



November 2021

Thank you for your support in 2021. This year felt a bit more normal. It was great to be able to see more members in person, at events and visiting Mackinac State Historic Parks sites.

We are excited to support the staff as they spend the winter months creating new exhibits. It is always gratifying to be able to present new exhibits each year. It helps keep Mackinac State Historic Parks one of the top living history sites in the country, thanks to support from members like you, who make this possible.

In 2022 Mackinac State Historic Parks will commemorate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the accident involving Alexis St. Martin that allowed Dr. William Beaumont, the post surgeon at Fort Mackinac, to conduct his famous experiments on human digestion. In preparation for the anniversary, our focus for the fall appeal is renovation of the Dr. Beaumont Museum housed in the American Fur Company Retail Store on Mackinac Island. The store itself will also receive some updates during the renovation.

In June 1822, French-Canadian voyageur Alexis St. Martin received what should have been a fatal wound when he was accidentally shot in the stomach while shopping at the American Fur Company Retail Store. Fort Mackinac post surgeon Dr. William Beaumont saved his life, treating him for the next several months. Even though St. Martin's health improved, the wound never completely healed, leaving a literal window into his stomach.



Intrigued, Dr. Beaumont used St. Martin's unique condition to experiment upon the voyageur and study the process of human digestion.

The experiments on St. Martin were the basis for Beaumont's publication in 1833, *Experiments and Observations on the Gastric Juice and the Physiology of Digestion*.



Beaumont advanced our understanding of how the human stomach works. The Dr. Beaumont Museum is a tribute to the science of the digestive process and the man whose groundbreaking experiments are the basis of modern day knowledge of the digestive system.

The American Fur Company Retail Store, located at the corner of Market and Fort Streets, which houses the Dr. Beaumont Museum, will also undergo updates during the renovation.

Many are familiar with Dr. Beaumont's experiments, but few are aware of the connection of those experiments to Mackinac Island. With your help, we look forward to being able to further tell the story of Mackinac's medical marvel, with a new exhibit in 2022.

Sincerely,

Harriet K. McGraw, President  
Mackinac Associates

Steven C. Brisson, Director  
Mackinac State Historic Parks

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