



# Painesdale Mine & Shaft, Inc.

Barbara Manninen President  
Catherine Lewis Vice President  
Vince Kanthak Treasurer  
Michael Prast Secretary

Trustees—  
Janet Gregorich  
Sherri Lewis  
Kurt Stevens

(906) 482-0776  
www.painesdalemin shaft.com  
painesdalemine@gmail.com  
PO Box 332 Painesdale, MI 49955

Newsletter—Fall, 2020

## Restoration Update By Michael Prast, Secretary



This has been a strange year with many projects and activities cancelled around the world due to Covid-19. Luckily, due to our position, Painesdale Mine & Shaft was able to complete a decent number of projects on our site as we work towards preservation and enhancing the visitor experience. Given that we were not able to put out a newsletter during the initial phases of the pandemic, we have a lot of projects to update our supporters on.

### Stantion Lowering

Starting last year, after the release of our previous newsletter, we had one of the timber stations laid down due to the fact that the bases were rotten, causing it to just lean on the trees and pull on the face of the hoist house. To

Cutting cables to lower the stantion.

Continued on page 2...

## In Memory of Anton J. Pintar

We are sad to report the passing of longtime member of Painesdale Mine & Shaft, Inc, Anton J. Pintar on March 7th, 2020. Many of our readers will remember Anton, as he was born and raised in Painesdale, graduated from Jeffer's High School in 1958, and went on to graduate from Michigan College of Mining and Technology (MTU) and the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. Anton had a successful career, including locally as professor of Chemical Engineering at Michigan Tech.

Anton was also very active in the community. Just a small sample of his involvement was: trustee of the Copper Range Historical Society, member of the South Range Business Association, member of the South Range 4th of July Committee, and member of the Range Lions Club. He was also a County Commissioner for several years, representing District 3 (Adams Township, City of Hancock, and Quincy Township).

Anton joined PM&S shortly after it started, and served as treasurer until his passing. Anton also kept the mailing and email list up to date, attended every meeting, and oversaw the shafthouse settlement study. He also took care of the mail correspondence PM&S received, always remembering to compile a selection of the letters for the "What you are Telling Us" articles in our newsletters.

Anton will be missed by all of us.



Anton Pintar



## Restoration Update Continued



The shafthouse after the vegetation removal.

save the HH and prevent the stanchion from falling unexpectedly with people around, it was decided to lower it. All of it still remains for visitors to see. The rest of the winter was quiet.

### Vegetation Removal

One of the major projects undertaken this year was to remove the volunteer vegetation on site which was a perfect project for this year given the pandemic indoor restrictions. In July, we hired a landscaping company to remove all the trees and bushes that primarily laid between the shaft house and the hoist house. The goal was to not only protect the remaining structures that had been overtaken by the trees but to bring the site visually back to its mining days feel. We wanted to open up the line of sight that follows the cable between the hoist house and the shaft house. We have also found many artifacts out in the yard like rail ties, foundations, tools, metal cables, ceiling supports destined to be underground, and a lot more. With the site more opened up, we reevaluated the security of the property. In partnership with our neighbor, large boulders have been placed along one of the properties lines and a chain now bars the drive down to the hoist house. The site is free and open for pedestrians but we wanted to limit vehicle access. New gravel for the drive was also placed along with rip rap to help with erosion from rain runoff.

### Environmental Concerns

The second large scale project was to address the environmental and health concerns of our buildings. Over the summer, we had numerous visits from professionals to take inventory on what hazardous materials we have. Though there were a few different types, we decided that our primary focus should be on the asbestos as it is the most hazardous at the moment. Surveys were completed of the amount and type of asbestos on site. Those of you who have been or going to be on tours, there is no danger to you. All of these cases are tucked away and not where we currently give tours. They mostly inhibit our ability to expand the tours and preservation efforts.

We have completed the process of receiving bids on removal of it all and will be fundraising to cover the costs of \$10,000.

### Document Preservation

One of the important missions of PM&S is to not only preserve the physical buildings and landscape but also the information about the mine. Sadly, over the years, a block building housing documents and ledgers deteriorated causing severe water damage to the documents stored inside. Most were too severely damaged to even consider saving, but a few were not complete losses. These salvageable documents were removed from the mold filled building and taken down to the hoist house to lay out and dry. They remain there for the winter and more review of what is on the documents will continue next year. Most of it seems like mundane paperwork but there have been a couple gems. Inspired partly by the losses, there has been an effort launched to find important historical documents in our possession and start to digitize them so items aren't truly lost. We have already identified a number of large format documents from the Captain's office that are being scanned as well as a steady cycle of smaller ones. If anyone has any important Champion, Copper Range, or Painesdale documents or even stories that you would like to share with our archives, we encourage you to send scans or write ups along to us. We will keep everyone updated on our archiving progress.

Continued on page 3...



## Restoration Update Continued

Part of the on going projects for our organization is to keep the buildings clean and tidy for the visitors. A lot of work has been done this year in the hoist house with cleaning up the floors, organizing the tools, and making sure the building is secure. It is much more inviting to stroll and look around without fear of tripping or stepping on something. The Captain's office has seen a large overhaul in organization (see article on page 3).

The mining fatalities booklet, which was a hit in the first edition, sold out. We spent time updating it with newly found names, upgrading the formatting, and printing new copies that are now available as a second edition. The changes between the first and second edition are available for free on our website for those who already have the first.

We have a lot of future projects for next season as well. Vegetation removal and landscaping will be a continuing project. We will have to continue to spray herbicide on the property to prevent vegetation returning as well as general site maintenance and clean up. Those in the local area interested in assisting are encouraged to reach out. There are plans to create

an interpretive trail leading around the property. The goal is to create a better environment for people to enjoy and learn about our site during times we don't have tours. We will also be expanding security by adding more visually appealing barriers that restrict vehicle access. Accessibility will also be enhanced as we add a set of stairs that will lead from the upper level parking near the Captain's office down to the lower level.

Next season will also involve the actual removal of all the asbestos that was found during the summer surveys. This is a large undertaking that, once completed, will allow us to safely expand our preservation efforts and tours into places currently not in focus.

Check out our Facebook page for more details on the projects as well as pictures. All of these projects are still in the fundraising phase so if you would like to help, any little bit counts. And if a particular project really speaks to you that you would like to help fund, please let us know. We always accept donations by mail or in person, but we also have an online donation option on our website.

## Captain's Office Update by John Blom

This past summer work was begun to organize historically valuable and many interesting artifacts in the Captain's Office. There was a need to begin a formal process of identifying all the loose materials, photographs, equipment, and boxed materials in the building. The process began organizing materials by category and developing an inventory of all the items. Though much progress was made, this process will continue through next summer.

Additional improvements were made by purchasing six large picture frames to display interesting pictures, maps, and mining data. Tables were purchased to enhance the overall appearance of the rooms. Three of the tables in the first room allowed for displaying items that the PM&S has available to purchase by donation, such as sweatshirts, caps, cookbooks, copper, and the booklet that lists the deaths of miners that occurred in Adams Township. A large shelving unit and plastic tubs were purchased to store and protect certain items.



The Captain's office

There are plans for future improvements to the building as well, such as replacing the door to the rear of the building and making it and the internal doors wider for wheelchair accessibility. A plan has been developed by the PM&S Board for future projects that will be finished as funds become available.



## Tours by Barbara Manninen

The Covid-19 pandemic of this year has affected all tourist attractions in the Copper Country, with some museums having to close for the season entirely, or operating under reduced schedules with Covid restrictions. PM&S has been able to continue offering tours free of charge and by appointment, or spontaneously as able, with recommended Covid-19 restrictions in place, i.e. wearing of masks, social distancing, and hand sanitizing. The tours have been of the mine shaft and hoist house with some limited access to the Captain's Office, depending on group size to accommodate social distancing.

It has been an active season, with visitors mostly from Michigan and the surrounding midwestern states. Tours began in June and have continued on into this fall, weather permitting. Painesdale receives a heavy snow fall each winter, coming early and staying late into the spring. The weather varies during the short season from very hot and humid, to cold, rainy or snowing. None of our buildings have heat and only the Captain's Office has electricity available. Dressing for the weather, and the terrain covered between buildings, is advised for comfort.

Preservation of the mineshaft and associated buildings are a major part of our budget, but with this being said, the major goal ultimately is to have this site preserved for the memories, enjoyment, and education of all who grew up in Painesdale, the Copper Range communities, and the public at large, who are interested in the fascinating story and history and geology of the mines along the Baltic Lode.

The challenge of preserving a historic mine site, captures the interest of the technical minded, the engineers, the geologists, the archeologists, the historians, and provides the "wow" factor for those who come to visit simply out of curiosity, as Champion #4 is listed as one of the attractions of the Copper Country.

Tours, free of charge, have been part of the PM&S since it was organized in 1996. It is part of the down-to-earth hospitality of the organization. When giving a tour, it is so worth it to see the reaction as you open those big heavy wooden doors to the mine shaft, of the visitors as they get to walk in and see with their own eyes, the interior of this tall, dark, fascinating structure and capped shaft going down 5,700 feet beneath them, deep into the earth. Immediately, they sense the danger of what the miners in the past faced daily in their work, and the questions begin. Other times, for the experienced miners or surface workers, or those who worked for the water company, it is the



A tour group this summer.

pleasure of seeing this place again and the telling of stories and memories.

We don't have a written script when giving tours, but give a general opening statement and then take it from there, depending on the persons taking the tour. Those of us who give tours, have a general knowledge of the history of Champion #4, have read some of the myriad of books written about copper mining in the Keweenaw, and have, perhaps our own memories to share. But what visitors seem to enjoy most is sharing their knowledge of the mine, or technical aspects of what they are seeing, or memories of relatives who worked in the mine, or memories of growing up here in Painesdale or in the area. And, what is really special is seeing the eyes of the children as they take in everything around them and then taking the questions they ask. It is amazing what they see and what they think about as they process everything, including their hands on experience. Our tours are family oriented, as well as dog-friendly. It is gratifying to see families enjoying the grounds and views now opened up this summer by removal of volunteer trees and vegetation. And children exploring the rock pile.

We hope to provide in the future, a picnic table and benches where visitors can relax and enjoy a peaceful place and imagine what it what must have been like in the past when the mines were in full operation. And eventually, a memorial structure with the names of all the miners associated with the mines of Adams and Elm River Townships who lost their lives in these mines and whose lives will not be forgotten, their names to be etched in stone and seen for the ages.

Tours are basically by appointment. Call 906-482-0776. Call a week in advance if possible. But if not, call anyway, take a chance, and check to see if there is a possibility for a spontaneous tour.



# Donations

The following is a list of donations that we have received from January 01- November 03. Thank you to all who have donated. Your support will help us restore and preserve the Champion #4 shaft house as well as the hoist house, and Captain's office.

## General Donations

- Charles Rhode
- Debra Fifield
- Michael Prast
- Kurt Fosburg
- Barbara Manninen
- John and Robert Pemberton

## New Members

- Barbara LaFex Lewis
- Francis & Donna Destrampe
- Andrew Beck
- Carolyn Gasperich
- Fred Aten
- Daniel & Christina Holcomb
- Frederick and Maria Sterk
- John Macha
- Deborah Frontiera
- Denise Morgan
- Bruce Feuerstein

## Donations in memory of Dominic Feira

- Janet Gregorich
- Alice M. Kolehmainen
- Martin & Gale Iskra
- Sue Feira
- Donald & Susan Gilbert Beck
- David & Kathleen Sarver

## Donations in memory of Janet Korpi Hackbardt

- George Hackbardt

## Donations in memory of Elsie Iskra and Margret Lombardi

- Mary Taddeucci

## Donations in memory of Jean Latvala Belkonen

- Unknown Donor

## Donations in memory of Anton Pintar

- Judy Pleshe
- Kevin & Connie Borsseth
- Shirley Pomeranz
- Stephen, Kim and Allyson Pintar
- Vince and Retta Kanthak
- Judith and Stephen Albee
- Sharon Maki and Jeffrey Bloom
- Martin and Margaret Pintar
- John Blom and Marcia Mason Blom
- John and Jeanette Pemberton
- Jaclyn Barna
- Mary and Frank Taddeucci
- Copper Range Historical Society
- Mary and Ken Stevens
- Sandra Hilgemann
- Irene and Terry Woldring
- Otto and Jane Dickow
- Richard and Jean Andrews
- Marlene Nordstrom
- Universal Oil Products
- Andy & Maria Anderson
- Janet Gregorich
- Deborah and Scott See
- Tony and Bonnie Datto
- Amy Jarvi
- Emil and Bonnie Dyni
- Range Lions Club
- Elaine Putrick

## 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

## Mine Production - 1937

### Champion Mine Production for November 22, 1937

	Copper Ore	Poor Rock	Skips Per Hour
Champion Shaft #3	129 Skips	17 Skips	6.1
Champion Shaft #4	96 Skips	41 Skips	8.6

On Monday November 22, 1937 the Champion Mine had two shafthouses in operation. The Champion #3 was operating on a three shift schedule while Champion #4 had an afternoon and a night shift only.

During this 24 hour period of operation, the Champion Mine lifted a total of 283 rock skips from the ground. In the table to the left, you can see the exact proportions of copper ore to poor rock and the shaft it came from.

