

Log Cabin Days

FROM PAGE 38

Cabin Committee. Her husband, Stephen Lewis, is also on the committee along with volunteers Fred Stoye, Paul and Jackie Burns, and Bob and Arlene Dean.

Lewis' parents, Mary and Walter Johnson, were on the first Log Cabin Committee.

"They did an excellent job restoring the cabin," Lewis said. "Every detail is historically accurate."

In addition to the cabin tour, Old Mission Log Cabin Day will feature Civil War reenactors and French fur traders as well as more than 40 demonstrators of historic crafts like spinning and weaving.

"Some of the things we think of as crafts were actually necessary for survival," Lewis said.

"Visitors will be able to experience history through hands-on demonstrations."

A new addition to the Log Cabin Day festivities will be the presence of the Gracie L, a replica schooner built by the Maritime Heritage Alliance at Clinch Park in 1983.

Carol Hale of the Grand Traverse Heritage Center in Traverse City said the two-masted Mackinaw boat was fairly common during the 1800s.

"It was the pick-up truck of the lakes," she said.

When ships like the Gracie L sailed the waters off Old Mission, they were guided by the Mission Point Lighthouse, also known as Old Mission Point. Though the lighthouse was approved for construction in 1859, it wasn't completed until 1870.

The Mission Point station was closed in the 1930s and sold to the state. It was

converted into a park after World War II and is maintained by Peninsula Township.

The former lightkeepers' quarters from where the tower extends is the private residence of park supervisor Jim Gilmet.

The Mission Point Lighthouse will be open to the public on Log Cabin Day, but a tour of the lighthouse is part of another event featured by the historical society on that day: the Heritage Walking Tour of Old Mission Village.

Lewis said there is no cost to tour the Hessler Log Cabin or The Gracie L, but there is an admission charge for the Heritage Walking Tour, which begins at the Old Mission Store. Visitors taking the tour will view several historic dwellings and learn about the history of each site from costumed guides.

Sites along the tour include an inn where Babe Ruth was a guest, and the first frame house in the area.

The house, built in 1842

by Rev. Peter Dougherty, served as a mission for the Ojibwa people who lived on the Peninsula. Now vacant, the dwelling has an uncertain future.

"The house is singled out for destruction," Lewis said. "We're (the society) hoping to purchase the property and preserve it."

Money raised from the Heritage Walking Tour will help finance the society's plan to purchase the Dougherty House from the present owners, Lewis said.



Record-Eagle/Lara Neel

Helen Pratt puts a pie by the window in the Hessler Cabin.

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