



Help Preserve Keweenaw's Proud Heritage

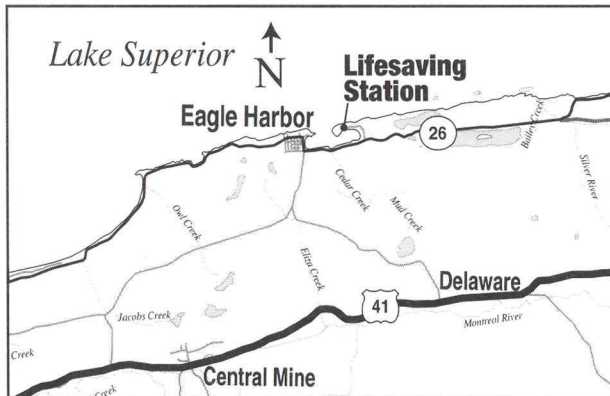
Founded in 1980, the Keweenaw County Historical Society depends on the generous contributions of members and friends to fund its continuing preservation, restoration and exhibition work.

The members of the Society have profound respect for those who went before, those who created the history we study and preserve. And we have a profound responsibility to those who will come after, to ensure that the history is still there. We are the connecting link, and it is important that we do our job well. Every membership and every gift is vital - we could not continue the Society's important and exciting work without such support.

Please join us! Members of the Society receive our award-winning newsletter, *The Superior Signal*, and other benefits.

To join, or ask for additional information about membership, or assist our work with a donation, please use the form on this brochure. Detach or make a copy of it and mail it to the Society today. Your involvement will be very much appreciated.

www.keweenawhistory.org



GPS: N47 27.543 W88 08.931

CIP - Rev 4/18

Eagle Harbor Life-Saving Station



Keweenaw County Historical Society

Eagle Harbor, Michigan

The Life Saving Station Museum is
open mid-June to early October.
From 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Keweenaw Heritage Site

Partner of Keweenaw National Historical Park



We invite you to join the Keweenaw County Historical Society

Yes, I am interested in assisting the work of the Society

Please sign me up as a member. My first year dues are enclosed.

Historian\$30 per year

Copper Miner.....\$50 per year

Lightkeeper ...\$75 or more per year

Life.....\$500

Please mail me additional information about Society membership.

I'm not interested in membership, but want to help. My \$_____ donation is enclosed.

I wish to volunteer, please contact me.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone _____

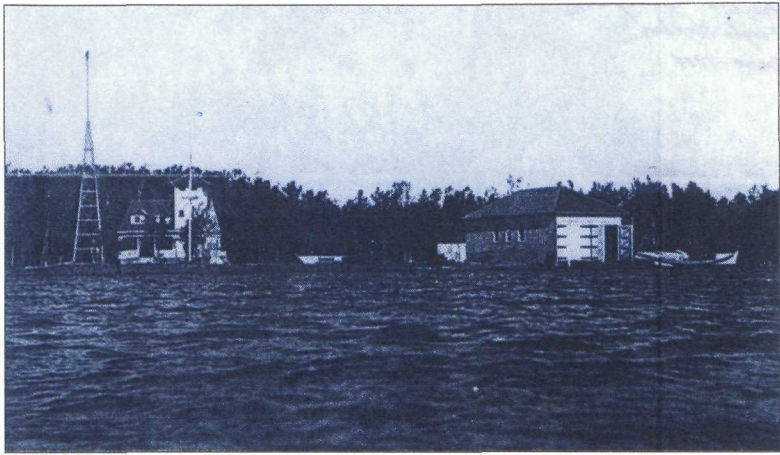
Email _____

Please detach or copy
and mail to:

Keweenaw County Historical Society
670 LIGHTHOUSE ROAD
MOHAWK, MICHIGAN 49950
www.keweenawhistory.org



Thank You!



This Class I station was opened in September of 1912. Albert Ocha was the first keeper in command, Chief Boatswains Mate John Mixon was the last Officer-In-Charge when the station closed in 1951.

Eagle Harbor Life Saving Station

The waters off Eagle Harbor are strewn with shipwrecks. In the age of sail and early steam and without navigational aids like today's radar and GPS, mariners traversing the treacherous shores of stormy Lake Superior's Keweenaw Peninsula were often in peril.

To save as many shipwrecked lives as possible the U.S. Government established and regulated Life-Saving Stations to aid mariners. In 1884, the first Life-Saving Station built along the Keweenaw shores was the Portage Ship Canal Life-Saving Station located at the north end of the Keweenaw waterway. Station No. 299 was established at Eagle Harbor in September of 1912. It was manned by a crew of six surfman and the station's keeper. The original Eagle Harbor station included a two-bay boathouse for rescue craft, a station crew quarters and a "watch house" on the lakeshore.

- 1915: The U.S. Life Saving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service merged to form the U.S. Coast Guard.



For many years 34 and 36 foot Motor Lifeboats were assigned to the station. These self-righting and self-bailing boats were supplemented with Pulling Surfboats and Motor Surfboats.

- 1921 – 1929: The U.S. Navy established a radio compass station on the site. It served both as a navigation aid, transmitting the Morse code letter "J" (dot dash dash dash) so ships could establish a radio signal bearing to Eagle Harbor and also allowing the Life-Savers to locate a vessel sending a distress signal by getting a compass bearing on their signal.
- 1930: A new elevated Watchtower replaced the old watch house on the shoreline.
- 1932: The compass station building and its keeper's dwelling were rafted across the harbor adjacent to the current site of the Eagle Harbor Lighthouse.
- 1939: A new three-bay boathouse was built. It now houses the Life-Saving Museum.
- 1951: The station closed due to the technological advances in navigation and to helicopter assistance in rescues.

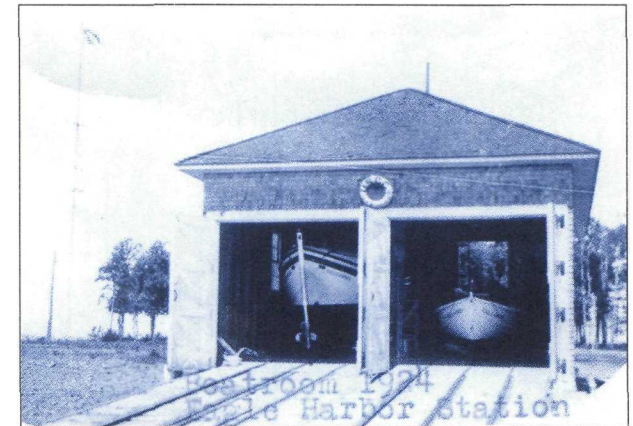
The elevated watch tower was moved four miles south of Eagle Harbor on the US 41 cutoff road. The tower offers an awesome view from its ridge top perch near Copper Falls. Currently the Portage Coast Guard Station, now located at Dollar Bay, continues to serve this area.

Today, the site of the former Eagle Harbor Life-Saving and Radio Compass Station is owned and maintained by the Michigan DNR as a public marina and lakeside park. The Keweenaw County Historical Society leases the former boathouse as a museum celebrating Lake Superior lifesavers.

The museum displays original rescue craft and equipment used by the U.S. Life-Saving Service and U.S. Coast Guard by these brave surfmen.

Items on display include:

- 36 Foot Type T Series Motor Life Boat
- 26 Foot Type S Series Motor Surfboat
- Restored 26 Foot Type H Pulling/Sail Surfboat, one of two known to exist.
- Surfboat Trailer
- Life Car
- Lyle Gun
- Beach Cart & Line Cart
- Displays of photographs and personal memorabilia



The original two bay boathouse was replaced with the current building in 1939.



The painting featured on the cover of this brochure is courtesy of Joan Brusso.