



## TDT'S COLLEGE OF USELESS KNOWLEDGE

WEQ-201

For those singing along at home in your own hymnals, we left off last week around 1880, just before the new association of Wequetonsing would be formed. Actually, during it's formative years it was always written as We-Que-Ton-Sing (this was before the big hyphen shortage of the 1920's) as witnessed by the cover of the original Articles of Association & By-Laws that the Weque founding fathers published in 1880, when Weque became a legal entity. This list of do's & don'ts, as well as a listing of each of the cottage owners & their home addresses & phone numbers, has been published every year since 1880, right up to the present. In more recent years it also includes who's renting whose cottage, a must for successful Weque people watching & gossip mongering, especially when some of the names of Weque regulars include not only members of the internationally renowned Peak & Swinford clans, but even lesser known names like:

Stryker, (as in medical equipment)  
Reynolds, (as in aluminum)  
Bissell, (as in vacuums)  
Vernor, (as in ginger ale)  
Baldwin, (as in pianos)  
DeWitt, (as in St. Louis Cardinals)

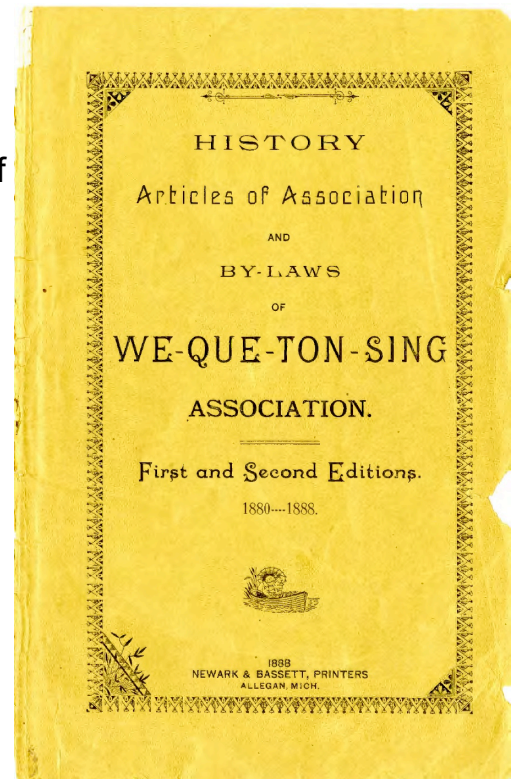
And even several KY connections:

Keenan, (as in Ky coal)  
Seelbach, (as is Louisville hotel)  
VanWinkle, (as in Pappy's bourbon)  
Young, (as in W. T.)

It was always one of Greg's first & favorite activities, on each season's initial visit, to check the new Weque directory (the new Weque book's here, the new Weque book's here!!!) to see who's who in Weque & if any cottages had changed hands, or generations, over the winter.

Shortly after the Civil War (war between the states if you're so inclined) various religious groups began holding tent meetings in Northern Michigan during the hot southern summers **"for intellectual & scientific culture & the promotion of the cause of religion & morality"** as one of the groups termed it in that flowery Victorian prose of theirs. Preceding Wequetonsing by just a couple years, a group of Methodist tent meeters formed the Bay View Association at the east end of the bay in the fall of 1875.

Likely using Bay View as their model, a meeting was held in Elkhart, Indiana in 1877 where a group of Presbyterians officially formed "The Presbyterian Resort" which would eventually become Wequetonsig (sorry We-Que-Ton-Sing). In that first copy of the Association By-Laws they described the process thusly:



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*"In the summer of 1877 the Reverends McCord, of Allegan & Essex, of Elkhart, visited all the points along Grand Traverse & Little Traverse Bays with the idea of selecting a location for the establishment of a resort where worn-out sweltering humanity could repair to recover health & enjoy rational recreations. After an impartial survey of all points, they decided that Little Traverse possessed greater attractions than any other place, & so they reported to the synod which met that fall. In accordance with this report it was decided at a meeting held in Elkhart in the fall of 1877 to accept the gift of the citizens of Little Traverse of 80 acres of land situated on the harbor shore. Half of the tract lies about twenty feet above the water, the remainder being an elevated plateau, nearly one hundred feet above the level of the bay.*

*An association was then & there formed for the purpose of improving the grounds & selling or leasing lots to parties desiring to put up cottages. In the spring of 1878, work began on the grounds, numerous lots were sold & a large boarding-house erected. July 17, 1878, the grounds were formally dedicated as the Honorable Schuyler Colfax delivered his famous address on Abraham Lincoln. The organization was not fully completed until the summer of 1880 when a business meeting was held & L. H. Trask was elected President; H. H. Pope, Secretary; H. H. Dennis, Treasurer. Streets have been laid out & a number of cottages erected."*

I've never thought of myself as "**worn-out sweltering humanity**" on my way up to Weque, but I've certainly "**recovered health & enjoyed rational (& a few irrational) recreations**" on many of our countless visits.



For the first couple of years, tent meetings described the rag tag bunch pretty accurately. The structures the culture seeking group spent their summers in were anything but cultured, consisting of little more than tents & lean-to's, very "rustic" to say the least.

The Indian name of the place was Wa-ba bi-kang, (still with the hyphens) meaning white gravelly shore. The Association founders evidently felt that sounded too "ethnic" so The Presbyterian

Resort soon became We-que-ton-sing (oh yeah, that's much better than Wa-ba bi-kang).

Patterning themselves after the first kids on the block, Bay View, but thankfully not repeating a major mistake that group made when selecting their site, the good Reverends chose wisely Mary Elizabeth (it's a Peak thing, ask Dharma). Unlike Bay View which has what back then was likely little more than a dirt path but today is the very busy bay circling main highway running smack through the middle of it, the Weque grounds are isolated off the same roadway but completely secluded by a steep bluff, tons of Birch trees & only 3 obscure entry points into

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the property. This really creates the feeling of a self contained familial community of & to itself, a cohesive & sheltered enclave that truly has to be experienced to be fully appreciated.

Also improving on Bay View's conventional grid-like city street layout & beating the city planners of Florida's Seaside by more than 100 freakin years, a master stroke of community planning long before that term had ever been spoken, the layout of the streets mentioned in the By-Laws above put the houses facing each other. Divided not by wide, dangerous, separating & isolating roadbeds, but by communally shared narrow sidewalks, wooden boardwalks in the original design. Placing all the cars (horses & buggies back in the day) to the rear of the structures in small deemphasized alleys, elevates, celebrates & encourages the interpersonal & inter-cottage relationships.



I mean, look at it! Greg & John Roy rocking on the porch, kid's playing across the sidewalk, people out in the front yard, several conversations going along that thin ribbon of concrete. If this is what heaven looks like I need to start being a better person. This one simple thing is a textbook example of how really freakin good design can dramatically enhance our lives & in this case five generations & counting. This now totally obvious but never before heard of idea, made all the difference. Instead of sitting on the front porch as your neighbors zip by in their hermetically sealed cars, people stroll, jog & bike by, in close enough proximity that a nod, wave or even a conversation starting "hello" is the rule not the exception. Even porch to porch conversations are possible & frequent due to the emphasis on people spaces & relationships above the vehicular.

A few more jewels from the 1888 update to the Association Owner's manual include:

***"The object of the Association is to improve & make attractive its grounds for the use of its members & guests who wish a pleasant, healthful & inexpensive place to spend the summer months. A hotel was erected in 1878, which has from time to time been enlarged & improved so as to meet the want of visitors. During the season of 1880 the***



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*present manager, Mr. W. J. Clarke was unable to furnish rooms to all applicants, so that a further enlargement is contemplated that will about double its capacity, when it is hoped there will be sufficient accommodations for all who apply. His efficient & attentive management heretofore will be a guarantee for the future. We are assured his cuisine will not be excelled by any hotel around the bay. We refer all persons to him for particulars as to rooms & board. The grounds have already been adorned with the erection of several tasty cottages & several more will be built the coming season.*

*The water approach to the grounds presents a picture of rare beauty; they rise from the water in gentle terraces, & are covered with a luxuriant growth of young trees in great variety, prominent among them are white birch, balsam, hemlock, pine, arbor vitae, aspen & sugar maple. Fine brook trout have been taken from several of the streams that empty into the bay near the resort.*

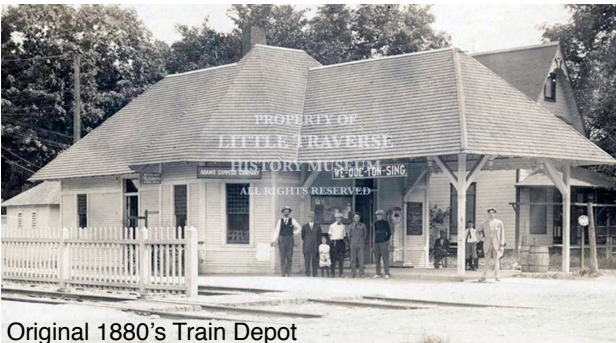
*Amid this delightful scenery, breathing the clear, bracing air & drinking the pure, cold spring water, rest has been found by many for wearied body & mind, strength for the weak, healing for the sick & joy in God's handiwork. In the frequent excursions & the rowing & fishing, exercise & amusement are always at hand, while the social privileges are all that could be desired.*

*We-que-ton-sing does not boast of being the largest summer resort, but it does aim to be the best - a safe & healthful place for families to reside during the heated season: where society & moral standing & tone of its residents will be unexceptionable.*

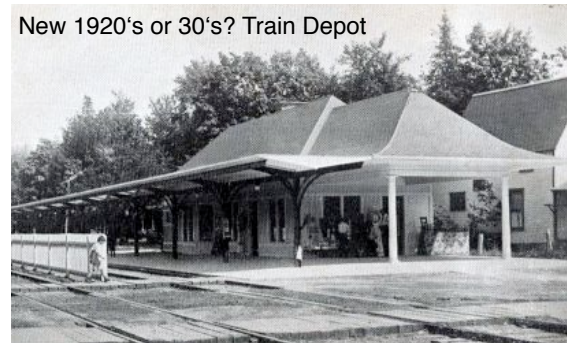
*The grounds of this Association are located on the north side of Little Traverse Bay, county of Emmet, State of Michigan, one mile east of Little Traverse Village, (aka Harbor Springs) one mile by water & two by land from Harbor Point & about five miles by water & eight by land from Bay View & Petoskey.*

*The Bay View, Little Traverse & Mackinac railroad crosses the grounds of the*

*Association; it is expected that the road will be in operation before another season opens & visitors will be enabled to*



Original 1880's Train Depot



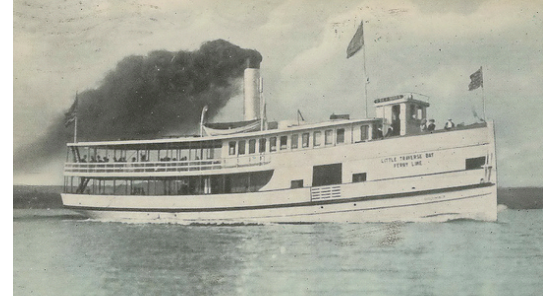
New 1920's or 30's? Train Depot

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*check their baggage direct to the resort or transfer to boat at Petoskey, as they may choose.*

*Small steamers ply around the bay & touch nearly every hour of the day during the season at the pier, which will be extended to sufficient depth of water another season to enable the lake vessels to receive & discharge passengers & freight."*



Some of the facts, figures & rules from the original By-Laws that were published upon the official founding in 1880 are interesting when juxtaposed against our current times.

The original shares of Association stock were worth \$5,000. That's not per share, that's the total for all 200 shares, or \$25 per share (bet they've gone up to \$28, maybe even \$30 a share by now). You had to buy at least 1 share but could not own more than 12 & it took a minimum of 4 shares to erect a cottage on your lot.

To keep out the trailer trash riffraff, any new cottage had to cost at least \$200. Let's see, 4 shares of stock at \$25 per, plus \$200 for a cottage, That's \$300 greenbacks, I thought they said the goal was an inexpensive place to spend the summer, who but the Vanderbilts or Carnegies could afford that?

Upon being accepted into membership in the Association by the Board of Directors & purchasing your 1 to 12 shares of stock, your expenses weren't over. There was a \$10 Membership Fee too (now they're just being greedy & soaking those poor stiff).

Your Privy (outhouse) had to be located on the centerline of the lot so as to maintain the maximum distant from your neighbor's cottage.

Your stock could be revoked for ***“any conduct of an immoral character on the part of the member or any person occupying with him.”*** Let's all be sure to keep this one in mind during our time in residence, (just saying, Dharma's gonna be royally pissed if you screw-up this sweet deal for her...)

Next week, The Peaks (aka Bowmans) Go To Michigan, or Poindexter meets Wequetonsing.