



*We invite you to join the
Keweenaw County
Historical Society*

Yes, I am interested in assisting the work of the Society

- Please sign me up as a member. My first year dues are enclosed.
- Historian\$20 per year
- Copper Miner\$35 per year
- Lightkeeper\$75 or more per year
- Life\$500 or more
- Please mail me additional information about Society membership.
- I'm not interested in membership, but want to help. My \$_____ donation is enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

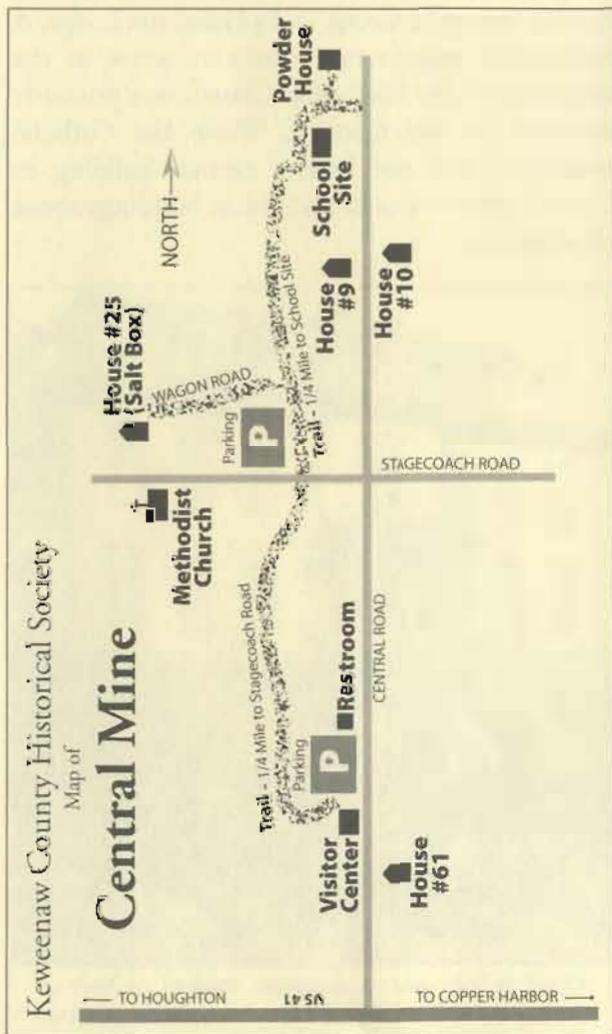
Please detach at perforation
and mail to:

Keweenaw County Historical Society
670 LIGHTHOUSE ROAD
EAGLE HARBOR, MICHIGAN 49950
www.keweenawhistory.org



Thank You!

became a ghost town. Since 1907 the former residents of Central and their descendants have gathered together with thousands of others at the old Methodist church on the last Sunday in July. There are only 13 houses and one church left at Central now, but come there on the morning of the last Sunday in July, and you will see it come alive.



Keweenaw County Historical Society

Eagle Harbor, Michigan



Central Mine from
Ancient Indian Pit
to Industrial Complex
to Ghost Town in 44 Years

The Reception Center at
Central Mine is Open Daily
From 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Mid-June to Mid-October.

Central Mine is located north of Calumet, just off US 41 between Phoenix & Delaware. The Central Mine fissure was discovered in 1854 in an ancient Indian mining pit along an outcrop about 600 feet below the Greenstone Bluff.



Central Mine Methodist Church

The Central Mine was formally organized on November 15, 1854 primarily by a group of five local investors. A shaft was immediately sunk along side of the pit and over 40 tons of pure mass copper was removed in the first forty feet of depth. By the end of the first year the shaft had reached a depth of 75 feet. Despite some water problems which required the building of a drainage adit, the mine produced 83,836 pounds of copper and was the only mine in the history of the Michigan Copper Country to show a profit in the very first year.

Central Mine was by far the most productive of all the fissure deposit mines and would go on to produce nearly 52,000,000 pounds of copper and pay \$2,130,000 in dividends on a capital investment of only \$100,000.

By the end of the Civil War, Central was well on its way to becoming a thriving community of some 1300 inhabitants. The mine provided a good living and adequate housing for its employees, most of whom were foreign born. Irish and Germans made up a substantial part of the population, however the largest group were the Cornish whose expertise in hard rock mining learned in the tin mines in the Duchy of Cornwall, England was in great demand throughout the mining world.

The social structure of the community included three fraternal orders, The Knights of Pythias, Sons of St. George and a Freemason Lodge. A temperance organization was also active in the community. The Methodist Church was primarily attended by the Cornish. While the Catholic population did not have a church building in Central, church was often held in buildings about the settlement.



Alfred Nicholls and his daughter, Mildred, in front of Central School. Photo from Charles Stetter Collection.

The community had a magnificent three story school provided by the company that stood high on the bluff and was the center for numerous social activities. The community had its own post office, telegraph office and one of the first telephone services in the entire Copper Country.

While Central Mine was a close-knit community it was not without its problems. Mining is a dangerous occupation and mine accidents were numerous. Tragedy would strike with full force on a late evening in April 1872 when a cable broke while 13 men were riding the skip car



#25 "Salt Box" House

down the number 2 shaft. Ten were killed and three others seriously injured. This was a devastating event in a community the size of Central in which people all knew each other. The community would endure its losses and for the next 25 years would prosper.

By 1894 the company had deep shafts in the fissure. On the 30th level of the mine, a fault was encountered that effectively terminated the ore body. By 1895 production hit a 33 year low. On July 29, 1898 after 44 years of continuous mining, Central Mine closed. People immediately had to seek employment elsewhere and Central soon