

Record-Eagle photo book receives warm response

Woven into the history of the Grand Traverse region are its families and their lives.

One year ago, the Traverse City Record-Eagle launched its community history project, "Grand Traverse - Reflections Along the Bay," a pictorial history of the Grand Traverse region. The intention was to document the history of the region through photos taken by or in the possession of the members of the community — from Northport and Torch Lake to Buckley, from Frankfort across to Rapid City.

Response to the project has been incredible. Hundreds of members of the community came forward to share their family photos and stories.

Historical societies, genealogical organizations and heritage groups were willing to share their wealth of resources. As a result, last October the newspaper was able to publish a hard-bound, black-and-white edition which includes more than 300 photos. The photos feature a range of scenes, from wedding fiddlers in 1912 to girl bands of the 1930s to scenes at the family cabin in the 1960s. At the book's launch celebration, Record-Eagle publisher Zeke Fleet noted that "this community history project helps to document nearly-forgotten stories of how the region has grown over the years."

Contributor Patti Schaap shared two family photos: one of relative Ozro Dillingham behind the front desk of the Park Place when he was the night clerk in the 1950s, and one of the Central Lake band of 1915. Schaap said, "This project is exciting because it delves into the history of not only Traverse City, but of the whole community. I think it just makes us feel closer to our ancestors. Years ago, they didn't take photos like we do today. When you find photos like this, you want to preserve them for the history of the community. To be a part of that is exciting."

Of course, the book would not be complete without photos showing historic ties to the cherry industry. Orchard owner Martha Jamieson offered a number of photos from the 1950s and 1960s demonstrating the key role of migrant workers in the booming agricultural economy. A photo spread shows families of Mexican heritage as they work in the orchards and relax with their families.

The book also incorporates a number of photos taken over the years of National Cherry Festival parades. As you thumb through the pages you'll see Gary Eikey's crate race winner of 1954, Fife Lake Cherry Festival royalty Isabelle Voice in 1933, little Betty Eikey Routsong's prize-winning Grand Parade Buggy Competition entry

circa 1935, and the Rotary club entry in the 1928 parade as it makes its way east down Front Street, the opposite of how traffic flows today.

After 17 weeks on local best-seller lists, the book was completely sold out, but requests continued to come in from across the United States. As a result, the Record-Eagle has produced an additional limited run. Books will be available at the Cherry Festival souvenir tent as well as at the Record-Eagle and area bookstores.

Readers have also asked if a second volume will be published, but the paper is just enjoying the success of its current compilation.

For more information on this project, please contact Record-Eagle coordinator Deena Mansour at 933-1402 or e-mail to: dmansour@record-eagle.com.



Photo courtesy of Martha Jamieson

The workers shown here were on the job at Bay Crest Orchards in the 1950s and '60s, owned by Leslie Jamieson. Jamieson worked on a committee spearheaded by William Milliken to set standards for migrant housing and working conditions.

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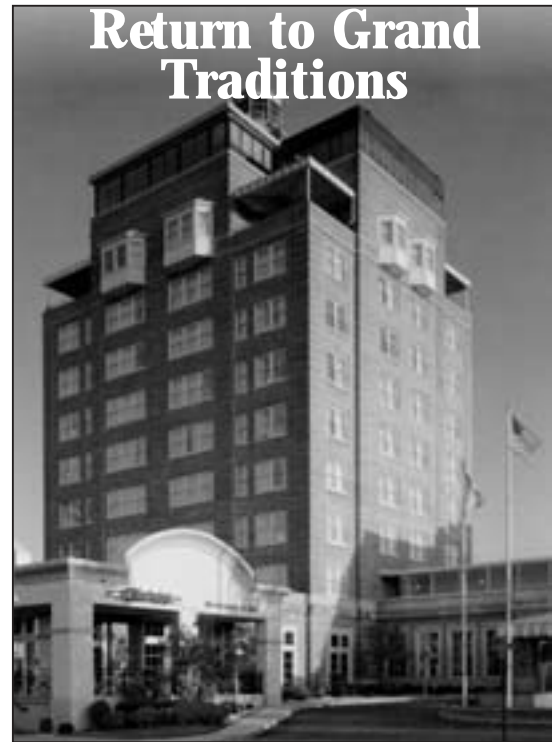
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