

CS 4/4/13

# Monuments, memorials dot Chequamegon Bay region

Several markers and monuments identify the locations of important historical events and places in the Chequamegon Bay region.

The Penokee highland, located about two miles south of Ashland, is the watershed between Lake Superior and the great river systems to the south.

North of the watershed, known as the Great Divide, water drains into the Great Lakes and eventually through the St. Lawrence River into the Atlantic Ocean.

South of the watershed, water flows through the St. Croix River, Wisconsin River and numerous smaller rivers into the Mississippi River and then to the Gulf of Mexico.

The high point of the watershed is located near Gordon Lake, a short distance east of Highway 13, just north of Glidden, in Ashland County.

On Sunday, Aug. 14, 1932, a white monument 4 feet wide and 8 feet high, appropriately inscribed on both sides and located on a farm then owned by Frank Driscoll, was unveiled and dedicated, marking the high point of the watershed.

The Ashland Daily Press reported that hundreds of people from Ashland and the surrounding area attended the ceremony. Guy M. Burnham, a well-known local historian, various public officials and other regional notables attended the event and made appropriate speeches.

Two poems, "The Watershed" and "Ode To Trees," were read and a song titled "Trees" was



**Lars  
Larson**

■ has been a guest columnist for The County Journal for many years.

199  
sung by a professor of music from Northland College. Driscoll was introduced but apparently did not say anything worth reporting. A picnic dinner was served at the Gordon Lake pavilion after the dedication.

In October 1665 Father Claude Jean Allouez, a Jesuit priest, arrived at Chequamegon Bay to conduct missionary work among the Indians. He constructed a crude chapel on the shore near the head of the bay, but the exact location is uncertain.

He returned to Quebec and was succeeded by Father Jacques Marquette, in September 1669, who either occupied the chapel left by Allouez or constructed another one on the same site. In the summer of 1671 Father Marquette and the members of several Indian tribes, living peacefully on the bay, were driven away by the Sioux.

On May 25, 1915, a shrine in memory of Allouez and Marquette, dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes, was erected on a hill overlooking the bay at Missions Springs, located between Barksdale and Nash.

The first recorded visit by Europeans to Chequamegon Bay occurred in the summer of 1659 by the French explorers and fur traders, brothers-in-law Pierre Esprit Radisson and Medard Chouart, Sieur des Groseilliers. They built a hut at the head of the bay, probably near Fish Creek, supposedly the first white man's house in Wisconsin. On Oct. 25, 1931, a marker on the site was dedicated by the president of the State Historical Society, which was ceremoniously unveiled by two Native American women.

On July 5, 1854, Asaph Whittlesey and George Kilborn rowed over from La Pointe and landed near the intersection of Ashland's current Lakeshore Drive and 18th Avenue West. They cut down a tree, which became part of the foundation of their log cabin, the first known house built in Ashland.

On July 5, 1929, as part of the Diamond Jubilee, a large stone marker placed on the site, bearing a metal plate commemorating the event, was unveiled with appropriate ceremony.

Three signs identify locations important in the history of Chequamegon Bay. In Cornucopia "The Tragedy of the Siskiwit" sign recounts the Indian legend of Chippewa Chief Bi-Aus-Wah, who gave himself up to a raiding party of Fox Indians to be burned to death in place of his son.

In Washburn, "Washburn's Historic Waterfront," at the west end of the walking trail, describes the wharves that lined the waterfront when Washburn was an important lumbering center and port. At the west end of Ashland, in Memorial Park, an overlook provides a view of the historic ore docks and Chequamegon Bay, with a sign that describes an ongoing shore restoration project.