



TDT'S COLLEGE OF USELESS KNOWLEDGE

WEQ-101

Centuries before the first native Americans, fur traders, loggers, porch swing sitters or casino enthusiasts ventured into the upper reaches of Michigan's lower peninsula (Up North to the unwashed masses of down-state heathens) eons of glaciers slowly wrote the first chapters of Northern Michigan & Harbor Springs history.

Although hundreds of millions of years of marine creatures deposited layer upon layer upon layer of their dead relative's sediments to form not only the bedrock on which modern day



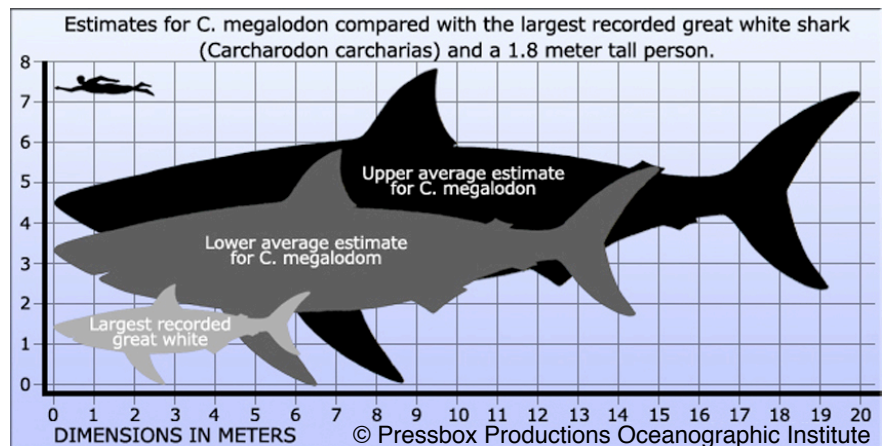
Michigan rests, but also the rarely found but frequently licked, Petoskey Stones (see pictures at left & right as two young ladies demonstrate textbook stone licking technique), the sculpting of the land surface which created the state's defining feature, its 63,000 freshwater lakes, wasn't



accomplished until late in the Pleistocene or glacial epoch. This geological period spanned from 2.6 million to about 12,000 years ago, only yesterday in geologic time. During this rather recent event, unbefreakinlively massive sheets of ice gathered (likely at a Tim Horton's) in the snowfields of Canada eh, & inch by inch scraped, scoured & gouged their way south over the northern half of the North American continent, burying it to an average depth of 6,000 feet (that's enough ice for a big ole buttload of Tanqueray & Tonics). At the peak of its expansion, the ice sheet extended southward all the way to the Ohio River, whose course was established along the glacier's southern border. So even way back then, Northern Michigan had a Kentucky connection.

Several advances & retreats of the continental glaciers covered & uncovered Michigan over many thousands of years with the final retreat leaving the land formation much as it appears now.

After the last defrosting, the vegetation was different from today: first tundra-like, later covered with massive spruce forests & ooey gooey bogs, then much later... it was water, water everywhere. Ice Age mammals inhabited all of northern Michigan including the mammoth, mastodon, caribou, giant beaver & Megalodon, a 60 foot killer shark that made the



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Great White look like a sardine & a human swimmer a guppy (see Dharma, Greg & I always knew there were lake monsters in them there waters).



Humans first migrated into Northern Michigan & the upper peninsula approximately 12,000 years ago, just as the last glaciers were retreating, to stalk the big game animals for food, fur & other necessities. The Paleo-Indians are believed to be the first humans to visit what is now Michigan, probably coming into North America from Asia by crossing the Bering Straits from Asia to Alaska (unlike TDT, they were apparently not averse to a little hiking). Although few in number, Paleo-Indians traveled constantly & widely, always trailing the roaming herds of mammoths & mastodons so they didn't settle permanently in the area, remaining only for a short period of time.

Shown above, in this recently discovered prehistoric picture, & despite their primitive clothing & weaponry, the Paleo-Indians apparently had a remarkable proclivity for precast concrete architecture, using it in their homes, sweat lodges & bingo parlors.

Although several different migrant Indian tribes moved through the area centuries earlier, the first permanent settlement of Odawa Indians began just north of present day Harbor Springs around 1740 (give or take a fortnight). The Indians called the land Waganakising, meaning "it is bent" in reference to the oddly bent pine trees that jut out of the steep bluffs along the Lake Michigan shoreline. Later, the French & English trappers & traders named the area L'Arbre Croche, "Land of the Crooked Tree". The Odawa



presence soon brought Father Peter DeJean & his Jesuit missionaries who encouraged the Indians to join them at a new mission they called New L'Arbre Croche in 1829. That early mission would later become The Holy Childhood of Jesus Catholic Church & Indian School. The 1892 church still stands today at the west end of Harbor Spring's Main Street.

When Richard Cooper established the area's first permanent trading post along the northwestern waterfront of Little Traverse Bay in 1854, it marked the beginning of a gradual transition from the Odawa's nomadic & informal trading to organized commerce. Continuous business operations began in 1858 in Little Traverse, as the small village was then known. Previously, fur traders from Mackinac Island came to barter with the Indians, but soon the permanent occupants were primarily fishermen & coopers.

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In 1861 a post office was established with Chief Andrew J. Blackbird (at left) as the community's first postmaster. Blackbird's 1858 house (at right) today contains an Odawa Indian artifact museum.



Several small trading posts flourished & when Emmet County was opened to settlement in 1874

the resulting land boom paved the way for even more settlers & businesses. The first newspaper, the Harbor Springs Republican, published its first edition in 1876. In 1881 Little Traverse changed its name & became Harbor Springs, an incorporated village.

The 1891 census pegged the new town of Harbor Spring's population at 1,000 with 200 students enrolled in the circa 1877 school building. By the turn of the century, during its lumbering heyday, the town had 3,000 year-round residents. By the 1950's the population had leveled off, close to its current 1,600 citizens.

Beginning in 1877, religious & business groups began searching northern Michigan for sites for recreational & health resorts. Upper crust socialites from the large cities sought escape from the filth, stench, noise, disease, overcrowding & the stifling heat of metropolitan summertimes. Hotels & boarding houses were constructed in town & in the new private associations of Bay View, Wequetonsing & Harbor Point. During the next decade, individual Victorian cottages were built, as well as large hotels & clubhouses at the resorts.

The railroad, long serving the nearby lumber encampments, first reached town in 1882. After that, summer residents arrived daily by train & by giant smoke belching steamships from Petoskey, Detroit, Chicago & Wisconsin, dressed in their Victorian finery & lugging trunks & trunks of belongings for an entire summer's stay.



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"The Pointer" (at left) provided ferry service around the bay between Harbor Springs, Petoskey & all the bay resorts. Ephraim Shay's 1901 narrow gauge railroad, "The



Hemlock Central" (at right), hauled logs during the week & picnicking tourists & locals on weekends to lumber camps at Stutsmanville & Weimer's Lake for a fare of \$.25, round trip.

As lumbering died off & Harbor Springs lost its few manufacturing businesses, the town became totally dedicated to providing care & comfort for its annually returning resort families. Today, about 130 years later, the summer resorts, winter ski areas, tourism & the service industry form the foundation for most businesses in the area. Although there is little local lumbering anymore, builders still construct simple to lavish Victorian-styled vacation homes & "cottages" that take advantage of Northern Michigan's clear vistas, moderate temperatures & soothing lake breezes.

Present day Harbor Springs, nestled between high wooded bluffs & Little Traverse Bay, the deepest natural harbor on all the Great Lakes, is a step back into another age, a picturesque, charming town of quaint shops & distinctive architecture dating mostly from the late 1800's. The area abounds in colorful history, with its strong woodland Indian heritage, its economic footings in the fishing, mining & lumbering eras, & its famous resort offerings. In its history, Harbor Springs has been a center of trade, a timber boom, then bust, town, a destination of ships & trains from the Midwest & beyond. And although the avocations & industries have changed over the years, the natural beauty of the area continues to make Harbor Springs a year round destination.

Next week, Wequetonsing, it's more than just a goofy name.....

Oh yeah, one more thing. The Gracester & Pops call permanent week long dibs on the porch swing!!!