



# Painesdale Mine & Shaft, Inc.

Barbara Manninen President  
Catherine Lewis Vice President  
Anton Pintar Treasurer  
Sherri Lewis Secretary

Trustees—  
Janet Gregorich  
Michael Prast  
Kurt Stevens

(906) 231-4930  
www.PainesdaleMineShaft.com  
PainesdaleMine@gmail.com  
PO Box 332 Painesdale, MI 49955

Newsletter—Fall, 2019

## Support Column Repairs Completed on Mineshaft



The bottom of the bins contained over 200 cubic yards of rock dust which had accumulated over the 65 years that the mine was in operation. Workers reported that this compacted dust was “as hard as concrete” and very difficult to break up.

Adams Township allowed us to tap into a nearby fire hydrant. The powerful water stream allowed workers to flush the muck down the ore chutes. Once the area around the base of the support columns was cleared, repair work could begin.

First the rotten steel was ground down to a fresh metal surface. Next 400 pounds of new 3/4” plate steel was welded onto what remained of the old steel. A rebar web was then welded to the base area of the new steel. This steel would transfer the load from the column to the concrete poured in the next step. In the final step concrete was poured around the base of the column. This concrete sits on the original massive foundation under the shaft-rock house.

The weight of the crushing machinery is now safely supported by good steel on a solid foundation.

We have just completed a major project to strengthen six of the primary columns that support the hundreds of tons of machinery that remain in the shaft-rock house. The work was conducted by a skilled crew from REJ Contracting. The \$22,000 project took about four weeks to complete.

Making the support column repairs a priority was based on the results of the 2018 Structural Survey by George Kiiskila (UP Engineering). It was recommended that 4-5 foot sections of six support columns be strengthened with new steel. These sections of the columns were buried in damp rock dust. The corrosion to the steel was significant enough to threaten the structure’s ability to support the crushing machinery still in the shaft-rock house above.

Before work on the columns could begin the two ore bins (North and South Chambers) located below the crushers needed to be mucked out. This job took four men four days to complete.

## President’s Report

By Barbara Manninen

We continue to meet monthly, except for December, on the fourth Tuesday at 7:30 pm at the Range VFW in South Range during cold weather and the winter months, and at the Captain’s Office in Painesdale during June, July and August. The meetings are open to the public, visitors are welcome. Ken Cygan, a retired local geologist familiar with Champion #4 and associated buildings, the water department, and Winona mines, spoke to us in April. Scott See, from the KNHP Advisory Commission, spoke to us at the May meeting re: the requirements and benefits of becoming a participating site with the KNHP, should we decide to pursue that route in the future. John Blom, who researched all the fatalities for the Mining Fatalities Booklet, spoke at our August meeting. Board

Continued on page 2...



## President's Report Continued

members Michael Prast and Kurt Stevens, along with Vince Kanthak, provide their knowledge and expertise in dealing with contractors and the technical aspects in our mission of saving the mineshaft. Scott See has resigned from the KNHP Commission and is attending our meetings, listening and actively taking part in advising, providing practical expertise in connections and directions we need to take to accomplish and further our goals. Lauren Koshak, a new resident of Painesdale who lives near the mineshaft, is interested in helping the PM&S, especially in the area of social outreach online.

The Structural Engineering Study by George Kiiskila of UP Engineering was completed last October, making a list of seven recommendations that provide an outline to follow moving forward, prioritizing what needs to be done. This list aids us in applying for grant money. We received \$15,000 from the KNHP Advisory Committee this year. So far this year, the "Crazy Stairs" have been repaired as recommended and we have also completed a major restoration of the support columns of the mineshaft. (See article on page 1).

Asbestos in the mineshaft is a bigger problem than first thought. Closer examination reveals sloughing and cottoning of the asbestos, needing more detailed environmental considerations. Professional asbestos contractors will be contacted to provide estimates for abatement.

Security continues to be an ongoing problem. Someone broke into the rock chute area of the mineshaft in August. A police report was filed. The door was then fixed so it cannot be forced open as before. Security/trail cams set up in strategic areas to help monitor the mine site. A motion light to be installed on the Captain's Office is being looked into, to provide lighting at night to discourage break-ins under cover of darkness. Vegetation around the buildings is trimmed back to increase visibility. Also, a fresh coat of paint will be applied by Kurt to the big doors of the mineshaft to enhance the appearance of a well-cared for mineshaft, potentially discouraging illegal entries. The man sized illegal entry hole into the Hoist House was repaired by Kurt.

The Captain's Office has been cleaned and organized further by John Blom and Kurt Stevens. A serious effort to archive material in a user-friendly way, will help in locating the records we do have, but currently lying haphazardly about the Captain's Office. The hands-on ambience so appreciated by visitors will remain, however.

Tours continue free of charge by appointment. There is a noticeable increase in tours requested this year from previous years.

Our online presence though the website and Facebook are attracting more interest re: comments and increased requests for tours. The videos posted of the headframe and crusher, as well as the welding of the crazy stairs have attracted a lot of viewers, and expressed interest.

Joining the Keweenaw Convention and Visitors Bureau in Calumet has also increased our visibility in the community, resulting in more requests for tours. Catherine has designed a business card for the PM&S that helps in disseminating information, at the KC&V Bureau and just to hand out. The CRHS in South Range also promotes the sale of our cook books and the Mining Fatalities Booklet, as well as mentioning the tour we provide.

Funding continues as before, from matching grants through the KNHP Advisory Commission, the Leuthold Family Foundation, and from donations made in memory of persons who were interested in the preservation of Champion #4, memberships, spontaneous donations, and suggested donations made for items in the gift shop. New this year is using the collection of register receipts and UPC labels through the fundraising program set up by Econo Foods for non-profit organizations. Kurt has enrolled the PM&S, Inc. in the program and organized the table collection of receipts in July at Econo Foods in Houghton, further increasing our presence in the community as well as generating more income.

We continue our membership in the Northland Historical Consortium and the Historical Society of Michigan. The KNHP Advisory Commission helps us with historical assistance as we are granted funding. On Saturday, September 28th of this year, the PM&S and the CRHS, co-hosted the Fall 2019 Meeting of the Northland Historical Consortium at the Grace Lutheran Church in South Range. The objective of this organization is the digitization of records of the smaller museums and historical sites in the UP of Michigan and Northern Wisconsin.

Thank you to all the board members, volunteers, members of the PM&S, interested persons and other interested community organizations, and the contractors who are always eager to help in the restoration and preservation of the PM&S! The work done this year was accomplished again by everyone putting their shoulder to the wheel!



## New Board Member - Michael Prast



Michael Prast is one of our newest Trustees. Originally from downstate Michigan, Michael came to the area to study structural engineering at Michigan Technological University. His interest in the Champion Mine started a little over 3 years ago when he was given a tour of the buildings for the first time. Michael has always loved history and touring our historic buildings as they were left by the people who worked in them sparked an interest in him to volunteer and get involved in the organization. He started coming to the monthly meetings in between his school work and offering up thoughts and advice on what could be done to help preserve these pieces of history. Michael was a regular attendee of the meeting for those three years and has since graduated with his master's degree from Tech. This degree landed him in an engineering job at a firm with a local office in the Keweenaw. Being able to stay in the area, Michael was honored to be nominated and accepted as a Trustee for the PM&S and hopes to continue serving to help preserve the history of the region through the Champion Mine.

### Find us on Facebook & Instagram

Facebook: @PainesdaleMineAndShaft

Instagram: @keweenawchampionmine



### Mining Moose

Meet Morris the Mining Moose! He is 9 inches tall and is wearing one of our navy hoodies printed with our logo. He is also ready for work in the mine with his hardhat with headlamp. He is available for a \$20 donation (please include shipping if you need him mailed to you).



### Cookbook

Our popular Painesdale Mine & Shaft Cookbook not only comes with many local and ethnic recipes, it also contains stories of life on the range towns during the time the mines were open. Available for a donation of \$15 (plus shipping).



Front

### Hoodies

Our navy zip up hoodies feature our logo, smaller in the front and large in the back. Available for a donation of \$40 (plus shipping).

### Mine Fatalities Booklet

John Blom, Lifetime Member of PM&S, has published a booklet, "Mine Fatalities in Adams and Elm River Townships 1889 - 1967." The booklet contains 336 names of those who died in the copper mines of Adams and Elm River Townships - Atlantic Mines, Baltic Mines, Trimountain Mines, Champion Mines (Painesdale and Globe), Winona Mines, and Wyandot Mine.

Copies are available for a \$10 donation plus \$2.60 for shipping and handling, or \$12.60 per copy. Please send your request and check to PO Box 332, Painesdale, MI 49955. Net proceeds will be used to continue the preservation work on the Champion #4 Shafthouse, which is being dedicated as a memorial to all those who toiled under hazardous conditions and died in our copper mines.



## What You Are Telling Us By Anton J. Pintar, Treasurer

*We often receive comments from our members on their family ties to Painesdale, Copper Range, the Champion Shafthouses and the Range Towns. We share these as memorials to the many everyday people who built, lived in, worked in, and died in the towns of Painesdale, Atlantic Mine, South Range, Baltic, Trimountain and Toivola. If you have comments to make, please send them to us and we will put them in future Newsletters.*

"Dear Friends, Please use this donation where it's needed most. My memories of the Copper Country are very precious to me and I remember the water from Champion #4 as clear and sweet. Hope to see you again."

Debra Godwin, Warren, MI

"As a Lifetime Member I feel I've outlived that initial fee. My dad worked in that mine and I'd hate to see it go. Use this donation as you see fit."

Arlene Stevens Peterson, Gambrills, MD

"Thank you, it came through [Spring Newsletter] (and I was able to download it) fine this time. I can already see that it will be a good read and I want to read in some detail, ESPECIALLY details of the part about the mine inspector's comments about needing to tear it down. Maybe 10-15 years ago, I had laid out a list of things that needed to be done and would have been easier at that time, also some ideas on how to get them done (financially), but it seems that never went anywhere, and problems only become worse with time. Anyway, I'll do a more detailed read of this newsletter. Also, in looking at the PM&S website, I thought the newsletters were available on line, but in checking, I find the website listing of newsletters has not been [up]dated for a year or so, and if we may be looking for major financial donors and there is reference in this newsletter to the last newsletter, but the last newsletter is not easily available, that could be an obstacle. More to come, I expect."

Doug Learmont, Warba, MN

**\*Note:** The website has been and is being updated.

"Please accept this check for the matching portion of the Keweenaw Heritage Grant to repair the shaft-rockhouse. Given in memory of my grandfather, John Perlich, and my father, John I. Perlich, who both worked in the mine."

John Perlich, La Crosse, WI

"My father [worked in the Champion Mine] passed [away] in Nov., 1985."

Alex DeForge, Painesdale, MI

"My grandfather, Abram Waisanen, immigrated from Muhos, Oulu Province, Finland in 1900. The 1900 Census on the 25th day of June shows that he was living in Adams Township, Houghton County, Michigan as a boarder/day laborer. He declared his intention to become an American Citizen on September 20, 1901, the same day he married Kaisa Korpi, also from Oulu Province, Finland. There were five children born to this couple, 3 daughters and 2 sons. Both sons died shortly after birth but the daughters lived until old age. Kaisa died June 3, 1910 due to shock after a hysterectomy. Six months later, on December 1, 1910, Abram Waisanen married Kaisa's half sister, Mary Korpi, who had traveled from Finland to help with the children. Abram continued to work at the Baltic Mine for another 10 years. The address I have listed for him in 1907 was 513 15th Ave, Baltic, MI. Mary, the second wife and half sister of the first wife, bore twelve children, half of them in Baltic, Adams Township, Houghton County, Michigan. My father, Paul Benhart Waisanen, was the second from the last child born. Only my Uncle Albert Waisanen is left of that generation. He is 88 years old.

"I have in my possession a written history from two of the daughters regarding the move from the Baltic Mine to a farm in Bagley, Menominee County, MI. No one knows how they could afford the move, which was done by train. The sisters said that they soon realized that they were much better off while in Baltic. Farming and many children caused severe poverty for farmer Abram Waisanen and his family.

"In 2013, during the Finnish Festival in Hancock, my husband and I, along with two of my brothers and two nephews, visited the Calumet Copper mine and spent some time underground learning just a little bit about the life of a miner. After my brothers and my nephews went back downstate, I insisted that my husband and I visit Baltic, which eventually brought us to Champion #4 where we went on a tour of about an hour and a half. We have been sending in our check for yearly membership ever since. I understand the importance of saving and maintaining the structure of the mine and would like to make a donation for that cause. Thank you so much for all of your hard work. I appreciate your passion for saving our history for another generation."

Cecelia Waisanen Parks, Kent, WA



# What You Are Telling Us Continued

"Are you looking for articles to be posted in your Newsletters? I could do some on the #4 Shafthouse, Engine House & another article on the CR Mine Office if interested. I did an article for Kevin Musser on the CR Mine Office & mom's experience working there. I have found more photos Mine Office personnel. Also, when Ron P[etrelus] was hoist operator took many interior photos of surface buildings there & some with the skip going down the shaft years before it was capped. My donation is for Lifetime Memberships for Doris Groeneveld and Bruce J. Groeneveld and a donation for PM&S, Inc."

Bruce J. Groeneveld, Norton Shores, MI

"Thank you for the work that continues to help keep Champion Mine in the lives of descendants of the mine workers: Sidney Dunstan and Leonard Perry."

Carolyn Perry Haines, Holt, MI

"Enclosed is a check sent in loving memory of my husband Richard (Dick) Laru. Over the years we have often talked of our life in P'sdale; how lucky we were to grow up there in the 40's and 50's. We remember on hot days we would walk to the #4 & sit on log timber waiting for his dad (Andrew) to come up on the skip. We recalled the rumble on our feet as the skip got close. Also remember bringing lunch to my dad (Herb Maltz) at the hoist (he started working there as an oiler at age 14. You are doing such great work. I enjoy your Newsletter so much."

Marilyn Maltz Laru, Oak Creek, WI

"I recently purchased a home in Seeberville, 1550 Second St. and while we are here, would be happy to help out. Also, I am a 1975 Tech graduate, MS Geology."

Frank & Hunter Holcomb, Southside, AL

"Please accept this donation in memory of Minnie Link who recently passed away."

James & Laurie Raffaelli, South Range, MI

## New Lifetime Members

- Bruce Groeneveld, Norton Shores MI
- Doris Groeneveld, Norton Shores MI
- Bette Blom Heikkila, Painesdale MI
- Frank & Hunter Holcomb, Southside AL
- David & Kathleen Kennedy, Onalaska WI
- John T. & Mary LaDrigue, Livonia MI
- Marilyn Maltz Laru, Oak Creek WI
- James H. Lawrey Memory  
(by John Lawrey), Rapid City MI
- Okalski Family
- Duane Pangrazzi, South Range MI
- David & Cecilia Parks, Kent WA
- John & John I. Perlich Memory  
(by John J. Perlich), La Crosse WI
- Scott F. See, Houghton MI

## Become A Member/Donations

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\$10.00

Yearly Membership

\$100.00

Lifetime Membership

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Other Donation

Please make checks payable to:  
Painesdale Mine & Shaft, Inc.

PO Box 332 Painesdale, MI 49955





Newsletter - Fall 2019

Painesdale Mine & Shaft, Inc.

Painesdale Mine & Shaft, Inc.  
PO Box 332  
Painesdale MI 49955

