

## Door County Historical Museum:

### NEW EXHIBIT AT THE MUSEUM - CARDY SITE GRAND OPENING

The Door County Historical Museum celebrated the grand opening of a new permanent exhibit, the second such addition of this season. The Cardy Site Collection of Paleo-Indian stone tools was donated to the museum by Darrel Cardy in 2016 and went on view for the first time on Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup>. The Collection contains fluted spear points, end scrapers, flake tools and various other artifacts that are distinctly different from and much older than the stone tools used by the Native Americans who were encountered by the earliest European explorers. In fact, these tools have been dated at somewhere between 10,000 and 11,000 years before present, which means that Native Americans were living on the Door Peninsula near the time of and very near the edge of the retreating glaciers that once covered this area. The collection also contains stone tools from younger ages as well.



Darrel Cardy (on the left) and Mike Orthober and the new exhibit featuring some of the Paleo-Indian stone tools found on Sturgeon Bay's west side.

Darrel Cardy was born in Sturgeon Bay and raised on the property now known as the Cardy Paleo-Indian Campsite at 322 W. Spruce Street on Sturgeon Bay's west side. In 1959, while attending the University of Wisconsin-Madison, he took a course in prehistoric anthropology and observed that the stone tools from the "Clovis" culture (10 to 12 thousand years old) illustrated in the class textbook were very similar to some chipped stone tools that had been found on his family farm. He brought the tools to Madison for confirmation, but was told that it was impossible for tools that old to have been found anywhere near Sturgeon Bay. However, later studies by archeologists from Marquette University and other institutions showed conclusively that Cardy's observations had been correct and that the tools in Cardy's collection were indeed of a similar age to those from Clovis, New Mexico. The Cardy property is now managed by the Archaeological Conservancy to implement long-term preservation and facilitate future research at this scientifically important site. In the morning on the 18<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Cardy answered questions from the enthusiastic opening-day crowd at the Museum and he gave a presentation later the same day at Crossroads at Big Creek.

In addition to the stone tools, the display case features a new painting by local taxidermist Mike Orthober, who did the murals for the Museum's Seasons of Life exhibit. The new painting depicts a bird's eye view of what the Sturgeon Bay west side might have looked like 10,000 years ago. The Paleo-Indian campsite is in the foreground in the midst of a tundra-like landscape. Just over the far hill is Lake Michigan, much enlarged by glacial meltwater. In the far distance you can see the south face of the retreating glacier.

✎ Bill Rice, Assistant Curator