

STANT PORTAGE

Dollar Bay, MI



Date Updated: 13 MAR 13
District: 9

History



Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula as we know it today would not exist if not for the discovery of the richest veins of copper in the United States during the 1840s. Communities sprung up all over the Keweenaw where the many mines were. Getting the processed copper out of the Keweenaw was a problem due to the lack of good harbors. A lake (Portage Lake), some 17 miles long, was within the peninsula. It had a three-mile twisting, shallow river (Portage River), which traversed into Keweenaw Bay at the south end. This would eventually be dredged and straightened. The communities of Houghton and Hancock were midway. They would be the best to ship copper. Crushers and smelters, located conveniently near many mines, converted the ore to ingots. The upper and lower entries to Portage Lake would have to be opened to enable access. It was envisioned and later proved, that this waterway, midway along the length of Lake Superior, would be a wood fuel stop for vessels with steam engines and an excellent refuge when the Lake became violent. It was also shorter in miles and took less time than going around the Keweenaw Peninsula that juts out over halfway across the lake. The government constructed two break walls of rock, angled to the shoreline and two wood piers inside to the entrance of the channel (or canal). Temporary lights were installed at the outer ends. The lower south entrance was opened and already had a lighthouse as well as the Huron Islands, Manitou Island, Copper Harbor and Eagle Harbor. The north canal entry would require a first class light station. In 1874, a large two-story, two-keeper brick dwelling was built with an attached 43-foot high square brick tower. The tower lantern room housed a 3-1/2 order fixed Fresnel lens. Numerous vessels ended up on the beach or sand bars on the wrong side of the rock break walls, or hit the piers on the inside. These problems helped encourage the government to build a life saving station across the channel. Across the canal from the lighthouse was the life saving station, built in 1885. This was the fifth station built on Lake Superior. The first four were the famed stations west of Whitefish Point on the shipwreck coast. The Portage Canal Life Saving Station would go down in history for many famous rescues. This station, along with the Eagle Harbor Station opened 1912, was the only station where every member of both crews would receive the Gold Life-Saving Medal for heroism during one rescue. This occurred by rescuing the crew of the L.C. Waldo shipwreck near Gull Rock Lighthouse at the tip of the Keweenaw Point on November 8, 1913. The Portage Life Saving Station would be removed in 1935 and a new station was built a few hundred yards inside the entrance on the canal when widening of the canal took place. In 1949 preparation began for a new 82-foot high, modern steel lighthouse to be built on a cylindrical crib on the east side at the end of a rebuilt rock-rubble break wall. A modern optic showed a green flash (the west break wall has a flashing red light on a pole). It was completed in 1950 and was operated remotely by keepers. It also housed the new trumpet type air fog signal system. This tower is fully electrified. In the 1970's, it was automated and a radio beacon was installed. The Coast Guard keepers were reassigned. A few years later the keeper's quarters, other buildings and property were sold to a private party. Today the automated light remains that way. The Coast Guard station was abandoned in 1991 and temporarily placed at Hancock just to the west of the Houghton/Hancock Bridge. The bridge provides the only access to the Keweenaw Peninsula, which is technically an island. A new modern Coast Guard station was built at Dollar Bay, east of the bridge in 1997. The North Entry, which once was a lively area with a manned light and Coast Guard station, now is inactive except for the modern automated crib light, fog horn and radio beacon. McLain State Park encompasses many acres on the east side near the canal entrance. The west side has a small park, with the balance of the area being private homes or property. Today, numerous pleasure craft, the Isle Royale National Park vessel Ranger III, an occasional freighter and an excursion vessel only use the canal.

1885-1902 west bank (Houghton side), ¾ mile down canal = Portage Ship Canal LSS

1902- 1934 east bank (Hancock side) = Portage LSS 1902 - 1915,

Portage Coast Guard 1915-1934

Canal widened from 100 feet to 500 feet at entrance. Second location was removed with widening the canal.

1935- 1990 on east bank then temporarily moved to Hancock until 1997 when the unit moved to Dollar Bay where it still stands.

Vessels

STANT Portage has two 47' Motor Life Boats 47220 & 47226.

The 47FT MLB is designed to perform mission activities in adverse weather and sea conditions. Its primary mission is surf/heavy weather SAR, but it is designed to support multi-mission operations.



In 1988 Textron Marine was awarded the contract to develop a replacement for the 44' Motor Life Boat which had been in service with the Coast Guard since the early 70's. The first prototype was completed in 1990 and following two years of surf trials and evaluations. In 1997 the first production 47' MLB was accepted by the Coast Guard, and since then well over one hundred have been produced.

STANT Portage has one 25' RBS 25554.

Defender Class boats Missions:

- Defense Operations (DO)
- Port Safety and Security (PSS)
- Recreational Boating Safety (RBS)
- Marine Environmental Protection (MEP)
- Enforcement of Laws and Treaties (ELT)
- Maritime Safety and Security (MSS)
- Search and Rescue (SAR)



Developed in a direct response to the need for additional Homeland Security assets in the wake of the September 11th terrorist attacks, the Defender Class boats were procured under an emergency acquisition authority.

STANT Portage has one 26' TANB 26145.

The 26' TANB is designed to primarily service aids to navigation



26' TANB serves as the workhorse for the Station Aids to Navigation Team (STANT). Most work done with aids to navigation involves trailering the boat to local ramps and launching to service the wide variety of structures and buoys they are responsible for.

STANT Portage has one SKF-ICE 151588 SKF-ICEs are fifteen feet, four inches in length when fully inflated. The SKF-Ice is configured to use an engine mount and small outboard or paddles.



The SKF-ICE is primarily used for ice rescue short-haul cases in enclosed ports, waterways and bays. The construction and inherent design of the SKF-ICE makes this an ideal platform for performing in soft or hard water rescue. The SKF-ICE may be used to transport the ice rescue team to a location to complete the rescue.

Facilities and Missions



STANT Portage is located in Dollar Bay, MI right in the center of the Keweenaw Peninsula. We have a large facility here approximately 30 thousand square feet and it was built in 1997. Our Primary missions are Search and Rescue, Law Enforcement and Maintaining Local Aids to Navigation.

STANT Portage conducts approximately 50-80 Search and Rescue Cases, 140-180 law enforcement boardings each year. And maintain 97 aids to navigation including 13 lighthouses.

The closest military installation is the National Guard Armory in Ishpeming, MI which is 90 miles away. The nearest Coast Guard Exchange is in Sault Ste. Marie, MI which is 268 miles away from Dollar Bay.

STANT Portage has 4 UPH barracks rooms for single E-4 and below and had 6 housing units located onbase. Contact Local Housing Officer BM1 Matthew Herrmann for details on assignment to barracks or housing onbase.

Surrounding towns include Houghton, home of Michigan Technical College, Hancock, home of Finlandia University and Calumet Township. Gogebic Community College also has a facility here in Houghton.

Reporting Aboard

A welcome aboard message will be drafted and sent to your unit assigning you a sponsor. It is imperative that you communicate with your sponsor to ensure your transfer here goes as smoothly as possible. If your sponsor is unavailable please speak with the Executive Petty Officer and he or she will be able to answer your questions.

It is STANT Portage policy that reporting members report during normal working hours, Monday through Friday 0800-1530. This will enable us to monitor that proper steps are followed in ensuring your needs are met.

If assigned to barracks on board space is limited to a 14'X14' room. If you have other storage needs, please contact the unit.

Upon arrival you will be issued everything else you may need. If reporting during winter, bring warm civilian clothes.

Uniform normally worn during the workday is ODU's.

Uniform to report in: 01 Oct - 01 April Service Dress Blue
01 Apr -01 Oct Tropical Blue

Unit Contact Info: STANT Portage
P.O. Box 350
Dollar Bay, MI 49922
(906) 482-1520
Fax: (906) 482-1443

Physical Address: STANT Portage
22911 Chippewa Trail
Dollar Bay, MI 49922

Assignments

Ratings that are present at STANT Portage are BM, MK, EM, SK, and FS. You will be able to speak and work with them to get an idea of what they do on a day to day basis to help you decide what rate you might be interested in becoming.

You will become communications watch stander qualified as soon as you arrive and then you will work on getting boat crew qualified. After that, you will start on becoming a Boarding Team Member. Boatswainmates will become Coxswain Qualified on all the units assets. Engineers will become boat engineer on the 47' MLB.

STANT Portage stands a 12 hour radio watch in 4 hour shifts. We have two duty sections that rotate two days on and two days off with alternating weekends off.

Useful Information

Religious Denomination: We have a wide variety of religious denominations in the current area.

Unit Mutual Assistance Rep is the Executive Petty Officer and you can contact him/her through the station.

Summers are nice and the local average temperatures are 70-80 degrees. Winters are harsh and we get extensive amounts of snow in excess of 200 inches, average temperatures in the winter are 0-25 degrees.

Cost of average two bedroom apartment in the local area is 300-450 dollars per month. Please contact local housing officer if you have any concerns with housing in the area.

BAH rates for local area can be found at this link enter in your pay grade and zip code: 49922
<http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bahCalc.cfm>

MEMBERS WITHOUT DEPENDENTS

IS MESSING AVAILABLE: **Yes, The station is equipped with a galley and an FS**

QUARTERS AND OR BARRACKS AVAILABLE: **Yes, Single members E4 and below will be assigned to Barracks and name placed on list for being able to move out on economy. Unit has 6 housing units for married members with Families.**

RATE OF AUTO INSURANCE FOR TYPICAL 18-20 YR OLD SINGLE MALE: **\$100-250**

IS UNACCOMPANIED PERSONNEL LEASED HOUSING AVAILABLE: **No**

WHERE WILL A SINGLE NON-RATE MORE THAN LIKELY LIVE: **Unit barracks**

WHERE DO MOST PEOPLE BANK: **Wide variety to choose from.**

IS THERE A CREDIT UNION IN THE AREA: **Yes**

IS THERE A MALL IN THE AREA: **Yes, very small.**

MEMBERS WITH DEPENDENTS

BAH RATE FOR AN E2/E3: <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bahCalc.cfm>

IS LEASED HOUSING AVAILABLE: **No**

IS GOVERNMENT OWNED HOUSING AVAILABLE: **Yes, for married members, when available.**

WHAT IS THE AVERAGE WAIT FOR HOUSING: **Varies**

HOUSING OFFICE PHONE: Housing Officers Name is BM1 Matthew Herrmann (906) 482-1520

RATE OF AUTO INSURANCE FOR TYPICAL YOUNG FAMILY: **\$100-250**

WHERE DO MOST DEPENDENTS RECEIVE MEDICAL CARE /GO TO SCHOOL: **Dependents usually go to the local hospital or the Primary Care Provider, unit is on Tricare Prime Remote. There are a variety of schools in the area.**

WHAT LEVEL OF TRICARE IS AVAIL: **TRICARE Prime Remote**

IS DELTA DENTAL AVAILABLE: **Yes**

IS IT ADVISABLE TO BRING DEPENDENTS ALONG WHEN REPORTING? **Call unit for information.**

HAVE A JUNIOR MEMBER DESCRIBE THE AREA, JOB AND ANYTHING ELSE OF INTEREST TO A NEWLY ARRIVING MEMBER:

Station Ant Portage is located in the U.P. of Michigan approx 5-hours north of Green Bay, WI. If you are a sportsman this is the area for you with fishing and hunting almost all year round and snowmobiling in the winter. The weather is very unpredictable with a moderate summer and snowy winter, an average winter brings about 200 inches of snow. The economy in Houghton is mainly based on tourism and Michigan Tech. University. Michigan Tech is a big engineering school and provides a good portion of the population.