We Celebrated the Signatures

While the news that the Germans had signed an armistice was received here at 2:30 Monday morning, the town was not advised until four. The mayor, who had sat up late the night before, expecting to receive the news, went home about midnight and it was deemed discourteous to rouse him too early, so it was four when the fire bell rang out a wild signal to let the people here know that peace had been declared. Immediately the bell sounded the glad news the whole noise producing equipment of the town broke loose, it all having been oiled up in expectation. The whistles at all the mines gave tongue and soon the air was vibrant with the clamor. The locomotive bells and whistles were on tap from the beginning as were the church bells.

The entire town, almost to a man—which includes the women and the children—were up at the first peal of the bell. Hastily getting into their clothes they poured into the streets and to the business portion of the city cheering and producing noise on various kinds of devices manufactured for their noise making qualities. Some went home for breakfast, others did not. There were parades in the morning, everyone joining, and the whole while the whistles continued to blow, and the bells to ring. Boys who wanted to could ring the fire bell and a waiting line was at the door of the building all day to take turns in this exciting pastime. It was the mecca to which all the youngsters turned. Many of them had always had a hankering to ring the bell and today they could do it to the extent of their strength.

Soon after one in the afternoon there was the big parade in which nearly all the fraternal and benevolent societies on town took part. There was the fire department too. The Elks carried Old Glory, horizontally and invited the wealthy to throw in nickels for smokes for the boys. Seven hundred and sixty were contributed.

There were all kinds of motor driven vehicles, pleasure cars, motor trucks, tractors, etc. On the trucks were beautiful girls waving flags and giving expression to their feelings through the medium of tin horns, clappers, bells and various other sounding devices. There were thousands of small boys. There were long strings of old wash boilers, tin cans and corrugated iron sheets clattering behind automobiles. There were two brass bands and numerous fife and drum corps. The parade was ore than a mile in length and finally ran into itself so largely was it multiplied from the time of its start.

At the Nelson House Mayor Shaddick spoke briefly of the occasion and the great joy it brought. The Community Chorus san. Miss Merle Trembath played the accompaniment on the piano. The Star Spangled Banner and the national anthem were give. Several clergymen offered thanks for the victory for humanity. The brass bands played and the people cheered. And immediately after the meeting adjourned the whistles and the bells and the horns took up their business of splitting the air. A half dozen locomotives that collected at the Main street crossing did their level best in trying to drown out everything else and they succeeded to a large degree.

After the people had taken a bite they were out on the street to finish the day and when

they stepped out from their homes the bells and the whistles were still filling the air with sounds. The bands came out on the street and one from Marquette lent variety to the home organizations, being fine, snappy and cheerful and full of glee. There was dancing on the asphalted highways and there was laughter and song and shouts of joyous kind, and when the Kaiser had been paraded through the streets, he was driven to the city square, along the side of Ishpeming, the Indian chieftain, who looked upon him with scorn, the original Americans having no use for him. Thousands were gathered about the square. The Kaiser was wonderfully well made up, there being a decided resemblance to the original who was quaking somewhere in Holland. His interior was manufactured with waste soaked in oil, he wore a tin helmet and he had a pronounce beak after the manner of his caricatures. He was firmly laced to an iron post, the whole mounted on a steel-bodied garbage wagon, a fitting throne for such a ruler. Thomas Clancey then delivered a funeral sermon, in which he briefly related that, contrary to the news given out the Kaiser was not in Holland but in Ishpeming and that fit punishment was to be meted out to him, it having been decided to burn him, although many in the crowd said that was too good a fate for him. Finally when the speaker declared the former emperor of Germany would hereafter be known as Billy, the damned, the torch was applied and the figure was quickly illuminated. The Ishpeming firemen had done a good piece of work and the Kaiser burned long and fiercely. Precautions had been taken to provide a chemical engine in case the heat became threatening to surrounding property, but it was not used. The fire lit up the place brilliantly. Men were stationed on adjoining roofs to put out the sparks that fell thickly. The effigy burned for about twenty minutes and finally collapsed into a mound of charred embers and the crowd yelled itself hoarse. The Kaiser had been reduced thoroughly.

Then the people resumed their singing and dancing and jollified until about midnight when the whistles and bells ceased their clamor and all went home thoroughly satisfied that they had enjoyed the greatest celebration of their lives. Many people came from outside places to help, and many from Ishpeming repaid the call by going to Marquette, Negaunee, Republic and Michigamme, all of which places indulged in visible expressions of their great joy.

The little warming up practice of the previous Thursday was a lubricant that made the Monday show the more brilliant in comparison.

It was a day all will remember who participated. Figured on the same volume per man per day the big cities must have been wonderful. In Ishpeming no one was hurt, which was wonderful in sight of the many things performed and attempted. There was considerable wild driving of cars but all drivers were liquor free, there were no collisions.

Michigamme, Republic and Champion did put on credible shows and sounded everything that could agitate the air.

It was an occasion for rejoicing and everyone made the most of it.

Rah for the old flag.



Important People in Ishpeming's history (You've probably never heard of)

Gilbert D. Johnson

Gilbert D. Johnson was born on July 2, 1819 in Enfield N.H. At 19 years of age, he moved to Kingston, N.Y. where he mined hydraulic cement rock. He moved to Sandusky, Ohio in 1853 and continued to mine cement rock. While he was in Sandusky, he was hired by the Lake Superior Iron Company to take charge of the Lake Superior Mine, located in what was then called the Lake Superior Location.

He moved to the Upper Peninsula in 1857 and was there when the first earth was removed from the old open pit. This waste material was dumped into the nearby swamps and became the foundation for some of the land platted by Robert Nelson 12 years later.

His first crew consisted of 6 men and they also had to erect the first building in Ishpeming, a boarding house. While living in the boarding house, Johnson saw wolves walking around the loose lumber during a moonlit night. The output for 1857 was a total of 300–500 tons of ore, sent to Marquette in the fall after the plank road was completed.

In 1860 the first store was opened and in 1863, the name was changed to Ishpeming and a post office was opened with Johnson as Ishpeming's first post master. The post office was located in the store and according to history books, the quarterly revenues for the first year amounted to \$10, which Johnson used to pay an expert to have his reports made out correctly,

In 1869, Ishpeming was incorporated as a village with Johnson acting as President. The first town election was held in the fall and James McLeon was elected the first Justice of the Peace and a Mr. Ryan was elected as the Town Marshall.

In 1875, Johnson left the company and headed to Utah where he mined for silver. In 1882 he moved to Colorado, but the high altitude affected his health. He moved to his daughter's home in Chicago and passed away on June 26, 1893 while visiting Cripple Creek.

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Ishpeming Area Historical Society

The Ishpeming Area Historical Society is a 501(c)3 Michigan Non-Profit Organization
Our mission is to promote and encourage a better appreciation for and a sustained interest
in the history of the Ishpeming area. Your membership allows us to carry out this mission.

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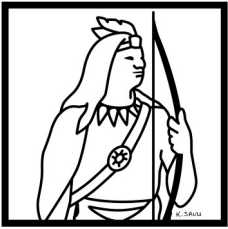
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The Spring 2018 newsletter is sponsored in part by Globe Printing.

This gorgeous ad was taken from a September 1888 issue of the Iron Ore and was drawn by Will Bradley who worked at the Iron Ore during that time, when he was still a teenager. He went on to become a famous illustrator.

