

Travel



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O&E Thursday, September 5, 1985

'Murder at the Grand' tops Michigan events

"Murder at the Grand" and other exciting things to do in Michigan.

If you like to lose yourself in a mystery or detective story, you can indulge your fantasies on an island in Michigan. For three days beginning Oct. 25, you can be the Nick or Nora Charles of your dreams. You can participate in a real live whodunit and live to tell the tale. Complete with murders, murderers, red-herring and blind alleys, clues and confrontations, "Murder at the Grand" is a weekend on Mackinac Island planned especially for mystery buffs and amateur sleuths.

Following a script authored by Karen and Bill Palmer, New York mystery writers, the adventures begin with a ferry ride across the Straits of Mackinac. They continue as your boat is met by a mysterious coachman who transports you by horse and buggy back to 1941.

Detective/vacationers are urged to wear 1940s clothing as they try to solve a murder or two committed during a fictitious 20th-year reunion of the Mackinac Island High School, Class of 1921. Guests will search for clues, interview suspects and take part in the bizarre, final solution.

KAREN and Bill Palmer, designers of the murderous weekend, will be on hand to direct the activities. They are members of the Mystery Writers of America and Private Eye Writers of America and have appeared with other professional mystery writers who bring their skills to the quest.

In addition to the business of the murders, guests will view classic mystery films, dine in the famous Grand Hotel dining room and dance at the Gala Ball, all designed to fit the 1941 time frame. The cost of the weekend, which runs from Friday, Oct. 25, to Monday, Oct. 28, is \$375 per person, double occupancy, and \$150 single supplement.

For more information about the weekend package tour "Murder At The Grand," call your travel agent or the organizers, ATS Travel 543-7955.

Hark and Huzzah — The Renaissance Festival is Here Again.

If you go out to the Michigan Renaissance Festival at Coblentz Center,



one-of-a-kind traveler

Iris Jones

contributing travel editor

Clarkston some weekend in September, the King may force you to grovel at his feet. That's right, grovel. No matter who you are. And the Queen — she won't be much better. Likely you'll have to lie on the ground and cover your eyes when she appears. Be careful — that wench in rags and the dark rogue chasing her may try to kidnap you.

This riotous behavior is all part of the pomp and pageantry of the sixth annual festival. You'll need to take your suspension of disbelief and your comfortable shoes with you when you go. And go you must. Go and buy a roasted turkey leg, wave it threateningly. Fill your tankard with cider or mead. Watch the puppet shows. Revel in the common puppet shows. Revel in the revelry as jesters and jugglers, royal lords and ladies, and minstrels act out their roles in this fall celebration of English Renaissance times.

In the wooded setting, scores of merchants and craftspeople create leather goods, weavings, carved wooden sculptures, make baskets or musical instruments and jewelry for sale. As you browse in the lanes, you'll be entertained by strolling actors, musicians and acrobats.

Open every weekend in September from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., rain or shine, the fair is set at the Coblentz Center, Clarkston. Take I-75 to Exit 93 (Dixie Highway/Waterford), one block south of Big Lake Road. Tickets are \$6.75 (adults) and \$2.50 (children 5-12) in advance at Ticket World and AAA or \$7.75 and \$3.30 at the gate. All music, theater and equestrian events are included. Parking is free. For more information, call 313-645-9640.

Festivals, Fairs and Fun. You name it. From apple cider to Carry Nation, from geese and potatoes to red flannel, there's a festival for it

somewhere in Michigan. Here is a partial listing of those events to visit in this colorful and varied state:

• Sept. 5-8 — Wine and Harvest Festival (Kalamazoo/PawPaw); Celebration on the Grand (Grand Rapids).

• Sept. 6-8 — Potato Festival (Posen), Carry Nation Festival (Flint) and Festival in the Park (Muskegon Heights).

• Sept. 7 — If you like to walk, tour historic homes at Marshall through Sept. 8; for runners there's the Kiwanis Foot Race (Mackinac Island) and, if you prefer to ride, there's the Wine Festival Train Ride from Saginaw and Durand to Kalamazoo.

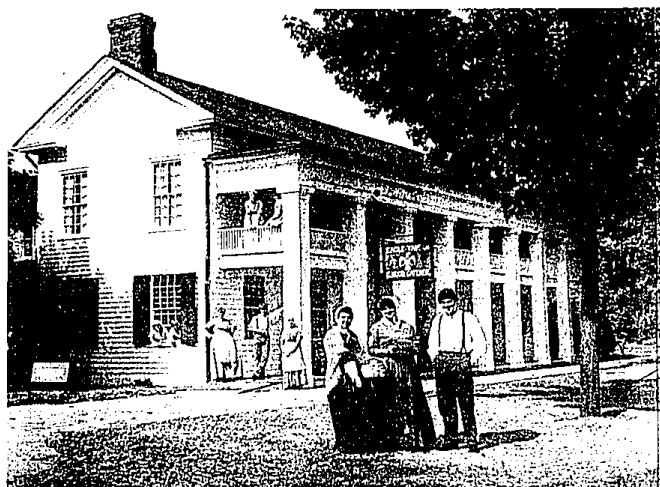
• Sept. 13-16 — You can "Discover Williamston Days" (Williamston) or tour Dow Gardens in the evening, Sept. 14-15 see the Fall Art Fair on Dow Library Grounds (Midland).

• Sept. 14 — There are Mexican/Hispanic Festivals in Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids. Portage Pride Week runs through the 21st; Autumn Auto Show (Petoskey), Sept. 13-14, Country Fair Art Show at the Community in Bay City; Sept. 14 and 15 is Gospel Celebration and Art in the Gaspel, Auto World, Flint.

• Sept. 15 — Ionia host the People's Choice Antique Market; Grayling starts color tour that runs through the 21st; St. Charles puts on a Quilt Show, also Sept. 19 through the 21st Heritage Arts are celebrated in Lake City.

• Sept. 20-22 — The "Mackinaw Limited" makes an overnight trip from Birmingham via Durand to Mackinaw City. Octoberfest begins in Grand Rapids and goes through Sept. 22. Visit the Four Flags Apple Festival in Niles.

• Sept. 18-21 — The Carriage Association of America Meet. Vintage carriages, carefully restored and refurbished are drawn by teams of fine horses through the streets of Green-



The Eagle Tavern at Greenfield Village will be a village for a national carriage meeting Sept. 18-21.

field Village into a national conference of members. Costumed drivers will exchange experiences of preserving their turn-of-the-century rigs. Tourists will enjoy the sights and sounds of the horse and carriage society of their forebears.

The Festival of the Pines in Lake City, Sept. 20-22.

Sept. 21 — Eat salmon dinner in Alcona County. Eat apple butter right where they make it at Tree-Mendous Fruit Farm in Eau Claire Sept. 21-22 or Sept. 23-24. Four historical homes in Owosso or tap a toe at the Fiddler's Jamboree in N. Branch; look at Gems and Mineral show in St. Louis; attend another early Oktoberfest at Auto

World, Flint, Sept. 21 or 22.

Sept. 27-28 — Grand Rapids has an Italian Festival while Midland Fairgrounds is the scene of the Michigan Antique Festival.

Sept. 28-29 — For train buffs — The "Annie Rambler" goes from Durand to Frankfort/Eberta. For stay-at-home Christmas begins at the Craftsman's Cabin in Harrisville and continues with color tours until Oct. 13.

Sept. 29 — People are "Gathering to Sing and Play" at the Nature Center in Kalamazoo; taking part in a Lake Festival Run in New Buffalo or buying and selling antiques at the Fairgrounds in Allegan.

WARNING TO MICHIGAN TRAVELERS

More than 11,000 grass and bush fires swept across Michigan in 1984. There was uncounted damage to the state's natural resources and incalculable loss of personal property. Hurons are to blame for 95 percent of all fires in Michigan. Watch your camp fires and house cigarettes in a safe way.

TOURIST'S HOT LINE

According to the Sanilac County Tourist Hot Line (1-800-923-2683) Sanilac County's residents want to let travelers know what is going on there. Sept. 8 the 4-H Girls will serve a dinner at the 4-H Fairgrounds in Lexington.

Junk reefs give shelter to fish

By Sarah E. Raper
National Geographic Society

When Bill Donaldson, a former mayor of Pontiac, retired to Stuart, Fla., he had no idea that he would become king of an underwater hill of junk beloved by local fishermen.

But there it is, the Bill Donaldson Reef, named after one of the leaders in artificial reef development by residents of the southern Florida community of 9,500.

Hundreds of toilets, bathtubs, and wash-bowls, 75,000 concrete-weighted tires, 100 dumpsters, two school-bus bodies, 200-foot ship, a 188-foot sand dredge, and nine steel wrecks — all the debris has hit the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean to form three artificial reefs, the Donaldson and two others, since the Stuart Sailfish Club and Bill Donaldson set out to improve local fishing in 1976.

Stuart's residents are among hundreds of individuals and local groups all along the U.S. coasts who are sinking both dollars and debris into improving fish habitat. They're putting all kinds of discarded objects on ocean floors to create reefs for fish where nature neglected to put them.

Ninety percent of the ocean floor around the United States is a sand and mud wasteland with little plant growth. The artificial reefs provide growing surfaces for plants and animals that fish eat.

A properly constructed artificial reef increases an area's fish population over time. In theory, it initially drains neighboring natural reefs of some fish, but it also provides new shelter from predators and new food that reduces competition on the natural reefs. Within two years, both the natural and artificial reefs become crowded with fish.

WHAT SOUNDS GOOD in theory looks good in practice, according to studies conducted by the National Marine Fisheries Service, a federal agency. A 1971-74 test at Murrelet Inlet, S.C., showed that catches over a five-and-a-half artificial reef equaled those over nearby natural reef rocks.

Impressive test results at sea don't always please on-shore environmentalists. But Richard Stone of the Fisheries Service says he's received very little criticism since he began developing artificial reefs in the 1980s.

"People don't object to enhancing areas if they can be shown that it's not going to be detrimental to something that's already there," Stone says. "What they would object to is to just dispose of material — ocean dumping under the guise of ocean reefs — or if they thought you were picking things off that did have some toxic byproducts or putting something down existing live-bottom areas or coral reefs."

Just about anything that can be sunk will help build a reef, Stone says, but some materials are more durable than others. Thin metal objects such as car bodies and refrigerators deteriorate rapidly and move around too much if they're not weighted properly. But many other metal scraps, including cleaned-out ships and collapsed oil rigs, have made successful reefs, he says.

The most effective fish condominiums, according to a test conducted by a marine consulting firm, are fiberglass-reinforced plastic units. These units can be adjusted to fit various ocean-bottom terrains and to reach different heights depending on the type of fish desired. Some highly sought fish often are found in taller structures.

The durable plastic units can be transported more easily than old ships or weighted tires. Unfortunately, they are now available only from Japanese manufacturers in very limited quantities.

THE JAPANESE, world leaders in reef development, have used these units successfully for seven years. The Japanese reef program, unlike the grass-roots efforts in the United States, is centrally planned and subsidized.

In the United States the majority of reefs are for recreational fishing, but in Japan reef development is carried out by and for commercial fishermen. Another difference between the two countries' policies is legal — here the ocean is open to any U.S. fisherman, but Japan recognizes ocean ownership rights, and the builder of a reef there holds the exclusive rights to fish it.

Stone says he doubts U.S. government participation will ever equal that of the Japanese government, but he hopes state governments will become more involved.

"I'd like to see the states become leaders in building reefs," he says. "I'd like to see them become more sophisticated, develop siting plans and have the money to do it right."

But state funds for reef construction have been unobtainable in the past. Because this unobtainability, Stone says, many reefs in the United States have been financed by local sports fishing and diving clubs, often through imaginative fundraisers such as Bill Donaldson.

In Stuart, for example, residents raised money to tow and sink an old barge by selling 10,000 shares of stock in the barge at \$1 a share. Contributors received certificates that said "We Cared and We Shared." Others paid \$100 each to have their names painted on enormous gas tanks before they were sunk.

U.S. industry also has supported reef development. Oil and gas companies have made the largest corporate contributions in the form of abandoned oil rigs.

Federal involvement now is limited to the Army Corps of Engineers' issuance of permits for new reefs. Stone is working with agencies and individuals to develop national guidelines that would improve the process.

Stone says he isn't worried about overbuilding. With proper planning, he says, there's little chance of cluttering the vast ocean floor in the next 50 years.

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