

# A sweet taste of the past

## Glen Haven's general store trades candy for scrip, volunteer work

There are those who think David Henry Day had a pretty sweet set-up.

Although Day began his career in the village of Glen Haven as a clerk, he was eventually able to purchase the entire town from The Northern Transit Company.

And here's the sweet part: lumberjacks and other laborers who worked for Day were paid in scrip, coupons that could be redeemed at the company store. The worker's wages were neatly returned to the company.

Children visiting Glen Haven this summer are being offered another sweet deal.

In return for helping park rangers with a small task, such as picking up trash or sweeping the boathouse, children are given their very own scrip, a coupon redeemable for candy at the same company store Day once owned. The newly restored general store opened in May.

"It's a great way to educate kids on history, to show them

how things were once done in this town," said Paul Purifoy, manager of the National Park Service's fee collection office at Sleeping Bear Dunes.

Glen Haven is nestled at the base of Sleeping Bear Dunes and once served as a natural

harbor for passing steamships. It took around 300 full cords

of wood to fuel a steamship's trip from Buffalo to Chicago in the mid-1800s, giving the tiny town a built-in market for their readily available lumber.

Many of the lumberjacks employed to provide the steady supply of wood were recent immigrants, hoping to save enough money to bring their families to Michigan. According to the National Park Service, these men worked 12 hours a day, six days a week. They paid to stay at the Sleeping Bear Inn, where they would be provided a meal and warm bed. As

was everything else in town, the inn was owned by D. H. Day.

But it's not as if Day sold dry goods, collected rents and rested on his laurels. According to April Shultz, an employee of the Grand

Haven General Store, Day was a tireless

worker. Rather than live in a nice home he'd had built on the

edge of town, Day preferred to live in a small apartment above his store. He constantly found new potential in the town he'd come to consider home. He opened a cannery just down the street from the store, canning cherries from local orchards and shipping them from the Glen Haven dock.

With a touch of their own industrious spirit, children have been collecting "pay" from park rangers all summer, and picking a piece of candy from the General Store for their efforts.

A trip into the newly



restored General Store is like stepping back into the past for these kids. The National Park Service

attempted to "keep things as authentic as possible" while restoring the old building, said Beryl Skroski, a store employee.

The very desk D. H. Day used during his tenure is still there, as is an original arch and grate. The store is lined with antiques for display and dry goods for sale. Skroski said that everything in the store — from glassware and cookie cutters,

gingerbread and soup mix, to toys and paper dolls — is a replica of what might have been found in the store

around 1920.

"The candy is all candy that would have been available in the '20s," said Skroski.

Employees say that children are excited to be able to trade their scrip for a piece of 10-cent candy, although not all of them want to part with the authentic-looking scrip.

"A lot of them ask if they can keep it as a souvenir," Skroski said.

Not so long ago, the origi-

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Far left, Michael McGinnis, 6, Daniel McGinnis, 8, and Katie McGinnis, 4, of Heath, Ohio at the restored Glen Haven General Store. Left, the children receive scrip coupons from Frank Zaring, president of Friends of the Sleeping Bear Dunes, at the Cannery Boat Museum in Glen Haven. Above, Katie exchanges her scrip coupon for candy at the general store.

nal buildings in Glen Haven sat empty, a dilapidated reminder of its hardy past.

The fact that the town has come back to life is a result of the restoration program of the National Park Service and people donating to the cause. About 150 people a day have streamed through the remodeled structures this summer.

"They come in with a lot of stories to tell," Skroski added. "They tell you about being here when they were younger, which is really nice."

Skroski sees value in restoration projects like the one that brought Glen Haven back to life.

"Historical value is as important as the natural beauty of the area," she said.