

# FIVE-YEAR REPORT

## FY2009-FY2013



**K**EWEEAW  
NATIONAL  
HISTORICAL  
P ■ A ■ R ■ K  
ADVISORY COMMISSION

In late 2008, the Keweenaw National Historical Park Advisory Commission adopted a set of goals, along with vision and mission statements. Five years on, it seems like a good time to assess our progress.

Keweenaw National Historical Park has grown tremendously in the past five years. The Park has become both stronger in its core (which includes the Calumet Unit and the Quincy Unit) and more integrated into the larger Copper Country. With the opening of the Calumet Visitor Center, the Park's presence in the community has assumed a new form. The Park's Heritage Site program has grown as well. A cohesive program of way-finding signs connects the Keweenaw Heritage Sites to the Park, to each other, and to the visitor. The Park's ongoing interactions with a myriad of partners are too numerous to list. At the same time, the Commission has become stronger, with a permanent staff and ongoing programs.

It has been a good partnership.



Quincy No. 2 Shaft-Rock House with associated historic resources. Photo: SFSee

**Caring for the historic resources of Upper Michigan's Copper Country  
in partnership with the**



**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**



# VISION & MISSION

The Advisory Commission, composed of seven volunteers appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, is a permanent operating commission. The Commission has a broad mandate to advise and assist the National Park Service (NPS), as well as carry out programs that enhance the appreciation of historic resources both within the Park's core and in the whole Keweenaw Peninsula. The Commission holds public meetings on a quarterly basis and employs an executive director, our only employee.

## The Commission's Vision Statement

*The Keweenaw National Historical Park is a nationally recognized historical destination. The National Park Service and other partner organizations skillfully convey the area's copper-mining history using effective interpretive methods and carefully preserved historic resources. Thriving local heritage organizations reflect the community's support and a strong preservation ethic permeates the Keweenaw.*

## The Commission's Mission Statement

*The Keweenaw National Historical Park Advisory Commission provides leadership, education, and financial support for the protection, preservation, and interpretation of resources related to the story of copper mining on Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula.*



# ASSISTING THE NPS

## Goal 1. Advise the National Park Service at Keweenaw National Historical Park on park planning, preservation, interpretation, and operational matters.

Keweenaw NHP is a partnership park, one that works with property owners, governmental entities, and nonprofit organizations to promote the area's copper-mining heritage. The Park is composed of the NPS, the Advisory Commission, and many local partners. The NPS owns only a fraction of the property that falls within its boundaries, which encompass two areas centered on the former Calumet & Hecla and Quincy copper mines. With most of its Commissioners representing geographical areas, the Advisory Commission is designed to provide local knowledge and expertise to the NPS.

Over the past five years, the Advisory Commission has advised the NPS on its general direction as well as its goals and objectives. The Commission provided written comments on the Park's plans—cultural landscape reports, historic structure reports, scope of collections statements, interpretive plans, and so forth.

The Park's major accomplishment over the last few years has been the opening of the Calumet Visitor Center in the former Union Building. This first major exhibit, *Risk and Resilience: Life in a Copper Mining Community*, which opened in 2011, entailed the involvement of the entire NPS staff, local builders, professional exhibit designers and fabricators from across the country, and local donors and lenders. Commissioners participated by advising on the scope and direction of the exhibit as well as specific text and captions. The Commission also helped host the opening ceremonies, which involved Senator Carl Levin, NPS Regional Director Mike Reynolds, past Keweenaw NHP superintendents, and hundreds of partners and citizens.

The Advisory Commission is also able to acquire property on behalf of the NPS, turning the property over to that entity as soon as possible. The Commission helped the NPS acquire a former streetcar station in the Quincy Unit and some property adjoining Italian Hall, the site of the 1913 Copper Miners' Strike tragedy.

The Commission is currently working on the acquisition of the Quincy Smelter, a rare historic survivor. This late 19<sup>th</sup>-century smelting works, composed of 25 buildings and located on the Portage Waterway in Ripley, operated until 1971 and is now owned by Franklin Township. If the Advisory Commission is able to purchase the smelter site, we would turn the property over to the NPS for two purposes: an historic site to be interpreted by Keweenaw National Historical Park, and a new administrative headquarters and docking facility for Isle Royale National Park. The City of Houghton would build Isle Royale's new facilities in exchange for a lease agreement that also allowed the City to acquire the property in Houghton currently occupied by the NPS. This \$335,000 purchase is a large undertaking for the Commission, but we believe that the benefits are so great—especially for the preservation and interpretation of resources significant to the copper-mining story—that we cannot afford to sit by.



Keweenaw NHP's Calumet Visitor Center in the historic Union Building. Photo: SFSee



# PARTNERING WITH HERITAGE SITES

**Goal 2. Develop the Keweenaw Heritage Sites Program into a consortium of fully sustainable sites.**

Keweenaw Heritage Sites help present the copper-mining story to the public. The Sites vary: some are volunteer-run, while others have professional staffs; some are for-profit, although most are non-profit; some present a whole county's history, while others offer a smaller slice. In 2007, the Heritage Site program was reorganized into 19 Heritage Sites, which signed Memoranda of Understanding with the NPS and the Advisory Commission. In 2013, these agreements were renewed and two new Heritage Sites were added to the group.

In 2012, the 19 Keweenaw Heritage Sites attracted more than 274,000 visitors and operated with budgets totaling \$2.1 million. In other words, the Sites spent an amount equal to or exceeding Keweenaw's NPS annual budget while receiving more than 90% of the Park's visitation.

The Advisory Commission's role has been to help facilitate the Heritage Sites' interaction with the NPS. We have organized two meetings a year, at which the Sites exchange information and receive input from NPS staff. Together, the Sites have identified areas in which they would like training or more information, which the NPS and Advisory Commission provide. The Sites also formed a marketing committee to present the Sites jointly and a program management committee to review new applicants for Heritage Site status.



An NPS events ranger engages visitors in the partnership aspects of the Park. NPS Photo

## **Keweenaw Heritage Sites**

A.E. Seaman Mineral Museum  
Adventure Mining Company  
Calumet Theatre  
Carnegie Museum  
Chassell Heritage Center  
Copper Country Firefighters History Museum  
Copper Range Historical Society  
Coppertown Mining Museum  
Delaware Copper Mine Tours  
Finnish American Heritage Center  
Fort Wilkins Historic State Park  
Hanka Homestead Museum  
Houghton County Historical Society  
Keweenaw County Historical Society  
Keweenaw Heritage Center at St. Anne's  
Laurium Manor Mansion Tours  
Michigan Tech Archives and Historical Collections  
Old Victoria  
Ontonagon County Historical Society  
Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park  
Quincy Mine & Hoist

One of the more successful collaborations between these groups was the Exhibit Support Group in 2013. Several of the Keweenaw Heritage Sites planned and developed exhibits to open in summer 2013 in recognition of the centennial of the 1913 Michigan Copper Miners' Strike. NPS staff, who were also planning their own strike-related exhibit, worked alongside the Heritage Site volunteers, sharing information and expertise. The Advisory Commission supported the effort by granting \$500 to each organization to help fund its exhibit.

In 2012 and 2013, the Advisory Commission also provided funding for a summer park ranger, hired and supervised by the NPS, to attend special events held at the Heritage Sites and elsewhere on the peninsula. The ranger set up a small tent and handed out brochures while fielding questions from visitors. The ranger's presence connected the Sites to the Park, while disseminating information about all the Heritage Sites, as well as Keweenaw NHP.



# DISTRIBUTING GRANTS

**Goal 3. Develop partnerships that provide visitors with a cohesive, accessible, and engaging national park experience along the entire length of the Keweenaw.**



U.S. Life-Saving Service surfboat was preserved with the aid of Keweenaw Heritage Grant funds.  
Photo: Keweenaw County Historical Society

Aside from the Keweenaw Heritage Sites program, Keweenaw NHP has a number of other partners, both formal and informal. Municipalities, state agencies, universities, nonprofit organizations, and others cooperate with Keweenaw NHP on a variety of issues.

For the past five years, the Park has offered the Keweenaw Heritage Grants program, funded by both the NPS and the Commission, for preservation projects, exhibits, signage, and other heritage-related activities. The NPS grants are limited to property owners within Park boundaries and require a 1:1 cash match, while the Commission's grants are available across a wider area and allow a 1:1 in-kind match. The program gives higher priority to requests from Keweenaw Heritage Sites, but also provides grants to other entities.

Projects funded by the Commission have included student interns at the Ontonagon Historical Society, signage at Hecla Cemetery and Adventure Mining Company, restoration of a lifeboat at Keweenaw County Historical Society, public archeology at the Cliff Mine site, and the Red Metal Radio Show performed at the Calumet Theatre. NPS-funded projects include repair of windows at the Firefighters Museum and several projects to improve accessibility at the Quincy Mine.

Year	NPS Funds	Advisory Commission Funds	Total Program	Number of Applicants	Total Amount Requested	Number of Grants Awarded
2008	\$30,000	-	\$29,998	11	\$49,356	10
2009	\$40,800	-	\$40,480	15	\$88,185	11
2010	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	33	\$208,682	24
2011	\$37,600	\$112,500	\$150,100	52	\$446,936	32
2012	\$49,000	\$100,000	\$149,000	42	\$359,267	26
2013	-	\$100,000	\$100,000	28	\$173,478	18



Temple Jacob exhibit funded through the Keweenaw Heritage Grants program. Photo: S. Burack



Fort Wilkins Enlisted Men's exhibit made possible through Commission grant funds. Photo: MI-DNR



# INCREASING HERITAGE AWARENESS

## Goal 4. Promote a historic preservation ethic and emphasize heritage awareness.

The Commission contributes to several programs geared toward engaging youth in heritage issues. One long-running event has been the Local History Smackdown, in which teams from local high schools participate in a history quiz involving a process of elimination. The popular event takes place on the stage of the Calumet Theatre, one of the Keweenaw Heritage Sites. The Commission solicits local businesses for funds to provide prizes for the winners. In addition, the Commission contributed to Project Sisu, a National Park Foundation-funded program to engage at-risk youth during a year of supervised activities involving historic sites. *Sisu* is the Finnish term for grit or perseverance—qualities that immigrants to the Copper Country had in abundance. The Commission also offers grants for school buses to provide critical funding for field trips that bring children to the Calumet Visitor Center or to a Keweenaw Heritage Site.



The Copper Country Historic Resources Survey identified extant resources across the four counties. Photos: R. Holt



In order to formulate a strategy to encourage preservation in the Keweenaw, the Commission developed a preservation plan. Beginning in 2008, this five-year project was made possible through funding from the Commission, the NPS, a private foundation, several donations from individuals, and a grant from the National Byways program. The first step was a survey of aboveground historic resources (built before 1970) in a three-plus county area—Keweenaw, Houghton, Ontonagon, and a part of Baraga counties. The survey identified 27,646 resources, grouped loosely into districts, with recommendations for National Register listing. The process then turned to a preservation plan, involving an assessment of the survey findings, an overview of current preservation programs, and public meetings. The final plan offers a range of activities, both short-term and long, for the Commission and others. Jane Busch, a historic preservation consultant from Cleveland with extensive experience in the Copper Country, assembled the team and oversaw this effort.

Not all historic resources are buildings, though, and the Commission also funded a study of mine waste resources—rock piles, stamp sands, and slag. Although easily dismissed, these remnants of the mining industry are often the only visible markers of once-important mines. The first step in ensuring these sites' preservation is public awareness, and our contractor, Sean Gohman from Michigan Technological University's Industrial Archaeology Program, has been publicizing his findings through numerous academic and local history presentations.



*Cultural landscape features include all indications of human interaction with the land: from structures to mine waste piles, all are integral to the story of copper.*



Mine waste piles such as this are often the only remaining landscape feature of once-important mine sites. Photo: S. Gohman



# BECOMING SUSTAINABLE

**Goal 5. Develop the Commission into a sustainable operating organization.**



Keweenaw NHP Advisory Commission's quarterly public meeting. Photo: SFSee

## Current Commissioners

Stephen Albee	At-Large
Susan Dana	Village of Calumet
Alison (Kim) Hoagland	At-Large
Edward Jenich, Jr.	Houghton County Board
Dr. Allan Johnson	State of Michigan
Rev. Robert Langseth	Calumet Township
John Sullivan	Franklin & Quincy Townships

The Commission's own survival is important to what it does, of course, and a secure funding stream would enable that. Thanks to our congressional delegation, we received a one-time appropriation in 2008. In 2009, our congressional delegation also helped us change our legislation, removing the requirement that our federal funding be matched 1:1 and raising our annual authorization to \$250,000 a year. Beginning in 2009, we received annual funding of \$100,000 from the Midwest Region of the National Park Service. Full sustainability, though, would require that we have our own budget allocation within the National Park Service, and we will continue to press for that.

We were also extremely fortunate to have received \$100,000 per year, since 2010, from an anonymous donor. The funding is designated for programs, not administration, and it enables us to do much of what we do.

The make-up of the Commission has been remarkably consistent, with only one change in the last five years, when John Sullivan replaced Clyde Raasio in 2010. The Commissioners volunteer their time to the Park—a total of about 1,000 hours a year. They are also involved with the Park's partners and Heritage Sites. For example, Sue Dana works with Main Street Calumet's Pasty Fest and Heritage Days. Bob Langseth is on the board of the Keweenaw Heritage Center at St. Anne's, while Al Johnson and John Sullivan are on the board of the Quincy Mine Hoist Association. Steve Albee is on the board of the Coppertown Mining Museum. Commissioners have collateral positions as well, such as Ed Jenich serving as Houghton

County Commissioner and Sue Dana as the Village of Calumet Comptroller. The Commissioners' community involvements contribute to their effectiveness as commissioners.

In 2009 we hired our one employee, Scott See, as executive director. Scott manages all aspects of the Commission, organizing our programs behind the scenes and also serving as the point man for the Commission to the general public. The Commission strongly believes that the future success of our projects and programs depends on our ability to hire and retain skilled professional staff members.

The Commission established a related organization, Copper Country Preservation, Inc. (CCP), which has 501(c)(3) status and can offer donors a tax deductible way to contribute to our efforts. Our first fundraising effort through this organization was for the Quincy Smelter in 2009-2010, which raised \$18,000 for stabilization of some structures and some signage. Fundraising for the Smelter continued in 2013 with CCP receiving \$193,000 in donations and pledges toward the purchase of the Smelter property. CCP receives money from private sources, such as that from our anonymous donor, and from foundations. We also work with other organizations to offer a tax-deductible option for donations that are consistent with our purposes; the Miscowabik Club used this option for the preservation of its building and the Elks Club for the replacement of its roof. Similarly, we have acted as a fiscal agent for foundations that do not donate to government entities. These partnerships allowed Keweenaw County to receive funding for the preservation of its courthouse and for the City of Hancock to repair an historic outdoor stairway adjacent to the Portage Lift Bridge.



# CONCLUSION

Through the efforts of our executive director and individual Commissioners, the Commission influences and participates in preservation and heritage activities throughout the Keweenaw. Collaboration with the NPS and the Park's many partners has been fruitful and rewarding. Our vision of a dynamic partnership park that presents Copper Country history in many ways and which nurtures a preservation ethic remains strong. We look forward to working for the preservation and interpretation of resources related to the copper-mining story for many years to come. A community grounded in its past will be well positioned for the future.



The stabilized Quincy Smelting Works, 2013. Photo: SFSee