

JUNE 6, 2016

As you can imagine, much of the activity related to the Warner site last month has surrounded the relocation of the Hicks school. The school is loaded on a set of steel I beams and is ready to roll. Just this morning I received final confirmation that the planned move date is Wednesday, June 8th. The move will begin at 10:00 AM with a sheriff's escort. It is unknown exactly what time the school will arrive at its final destination at the Warner farm as it must travel about 19 miles below quite a number of power lines and an overpass. Several articles have appeared in the Argus-Press newspaper and a final one will highlight the actual move. I want to thank several donors who contributed to our gofundme initiative to help fund the move and restoration of the school: Ken Kosidlo (who gave a very generous contribution), Barb Olszewski, Casey Broom, and another private donation. Many thanks to the donors, it is much appreciated!

We were able to do some limited archaeological research at the school. Excavation was limited to screening topsoil removed at the north end of the foundation to facilitate elevating and moving the school. A surprising variety and quantity of artifacts were recovered including lots of clinker, round and square nails, medicine bottle fragments, a number of sherds of ceramics including crockery, a clay marble, cast iron stove parts, a slate pencil, metal eraser bands, pieces of slate, a ceramic dog figurine, glass fragments, a cast metal emblem, and buttons (Prosser and hard rubber) among other items. The movers actually had one of the best finds, recovering a completely intact tea cup that I would guess dates to the 1890s/1910 era. I was a little surprised at the quantity and variety of the ceramics located at a one room school. I was reminded that the use of the building over the past 150+ years wasn't limited to students but was used for a variety of civic and government activities. I also mapped the foundation, trenches excavated by the movers, among other permanent features. The mover has offered to lift the large poured cement steps to the original (pre 1947) entrance. This is a huge help as it is likely that many artifacts dating to the 19th century are underneath the steps installed during the mid 1930s renovations.

Kerry and I attended the Michigan Historic Preservation Network awards ceremony along with Randy Klepinger and his wife, Suzi, of Klepinger Construction. Randy worked on restoration of the Warner homestead for a number of months last year. The awards ceremony was a first rate event and we all enjoyed attending. There certainly are a number of amazing historic preservation projects going on around the state. We accepted the Special Jury Award for our efforts to restore the exterior of the NRHP listed Warner homestead. Our colleagues at the Castle Museum received the GEM award for installation of original lighting fixtures. Another award was given to other colleagues for the M-231 bridge project including the State Archaeologist and CCRG. Congrats to both groups and many thanks to MHPN for the recognition!

As today is the 72nd anniversary of D-Day, I have attached an article I wrote a number of years ago about a family member that was in the 2nd wave of the D-Day invasion at Omaha Beach. I had the chance to interview Don Holzauer, the husband of my grandmother's cousin, and record his recollection of the event on video. He not only survived the invasion but took a number of photos of the aftermath. His telling of the story is much more compelling than what I can relate but attached is a humble effort to document some of his experiences.