

MUSEUM MUSINGS



ITASCA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mission: Connecting people to the history of Itasca County.




Itasca County Resorts opening soon. Lilah and ICHS volunteer Ruth Martin visited Bowen Lodge last week and took some pictures for the resort exhibit. Bowen Resort is featured in the Itasca County Resorts Exhibit and representing County District One. Jens Haig, standing with Lilah, is one of the managers for the resort.



Lori Huber, our research assistant, painted the walls a light blue in preparation for the resort exhibit. Peggy Hagen once again volunteered to paint a map of Itasca County on the wall. It looks Awesome!

LOGO **KEEWATIN MINES**
In the Western Mesabi Range



umbering was the industry that first attracted laborers and settlers to the Keweenaw Peninsula. It was the development of the mining industry that built the village and gave it life and permanence. Old timers tell of the labor shortages in those early mining days. Coal is mined and the iron ore and some trucks were a matter of feet or miles to the job here. In 1915, 196 cans of immigrants were shipped to Minnesota. Women in the early days made from \$2.00 per day for men to \$1.75 for women working 10-hour shifts in the underground. The three-ton cars were loaded by hand and pulled by electricity, although mules were first used to pull the earliest underground mining cars.

Keewatin is the largest copper-producing town in Itasca County. It was the first and last to have mining in the Western Mesabi Range. The most famous area was the Saint Paul Location, many stories have come down about the many accidents that took place there. Saint Paul started out as an underground mine and eventually became an open pit. The children could hardly get to the edge of the pit and watch the big wheels hold the ore. In 1942, all of the Saint Paul Location houses were sold to the people who occupied them. Four room cottages were sold for \$40 and up. Five room houses were \$50 and up and six room houses were \$60 and up. All of the houses were sold in one day.

MINE	YEARS IN OPERATION	TONNAGE
Aromatic	1942-1989	1,394,995
Bennett	1918-1985	20,860,714
Bray	1909-1962	6,485,513
Cartz	1952-1957	1,683,279
Forest	1904-1910	248,924
Gordon	1952-1965	2,772,669
Nace	1916-1959	2,176,035
Nesbitt Chief	1911-1968	31,271,785
Mississippi	1910-1930	2,779,878

MINE	YEARS IN OPERATION	TONNAGE
Mississippi #1	1942-1949	3,223,304
Mississippi #2	1933-1955	1,047,625
Mississippi #3	1948-1965	2,246,978
Perry	1949-1957	2,068,013
Russell	1942-1964	3,650,011
Sargent	1918-1968	9,919,437
St. Paul	1906-1964	6,823,441
Stein	1940-1957	2,078,953
Wyman	1957	1,401,656

ICHS worked with Visit Grand Rapids to develop the mining signs now ready to put up along the Taconite Trail. Eight communities had mining sites. Volunteer Barb Shipka organized Itasca County's mining file and recorded all the tonnage from each mine.

ichs@paulbunyan.net
itascahistorical.org
itascaveteransproject.com
 218-326-6431

June 2025

Director's Report

First I would like to Thank all of you that have prayed and sent get well cards as my journey of recovery is still on going. I think the illness was a sign that I really needed to slows down a bit! I was not here to send out the May Musings, so this one is full!!
 ICHS penny machine has 4 unique designs. With the decision made not to mint pennies, we are asking everyone to donate their extra pennies. I want to thank everyone that stepped forward to help in the museum and research center.

Lilah

ICE SWING

By: Greg Miller

This interactive sculpture honors the life of Ted Betts, Sr., who started the Ted Betts Ice And Fuel Company in 1902.







Photo Credit:
Itasca County Historical Society

It is at this very spot where ice harvesters floated large sawn blocks of ice to a ramp, where a large iron clamp would grab it.

Two belgian horses, named Bill and Dick, would drag two tons of ice up the wooden ramp into the massive icehouse.

The icehouse, three-quarters of a city block long and sixty feet wide, would hold the ice, stacked nine to ten layers high with a deep coat of sawdust insulating it from the summer heat.



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
IT'S IN MINNESOTA'S NATURE

ICHS worked with Grand Rapids City administrator Tom Pagel in researching the story and pictures for this sign to be located on the East side of Crystal (Ice) Lake in the small park by the round-about. This should be put in this month.

Escape Room changes out in June to:
 "Poppy Field to OZ Land"



Reserve your hour at
 Call 218-326-6431

