

2018 Annual Report  
*Ernest C. Oberholtzer Foundation*



## MALLARD ISLAND IN RAINY LAKE

Work Crew in the Teaching Lodge, in Progress in May

IMAGE CAPTURED BY MICHAEL REID

Organization incorporated in 1964, a 501(c)3 nonprofit and a private operating foundation

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**“The Ernest C. Oberholtzer Foundation maintains Ober’s legacy and north woods island home as a source of inspiration, renewal, and connection to Indigenous Peoples, kindred spirits, and the natural world.”**



## Dear Friends of Mallard Is, Oberholtzer Foundation,

When Ernest Oberholtzer left his favorite island in the fall of 1957, I know that he thought he was coming back. Due to health and life circumstances, he visited many times but never lived there again. Since he seemed to leave in a hurry, his books, photographs, sheet music, pianos, furniture, and other artifacts were left with a wish and a promise, and it is now taking decades and dozens of followers to keep those promises.

We are currently gaining ground on Oberholtzer's photograph collection, thanks to a MN Legacy Grant and the patience and leadership of our archivist, Paula DeMars of Bemidji, MN. We continue to care for Ober's unique library of books, of course—an effort begun and designed by program founder, Jean Sanford Replinger of Marshall, MN.

When the island offered broken buildings, rough trails, stacks of uncatalogued books and baskets of negatives, it also seemed to attract young people. Or at least we all thought we were young when we first met this magic island. Now we realize that something more intentional must be done to keep attracting young folks—doesn't every ongoing legacy call for that renewing cycle of youth? This summer we hope to be welcoming college-age students in two of the summer weeks and writers, teachers, and others who take a hold of these stories again and eventually make them their own.

After losing Tim Heinle in the fall of 2017, we lost Don Maronde in the fall of 2018. Of course, this is the other half of any "legacy cycle," and we may have to grow more used to such harsh losses. I know, personally, that without Don (my husband for 14 years) I would not have taken this all-encompassing job, and that his spirit, physical strength and love for Mallard Island and Rainy Lake gifted all of us.

Other remarkable "happenings" in 2018 included the implementation of a "year of reflection and renewal," two 2-day work sessions on the island, and a renewal week with most of the board of directors. [Note the renewed list of board members, page six.] For the first time, none of our current board actually *knew* Ernest Oberholtzer. We are in a new and inevitable phase of life for this fine legacy organization.

Storms were one order of the day last summer. In July our volunteers survived the blow-out of the island's transformer and a dozen hours of power outage. In August, a group heard a quick night-time wind take down eleven trees in the "wild" area west of Bird House, and again we had 10 hours without power. Those who step onto the island will recognize *new light* in many small forested areas. May I add here my personal thanks to Mairi Doerr and Prudence Johnson— intrepid summer program directors!

Finally, let me tell you the story behind the image on the front cover. Board member, Dennis Jones (Pebaamibines) was the keeper of a teaching lodge on his reserve for many years. He decided that the programs of Mallard Island and the more southerly location of Mallard and Gull Islands, two of the "Review Islands," would foster a good home for a re-created sacred spot. Thus, in late May, thanks to Pebaamibines and the crew on Mallard as well as elders from his home reserve and several strong young women staffers from Camp Ogichi Daa Kwe, we have a lodge. This ash-pole structure holds sacred air space and brings spiritual energy together in a beautiful wooded location on Gull Island. It will teach now, and will be carefully shared with those who come to Mallard for program or those who travel in with Pebaamibines, including young people from the Camps: Ogichi Daa Kwe or Koochiching.

*Beth E. Waterhouse* ~ Executive Director

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## Accomplished by Everyone during 2018: (a very partial listing)

- ❖ Our endowment campaign crossed the milestone of 91% of pledges vs goal, and the board of directors declared a grateful victory. This gift option remains open to all.
- ❖ Elders from Nigigoonsiminikaaning reserve on Rainy Lake, brought over by our board member, Pebaamibines, led a group to create the Teaching Lodge space on Gull Island.
- ❖ Archivist, Paula DeMars dove into Ober's photograph collection and documented thousands of images, supported by a Minnesota Cultural Heritage Legacy grant.
- ❖ Board voted to tear down the "LP" structure on Gull Island; accomplished in February.
- ❖ As part of "renewal," the island was deep cleaned, all blankets were washed, and we procured new pillows for many of the beds on site.
- ❖ We trained eight caretakers in first aid, CPR, and all of the island systems and boats.
- ❖ Gardeners planted several new species of native, non-invasive plants and grasses.
- ❖ Japanese House and Lower Front House received new roofs.
- ❖ We survived July and August wind storms that took down over a dozen trees and put the power out each time for a dozen hours. (New transformer installed in July)
- ❖ The board is adopting policies and processes toward its own perennial renewal.
- ❖ Note a newly re-designed web site, launched in January 2019.

## A Word from Board President, Peggy Anne Smith,



(Miskwaanakwadook—Red Cloud Woman)

**I thought I would** focus this year on our Board: who we are, what we do and how we do it, and how we are building our Board "bench" or our prospects for future trustees.

We have a dedicated group of Board members committed to upholding the Foundation's mission statement (see the cover of this report.) As a Board, we are entrusted with this mission and responsible for the organization's financial and legal health. We operate under the US government rules for 501(c)3

non-profit organizations. In keeping with our multi-cultural mission, we also try to balance our decision-making by taking into account Indigenous ways of knowing, and we are well guided in these efforts by Anishinaabe Board member, Dennis Jones (Pebaamibines).

Our current members bring a range of skills to the Board. We have identified the qualities and skills we need in Board members, and we review those skills when we recruit new members. We consider: credentials, demographics, ethnicity, expertise in various areas, "giving" (financial) ability, influence with outside groups and other attributes. Right now, we have particular need of a member(s) with financial and fundraising experience. We would also like more Indigenous representation on our Board. And we are always seeking members who have a range of our needed skills and experience.

[photo L to R: Smith, Jones, Tessari, Forsyth, Waterhouse]

*~ Peggy Anne Smith (continued on page six)*

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**Statement of Operating Revenue and Expenses – Unaudited  
Ernest C. Oberholtzer Foundation - for Calendar Year 2018**

<b>REVENUE</b> (rounded to nearest dollar)		<u>% of total</u>
Earnings on Endowments, first budgeted this year	24,000	19%
Grants from Foundations	27,600	22%
Dividends and Interest from Investments	18,000	15%
Revenue from Oil & Gas Royalties (and leases)	17,000	14%
Donations from Individuals this year	27,805	22%
Program Fees for Island Use during 2017	8,750	7%
Sales of photos and books	<u>977</u>	1%
<b>Total for Year.....</b>	<b>\$ 124,132</b>	

<b>EXPENSES</b> (rounded to nearest dollar)		
Staff Salary / Wages and benefits (ED plus 3 contract staff)	52,198	
Island Utilities / Organizational Storage	3,646	
Administration and Fundraising (Insurance, taxes here)	17,053	
Board Meeting Expenses and Travel	8,914	
Outreach and Education (newsletter costs here)	3,631	
Archives and Collections Management (w/archivist wages)	14,384	
Direct Summer Program Expenses (without prorated exp)	9,214	
Capital Improvements & Repairs (two new roofs)	6,400	
Forestry Tasks (all volunteer labor and donated exp)	0	
Equipment Replacement (new tools this year)	1,837	
Book and Archival Projects supporting the Legacy	925	
Contingency / Gifts	<u>1,500</u>	
<b>Total Expenses.....</b>	<b>\$ 119,702</b>	
Transfer to emergency fund*.....	<u>5,000</u>	
<b>Total for Year.....</b>	<b>\$ 124,702</b>	
Deficit, This Year	(570)	

Our year was improved financially in 2018 with the incorporation of “earnings” from our endowment receipts, donated since 2015. This figure will vary each year, this year at just under 5%./ Foundation salaries supported one person at 60% time plus 2 summer staff people working 3 weeks ea., and a website designer part time all year. Our archivist worked about 10 hrs/week all year. \*Note: Each year, the board designates \$5,000 to a self-insurance/emergency fund. The total by year-end 2018 in that fund, co-mingled in our investments, was \$65,000. ~ Revenue closely matched with expenses this year. Program fees were down due to a renewal summer. We were able to reinvest some of the dividends into long-term savings.

**Portfolio of Investments—held with Raymond James & Assoc., Chicago, Illinois**

*With the guidance of Ms. Rosa Ebling at Raymond James & Assoc, Chicago, the Foundation manages a diverse portfolio of investments. Total investments as of 12-31-18 were valued at \$899,787. We benefited from \$384,813 in donor-designated endowment gifts as of year end. Special thanks are extended to Rebecca Wallenfelz and Antoinette Hickey of Chapman & Cutler LLP, Chicago, for their assistance with legal and tax compliance over many years. We could not accomplish all that we do without our financially knowledgeable friends in Chicago.*

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## Recognition of Volunteers in 2018

### Work Week Volunteers

Michael Reid  
Nance Kunkel  
Barb Balcom  
Tom Balcom  
Mary Alice Smith  
Sherry Rovig  
Craig Fernholz  
Doug Kelley  
Pebaamibines  
Peggy Anne Smith

### Archives Week Volunteers

Elizabeth Hutchins  
Edie Meissner  
David Duggan  
Sue Carver  
Jennifer Huebscher  
Clay Gustafson  
Lisa Gustafson  
Gordy Paquette  
Andrea Allison  
Lori Probst

### Special Thanks to our Newsletter Layout Editor,

Nance Kunkel

### Mallard Island Caretakers during 2018

Mairi Doerr (\*)  
Prudence Johnson (\*)  
Jennie Ross  
Daniel Laurence Andersen  
Jane Lund  
Paula DeMars  
Elaine Thruene

Diane Tessari  
Mary Swalla Holmes  
Jim Fitzpatrick  
Danielle Sosin  
Nance Kunkel  
(\*) summer program directors

### Steadfast Island Opener and Closer Volunteers

Pam and Darrell Rundell  
& the Rundell family  
David & Nancy Markwardt

### Incoming Caretakers Trained this Summer

Kelly Sassi  
Barb Draper

### Special Thanks to 2018 Forestry Volunteers

Elaine and Steve Thruene  
Bill Thruene  
Marlene Ehresman  
Michael Reid

### Zhaa-bo-da-waan Teaching Lodge Crew in Cover Photo

“The name ‘teaching lodge’ explains its use: people come to this space to learn the universal truths of life—to learn about life.” (Pebaamibines)

We want to recognize the crew pictured on the cover of this newsletter, though we are also aware that several others helped in the process of creating this ash-pole structure in May of 2018. We are grateful for 60 ash poles, and for the men who came

down from the Ontario reserve to teach the process.

Left to Right, Back Row of the cover photo: Jerrica Bauer\*, Alice Woods\*, Lizzie Thomson\*, Craig Fernholz, Calvin Morrison, Don Jones, Ernie Morrison, Doug Kelley, and Sherry Rovig.

Seated, Front Row: Lindsay Wiebold\* and Pebaamibines (Dennis) Jones.

(\*) Camp Staff from Camp Ogichi Daa Kwe, in nearby Rainy Lake.

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With sadness, we marked the death of Helen M. Heller during 2018. A generous soul.

~ ~ ~

### 2018: A Year of Reflection and Renewal

Facing the unexpected death of then board treasurer, Tim Heinle, and an over-packed summer of 2017, the board declared 2018 a *year of renewal*. They defined that, limiting the summer program weeks to 3 and increasing island rest weeks to 3+. In addition, the board of directors spent countless extra hours evaluating—running out and interpreting a survey, and discussing policies and implications of carrying capacity.

After a June week of renewal discussions, the board revised our strategic goals for the organization for 2019+.

## Oberholtzer Foundation Board of Trustees: (April 2019)

- Bill Forsyth Minneapolis, Minnesota
- George Glazier Devens, Massachusetts
- Mary Swalla Holmes Polk City, Iowa
- Pebaamibines (Dennis) Jones Minneapolis, MN and Ontario
- Bob Norbie Great Falls, Montana
- Michael Reid St. Paul, Minnesota
- Dave Rolloff Sacramento, California
- Margaret (Peggy) Anne Smith Thunder Bay, Ontario
- Diane Crawford Tessari Excelsior, Minnesota

### Board President's Letter, continued

We seek to find a balance between men and women and a range of ages. We seek diversity in ethnicity, and we have a special need for Indigenous representatives who help us meet our mission goal of improving our connection with Indigenous Peoples. We look for Board members who have some familiarity with Rainy Lake, summer island or program experience, and a love of wilderness preservation.

This group lost Tim Heinle in 2017, but we also miss Charlie Kelly, Mark Granlund, Denise Lajimodiere, and Bob Hilke. Mark and Denise both resigned from the Board this past year for personal reasons. Thankfully, Mark continues to participate as a summer caretaker and to sit on the Archives Committee. Denise has helped to organize a summer program on Indigenous Art and Writing at Mallard Island. We are grateful for their continued contribution to the Foundation's work. We will also sorely miss Bob Hilke who attended his last Board meeting in March. Bob is one of our connections to those who knew Ober personally. Our thanks also to Charles A. Kelly for his decades of leadership. Charlie still brings us much-needed investment acumen.

We welcomed Mary Swalla Holmes back this year, grateful for her long-term experience in serving as caretaker, first Executive Director and board member. We also welcomed Dave Rolloff, a professor in Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration at Sacramento State University who brings expertise in photography, art and history, as well as wilderness preservation. Welcome!

One way to join this leadership group is to work on one of our board's standing committees. Consider these: Archives, Board Development, Facilities Maintenance, Finance & Fundraising, Inaakonigewin, Program & Outreach, or Vegetation Management. I'm sure that Beth Waterhouse would describe the activities of any of these committees for you, if you're interested. It takes a diverse gathering of interests to maintain this meaningful legacy. Here's to another good year.

*~ Peggy Anne Smith*

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## All 2018 Individual Donations:

Traci Andersen  
Anderson Fabric Workroom  
Michael L. Anderson  
Rolf Anderson  
David Andes  
Barb and Tom Balcom  
Catherine and Peter Beckstrand  
Tom Bell  
Virgil Benoit  
Tom Blum  
Lucy Bruntjen  
Bruna Bucciarelli  
Jane Bultman  
Richard Burke  
Phyllis and Dale Callaghan  
Reid Carron  
Susan Carver  
Joanne Church  
Joseph Conrad  
Muriel Copp  
Jerry and Lynn Cox  
Patricia Cummings  
Fred Dalldorf  
Emily Deaver  
Tom Deupree  
Mairi Doerr  
Barb Draper  
James and Janet Edlund  
Martha Egersdorf  
Bruce & Marlene Ehresman  
Larry and Nancy Eisinger  
Charlene Erickson  
Mary Evans  
Kathryn Fernholz  
Jim Fitzpatrick  
Bill and Karla (McGray) Forsyth  
Doug and Karen Franchot  
Marjorie Frost  
George Glazier  
Mark Granlund  
Katharine Grant  
John and Toni Grate  
John and Janet Green  
Richard Green  
John R. Gregg  
Carol and Carl Haag  
Howard R. Hanson  
Joan K. Heinle  
Vickie Heggen  
Helen M. Heller  
Trish Herbert  
Bob (Eddie) Hilke  
Ron and Georgia Hilke  
Heidi Hohman  
Mary Swalla Holmes  
William C. Howard  
Bill and Mary Huenefeld  
Elizabeth Hutchins  
Larry and Jane Jacobson

William and Alicia Jennings  
David Jensen  
Heidi and Wendy Jerome  
Kathleen Johnsen  
Byrne and Carole Johnson  
Prudence Johnson  
Lisa Johnson  
Jyl Josephson  
Larry & Jo Kallemeyn  
Phyllis and Leo Karsnia  
Mary Ann and Wayne Kasich  
Brenda Kayzar  
Jennifer Kellen  
Martin and Esther Kellogg  
Charles A. and Jean E. Kelly  
Terry and Dean Kennedy  
Kathy Kirchner  
Sonja Kosler  
Delton Krueger  
Bonnie Kuhlman  
Ardis Kyker  
Paul and Kay Larsen  
Leif Larsen, Green Larsen  
Barbara LaValleur  
Greg Lehman and Dawn Martin  
Jim and Susan Lenfestey  
Karen Lewis  
Curtis Lundy  
Liz Magee  
Lucinda Maronde  
Carol Marshall  
Christy Maust  
James and Mary Alice Mayerle  
Margo McCreary  
H.G. McNeely, Jr.  
Gladys Meade  
Edie Meissner  
Ward & Linda Merrill  
Ben Moren  
Dale and Janice Mulfinger  
Lynn Naeckel  
Richard Niemi  
Bob and Mary Lou Norbie  
Laurie Oberholtzer  
Gary and Gaila Olsen  
Pam Oveson  
Joe and Nancy Paddock  
Richard Paper  
Thomas J. Paper  
Rich and Carol Pohl  
Roger and Constance Powell  
Melinda and Fred Quivik  
Leslie Rapp  
Dan Ray  
Michael & Anne Reid  
Eric Replinger  
Jean Sanford Replinger  
Sid Robinson  
Nancy Rognerud  
Marilyn Rohlfling  
David Rolloff  
Rebecca Rom  
Tony Rongstad  
Jennie Ross

Sandra Rufer  
Pam and Darrell Rundell  
Catherine Sandell  
Deborah Schildt  
LaVonne Schildt  
Julia Schmitt  
Mark Schultz  
Rick and Cindy Schultz  
Sierra County Land Trust  
Jeffrey and Susan Sieve  
George & Ruthie Simmons  
Peggy Anne Smith  
Ruth K. Solie  
Walton Stanley  
Gloria Stapp  
Sam and Cindy Stenson  
Jill Stoltenberg  
Barton Sutter  
Harry & Virginia Sweatt  
Diane Crawford Tessari  
David Thorstad  
Elaine & Steve Thrune  
Terry Van Der Pol  
Joe and Eileen Van Wie  
Dennis and Carol Vohler  
Jack Wadsworth  
Rosemary Washington  
Glen Wasicuna  
Rud and Timmy Wasson  
Ann Marie Waterhouse  
Beth Waterhouse  
Lucia Watson  
Gwen Westerman  
Janice Whitney  
Jerry Williams  
Michael & Mary Williams  
Frederick and Eleanor Winston  
Maralee Thomson Yood  
Jerry and Barbara Young  
Jim and Marianne Zarzana

## Foundation Gifts:

Community Fndtn of the Ozarks  
Dorsey & Whitney Trust  
Head Family Foundation  
Minnesota Historical & Cultural  
Heritage Grant, MNHS  
Winter Wheat Foundation

## Gifts Were Made in Honor or Memory of

\* Henry and Katherine Doerr  
\* Larry & Elizabeth Doyle  
\* Dr. Mary Ghostley  
\* Timothy M. Heinle  
\* Mary Swalla Holmes  
\* Don D. Maronde  
\* Gladys Meade  
\* Janet Pearson  
\* Jean Sanford Replinger