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 CedarLakeMuseum

 CLHAMuseum
 CedarLakeHistory

It was the dream of Beatrice Horner, Cedar Lake's first town historian, to form an organization and create a museum to tell the fascinating history of the area. A group of 19 Cedar Lake citizens joined her to incorporate the Cedar Lake Historical Association (CLHA) on September 22, 1977.

The most significant artifact in the collection is the building itself: a 16,000 sq. ft., two-story, wood-frame structure. The back wing was formerly situated on the western shores of the lake to house ice harvesters for Armour Bros. and Company meatpacking of Chicago. In 1919, Chris Lassen purchased the building and moved it over the frozen lake to this site on the east shoreline, where he was operating his thriving dance pavilion and restaurant. He added the lakeside wing and the Lassen Resort Hotel opened May 7, 1921. The resort was sold shortly after World War II. After 30-years as a church camp, the Town of Cedar Lake purchased the 20-acre property. CLHA was incorporated to preserve the hotel structure and operate it as a museum.

The building was leased from the Town of Cedar Lake on March 21, 1979, placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1981, and opened as a museum in 1986. Today, CLHA is managed by a small but thriving group of dedicated volunteers with a BIG vision. The museum is the only structure remaining from more than 50 summer resorts that once graced the shores of Cedar Lake. Accordingly, CLHA maintains a predominantly 1920's feel in keeping with Cedar Lake's resort-era tradition spanning the 1880s through the 1930s. **Your patronage supports the preservation of Cedar Lake history.** Donations are welcome. Please visit the front desk or lassensresort.org to contribute.

Foyer & Lobby:

Welcome to Lassen's Resort hotel! Enjoy the many photographs showcasing the Lassen Bros. Dancing Pavilion, buffet restaurant, Dewey boat line, and more. To purchase souvenirs or sweet treats, please visit our general store gift shop. **Tip: Ask if our hotel concept room is open on the 2nd floor.**

South Hallway:

The lake view **Dining Room** is available for special event rentals. Artifacts include the Coleman Bar, memorabilia from various resorts such as Lassen's and Coffin's Shady Beach, water ski club jackets and skis, and sign from Reichert's Tavern in the nearby historic village of Brunswick.

North Hallway:

- **Members Lounge:** available for event rentals. **Step inside to view the Cedar Lake Timeline Exhibit**
- **Archives:** Make an appointment with our Historian/Curator to learn more.
- **Hands-on History Room:** Where children are invited to learn Cedar Lake history through play. Please keep the space clean and safe for all our junior historians. Coin-operated train layout on loan from Hesston Steam Museum (LaPorte County, IN) requires 25¢ to run trains.

Museum Gallery: The Story of Cedar Lake

1. **Pre-Historic Exhibit, the Dawn of Human Inhabitation:** Showcases a 25,000 year-old femur of a mastodon and 12,000 year-old stone tools used by the indigenous peoples of the region. Most were found locally. The replica hunting spear was used to hunt mastodons and mammoths.
2. **Bounty from the Lake, the commodity that changed commerce:** Discover Cedar Lake's winter harvest in two brief videos that give an introduction to the ice harvesting business that built the economy of Cedar Lake and how that it was used for railroad boxcar refrigeration.
3. **Tools of the Trade, hardware for a hard job:** Hand tools were used to harvest ice from Cedar Lake. The largest tool – the refrigerated box car – was essential to the meat-packing industry on Chicago's south side. **Press the button** in the center of the display to activate train.

4. **Monon Connection, Cedar Lake's lifeline:** The Monon's 1881 arrival ushered in the resort era. People came to the lake to escape the pollution of factories and locomotives and experience a breath of fresh air – literally! [Press the button](#) under the reading rail to activate the passenger train.
5. **Resort Fun, summertime on the shores of our lake:** Over 50 resorts were established through the years and the Lassen's Dewey Line ferried passengers to all points around the lake. The Lassen's even hosted boxing events in the building now used as Town Hall. [Open cedarlakehistory.org](#) on your mobile device to view pictures and details about each resort listed on the wall map.
6. **Welcome Aboard the Dewey Line:** Discover the science behind steam power and visit us on [Wednesdays from 6/14/23-9/27/23](#) to steam across Cedar Lake.
7. **Global Contributions, the innovation of Cedar Lake's citizens:** Apart from the ice industry, Cedar Lake held prominence in the region, the nation, and the world for other reasons. Discover them here. [COMING SOON: The Science of Steam - Our new exhibit will be unveiled on 7/26/23 on Steam Through History Day.](#) See more steam equipment in operation and a boat parade too!
8. **World War II Kitchen:** Note the early model refrigerator and vintage wash machine. Depicts canning from the Victory Garden and cans are saved for the war effort.
9. **Vintage Kitchen:** The vignette features an ice box, wood-burning cook stove, and "Hoosier Cabinet." Meal preparation was centered on the dry ingredients and spices stored in the cabinet. The pantry held dishes and some canned and dried produce.
10. **Rotating Exhibit Room:** [Pioneer Pop-up](#) on loan from Porter County Museum (Valparaiso, IN)
11. **Parlor:** A room where children were rarely permitted except on special occasions. On display are vintage vacuums, a wind-up phonograph and cathedral radio, the 1920's entertainment center.
12. **Bedroom:** Typical of the 1920s featuring soapstone bed-warmers and an antique sun lamp.
13. **Special Features:** In 1836, Revolutionary War veteran Obadiah Taylor settled at the northeast shore of Cedar Lake, once called West Point. His descendants display the Taylor family history in this room - along with memorabilia from Midway Gardens/Ballroom, Cedar Lake Roller Rink, and the cobbler tools of Peter Scholl, Sr., grandfather of Dr. William Scholl of foot-care fame
14. **School Room:** A look back at many items featured in a one-room school house.
15. **Doctor's Office:** Depicts an office of the late 1940s and early 1950s complete with vintage medical equipment. Dr. Robert W. King is known as the "father of Cedar Lake." Learn why from our volunteers at the front desk. [View CLHA organizational history in the adjacent gift shop.](#)

Outside:

Front Porch - Native Flower Garden: The garden includes the common blue violet, wild columbine, lead plant, stone crop, aster, phlox, four o'clock and little bluestem, a native prairie grass. [We welcome volunteers to help us maintain the garden.](#) The walkway is made from bricks from the original Lincoln School that sat on the site of the current HCSC administration building. South of the museum, close to the public beach, notice the two eastern red cedars. The larger one has a twisted trunk. Because of the vast amount of these native trees, the Potawatomi Indians called Cedar Lake Mes-kwah-ock-bis, or "Lake of the Red Cedars." The original name of the lake was Red Cedar Lake.

Back Porch - Woody's Barbershop: Built in 1931 and restored to the late 1940s and 1950s. Accessible through the rotating exhibit room with assistance from a museum volunteer.

Parking Lot (if on display) - Taylor Ice Truck: (1947 International KB5) Donated by Todd Taylor. In 1922, Thomas J. Taylor, Sr., established the Taylor Ice Co. His son, Thomas J. Taylor, Jr., assumed operation of the company in 1948 and delivered to local homes and businesses. The Taylor ice truck made its final deliveries to the Lake County fairgrounds in 1988. View dedication ceremony on our YouTube page (link in the footer on our website) or on the truck's Facebook page [@TaylorIceTruckCLHA](#)

Community Pier

- **Steamer Dewey:** (20-passenger steamboat) Resort history cruises offered on Wednesdays 6/14-9/27. Book tickets at the front desk or online at [lassensresort.org/deweyline](#).

- **Baby Dewey:** (6-passenger electric boat) Ask our volunteers about booking a resort history cruise at sunset. Pair with dockside carryout dinner from the Lighthouse Restaurant enjoyed aboard the boat.

- **History Panels:** Discover history highlights and enjoy a respite over-the-water on the pier benches.

[Interested in joining our volunteer team to present the relevance of Cedar Lake history?](#)

Ask for an application at the desk or visit [lassensresort.org/volunteers](#)