

TRAVEL

# 100th birthday

## Island's Chippewa Hotel celebrates milestone

BY BRENDA DOMINICK  
STAFF WRITER

The newly renovated Chippewa Hotel on Mackinac Island is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year.

"I think we're the only hotel with walk-out balconies from the new suites," said Robert Benser of Birmingham who owns the hotel with Frank Nephew. "Also, we constructed a whirlpool that overlooks the harbor. Families and kids seem to be enjoying it."

Located on Main Street, at the water's edge, the Chippewa, which also houses the Turtle Club Deck and famed Pink Pony Bar and Grill, is within walking distance of ferry docks, the marina, carriage tours, shops and historic attractions.

"We have a newly renovated deck which is perfect for receptions and parties," Benser said. "We enlarged the Pink Pony. It's about twice as big and now has a partial water view." The deck holds up to 80 people and is available seven days a week for parties of all occasions.

The hotel also offers sailing trips in a 50-foot catamaran sailboat for the guests which lately, the owner says, is becoming more popular. "Everybody enjoys it," Benser said. "It's just a nice tour of the island."

Benser estimates the hotel probably takes in 20,000 guests per season, during the spring and fall.

"Some of the best times to come up are in the off season," he said. "A lot of people don't always know that."

### History

Built in 1902, the Chippewa was originally owned by George T. Arnold of the Arnold Transit Company. Arnold then sold it to fur trader John Jacob Astor. Nathan Shayne bought the hotel in 1946, and added the Pink Pony Bar and Grill. Benser and Nephew took over management of the hotel in 1984. They spent



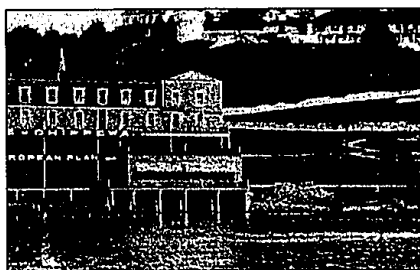
**Summer destination:** Newly remodeled, the Chippewa Hotel has been serving guests for 100 years on Mackinac Island.

approximately \$4 million renovating it in 1995 to create a more accommodating atmosphere for guests.

Their lobby is decorated in turn-of-the-century Victorian style, with a maroon, green and beige floral motif. Brand new ceiling fans, large chairs and couches in the lobby create an "at home" feeling for guests. Hotel rooms are individually decorated with wood, floral competing in various colors which reflect Victorian theme. Standard rooms, kept in their original Victorian state, overlook Main Street, while suites offer a view of the harbor. Decks also give guests a panoramic view of one of the most famous lighthouses in area, Round Island Light-house.

Room amenities include cable TV. The suites have a spacious living room with balcony, refrigerator, microwave, wet bar, and two cable TVs.

Guests can also let loose and



**Historic photo:** This is what the Chippewa Hotel looked like 100 years ago.

enjoy nightly entertainment at the Pink Pony every night of week during the summer. Live bands perform a variety of rock and roll, classic rock, jazz and other types of music.

The hotel birthday celebration runs 5-8 p.m. Sunday, June 9 and will include a birthday cake and historical display. For more information call (906) 847-3341 or go to [www.chippewahotel.com](http://www.chippewahotel.com).

### In plane view



**First class seat:** When The Westin Detroit Metropolitan Airport hotel opens in November, guests in The King model guest room, seen here, can overlook the airport's tarmac. Guests can also see planes take off and land from the planned jet ramp observation lounge.

## Take your family on a summer cruise

PRNewswire - This year, the annual dilemma of where to take the family on summer vacation is complicated by high gas prices. Many people are solving the problem by deciding to take a cruise.

"Cruise lines are catering to families these days, with special menus, activities and shore excursions for kids and parents," says Sy Ripka, president of eCRUISES.com, the worldwide cruise vacation broker. "That's one reason the lines count more kids among their passengers every year, making families one of the fastest growing cruise markets."

"With food, accommodations and entertainment included, today's prices make a family cruise a real bargain," says Ripka. "In my nearly 60 years in the travel industry I cannot recall when prices have been more family-friendly."

There are plenty of options to

fit the family budget, no matter where your family would like to cruise," says Ripka. "The Regal Empress offers an exclusive with eCRUISES. Our Web site, <http://www.eCRUISES.com>, also features many other outstanding family cruise values from all major cruise lines."

To find out more about family cruise vacations, log onto eCRUISES.com and click on "Hot Deals" or "Family Cruising." To contact a certified cruise executive for a free personal consultation, call 1-800-223-6868 or e-mail [info@eCRUISES.com](mailto:info@eCRUISES.com).

Families who want to head south this summer also can find exceptionally low cruise prices to the Bahamas. The price for a seven-night July 7 Regal Empress sailing out of New York to Eleuthera and Nassau/Bahamas begins at \$1499 for a family of four and \$1799 for a family of five.

### IF YOU GO

For more information: Call (906) 847-3341 or (800) 241-3341. You can also go to their Web site at [www.chippewahotel.com](http://www.chippewahotel.com)

**Room rates:** \$105-\$360 (depending on season)  
**Dining options:** The Harbour View Restaurant (family style) and Pink Pony Bar and Grill - open 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. The bar is open until 2 a.m. and has nightly entertainment every day of the summer.

**Special events:**  
■ Lilac Festival - June 7-16  
■ Straits Antique Show at the Grand Hotel, June 27-29  
■ Independence Day Fireworks, July 4  
■ Port Huron-Mackinac Island Yacht Race, July 13-15  
■ Chicago-Mackinac Yacht Race, July 20-23  
■ Annual Islanders' Saddle Horse Show, Aug. 18

### Accommodating options

■ Grand Hotel - \$195-\$515, breakfast and dinner included. Call (906) 847-3331, 24 hours/day, or for reservations, call (800) 334-7263, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
■ Harbor View Inn - standard rooms \$85-\$175, specialty rooms (with whirlpool) \$185-\$345, call (906) 847-0101

■ Murray Hotel - continental breakfast included. Traditional rooms \$89-\$160, deluxe rooms \$134-\$250, call (800)-4MACKINAC  
■ Pontiac Lodge - continental breakfast, refrigerators in all rooms. Rooms \$65-\$90 (Winter season) and \$85-\$130 (Summer season), call (906) 847-3364

■ The Inn at Stoncliffe - continental breakfast. Rooms \$85-\$245 (Cuddey Manor) and \$185-\$325 (Summer House Suites), call (906) 847-3355



## pelee island calm

*Escape* from the crowds. Bicycle along shoreline roads through woodlands and nature preserves. Stroll clean, sandy beaches. Discover over 30 species of birds, unusual plant life, wildflowers, and natural habitats. Visit quaint inns and B&B's. Camp under the stars. Tour our internationally famous wine region and historic landmarks. Dive for shipwrecks dating back to 1800. Escape to the peace and tranquility of Pelee Island. We're not too far from where you are.

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In cooperation with the **Ligonis Arts Commission**  
at The Redford Township Clerk's Office

present

**A World Premiere**

**"NO COMMENT"**  
by Berl Falbaum

When does the public need to know?  
**Gala Premiere**

**Saturday, June 1, 8:00 PM**  
**Ligonis Civic Center Library Auditorium**  
**Play and Afterglow Reception \$25**

The play will continue at the Grand Playhouse  
**Friday - 24 June 8 - 8:00 PM - Sunday June 3, 8:00 PM**  
**Tickets \$15-\$30 for adults and seniors**  
**18188 Beachway Rd., Redford. Tickets (515) 581-0884**

**Don't miss it!**

**Don't miss it!**

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