MARINETTE COUNTY

# Historian

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## Sixty Islands Is Spirit Spot of The Menominees

*Marinette Eagle-Star, Aug. 17, 1929*

### NAMACACHURE

This spirit spot of the Indians is among the Sixty islands of the Menominee river at a point perhaps two and one half miles below the present White Rapids dam. The shape of the river was what gave it the name and the log drivers quickly changed the Indian term into its literal translation – "The Dog's Belly." To these drivers it meant only a troublesome stretch of water where the stream was divided into two channels by the heavily wooded island and logs were apt to jam but to the Menominees it was one of those sacred places where a spirit dwelt and where the passer by was duty bound to leave an offering of tobacco and a prayer for good luck. The legend of Namacachure is about as follows:

### Legend of Indian Maiden.

Many, many summers ago there lived at the mouth of the Menominee river a red maiden who possessed unusually beautiful hair. Nothing gave her greater enjoyment than did combing her silken tresses.

The time came when her parents decided that she must undertake the fast during which the spirits would give her words of guidance for her future. This she undertook with great interest and earnestness but the allotted ten days of abstainance brought her no guiding dream so she prolonged her fasting until she became greatly weakened. Finally she announced to her parents that she was going to leave them – that she had received word that some would come for her that night. That night she again sought her lonely resting place and next morning was not to be found – all search for her was fruitless.

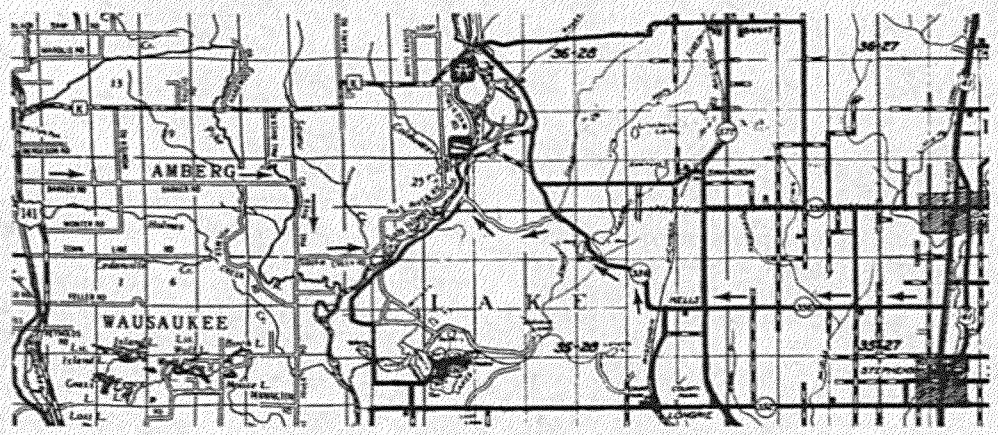
### Appears in Dream.

After some time she appeared to her parents in a dream and told them how she had been taken to his home by the spirit who lived in the eddy on the east shore at Namacachure. More, they should immediately take up their abode at that place – game whould be plentiful and she would be allowed to appear to them often.

They did as directed and found a beautitul spot where game abounded and, true to her promise, the maiden often come up out of the eddy at night to talk with them and sit combing her hair. This she continues to do to this day and the Menominees believed it a kindly act to leave some tobacco on the high bank where she maintains her lonely vigils, with the words, "Good luck; have a good smoke."

*It is hard to imagine a more beautiful spot then Namacachure. The Eagle-Star story tells the reader to reach Sixty Islands by taking Hwy. 41 to the point northwest of Stephenson where it intersects with the road to the White Rapids and Chalk Hill power plants. Follow this road west and at a hollow about 30 miles from Menominee, a trail on the left side of the road will turn in. Take this rough trail, which winds several miles to the river where there is a steep bank with an eddy below . . . home of the river spirit. In front of you is the island, once the home of Alex Premo.*

*You are looking upon Namacachure, the article continues, where the Indian keeps her lonely vigil. If you are a smoker, don't fail to drop a cigar or liberal portion of tobacco and say, "Good luck. Have a good smoke."*




*Extend your Marinette [or Menominee] County color tour a bit to see Sixty Islands in the Menominee River this fall. The maples, popples and oaks in the counties are incredible!*

### COME

The Marinette County Historial Society has set its annual meeting and election of officers for October 20 from 4:30 p.m. to about 5:30 to make it possible for working men and women to attend.

Where? At the museum on Stephenson Island.

. . . Christmas party plans will be discussed. Members and interested persons are welcome. We must have a quorum of 30. The offices of president and vice president will be filled. The nominating committee consists of Catherine Reines, Irene Lovig and Barb Neverman.

Snacks will be served . . .

## Season ends . . .

According to Museum Curator Bob Couvillion, the summer at the museum had about as many visitors as during 1987 . . . 4,000 or so. The facility closed Sunday, Sept. 25, at 4 p.m. There will be conducted tours by reservation until Oct. 15, Couvillion said. He may be contacted at 582-3169.

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