

Friends of the Historic Commons – Arboretum Tree Inventory Press Release

Email subject line: From Clear Cut to Great Lawn: Preserving the Arboretum at the Grand Traverse Commons

TRAVERSE CITY — The Friends of the Historic Commons is undertaking the first step in a long-term project to preserve and replenish the arboretum to its original botanical collection. The group is updating an out-of-date tree inventory of the historic arboretum that exists on the grounds of the former Northern Michigan Asylum.

This project creates an updateable online catalog that will permit arboretum visitors to learn each tree genus and species via their geographic location on a smart phone or similar device.

The survey of trees will identify what trees have been lost and prioritize tree maintenance activities necessary to preserve and protect the space for public enjoyment of the property for years to come.

Friends of the Historic Commons President Ken Richmond, “This is one of the most important activities we can take to protect the valuable historic character of the property. With community support, we can restore the arboretum and promote its cultural significance.”

Dr. Munson’s vision to enhance the natural setting for the benefit of the patients of the former Traverse City State Hospital included the planting of many trees in what would emerge after 1930 as the arboretum at the hospital. As he traveled throughout the US, he sent back unique trees and plants to become part of the hospital grounds. Central to the original Kirkbride approach, and carried out by Dr. Munson, was “therapeutic landscapes” which connect architecture and the land; viewing nature as a restorative influence.

The Friends of the Historic Commons 501(c)3 organization exists to celebrate, preserve, protect, and enhance the development of the structures, landscapes, historic vision, and cultural significance of the complete former home of the Traverse City State Hospital. The group serves as a conduit for mission-fit projects for this historic campus that impact the many constituents who call the Grand Traverse Commons ‘home.’

Visit the website to support the preservation of the arboretum: www.friendsofthehistoriccommons.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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