



THE COLUMNS

Newsletter of the Pepin County Historical Society

Vol. XXIII, No. 2

Affiliate of the Wisconsin Historical Society

June, 2009

President's Message:

Greetings to PCHS members! Our summer museum hours are now in full swing. We're pleased the museum is open Thursday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. now until Labor Day. These expanded hours are made possible by PCHS providing a summer intern program in cooperation with the UW-Eau Claire History Department. We are happy to welcome Jill York of New Lisbon, Wisconsin as our summer intern. Jill is a graduate student in UW-EC's Public History Master's Degree Program.

The PCHS Board would also like to welcome Dick Schlosser as a new board member. Dick has been a long-time PCHS member and was appointed to fill the remaining term of the seat that became vacant when Jon Dodge resigned.

Board members Galen Radle, Roberta Stuart, and Lynn Coulson were re-elected to new three-terms on the board during our Annual Membership meeting held in April. At a subsequent meeting of the board, we elected officers for 2009 as follows: President - Kim Wagenbach, Vice-President - Lynn Coulson, Secretary - Roberta Stuart, Treasurer - Galen Radle. This will be Lynn's first time as an officer; welcome aboard, Lynn.

We're excited about Gary Schlosstein being the featured speaker at our summer picnic on July 20th at Round Hill. Don't miss it!

And finally, we could not do the things we do so well if it weren't for the great support we get from our dedicated corps of Tuesday Volunteers and Saturday Volunteer Hosts - Thank you, All !!

- Kim Wagenbach

Where are the Big Woods?

Origin of the phrase the "**Big Woods**" cannot be credited to Laura Ingalls Wilder, despite her famous first book's setting in Pepin County. Numerous places around the U.S. are known locally as the Big Woods, but Wikipedia (the Internet encyclopedia) says: "**Big Woods** refers to a type of temperate hardwood forest found in south-central Minnesota." However, the History of Buffalo & Pepin Counties, published in 1919, describing Pepin County says: "The western portion is more rolling, and was originally covered with hardwood timber such as oak, ash, elm, maple, basswood, butternut and birch, forming a part of the '**Big Woods**.'"

PCHS Summer Potluck Picnic

Monday, July 20 at 5:30 p.m.

Round Hill

Arkansaw, Wisconsin

Featured presentation:

**Gary Schlosstein - Circuit Court Judge
for Pepin & Buffalo Counties**

Judge Gary Schlosstein will be the guest speaker at the PCHS annual Summer Potluck Picnic scheduled for Monday July 20 at Round Hill. Judge Schlosstein's presentation will focus on his life-long passion for collecting arms and armor from the Middle Ages. He will also provide insights into and a preview of his latest project, the development of the Castlerock Museum in Alma, Wis. The museum will open later this year.



Attendees at the PCHS 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.

Find us on the Internet!

www.oldpepincountycourthouse.org

MUSEUM / SOCIETY NEWS & NOTES

The arrival of our summer intern Jill York tops the news! Jill will assist with museum operations. The most important of her responsibilities will be staffing the museum during our extended summer hours, i.e., opening and closing the doors Thursday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. now through Labor Day.

Among her first tasks has been enhancing the captions and narratives which accompany our displays and artifacts. We began this project last summer and got about half-way through. The larger print makes the exhibits more attractive and much more visitor friendly.

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

Dutch Professors Rene Berends and Luuck Sanders, who visited us this past Spring searching for Helen Parkhurst, report their time in Wisconsin was very rewarding. Rene and Luuck said the data and information they found on Helen was beyond their expectations and the reception by the local people in Pepin County, UW-River Falls and UW-Stevens Point was exceptional. It was a "trip to remember."

From PCHS Gift Shop

Dime Novel Desperadoes - The Notorious Maxwell Brothers, by John Hallwas, 2008, published by University of Illinois Press; winner - "Best Biography from the Midwest" by the Society of Midland Authors, \$32.00

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

Just In... A Twisted Pig's Tale, by Vern Pinkowski, 2008 - \$10.00

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

Memorials received:

For:	From:
Horance (Hank) Hougen	Galen / Bernadine Radle
James Brantner	Gerald / Vivian Levenske
Francis Brion	Bernard / Lorraine Brenner
Erwin (Sonny) Stewart	Bernard / Lorraine Brenner
Marie Boigenzahn	Bernard / Lorraine Brenner



Luuck Sanders (left) and Rene Berends (right) appear with City of Durand Mayor Gerald M. Bauer during their visit to Pepin County. Sanders and Berends are professors from Saxion University in Deventer, The Netherlands, where they train teachers. Both have intense interest in Helen Parkhurst (whom they endearingly refer to as "Parkie") and her "Education on the Dalton Plan." Berends is writing a biography of Parkhurst in Dutch so teachers and students in The Netherlands will have a better understanding about the "Mother of the Dalton Plan." At least 350 elementary and secondary schools in The Netherlands are based on the Dalton Plan. The professors toured Arkansaw Elementary School and the Durand Jr-Sr High School and were impressed with how many elements of the Dalton Plan were unknowingly being used at the schools.

Pepin County Historical Society

Officers:

President: Kim Wagenbach

Vice-Pres.: Lynn Coulson

Secretary: Roberta Stuart

Treasurer: Galen Radle

Directors:

Rita Conlin, John Solie, Lois Laehn,

Jean Kannel, Dick Schlosser

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by the Pepin County Historical Society.

Editor: Terry J. Mesch

"A PAYING INDUSTRY FOR OUR CITY"

Pickle Factory Brings in Considerable Money In Course of a Few Weeks

[from the "Entering Wedge" - Sept. 23, 1926]

"Durand has an industry about which little is known which brings in considerable money. We refer to the pickle factory which has done a large business for the short season in which it was in operation, closing down Tuesday of last week. It has been in operation here for several years and the season just closed has been one of the most successful in its history.

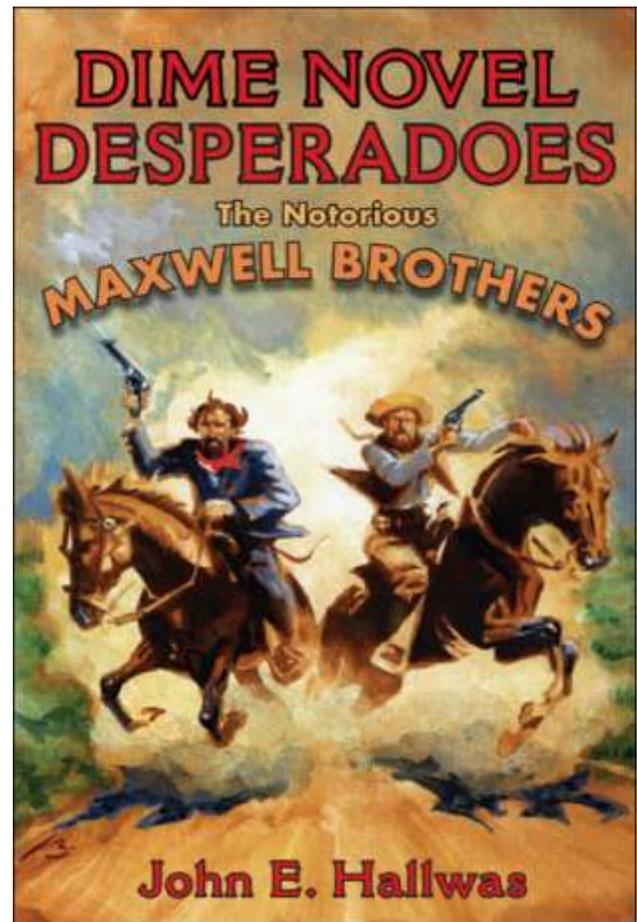
The season started two weeks later than it has in former years and closed earlier than it has in other years but in the short period it was in operation over 59,000 bushels of pickles were cared for. No less than 2286 barrels were used to hold the dill pickles alone.

The small cucumbers were made into salt pickles and were put in large tanks, of which there were twelve. These pickles are shipped to West Chicago in tank cars with brine on them. Eight car loads of pickles have already been shipped and 27 cars remain to be shipped. The dill pickles can be kept here all winter.

The price paid this year was considerable less than that paid last year but there was very good revenue per acre on most farms. William LaPean had in two acres and received \$301.73; Frank Kadodek raised 1½ acres and received \$257.80; Alonzo Metcalf had 1¼ acres and received \$250.96. Several others did equally as well or better.

The farmers are paid by check for each load as soon as it is weighed, making it one of the quickest cash crops a farmer can raise as sixty days after planting harvesting begins and the work is done without expensive machinery or extra hired help."

Note: Our thanks to Arlyn Colby who occasionally sends us interesting tidbits of history he comes across while doing research for his book about the railroads in western Wisconsin.



Dime Novel Desperadoes Takes Top Honor

Dime Novel Desperadoes: The Notorious Maxwell Brothers, by Illinois author John E. Hallwas, received this year's Midland Authors Award for "Best Biography from the Midwest" in May.

In announcing the award, Robert Remer of the Society of Midland Authors referred to Dime Novel Desperadoes as "...a great biography, massively researched and powerfully written, that probes deeply into the lives of the outlaws and the violent era in which they lived."

John Hallwas was in Durand last year during Pepin County's 150th Birthday Celebration. The book is available locally at the Old Courthouse Museum and Heike Pharmacy in Durand.

More "News & Notes"...

Even before the museum opened its doors for the new season, we had hundreds of visitors during 2009. More than 150 fifth graders, teachers and parents from four area school districts toured the museum and participated in mock trials in the upstairs courtroom in early May. Mother's Day weekend, the museum participated in the annual Spring Fresh Art Tour and featured guest artist/photographer Dennis Newton. More than a hundred visitors enjoyed Newton's beautiful photos and the museum's exhibits and displays. Then, nearly a hundred third grade students, teachers and parents from Arkansas Elementary School took a whirlwind tour through the museum and jail in late May.

The museum recently acquired some very significant artifacts from

the first Catholic Church at Lima. Hand-carved wooden statues of the Mother of Sorrows and an Angel, the Crucifix that once hung above the main altar, and pictures of the Sacred Heart and Mother of Sorrows were donated by Arthur and Mary Fedie of Durand. The statues and crucifix were carved in 1886 by Michael Anibas and Michl Flicker, whose names are inscribed on each of the pieces. These remarkable pieces will soon be incorporated into the new religious exhibit on display in Room One.

Work is also progressing in the development of an exhibit devoted to the original inhabitants of Pepin County and another one to the many musicians who provided entertainment in the region throughout the past 150 years.

OLD COURTHOUSE MUSEUM
Washington Square
315 W. Madison St.
Durand, WI 54736



PCHS Summer Potluck Picnic
Monday, July 20 at 5:30 p.m.
Round Hill
Arkansaw, Wisconsin

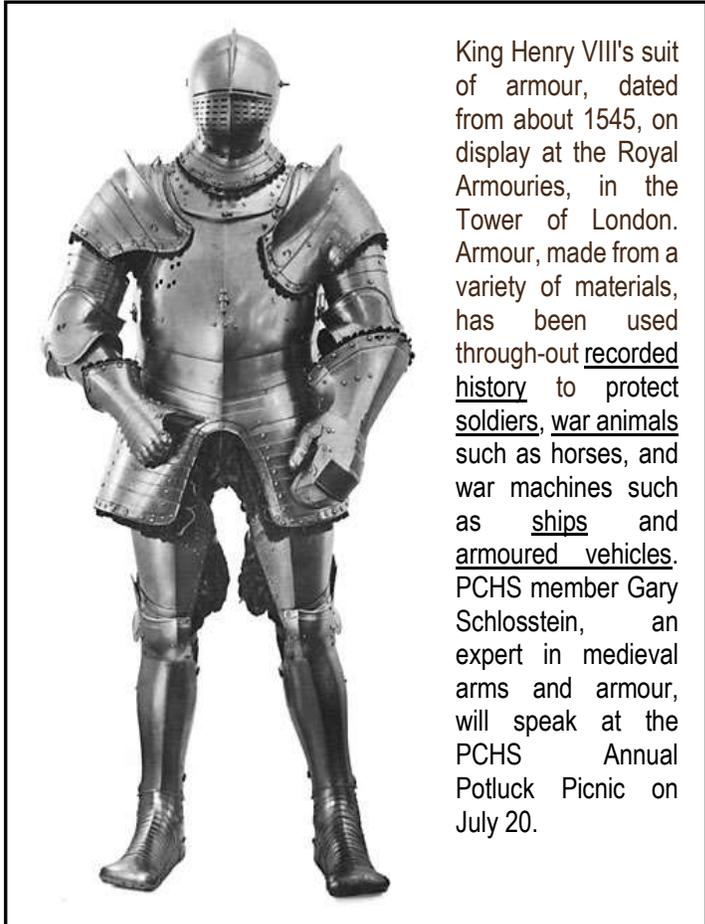
Featured presenter:
Circuit Court Gary Schlosstein
(see inside for details)

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

Name _____
Address _____

MEMBERSHIPS:

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



King Henry VIII's suit of armour, dated from about 1545, on display at the Royal Armouries, in the Tower of London. Armour, made from a variety of materials, has been used through-out recorded history to protect soldiers, war animals such as horses, and war machines such as ships and armoured vehicles. PCHS member Gary Schlosstein, an expert in medieval arms and armour, will speak at the PCHS Annual Potluck Picnic on July 20.