

## A Brief History of the Leathem and Smith Quarry

400 Million Years Ago: Niagara escarpment forms. Leaves an arc of quality stone well suited to civil works (and Niagara Falls).

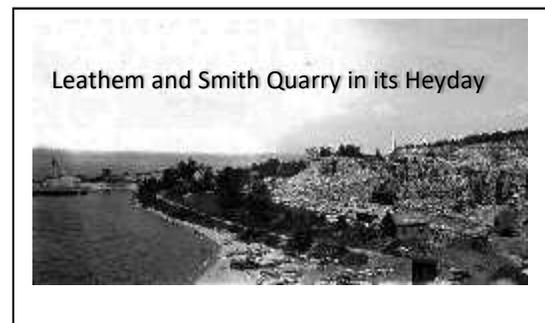
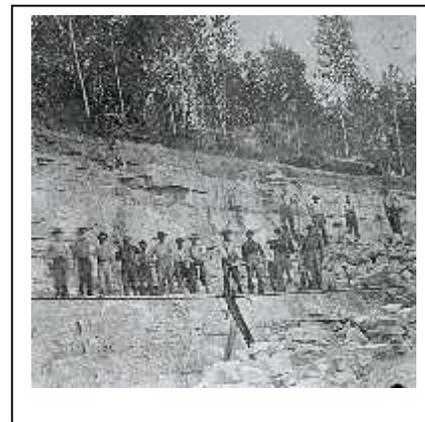
1832 to 1893: Samuel Straumbaugh notes the fine stone of the escarpment near a good harbor for water transit – Sturgeon Bay. Dimension stone is quarried and sent to build harbors, piers, and breakwaters throughout Lake Michigan as the new states rapidly expand. Quarrying and shaping of 300 pound slabs and 100 pound “one-man” stones is done by hand with iron wedges. Lifting and transit from the ledge is by horse to barges. Many quarries operate around Door County.

1880's: Sturgeon Bay canal opens, making stone transit easier and cheaper. Black powder blasting replaces manual work. Steam power machinery and miniature railroad on the shelf enable production and movement of 2 to 5 ton slabs. Dynamite and drilling innovations increase quarry production.

1893 to 1914: Sturgeon Bay shipbuilders John Leathem and Tom Smith buy 20 acres at the present quarry site. 8 major Door County quarries reduce to 4, with Leathem and Smith being the largest. Stone is Door County's biggest export. Thousands are employed. In 1903 Leathem leaves area and sells the business to Smith. Quarry expands. In 1914 Tom Smith died and the quarry is left to his son, Leathem D. Smith. World War I and the transition to concrete sinks the dimension stone market.

1914 to 1944: Quarry electrified. Conveyer belts move stone from the ledge to new crushers to speed production that has shifted to lime for concrete and crushed stone for roads. Tunnels to the largest, strongest dock on the Bay feed a quarry owned fleet of 15 ships. In 1927 the quarry is sold and renamed “The Sturgeon Bay Company”

1944: Leathem and Smith quarry production ceases. Crushed stone and lime quarries local to civil projects are more economic than large distant quarries.



1913: 171 foot ship “Joseph L. Hurd” sinks at the quarry dock. Shipwreck is there today.

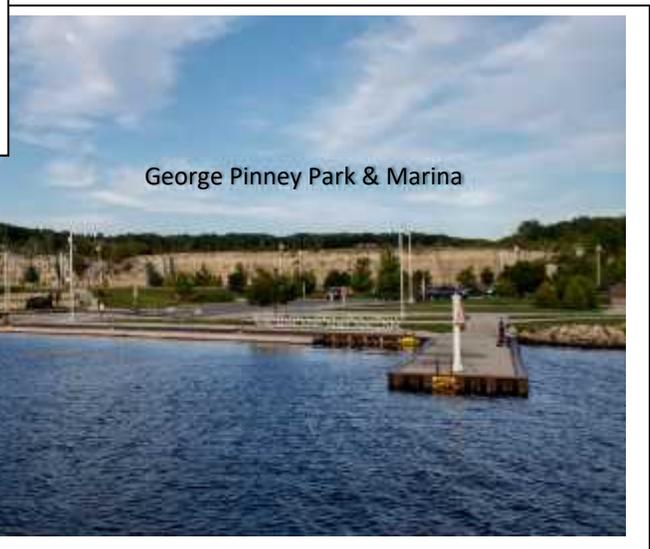
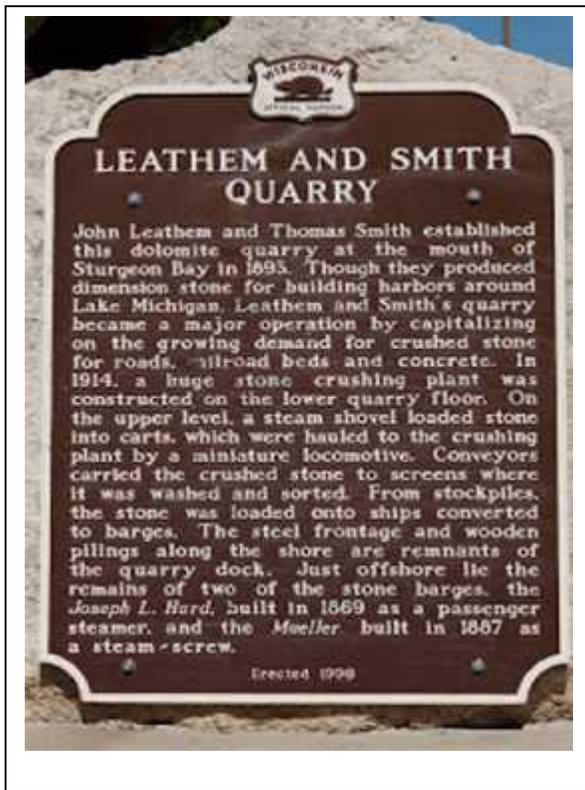
1996: Olde Stone Quarry Park, the area below the ledge along the Bayshore opens as a marina. Redeveloped in 2006.

2012: County park renamed to honor George Pinney.

*James V Mitsche, 2019 from various sources*



Joseph L Hurd



George Pinney Park & Marina