

## Ladies of the Islands

A brief and incomplete list of women who played a part in the Apostle Islands' rich history. Some of these women spent most of their lives on the islands, others never set foot on one of them. Nonetheless, each touched the islands in some way, and were touched by them in return. This list is a work in progress and always will be, because we can be certain there are others whose stories are yet to be told.

Bob Mackreth  
2023

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**Geneva Bonneau Angus** (1830-1908) Wife of John D. Angus, early Lake Superior ship captain and first keeper of the La Pointe lighthouse on Long Island. Born at Sault Ste. Marie to a French father and Native mother, she was fluent in Ojibwe, and it's reported that she served as an interpreter during the 1854 treaty negotiations at La Pointe. Reports of the number of children born to Geneva and John vary considerably, from nine to an unlikely twenty-two. According to an announcement in the *Bayfield County Press*, she married a second time in 1896, two years after John's death. She was 66 and the groom 28.

**Martha Atkinson** (1845-1924) Wife of Michigan Island Assistant Keeper Joseph Atkinson. Gave birth to daughter Alice at the lighthouse in 1871. The family's return to the mainland at the end of that season became an ordeal, when waves nearly capsized their boat and they were forced to jettison most of their belongings to avoid capsizing.

**Hannah Austrian** (Hannah Freudenthaler Leopold Austrian, 1823-1910; born in Germany) Wife of early Madeline Island entrepreneur Jul-

ius Austrian, and according to her obituary, "the first white woman to set foot on the soil of Bayfield." Also said to be the first Jewish woman to live in the Lake Superior region. Arrived at La Pointe about 1850, eventually moved to St. Paul. There she helped found the Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Society, which provided aid to recently arrived Jewish immigrants. According to a report in the *St. Paul Globe*, "half the charitable money expended in St. Paul" was dispersed by this organization.

**Dorothy Goslin Bard** (1905-1943) Red Cliff tribal member, wife of James Bard, keeper at the Devils Island and La Pointe light stations among several assignments. Mother of five, including one daughter who died at age eight while the family was living at the Whitefish Point light station. Died of cancer at age 38.

**Frederika Benson** Norwegian immigrant, early South Twin Island settler, wife of fisherman Charlie Benson. Raised her family of five children on the island during the fishing season, returning to the mainland in winter. The Benson family eventually moved to Rocky Island along with several other South Twin families.

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**Bess Grimm Benton** (1891-1968) Ashland school teacher who married widowed Raspberry Island keeper Lee Benton when she was 31 and he 49. Sadly, the couple had little more than a year together, Benton dying the following year. Bess returned to school for graduate work, then taught French and German at Superior Normal School, which later became U.W. Superior.

**Marjorie Benton** (1907-2002) The daughter-in-law of Raspberry Island keeper Lee Benton, Marjorie Benton played an indispensable role in the preservation of the Apostle Islands light stations' history. Her interviews and correspondence with former light keepers and their families were critical in preserving their firsthand knowledge before it faded away, and her carefully-preserved collection of her father-in-law's belongings now form the nucleus of the park's Raspberry Island exhibits.

**Cecelia Belanger Bergan** (1860-1943 ) Wife of Ashland Breakwater Light Keeper James Bergan; member of the Bad River band of Ojibwe. She immediately took responsibility for displaying the light when her husband suffered a fatal heart attack in 1922. The Lighthouse Service immediately appointed her temporary keeper but when a replacement arrived several weeks later, she had to relinquish the position and move her family out of the keeper's dwelling.

**Hester Crooks Boutwell** (1817-1853) Daughter of Ramsay Crooks, head of the American Fur Co. post at La Pointe and his Ojibwe wife Abanokue. Married missionary William Boutwell, serving alongside him as teacher and translator at missions at Mackinaw, La Pointe, and Leech Lake. Worked closely with

her husband in translating religious material and textbooks, and preparing an Ojibwe grammar.

**Grace Bruder** (1867-1953) Minneapolis woman who leased Hermit Island's Cedar Bark Lodge from 1914 until about 1920, with hopes of turning it into a tourist resort. With her husband working elsewhere most of the time, it appears that she lived year-round on the island and cared for the place with the help of her two teenage sons.

**Anna Carlson** (Anna Maria Palmgren Carlson, 1870-1957; born in Sweden) The well-known "Heroine of Michigan Island" endured a harrowing ordeal at the Michigan Island Lighthouse in late-February-early March 1895, when her husband, Keeper Robert Carlson, failed to return from ice-fishing. Despite the obvious presumption that her husband was lost to the lake, Anna managed to keep her wits and care for her two-year-old daughter and twin nine-month-old boys until Robert's near-miraculous return on the fourth day. Later on, after leaving Michigan Island for the Marquette light station, she was occasionally appointed assistant keeper to fill temporary vacancies.

**Madeline Cadotte (Eqwaysayway)** (c.1770-1850) The namesake of Madeline Island, daughter of the prominent chief Wau-bojeeg, Eqwaysayway was called Madeline (or Magdaleine) by her husband, fur trader Michel Cadotte. She worked with Cadotte to develop partnerships within the Native community, and accompanied him on several extended journeys of exploration.

**Stella Champney** (Stella Wolfe Champney, 1874-1935) *Detroit News* reporter whose

1931 tour through the Apostles Islands on the lighthouse tender Marigold provided a detailed account of lighthouse operations in that era, including the challenges facing the lightkeepers' wives. Champney's own story is also of interest: the daughter of an Odawa father and a white mother, she grew up in a small Native settlement in far northern Michigan. Throughout her newspaper career, her articles often focused on Native issues and heritage. Several of her brothers and sisters achieved success in a variety of fields: one brother was a pianist, another a violinist and,

#### Waubojeeg

One male name needs to be mentioned in this compendium, that of the Ojibwe chief Waubojeeg, father or grandfather of four women listed here. Waubojeeg and his wife Misquobonoquay, or Red Dawn Woman, were the parents of Madeline Cadotte and Susan Johnston, and the grandparents of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft and Catherine Wabose.

As often happens in converting the Ojibwe language into English, several alternative spellings of his name appear in the literature, including Waubojig, Waubujejak, and more. His English name is most often given as White Fisher, but sometimes appears as White Crane.

However one chooses to spell it, his achievements loom large. In his *History Of The Ojibway People*, written about 1852, William Warren described Waubojeeg "the greatest Ojibwe Chief of the historical period." More than a century later, one history textbook prepared by Minnesota tribal authorities called Waubojeeg "the greatest of Ojibwe Chiefs... an inspired leader of his people and fearless warrior."

Not only a statesman and warrior, Waubojeeg also gained renown for his poetry- a talent which passed down to at least one descendant, Jane Johnston Schoolcraft.

like Stella, two of her sisters also went into journalism, though one left the field to pursue her interest in ornithology and became a traveling educator for the Audubon Society.

**Marjorie Bard Coon** (1923–1998) Daughter of Devils Island Light keeper James Bard, suffered a severe hip injury in 1937 when she fell down the stairs in the keeper's dwelling, then endured a harrowing evacuation to the mainland during a storm. Her father was transferred elsewhere while she was recovering, and she never returned to the island until a NPS-sponsored trip sixty years later.

**Emma Hahn Daniels** (1887-1949) Niece of Sand Island keeper Emmanuel Luick, Emma was a frequent visitor to the lighthouse as a teenager, then moved in to serve as her uncle's housekeeper after his wife Ella departed in 1905. In 1907, she was appointed temporary assistant keeper during the gap between the departure of one assistant and the arrival of his replacement. In 1909, she married Michigan Island assistant keeper Walter Daniels, accompanying him through subsequent promotions to the Devils and Outer Island stations until his retirement in 1935.

**Alma Hansen Dahl** (1913-1997) Daughter of Sand Island fisherman Fred Hansen, married Sand Island fisherman Carl Dahl. Raised her family of five children living on the island year-round until 1943, when the Dahls became the last island family to move their permanent home to the mainland.

**Constance Dahl** (Constance Ingrebrigtsen Dahl, 1876-1915) Born in Norway, emigrated to the U.S. as a child with her mother and siblings to join her father already in Bayfield. Married a fisherman named Peder Nelson with whom

she had one child, daughter Bessie. Nelson died shortly afterward, and Constance eventually married Sand Island fisherman Harold Dahl and had three more children, living year-round on the island. Died of tuberculosis in 1915, after which Bessie took on the responsibility of raising her much younger siblings.

**Jennie Brown Drown** (1885-1969) Lighthouse keeper's daughter and incest survivor. The long-term abuse came to light when Jennie became pregnant at the age of sixteen. Her father, Michigan Island keeper Charles Brown, was sentenced to prison, and Jennie gave birth to a boy shortly afterward. She married several years later, and her new husband adopted her son; several more children followed. According to one grandson, she lived a long and apparently happy life, but never talked about her time at the lighthouse.

**Mabel Eddy** (1892-1969) The "Girl in the Wheelbarrow" in the familiar photograph from Raspberry Island. Daughter of lighthouse keeper John Eddy, Mabel occasionally returned to the island after her father's premature death, and the playful photo was taken in the course of one of those visits. Later on, she pursued a career as a teacher, then took up painting in her retirement. One of her paintings, showing the Raspberry lighthouse, was placed on display at the State Historical Society museum on Madeline Island.

**Jennie Edwards** (Jennie Johnson Edwards, 1884-1941) Daughter of Bayfield fish wholesaler Jacob Johnson, wife of early South Twin fisherman Olaf Edwards. Raised five children while spending a large part of the year on South Twin Island. Eventually moved to Rocky Island along with

several other South Twin Island families.

**Stella Fifield** (Stella Amelia Grimes Fifield, 1845-1913) Wife of journalist / politician / entrepreneur Sam Fifield, namesake of Sand Island's Camp Stella. Played an active role in running his newspapers, as well as in his later political career.

**Ingeborg Hadland** (1871-1988; born in Norway) Bear Island settler, wife of fisherman Ole Hadland, raised a family of eight children, living on the island during the fishing season.

**Olga Hadland** (Olga Olson Hadland, 1894-1981; born in Norway, ) Wife of Outer and Rocky Island fisherman Christ Hadland, mother of Harvey and Cliff Hadland who fished from Rocky Island. During her time on Outer Island, Olga and her two boys lived at the sand point in buildings left behind by the Schroeder Lumber Co.

**Fanny Hall** Wife of first Outer Island Lighthouse keeper, Orator K. Hall, who requested for her to be appointed second assistant keeper because of "the difficulty of getting a man to accept the appointment." However, there is no record of her ever serving in the position.

**Mary Haloron** Although records are not totally clear, it appears that John and Mary Haloron were the first keepers of the Michigan Island lighthouse. Records in the National Archives show that in 1857, she was paid \$250 to serve for one year as her husband's assistant keeper at the "La Pointe Light Station," but it appears this entry is actually referring to the misplaced beacon on Michigan Island. Nothing more is known about either Haloron.

**Dorothea Hansen** (1849-1920) One of the first Norwegian immigrants to settle on Sand Island; wife of Sand Island fisherman Peter Hansen,

mother of fisherman-diarist Fred. Bedridden for much of her later years, due to rheumatism or arthritis.

**Francine Hansen** (1920-1971) Resident of Russell Township, married Sand Island fisherman Jake Hansen in 1940 at the age of 19. A talented artist; some of her landscapes remain in the possession of family members. The Hansens divorced shortly after the accidental death of their four-month-old daughter Cheryle in 1944, after which Francine moved to Oregon and began a career in commercial art. She was living in California at the time of her death at age 51.

**Nettie Hansen** (Agnetta Johnson Hansen, 1886-1949) Sand Island settler. Daughter of Bayfield fish merchant Jacob Johnson, married fisherman/ diarist Fred Hansen, raised five children living year-round on the island.

**Roselyn Harrison** (1923-1996) Possibly the last woman to raise a family on one of the islands other than Madeline. Wife of Bob Harrison who ran a logging operation and hunting camp on Basswood Island in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The family finally moved to Bayfield when the children reached school age.

**Elizabeth Hawkes** (1906-1978) Washburn native Liz Hawkes is honored by a plaque at the Bayfield County courthouse as one of the first women lawyers in northern Wisconsin. Prior to earning her law degree, she worked on the Washington staff of Congressman H.H. Peavey, and helped draft his 1930 bill proposing an Apostle Islands National Park. More than thirty years later, she served as the attorney for the Red Cliff Band of Ojibwe, and argued in favor of Sen. Gaylord Nelson's successful proposal.

### Lady Lighthouse Keepers

While many keepers' wives worked side-by-side with their husbands and were expected to tend the lamps in their absence, only a handful ever received the title of Assistant Keeper and were paid for their labor. Those that we know are:

#### Full-time

- Mary Haloron, Michigan Island, 1857
- Anna Maria Larson, Raspberry Island, 1868-1880
- Hellen Pendergast, Michigan Island, 1872-74
- Matilda Rumrill, Michigan Island, 1874-1882
- Mary Snow, Raspberry Island, 1880-1882

#### Temporary positions to cover vacancies

- Ella Luick, Sand Island, 1903 and 1904
- Emma Hahn, Sand Island, 1909

**Special Mention:** Young sisters Bessie Nelson and Mabel Dahl filled in for Emmanuel Luick at Sand Island for one night in 1917.

**Anna Mae Hill** (Anna Mae Shaw Hill, 1876-1952) Iconic Sand Island personality, daughter of early settler Frank Shaw and wife of memoirist and jack-of-all-trades Burt Hill. She was said to be skilled in natural healing and was often called for assistance by other community members. She was locally renowned for her culinary artistry, and provided a substantial part of the family income by taking in boarders and cooking for the island's summer residents.

**Irene Hokenson** (Irene Margaret Andersch Hokenson, 1900- 1982) Wife of fisherman Roy Hokenson, lived at Little Sand Bay well into the National Lakeshore era. She is remembered for her cordial relations with her NPS neighbors.

**Florence Hokenson** (Florence Aiken Hokenson, 1903-1992) Russell Township native, wife of Little Sand Bay fisherman Eskel Hokenson. She was said to be a strong moving force in persuading the three Hokenson brothers to shift from farming to fishing, telling her husband that otherwise, "We could hold up a mirror and watch ourselves starve to death." At the fishery, it is said that she did "everything the men did except go out in the boat."

**Helen Johnson Irvine** (1889-1922) Wife of Outer Island assistant keeper Tom Irvine, whom she married at age sixteen, less than two weeks after the *Pretoria* shipwreck. Arrived at the island for the first time after her honeymoon where, according to the family account, she was greeted by wreckage from the ship strewn about, and bodies still washing up on the beach. Left Outer Island shortly afterward when her husband was transferred. The couple had three children, but divorced some time before 1917, leaving her children in the care of Irvine's sister. Several years later she contracted tuberculosis and died in a Minneapolis sanitarium at age 33.

**Myrtle Iverson** (1900-1965) Accompanied her logger husband Ole, her daughter Elaine Jaskowiak, and the latter's husband and toddler, at the Lullabye Logging Camp on Outer Island for several winters during the early 1950s. Along with her daughter Elaine and Roselyn Harrison on Basswood Island, she appears to be one of the last women to spend a winter on one of the National Lakeshore islands.

**Catherine Wabose Jacker (Ikwesens)** (1840-1916) Daughter of Ojibwe chief Wabose and his

wife Nibinekwadokwe, wife of Raspberry Island Lighthouse keeper Francis Jacker. Raised six trilingual children (English-German-Ojibwe) and assisted Jacker in his studies of Native folklore. Best-known for saving her husband's life through her impromptu visit to the lighthouse while he was marooned on Oak Island, but of equal note is that immediately after dispatching her sons to seek aid on the mainland, she climbed to the tower and figured out how to light the lamp to ensure the safety of passing mariners.

**Elaine Jaskowiak** (Elaine Joyce Iverson Jaskowiak, 1926-2007) Spent several winters at the Lullabye Lumber Camp on Outer Island during the early 1950s, along with her logger husband Arthur Jaskowiak, their toddler son Gary, and her parents Ole and Myrtle Iverson. The Jaskowiaks, along with the Harrison family on Basswood Island at about the same time, appear to be the last families to spend a winter on any of the islands other than Madeline.

**Daisy Jensch** (Daisy Minnie Campbell Jensch, 1876 -1965) Sand Island summer resident, matriarch of the Jensch family and social arbiter of the island's summer community. Reportedly persuaded her father, Sam Campbell, to build

#### A Nearby Perspective

*One familiar only with the comfortable homesteads of the East can form no conception of what farming is to the (frontier) woman. The houses are small, inconvenient, and finished only by degrees. She has few facilities to make easy her care for her household, her cows and poultry. The fuel is not under cover, the water is hard to draw. Her work is heavy through lack of conveniences. The farms of the West are often an injury to the woman in many ways.*

Clara Bewick Colby, Madison, WI, 1880

the family cottage next door to Camp Stella in 1905. Well-known for her parties, and for her stern enforcement of proper Victorian mores among her family and guests.

**Mrs. Charles Johnson** Camp Stella laundress, mother of six-year-old Harry Johnson, who drowned while playing on the dock in 1912. Her first name is not given in any reports of the incident.

**Aggie Johnson** (Agnes Drinville Johnson, 1910-1979) Little Sand Bay fixture, wife of Herman "Hermie" Johnson, well-loved proprietress of their general store.

**Emma "Gram" Johnson** (Emma Mansell Russell Johnson, 1872- 1970) "Gram" Johnson was a Madeline Island institution. Born in Birmingham, England, in 1872, her family emigrated to the U.S. when she was nine. She came to Madeline Island ten years later, and married boatman Charles Russell two years after that. After Russell drowned in 1915, she married and became a widow twice more. She spent many years running the island's post office and general store, and made dinner for President Coolidge on his 1926 visit to the island. She died at 98, after spending 76 years on the island.

**Susan Johnston (Ozhaguscodaywayquay)** (c. 1775-1840) Ozhaguscodaywayquay, "Woman of the Green Glade," was born at La Pointe, daughter of the prominent chief Waubojeeg, and sister of island namesake Madeline Cadotte. Ozhaguscodaywayquay married the Scots-Irish fur trader John Johnston in 1793, taking the English name Susan, and moved to Sault Ste. Marie, where her partnership was essential in his rise to become one of the region's leading traders. Her daughter Jane Johnston Schoolcraft achieved

renown as a poet and is considered by some to be the first known Native American woman writer.

**Harriet Justice** (Harriet Agatha Jeffery Justice, 1840-1913) Early Sand Island settler. Born in Penetanguishene, Ontario, Harriet married Italian immigrant John Baptiste Justice in 1859. The couple came to the U.S. shortly afterward, settling first on Michigan's Upper Peninsula, then moving to the Chequamegon Bay region about ten years later. Two of her twelve children were born on Sand Island by the bay that now bears their family's name: Joseph in 1875 and Harriet in 1877. Her daughter Theresa was born at the Outer Island lighthouse in 1880 while

#### Lighthouse Babies

Several keepers' wives gave birth out on the islands, with only their husband or another keeper's wife to attend them. These include:

**Henriata Kuchli:** Gave birth to three children in four years at the Outer Island lighthouse.

**Oramill Luick:** Daughter Luella born at the Sand Island lighthouse on November eighteenth, 1912, died one month later. The baby was initially buried on Sand Island, but her grave was eventually moved to the family plot on the mainland.

**Marguerite Lederle:** Son John, Sand Island, 1884.

**Hellen Pendergast:** Son Charles died on Michigan Island at just under three months of age in late August, 1871, suggesting that the baby was most likely born at the lighthouse.

**Martha Atkinson:** Daughter Alice, Michigan Island, 1871.

Special award to **Harriet Justice**, fisherman's wife, who gave birth to her daughter Theresa at the Outer island lighthouse in February, 1880. Ten days later, she brought the baby to her home at La Pointe, bundled up on a dogsled driven by one of the keepers— a trip of nearly thirty miles over the ice for little Theresa.

Mrs. Justice was working as a family nurse for keeper's wife Henriata Kuchli, who had given birth there ten days earlier.

**Eleanor Knight** (1913- 1994) Self-taught historian Knight wrote weekly history columns in the Bayfield Press in the 1950s. Her colorful writing helped to raise awareness of local history, but unfortunately she apparently did little fact-checking, and occasionally spread misinformation along with the legitimate history.

**Muriel Korfhage** (1914-2007) Sand Island summer resident, St. Paul schoolteacher, life partner of Gertrude Wellisch, who bequeathed her the Plenty Charm cabin after she passed.

**Henriata Kuchli** (Henriata Loranger Kuchli, 1840-1929; born in Canada) Wife of Henry Kuchli, second keeper of the Outer Island Lighthouse. Her first name is sometimes shown as Henrietta, and her surname is often given as Kiichli. Gave birth to three children in the space of four years at the lighthouse: Wilford (1876), Hale (1878), and Adelaide (1880). Lived in Duluth for many years after her husband left the Lighthouse Establishment, but eventually relocated to Seattle.

**Anna Maria Larson** Swedish immigrant, wife of Raspberry Island light keeper Lewis Larson, served as assistant keeper 1868-1880. Consistently referred to as "A.M. Larson" in the station logbook, and mentioned in Lighthouse Board correspondence as "Mr. A. M. Larson." It is not known whether this reflects a deliberate attempt to conceal the fact of her gender. She was succeeded in her position by Mary Snow, wife of subsequent keeper Seth Snow.

**Marguerite Lederle** (1851-1933; born in Germany) Wife of Charles Lederle, first keeper of the Sand Island Lighthouse. Gave birth to ten-pound son John at the lighthouse, July 15, 1884.

**Aagot Loftfield** (1891- 1963; born in Norway) Sand Island resident. Daughter of Ole and Jonette Loftfield, arrived in U.S. with her family in 1904. Served as teacher in the island's one-room school in 1913 and possibly other years.

**Jonette Loftfield** (1862-1942, born in Norway) Member of the second wave of Norwegian immigrants to settle on Sand Island. Arrived in U.S. in 1904, was living on the island by 1920. Said to come from an upper-class background, unusual among this group. The family left Norway for the U.S. after her husband, a high-level government official, was falsely accused of embezzlement. Ran a small "convenience store" out of her property for a number of years.

**Mabel Dahl Loftfield** (1904-1981) Daughter of Sand Island fisherman Harold Dahl. In 1917, on her thirteenth birthday, Mabel and her older sister Bessie Nelson spent a night at the Sand Island lighthouse, tending the lamp when Keeper Emmanuel Luick had to leave the island. In 1926, living in Minneapolis, she married fellow Sand Island resident Magnus Loftfield; the couple eventually relocated to Las Vegas.

**Ella Luick** (Ella Gertrude Richardson Luick, 1879-1950) First wife of Sand Island keeper Emmanuel Luick. Born in Providence, Rhode Island, she married Luick at the age of sixteen and spent the next ten years dividing her time between the lighthouse and their off-season home in Iron River.

Although Ella often tended the light on her own for days at a time during her husband's frequent

absences, she was only paid for this work during two brief periods in 1903 and 1904 when she was appointed acting assistant keeper to fill short-term vacancies. When her husband became seriously ill at the end of the 1901 season, she tended the light and cared for her husband for nearly three weeks, then took on the arduous job of closing the station for the winter.

*Sand Island Light Station Keeper's Log  
Saturday, November 30, 1901.*

*Wind SW, fresh warm. Mrs. Luick inspected  
the Station. Everything in order for the winter.*

Ella Luick, Sand Island

After the couple divorced in 1906, Ella went to nursing school in Baltimore, MD, then after completion returned home to Rhode Island where she pursued her new career. She married a second time at age forty, subsequently going by her husband's last name, Gordon. Her name appears (as "Mrs. Timothy Gordon") in the *Providence Journal* of May 28, 1934, as providing emergency aid to the occupants of a small plane that crashed near her home. Her husband died in 1938, and Ella died in 1950, at the age of seventy.

Note: some accounts claim that Ella worked as a journalist before she married Emmanuel. This assertion apparently originated from a 1990s misreading of one particular *Providence Journal* article, and given her age at the time of her marriage, seems highly unlikely.

**Oramill Luick** (Harriet "Hattie" Oramill Buck Luick, 1888-1955) Second wife of Sand Island keeper Emmanuel Luick. Native of Iron River,

Wisconsin, married Luick in 1911, when she was 23 and he 46. Gave birth to four children during their marriage, including one who was born at the lighthouse, but only two survived to adulthood, the other two dying as infants.

Oramill's experience at the lighthouse was different in many respects from that of Luick's first wife, Ella. With an assistant keeper assigned to the lighthouse by the time of her marriage, it appears that she was never asked to tend the lamp or stay at the lighthouse alone. In addition, the island's population had increased by the time of her marriage, with greater opportunities for socializing with the island's other women. Remarried after Luick's 1947 death, and relocated to Seattle until her own death in 1955.

**Cecelia McLean** (Cecelia Carlson McLean, 1872-1956; born in Sweden) Wife of Devils and Raspberry Island Light Station keeper Alexander McLean, sister of Michigan Island keeper Robert Carlson. After her husband's retirement, she spoke candidly to reporter Stella Champney about the drawbacks of life at a light station, including the memorable summary, "When a woman marries a lighthouse keeper, she gives up everything else in the world. If I had my life to live over again, it would not be in lighthouse stations."

**Kate Lidfors Miller** Apostle Islands Cultural Resource Management Specialist in the park's early years, later Chief of Interpretation. Her work set the course for the park's cultural resource program, ensuring attention to not only the lighthouses, but also to the lesser-known resources such as quarries, logging camps, and farmsteads.

**Eliza Morrison** (Eliza Morrin Morrison, 1837-1921) Born on Madeline Island, daughter of a Scottish/French father and an Ojibwe mother,

Eliza spent parts of her life at La Pointe, Bayfield, Ashland, and Iron River. Her autobiography, *A Little History of My Forest Life*, provides a first-hand account of Native life and culture in the late nineteenth century.

**Mary Neveaux Murray** (1873-1934) Cook at Manitou Island lumber camp, survivor of domestic violence. Briefly arrested along with her nephew when the latter shot and killed her drunken husband in her defense; both were released the following day and all charges dismissed on grounds of self-defense. An Ojibwe woman, Mary and her Scottish immigrant husband had become unwittingly embroiled in controversy several years earlier when they adopted a girl from a group of eastern children brought to live in Wisconsin. According to one report, "The newspapers of the time severely criticized the adoption of... these white children by Indians," but Mary successfully resisted all pressure to give up the child.

**Mrs. Daniel McCrea** Wife of Basswood Island quarry worker Dan McCrea, walked with two others over the ice to Bayfield on Christmas Eve, 1893, to buy presents for her children. The party became disoriented when they were caught in a blizzard on their way back, and Mrs. McCrea perished a short distance from home. Her first name is unknown.

**Marie Moe** (1900-1917) First child of Sand Island settlers Louis and Nanne Moe. Born on steamer *Barker* en route from Sand Island to the mainland, May 14, 1900; died of appendicitis at the age of seventeen.

**Mary Moe** (Mary McGuire Moe, 1922-2004) After serving as a physical therapist for the US Army during World War II, Mary McGuire was

reluctantly convinced by her parents to accompany them on their vacation to the Troller's Home resort on South Twin Island. While there she hit it off well with owner and recent Navy veteran Carl Moe; the couple were married before the next season opened, and the year after that, she returned to the island with a baby boy who would spend much of his early life on South Twin. For the next several years she helped run the resort with her husband and his partner John England, but Troller's Home eventually failed and the family moved to California.

**Nanne Moe** (Nanne Gurine Hansdatter, 1878-1924; born in Norway) Sand Island settler, wife of the entrepreneurial Louis Moe. Gave birth to her first child, daughter Marie, on the steamer *Barker* en route to Bayfield. Died eight days after giving birth to her seventh child.

**Martha Monaghen** Irish immigrant, Basswood Island resident c.1870-73. Wife of quarry foreman Dean Monaghen, also worked there as a cook. Brief 1871 *Bayfield County Press* article states that she was the grandmother of the first child born on the island, but gives no further details.

**Andrea Nelson** (Andrea Jakobsen Nelson, 1881-1974; born in Norway), Wife of Stockton Island fisherman Johannes Nelson, mother of seven. When Nelson brought his new bride out to the island shortly after her arrival in the U.S., the town-raised Andrea looked around the camp and burst into tears-- this was not what she expected to find in the new country.

**Mrs. Joseph Neveux** Wife of early Sand Island fisherman Joseph Neveux, discovered her

husband's body after he apparently committed suicide in their cabin in 1884. No investigation was performed and nothing more is known of Mrs. Neveux.

**Grace Nourse** (Grace Elsie Butler Nourse, 1907-1989) Wife of Rocky Island fisherman Laurie Nourse, well-known proprietress of the "Rocky Island Air Haven" restaurant which operated from 1946 to 1974. Her fish dinners were advertised as one of the main attractions on the sight-seeing boats of the time.

**Elna Olson** (Elna Marguerite Olson, 1909-1994 ) Daughter of Outer Island Keeper Ole Olson, corresponded extensively with NPS personnel in the 1980s and 90s, providing an important source of information on life at the lighthouse.

**Bessie Nelson Palm** (Bessie Matilda Nelson Palm, 1894-1983) Early Sand Island resident. Daughter of Norwegian immigrants Peder and Constance Nelson; first came to the island when her mother married Sand Island fisherman Harold Dahl after her father died when she was six. When her mother died in 1915, she took over care of her three younger half-siblings. Friend and frequent photo subject of Sand Island light keeper Emmanuel Luick. In 1917, when Luick had to leave the island unexpectedly, she and her twelve-year-

old sister Mabel tended the lamp until he returned. In 1918 she married Ludwig Palm, a widower, becoming stepmother to his four small children, and subsequently gave birth to three more of her own. In 1933, with her husband out of work due to the Depression, she and her whole family spent a full year on the island, where they could survive at little expense.

**Eva Pasque** Daughter of Michigan Island Lighthouse keeper John Pasque, namesake of his boat "Little Eva," later wrote a brief history of her father's life and his time at the lighthouse.

**Harriet Peet** (1827-1914) Wife of the early Methodist missionary James Peet, whose diary provides a source of information for Bayfield's earliest days. In 1855, Harriet and her new husband traveled from upstate New York to St. Paul, and the following year, the couple made an arduous, eight-day mid-winter journey by sleigh from St. Paul to Superior. Though her husband doesn't bother mentioning it in his diary, Harriet was in her third trimester of pregnancy at the time; six weeks after arriving in Superior, she gave birth to the couple's first child. In 1857 the Peets relocated to Bayfield where they spent two years before returning to Superior, then finally moved again to Minnesota. James Peet died in 1866, and Harriet remarried and outlived him by many years.

*The island paradise that people today think it is – swimming, hiking, and playing on the beach- wasn't fun at all during the black fly and mosquito seasons. Mom would cook on a hot wood-burning stove, haul water in pails from the lake, and wash clothes on a scrub board. I don't think people nowadays would make it as islanders under those conditions.*

Olive Nelson Jones, daughter of Andrea Nelson  
Stockton Island and Rocky Island

**Hellen Pendergast** Wife of Michigan Island Light Station keeper Roswell Pendergast, shown in Lighthouse Board records as receiving a salary as Assistant Keeper in 1872-74. The following year her infant son Charles passed away in early August, aged less than three months, suggesting that the child was probably born at the lighthouse. The unusual spelling "Hellen" is seen in multiple sources.

**Fran Carpenter Platske** (c.1926-2022) Daughter of Raspberry and Outer Island keeper Alva Carpenter, an energetic advocate of preserving lighthouse history. Wrote prolifically on her memories of lighthouse life.

**Lydia Prentice** (Lydia Amanda Stillwell Prentice, 1846-1912) Fourth wife of brownstone quarry tycoon Frederick Prentice. Although local lore claims that she was in her teens when Prentice brought her out to the newly-built Cedar Bark Lodge on Hermit Island, in fact she was 39 at the time of their marriage. Several more years would elapse before construction of the lodge even started, and there is no evidence whatsoever to support the often-told tale that she refused to spend more than one night on the island.

**Vivian DeRusha Quantz** (1929-2017) Daughter of Devils Island lighthouse assistant keeper Louis Derusha, later in life wrote a memoir titled *Foghorns Saved Lives, Too*, which provides an account of Pres. Calvin Coolidge's visit to Devils Island.

*One summer the Lighthouse Service had to send a crew of ten men out to the island for some big jobs that had to be done. They asked mother if she would fix the meals for them. She said yes, she would. The crew was there for nine or ten weeks -- all summer she said. She was in the kitchen from five a.m. till ten p.m. at night every day. She said she baked ten loaves of bread every other day. In those days it was a wood or coal kitchen range. After the crew left and we settled down to normal life, the Lighthouse Service sent mother a nice complimentary letter thanking her and saying the crews spoke of the excellent meals she made for them.*

Elna Olson, Outer Island

**Mary Hulings Rice** (1940-2020) Sand Island summer resident, heiress to the Andersen Window Co. fortune, Mary Rice was a philanthropist, artist, collector of flamingo iconography, and genuine larger-than-life personality. Fiercely devoted to her family's Sand Island heritage, she was a bitter opponent of the National Lakeshore in its early years, but her attitude softened as time went on and in her last years welcomed NPS involvement in preserving the island's heritage.

**Alice Risley** Lived in Cedar Bark Lodge on Hermit Island in the mid-1890s, shortly after original owner Frederick Prentice moved out of the area. Surviving portions of her diary detail her life there in 1896-98, but leave it uncertain exactly why she and her family were there.

**Matilda Rumrill** Wife of Michigan Island Light Station keeper Pliny Rumrill, served as Assistant Keeper from 1874 through 1882. Sadly, her 18-year-old son Willie drowned in 1878 while swimming out to retrieve a boat moored near the dock. When her position was abolished in 1882, her husband quit his job as well, and the family eventually left the area, finally moving to Oregon.

**Edna Lane Sauer** (1895-1991) Daughter of Michigan Island lighthouse keeper Ed Lane. Edna Lane Sauer was a prolific and articulate correspondent, and her letters to NPS personnel in the National Lakeshore's early years provided the park with its single best source of information on life at the lighthouse in the early twentieth century.

**Mary Sexton** (c.1850-1901) Michigan Island settler and lightkeeper's wife. Born in Germany about 1850, she married fisherman Joe Sexton in 1870, and about seven years later, they homesteaded a claim on Michigan Island, clearing several acres and building a house and out-buildings. They remained on the island until

1886, when her husband accepted a position as assistant keeper at Outer Island. The family moved to the La Pointe station on Long Island in 1899, where Joe served as keeper for the next thirty-two years. Mary, mother of five, did not get to spend much time at this new home; she died only two years later.

**Sophia Sexton (1864-1925)** Second wife of La Pointe light station keeper Joseph Sexton, cousin of his first wife, Mary. When Mary Sexton died in 1901, Sophia became stepmother to her five children, then went on to have six of her own. There was a 38- year difference in age between Joseph Sexton's oldest and youngest children.

**Jane Johnston Schoolcraft  
(Bamewawagezhikaquay)**

(1800-1842) Called by one biographer "the first Native American literary writer, the first known Indian woman writer, the first known Indian poet, the first known poet to write poems in a Native American language and the first known American Indian to write out traditional Indian stories," Jane Johnston Schoolcraft lived most of her life at Sault Ste. Marie but had strong family ties to Madeline Island. Her mother was Susan Johnston (Ozhaguscodaywayquay), born at La Pointe, and she in turn was daughter of the prominent chief Waubojeege. Her Irish-born father, John Johnston, was a prominent fur trader and had a large library which enabled her to become familiar with European literary traditions.

At the age of 23 she married the explorer, ethnologist, and Indian Agent Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, and assisted him in his research throughout their marriage, gathering infor-

*My memory is very clear of our arrival in Bayfield in 1901. We had spent the winter in Detroit and Dad had to leave us and report for duty at Michigan Island. Mom decided not to wait and with three children under seven and all with whooping cough, she started out. I was just recovering from measles.*

*Between trains in Chicago, my sister broke out with them and as there was a smallpox epidemic in Chicago at that time, it was doubtful if we would be allowed to continue. However, we finally arrived in Bayfield on the eleven o'clock train.*

*Early the next morning we went on board the Barker. My brother broke out with measles and my sister, already quite ill, developed pneumonia. We landed on the island to find the living quarters a filthy mess. A horsehide had been tacked to the one bedroom floor and the whole place was overrun with roaches. Mom and Dad had to scrub everything in order to get the sick ones in bed. From then on it was a struggle to save my sister's life. With the help of the "medicine chest" we all survived.*

Edna Lane Sauer, Michigan Island

mation and arranging access to the local native population. Some scholars believe that she wrote significant portions of his monumental six volume study, *Indian Tribes of the United States*, but she was not given credit as co-author. Her own writings were not published during her short life, but gained wide renown later on.

**Josephine Shaw (c1842-1911)** Early Sand Island settler. Arrived in the Chequamegon region from Sandusky, Ohio with her husband Frank Shaw and initially settled at La Pointe. During the 1870s and 1880s, it appears the family moved frequently between Sandusky, and Sand and Madeline Islands, but by about 1897, they settled year-round on Sand Island. She gave birth of at least one of her ten children on

the island, but sadly that little girl died shortly after her birth.

**Helen Shuga** (1906-1980) Teacher at the Sand Island school in 1927, lost all her belongings when the cabin where she was staying burned down. Wrote a humorous account of a trip to Eagle Island with some of her pupils, including a digression on the palatability of seagull eggs. Also taught at the Belanger Settlement school on the mainland, eventually relocated to Racine and continued in the teaching profession.

**Mary Snow** Wife of Raspberry Island lighthouse keeper Seth Snow, listed as assistant keeper there 1880-1882. No other information about her has surfaced.

**Kate Spencer** Passenger on the steamship *Sevona* when it foundered off Sand Island in 1905. Provided a vivid account of the ship's final moments in a subsequent newspaper report.

**Abigail Spooner** (1810-1893) Teacher at the Protestant mission at La Pointe, 1841-c. 1853. Noteworthy as the only single woman to serve at the mission.

**Florantha Thompson Sproat** (1811-1883) Wife of missionary Granville Sproat and teacher at the mission during their stay at La Pointe from 1838 to 1846. Wrote copious letters providing vivid detail about life at the mission, the signing of the 1842 treaty with the Ojibwe, and one of the earliest descriptions of the mainland sea caves.

In 1854, after leaving La Pointe and spending eight years in her Massachusetts home town, Florantha and her two daughters, ages ten and

twelve, embarked on a five-month voyage by sailing ship around Cape Horn to join Granville, already in California.

The couple separated in 1863, and Florantha, her two daughters, and her son-in-law James Mason Hutchings moved to Yosemite, where they managed the Valley's first successful hotel. While at Yosemite, she became friends with John Muir, and at age 66, became one of the first women to climb the iconic monolith Half Dome.

**Julie Van Stappen** The *Grande Dame* of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore natural resource management program from 1988 to the present (2023), and a wonderful friend to this writer. It's too early to assess her legacy, but it's going to be huge.

**Catherine Wabose (Ogeewyqhoqutokwa)** (c. 1790-1880) Mystic and visionary, born at La Pointe, granddaughter of Chief Waubojeeg. Called by Henry Schoolcraft "the Chequamegon prophet," she is particularly noted for the detailed description she shared of the vision quest she experienced upon entering puberty.

**Gert Wellisch** (Gertrude Veronica Wellisch, 1896-1966) Sand Island summer resident, high school English teacher, and "the woman who saved the Sand Island Lighthouse." Daughter of a well-to-do St. Paul businessman, Gert spent her teenage summers at Sand Island's West Bay Lodge, where her father was part-owner. When he decided to sell his share in the Lodge, she sought a way to continue spending time on the island, and hit upon the idea of leasing the recently automated lighthouse.

After several years of effort, she persuaded the Department of Agriculture to issue a

lease in 1925, contingent on her taking care of all maintenance. The first of several private lessors to occupy the lighthouses between automation and the advent of the National Lakeshore, she set a precedent that was critical in preserving the structures.

When the government ended her lease at the lighthouse in 1936, she bought land at East Bay for the cottage she dubbed "Plenty Charm." Gert and her life partner, fellow teacher Muriel Korfhage, spent summers at the cabin and were welcomed into the tight-knit community.

**Harriet Wheeler** (Harriet Wood Wheeler, 1816-1894) Wife of Protestant missionary Leonard Wheeler, assisted him at La Pointe

from their arrival in 1840 until 1845, when Wheeler decided to move to the mainland, where he established a new settlement that he called Odanah. Wheeler suffered poor health during this time and Harriet was often called on to perform some of his pastoral duties, in addition to caring for her sick husband and looking after her nine children. Leonard Wheeler finally retired from mission work in 1866 whereupon the family moved to Beloit. Harriet remained active long after Leonard's death in 1872, and died at Ashland on a trip to revisit old friends. Harriet was a prolific correspondent, and 260 of her letters survive, providing detailed information about her life at the mission, and her interactions with the native community.