

Farms & Cabins

Sleeping Bear Dunes
National Lakeshore
Michigan



DISCOVER THE RICH HISTORY OF 13 ORIGINAL FARMS & CABINS LOCATED IN SLEEPING BEAR DUNES



A Publication of
Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes

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Learn more about the **Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes**, our mission, projects, and accomplishments on our web site. Support our efforts to keep Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore a wonderful natural and historic place by becoming a member or volunteering for a project that can put your skills to work in the park.

This booklet was compiled by Kerry Kelly, **Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes**.

Most of the content for this booklet was taken from various NPS research and interpretive documents at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. Maps were prepared by James Kozacek.

Information about North Unity came from an NPS report referencing Littell, Edmund – 1965, **100 Years in Leelanau**. The Print Shop, Leland, Michigan.

The source of information on the Bufka farmstead and family is **From Bohemia to Good Harbor** by Norbert Bufka. Another book by Norbert Bufka sheds light on the village of Good Harbor: **Good Harbor, Michigan – The story and the people 1850-1931**. Both books are available at local bookstores.

Information about the Kropp farm and Charles Kropp Sr. was provided by Marc Bartnik and Kathy (Kropp) Bartnik and is dedicated in Kathy's memory. She was the great-great-granddaughter of Charles Kropp Sr.

More information on local history of the Sleeping Bear Dunes area is available on the Area History section of www.friendsofsleepingbear.org and www.vzoralhistory.com.

While the **Port Oneida Rural Historic District**, located about 3 miles north of Glen Arbor is the largest agricultural community of farmsteads in Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, there are many other interesting historic farms and cabins to explore. Just like Port Oneida, these buildings represent settlements that date from the mid-1800s to mid-1900s. This booklet describes the farms and cabins that are not included in Port Oneida.

Most visitors to Sleeping Bear Dunes drive right past these buildings without giving them a thought, but now that you have this booklet, you may be more inclined to take a moment to stop and explore the farmsteads and think about the people who built the buildings and lived here. Feel free to get out of your car at any of the stops described here and walk around the farm or cabin and imagine what it would have been like to live here in 1900 when the site was in operation. Most of the buildings are near state or county roads, so very little hiking will be required to get to most of the farms and cabins. The exception is the Treat Farm, which requires a ½ mile hike to the farm, but it is definitely worth the effort!

There are two clusters of farms and cabins described here. One cluster is in the northern region of the Lakeshore and the other is in the southern region. See the maps in the back of the booklet (pages 21 & 22). Let's start our tour by exploring the southern region of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore then we'll head to the northern region of the Lakeshore.

South Lakeshore Region

Ken-Tuck-U-Inn

From the southern border of the Lakeshore (identified by the **Welcome to Sleeping Bear Dunes** sign) on M-22 near Crystal Lake, drive north along M-22 about 0.3 miles to Long Lake Road, which intersects M-22 from the east. The Ken-Tuck-U-Inn is located on the east side of M-22 at Long Lake Rd. Get out of the car and walk down the driveway to the garage and around the inn.

This little inn represents the final chapter in the story of the logging village of Aral, which was located a few miles north of here at the end of Esch Road where Otter Creek drains into Lake Michigan. Robert Bancroft, a printer and photographer was the first white settler in this area. By 1882, Dr. Aurthur O'Leary, who owned most of the land in the area,



built a sawmill on Otter Creek. By the mid-1880s, Aral had a population of about 200 – mostly mill hands and lumbermen. As the mill town began to grow, Robert Bancroft opened a general store to supply the growing town. His son, Bertie, was born in Aral. Eventually the trees were all harvested and the mill closed down in 1911. Our tour will take you to Aral when we visit the Esch Farm a bit later.

Bertie Bancroft was the last one to leave Aral in the early 1920s, and in 1925 he sold his land in Aral and built the **Ken-Tuck-U-Inn** to serve the growing tourist trade. Bertie and his wife Donna operated the inn. About this time, several other farm inns developed in the area to serve the growing tourist industry. The late 1920s saw the beginning of the transition from a logging and subsistence farming economy to a tourism economy. Produce grown on the farm was used to make meals for the guests, which was more valuable than selling it wholesale to local markets.



Ken-Tuck-U-Inn stairwell

The house was built larger than a typical family farmhouse to accommodate the boarders and diners. Chicken dinners using their own farm-raised chickens were a Sunday specialty at the inn. During the peak tourist season, Donna and her staff prepared Sunday dinners for over 100 guests on her wood stove. Dairy products like milk, whipped cream, and ice cream came from the family cows.

Boarders often returned year after year until they purchased their own summer cottages, and many became good friends. The house, which was painted pale yellow, was surrounded by gardens, flower beds, and trees. A sunroom was filled with books and seashells. Bertie lived in this house until his death in 1963. Donna died the following year.

As you peek in the windows or sit on the steps to the back porch, you can almost hear the chatter and laughter of the guests as they enjoy a good chicken dinner in this serene country setting.

Boekeloo Lodge

Now, get back in the car and continue driving north along M-22 about 2.1 miles to Boekeloo Road. Turn left (west) onto the 2-track road that leads to the Boekeloo Lodge. You can drive, ride your bike, or hike on the road for 1.2 miles before you come to the cabin on a quiet little pond.

The first thing you notice is the quiet beauty of the pond and surrounding forest. The reflection of the cabin on the still water of the pond makes you want to sit right down and enjoy the natural setting.

The pond is actually a cranberry bog dug out by Boekeloo in the late 1940s. They dug a canal to the Platte River to fill the bog. There are no cranberries any more, but there is still evidence of the canal. The lodge was built as a homestead cabin by the Cooper family, who hunted, trapped, fished, and tended a garden to survive on the sandy soil of Platte Plains from 1932 to 1935.



Boekeloo Lodge 2007

When the Boekeloo family acquired the cabin in 1945, it had been abandoned for ten years. They repaired and modernized the cabin and used it as a wilderness vacation spot until the property was acquired by the National Park Service.

Walk around the lodge and peek in the windows to get a glimpse of vacation life in this little cabin in the woods. If you're up for a hike to Lake Michigan, follow the trail about 1 mile through the woods and beach dunes to a secluded beach. The trail from M-22 to Lake Michigan is ideal for cross country skiing or snowshoeing in the winter.

Esch Farm



Esch Farm House 2007

Are you ready to head to Aral? Drive back out to M-22 and then go north 8.5 miles to Esch Road. Turn west and go about ¼ mile to the Esch house on the north side of the road. This Victorian house was built around 1890 as part of a farmstead that provided livestock, dairy, and fruit to the inhabitants of Aral. The barn and other out-buildings have been removed and the house is now used for housing for Park staff.

Continue down Esch Road to Lake Michigan, and take the opportunity to walk the beach and see where Otter Creek enters the lake. Near the vault toilet is an interpretive sign that describes the ghost town of Aral.

Tweddle School

Drive back to M-22 and head north for 2.1 miles to Norconk Road and turn west. The Tweddle School is on the southwest corner of this intersection. It was built in about 1895 and served the little farming community until the schools were consolidated and the building was converted to a residence. The bell tower was removed, but the exterior of the building displays much of its original character as a school. Note the two entrances: one for boys and one for girls. A row of lilac bushes borders the school yard.



Tweddle School 2007

Pelky Barn



Pelky Barn from behind 2007

The barn next door to the school is the Pelky barn. It was built about 1875, and is the only building of the farmstead remaining. The L-plan, timber-frame, and vertical board siding is typical of barns of northern Michigan.

Tweddle Farm

Drive west on Norconk Road for about ½ mile. The road will turn south and on the corner is the Tweddle Farmstead. Park your car at the corner and walk around the barn and outbuildings. This picturesque farm was home to the Tweddle family. David Tweddle homesteaded this farm in 1867 and received the patent for the land in 1873.



Tweddle House and Barn 2006

David was born in 1829 in Cumberland Co. England and died in Empire in 1903. He was elected to numerous township offices including Supervisor and Justice of the Peace. He was also Leelanau County Treasurer in the 1880s. They grew ginseng in large arbors around 1910. Sometime later, the Crouch family purchased the farm from the Tweddle family. The farmhouse is now used for temporary housing for Lakeshore Staff, volunteers, and the Artist-in-Residence program.



George & son David in ginseng arbor



Tweddle Farm outbuildings 2007

The buildings are typical of small family farms. The barn was used for dairy cattle in the bottom level with hay storage above. The metal silo near the barn was used for silage (chopped corn or hay that was stored wet and fermented over time). The other smaller silo may have been used to store dry grains. There are also several smaller buildings: a corn crib, granary, chicken coop, pump house, etc.

Treat Farm

Now for a “Treat” you’ll have to take a hike – but it is well worth the effort! The trail that leads from the corner of Norconk Road into the woods is about ½ mile long through the maple-beech forest and will take you to the Treat Farm. As you reach the top of the hill, the canopy of trees opens up to a view of the farmstead. A portion of the original barn has been rebuilt on the original foundation.

The garage is the unique cement dome structure ahead of you and the little root cellar built into the hill near the garage also has a cement dome structure. The frame farmhouse has a great view of the fields from the front porch with an orchard behind it. Below the barn and garage are machine sheds for storing farm equipment.



Treat Barn and garage 2007

The trail follows the edge of the field about ½ mile to the bluff overlooking Lake Michigan. This hike is beautiful in all seasons of the year. The spring and summer show off a wide array of wildflowers. Fall offers beautifully colored leaves in contrast with the blues of Lake Michigan, and winter provides great skiing and snowshoeing.

As mentioned earlier, the first building on this property was believed to be a log cabin built by John Tweddle around 1840 just west of the current house. This one-room log house was used as a playhouse for the children until the 1930s. No evidence of the log house remains. The Tweddle family built the current farmhouse around 1880, and they later moved to the corner of Norconk Road, where they built the Tweddle farmstead described above.

Charles Treat and his wife, Martha, purchased 220 acres west of Norconk Road from Mr. Tweddle in 1912. Treat purchased the barn in the Detroit area and had it disassembled, with each piece numbered. The barn was shipped in two railroad cars to the Empire area. From there it was moved to the site using a horse-drawn team. Charles Treat built the foundation and reassembled the barn. The house, chicken coop, and carpentry workshops were already at the farm when the Treat family moved here.

The family called the house the “Senate”. Later one of Charles’ sons, either James or Donald, built another house of cement block near Norconk Road. This became known as the “House of Representatives”. This house has been removed.



Treat House 2006



Treat rain-water system 2007

A major problem for the Treat family was the lack of running water at the farm. They hired a contractor to drill a well. He worked at it for over a year, and found that he had to go down about 300 feet to find water. In a short time the well clogged with sand, so a series of gutters was added to the roof of the house to drain rain water into a cistern built into the ground. This system of rain water collection can be seen today as you walk to the rear of the house. The kitchen had a small pump over the sink to pump out of the cistern. This was the only running water in the house.

Additional water was brought up to the farm from a spring about ¼ mile east of the house. The small spring was on the side of one of the valleys by the road. A small pool was excavated into the side of the hill and a pipe was used to bring the water down to the road. Water was transported to a wooden tank near the barn. A tub was used to water the animals and the rest was carried to the house.

The original front porch of the house was removed and rebuilt with a concrete foundation. This design allowed a basement workshop to be built under the porch. A forge was also added under the porch with a vent to a metal smokestack located off the wood shed. The forge was used to make metal hinges and tools for woodworking. Most of these parts were for family use, not for sale. Some of the tools are preserved at the Empire Area Museum.



Treat Garage from walkway to the house 2007

Charles Treat was an engineer, and he loved to experiment and invent things that could be used around the farm. After pouring the foundation for the barn, he continued to experiment with concrete. He probably started with the root cellar, which is a rounded concrete structure built into the hill near the garage. Later he built the garage using an eggshell design. The walls were first constructed with 4” thick rebar reinforced concrete.

Then the roof was started with a heavy frame of cedar with an earthen form around it. The concrete was poured one bucket at a time. Steel rebar was bent to the circular design we see today. The roof was 2.5 inches thick with a spiral rebar pattern for strength.

Most of the crops grown by the Treat family were for their own consumption. They grew asparagus, apples, beans, plums, potatoes, and raspberries. They also grew corn and hay to feed the animals. They had two unshod horses, which they used to work the land. They milked about 12 Jersey cows by hand twice each day. They used the milk and separated cream. Chickens provided eggs and meat. They didn’t raise hogs even though ham was one of their favorite meats.

Within a few years the sandy soil began to deplete, but with addition of manure and commercial fertilizers along with crop rotation, they continued farming into the 1930s.

North Lakeshore Region (See maps on pages 21 & 22)

Now it's time to drive to the northern region of the Lakeshore. Go back to M-22 and drive north to the intersection of M-22, CR-677 (Benzonia Trail), and CR-616 MacFarlane Road). This intersection is just before you cross the Glen Lake Narrows. Drive about 1.6 miles on CR-616 MacFarlane Road to Inspiration Point, which is a little scenic turnout with a magnificent view of Lake Michigan, North Manitou Island, and Glen Lake. Just to your left as you enjoy the view is a log cabin called the Faust Cabin.

Faust Cabin (Glen Craig)

This summer vacation cabin was built by George and Mary Faust in 1929. They called it Glen Craig. Their main home was in Chicago. Mary attended the University of Chicago and majored in philosophy and botany. She learned of the Sleeping Bear Dunes area in her botany classes and wanted to see the moving dunes for herself. She and George came to Glen Haven by steamship in 1914 or 1915. They were met on the dock by DH Day and stayed in one of the inns on Glen Lake. They eventually found the property on the bluff on the south side of Glen Lake, which was used as a roll-a-way to roll logs down to Glen Lake. As a result, there were no trees obscuring the view. You can see Big Glen Lake, Glen Arbor, and North Manitou Island. The island is framed by Alligator Hill on the west and Miller Hill on the east.



George and Mary used the cabin in the summer. They would come to Glen Haven by steamship from Chicago, and Mary and the children would stay for the summer. George would commute back to Chicago for work. He would watch from the cabin for the steamship to dock at Glen Haven and then he would know it was time to leave to catch the boat back to Chicago.

The cabin was designed by Mary Faust and Frank Sohn. Frank was George's very close friend and prize student of architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Mary and Frank worked together on the house design and much of the furniture. The unique design of the cedar log cabin and natural wood furniture provide a natural theme for this summer cottage.

The cabin and furniture was built by Fred Miller, whose family owned the land we know as Miller Hill. It took about a year to build the house. Fred was also a skilled boat-builder and helped Mary's son build his own wooden boat, which he raced.



Faust Cabin Living Room – Main Level

As you walk in on the main level, you are inside a large 2-story living room with a balcony on three sides. There are two bedrooms upstairs along with sitting areas on the balcony. The handrails and built-in bookshelves are made from natural wood – not dimensional lumber. The bottom level of the house includes the kitchen, dining room, and a utility room.

There was a path with stairs and six landing sites with benches that wound down the hill to Glen Lake. There is also a garden on the south side of McFarlane Road opposite the cabin. There was a gravel path that led to a gate at the entrance to the garden.

Shalda Cabin

Drive back to the intersection with M-22 and cross the Narrows. Drive to Glen Arbor and follow M-22 to CR-669 (Bohemian Road). Just before you get to CR-669, you will see an old cabin on your right standing alone in a field.

This cabin is believed to have been built in the mid-1850s by Bohemian immigrants who settled in the North Unity and Shalda Corners area. North Unity was located near where Shalda Creek empties into Lake Michigan about ½ mile west of the end of County Road 669 and a couple of miles west of the former location of the Good Harbor dock located at the end of County Road 651. Several families moved here from Chicago in 1855, and because there was no time for each family to stake their homestead claim before winter set in, they built a barracks 150 feet by 20 feet with rooms partitioned off for each family.

The village thrived during the next few years as more people arrived. It had a schoolhouse, sawmill, and store. In 1859, it was awarded a post office, and Joseph Shalda built a gristmill on the Lake Michigan outlet of the creek that bears his name. In 1871 (the same year as the Chicago Fire) the village was destroyed by fire, so the villagers moved inland to Shalda Corners (M-22 & CR 669).



Shalda Cabin 2006



Inside the Shalda Cabin during restoration

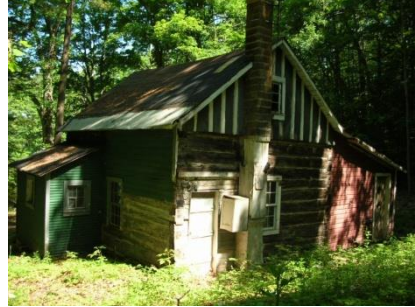
This cabin was in poor condition when the Lakeshore obtained the property. It was surrounded by brush and weeds and the lower logs were rotted. Significant reconstruction work has been done to restore the cabin to its current condition. The cabin shows early log construction techniques of the Czech and German immigrants who settled in North Unity and Shalda Corners. They had brought methodology for building cabins from hand-hewn timbers from their native Black Forest of Central Europe. Note the dovetail notched corners of the logs.

Kraitz Cabin

Let's go back to the car for a short ride to an interesting little log cabin that was hidden in plain sight. Turn south on CR-669 and drive 0.8 miles. Look for a little green cottage on your left (east) setting about 100 feet from the road. This is known as the Kraitz cabin. The cabin looked like a 1940s era cottage. When the Park Service took ownership and began to inspect the building, they found a very well preserved hewn-log cabin underneath the clapboard siding!



Kraitz cabin from the driveway 2007



Kraitz cabin from behind 2007

The cabin was built approximately 1856. It was the first permanent dwelling built on the Francis Kraitz homestead, which is about one mile further south on CR-669. The homestead is on the west side of the road across from the St. Joseph Catholic Church on top of the hill. Because the family story is typical of many early settlers in North Unity, it will be described in some detail.

Francis (Frank) Kraitz, his wife Antonia, and their family arrived in Chicago from Pelhrimov, Bohemia in August, 1855. Shortly before their arrival several German families and a few Czechs formed a society they called "Verein" which is the German word for club or association. The Verein hired a sailboat to take them north in search of land to settle. They selected a site along the shores of Good Harbor Bay across from the Manitou Islands.

A barracks was built about 150 feet by 20 feet and divided into sections to provide temporary housing for families until they could select farm sites and build their own cabins. Some families or individuals built their own temporary shelters near the barracks to get them through the first winter. They were intended to be replaced by permanent structures during the next summer. Joseph Krubner, a boy of 10 years old at the time, later wrote about the construction, "It was great fun watching new homes being built in North Unity. Everybody had his own idea. Some houses were all covered with hemlock branches, leaving small openings for windows. They looked like little bear huts instead of homes for humans. Some places they built the log houses so low it was difficult for a tall man to stand up in one." (Littell 1965) Some of these houses were built near the barracks and others were built inland on homestead sites.

A typhoid epidemic in Chicago caused the Kraitz family and their friends, the Vaclav Muzil family and the Krubner family to leave quickly for North Unity, which they did in October, 1855. Their ship ran aground off Racine, WI, but fortunately they were picked up two hours later by the *Lady Elgin* and taken to North Manitou Island. After a few days they were able to take a small boat to North Unity. The Muzils moved into the barracks, but the Kraitzs and Krubners moved near the Krubners' Uncle Stepanek's shelter.

Food supplies became low during the winter and the community was near starvation. Frank Kraitz and Vaclav Muzil and a few other men set out for the Manitou Islands across the frozen Lake Michigan to seek food at the nearest settlement. They were able to buy a few bushels of potatoes, which they carried back across the lake on a sled. The trip nearly cost the men their lives because the ice was cracking and breaking apart as they neared shore.

During the late fall and early winter, Frank Kraitz most likely hiked the surrounding land looking for the best location to homestead. Like the others, he sought well-drained, level land free of pines. He probably picked a location that had many tall sugar maples, which was an indication of fertile soil. He picked a spot about three miles from Lake Michigan. Frank Kraitz built this log cabin as the first building on his homestead. A few teams of draft animals were brought to the community in 1856. They were used to move the massive logs to the building sites. The first masses for the St. Joseph parish were held in the Kraitz cabin. The St. Joseph church, which still stands was built across the road from the Kraitz cabin. A general store was also located at the corner of M-22 and CR-669. It was locally known as Shalda Corners and served the community until the early 1970s.



Kraitz cabin interior log wall 2007

Like other cabins built in this area during that time, Kraitz built his cabin of logs hewn on two sides 7-8 inches wide and 10-14 inches high. The logs were close fitted so that the top of one rested on the log below it for its full length with only an occasional small gap. The corner notches are dove-tailed like the drawers of finely crafted furniture. The dove-tails were cut with a saw. The cabin was 16 feet by 20 feet and

1.5 stories with a loft that ran the whole length of the cabin. The log walls raise three logs above the floor of the second story. Hewn tie beams of 6 inches by 6 inches are mortised into the log wall and form the floor joists for the second

floor. A steep stairway along one wall leads to the second floor. No evidence of a fireplace was found. The cabin was probably heated with a wood stove.

The cabin has four doors, but only two appear to be original. They are each 73 inches high. The other two doors are higher (80 inches) and appear to have been windows that were enlarged and made into doors. The gable ends are constructed of sawn boards. The roof rafters are round cedar posts 4 inches in diameter. There is no ridge pole, and roofing is made of one-inch thick boards with wide spaces and asphalt shingles. There are traces of older wood shingles.

Francis Kraitz was continuing the tradition of his Czech heritage when he built his log cabin. The Czech lands of Bohemia (Kraitz's home), Moravia, and Moravian Silesia have a long tradition of horizontal log construction. In this area of forested mountains and foothills in Central Europe, log construction had been a common building technique for hundreds of years. The houses were sophisticated multi-room two-story dwellings. Some in use today have lasted over 300 years.

The Kraitz cabin is similar in design to the Shalda Cabin, and the North Unity School, which is just inside the Port Oneida Rural Historic District near Narada Lake on M-22. They may have been built by the same people.

This cabin is in very good condition because it has been used as a dwelling almost continuously since its construction. Frank Kraitz and his family lived in the cabin on the homestead farm. His son, Wenzel built a wood frame house, but the cabin continued to be used for members of the extended family. For many years it was used for the "grandparents' house" keeping with Bohemian tradition of having the grandparents live in a separate house on the same property. In 1945 John Kraitz (3rd generation) moved the house to a site beside School Lake and just a few years later, moved it across the road to its current location. Several modifications were made during this move.

Bufka Farm

Let's get back to the car and drive back to M-22. Turn north (right) and drive 3.8 miles to the Bufka farm. As you approach the farm, you will see it below road level on your left from M-22. It is one of the most picturesque farmsteads in the Lakeshore. Turn into the driveway and walk around the buildings.



Joseph Bergman, born in Baden, Germany about 1804, originally homesteaded this land. He and his family immigrated to this area in the 1850s and built a cabin on this site. The cabin is believed to still exist, but has been incorporated into the chicken coop. It is typical for a homestead to be established and cabin to be built for the family to live in for a few years while the land is being cleared and barns and other out-buildings are built. Then a larger house is built for the family, and the original log cabin is used for other purposes. None of the other Bergman buildings have survived.

The Bergman family moved to Chicago and the land was deeded to their daughter, Mary and her husband Nikodem Tabor. It is unclear how long the Tabors lived on the farm, but on September 20, 1880, Charles Faustin Bufka purchased the entire 200 acres and built the farm house that you see today. As death approached, Charles Bufka deeded 120 acres to his son Joseph, 40 acres to his son Edward, and 40 acres to his wife, Mary. The land was further subdivided by family members until it was finally purchased by the National Park Service.

Most of the farm's land was on the other side of M-22 from the buildings. The fields were rolling hills, and the Bufka's grew a variety of grains, hay, and corn for the animals, and potatoes and other vegetables for their own consumption. They raised chickens for eggs and meat and raised pigs for meat. They also had a few dairy cows to provide milk and cream, which they used and sold the excess for cash. There were a variety of fruit trees scattered over the yard including apple, apricot, pear, and plum. Only the apricot and a couple of apple trees remain. They also raised strawberries and had a large vegetable garden. Most of the food was used for the family's own consumption.

The farm had many acres of forest containing sugar maples, so making maple syrup became a family activity in the 1940s. The sap would be collected and boiled in an open pan over a wood fire. In the 1960s the family built a sugar shack on the other side of M-22 and sold the syrup to raise cash.

Walk around and look at each of the buildings. The house was built in 1880 by Charles Bufka with a fieldstone foundation, clapboard walls, a wooden shingle roof, and brick chimney. The kitchen and dining room were added in the fall of 1892. Electricity came to the farm in 1928 from the Leland Dam, and Joseph Bufka (Charles' youngest son) helped put in the poles and lines. The farm was at the end of the line and still is.



Bufka house 2007

The garage was originally built in the 1920s as a 2-bay garage, and the other two bays were added in the 1960s. The log chicken coop is believed to be the original log cabin the Bergman family built on the homestead. The modification to make it into a chicken coop was done around 1940. The logs are visible on the east and north sides of the building.



Bufka original cabin and now chicken coop

The barn was built in 1908. Its construction is typical of barns in this area with a stone foundation, vertical board siding, and a cedar shingle roof. The metal roof was added in the 1940s. It is 24 feet by 36 feet with heavy hewn mortise and tenon frame. The gambrel roof has a large center ridge and a cross-gabled cupola with shutter vents adds character. The barn is built on a sloping hill so you could enter the upper floor on ground level to unload hay and the lower floor where the dairy cows, horses, and pigs were housed is accessible at ground level around to the north side where the ground sloped down to the swamp. The upper floor had a hay sling on a pulley system that was used to stack hay in the hay mow. A team of horses or later a tractor was used to lift the hay from the wagon to the top of the mow. Hay was raked into furrows and then pitched by hand onto the wagon until the 1950s when they hired a neighbor to bale the hay.



Bufka Barn 2007



Bufka Granary 2007

The granary/storage shed area is actually three structures all adjoined. It was used to store corn and grain to feed the farm animals. Note that the granary was built on a foundation above ground level and was built tightly. This was to keep the mice and other rodents from easy access to the grain. Most of the grain was stored on the second floor in bins with chutes to the first floor where it could be put into buckets to feed the animals. There is a corn crib built onto the granary as a lean-to. The corn crib was built with slats spaced a couple of inches apart to allow the corn to dry.

The shop is the last building to look at, south of the granary. The original part faces west and may have been built by the Bergmans. The next part was built in 1912 and housed the forge and anvil of Charles Bufka, who was also a blacksmith. He made and repaired many farm tools in this shop. The final part, facing north was added in 1953 and was used as a carpenter shop.

Eitzen Farm

Back to the car! Be careful as you exit the driveway of the Bufka farm and turn left on M-22. This is a steep approach to the road and visibility can be limited. Drive about 0.1 miles to Townline Road and turn right (south) and go about 0.1 miles to the Eitzen Farm, which is on your left (east). Stop and walk around the farm. This is a good example of a small dairy and fruit farm.

The house was built by John Eitzen about 1890 with an enclosed porch off the kitchen in the rear. The foundation is made of fieldstone and clay. The main entrance to the house opens into the back yard and faces the barn providing efficiency. The layout of the buildings with all the buildings facing a central yard indicates the focus of the family was the farm activities in the barns and workshop. The circular drive allowed trucks and field equipment to drive through. The house was a place to eat – the kitchen was right inside the back door.



Eitzen Farm 2007



Eitzen barn and silo 2006



Eitzen horse barn and barn 2007

The barn, built around 1890, was set up for a small dairy operation. There were probably two alterations in 1926 and 1945 for milking. The cow stalls and stanchions (part of the stalls that latch around the cow's neck to keep her in place during milking) are still in the barn. The silo (built ca. 1910) had a poured concrete foundation and was made from tiles mortared together with an octagon

shaped shingled roof and a small gabled dormer. It was 7 feet in diameter and 28 feet high. You can tell by the photo taken in 2006, that it was starting to fall down, and in 2007, the Park Service took the silo and silage room down. The foundation and four rows of tile are all that remain. As mentioned before, silos on a farm are a good indication of a dairy operation, since the cows needed high protein feed all year long, and the fermented chopped corn or hay were a good source of fiber and protein. When you see a silo, you can bet the farm had cattle (usually dairy, but beef cattle would also be fed silage).

The horse barn (on your left as you enter the driveway) was at one time a chicken house. It was built in 1945 and later altered about 1970. The corn crib is located around behind the barn. It is a V-shaped building with a wooden foundation and wood slat walls to allow the corn to dry after it was picked. It has a metal roof and is about 4 feet wide by 26 feet long. It is mounted on wooden skids and was moved to the Eitzen farm from the Kropp farm. The National Park Service will move it back to its original location if they can identify the location from old photos.

Kropp Farm

Now we're ready to go to our last farm on the tour. You don't have far to go, because the Kropp farm is right on the corner of M-22 and Townline Road. As you drive back to M-22 from the Eitzen farm, turn into the driveway just before you get to the St. Paul's Lutheran Church. The land where the church building and cemetery are located were donated by the Kropp family, and several of the family members are buried in the cemetery. The Kropp farm is missing a large barn and possibly some other buildings from the original farm. The remaining buildings are now divided by the church grounds, so let's look at a couple of buildings on the south side of the church and then go over to the house on the east side.



Kropp Granary 2007



Kropp Smokehouse 2007

Walk up the hill behind the church to the large wooden barn, which is really a large granary. Charles Kropp Sr. came to the U.S. with two brothers (Henry and George) in the early 1850's. They were in the first group of settlers who landed

near where Shalda Creek enters into Good Harbor Bay. They established the village of North Unity in October of 1855. Charles married Amelia and they had 9 children. Charles Sr. and his sons with the help of others, built the dock at Gook Harbor (CR-651). It was 52 feet wide and 550 feet long and could moor 4 ships at a time. They also built a General Store and Blacksmith Shop in the village of Good Harbor. Charles Sr. boarded the steamship propeller Vernon on October 28, 1887 to travel to Milwaukee to get supplies. The ship foundered in high seas near Two Rivers, WI and went down with all passengers and crew. Only one crewmember survived. You can learn more about the Kropp family and the sinking of the Vernon on the Area History section of our web site.

The Kropp family was in the lumber business. They had several teams of horses and hired workers who would drive their teams to the south as far as Cedar and Maple City to get logs from the forest and haul them to the dock at Good Harbor. They needed a large granary to store the feed for the horses. They also had a large barn for hay and to house the horses and to store the harnesses and other equipment. The barn no longer remains. It would take a day for the teamsters to take a team of horses to the forest to pick up a load of logs. They would stay at the lumber camp and then it would take a day to drive the load to the dock. Then they would stay at the Kropp house overnight before heading back for another load.

While you are up on the hill at the granary, notice the unusual small fieldstone building with the metal roof. It is a smokehouse used for smoking fish and meat to preserve it. This was built about the same time as the granary (ca. 1890).

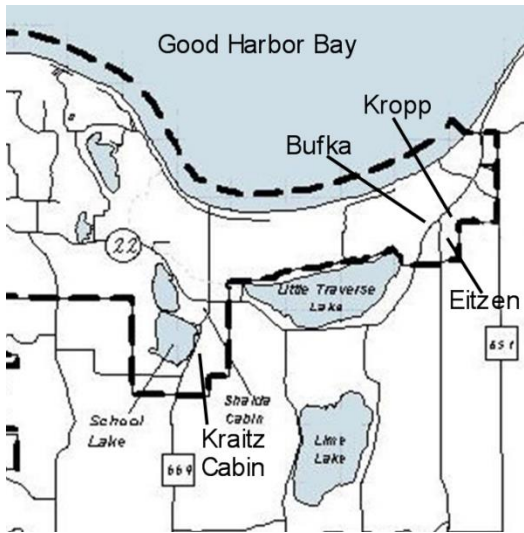
You can either drive or walk over to the other Kropp farm buildings. They are located just past the cemetery on M-22. If you walk over, you will notice several familiar names on the grave markers. Many of the family members were buried right here.

The house was built around 1869. Its construction is similar to other farmhouses in the area – stone foundation, clapboard walls, and asphalt roof. It has two gabled wall dormers on the north side and three chimneys. Behind the house is a homemade circular clothes-drying rack made of metal and wood. There is also a shed and a privy near the house. If you walk along by the edge of the cemetery, you will also notice a couple of little shacks, which were probably used as workshops or to house small animals.

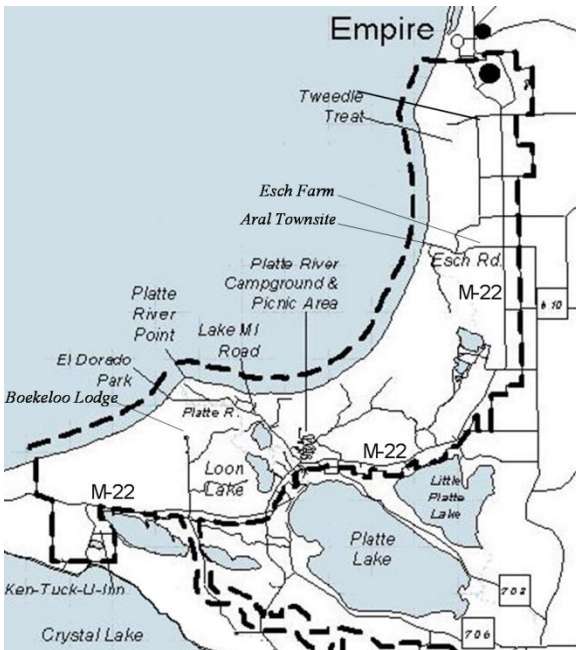


Kropp House 2007

North Lakeshore Region Map

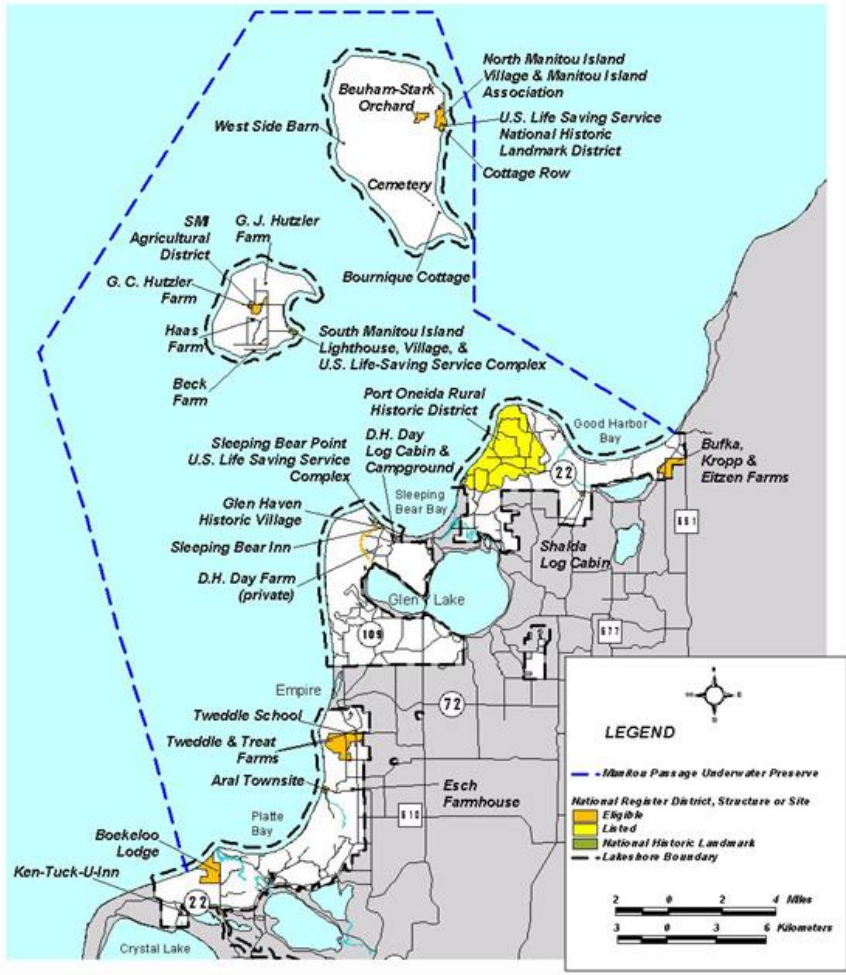


South Lakeshore Region Map



CULTURAL HISTORY

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore



This concludes our tour of the mainland farms and cabins in Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore outside of Port Oneida and the village of Glen Haven. I hope you've taken time to walk around some of the buildings and imagined what it would have been like to have lived here when these farms were bustling little enterprises where neighbors helped each other raise buildings and harvest their crops. While the work was hard and demanded long hours, working together built friendships and close community ties.