

Raven Hill Discovery Center, incorporated in 1991, is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation.

Mission: Raven Hill provides a place that enhances hands-on and lifelong learning for all ages by connecting science, history & the arts.

To: Friends and Family everywhere

From: Cheri and Raven Hill

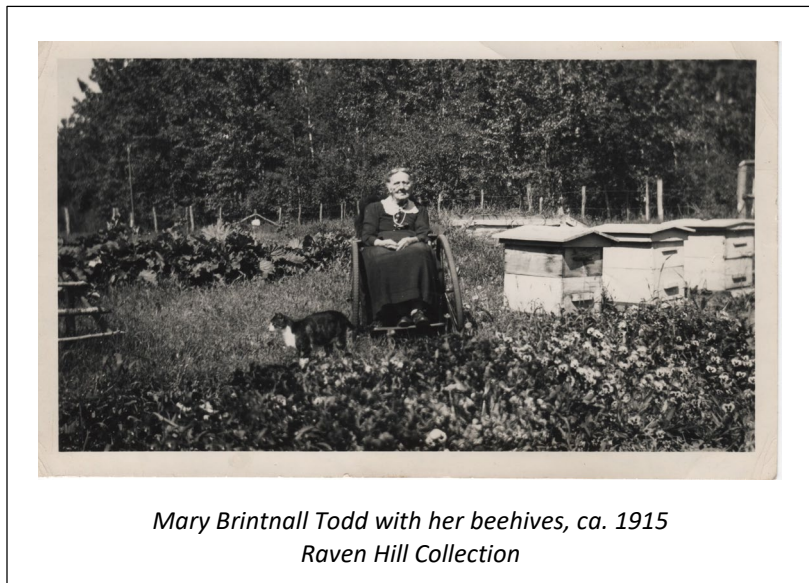
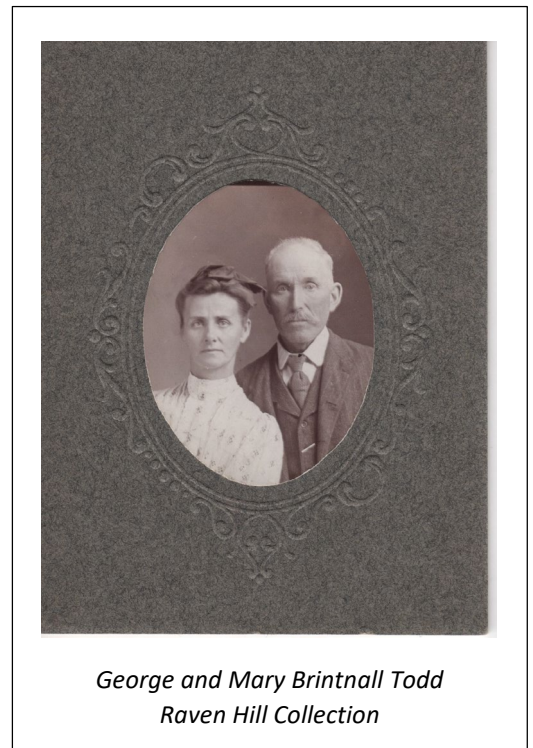
Date: September 4, 2021

Re: Weekly Update

Greetings to all!

Back in the 1800's, Canadian immigrants, Emily Brintnall and her two children, Edward and Mary, moved here. The small family traveled to Northern Michigan (Wilson Township, Charlevoix County) to live with Uncle Ira, Emily's deceased husband's younger brother, on an eighty-acre parcel of wilderness. Mary spent most of her life here on "the hill" that is now known as Raven Hill. Her autobiography, **Ninety Years**, is filled with stories of her adventures and the hard work that she and her family did just to survive. Her memoirs mention familiar locations, like Advance, Boyne City, Charlevoix and East Jordan. Mary is one of many men and women featured in the Smithsonian ***Labor Days—A History of Work*** exhibit now on display at Raven Hill Discovery Center.

Do you like twists and turns in a story? Mary's story has plenty of them. Reuben Todd, who homesteaded the Raven Hill property, eventually marries Emily, Mary and Edward's mother and the children become Reuben's stepchildren. When Mary and George Todd, Reuben's son, marry, Reuben becomes Mary's step-father and her father-in-law. *Is this legal?* In this case, yes it is! Even though, Mary and George are step-brother and step-sister, there is no blood relationship between them.



Excerpts from Mary's autobiography, **Ninety Years** convey how hard life was here on Raven Hill 150 years ago. "The crop of potatoes and corn would have to be harvested, the shanty plastered with mud and banked high with earth, and a big hole dug under the floor to hold the potatoes and a few turnips for winter. Fuel must also be cut and Uncle Ira must make a trip with Pete Sutton and his boats to Charlevoix (or as they called it then – to the foot of the lake) before freeze-up to get some flour and a few other things (that) we must have, before he left us to find a job where he would be working most of the winter."



Amateur archeologists work carefully to recover artifacts from the Todd dig site during the 2013 Career Expo at Raven Hill. These artifacts chronicle the life of Mary Brintnall Todd and her family here on the "hill"!

The Todd homestead site at Raven Hill has provided over 25 years of archeological research for teachers and students. Through the years, students have unearthed over 250 artifacts, including a doll's pewter teacup, glass, china, pieces of farming implements from the 1800's and even parts of old leather shoes. Kerri Finlayson, Professor of Archeology and Sociology at North Central Michigan College, is the most recent presenter to lead teams of middle school students in on-site digs during Raven Hill's Math/Science Career Expos sponsored by Charlevoix-Emmet (Char-Em) Intermediate School District. From their beginning in 1993 until 2019, the expos have given over 4,200 participants hands-on experiences in a variety of math and science careers. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the middle school math/science career explorations were put on hold in 2020 and 2021. We hope for their return in the near future.

In a 2019 pilot project, the Smithsonian Museum on Main Street (MoMS) Traveling Exhibition Service chose 10 sites in the United States and provided each one with the same general overview of the past 150 years of the "history of work". Each location, including Raven Hill, then researched their own local history of work to present within the Smithsonian's framework. Raven Hill Discovery Center's **Labor Days—A History of Work** is the result of over a year of research, planning, design and final Smithsonian approval. The exhibit is open from 10am to 4pm daily through the end of the September. Don't miss it. Groups of ten or more, such as school groups and service organizations, are encouraged to make reservations to view this unique look into northern Michigan's work history. Call 231.536.3369 or email info@miravenhill.org to set a date and time for your group to visit the **Labor Days** exhibit.

As always, for the sake of the children who cannot yet be vaccinated, we ask everyone to mask up while inside. Please, do your part: get vaccinated, wash your hands thoroughly, wear your mask correctly, socially distance & stay away from large gatherings.

Have a good Labor Day weekend, but please stay safe and take care of yourselves.

Cheri



Mary Brintnall Todd's homesteading of Raven Hill is just one example of "Women against the odds" as featured in the Smithsonian Labor Days exhibit.