



CHARLEVOIX

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Bridging our past with our future

NEWSLETTER

Fall 2025



Willard A. Smith's

CHARLEVOIX

SENTINEL

REDISCOVERED

THE CHARLEVOIX SENTINEL ARCHIVE

EDITOR WILLARD SMITH'S PERSONAL COLLECTION OF CHARLEVOIX'S FIRST NEWSPAPER

A Historic Treasure Returns to Charlevoix

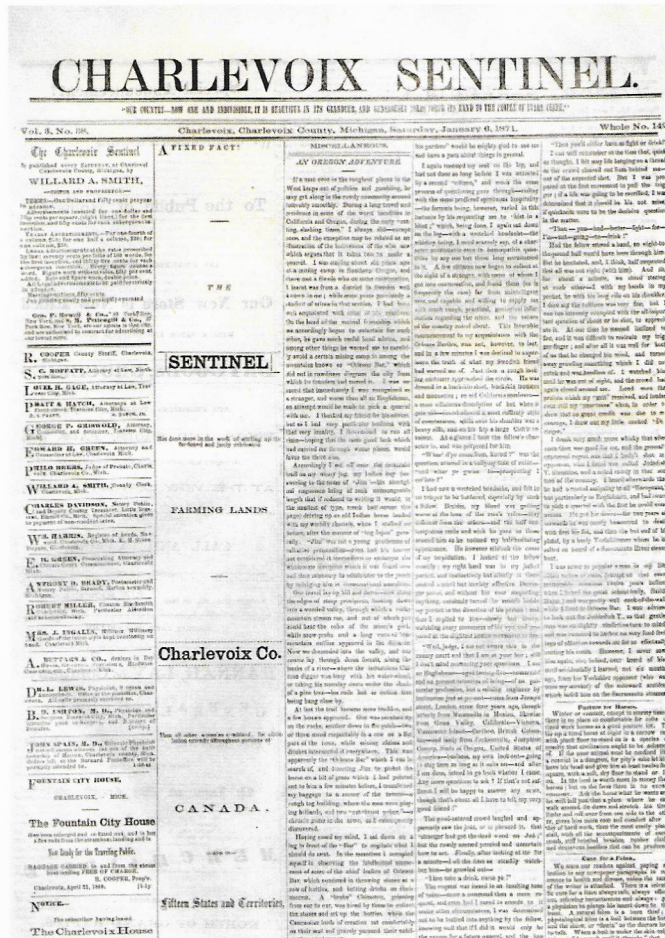
This summer brought a wave of remarkable acquisitions to the Charlevoix Historical Society—but none more extraordinary than what arrived just after Labor Day at the Harsha House Museum: what is believed to be a nearly complete run of the *Charlevoix Sentinel* newspaper, spanning from its inaugural issue in April 1869 through 1933. This invaluable collection of largely intact period newspapers was generously donated by the Madison family of Grand Rapids.

While the archive is said to be extensive, its exact contents remain unknown. It has not been carefully examined in decades, having spent the last 40 to 50 years tucked away in an attic. A full inventory will begin soon to assess its scope, condition, and any potential gaps or damage. Until then, we remain cautiously optimistic about its condition and completeness.

Early impressions, however, are promising. Many of the newspapers appear to be in remarkably good shape. Especially notable are the 1870 editions, printed on high-quality cotton rag paper, which remain fully intact and astonishingly well-preserved—some appearing almost as fresh as the day they were printed.

A Legacy Preserved

The preservation of this archive is thanks to Barbara Madison, who passed away in Grand Rapids this past February. Madison was a respected Native American research and genealogy consultant, Her husband's family are direct descendants of *Sentinel* founder and editor Willard Smith. For decades, she safeguarded what is believed to be Smith's personal archive of the publication—materials he continued to reference as long as he led the paper. He died in 1917. The paper continued under the editorial direction of Ira A. Adams until his death in July 1936. The paper was briefly continued by Shirley A. Henry until its final issue on October 30, 1936.



Charlevoix Sentinel, January 6, 1871



The archive arrives at the Charlevoix Historical Society, September 8, 2025.

Smith's beloved "Look Back" columns reprinted news from earlier editions published on the same date ten, twenty-five, and fifty years prior. These retrospectives were often accompanied by his signature editorial voice—sometimes insightful and celebratory, other times sharply critical and unapologetically bold.

From Microfilm to Modern Digitization

In the 1970s, Madison loaned the collection to the Library of Michigan for microfilming. Unfortunately, the original microfilm process was not done to high archival standards. Many pages suffer from poor focus, low contrast, and illegibility. Over the decades, the microfilm reels have endured heavy use—resulting in tears, mended breaks, and heavy scratches from repeated winding and rewinding in once standard reel-to-reel microfilm readers. These degraded copies were later used to produce the electronic versions now available on the Internet Archive:

<https://archive.org/details/charlevoixmichigannewspapers>

The rediscovery of the original newspapers presents a rare and urgent opportunity. With today's advanced digitization technology, we can finally capture the full clarity, detail, and nuance of the *Sentinel*—before any further damage or degradation occurs to these fragile, irreplaceable documents. This is a unique moment that must be seized now, while the originals are still intact and accessible.

Preservation Efforts Underway

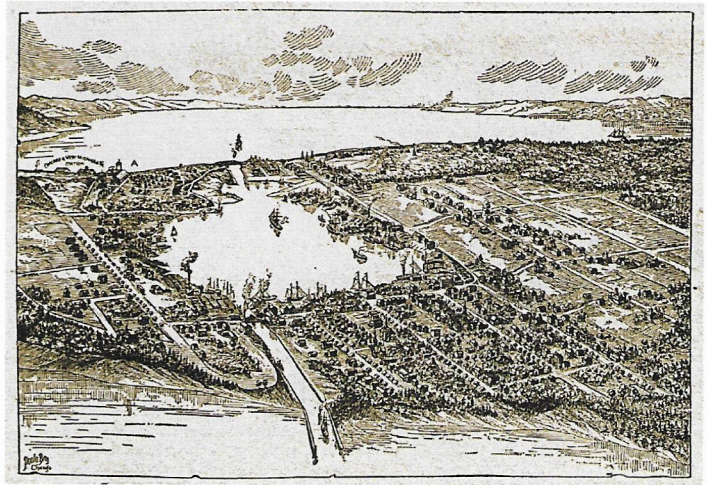
Preparing this archive for professional digitization will be a significant undertaking — both in time and cost. In the coming months, the Charlevoix Historical Society will launch a special fundraising campaign to support the organization, storage, and digitization of the *Charlevoix Sentinel* Archive. If you'd like to be part of this historic effort, please keep an eye on our website for updates.

<https://chxhistory.com/sentinel>

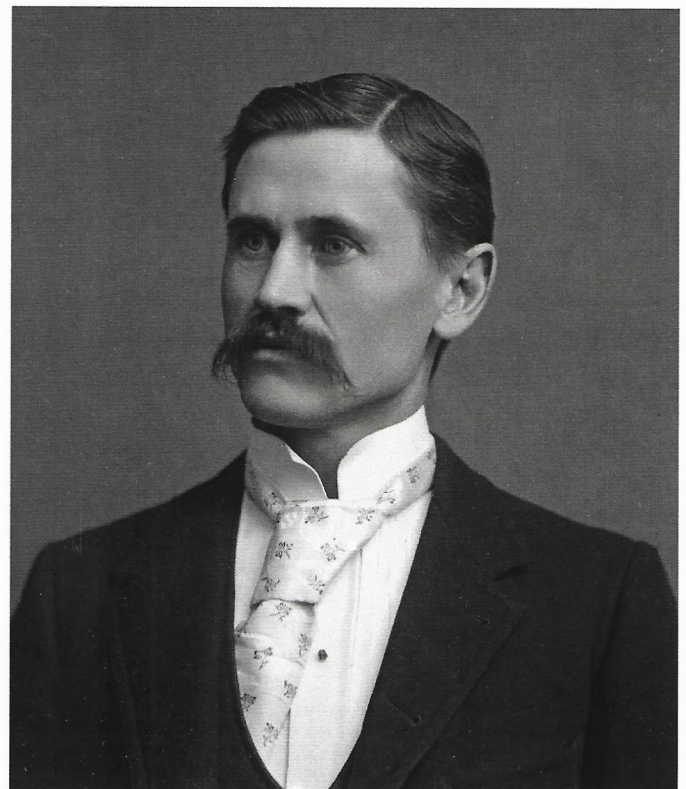
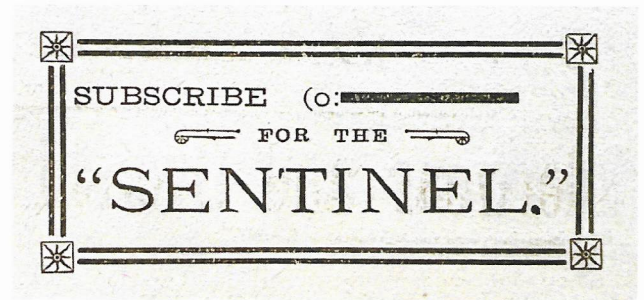
Want to Learn More?

For a deeper look into the life and legacy of Willard Smith, Charlevoix's first newspaper editor, don't miss our recent "Looking Back #18" on the Society's website. Read the article at:

<https://chxhistory.com/wp-content/uploads/18-Willard-A-Smith.pdf>



This bird's-eye view of Round Lake, a woodcut illustration by Poole Bros. of Chicago, reflects the exceptional graphic work featured in the 19th century editions of the *Sentinel*. Sadly, much of this detail was lost in the microfilm reproductions of the 1970s. Today, modern digitization offers the opportunity to bring these visual treasures back into the limelight.



A studio portrait thought to be Willard Smith, taken in Charlevoix in the early 1890s



Holiday Dinner

We invite you and your guests to join us for our annual holiday celebration. This year, the dinner will take place at **The Argonne House** on the evening of Wednesday, December 3, beginning at 6:00 pm. The cost of the dinner is \$75 per person, with tax and gratuity included. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the Historical Society.

Please RSVP by Monday, November 24th by calling the Museum at Harsha House at (231) 547-0373



Screenshot of the new personal membership account page

New Membership Portal at *chxhistory.com*

The Charlevoix Historical Society is kicking off the 2026 Annual Membership Campaign with the launch of our new online membership portal. You can now seamlessly renew your membership directly through our website at *chxhistory.com*. New and existing members and patrons can now also go there to create and maintain a personalized Charlevoix Historical Society membership page, allowing them to:

- Register as a new member
- Update their contact information
- View, renew and update their current membership or donation status
- Request and manage an automatic membership renewal
- Register/Purchase tickets for our events
- Sign up for volunteer activities

We welcome any questions or comments about the new system and can help you get started. Feel free to contact us at *info@chxhistory.com* or call 231-547-0373. Of course, you are always welcome to renew in person, or by mail.

Membership dues make up a significant portion of the Historical Society's annual operating budget. We rely on our members' shared interest and support, and hope you also will encourage your family and friends to join us in celebrating our amazing local history by considering a generous donation to our year-end giving campaign.

United States Coast Guard Cutter Earl Cunningham

Born out of a local Charlevoix tragedy comes the recent launch of the *United States Coast Guard Cutter Earl Cunningham (WPC-1159)*. She supports multiple Coast Guard missions including port, waterway and coastal security, fishery patrols, drug and illegal immigrant law enforcement, search and rescue, and national defense operations. She was commissioned on August 11, 2025 and is based in Kodiak, Alaska.

On Saturday, February 8, 1936, Boatswain's Mate Earl Cunningham interrupted his day off to come to the aid of two stranded fishermen, Claude Beardsley and his son-in-law, Clayton Brown, after the ice they were fishing from broke loose and moved out into a Lake Michigan blizzard off South Point. Little did he know that he would soon become the only U.S. Coast Guard service personnel from the Charlevoix, Michigan station to ever lose their life at that station in over 36 years. Also lost was Beardsley. Brown walked off the ice near Good Hart the following Monday. In honor of his heroism at Charlevoix, the U.S. Coast Guard choose his name to be placed on this latest class of vessels built for their use around the world.



Boatswain's Mate Earl Cunningham



United States Coast Guard Cutter *Earl Cunningham* (WPC-1159)

President's Message

Thank you to all who have continued to support the Society through your financial donations and attending our yearly programs and fundraisers. This summer we hosted several standing- room only programs based on our local history. We have started planning the 2026 program year and would welcome any ideas or speakers you have in mind as well as programs you would like to see in the future. Our next member event will be the Annual Holiday Dinner at The Argonne House on December 3 at 6:00 p.m. Please mark your calendars. More information will be forthcoming.

I would also like to remind our members that the Train Depot that we have owned and cared for since 1992 serves not only as a local landmark and venue for Society events, it is also available for rent to our patrons. This past summer we hosted a wedding, wedding rehearsal dinner, memorial service, and organization meetings, to name a few. Please contact Trevor at 231-547-0373, info@chxhistory.com, or visit chxhistory.com for more information.

Geoffrey Reynolds



Sara Teasdale

Unique Artifact Comes to the Museum at Harsha House

In the last newsletter, mention was made of the recent receipt of an artifact that had been in the possession of the Teasdale family of St. Louis who summered here from 1901 to 1921. Their house stood where the Dunes condominium is located on Michigan Avenue overlooking Lake Michigan. Daughter Sara went on to become one of America's leading poets in the early part of the 20th century. She spent much time here writing her early work while seated on a lakeside lookout, and even wrote a poem called "Schooners, Charlevoix Harbor" that was published in Everybody's Magazine, New York, in 1917.

Her father, John Warren Teasdale, a former wholesale food distributor, died in Charlevoix on July 31, 1921 at age 82. The family never returned after that. The house was placed on the market, and the furnishings were auctioned off. The wife of local shoe store owner Don Campbell, Julia Corlett Campbell, obtained a small rocking chair. This was passed on to their daughter Julia Anne Campbell Herrick Bandfield, Historical Society Life Member and onetime Board of Directors member. The chair recently passed on to her estate, and it was Anne's express wish that it be donated to the Museum at Harsha House where she had also served as a devoted summer docent and often volunteered her time even beyond that.

The Society would like to thank Anne's descendants Carolyn, Barbara, Nancy and Bill for this prized acquisition, a unique connection to America's literary history. It takes its place alongside the other literary-connected treasure the Historical Society possesses, the original 1921 marriage license of American author Ernest Hemingway and his first wife Hadley Richardson.

The Charlevoix Historical Society has learned of the recent passing of Lifetime Member John Haggard. Condolences are extended to his friends and family.

Donations received from:

Roger & Sheila Christensen, David E. Domann Charitable Fund, Teddis & Marilyn Dumbauld, Denise & Gary Fate, Ralph & Mary Lynn Heid, Mike & Linda Kozminski, Brian & Joanne Shenstone, Bud & Teri Stout, Kermit Sutton, Cindy Whitley

Donations given in memory of:

Ted, Clara, & Steve Ager from Fred Ager
Judy Russell from David & Suzanne Campbell
Carl & Bud Kohler from Janet Kohler & Dan Dueweke

Donations given in honor of:

Gail DeMeyere from Bob & Wally Klein

Many thanks and a hearty welcome to all of our new members!

Summer Events

Antiques Roadshow Visits Charlevoix



Familiar faces from the Antiques Roadshow arrive at the Museum at Harsha House for a visit at Harsha House: appraisers Deborah Rogal (photography), Sarah Churgin (jewelry), Laura Ten Eyck (rare books & maps), and David Lackey (porcelain & pottery).



Curator David Miles walks the Antiques Roadshow guests down Park Avenue for a special tour of the Earle Young Mushroom Houses.

Ironton Programs Pack the House!



Captain Robert Goodenough presented his history of the Ironton Ferry at the Charlevoix Public Library.



Ole Lyngklip welcomed a standing room only crowd at the Charlevoix Public Library at his early Ironton history lecture.



Jon Fogg presents on the History of Fogg Towing & St. James Marine at the Society's Historic Train Depot.


CHARLEVOIX
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Bridging our past with our future

103 State Street / P.O. Box 525
Charlevoix, MI 49720

Board of Directors

President

Geoffrey Reynolds

Vice President

Jamie McLane

Secretary/Membership

Janet Kohler

Treasurer

Ken Kranz

Interim Finance Chair

Denise Fate

Directors

Gail DeMeyere

Jon Fogg

Ole Lynklip III

Susan Tukul

Manager of Operations

Trevor Dotson

Curator/Archivist

David Miles

Museum Assistant

Jessica Dominic



The South Pier Lighthouse project to repair and paint areas of the interior and exterior got underway on September 8, 2025, and is expected to continue into October. Blas Tek LLC of Shelbyville, MI, was awarded the contract. Pictured with the Lighthouse Committee are Blas Tek employees. (l to r): Mayor Lyle Gennett, Councilman Richard Spring, Ian Fillmore, Geno Wierckz, Zach Carlson, Denise Fate, Tom Darnton.

Photo courtesy of Thomas Mann / Great Lakes Energy