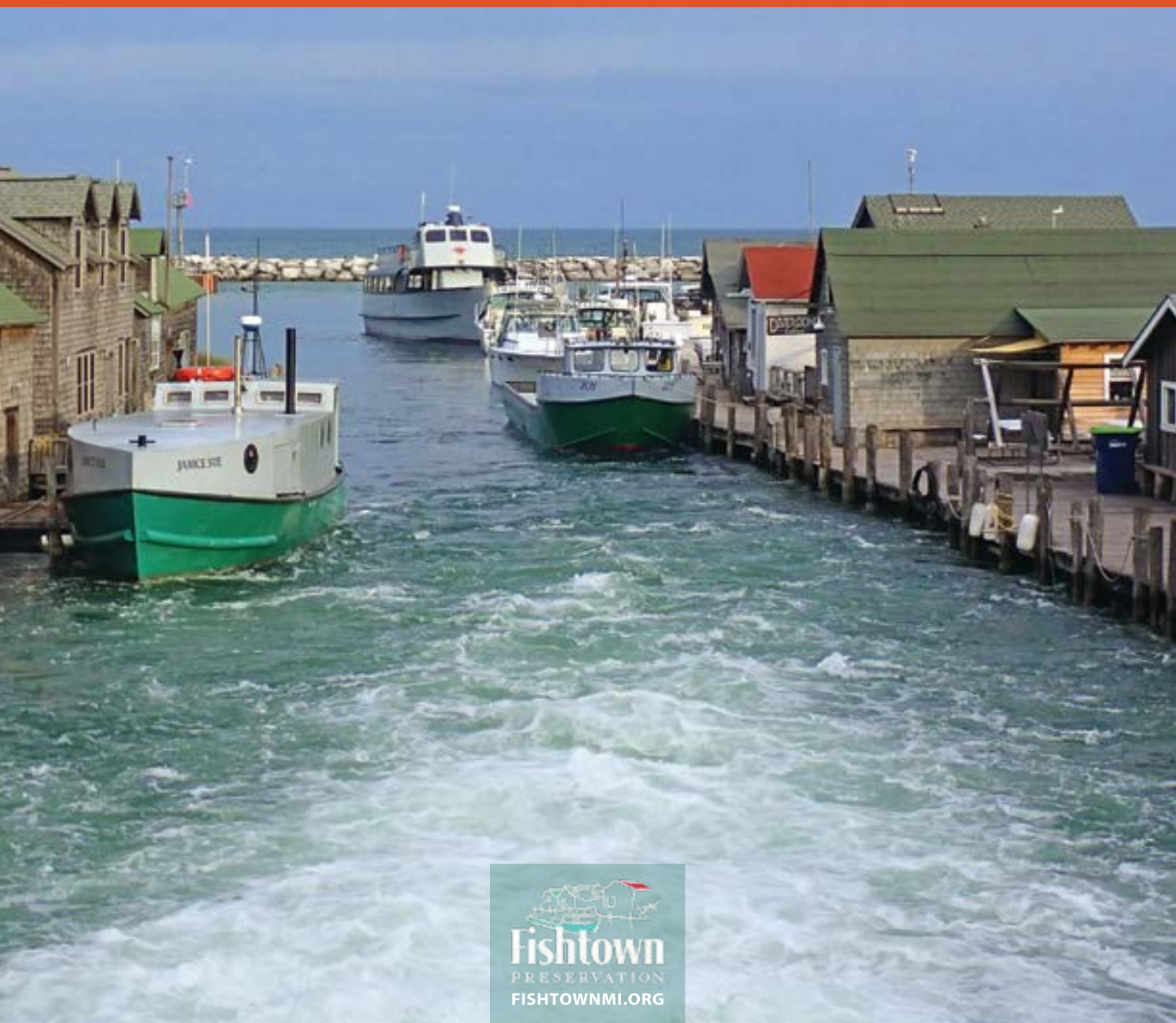


FISHTOWN PRESERVATION

SUMMER 2019 | 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

FISHTOWN, MICHIGAN Volume 13 • No. 1

Preserving a publicly accessible and authentic connection to local and regional history, Great Lakes commercial fishing, and maritime traditions and experiences.



OUR JOURNEY

PHOTO BY DANIEL STEWART



By Amanda Holmes,
FPS Executive Director

We'd come together to celebrate—and to toss the just-paid-off mortgage into the bonfire.

We covered the embers of the fire with snow, and while everybody else headed up to the Leland Lodge to warm up, I wanted to linger in Fishtown to watch the roof lights glow in the gentle snow as twilight turned to night.

We'd come together to celebrate—and to toss the just-paid-off mortgage into the bonfire. It was February 14, and while an ice storm had postponed our plans to celebrate the actual final bank payment the week before, it was also fitting to be together on Valentine's Day beneath the metal heart we'd lifted above Fishtown as a symbol of what love can do. There were a few speeches, we passed around cups of champagne, and as Fishtown's white holiday lights turned on for one final week, we laid the old loan papers one by one into the metal fire bowl holding our small bonfire. There was a little more smoke than we expected, but we cheered and toasted our success. We had promised each other, way back in 2007, that we would carry through until this moment, and we had kept that promise.

I stayed behind for those few minutes because I think I appreciate Fishtown best in the small moments of quiet,

when I can pause at the dock or at the top of the hill and take in the light, colors and sounds. Fishtown can be a hectic place, and there is renewal in finding the peace.

The day after our Valentine's celebration, I crunched through the snow back into Fishtown and noticed a family weaving around and among the shanties. They had come because the father wanted to share Fishtown with his wife and children. "Fishtown has been his favorite part of our trip north," he said, nodding toward his son. I pointed out the "I Love Fishtown" signs and his son and daughter each picked up one, and the four of them drew together for a photo—a bit of evidence of their quest to find in Fishtown, in this small place tucked away in the north, a way to connect their daily lives to something larger.

In mid-March I happened upon a different group of children standing in front of the Dam Candy Store, posing for a photo with their hands overflowing with candy—imaginary candy, because the shop was still closed for the season. The family of six had come up from Brighton, Michigan. "Have you been to Fishtown before?" I asked. "I have," the father replied, "but not the rest." I dug out one of our "I Love Fishtown" signs and the children took it to pose for photos that would help them remember their discovery of Fishtown.

Neither of these families had heard about our small wintertime celebration, nor about the dozen years of effort behind that accomplishment and the work we are doing now to care for Fishtown and keep alive its fishing legacy. They had come, in this midst of this eventful northern winter, simply to find a bit of family togetherness many miles from home. Even if they knew only a little bit about Fishtown's long history of commercial fishing, they were, in their own ways, staying true to the family focus of our local fishing world.

As I've realized many times over the past dozen years, we live our largest goals in many small, often quiet moments. Springtime has returned to the Grand Traverse region, and the lengthening days and tender green of new growth remind us that the future is born from the seeds and roots laid down in the years now past. Fishtown helps us to remember what we have grown already, and then to build for the years to come.

We lit a small fire at the end of winter not to finish something from 2007, but because that past makes possible what we are beginning now, in 2019. We are always building upon the legacy of generations of fishermen and the others who have, together, made our Fishtown.

We are on a journey, and we are eager for what comes next. **After all, we still have promises to keep.** ■

A family explores Fishtown on February 15, enjoying having it all to themselves in the middle of winter.



Julie Kuieck and her daughter, Hanalei, joined the festivities when Fishtown Preservation celebrated paying off the mortgage in February.



MY FISHTOWN CONNECTION

By Berkley Duck, FPS Board President

I first came here on a school bus on a warm day in 1948.

When we at Fishtown Preservation made the final payment on the debt related to the purchase of Fishtown, I had to pause and think about the unexpected path that had brought me to Leland for that snowy February afternoon.

I first came here on a school bus on a warm day in 1948. I was a summer camper at Leelanau Camp in Glen Arbor and our destination was the mail boat dock at what is now the location of Falling Waters. We were to be transported to South Manitou Island (with a stop at the Crib to deliver the mail) for a three-day camp-out. Beyond the fact that it was home to a lot of commercial fishing boats and rustic shanties, I don't remember much about Fishtown as it then existed, but the charm of the place was imprinted on me.

I returned to Leland two or three times in my teen-age years, lodging for a week or two in the summers with a friend at what was then the home of Captain Cook, now the Coldwell Banker office on Main Street. We palled around with a great group of kids, ate cherry pies for breakfast, raced Lightnings at the Yacht Club and enjoyed our freedom in that much more innocent time.

I brought my bride, Nancy, to see Leland while we were honeymooning at Glen Lake. In later years, when we began sailing on Lake Michigan, we visited the then-new Leland Harbor on our trips up and down the coast. When we retired and were considering what to do next, we decided to look for a place in Leland Township. We bought a lot, built a home, and began a new life as Michiganders just as Fishtown Preservation was taking over ownership of the Fishtown site.

I had served on the board of a nonprofit in the Indianapolis area that was involved in historic preservation and in short order I found myself on the newly-organized Board of Directors of Fishtown Preservation Society. We had a one-person staff (Amanda), no budget, no strategic plan, no programs and no detailed knowledge of what we had just acquired.

We have come a long way since then. We have chronicled our many milestones and achievements in our newsletters and reports to you. The bottom line financially is that we are stable and debt-free. Fishtown is healthy and vibrant. We have extended our preservation efforts to two historically significant shanties on the south side of the river. The *Joy* is fishing under our whitefish license. We have an active interpretive program. And we have made significant improvements in the Fishtown infrastructure. But more remains to be done.

We have final plans for the rehabilitation of the Morris Shanty, Carlson's Fishery, and the Cheese Shanty; the replacement of the north and south side docks; installation of a system for management of storm water run-off; new landscaping; and the replacement of the entryway. The completion of these projects can be viewed as the final step in the rehabilitation of the Fishtown that we acquired in 2007. We have received a portion of the needed funding, but we are asking for your support.

Thank you for all you have done. Please help us continue with the work to preserve this wonderful asset. ■

Berkley Duck, FPS Board President, with his wife Nancy on board the *Joy* in Fishtown.





▲ By early June 2019, water levels were breaking month-by-month records set in 1986. In Fishtown this has strained already aged infrastructure.

► The Lake Michigan and Leland River water levels were at an all-time low in early 2013, when this photo was taken.



"We feel it's important to support areas here that have historic value. One of the most notable of these is Fishtown, it's not only an historic site that's open to the public, it's a working commercial fishing village."

—Sally Viskochil, Marianne Vick, Len Cowgill
Fishtown Business Anchor, Tamarack Gallery

THE CAMPAIGN FOR FISHTOWN

The origins of what is now The Campaign for Fishtown can be traced to a 2012 fund-raising effort to generate funds for debt retirement and capital improvements (the "Purchase Fund" campaign). Two additional fund-raising efforts were initiated in 2014, the "Landscape Project" and the "Carlson's Fishery" project (repairs to the Fishery building). In 2017, the FPS Board of Directors decided to consolidate FPS' capital fundraising into a single comprehensive campaign, The Campaign for Fishtown. The funds raised in the prior campaigns were restricted to the projects to which they were designated, and the new campaign was expanded to include the balance of the funds needed for debt retirement, shanty rehabilitation and infrastructure improvements.

On February 7, 2019, the FPS paid the final installment of the mortgage on the Fishtown property. Thanks to the incredible support of our donors, Fishtown now belongs to everyone, free and clear.

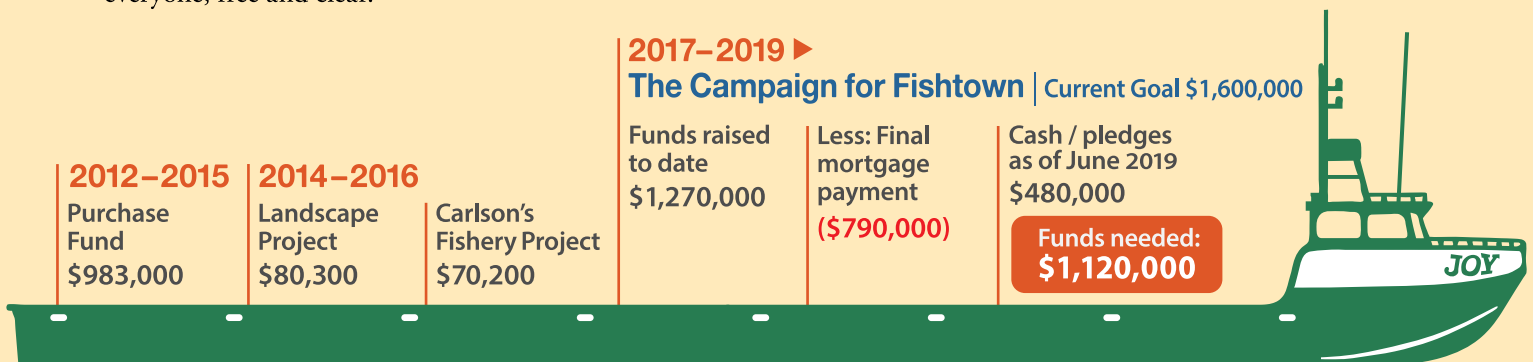
What lies ahead are the remaining goals of the Campaign: rehabilitation of the Morris Shanty, the Cheese Shanty and Carlson's Fishery; the installation of a new entryway with barrier-free access; infrastructure work; landscaping; and dock replacement. And, as a result of the higher lake levels, the need is more urgent than ever.

The project costs are estimated at \$1,600,000. Our community has invested generously in the preservation of Fishtown since its acquisition by FPS in 2007. We need your continued support in our efforts to protect this treasured historic and regional asset.

You can support The Campaign for Fishtown with:

- One-time gift of cash or securities
- Multi-year pledge payable by December 31, 2021*

*Payments on Jeffris pledges must be received by June 30, 2021



The donors to the prior campaigns now incorporated into The Campaign for Fishtown, and the donors to the current campaign, are listed below. We are grateful for the support of these contributors.

Campaign for Fishtown Donors 2017-March 2019

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Fishtown Landscape Project 2014

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Carlson's Fishery Project 2014-2016

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SOS! SAVE OUR SHANTIES

Water impacts have been increasingly severe in Fishtown for several years, and Fishtown Preservation has been going through the complex planning and approvals process to remedy the issues. Recently, however, Fishtown has been battered by both the rise of Lake Michigan's water levels and the increased flow of the Leland River over the Leland Dam, which have taken an additional toll on the historic buildings and aged infrastructure.

The water adds urgency and expenses to what we are doing. In January project costs were estimated at \$1,600,000, and it is expected that these costs may rise along with the water levels—see photos on page 5.

Two donors have come forward with challenge gifts to inspire giving, raise awareness of the crisis facing some of Fishtown's treasured shanties, and to help ensure that the shanty and dock portions of the Campaign for Fishtown projects can begin this mid-October. We appreciate the vision of these donors—they know that the situation in Fishtown requires an SOS to Save Our Shanties.

Double-Match Challenge

A gift at this time to The Campaign for Fishtown will go more than twice as far with a double-match challenge from the Jeffris Family Foundation and an anonymous donor. Please indicate that you would like your gift to be applied to the double-match challenge.

- ① The Jeffris Family Foundation, of Janesville, Wisconsin, has pledged a match for donations designated to the rehabilitation of Carlson's Fishery, the Village Cheese Shanty, and Fishtown's oldest building, the Morris Shanty. Upon raising \$320,000—Fishtown Preservation will receive \$160,000 from the Foundation.
- ② To inspire gifts to the Jeffris Family Foundation match, an anonymous donor has offered to match dollar for dollar up to \$50,000 in gifts towards the rehabilitation of the three shanties. The challenge is to "anyone who loves Fishtown" to show that love with a gift.

Current high water levels and seiches have exacerbated the critical work needed to preserve Fishtown now and for future generations. Shanty work must begin by mid-October.

For more information about **The Campaign for Fishtown** please contact Amanda Holmes at 231-256-8878 or aholmes@fishtownmi.org. You can also visit our website at FishtownMI.org.

12 YEARS

Fishtown Preservation | Fishtown
February 7, 2007 • February 7, 2019

This past February, people from the Leland community and beyond came together in Fishtown on a cold, windy evening to celebrate the payment of the final mortgage installment for the Fishtown property. We gathered around a fire pit—donors, board members, and staff—and fed the mortgage into the flames. Many others joined us in spirit from afar, grateful that Fishtown will be here when they return in the spring, summer, and all the seasons ahead.

This event was a milestone in the work of the past dozen years. Your gifts and steadfastness have made everything possible: the 2007 purchase, getting the *Joy* out fishing again, rehabilitation of most of the shanties, acquisition of property on the south side of the river, on-site education, and assuring that Fishtown remains an authentic place that benefits the community and region. Fishtown is the docks, the boats, the water, the fish, the shanties, the shops, the smokehouses, the weather—and all of you.

Thanks to your support, Fishtown now belongs to everyone, and we can focus on what it will take to keep it flourishing into the future, starting with the pending projects of the Campaign for Fishtown.

- 1 In 2007 Fishtown Preservation rejoiced at the success of the “Save Fishtown” Campaign.
- 2 Most of Fishtown’s shanties were rehabilitated during the record-setting cold and snows of the 2013/2014 winter.
- 3 This crew helped get *Joy* to a machine shop in late 2015, where she had her sides raised and got a fresh coat of paint.
- 4 Completed in 2010, the Steffens & Stallman Shanty (Diversions) was FPS’s first shanty rehabilitation project.
- 5 The Friends of Fishtown 5K began in 2009 and has been an anticipated event each July.
- 6 Alan Priest has worked in Fishtown since the 1970s. Here he wheels freshly smoked fish into Carlson’s in 2016.
- 7 Thanks to the efforts of Captain Joel Petersen and his crew, commercial fishing continues uninterrupted in Fishtown, here loading equipment off the Hall family’s shanty dock.
- 8 The Mancini family were the first winners of a raffle for a week in FPS’s vacation rental, The Otherside, staying in 2017.
- 9 Craig Miller, Joanie Woods and Kathryn Eckert (from left to right) worked ceaselessly starting in 2005 to save Fishtown—and celebrated paying off the debt in February 2019.
- 10 In early 2016 Fishtown Preservation acquired the Morris Shanty and The Otherside on the south side of the Leland River.
- 11 Burying the utilities in spring 2014 and removing the power lines changed the view of Fishtown forever.
- 12 The Fishtown in Lights display of December 2018 and February 2019 honored all who have made saving Fishtown possible – past, present and future.

FISHTOWNMI.ORG

PHOTO BY KETH BURNHAM





THANK YOU FISHTOWN DONORS

Donors \$20,000 and above

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the Community Foundation
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the accuracy of these tribute gifts.
Please notify us of any errors or omissions.*

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*"We are Anchors because without
Fishtown, Leland would just be
another small town in Michigan."*

*—Mil and Val Schuette,
Fishtown Anchors*

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Show your support and lend stability —become a **Fishtown Anchor**

An anchor's purpose is to keep something in place, to provide stability and a solid presence.

Fishtown Anchors are those individuals/families who have pledged to donate a minimum of \$500 each year to support and lend stability to Fishtown's operating fund.

Fishtown Business Anchors pledge to donate annually at level options: Platinum \$2500, Gold \$1000, Silver \$500, and Bronze \$250.

Fishtown preservation is a forever project, but there is no time like the present to give. Complete and send in the attached envelope, sign-up online at FishtownMI.org or call 231-256-8878.

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Dam Candy Store
Shine of Traverse City
Randy and Joanie Woods

RUN LIKE A FISH! FISHTOWN 5K ~ JULY 20 | 9AM



The annual Friends of Fishtown 5K is for the serious runner and the whole family. This year's theme is "Run Like a Fish!" with a fish costume contest *sponsored by Two Fish Gallery*. Dress-up like a fish (or just a "fish" hat is great) and you may win an award or prize!

Saturday, July 20 ~ 9:00am

Registration: \$30 thru June 30 | \$35 July 1-20

Registration includes:

- Fishtown 5K t-shirt (toddler, youth, adult sizes)
- Reusable water bottle
- Post-race refreshments and award ceremony

Register: Fishtown Welcome Center, FPS office 203 E Cedar, Leland or FishtownMI.org. For more information call 231-256-8878.

FISHTOWN 2018 IN REFLECTION



◀ Keith Burnham visits Fishtown and other Leland sights every day. On this September day we caught him at the overlook deck, watching the cloud formations change over Fishtown. In honor of his love of Fishtown, FPS honored Keith at the Fishtown in Lights ceremony in mid-December.

▼ The namesakes of Fishtown Preservation's commercial fishing vessels *Joy* and *Janice Sue*, Joy Lang Anderson and Janice Sue Kiessel proudly served as Tug Queens in the Leland 4th of July Parade.



◀ Fishtown summer interns Katie Staudacher (far left) and Colin Wagner (far right) joined DNR vessel *S/V Steelhead* crew for a day of Great Lakes fisheries research, with Captain Jerry Ranville, Kris Snyder, Pat O'Neill, and Matt Anderson.



◀ Brad Smith, Stephen Uhl and Gary Kuepfer of Shine in Traverse City installed 3800 feet of white lights for Fishtown in Lights. To not damage the shanties, each bulb had to be placed under the edge of shingles. Shine also sponsored the display.

▼ The children of this family were going to try smoked fish for the first time, and enjoyed picking out the perfect piece at Carlson's.



▲ Water levels rose significantly in 2018, going higher when the Leland Dam was opened wider to regulate Lake Leelanau's level during significant rain events. The Morris Shanty (left) flooded several times during the summer and half of the dock had to be removed. The shanty, built in 1903, is still used for Fishtown's commercial fishing operations.

► The shanty rooftops were lit December 14 through January 6 in honor of Fishtown Preservation's first twelve years of saving Fishtown, then were relit on February 7 in celebration of making the final mortgage payment.



Fishtown Preservation Society **Honoraria & Memorials**

Gifts Given in Honor

April 1, 2018 - April 30, 2019

Tamera and Jackson Bamford

Andrew Bamford

Linda Lindquist-Bishop Brian

Bishop

John and Kris Martin

Mike and Brenda Zemmin

Sally Bracken

J. Frederic and Elizabeth

Bracken Wiese

Sandy Bracken

J. Frederic and Elizabeth

Bracken Wiese

Will Bracken

J. Frederic and Elizabeth

Bracken Wiese

Mike Brown

Laurie Kay Sommers

Biscuit Burnham

Marceil Johnson

Keith Burnham

Chuck and Kay Robertson

Keith and Joanne Burnham

Julia Ann Burnham

Christopher Curtis

Gary and Mary Burnham Curtis

Patty Croom

Barbara Wotila

Berkley Duck III

Dave Edelstein and Jennie Berkson

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Lee J. Workum, Jr.

Taya Workum

Joanie Woods

Jim and Elizabeth Fisher

Jeff and Nancy Fisher

Phil and Kathy Scherer

Walter and Leslie Schmid

Liz and Scot Zimmerman

Gifts Given in Memory

April 1, 2018 - April 30, 2019

Jack Allen

Glenn E. and Ellen G. Allen

Mathias Alten

Anita M. Gilleo

George A. Basta, Jr.

Julia Walter

Nancy Carlson Bowes

Warren and Ann Watkins

Frank Bracken

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Bracken Wiese

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Amanda Holmes and

Daniel Stewart

Kathryn Bishop Eckert Omoto

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Eloise Lund

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“Fishtown is like family – love it no matter what the weather or circumstances. But the great thing is that it’s like the oldest family member we have, with all the connection to days past, but who stays with us forever, constantly renewing.”

—John and Kacia Morris,
Fishtown Business Anchor, Leelanau Books

WHAT DO **YOU** LOVE MOST ABOUT FISHTOWN?

We recently asked our Fishtown Anchors, “What it is you love most about Fishtown?” Responses show that what people love about Fishtown runs from the personal to the practical—but all reveal that Fishtown is not just appreciated, but treasured. Please share with us what **you** love most about Fishtown at info@fishtownmi.org.

“What we like most about Fishtown:
The water; The boats, *Joy* AND *Janice Sue*; That bridge thing with the waterfall under it; The waterfall.”

—Frances and Louise Hall,
Fishtown Anchors
(as told to their father, Evan Hall)

“What I love most about Fishtown is the authenticity and that it was my first retail location. If it were not for Fishtown I would not have been able to do it. I thank Fishtown for the opportunity to achieve my dream of owning a retail store!”

—Lizzi Lambert,
Fishtown Business Anchor, *Haystacks*



Will Larson (center) joined commercial fisherman Jerry Vanlandschoot (left) and FPS board member Dan McDavid (right) in June 2009 to see the newly refurbished *Joy* before going out fishing.

THANK YOU **WILL**



Fishtown Preservation would like to recognize Wilfred (Will) Larson, who passed away on March 30, 2019. He was 91 years old. Will and his wife Joan, who passed away in 2017, both championed the cause of preserving Fishtown, from 2005, when Fishtown’s future was in doubt, to the present. He’d visit Fishtown often, hands in pockets, a quiet observer.

Will expressed his love of Fishtown in the letter he wrote as Honorary Chair of the current Campaign for Fishtown. “My wife Joan and I began coming to Leland after we moved to Cincinnati in 1963. When charter boats began fishing from Fishtown, I was inspired to run a charter myself for several years. This literally tied me to Fishtown’s docks, and also marked the beginning of friendships—many with people who grew up here in town—that have spanned decades. There are parts of my life—my home, my family, my friends—that are priceless to me. Leland has been my home for more than half a century, and a big part of what makes Leland special to me is Fishtown.”

We thank you, Will, for your vision, dedication, kindness and generosity. *You will be missed.*



PO Box 721
203 E Cedar Street
Leland, MI 49654

Fishtown Preservation Society, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is made up of dedicated staff and community volunteers who have come together to preserve and protect Fishtown.

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*All photos in publication by
Amanda Holmes unless noted*

Many go fishing all their lives without knowing
that it is not fish they are after. — Henry David Thoreau

A Fishtown late-spring evening, May 21, 2019.

FRONT COVER: Heavy rains in late summer and fall sent high volumes of water over the Leland Dam, sometimes causing whitewater conditions in Fishtown, like on the day of this photo, September 5, 2018.

