



# THE COLUMNS

Newsletter of the Pepin County Historical Society

Vol. XXIV, No. 2

Affiliate of the Wisconsin Historical Society

June, 2010

## President's Message:

First, "Thank you!" to all of you who help make PCHS and the Old Courthouse Museum what it is today ... our volunteers who keep the Museum running smoothly, the Board of Directors, all our members, and very generous donors. I'm proud of our accomplishments.

Next, I'm pleased that John Solie and Dick Schlosser agreed to serve on the Board of Directors for another three years. Seats held by John, Dick and myself were open for election at the Annual Membership meeting held in April. All of us were re-elected.

More than 70 people attended April's Annual Membership meeting at which we were privileged to have Carol Buhlman and Bob Grundvig provide a very interesting and fact-filled presentation about the history of the Eau Galle Cheese Factory. Following their slideshow and display of artifacts, Carol (& husband John) treated us all to samples of the cheeses they produce and sell. Thanks to Carol, John and Bob for a great history lesson!

Welcome to our new summer intern, Ben Clark. Ben will be in attendance throughout the summer and will be researching the history of the Old Courthouse.

We are, of course, celebrating PCHS's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on July 10<sup>th</sup> with a trivia contest, ice cream at old-time prices, t-shirts, and local history experts. Hope you can be there!

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. The best way for you to say thanks to them is to stop in to visit this great historical jewel on the Chippewa River!

- Kim Wagenbach

## 2010 Summer Hours / Intern Hired

PCHS has hired Ben Clark, a recent graduate in History at UW-Stevens Point, as "Museum Operations Intern" for the summer season. The Old Courthouse Museum and Jail will be open from 11am to 4pm Thursday through Sunday now until the end of August.

Ben is a native of Wausau, Wis. and has enrolled in the Masters Degree Program in Public History at UW-Eau Claire for Fall, 2010. Part of his work this summer will include researching the historical changes in the Old Courthouse building itself.

## PCHS 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open House

**Saturday, July 10 – 1pm-4pm**  
**Old Courthouse Museum**

PCHS is observing its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year. To kick-off the celebration, PCHS has organized a History Trivia Contest featuring 20 questions about the history of Pepin County. Winners of the contest will be announced during an Open House at the Old Courthouse Museum in Durand on Saturday, July 10.

Open House festivities will be held from 1pm to 4pm and will feature an old fashioned ice cream social at old-time prices, local history scholars from different areas of the county, and prizes awarded to the trivia contest winners.

All trivia contest entries with all 20 correct answers will be entered into a drawing for cash and merchandise prizes to be given away to the first ten entries drawn. Many of the questions can only be answered by visiting the Old Courthouse Museum. **July 3 is the deadline for submitting entries**, which should be sent to: PCHS, 315 W. Madison St., Durand, WI 54736. Contest entry forms can be requested from PCHS by calling 715-672-5423 or by stopping by the Old Courthouse Museum during its regular summer hours 11am-4pm Thursday through Sunday.

A major feature of the July 10<sup>th</sup> Open House will be the presence of local amateur historians from different parts of the county who will share their knowledge and stories about the county. Also, the Pepin County Dairy Wagon will be on hand and volunteers will be selling ice cream cones for a nickel. Pie and ice cream will also be available.

## PCHS Summer Potluck Picnic

**Monday, July 12 at 5:30 p.m.**

**Round Hill**

**Arkansaw, Wisconsin**

**Special event: "Reminiscing"**

PCHS members and the public are invited to attend the annual Summer Potluck Picnic on Monday, July 12. In observance of the Society's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the PCHS Board thought "reminiscing" about the last 25 years would be appropriate. Bring your stories about PCHS, Pepin County history, or, perhaps, your favorite joke.

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. Coffee and water will be available. The gathering begins at 5:30 p.m. with plans to begin eating by 6:00. Beautiful and historic Round Hill is a great back drop for the festivities.

**Find us on the Internet!**

[www.oldpepincountycourthouse.org](http://www.oldpepincountycourthouse.org)

## MUSEUM / SOCIETY NEWS & NOTES

The Old Courthouse Museum and Jail are now open for the 2010 season. New this year is new lighting in Room One (the "Durand Room"). The old fluorescent lights were removed and replaced with halogen track lights to create a much warmer atmosphere and enhance the exhibits.

A never-been-used asbestos fire-fighter suit is now on display in Room Two (People in Uniform). This shiny silver fire protection suit is a bit "other worldly" in appearance and was donated by the Durand Volunteer Firefighters. It was a hit with the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders during their annual visits to the Museum during May.

Also in Room Two is our expanding exhibit of musicians and musical instruments. We have photos and artifacts from several musicals groups from bygone eras.

More than 200 people visited the Museum during the Spring Fresh Art Tour during May. You may have missed the fabulous photography of Dennis Newton, but the Museum features dozens of pieces of original art work by artists from the present and past.

### From PCHS Gift Shop

**Coming Soon:** 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary T-Shirts - sizes s-m-l-xl

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."

The Old Courthouse Museum is **open anytime by appointment!** Call 715-672-5423 to set up a time for you and/or your group to visit / tour the museum.

## Memorials received:

For:	From:
Jack Sankey	Bill Plummer
John Kins	Bill Plummer
Arline Coulson	Lynn / Kelly Coulson
Lorraine Bauer	Bernard / Irma Brantner
John Prissel	Bernard / Irma Brantner
Glen Pelke	Lee / Gayle Grippen
Donna Weinzerl	Lloyd Weinzerl
Virginia Ryan	James / Beverly Ryan
Audrey Hoeser	Judy Schwellenbach
	Dan Langlois
	Richard / Vera Slabey
	Sadie Hagness
	Friends of Audrey Hoeser

## THE PEPIN ESCUTCHEON



This is the Heraldic Shield granted to Pepin the Short in 751 A.D. by the Papal Legate Boniface at Pepin's coronation as King of the Franks. The "Y" cross is the Papal Cross used by the Merovingians in their arms. The cross is silver and the shield blue. The Pepin name dates to before 560 A.D.

### 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

**"THE COLUMNS"** is published three times a year  
by the Pepin County Historical Society.

Editor: Terry J. Mesch

## PCHS Receives Bequest From Virginia Ryan

Virginia V. Ryan, who passed away last October at the age of 92, left the Pepin County Historical Society an unrestricted bequest of \$20,000. She was born in 1917 at Tomah, Wis., the daughter of Edward and Rose Von Haden. She was married to Edmund J. Ryan and moved with her husband to Alaska in 1946, where they lived throughout the rest of their lives. They were modern day pioneers carving a home out of the Alaskan wilderness and building their own home and cabins.

Edmund J. was the youngest son of Edmund and Blanch Ryan, who owned the family farm located a few miles east of Durand along U.S. Highway 10. The property was more recently known as the Ryan House and operated as a bed-&-breakfast.

On trips back to the area, Virginia stopped in at the Old Courthouse Museum and must have approved of the PCHS mission of "preserving the history and traditions of Pepin County." Galen Radle, Lois Laehn, Roberta Stewart and Jean Kannel represented the PCHS Board of Directors at a recent memorial service held by Virginia's family at Forest Hill Cemetery in Durand, where she and her husband are interred.

Jean Kannel has prepared a Ryan family history book which is now in the Museum archives. The history is based on information and pictures provided by the family and by Lorena Weiss, the current owner of the former Ryan House.

No decisions have been made how to use this very generous gift; although, replacing the fluorescent lighting in the upstairs courtroom with more historically aesthetic lights has been high on the list of possibilities for several years.

Pictured to the right is Celia M. Jahnke, who was awarded an Honorary Recognition Award by the University of Wisconsin College of Agriculture and Life Sciences in 1944. The Honorary Recognition Award recognizes those individuals who have demonstrated outstanding and inspirational leadership, integrity and unselfish service, making significant contributions in the areas of agriculture, life sciences, natural resources and social science.

This photo was downloaded from the UW website and the accompanying caption states: "**Celia M. Jahnke, Rural Youth Leader** - Has contributed greatly to the improvement of rural life in Pepin County, she has stimulated rural youth through inspired leadership and example."

She was born in the Town of Pepin Jan. 21, 1888; daughter of John and Emma McCain. She married Julius F. Jahnke Oct. 5, 1910. Celia was a school teacher and Julius was a farmer at the time of their marriage.



(left to right: Bill Plummer, Jack Sankey, John Kins)

Late last year, Bill Plummer and his wife Wanda, sent PCHS their 2010 membership renewal and included a memorial donation for Bill's longtime friends and high school classmates, Jack Sankey and John Kins. Bill included this photo of himself and his friends. The three men were in the Durand High School graduating class of 1944.



**Pepin County Historical Society  
OLD COURTHOUSE MUSEUM  
Washington Square  
315 W. Madison St.  
Durand, WI 54736**



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Washington Square – Old Courthouse Museum**

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***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



Ice cream and yarns of yesteryear are featured during PCHS's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on July 10 at the Old Courthouse Museum on Washington Square in Durand ... & T-shirts!

