

Keweenaw Heritage Center — Opening Doors to Our Heritage Forward and Backward; Onward and Upward



2026 is on the horizon — another landmark year for Keweenaw Heritage Center. Its 125-year life span separates into three segments. Beginning in 1901, the building was a church, well cared for by a primarily French-Canadian parish. In 1966, the building was deconsecrated. A 28-year period of abuse and neglect as a junk shop and the setting for a horror movie brought a state of ruin and nearly destruction. By 1994, it required inspiration and

devotion of a community of volunteers even to keep it standing.

Rescuing a building that covers the block from Temple to Scott Streets is no small challenge. The first challenge was to rid the building of its inhabitants — pigeons and small animals that had entered through broken windows and cracks in the walls. Removal of tons of junk came next. Then came a very long series of crisis after crisis.

Logically, the first step in rescue would have been to replace a roof that had lasted since 1928. But a swaying steeple, sandstone falling onto 5th Street, lack of electricity, heat, and water, broken stained glass windows, dirt floors or floors that threatened collapse all demanded *immediate* attention. Leaks that appeared from gaps in the sandstone, from the back of the building, and from places in the roof caused continued damage and had to be addressed. Raising money for remediation meant appealing for grants and donations again and again.

The second challenge in rescuing the building was to give it function. Successful function meant the building would be used so that it could generate enough money to meet ordinary expenses. Making the building safe and attractive to visitors and renters required time and additional efforts. Although there still are residents who say they didn't know this is a great place for celebrations or have never been to an exhibit or performance, rentals and admissions now pay for a significant portion of utilities and monthly expenses.



But the nearly 100 year-old asbestos shingled roof, which we hope will be our last major project, has now reached crisis stage. Planning for replacement has gone on for three years, incorporating an engineering study, some cost estimates, and fund-raising.

Events early last summer showed how urgent replacement is and what damage and additional cost there will be from postponement.



***Water from roof leak
trickles down window frame***

***A closer look at the
hole caused by the leak***

Traditional Summer Activities That Move Us Forward

Kathleen Alatalo-Arten provides a recap of Summer Activities

Keweenaw Heritage Center enjoyed a busy summer season, with celebrations, music, an antique car show and, most importantly, visitors. T. J. Baron, an MTU student and history buff, staffed open hours, conducting daily tours and entertaining visitors with stories about the building, exhibits, and area history. With warmer weather, Baron was available to keep the KHC open into September.



Jan List and Kathleen Arten played Pipe Organ Matinees through the summer. Visitors enjoyed informal recitals and visits to the historic pipe organ. Matinees started over a decade ago, when the organ was welcomed to the loft. This 1892 Barckhoff instrument was originally located in the Carmel Lutheran (Swedish) church down the street. It made a good replacement for the original instrument, which had been sold after St. Anne's was deconsecrated and subsequently abandoned. Special visitors included the Simonson family, donors of the instrument. At least one organist claims to have been visited by the spirit of Pastor John Simonson.

(A few pipes are still available for dedication!)

The long tradition of Musical Mondays was presented by both familiar and new names. In July, concerts were given in the Bob Langseth Sandstone Hall by the well-known trio of Gail English, Mike Irish and Scott Veenstra, and by Cathy Isaacson and the Back Roads Boys.



August concerts were held on the KHC's main floor. The Copper Country Community Band, reconstituted under the co-direction of Amy Johnson and Micah Erickson, opened the August series. These two teachers foster a love of music in elementary and high school students (at Dollar Bay and Lake Linden, respectively). Anne Linja delighted the audience with an eclectic program, including jazz, boogie-woogie and classical pieces. Her modern keyboard made an interesting contrast to the historic building. Two new ensembles, in a chamber music format, rounded out the August Musical Monday menu. The Home Choir, under the direction of Susan Byykkonen, sang a beautiful collection of à cappella songs ranging from ancient Latin through spirituals, and invited audience participation. Giving the singers' voices a brief rest, Ms. Byykkonen made the elderly piano sound young again with a couple of spirituals.

Established in February, the Keweenaw Early Music Ensemble presented a program of Baroque-era pieces. Performers included Kathleen Arten, harpsichord and organ; Andrew Shaud, cello; Brian Wall and Jane Lakotas, violins.

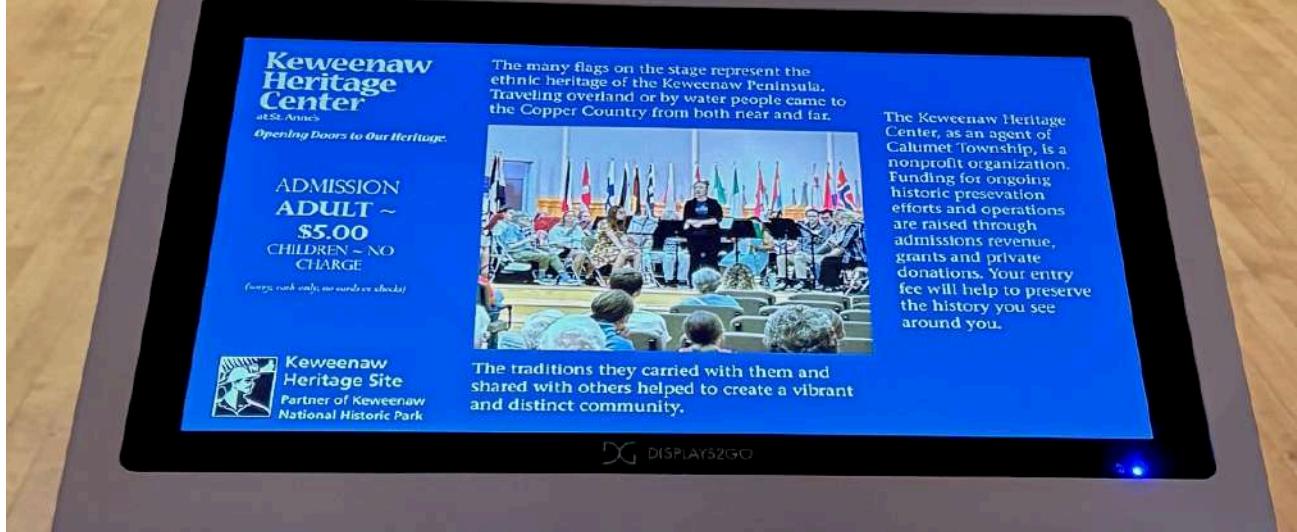


Another tradition benefiting the KHC, an antique car show was held during Pasty Fest. The KHC's location at the top of Fifth Street was a good starting point for this annual Calumet celebration. Joe Locatelli and his son Joe spend time during the year making contact with antique car owners and collecting registration fees. They have donated the winner's trophy. Krissi and Ernie Tepsa help organize spaces for the cars.



Still Moving Forward — New Things in the Summer

Jerome PatraJak and Patti Miller were busy while Jean Ellis left to travel in the spring. Jerome had pulled information and pictures from CDs that Jean had collected at events and from exhibits over the years. With support from a 2024 grant from the Keweenaw National Historical Park Advisory Commission, Jerome began the process of digitizing. He ordered five kiosks that would eventually lead to self-guided tours. The first and largest welcomes visitors as they come in the front door. The four smaller ones recap exhibits and information about the building.



But as always, there was a problem to solve.

In 2001, a gift from Mrs. Ann Locatelli had allowed repair and refurbishment of the front doors. The outsides were painted; the wood insides were stripped and stained. Twenty-four winters take their toll. The outsides were weather checked and chipped. The top of trim was extremely dirty and would not take paint. The back and side doors were in similar condition. Garrow Maintenance & Repair, LLC. agreed to take on the project.

Their description of the work — washed the front door trim, scraped chipped paint and wire-brushed raw areas; applied primer and 2 coats of paint; touched up broken paint where doors had bumped up against sandstone. Egress doors work would exceed the original estimate of \$3000 but we decided to do it anyway. This included scraping, wire brushing, reattaching loose trim boards, priming and painting, as well as painting some raw concrete on the rear door.

That work and scraping and painting wood would have added \$894.24 to the original estimate of \$3,000. Many, many thanks to Garrow Maintenance and Repair for their generous gift by waiving the difference.

And in the Fall



“**Through Quilts**”-- rounded out the season. Carole Collins is an internationally-known quilt artist. She has won awards, published in quilting magazines, and gives workshops and classes. Helped by Charlene Pearce and Karen Kezele, Carole showed multiple patterns and delighted the audience with a wide variety of styles. Some of her publications were for sale with proceeds given to KHC.

We look forward to next summer's offerings! KHC is grateful to each and every person who contributed their time and talents. Without volunteers, we would not exist.

New Classes, Continuous Rental — Welcome Encompass!



Way back in the early 1900s, St. Ann's offered grades 1-4 in the basement. Those classes were taught in French, continuing the heritage of many of the parish. This year, for the first time, KHC has a continuous renter during the week. *Encompass Wellness Studio* is offering a class to people interested in massage therapy and related procedures. This class takes place Tuesdays through Thursdays in the Bob Langseth Sandstone Hall. KHC is still available for other rentals in the evenings and on weekends.



Difficulties and Setbacks/Goals

There were many good things to celebrate. But KHC still faced a major crisis — during a spring rainstorm, water poured in, creating damage in the ceiling near the organ. Pictures you saw on page 1 show destruction in one of the window frames. Meeting this challenge requires a major effort. Ignoring it could destroy the building.

Concern for the roof has been part of the Board's agenda for a long time. In 2016, we sought recommendations for long-range actions from Michael Drewyor, PE. He suggested completing tuck pointing the whole building to prevent moisture damage. In 2021, with help from a grant from the Advisory Commission, that project was done at a cost of \$48,000. What remained was the major project of roof replacement, a long-standing concern. Efforts have included:

- Dedicating a portion of the budget toward roof study
- A drone study of the roof in 2020
- Roof repair in the front of the building in 2021
- *Raise the Roof* fund-raising efforts included a dinner and dance in 2023. Posters donated.
- Successful application for a grant for an engineering study in 2023 — matching funds
- Engineering study completed in 2024. Cost: \$15,000 from grant; \$15,000 KHC fund match
- Estimates for roof replacement ranged from \$250,000 to \$350,000
- Current dedicated funds include 2 CDS earning interest. Total Roof fund ~ \$60,00

KHC needs your help to *Raise the Roof*. Please join our efforts to complete the rescue of the building.

Making Things Happen — Donations from Supporters

Thank you for your generous gifts in support of the Keweenaw Heritage Center's efforts.

Gifts made In Honor Of

Jim Enrietti on his 90th birthday
Tricia Gokus
Deloris Langseth

Phyllis Locatelli

By

Jean Ellis
Gina Nicholas
Karl Langseth, Robert & Marjorie Nelson,
Jeppie & Faith Wilson
Gina Nicholas

Gifts Made in Memory of

Carl Adams
Joseph Desjardins
Clarice Imperati
Bob Langseth

Anita Luoma Morton, M.D.

Pam Shaughnessy

By

Tony & Phyllis Locatelli
Gregory Gardner, Patricia Tosto
Tony and & Phyllis Locatelli
Karl Langseth, Robert & Marjorie Nelson,
Jeppie & Faith Wilson
Margaret Blackann, Jean Ellis, Philip &
Ann Maxson, Loretta Morton, Michael & Karen
Newell, Carole Nowicki
Mary Ann Bammert, Tony & Phyllis Locatelli

Gifts Designated for

Exhibit development
Organ
Stained glass

By

Ann Kemppainen
Ann Kemppainen, Lois Siler, Jean Stauffer
Gregory Gardner

Gifts made without designation

Marvin & Ruth Bradford
Antonia Burich
Tony & Chris Clements
Michael & Janet Dudenas
Margaret Kekko
Tony & Phyllis Locatelli
Jack Marta
Jerome Patryjak
Arthur & Debbie Rathke
Philip Ruppe
Raymond & Diane Tiberg

Robert Brennan
Paul & Anita Campbell
Mike & Sylvia Cooper
Insight Eye Care (Don & Cynde Mitchell)
George & Linda Kingstrom
Mirian Lytle
Gary Olds
Michael & Phyllis Ramos
James Ruppe Foundation
Leonard & Karen Simonson
Michael & Bonnie Wolff

Gifts Designated to Raise the Roof

Mary Ann Bammert
Jean Ellis
Alison K Hoagland
Ann Kemppainen
Joseph & Carol Lizzadro
Rodney & Pat Mishica
Annette Preston
Dale & Jerri Rust
Valerie Zimdars

Marvin & Ruth Bradford
Debbie Frontiera
Donna & Richard Holmstrom
Karl Langseth
Betty McGuire
Larry & Nancy Molloy
Michael & Phyllis Ramos
Ruth Sablich

Working Behind the Scenes — The KHC Board Puts in Many Hours

Kathleen Alatalo-Arten, a Trustee since 2012, heads the Organ Committee, drawing on her background as a Musician, Piano Teacher, Organist and Accompanist. Kathleen works at Community Mental Health as Activity Center Director, Music Therapist, Case Manager, and Acute Services Specialist. She completed a Bachelor of Science in Music at Western Michigan University with concentration in music therapy. Her internship in Music Therapy was at the Sunland Training Center. She continued her education at various classes and seminars. In addition to her efforts at KHC, Kathleen volunteers as Choir Director and Altar Guild at St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church. She is a performer at and advocate for the Organists of the Keweenaw.

TJ Baron was invited to join the Board as Trustee after this summer's employment as Host for the KHC Exhibit. He combines communication skills and expertise with Microsoft Excel to add depth to the Board. TJ is majoring in Mechanical Engineering at MTU, after studying at Grand Rapids Community College for two years. He has volunteered to take over the Facebook page.

Jean Ellis has served in various capacities on the Board since 1994. KHC offices held include Secretary (appointed) and current Co-Chair. She has served on the Exhibit Committee for nearly 20 years, chairing it for the past 13 and is the Newsletter Editor. Building on degrees from MSU and U-M, Jean taught Latin, French, and English at the high school and university level. For 17 years until retiring in 2001, she worked at the Copper Country ISD as Consultant to 13 districts for Programs for Gifted and Talented. Her community experience includes initiating the CLK Nursery School, the Council for High Potential Youth, and Keweenaw Kernewek, a Cornish heritage group. At the state level, she served on the Advisory Commission that drafted statewide plans for gifted and talented. As a volunteer, Jean has been chair for 3 international Gatherings, done numerous presentations at the state and local level. Published articles, a booklet on KHC's history titled *A Return to Honor*, and one book, [BEYOND Brothels and Bars](#), add to her resumé. She continues to be involved in various community organizations and task forces.

Dave Geisler brought experience in Accounting with him when he moved from Chicago to Calumet in 2011. Degrees from Loyola University and Northwestern University gave him the background for employment as an Auditor at Arthur Andersen and for a variety of positions at International Havester/Navistar International Corporation. Dave joined the Board in December 2020 bringing knowledge from many experiences, including 6 years as President of the Village of Calumet. He has helped with applications for grants, and has served as Secretary for several terms. Dave has also served on the Village Planning Commission, the Downtown Development Authority, Main Street Calumet, and Little Brothers, Friends of the Elderly. He is an active member of St. Paul the Apostle Church.

Tricia Gokus joined the KHC Board in 2012. Her degree in Business Administration from MTU and experiences with financial matters boded well for KHC. Tricia's employment includes auditing, accounting, billing and payroll. She was the elected Laurium Village Clerk for 26 years, the appointed Village Accounts Clerk for 15 years, and Central Office Clerk for the CLK Schools for 8. Currently, she is employed as bookkeeper for Keweenaw Catholic Churches. Tricia and her family served the Laurium community as volunteers, running the Daniell Park Concert Series for 25 years. Her connection with local musical groups has helped her line up the acts for Musical Mondays each summer at KHC. She is a choir member at St. Paul the Apostle Church and has been Fall Festival Italian booth coordinator since 1995. Calumet High School's Band Parents Club has utilized her skills as Secretary over a period of 9 years and as Treasurer since 2022.

Phyllis Locatelli has been a KHC Board member since 1999. Her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from NMU qualified her to teach Physical Education, kindergarten and 3rd grade. Her tenure on the CLK School Board began in 2000 where she has been a Trustee, the Secretary, and for the past 10 years has served as its President. The many connections to organizations she has served have benefited KHC. Among those are the Band Parents, All Sports Booster Club, Laurium Centennial Celebration, All School Reunion, and St Paul the Apostle Hospitality Committee. At KHC, Phyllis has been Co-Chair of the Board from 2002 to 2005, Chair from 2006-2015, and is currently Co-Chair. She handles all rentals of the building, contacts various musical groups, and has worked with contractors for construction projects, including 2 lifts, and the newly constructed kitchen. Honors like Main Street's Rita Finch Community Service Award, The Elk's Distinguished Citizenship Award, the KHC Legacy Award, and the CHS-SHHS Distinguished Alumni Award have recognized her contributions.

Jerome Patryjak became a Board member in 2022, building on several volunteer activities at KHC. Jerome brings a broad background as an exhibition designer and graphic designer stemming from degrees in Fine Arts from Wayne State University and Southern Illinois University. His resumé states, "Working with a team of talented directors, engineers, designers, artists and craftspeople, we produced a corporate and museum exhibitions that have been installed and utilized all over the world." His work is locally represented in the *Gallery on 5th* and *Copper Country Associated Artists* in Calumet and in the *Copper Country Community Arts Center* in Hancock. During his time on the KHC Board, Jerome has proved invaluable by designing posters and working with displays and exhibits. His recent designs of the signage under the front balustrade and of the digital displays upstairs have contributed to visitor knowledge of the history of the building and fulfilled the requirements of a grant from the Keweenaw National Historical Park Advisory Commission. In addition, he is always willing to explore new options to improve conditions for visitor experience and has frequently served a docent/host at KHC.

Patricia Schmitt-Miller joined the KHC Board in 2021, bringing her 20+ years experience in the Detroit area as a teacher in various schools districts. Patti's college background included Wayne State, Eastern Michigan, Madonna and Lawrence Technological University. Along with her teaching experience downstate, she served as a Girl Scout leader and Secretary of the Michigan Chapter of the National Organization of Women. She is active as a Knitter, Spinner, Quilter, Watercolor Painter and Crafter, including Felting, Tatting and Sewer. Locally, she volunteers at the Calumet Art Center on the Exhibition Committee and as a host/docent. She is a member of the Copper Country Associated Artists and frequently serves with Jerome as a docent/host at KHC.

With deep regret, the Board accepted resignations from Leah Polzien and Marcia Primeau this past summer. Leah served as Treasurer for part of the year. Over several years, Marcia was an active committee member for 1 fund-raising dinners and always drafted husband Tom to help. KHC is grateful for all they did.

Charter Township of Calumet and Staff

Supervisor Tim Gasperich, Clerk Robin Hicks, and Treasurer Lana Hyrkas provide wonderful advice and support. We especially appreciate Tim's insight into projects and contacts and Robin's and Lana's patience and understanding with records and accounts.

You can also bet that we appreciate the Township guys who remove the trash from the back hall!

Thank you, one and all.

MEMBERSHIP AND DONATION FORM (GIFTS ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____
City, _____ ST, _____ Zip

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

GIFTS ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE

Make checks payable to **Keweenaw Heritage Center**.

\$ _____ Donation General

\$ _____ ***Raise the Roof!*** Contribution for replacement of the whole main roof

\$ _____ Adopt-a Pipe Contribution toward restoration and upkeep of the organ

\$ _____ Exhibit Fund Contribution for future exhibits highlighting our heritage.

\$ _____ Donation made *In Memory Of* or *To Honor* _____

Name and address so we can notify them of your gift

\$ _____ Donation Other

\$ _____ Membership—additional \$35.00

\$ _____ Check total

_____ Contact me to be a volunteer in the spring or summer or help in some other way. Mail to:
Keweenaw Heritage Center, 25880 Red Jacket Rd., Calumet, MI 49913

Keweenaw Heritage Center
C/o Calumet Township
25880 Red Jacket Road
Calumet, MI 49913