



MANITOWISH WATERS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

June 2026

Visit the Experience!

On June 13th, we held the grand opening of the **Northwoods Forest History Experience: More Than a Museum**, which is now open 9 am - 3 pm Tuesday through Saturday. It's impossible to estimate the number of volunteer hours that went into building this educational and immersive facility but it would have to be in the thousands. Much thanks to the North Lakeland Discovery Center and Manitowish Waters Historical Society boards on this joint venture and to all who gave their time, talents and certainly their donations to make the Experience possible and to provide our community with a true celebration of our wonderful forests and a point of civic pride. This issue of our newsletter is dedicated to the building of the Experience. **Come see us!**



Matt Blessing (left) and Matt Wittry, exhibit captains, saw the "ribbon-cutting" log to open the Experience.



Smokey Bear was at the grand opening for photos with friends of all ages.



Northwoods Forest History Experience

The Grand Opening!



Members of the Manito Art League's plein air painters were on hand, including Louise Randall.

North Lakeland School's incoming eighth grade class and moms served up tasty wraps, strawberry shortcakes and cold beverages to raise money for their big trip next year.



Kay Krans took visitors on a tour of the one-time Youth Conservation Corps camp at Statehouse Lake, today the site of the NLDC campus.



Here is part of the Civilian Conservation Corps exhibit.



The Experience features six exhibits, including one on the Youth Conservation Corps. Notice the time line above focused on activities for the U.S. government (top line), the Indigenous Nations (middle line) and business.



Lots of visitors enjoyed working the two-person crosscut saw and making a tree cookie.



The Grand Opening!



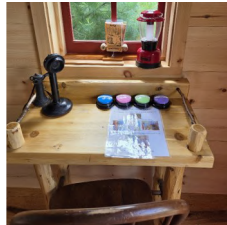
Bill Jamerson sang lumberjack songs and told lumberjack tales.



NLDC board member Lori Shepherd (left) led a story walk.



Kay Krans points out some of the features of the Trout Lake Forestry Headquarters replica building.



Members of the George S. Cook family, our lead donors



Jim Bokern points out an item in the early logging exhibit.



There were games and activities in the Experience's outdoor activity area.

The Renovation of the Experience

The building that we now call the Experience was once a Civilian Conservation Corps barracks in the 1930s at Palmer Lake. It moved around the state after that, landing at Statehouse Lake where it became the Recreation Hall for the Youth Conservation Corps campers, starting in the 1960s. It's been a storage facility at the NLDC ever since the YCC ended in Wisconsin in 1995.



The building was moved across the NLDC campus on April 29, 2025



A foundation was dug out and laid before the building could be set in place.



Nasi Construction won the bid to complete the renovation.



Mike Patek (left) and Jess Christensen built the panels and furniture, and installed all of the exhibits. Think one big jig saw puzzle!

Historical Preservation Recipients



On Tuesday, June 2nd, we honored three leaders of historical preservation, people the MWHS board honors annually for their contributions over the years in preserving our local history. Susie Bauer (left) accepted on behalf of her father John Lafave. To Susie's left is Caleb, Hannah and Trish Menzia who accepted on behalf of their uncle and great uncle, Paul Brenner. On the right are honorees Judy and Bob Prentiss. Thanks to all our honorees and their families.

Jim Bokern aka Thomas Jefferson

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
THOMAS JEFFERSON
PRINCIPAL AUTHOR OF THE DECLARATION OF
INDEPENDENCE, THIRD PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
AND ONE OF VIRGINIA'S MOST INFLUENTIAL FOUNDERS



Jim Bokern aka Thomas Jefferson sharing the history of the birth of our nation and the Declaration of Independence on June 16th at the Boulder Beer Bar. You can catch Thomas Jefferson on Friday July 3rd for presentations at 2 pm, 3 pm, 4 pm and 5 pm at the Manitowish Waters Community Center.

No registration is necessary.



MW Historical Society 2026 Calendar

JULY

America 250 Thomas Jefferson Presentation

7/3, 2, 3, 4, 5 pm
MW Community Center

Legends of Manitou Island Mystery by Pontoon

7/6 6 to 8 pm
Blue Bayou

Manitowish Waters Crime Tour by Pontoon

7/10, 9 to 11:30 am
12:30 to 3 pm
Rest Lake Boat Landing

Trout Lake History by Pontoon

7/14, 9 am to noon
South Trout Boat Landing

Dillinger Pontoon Tour Including Lunch at noon

7/17, 9:30 am to noon or
1:15 to 3:45 pm
Little Bohemia Lodge

Turtle Flambeau Flowage by Pontoon

7/22, 11 am to 4 pm
Springstead Boat Landing

Turtle Flambeau Flowage and Pizza by Pontoon

7/22, 5:30 to 9 pm
Springstead Boat Landing

Turtle Flambeau Flowage by Pontoon

7/23, 11 am to 4 pm
Springstead Boat Landing

Rest Lake Tour and Shore Lunch

7/24, 9 am to 12:30 pm
or 11 am to 2:30 pm
Rest Lake Boat Landing

Mysteries of Alder and Wild Rice Pontoon Tour

7/30, 9 to 11:30 am
Contact the Discovery Center

Manitowish & Little Star Lakes by Pontoon

7/30, 12:30 to 3 pm
Blue Bayou

AUGUST

Camp Mercer Hike & Taphouse

8/6, 1 to 4:30 pm
River's Edge Outfitters

Mysteries of Stone, Fawn & Clear Lakes by Pontoon

8/7, 9 to 11:30 am
Clear Lake Boat Landing

Mysteries of Island and Spider Lakes by Pontoon

8/7, 12:30 to 3 pm
Blue Bayou

Manitowish Waters Crime by Pontoon

8/13, 9 to 11:30 am
12:30 to 3 pm
Rest Lake Boat Landing

Big Lake Investigation by Pontoon

8/17, 9 am to noon
Big Lake Boat Landing

Chippewa Retreat History Presentation

8/19, 4 to 6:15 pm
White Oak Grill at Chippewa Retreat

Dillinger Pontoon Tour Including Lunch at noon

8/22, 9:30 am to noon or
1:15 to 3:45 pm
Little Bohemia Lodge

Travel through Time Bike Ride

8/26, noon to 5 pm
River's Edge Outfitters

MW Pub Crawl

8/27, 3 to 7 pm
Koller Park

SEPTEMBER

Dillinger Pontoon Tour Including Lunch at noon

9/8, 9 am to noon or
1 to 4 pm
Little Bohemia Lodge

Trout Lake by Pontoon

9/9, 10 am to 1 pm
Location TBD

Northwoods Artisans Presentation

9/9, 4 to 6:15 pm
White Oak Grill at
Chippewa Retreat

Forest History Driving Tour and Short Hikes

9/22, 10:30 am to 5 pm
Contact the Discovery Center

OCTOBER

Before the Dam Presentation

10/7, 4 to 6:15 pm
White Oak Grill at
Chippewa Retreat

For more information
go to: [https://
www.mwhistory.org/events/](https://www.mwhistory.org/events/)

