

## **10<sup>th</sup> Annual Archibald Jones Day & Cold Creek Bridge Walk (09/02/2019)**

Welcome to the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Archibald Jones Day. I trust you enjoyed your walk across the Cold Creek Bridge. Back 146 years ago, you would have had to swim across a swamp filled with lively green snakes and frogs! The future site for the Village of Beulah was under 12 feet of water. We now celebrate the combined **“Tragedy” / “Comedy”** of Crystal Lake!

I’m Archibald Jones, Jr. I (allegedly) “pulled the plug” at Crystal Lake in 1873. I fancied myself as an entrepreneur and “boot-strap” engineer having once worked on the Erie Canal. I came to town and formed the Benzie Co. River Improvement Co. I planed to lower the level of Crystal Lake to improve water-lots, and build a canal for a paddleboat to transport settlers and freight on the Betsie River to Lake Michigan. About 12,000 ybp, the glaciers left Crystal Lake like a “bathtub” 35 ft above the “big lake” – ideal for a future canal!

The project started well. Stock was sold. Dredging proceeded upriver from Frankfort to the Crystal Lake Outlet. Then all went awry! On the morning of Sat 23 Aug 1873, whitecaps from a storm washed away a temporary dam before permanent locks could be installed! The level of the Lake dropped precipitously by 17 ft as 56,000,000,000 gal of lake water flushed down the Betsie River almost washing the Port City of Frankfort into Lake Michigan!

The paddleboat made one trip, ignominiously, backwards, churning through sandbars of the shallow river. The Company went bankrupt. Seemingly all was lost. The canal was left “high-and-dry” - an apparent failure! But some 2,000 A of former lake surface transformed into sandy beach - where none had been before - a qualified success – it just took time to “sink in” / “rise up”!

The **“Tragedy” / “Comedy”** was an epochal event! It led to the development of a modern recreational community: the founding of the Village of Beulah, the coming of the railroad, installation of telegraph and telephone lines, lakeside resorts, and cottages, all connected by an infrastructure of perimeter roads and trails. The beach supports ~1,100+ cottages, numerous resorts, several church camps, a yacht club, and a State boating access site. The former railroad has become a walking/biking trail to/from the nearby Port City of Frankfort. The “Crystal Lake Canal”, however, remains an unfulfilled dream.

A historic project map from 1873 was “rediscovered” in 2011. It had been found hidden in a wall during the 1980 renovation of an 1870s farmhouse

belonging to John Bailey, the Vice President of the Company, who helped plat the “Beulah View and Crystal City Resort”. A modern topographic / bathymetric map of The Crystal Lake Watershed was created in 2018 from a high-resolution LIDAR flyover dataset. The routes of three canals were superimposed. These maps allowed development of 3-D models of the watershed, and reconstruction of the epochal event. A “net” drop of 12 ft (low-now) created a beach 288 ft (avg) depth and 21.71 mi long around the Lake!

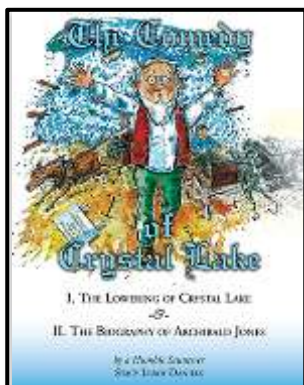
The story is contrasted in **“The Tragedy of Crystal Lake”**, (1922), by William L. Case; and **“The Comedy of Crystal Lake”**, (2015), by Stacy Leroy Daniels. The event has evolved “full circle” from a perceived “failure” of an “ill-advised project” by an apparent “scapegoat” - to an unqualified “success” of an “ambitious” plan by a “visionary” to be celebrated as a “local hero”!

***“There is a tide in the affairs of men.  
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;  
Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries.  
On such a full sea are we now afloat,  
And we must take the current when it serves, Or lose our ventures.”  
-- Shakespeare, Julius Caesar Act 4, scene 3.***

***“I got more than enough ‘flood’ to ‘tide’ me over.” -- Archibald Jones***

I’d like to conclude by re-enacting the “pulling of the plug” from Crystal Lake. When I ask, “Shall I pull the plug?”, please respond, “Pull the plug!”

**[Copies of the book and map are on display and in the raffle.]**  
**Check out the websites for the book and online journal of “Crystalana”.**



***“THE COMEDY OF CRYSTAL LAKE”***

[ Sequel to the **“Tragedy”** (1922) ]

The story of Archibald Jones and the attempt to build a canal from Crystal Lake to Lake Michigan in 1873. The dramatic lowering of a very large inland lake and the creation of its sandy beach.

The epochal event that led to the development of Crystal Lake and Benzie Co.

Dr. Stacy Leroy Daniels, Benzie Co. River Improvement Co., Est 1873  
ISBN 978-0-692-21715-3 | Hardcover | 9” x 12” 496 Pages | 200 Illustrations  
Flushed With Pride Press © 2015 P.O. Box 281, Frankfort, MI 49635

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**BOOK \$32 WATERSHED MAP \$15** (Proceeds to local nonprofits)