



Photo Courtesy of www.michigan.org

Fort Wilkins Natural History Association

P.O. Box 104
Copper Harbor, MI 49918

January 2013

Happy 2013 from the Fort Wilkins Natural History Association! We look forward to your visit this season and appreciate your continued support.

The following is a list of events and programs sponsored by the FWNHA in 2012. These annual activities provided education and enjoyment for this season's park visitors. Monies to fund the programs were raised from park store sales, pop and laundry vending machines, as well as memberships and donations.

- Memorial Day Program
- Fort Wilkins by Candlelight
- 39 Summer Evening Programs attended by 1,400+ visitors
- Battery D – 1st Michigan Light Artillery Civil War Encampment
- Fall Festival and Geocaching Event
- Housing Stipend for the Fort Wilkins Living History Program
- Local Authors Meet and Great Book Signings
- Installation of Wi-Fi Equipment – Phase II West Campground Hot Spots

In 2013 the FWNHA is proud to announce that in addition to activities listed above, the FWNHA will also develop a series of children's summer programs as well as make a contribution to an archeological study on the south side of Lake Fanny Hooe.

In closing, it is your involvement that continues to provide the activities and events that make Fort Wilkins Historic State Park a very special place. Whether you volunteer your time, renew a membership, make a donation or purchase items at the park store, **you** help Fort Wilkins Historic State Park.

Thank you for being a friend of Fort Wilkins by your continued support of the FWNHA.

FWNHA Board Members

Melvin Jones, Chairman
Thomas Baker
Miranda Davis
Barb Foley
Carol Jones

Patrick Martin
Susan Martin
Sharon Powers
Sandi Siegmeier
Dave Thomas

2013 FORT WILKINS HISTORIC STATE PARK EVENTS

Memorial Day Celebration

May 27

The Memorial Day Program will be held on the Fort Wilkins Parade Grounds. There will be a Copper Harbor School program, Memorial Day address, and the presentation of colors; refreshments will be provided. For more details contact the park at (906) 289-4215.

Battery D

July 26, 27 and 28

History comes alive at Fort Wilkins! Battery D, the 1st Michigan Light Artillery, and a Civil War era living history group returns to Fort Wilkins for its annual weekend encampment. The weekend event will be open to park visitors from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Friday and Saturday and 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM on Sunday. Battery D will interpret army life of the period, demonstrating artillery and small arms drills, period cooking and soldiers' pastimes. For more details contact the park at (906) 289-4215.

Copperman Triathlon

August 3

This event begins at 9:00am at the Lake Fanny Hooe boating access site. Participants will swim tranquil Lake Fanny Hooe, bike the rocky shores of Lake Superior and run through wilderness on shady roads. The swim is 1/2 mile (cap mandatory and provided), bike is 23 miles (helmet mandatory – not provided), and run is 5 miles. Visitors may observe all three stages of the event from Lake Fanny Hooe boating access site. Register at www.keweenawcopperman.org or phone (906) 482-8201 for more information. Sponsored by Aspirus Keweenaw Hospital. Participants must preregister. Registration is limited to 195 individuals and 50 teams. All registrations are final. No refunds. Entry Fees: Individuals: \$50.00 Teams: \$126.00. For more details contact the park at (906) 289-4215.

Geocaching 101

September 21

What is Geocaching? It is a family-friendly activity that combines technology with the outdoors; if you don't know how to Geocache, don't worry, we will teach you how! Spend the day exploring the beautiful Keweenaw Peninsula during the fall color season at our Geocaching event. The event begins at 9:00 AM in the West Barracks of the Fort. A treasure hunt for the kids will be held at 3:00 PM before the evening cookout at 4:00PM. Following the event, the evening cookout will be a bonfire with provided hot dogs and snacks. For more details contact the park at (906) 289-4215.



*From the Desk of Robert Strittmatter,
Fort Wilkins Historic State Park Supervisor....*

As I start this letter, I want to thank the Fort Wilkins Natural History Association (FVNHA) for helping to make this past year a successful one. Your support was instrumental in providing an excellent experience to our visitors.

2012 was an excellent year at Fort Wilkins. The fort saw 122,977 visitors in 2012. Total attendance was up 13.3% when compared to 2011. Camping was up 9.6% and Day use was up 15%. Your support for park events, programs, and improvements figured heavily into visitor use and enjoyment. This year 1,470 people attended 39 evening programs. This is an average attendance of 37.7 people per program. Attendance of popular Fort Wilkins Natural History Association Sponsored Events was very good as well.

- Memorial Day Program 450 visitors
- Battery D Day Use up 25% & Camping up 11%
- Fort Wilkins By Candlelight 450 visitors
- Fall Festival and Geocaching 150 participants

(Photo of Battery "D" Company doctor program)



I would also like to thank all of the individuals and groups who volunteered their time and resources to do programs. Their expertise and passion show in their programs. Their efforts help to make Fort Wilkins the special place it is. Visit <http://www.fortwilkinsnha.org> to see the complete list of 2012 programs and what's planned for 2013.

The new Married Enlisted Men's Cabin exhibits opened in July. Funding for this project was made possible through a 2011 Keweenaw Heritage Grant we received from the Keweenaw National Historic Park (KNHP) and the Advisory Commission. As part of the new exhibit the 1st cabin has been restored and now serves as an orientation exhibit.

(Photo of one of the restored cabin rooms)



Over the past year we also made it a priority to provide better service and amenities to all our visitor by addressing several accessibility issues.

- Installed accessible faucets in the old east and west toilet/shower buildings
- Installed Board counter in the Campground Office
- Installed accessible pathway and viewing area to mine pit exhibit near the park store.
- Installed accessible pathway into Fort

(Photo of accessible counter in Campground Office)



(Photo of accessible pathway to mine pit exhibit)



(Photo of accessible pathway into fort)



If you visited the fort at the end of July you may have noticed an unusually high number of workers. Sixteen teachers volunteered nearly 800 hours at Fort Wilkins Historic State Park. The Teacher Restoration Corps, (www.teacherrestorationcorps.org), donated their skills and time towards cultural stewardship projects at the fort. The volunteers worked alongside PRD staff on three cedar shingle historic privy roofs, stockade restoration, and multiple painting projects. The volunteers worked at the fort July 30 through Aug. 5.

The Teacher Restoration Corps is a non-profit service organization established in 1996 by Dave and Margaret Dobkoski of East Troy, Wisconsin. Their mission is to: “restore humankind's imprint on federal lands.” While not on federal land, the fort's Keweenaw Heritage Site partnership with Keweenaw National Historical Park satisfied the group's purpose to improve cultural resources that contribute to the nation's heritage.

(Photo of Teacher Restoration Corps working on Privy roof)



2012 was a very busy and productive year for projects at Fort Wilkins. We were able to meet many of our goals. Below you will find a list of several of the restoration/preservation projects we completed in 2012.

- Tuck Point and Paint the Powder Magazine.
- Continue Restoration on the Stockade (There are no gaps or support braces)
- Re-roof Married Enlisted Men's Cabin # 1
- Re-roof Married Enlisted Men's Cabin # 2
- Re-roof 3 historic Privies
- Paint the Guard House
- Siding restoration and painting of NE & SE Hospital Walls
- Siding Restoration and painting on East Mess Hall east wall
- Siding Restoration and Painting on West Barracks west wall
- Siding Restoration and painting on West Mess Hall west wall
- Siding Restoration and painting on West Officer Quarters south kitchen
- Siding Replacement on upper west wall of West Officer Quarters
- Siding Replacement on north wall of East Barracks
- Prepared logs for spring 2013 Married Enlisted Men's Cabin #4 Log Replacement Project.
- Chinking and painting on Bakery west wall.

(Photo of restored Powder Magazine)



We (Parks and Recreation Division & Michigan Historical Center) will be undertaking two exciting research projects in 2013. The first is a Phase I Archeological Survey for 400+ acres on the south side of Lake Fanny Hooe. This project was successfully funded through a donation from the FWNHA, a 2012 Keweenaw Heritage Grant (KNHP & Advisory Commission), and cultural stewardship funds allocated by the DNR's Park and Recreation Division. The second is a Historic Structures Report (HSR) for the Historic Range Light District. The HSR will facilitate the rehabilitation and public interpretation of the Copper Harbor Range Light Station, including the 1868 Rear Range Light and Keeper's Quarters, Barn, Front Range Light, and Rear Range Light. This project is being funded by a Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program grant administered by the State Historic Preservation Office and allocated cultural resource funds from the DNR's Parks and Recreation Division Stewardship Office. These projects will aid in the preservation and future interpretation of non-fort related cultural resources located within Fort Wilkins Historic State Park.

2013 is shaping up to be an exciting summer. Thanks to the FWNHA we will be introducing a new series of youth programs. It is our goal to engage both young people from the area and young people visiting the area. Preservation and restoration work will continue inside "Old Fort Wilkins". Two of the larger projects scheduled are the roof replacement on the west mess hall and the replacement of several logs on Married Enlisted Men's Cabin #4.

As we wrap up the completion of a successful year at Fort Wilkins Historic State Park I look forward to working together to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead. I want to take one last opportunity to thank the FWNHA for their efforts to promote the area, preserve our history, and share the Fort Wilkins story. If you have any questions or ideas, please contact me at 906-289-4215.

Robert Strittmatter, Park Supervisor
Fort Wilkins Historic State Park
Parks & Recreation Division
906-289-4215



FWNHA Membership

Please apply or renew a membership today.

Visit www.fortwilkinsnha.org

Click on the “Join” Tab Today!

Or Use our QR code below



2013 FWNHA Park Store Hours



May 23 to June 28 10:00 AM -6:00 PM
June 29 to September 1 10:00 AM -8:00 PM
Labor Day to October 13 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM