



# MULLETT LAKE AREA PRESERVATION SOCIETY

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**NEWSLETTER**

**MARCH 2013**

# The Call of the North

by Julie Redding, Hack-Ma-Tack Inn

*Summer is here.---Vacation time. How the pulse quickens at the very thought. The mind flits to memories of beautiful days amidst profusion of leafy verdure, rippling brooks, sunny skies,---all nature laughing with us at the joy of ever living and growing thing around us.*

*What a charm there is in the north country. It's bright clear days, cool invigorating air laden with aromatic Balsam and sweet scented Pine,---the natural tonic of the north. On pleasure or health bent, the woods and waters of northern Michigan appeal to both young and old, and afford quiet retreats away from the nerve trying life of the city's rush and din.*

*Rowing, motor boating, fishing, sailing, bathing, canoeing, hill climbing, tramping through the woods--these and other diversions make the appetite keen; brightens the eyes; brings color to the cheeks, and strengthens one both physically and mentally.*

Excerpts taken from a vintage Hack-Ma-Tack Inn pamphlet (not sure of the year). Room rates were \$2 per day, or \$10 to \$14 per week and Watson Beebe was still the proprietor.

It seems natural that one would have the desire to preserve and protect a natural resource or piece of history. The Hack-Ma-Tack Inn was built by Watson Beebe with a Native American guide in the late 1800's. What did Mr. Beebe think would be preserved after a hundred plus years? We have come to a time of internet, smart phones and expected immediacy. The Hack-Ma-Tack, then and now, still possesses that "up north" calm; the peace or quiet most people are inclined to look for. Because of the location of the lodge, and the past and present hosts entertaining efforts, the patrons will always preserve the Hack-Ma-Tack. The vibes, or memories it conjures are significant enough to keep us coming back.

Today, the Hack-Ma-Tack is still a place to relax, catch up with old friends, or meet new friends while enjoying good food and spirits (The spirits may not necessarily just be drinks. Though we won't delve into our "ghost" stories at this point in time). "you can count on meeting genuinely fine folks at Hack-Ma-Tack. Men and women, married and un-married, young, middle-aged, and the young-at-heart all blend together into one happy family, where



cordiality and hospitality reign--the kind of folks you will always remember and want to meet here year after year..” as stated in a 1955 brochure.

Even though Mr. Beebe lived in a simpler time, there are still a few similarities that can be found at the Inn today. Danny, our charismatic bartender, still stokes up the fire in the old cobblestone fireplace (more commonly in the Spring and Fall when the weather calls for it). So eloquently stated by the same 1955 brochure, “Day and night a great fire roars in the old fieldstone fireplace, spreading warmth and cheer throughout the lodge. This is the “family” meeting place. Watch those pounds, girls, when you relax here after a famous Hack-Ma-Tack dinner.”

Thinking of delicious dinners at the Hack-Ma-Tack have always made people’s mouths water. This famous food caused one reputable patron to shout “HI-U-SKOOKUM!” Being the Indian term for ‘heap big, good,’ is used in connection with Hack-Ma-Tack Inn; being symbolic of the virtues of that well-know hostelry. The term was introduced to the management of the Inn many years ago by Tom Petoskey, an old guide and namesake of Chief Petoskey, after who the city of Petoskey was named. At the conclusion of one of the fish dinners for which Hack-Ma-Tack Inn has long been famous, Tom arose from the festive board and with his characteristic smile stretched himself up full height and exclaimed, ‘HI-U-SKOOKUM!’, as quoted from a 1942 circular.

When the Inn was built, the new log structure was said to be the finest of its kind. The main entrance is only twenty feet from the water and the dining room had stained glass windows which Mr. Beebe had imported from Europe. These French plate glass windows formed a background for a cobblestone lighthouse foundation. “A feature of the dining room, in fact the whole building, is light, large windows providing an unobstructed view of the water and woods,” stated a brochure from 1942. The second floor consists of 19 rooms, not including the linen room. One recalls the delight in sharing the various stories they “heard” through the thin walls. The Old church bell is no longer available to ring from the tower to call guests to dinner. Each summer the Inn’s ambience and familiarity somehow guide them back anyway.

The Pow Wow Lounge is an exceptional place to rejuvenate exhausted minds and bodies. One can still enjoy a cocktail at the bar, people watch, or stare out the picturesque windows as the boats motor by.

The Hack-Ma-Tack is intertwined with nature. The very name Hack-Ma-Tack is a contraction of the Algonquin Native American word “tacamahac.” It is

the “Indian name for Tamarack, a native tree. A word to conjure with. What memories it brings of beautiful days, walks through the trees, along the beach, canoe and launch trips on the clear waters of Mullett Lake, motoring along the pretty country roads, and the air, ah! How sweet and fragrant the breath of the Pine, Spruce, and Balsam comes to us. Wafted by the merest zephyr, it’s fragrance, the tonic of the forest so pleasing, stimulates one to look up and be glad of living. Hack-Ma-Tack Inn appeals to that class who love the outdoor life among the trees and along the waters. Nature is always in a receptive mood at Hack-Ma-Tack and welcomes you with open arms,” stated a 1947 Hack-Ma-Tack brochure.

The Hack-Ma-Tack Inn is more than just a place to dine, or an old historical log lodge. It means so much to many people because it helps them recollect fond memories. This the way we like to think that the Hack-Ma-Tack stays preserved. Thank you for all the memories, and continued support. Cheers to all the good times ahead of us.

Hack-Ma-Tack Inn will open for the 2013 season on Friday, May 3, at 5 p.m. Open 7 days a week until mid-October.

If you have any Hack-Ma-Tack stories, memories, pictures, or any fun information to share please email me! One day we hope to complete a book and would love any input or recollections.

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