

Interpreter

A Publication of The Sugarloaf
Interpretive Center Association
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SICA Celebrates Ten Years of Success



Dick Slade

On a beautiful, sunny August day, 80 people gathered to celebrate the first ten years of the Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association. It was a wonderful day with fine weather, terrific food, enthusiastic members, reflective historical perspectives, and

optimistic views of the future. We said thanks and farewell to several board members and elected four new board members to help continue SICA's success. We also expressed our gratitude to Terri Port Wright as she moves on from her position as SICA Executive Director to attend law school.

Elsewhere in the *Interpreter*, you can read the historical perspective presented by John Green, a summary of the many board members who have served during SICA's first ten years, and a tribute to Terri's outstanding work as Executive Director during the past four years.

Many thanks to Jack and Genea Pichotta who again prepared and cooked a fabulous traditional fish boil with all the fixings. Bob Fabbro and his wife, Louisa, graced us with wonderful Irish fiddle music throughout the day, while folks visited with each other, viewed the new displays and signs, and enjoyed interpretive hikes. Several partner organizations also shared their knowledge and interests with us: the County Biological Survey (MDNR), Scientific and Natural Areas Program (MDNR), the Cook County SWCD, Deep Portage Environmental Learning Center, and the Cross River Heritage Center.

What an anniversary and what progress we celebrated! During the past ten years the Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association has made incredible strides - growing from the initial dream of protecting a special place on the North Shore to the strong organization we have today. Our list of accomplishments is long and we can

be justly proud of our success: forming a nonprofit; raising funds to purchase the Lind property at Twin Points and completing a land exchange to secure the Sugarloaf Cove property; sponsoring outstanding research on the natural resources at Sugarloaf Cove; compiling oral histories of Grand Portage Band members into an award-winning book; erecting our interpretive center using sustainable building techniques; designing and planting 12,000 native plants to restore the wetland and upland areas; and supporting an ongoing educational and interpretive program.

If our past serves as an indication of our future, SICA's future looks bright. Join us as we progress into our second decade and help make a difference as we continue to protect and interpret this unique place on Lake Superior's North Shore.

The board of directors of Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association named Andrew Slade of Duluth to replace Terri Port Wright as their executive director.

"We are honored and excited to have Andrew on-board as our new Executive Director. He brings a breadth of experience, a wealth of new ideas, and a history of successful partnerships with the North Shore and environmental communities," said Barb Liukkonen, SICA board president. "We look forward to building on our recent successes with the addition of Andrew's creative vision, long history in the area, and firm commitment to protecting and interpreting the environment."

Slade is the former director of education at Great Lakes Aquarium. Recently he has worked with the Superior Hiking Trail Association to plan an extension of the trail through Duluth. He has also been an instructor in the geography department of the University of Minnesota Duluth. Slade is a graduate of the University of Montana and the University of Minnesota and was a Fulbright Scholar in Germany.

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.

Welcome New Board Members!

Dave Carlson and his wife Denise became permanent residents of Little Marais in April 2001. Dave took early retirement after 28 years at 3M, and Denise left her job as Head of Reference at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul. Both are now seasonal employees of the Minnesota Historical Society as interpreters at Split Rock Lighthouse. Dave has a graduate certificate in meteorology and an ongoing interest in weather analysis, which is the foundation for a broad range of environmental interests that encourage a diverse community in service and development. SICA is the focus of those interests in this wide community.

Marcy Harris has lived in Minnesota for the past 30 years, and she loves spending time “up the shore.” She is an attorney and has been practicing law for the past 17 years, primarily in the areas of administrative and public law. She has been working with nonprofits for most of the 17 years she’s been in practice, serving on boards, as well as advising and consulting. Marcy became involved with SICA prior to its formation — she was involved in the initial legal work involving the North Shore Management Board and the DNR to restrict the development of marinas along the North Shore, including providing information on the administrative processes involved in working with both of these state agencies. She has been a member of SICA since its inception and has worked at the interpretive center as a volunteer for the past two years. Marcy currently lives in Eden Prairie and works for Community Action for Suburban Hennepin. She is learning Spanish and otherwise enjoys hiking, canoeing and building dollhouses.

Ethan Perry is originally from coastal Rhode Island, where he grew up mucking around in the salt marshes and barrier beaches. He first came to Minnesota for a graduate program at the U, and he says that for him Lake Superior does not quite fill the void once occupied by the ocean.

The north woods, however, more than make up the difference. Ethan started working in the Chippewa National Forest, where he conducted a study of nesting success in forest birds. Afterwards he worked briefly for The Nature Conservancy, before joining St. Paul-based Great River Greening as an ecologist. There he developed management plans for parks and other natural areas, and he guided ecological restoration projects in prairies and woodlands. One of the most rewarding parts of the job, he says, was watching hundreds of volunteers come out to remove invasive species and plant native trees and shrubs. Last year he moved to Duluth with his wife, Meredith Cornett, and he now works independently on a variety of ecological projects, ranging from conducting plant surveys in state parks to (GIS) land cover mapping to writing text for Nature Conservancy signs and brochures. He also sits on the board of the Minnesota Native Plant Society. Ethan sees joining SICA as a first step in becoming involved in the Arrowhead community, and he is excited to help the organization determine the best direction for the future.

Jim Mullin is an urban chap who always wanted to have a place on the North Shore. About a decade ago, he bought property on the Caribou River and now spends significant time there. In the city, he is a member of a widespread family and has been engaged in a number of worthy causes including a nine year stint on the board of the JJ Hill Library. His interest in SICA was manifested by his response to a recent membership survey wherein he said “yes” to the question of whether he would like to serve on the board of directors. Jim is currently president of the Catholic Community Foundation.

Cove

The waves at Sugarloaf Cove come in and go out, sometimes crashing in and sometimes sliding in gracefully. The reds and oranges and crimsons of the fall leaves have now turned to the golden hue of late fall, and the feel of the morning reminds us of the coming winter. The extremes of the waves, the extremes of the seasons, make me ponder the extremes of what is happening in the world today. I chuckle to myself, remembering a story my mother tells of my great-grandmother, who apparently told my mother when she had children that it was a difficult time to raise a family. Is this something that happens throughout the generations? We look at our children or grandchildren and see their burdens as so much greater than our own were. How can that be? Can the burdens continue to increase while civilization continues to survive? I don't know. I know the waves at Sugarloaf continue to come in and go out, the trees continue to grow new leaves and change color and drop to the ground and wait till Spring comes and the cycle starts again. What lessons can we learn from nature that will help us heal the fissions that have continued in some parts of the world for many generations? What purpose do those battles serve for those nations and for us? I think, listening in my mind to the sound of the Cove, about John Lennon's song, "Imagine all the people, living life in peace." My mind wanders back to my mom, who raised seven children, so she probably had to



have lots of quotes handy just to survive. One of her favorites seems appropriate these days: "If there is peace in the family, there can be peace in the neighborhood. If there is peace in the neighborhood, there can be peace in the town. If there can be peace in the town, there can be peace in the country. If there can be peace in the country, there can be peace in the world." I know our family priest shared this with her and have no idea where he got it. I also know she used it when there wasn't peace in the family! With seven kids ... well, you get the picture. But the picture is what is important. In order to truly change the world, whether it is Sugarloaf Cove, Spirit Mountain, the Middle East, or anywhere else, it takes one step after another. One carefully planned step that is based on a firm, committed belief that success is not only possible, but also necessary for the continued survival of our species.

BY TERRI PORT WRIGHT

SICA History: Preservation, Restoration, Education

By John C. Green, Professor Emeritus of Geology, UMD

From a talk at SICA's annual meeting, August 17, 2002

SICA's tenth anniversary is a good time to look back and consider the things this organization has accomplished. I need to acknowledge up-front the crucial role that Governor Elmer Andersen and his daughter Emily have had in bringing us to where we are today. Governor Andersen has a very nice chapter about Sugarloaf Cove in his autobiography, "A Man's Reach." I highly recommend it to you.

In the early years after Scandinavian immigrants settled along the North Shore of Lake Superior, Sugarloaf Cove was the site of a small fishing station. The Cove was then used by Consolidated Power and Paper Company from 1943 to 1971 for a major log landing operation. They trucked pulpwood down here in the winter from their woodlands upslope, stockpiled it on both upper and lower levels, and in the summer formed great rafts to be towed across the lake to Ashland, Wisconsin.

Meanwhile, in the mid-1960s, I was mapping the geology along the lakeshore in this area, and I was struck by the beauty as well as the interesting geology of the point and the cove.

In 1985, having ceased its industrial operations, Consolidated donated the land to The Nature Conservancy, which in turn sold the land surrounding the cove and point to the State of Minnesota, which was interested in developing a

environmental values and Minnesota's natural beauty, and knowing the area through his daughter Emily's adjacent property, he began organizing support for an Interpretive Center at the site, as another means of heading off its conversion to a boat access or marina. Soon the Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association was incorporated as a non-profit organization. It held its first Board



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meeting in September and first public meeting in October in Schroeder. Bob Heller, then Chancellor of the Duluth Campus of the University of Minnesota, was the first President. Governor Andersen campaigned with state officials against the boat access proposal and actively sought an alternative site at nearby Taconite Harbor. Soon a



water access facility. That same year, I nominated the site as a candidate for a State Scientific and Natural Area (SNA), in the hopes of protecting it from such development.

In early 1991, an elaborate plan was publicized to construct a large marina, including rock breakwaters, that would fill up the entire cove. This galvanized people to action. In March 1992, DNR Commissioner Sando officially designated Sugarloaf Point and part of the beach as a Scientific and Natural Area. Also in early 1992, Governor Andersen entered the fray. Long a champion of

series of public programs was started, up and down the shore. A Management Plan for the site was developed by SICA volunteers, which among other things proposed a 99-year lease from the DNR to the Association, continued public access, and no boat harbor.

Meanwhile, the MN DOT had applied to the Federal Highway Administration for funding of a Public Water Access facility. The struggle was on.

Also in 1993, SICA published the first issue of its newsletter, the Sugarloaf Interpreter, thanks mainly to stalwart Board member Merlin Berg. And

SICA organized SHORE-LINK, a broad-based networking system for North Shore groups.

In 1994 three more significant milestones were passed. Glenn Maxham produced a video on Sugarloaf Cove for distribution to media, schools, and libraries. A major fundraising campaign was launched to purchase the Lind family's Twin Points Resort in Lake County, in order to exchange it for the remaining DNR lands at Sugarloaf Cove outside the SNA. This was completed in 1996, again due largely to the efforts of Governor Andersen. Also in 1994, the Town of Schroeder and Cook County



officially approved the alternative site for a boat access at Taconite Harbor.

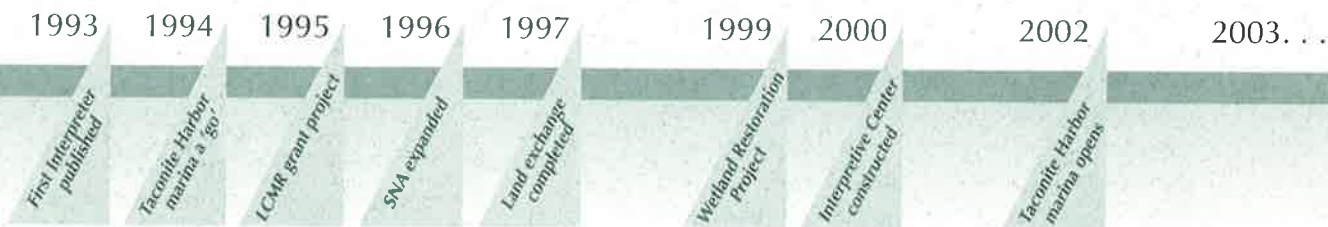
SICA kept rolling along. The 1995 legislature approved LCMR funding for a \$100,000 project called "Sugarloaf Site Assessment and Interpretation." Managed by Pat Maus, this ambitious program involved both natural and

project. This involved removing the last remaining building, excavating a large area on the flats where drilling had determined that a wetland had previously existed, closing off the access road, and planting thousands of native trees, shrubs, sedges to restore the wetland.

The year 2000 saw - at last - the construction of our beautiful log building by Mike Senty of Grand Marais. The interpretive center was fitted out with cedar tables and benches, thanks to more donors and the efforts of Al Wright. This was also the year for the publication of the prize-winning book "Grand Portage Chippewa," a compilation of personal reminiscences and impressions from Grand Portage Band members, designed by SICA member and graphic designer Wendy Strombeck. A Management Plan for the entire site was developed jointly with the DNR. All of these major accomplishments were spearheaded and brought to fruition by Executive Director Terri Port Wright.

Finally, 2002 saw the dedication of the new Taconite Harbor public boat access, thus bringing closure to the original issue that brought SICA into existence ten years ago.

This ten-year history is one of amazing accomplishment, mostly through the efforts of dedicated volunteers. Only since 1997 have we had a paid Executive Director. Each of these events and successes has involved a tremendous amount of work and time. Why have we done it? Because we love the place, of course, and we are determined to keep it open to the public and in as natural a



cultural history inventories of the site, GIS mapping technology, and production of displays and brochures.

In 1996 the SNA was expanded to include all of the beach and most of the lower level, finally fulfilling the original nomination in 1987. And in 1997 the land exchange with the State of Minnesota was finally accomplished, along with a conservation easement that assured continuing protection and public access to Sugarloaf.

In 1999 the U.S. EPA provided funds to the DNR for a major Coastal Wetland Restoration

condition as possible. Many dedicated people have served over these ten years as officers and Board members, and on committees and task forces. SICA has been particularly fortunate to have had in Terri Port Wright an Executive Director who is not only multi-talented and effective, but loves the place as well as the rest of us. But we'll need many more members, contributors, and volunteers to carry SICA into the future so we can keep protecting this gem of a place and continue our interpretive and educational function. Everyone's help is needed!

Thanks, Terri

Ten years ago the four incorporators of the Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association, Elmer Andersen, Bob Heller, Emily Andersen, and Lorrie Stromme, met for the first time. They were bound together by their absolute determination that Sugarloaf Cove be preserved as a place for reflection, learning, and awe. The first task was to form a board of directors. The incorporators debated the qualities that would make a good director and determined who should be asked to join the new organization. All agreed that individuals with dedication, vision and, above all, a love of Lake Superior and the North Shore were the people needed to redirect the commercial development of Sugarloaf Cove. Dr. Heller suggested that the ideal board member would also be well grounded in science. He believed that adherence to scientific principles was crucial to SICA's ultimate success and survival.

I was present at that meeting first as an observer, then as SICA's lawyer. A number of years later I was fortunate to again be present when SICA faced another challenge - the hiring of an executive director. The candidates we interviewed all loved Lake Superior. Each had dedication and vision in abundance. At least one had a professional degree. They had both public and private sector experience. In spite of their qualifications, one candidate, Dr. Terri Port, towered above the others and was the unanimous choice of the selection committee. Driving home that day I wondered what it was about Terri that made her so clearly the ideal person to lead SICA into its next phase. It was then that I recalled Dr. Heller's insistence that good science would be the key to building SICA, and I knew that the committee had made the right choice.

The directors and members of SICA have always been dedicated and visionary individuals. Their commitment insured that Sugarloaf Cove would be preserved and that future generations would have a place to skip a stone and revel in the power, tranquility, and beauty of Lake Superior.

Without Terri, the rare coastal wetland would not have been restored and preserved. The road to the Cove would not have been replaced with native plants. Our cooperative relationship with the Department of Natural Resources would not have developed. We would not have won grants from the Environmental Protection Agency. We would not have completed the publication of the history of the Grand Portage Band. The old buildings would have remained near the beach. And I am absolutely certain that the wonderfully appropriate log building in which we celebrated our tenth anniversary would still be a dream.

Now Terri has left us so that she can pursue a legal education. At the annual meeting SICA gave her a leather-bound copy of Black's Law Dictionary, an essential tool for any lawyer. We also gave her a tongue-in-cheek paperback entitled 29 Reasons Not to Go to Law School. I read the book carefully, but the most important reason was left out. William Mitchell College of Law is a long way from Sugarloaf Cove. Terri — both Sugarloaf Cove and SICA will miss you.

Thank You

Steve Pihlaja



SICA ACTIVITIES

JANUARY 11

Second Saturday at Sugarloaf

Snow Studies

FEBRUARY 8

Second Saturday at Sugarloaf

Winter Birds on the North Shore

FEBRUARY 22

SICA Board Meeting

Location and time to be announced

All Second Saturday Activities start at 10 a.m. at the Sugarloaf Cove Interpretive Center.

New leadership on SICA board

The staff isn't the only thing that has changed for SICA. Board leadership has changed as well. SICA relies on its board members and officers as the hub of the wheel as we move forward in protecting, restoring and interpreting Sugarloaf Cove and the North Shore.

Barb Liukkonen finished three great years as the SICA board president at the November board meeting. Richard Slade of Little Marais and Minneapolis has taken over that position, while Jim Mullin of Saint Paul and Skip Lamb of Schroeder are the new first and second vice-presidents, respectively. Rebecca Wiinanen of Grand Marais is the new treasurer, and Marcy Harris, our general counsel, has been appointed secretary. Officers serve one-year terms in their positions.

Watch for a tribute to Barb's term in the next Interpreter.

All A-Board!

Take a moment to look over this list and see how many outstanding people have served as board members for Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association during the past ten years. They've contributed thousands of hours, tons of creativity, and a limitless supply of vision. Many thanks to every one of them!

Elmer Andersen, 92-98
Emily E. Andersen, 92-98
Chel Anderson, 92-02
Carrie Anderson, 96-00
Rick Anderson, 01
Merlin Berg, 92-99
Robert Bruce, 92-98
Marion Calph, 92-94
Dave Carlson, 02-05
Archie Chelseth, 98-01
Gene Clark, 96-02
Bill Corcoran, 94-97
Norman Deschampe, 95-01
Tim Dickson, 99-01
Tom Duffus, 99-02
Art Fenstad, 93-01
Al France, 92-93
Nelson French, 96-99
Christina Gallup, 01-04
John Green, 92-04

Jan Green, 92-95
Frank Hansen, 92-93
Mary Alice Hansen, 92-94
Marcy Harris, 02-05
Robert Heller, 92-94
Pershing Hofslund, 94-97
Kim Johnson, 98-02
Kevin Johnson, 94-00
Joyce Klees, 92-94
B.J. Kohlstedt, 95-01
Dana Kollars, 94-00
Greg Koschinska, 97-00
Skip Lamb, 01-04
Ed Landin, 92-94
Barbara Liukkonen, 92-03
Jean Ljungkull, 94-97
Patricia Maus, 93-03
Terry McCarthy, 92-93
Caroline Miller, 92-00
James Mullin, 02-05

Dick Murphy, 00-01
Nancy Nelson, 97-00
Richard Ojakangas, 92-99
Howard Olson, 92-01
Deonne Parker, 94-97
Ethan Perry, 02-05
Andrea Peterson, 93-05
Jack Pichotta, 98-01
Steve Pihlaja, 92-04
G. Richard Slade, 01-04
Anne-Marie Rose, 93-96
Willis Schellberg, 92-94
Lorraine Stromme, 92-95
Mrs. Thomas Savage, 92-98
Louise Thureen, 92
Lucille Tofte, 93-96
H.E. Westmoreland, 92-93
Rebecca Wiinanen, 00-03
Fred Witzig, 92-93
Mike Zins, 00-03

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SICA OFFICERS

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Dick Slade

First Vice President

Jim Mullin

Second Vice President

Skip Lamb

Secretary

Marcy Harris

Treasurer

Rebecca Wiinanen

Executive Director

Andrew Slade

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membership
APPLICATION

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

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