



THE COLUMNS

Newsletter of the Pepin County Historical Society

Vol. XXII, No. 2

Affiliate of the Wisconsin Historical Society

July 2008

President's Message:

Greetings from PCHS! I hope everyone is having a safe and happy summer. We are pleased to welcome our new summer intern, Corinne Menomonee. Corinne will be staffing the museum for our newly expanded hours this year and assisting with museum operations. She is currently attending the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, working on a Master's Degree in Public History. The PCHS Board is looking forward to Corinne's assistance in making the museum more "visitor friendly" with enhanced display captions and narratives and help with developing new exhibits, as well as many behind the scenes activities with filing, cataloguing, etc. Corinne will get credits toward her degree, valuable hands-on experience, and an addition to her resume.

We are also looking forward to an exciting day of activities on Saturday, August 9, during the county's Sesquicentennial...oh, let's just say 150th Birthday Celebration!

As always we owe much appreciation to the Board members and loyal volunteers who do such a great job keeping things running smoothly for the Society and the Museum.

Enjoy the rest of your summer!...and we'll be seeing you PCHS Picnic on July 21st & August 9th Birthday Party!

- Kim Wagenbach

PCHS 2008 Sesquicentennial Calendar Still Available

We still have a small supply of Sesquicentennial Calendars available...now at a discounted price of \$3 each or two for \$5. Call the museum at (715)672-5423 to place an order. (Great historical photos!)

TOURS, RESEARCH, QUERIES

Persons interested in making arrangements for museum tours, doing research, asking questions about the collection, etc., should call the museum phone at (715)672-5423 or call the Pepin County Resource Office (715)-672-5709. Museum **tours** are available **free of charge** anytime by appointment.

PCHS Summer Potluck Picnic Monday, July 21 – 5:30 p.m. at Round Hill.

Featured presentation: **Les Kruger, author of Brothers in Blood**

Les Kruger, who spent the past few years researching and writing the book, Brothers in Blood, will be the guest presenter at this year's Summer Potluck Picnic scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Monday, July 21 at Round Hill.

Kruger, who lives at Owen Sound, Ontario, Canada, became fascinated with the story of the infamous Maxwell Brothers several years ago. His research eventually brought him to Pepin County, where Ed Maxwell met his demise at the hands of an angry lynch mob. Kruger will recount his experiences researching, writing and self-publishing the book. He'll also share his views about the Maxwells and their story. He will have copies of his book for sale at the summer picnic, which he will gladly sign, as well as the copies of those who have already purchased the book. Brothers in Blood is for sale at the Old Courthouse Museum.

Attendees at the summer picnic are asked to bring their own beverages, plates, cups and eating utensils, a dish to pass, and a lawn chair. The gathering begins at 5:30 p.m. with plans to begin eating by 6:00. Water is available. Beautiful and historic Round Hill is a great back drop for the festivities.

Marge Mason "Spring Blossoms" Print on Display at Museum

The Old Courthouse Museum has added a print of the late Marge Mason's watercolor, "Spring Blossoms," to its growing collection of artworks. The setting for the original painting was Mason's Plum Valley farm in Pepin Township. A matted and framed print is on display in the museum (another framed print is for sale); additional prints are available for sale.

Mason lived and painted for many years in Pepin County and is regionally renowned for the quality of her watercolors. Many of her works were featured at the museum during in the Fresh Art Tour this past spring.

SOCIETY NEWS

Rita Conlin, Lois Laehn and Jean Kannel were re-elected to 3-year terms on the PCHS Board of Directors at the Annual Membership meeting in April. In May, the Board re-elected its slate of officers: President - Kim Wagenbach; Vice-President - Jon Dodge; Secretary - Roberta Stuart; Treasurer - Galen Radle.

MUSEUM NEWS & NOTES

The big news is the arrival of our summer intern, Corinne Menomonee, to assist with museum operations. The most important of her responsibilities will be staffing the museum for our newly extended summer hours, i.e., opening and closing the doors Thursday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

One of the first, among her many other tasks, will be to re-design and enhance the captions and narratives which accompany our displays and artifacts. Many of these were hand-printed; many of the typed ones have faded; and, generally, the very small font type is difficult to read. Much larger type and uniform style will make the exhibits more attractive and much more visitor friendly.

Additional jobs for Corinne will be giving guided tours upon request; helping the volunteer staff to improve our archives, and cataloguing artifacts, photographs and other collections; and, developing new displays and exhibits.

All these are big jobs and we have great expectations for a better museum by the end of the summer. If we can accomplish half these tasks, we'll have met our goals for hiring an intern this year.

The PCHS Board was willing to experiment this year, with goals of increased attendance and improvements at the museum. The UW-EC graduate program in Public History may be a valuable resource for us in future years.

Unique Gift Ideas from PCHS

Brothers in Blood, by Les Kruger, 2008 - \$20.00

Durand 1881, compiled by Vera Slabey, published by PCHS, 1987 - \$3.00

Steamboat Navigation on the Chippewa River, by Peter A. Adler, published by PCHS, 2004 - \$10.00

Mary Plummer Clemenceau - Sweetheart of Pepin County, by Vern Pinkowski, published by PCHS, 1997 - \$10.00

Helen Parkhurst - Educator, by Vern Pinkowski, published by PCHS, 1999 - \$10.00

Elizabeth Clarke Hardy - Wife, Writer, Farmer, Poet and Editor, by Vern Pinkowski, published by PCHS, 2001 - \$10.00

A Pathway to Pepin County's Stone Age People, by Vern Pinkowski, published by PCHS, 2003 - \$10.00

A Vanished Community - The Waubeek Saw Mill Settlement, by Vern Pinkowski, published by PCHS, 2004 - \$10.00

Phil Scheckel - The Man & The River He Loved, by Don Rahman, published by PCHS, 2006 - \$10.00

Your purchase will help support the PCHS mission of "preserving the history and traditions of Pepin County."

Memorials received:

For:

Robert Pittman
Alice Pittman
Cletus Koller

From:

Arlene Pittman
Arlene Pittman
Galen / Bernadine
Radle

Pepin County 150th Birthday Celebration

Saturday, August 9, 2008

Schedule of Events

- 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. - Old Courthouse Museum
Open House - Guided tours: hourly 11am to 3 pm
- 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Traditional Crafts exhibits - Washington Square
- 10:00 a.m. - Opening Ceremony - Washington Square - Unveiling of Sesquicentennial Works of Art
- 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. - Food concessions - Student Historical Exhibits - County Historical Display - Art Contest entries - Masonic Hall
- 11:00 a.m. - Lecture by John Hallwas – Dime Novel Desperadoes, book signing & sales - Durand Theater
- 12:15 a.m. - Lecture by Mary Logue – Pepin County Read, Bone Harvest, book signing and sales – Durand Theater
- 1:30 p.m. - Music through the Decades by Yata - Durand Theater
- 2:45 p.m. - Essay contest winners - Art contest winners - Durand Theater
- 3:30 p.m. - Dancing through the Decades, Arthur Murray Studio, Eau Claire - Durand Theater

Pepin County Historical Society

Officers:

President: Kim Wagenbach
Vice-Pres.: Jon Dodge
Secretary: Roberta Stuart
Treasurer: Galen Radle

Directors:

Rita Conlin, John Solie, Lois Laehn,
Jean Kannel, Lynn Coulson

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Editor: Terry J. Mesch

Old Courthouse Museum Now on Internet!

The Old Courthouse Museum now has a presence on the Internet! Our web address is:

www.oldpepincountycourthouse.org

While it's a very simple, four-page website, at least the museum has an Internet presence. One of our summer intern's other jobs this summer will be to develop additional content for the website.

More Artwork Coming Soon!

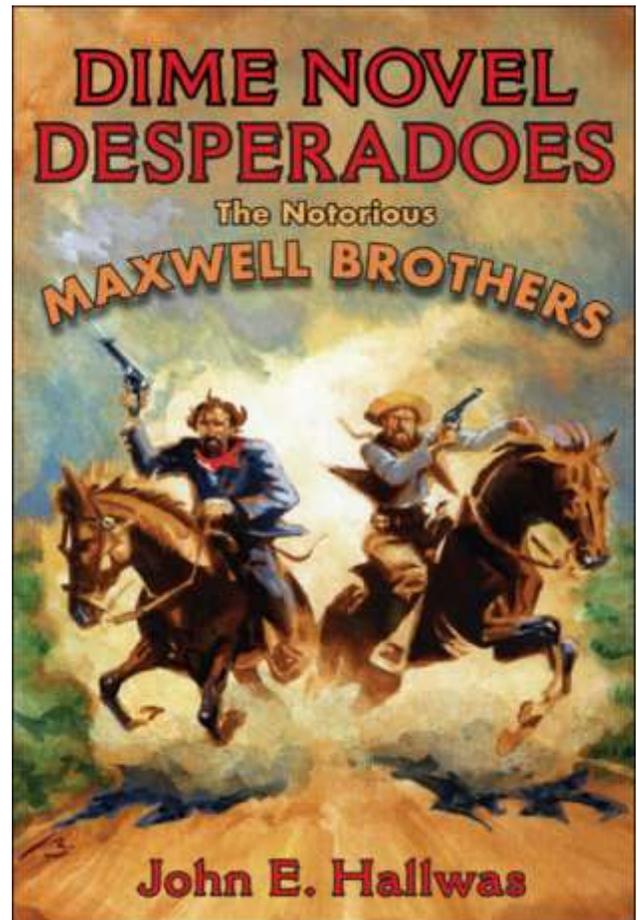
In addition to the purchase of the Marge Mason print, "Spring Blossoms," the PCHS Board has agreed to purchase two new original pieces of artwork by regional artists as part of the observance of the Pepin County Sesquicentennial. PCHS was able to find donors to provide the funds necessary for the purchases.

A contribution from Eau Galle Cheese Factory will pay for an 18"x 24" acrylic painting of the old Pepin County Courthouse by Rozan Henning of Augusta, Wis.



The painting is entitled "Campaign Speeches" and is set in the late 1800s. It will be unveiled during the Opening Ceremony of the 150th Birthday Celebration on August 9. Henning has previously done paintings of the Durand Free Library and Durand Depot, small prints of which are currently on display at the museum. The black-&-white photo above, of course, fails to do justice to how beautiful the painting really is. Following the unveiling, this painting will be on permanent display at the museum.

A contribution from Chippewa Valley Hospital has also allowed PCHS to purchase a special "TIME & AGAIN" piece of artwork by Midge Bolt of Pepin, Wis. The subject of the work is the Durand Railroad Depot, which is depicted in past and present photographs printed on layers of fabric. This piece will also be unveiled during the August 9 Opening Ceremony. Bolt's other works can be seen at BNOX Gold & Iron in Pepin and will be featured in her own show at Lake Pepin Art & Design Center in Pepin Aug. 16-Sept. 28



A thrilling true crime story and historical account, Dime Novel Desperadoes, recovers the long-forgotten story of Ed and Lon Maxwell, the outlaw brothers from Illinois who once rivaled Jesse and Frank James in national notoriety. The brothers achieved national prominence in 1881 when they shot and killed Charles and Milton Coleman at Durand, Wis. Public outrage sparked the largest manhunt for outlaws in American history, involving some twenty posses who pursued the desperadoes in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, and Nebraska.

A stunning saga of robbery and horse stealing, gunfights and manhunts, murder and mob violence, Dime Novel Desperadoes also delves into the cultural and psychological factors that produced lawbreakers and created a crime wave in the post-Civil War era. By pointing to social inequities, media distortions, and justice system failures, John E. Hallwas reveals the complicity of nineteenth-century culture in the creation of violent criminals.

John Hallwas will be lecturing about his new book during Pepin County's 150th Birthday Celebration in Durand on Saturday, August 9. The book, which has not yet been released, will be available for sale that day.

Pepin County Historical Society
OLD COURTHOUSE MUSEUM
Washington Square
P.O. Box 74
Durand, WI 54736



PCHS Annual Summer Picnic
Monday, July 21
Presentation by:
Les Kruger, Author of
Brothers in Blood
(see inside for details)

DATES TO REMEMBER

July 2 - PCHS Board Meeting
July 21 - PCHS Summer Picnic
Aug 6 - PCHS Board Meeting
Aug 9 - 150th Birthday Celebration

***Pass this newsletter on
to a friend & encourage
him/her to join PCHS!***

MEMBERSHIPS:

- \$5 Individual
- \$8 Family
- \$25 Friends of Museum
- \$25 Business/
Professional
- \$50 Contributing
- \$100 Sponsor
- \$1000 Lifetime

Name _____
Address _____ _____



The Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) Website has only a few pictures of Pepin County. Here's one of the Civil War Memorial Statue on the front lawn. The WHS caption reads: "Murderer Ed Williams was lynched on November 19, 1881, from this old oak tree on the lawn of the Durand Courthouse in Pepin County. The tree survived until 1977." However, evidence indicates the tree was removed in 1959 to make room for the courthouse annex.