



THE COLUMNS

Newsletter of the Pepin County Historical Society

Vol. XXV, No. 2

Affiliate of the Wisconsin Historical Society

June, 2011

President's Message:

Greetings! Summer is in full swing and as you read this we have yet to have a dry spell; the gardens and lawns look great! My wife Lynette and I travelled across the country earlier this month and passed by many museums, historical sites, points of interest, etc. Unfortunately we were on a schedule so could not stop at as many of them as we would have liked. However, it was a great reminder to us about our own county's many historical sites and attractions and our own love of history. We are very fortunate to have a great history museum right here at home. I encourage all of you to stop in to see the excellent exhibits and displays in the wonderful Old Courthouse Museum.

At the PCHS Annual Meeting in April, our very own Vice-President, Lynn Coulson, gave us an entertaining and educational history lesson about the Father of Our Country, George Washington. It was a fun and informative presentation about the early history of our country. Thanks, Lynn!

We also held an election for three of the seats on our board of directors [sorry about the misinformation in the last newsletter where we listed the names of three board members whose terms were not ending]. Jean Kannel, Roberta Stuart, and Lois Laehn [the correct three] were all re-elected to each serve another three year term. I thank them for the great job they've done in the past and look forward to our continuing work in the future.

I am also pleased to advise you we have hired Ben Clark as our summer intern for 2011. He also served last year and has been doing a great job for us. Stop in to say hello to Ben.

And finally, a big "THANK YOU" to all the volunteers who make the Old Courthouse Museum a very special place in this very special county of ours!

- Kim Wagenbach

2010 Summer Intern Re-Hired for 2011

PCHS has rehired Ben Clark, a 2010 graduate in History at UW-Stevens Point, as "Museum Operations Intern" for the 2011 summer season. Ben interned at the Old Courthouse Museum & Jail last year.

Ben is a native of Wausau, Wis. and is enrolled in the Masters Degree Program in Public History at UW-Eau Claire. Part of his work this summer will include designing and implementing a new filing system for our archives and records to make them more accessible and user friendly.

PCHS Summer Potluck Picnic

Monday, July 11 at 5:30 p.m.

Ella Free Church

N3503 County Road N

Ella, Wisconsin

Featured Presenters:

Carl Morsbach - "A Short History of Ella"
&

Marliss Pittman - "Country Schools of Pepin County"

PCHS members and the public are invited to attend the annual Summer Potluck Picnic on Monday, July 11; this year featuring two experts in local history. First, Carl Morsbach of Morsbach Farms in Ella and current owner of the Ella Free Church, where the picnic will be held, will share his knowledge about the history of the surrounding area.

Also, Marliss Pittman will talk about "The Country Schools of Pepin County", a project she started working on about 5 years ago with Jean Black Kannel.

"The country schools project has turned into a passion and a true labor of love," Marliss states. "During our travels, through telephone calls and emails, we have met so many wonderful and interesting people many of whom have made great contributions [to this project]."

Of the 45 country schools that once existed in Pepin County, Marliss and Jean were unable to find information about only two, the Little Red in the Town of Albany and Pleasant Bluffs in the Town of Stockholm.

"I can tell you where every country school was located," she reports. "I have traveled into areas of the county that I had never been before or even knew they existed."

Marliss will share her wealth of information, which will likely prompt personal memories among many of those who attend the Summer Picnic.

Attendees at the PCHS Summer Potluck 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 Ella is located along the banks of the Chippewa River and is a great back drop for the festivities.

Find us on the Internet!

www.oldpepincountycourthouse.org

MUSEUM / SOCIETY NEWS & NOTES

The Old Courthouse Museum and Jail is now open for the 2011 season. Hours are 11am-4pm Thursday through Sunday now until the end of August.

New this year: the old fluorescent lighting has been replaced in all the exhibit rooms throughout the entire first floor. Halogen light fixtures hung along new tracks allow much greater control of the lighting for our displays, paintings and artifacts. It also provides a more "museum-like" atmosphere. We will soon be getting estimates for replacement of the fluorescent lighting in the upstairs courtroom with more appropriate period lighting fixtures.

More than 150 people visited the Museum during the Spring Fresh Art Tour during May. You may have missed the fabulous paintings of John Meyer of Pepin, Wis., but the Museum features dozens of pieces of original art work by artists from the present and past.

PCHS Vice-President Lynn Coulson was featured in a recent edition of the Eau Claire Leader Telegram. A nearly full-page article describes his living history presentation of George Washington and life of a Revolutionary War Soldier. An accompanying photograph of Lynn in his full soldier's regalia was taken during his presentation at the PCHS Annual Meeting this past April.

From PCHS Gift Shop

25th 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

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.

Memorial Received

The Pepin County Historical Society has once again been the fortunate recipient of a bequest. Hazel Martha Maxwell, who passed away last December at age 92, made a bequest of \$1,000. Hazel was born in the Town of Waterville on May 6, 1918, daughter of William S. and Rosa (Laschinger) Maxwell. She graduated from Arkansaw High School in 1936. She graduated as a registered nurse from Asbury Hospital in Minneapolis in 1940. Hazel joined the Army Nurse Corps in 1943 and served in England during World War II and in Korea from 1950-1952. She served in the U.S. Army until 1969, when she retired at the rank of Major.



The "Free Lutheran Church" - "Ella Free Church" - "Old Ella Church" served the spiritual needs of people in the Town of Frankfort for more than a hundred years ending finally around 2000. Music was produced on an antique German pump organ and a piano which still stand in the sanctuary. Its last congregation built a new addition with a kitchen and serving area, handicapped bathrooms and a utility room. The addition also included a new well and septic system, a new forced air furnace, handicapped parking and ramp, and new front doors and deck.

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.

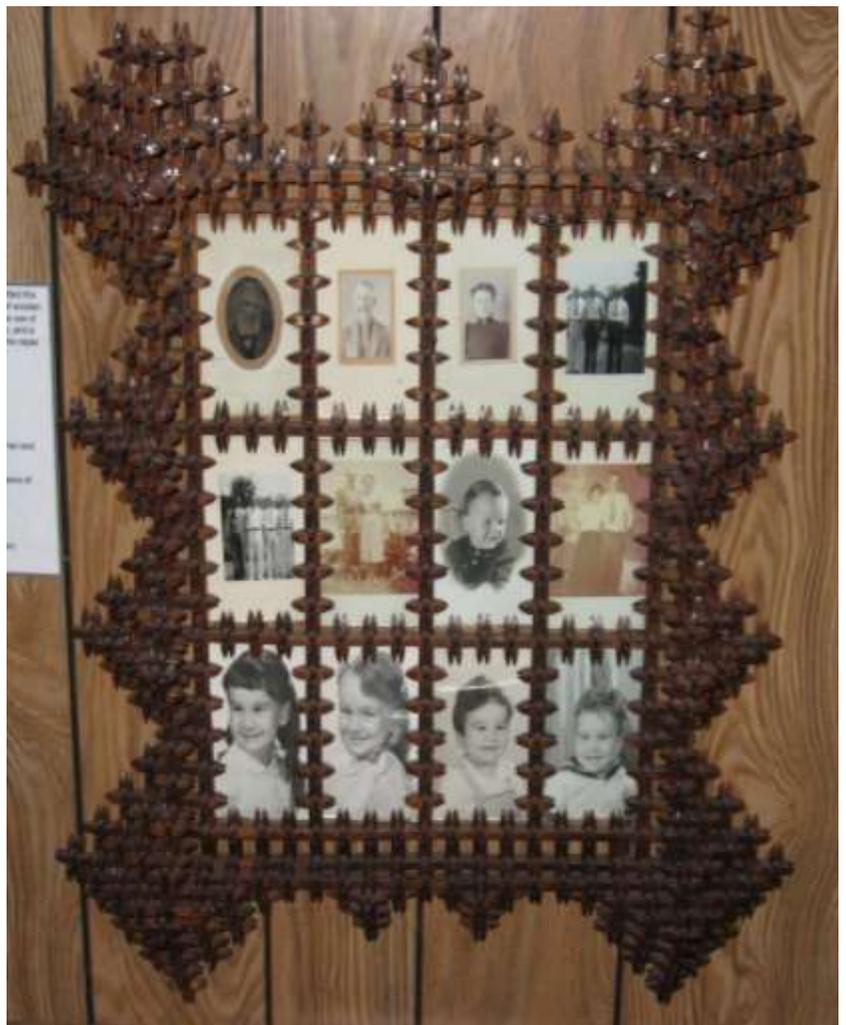
Editor: Terry J. Mesch



TICKET OFFICE IN DEPOT AT DURAND - (circa 1930) - pictured left-to-right are: Oscar Swanson, Depot Agent; William Archer, Telegraph Operator; Newman Barnes, Freight Man. This photo from the PCHS archives was taken in the early morning (note the dark shades pulled against the bright sun in the southeast facing windows). Also note the electric meter at upper left above the wooden wall phone and the kerosene lamp on the floor at lower right. The typewriter being used by William Archer at center is on display in the Railroad Room at the Old Courthouse Museum. The calendar at the center of the photo is unfortunately unreadable due to reflective light, so the exact year cannot be determined. Oscar Swanson worked for the Milwaukee Road Railroad for 50 years; 35 of those were in Durand.

This intricate, hand-carved picture frame is on display in the Household Room at the Old Courthouse Museum. It was hand-crafted (circa 1862) by Warren Lafayette Bradshaw, a Civil War veteran, who is pictured second-from-left in the top row. The frame consists of various lengths of wooden pieces, carved and fitted together like a puzzle without the use of glue or nails. Divided into 12 sections, it includes pictures of (top row) Warren's father Carlos; Warren; wife Ella; sons Harvey, Herbert & Alvin; (middle row) sons Clifford, Clarence, Francis & Leslie; son Francis & his wife Irene; Francis' son Robert; Robert and his wife Stella; (bottom) Robert's & Stella's children (un-named).

Francis Bradshaw, who lives in California, had this artifact in his possession for a long time and donated it to the museum in 1989. Francis just turned 103 on his birthday in May!



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



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N3503 County Road N
Ella, Wisconsin

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from 11am to 4pm Thursday through Sunday now
until the end of August.

***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



It's not too late to acquire your very own PCHS 25th Anniversary T-Shirt!! Ordered especially for our celebration last year, these one-of-a-kind t-shirts are now collectibles. Sizes small-through-extra-large will fit everyone in your family.