

Interpreter

A Publication of The Sugarloaf
Interpretive Center Association
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Grand Opening

The Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association was formed in 1992 when a dedicated group of people decided that Sugarloaf Cove was a special place, worthy of protection. SICA's mission states that the organization is "committed to the establishment of a public interpretive forum that includes a physical facility." In August we will celebrate the fulfillment of this dream when we host the **Grand Opening of the Sugarloaf Cove Interpretive Center...**a major milestone for this member-supported non-profit organization.

Another important piece of SICA's mission is to interpret the history and cultural heritage of the Sugarloaf site. A big part of this history involves Consolidated Papers, Inc. and the pulpwood landing that the company operated at Sugarloaf Cove from the early 1940s through the early 1970s.

Those of you who have discovered Sugarloaf Cove within the last few years might not realize that during the height of the pulpwood operation, many families lived and worked at Sugarloaf Cove. These families are now scattered throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin.

With funding from the Consolidated Papers Foundation, oral history interviews were recently completed with some of the folks who once worked at Sugarloaf Landing. In addition to taped interviews, these people generously gave SICA over 600 historic photos along with artifacts from life at Sugarloaf Cove. Johnny Walters, who currently resides in Ashland, Wisconsin, carved miniature replicas of the boom systems used by Consolidated Papers for the log rafts. These replicas have been donated to SICA and will be on display in the Interpretive Center.

Because the pulpwood landing operation is so important in the history of Sugarloaf Cove, the Grand Opening celebration will include a reunion of the folks who lived and worked at Sugarloaf Landing.

This promises to be a great celebration! Please join us for any and all of the Grand Opening activities at Sugarloaf Cove, Friday August 18 through Sunday August 20. You'll be receiving a full invitation via mail, but here is a snapshot of events:

FRIDAY, AUGUST 18:

Consolidated Papers employees reunion and storytelling, 2-5 p.m. Listen to stories of the "old days." Hike the interpretive trail with former employees and learn what they remember at each interpretive spot on the trail! Dinner at 6 p.m.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19:

The morning (10-11 a.m.) will be filled with opportunities to visit with the Consolidated folks. Then at 11 a.m. we'll have a ribbon-cutting ceremony and building dedication followed by lunch. The Annual SICA Membership meeting will take place after lunch (1-1:30 p.m.), and the afternoon will be filled with music, guided trail hikes, and more stories (1:30-4 p.m.).

SUNDAY, AUGUST 20:

Join SICA Board members and Consolidated folks on the Grampa Woo for a brunch cruise along the Lake Superior shoreline to Sugarloaf Cove! We will leave dock at 8 a.m. and return around 10 a.m.

This should be a great and fun way to open our new Sugarloaf Cove Interpretive Center! Come share stories about Sugarloaf Cove, view artifacts and materials from times past, and explore the North Shore both on land and water! We hope you will join us to celebrate SICA's accomplishments of the past 8 years and share in plans for the future!

SICA's VISION is a healthy Minnesota North Shore of Lake Superior where an informed citizenry takes personal and group responsibility to ensure that natural and ecological systems and human economic and social systems coexist in a fashion sustainable into the future.

Sugarloaf Creek

Sugarloaf Creek flows along the western property line of Sugarloaf Cove, carrying water to Lake Superior. The watershed of the stream includes much of the ridge above Sugarloaf Cove. A new residential development planned within the Sugarloaf Creek watershed will result in the construction of 15 private residences upstream from Sugarloaf Cove. Each home will be built on 5 acres (well above the county requirement of 2 acres), and each will have an individual septic system.

In order to monitor the impact of this development on Sugarloaf Creek and the quality of the water entering Lake Superior, SICA recently received a grant from the Great Lakes

Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund to conduct baseline water quality sampling on the creek.

The first round of sampling was completed on May 24, 2000, at three locations along the main creek and one location along a small branch stream. Samples were collected 1) where the creek goes under Highway 61, 2) about halfway between Highway 61 and Lake Superior, 3) near the mouth of Sugarloaf Creek at Lake Superior, and 4) where the branch stream crosses under the former roadbed.

Samples were analyzed for field temperature, total suspended solids, turbidity, nitrates, and fecal coliform. Work is underway to secure additional funding to continue a regular testing program so we can monitor any impacts on the creek as the new houses are constructed.

Leave Your Legacy at the Sugarloaf Cove Interpretive Center

The new building at Sugarloaf Cove will soon be completed! But wouldn't it be nice to have a chair to sit on or a table to eat at when you visit?

We recently ordered some great furniture for the Interpretive Center, and we would love to have your help to pay for it!

The furniture is handmade from white cedar by Rustic Furniture in Providence, Rhode Island. It will be shipped to us in late July, and we'll assemble and varnish it in time for our Grand Opening on August 18. We've ordered three picnic tables for outdoor use, and six tables with benches plus six chairs for inside the building.

You can purchase a picnic table with



attached seats for \$418.00, a farmers table with two benches for \$590.00, or a dining chair for \$120.00. All contributions will be acknowledged with a plaque on your piece of furniture. To make a special furniture contribution, contact Terri Port Wright at 218-733-9938 or tport@duluth.infi.net.



THIS MAY BE YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER!

Please take a minute to check the address label on this newsletter to find out when you last made a membership contribution to SICA. If you haven't contributed within the last year, this will be your final newsletter, as we can no longer provide newsletters without support. It costs us about \$4.50/year/member just to cover printing

and mailing costs. No contribution is too small! Any contribution you can make will allow us to continue sending you the Sugarloaf Interpreter with its exciting news about the preservation, restoration, and interpretation activities that are going on at Sugarloaf Cove. We hope to hear from you soon!

Cove

Sugarloaf Cove's beauty and the powerful draw of Lake Superior are what pull me off Highway 61 every time I am driving between Duluth and Grand Marais. For me each visit is divided between admiring Sugarloaf Cove's physical beauty, recalling some of our association's history at the Cove, and contemplating what a different experience it would be without SICA.

The product of Elmer Andersen's vision and the work of a few dedicated people, SICA was created in August 1992. In those first months the Department of Natural Resources was moving forward with plans to build a breakwater across the mouth of the cove to create a 'safe harbor.' Other proposed developments included a 105-slip marina and extensive lodging facilities.

SICA had a much different vision for Sugarloaf Cove. Instead of a marina, we proposed a facility that would nurture scientific study and education and, at Dr. Robert Heller's insistence, would help to preserve and interpret the social, economic, and cultural history of the North Shore.

SICA's first president, Dr. Heller, was a truly remarkable man whose accomplishments can barely be touched upon here. He was a lifelong educator and scientist and a former provost of UMD. He was a great admirer of the interpretive center at Devil's Tower Wyoming and thought that we could do even better by interpreting social as well as physical science.



Dr. Robert Heller

UMD Geology Dept.

In the spring of 1993 the DNR indicated that they would be willing to consider not building the breakwater if they were presented with a formal alternative management plan. The DNR also gave an impossibly short time to complete the plan. Undaunted, Dr. Heller organized, directed and inspired us to complete the plan and deliver it on schedule. I believe that this was a critical turning point. SICA demonstrated that it was an organized competent force that simply could not be ignored.

What none of us knew was that while Dr. Heller was teaching us how to successfully fight for Sugarloaf he was losing his own fight with cancer and had only a few months to live. A hike with several of us over Sugarloaf Point, gathering information and planning strategy for the management plan, was probably his last act as SICA president.

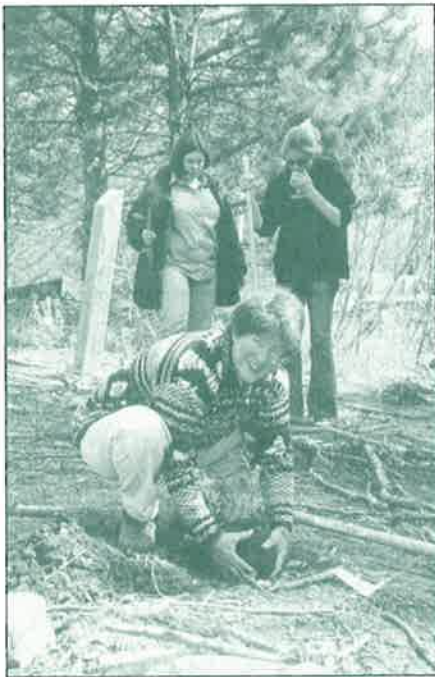
What all of this leads up to is that whenever I visit Sugarloaf Cove I am filled with joy that such a place exists and gratitude that I have known some of the people who have preserved it.

STEVE PIHLAJA

Planting Days at Sugarloaf Cove

During the week of May 14-21, volunteers from across the state joined SICA members, neighbors, and friends to plant over 12,000 trees, shrubs, flowers, and grasses at Sugarloaf Cove. On May 19, about seventy 5th-graders from Cook County, along with their teachers and parents, learned about environmental preservation and restoration and planted many birch trees. On May 20th, volunteers from the Great Lakes Aquarium planted hundreds of flowers and grasses and dug out exotic plants such as spotted knapweed. Members and staff of the Minnesota Chapter of The Nature Conservancy spent two days planting trees, shrubs, and grasses in the wetland area. Everyone helped water, water, water, and the plants are looking wonderful.

A BIG *Thankyou* TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED!





To Be or Not To Be...Red Pine at Sugarloaf Cove

by John Kohlstedt

Are the red pines (*Pinus resinosa*) that were planted at Sugarloaf Cove in the early 1970s a native component of the site?

One way to learn if red pines were common along the pre-settlement era shoreline of Lake Superior is with information gleaned from surveyor's records from Minnesota's public land survey of 1858. For example, in the townships where Crosby-Manitou and Tettegouche State Parks are now located, the surveyor marked the following as bearing trees: White Cedar (60), Paper Birch (55), Balsam Fir (54), White Spruce (30), Yellow Birch (20), White Pine (18), Aspen (4), Sugar Maple (2), Red Pine (0).

Not a single red pine was used as a bearing tree or even mentioned in the line notes describing the surrounding forest! I admit that this is a tiny sample and that there is a fine science used in interpreting bearing tree data, yet even this casual glance is revealing.

The natural range of the red pine is a 500-mile wide band from Alberta to the Atlantic Ocean between the 51st and 43rd parallels. When conditions are right, they form pure stands or mixed stands with white pine—but that is when conditions are right. When conditions aren't right, you won't find many red pines.

For, you see, red pines are fussy. Clifford and Isabel Ahlgren, in their book *Lob Trees in the Wilderness*, describe red pines as "lacking in genetic variability, ... ecologically inflexible, ... less adaptable [than white pine], ... and their reproduction requires a strict and rigid set of conditions that are hard to meet ..." As far as I can tell, these conditions involve dry, sandy, or rocky soil, lots of sunlight, and infrequent (50-100 year) ground fires to clear away competing vegetation.

These conditions are rare close to the Lake Superior shoreline. Instead, we find this situation on the rocky outcrops of the Sawtooth Mountains—that rampart of 400-foot-high hills lying 1-5 miles away from the lake. It is here that



hikers encounter small stands of red pine near the tops of Mystical Mountain, Sawmill Creek Dome, Marshall Mountain, and Carlton Peak.

Between the crest of the Sawtooth Mountains and the lakeshore, the glacially deposited soil is too rich and heavy with clay for many of the fussy red pines to germinate and grow. Trees more adapted to moister soils, like the birch, white spruce, and balsam fir, dominate in the current forest near the water. White pine used to be a component of this forest, but now only a few remain.

In 1923 and 1926 large fires consumed thousands of acres of forest in the Sugarloaf Cove area. These fires prepared the way for the light, windblown seeds of the sun-loving paper birch to take hold and the hardy shoots of the aspen to sucker up from protected roots. White pines should also have capitalized on the sunny openings and fertilizing ashes, but by then the seed trees were too few—they had been logged out during the previous decades.

Now, seventy years later, we are watching the forest mature along the North Shore, as the sun-loving birch declines and the shade-tolerant understory of balsam fir and white spruce gains ascendancy.

I said red pines are fussy to get started. But plant a healthy seedling in almost any soil, keep the shade, deer, and rabbits away, and witness the speedy growth of a tough and valuable tree. The red pine, because of its disease-free characteristics, has been planted in areas that should be home to white pine. But white pine blister rust, white pine weevil, and deer browsing are three major obstacles to successful regeneration of white pine.

Although probably not present before the forest was logged in the 1800s, the red pines now growing at Sugarloaf Cove add diversity and provide the pine component of habitat until we can get white pines back into the area.

SICA ACTIVITIES

JULY 8

10 a.m. Interpretive Hike. Learn about the rich variety of lichens that grow at Sugarloaf Cove.

JULY 16

11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Third Annual "Celebrate Lake Superior" Day fishboil at Sugarloaf Cove. Join us for fresh Lake Superior Herring. Cost is \$5.00 per meal.

JULY 22

10 a.m. Interpretive Program. "Growing Agates" Join intern Kate Anders for a day at Sugarloaf Cove searching for and learning about agates.

AUGUST 12

10 a.m. Interpretive Hike. Learn about the trees and shrubs that make up the forest at Sugarloaf Cove.

AUGUST 18 - 20

SICA Annual Membership Meeting and Grand Opening of the Visitor's Center and reunion of the folks who worked and lived at Sugarloaf Landing!

FRIDAY AUGUST 18:

2-5 p.m. reunion
6 p.m. dinner

SATURDAY AUGUST 19:

10-11 a.m. stories and socializing
11 a.m. ribbon cutting and building dedication
12 p.m. lunch
1 p.m. annual meeting
1:30 - 4 p.m. music, stories, and hikes

SUNDAY AUGUST 20:

8-10 a.m. brunch cruise on Grampa Woo

AUGUST 26

10 a.m. Interpretive Program. "Steps Toward Nature" A program on 'green' living with intern Kate Anders.

SEPTEMBER 9

10 a.m. Interpretive Hike. Join SICA Executive Director Terri Port for a tour of the wetland and upland restoration projects at Sugarloaf Cove.

(All activities are RAIN or SHINE.)

Information

If you're looking for some great information about Sugarloaf Cove, SICA has three informational brochures available on the topics of Ecology, Geology, and Cultural History of the Sugarloaf Cove site. We also have an educational slide show available about Sugarloaf Cove.

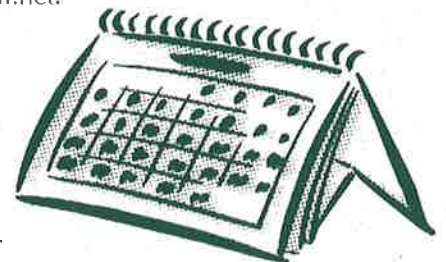
Additional brochures are in production and will cover the topics of:

- the history of the Anishinabe of Grand Portage,
- the life and times of loggers and rafters at Sugarloaf Landing,
- the ins and outs of upland and wetland restoration.

To request brochures or to arrange a presentation for your organization, please contact Executive Director Terri Port Wright at 218-733-9938 or tport@duluth.infi.net.

2001 Calendars Are Available!

The Sugarloaf Cove calendar for 2001 is now available. This calendar includes current photos as well as scenes from the years when the cove was used by Consolidated Papers as a pulpwood landing. The calendar is available for \$12, including shipping and handling. Order yours now, by contacting Terri Port Wright at 218-733-9938 or tport@duluth.infi.net.



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membership
A P P L I C A T I O N

Please enroll me as a member of the Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association in the category I have indicated.

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