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Museum Hours:

Wednesday to Saturday:

9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.



Langlade County Historical Society Newsletter

Spring 2007

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Curator: Mary Kay
Wolf

Board of Directors

Sue Baginski
Dean Blazek
Patrick Blood
Nancy Bugni
Glenn Bugni
Lisa Haefs
Joe Hermolin
Joe Sveda
Red Turney

May is designated History and Archeology Preservation month by the State Historical Society, and the museum will be using the month as an opportunity to celebrate the importance of the railroad in Antigo's history.

The museum has set aside space on the second floor as "railroad room." Together with the caboose, it will house displays related to railroad history. We will officially open the room to the public in May. The Antigo Public Library will also have a railroad display in its lobby in May.

On Wednesday, May 9 at 6:30 p.m., there will be a presentation on the history of the railroad in Langlade County and on the restoration of the 440 locomotive. It will be at the Antigo Public Library.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Thursday, June 7, the formal dedication of the 440 locomotive will take place. We will have a program and picnic on the museum grounds.

Watch for more information in the *Antigo Daily Journal*.



Some of the displays in the new Railroad Room of the museum.

Hudson St. Bridge



Recently renovations to the Hudson St. bridge were completed.

The bridge was constructed in 1936 thanks to financing by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). In the 1930's America was in the worst economic depression in its history. The Roosevelt administration instituted a series of public works projects, one of which was FERA. Antigo received \$30,000 for the building of new bridges over Springbrook. Ten

bridges were constructed; the one at Hudson Street being most prominent.

The bridge was designed by Henry Olk (1887-1977). He was born in Antigo, attended universities in Appleton and Houghton and then returned to Antigo where he was a city engineer from 1914 to 1964, as well as a private architect and engineer. He designed many buildings including the water plant on First Avenue and the original Bass Lake Country Club.

The Picnic Train

The enthusiasm generated by the restoration of the 440 locomotive serves as a reminder of how important the railroad was in the history of Antigo and Langlade County and how the Chicago & Northwestern was once a major employer in the area.

For a period of about six years, ending with the onset of the depression, employees of the C&NW together with their families celebrated an annual picnic, first at Summit Lake and later in Rothchild Park south of Wausau. Picnickers were transported to the

picnic site on a special train with the railway providing coaches and locomotive, and workers volunteering their labor. The roundhouse crew decorated the engine. These excursions consisted of 12 to 14 coaches each carrying 40 to 48 people. Some families came from as far as Rhinelander to board the train in Antigo and others boarded at stops en route. The outbound train left Antigo around 9 a.m. and returned at around 6 p.m.. In at least one year a group came from Kaukauna, and there was a baseball game

between “the North” and “the South.”

This material is from an Antigo Daily Journal article by E. S. Holman on Nov 16, 1973.



Picnic train locomotive decorated with stars and flags.

Alvin Linden’s Workshop



An example of Linden’s craftsmanship

Near Bryant are the remains of an old 20x20 workshop: once the focus of attention for gun lovers across the country. It was where Alvin Linden created custom-made rifle stocks.

Al Linden was born in Sweden in 1886 where he learned his father’s craft of cabinetmaking. The family moved to the U.S. in 1899 where his father and Al worked at Pullman in Illinois

finishing interiors of sleepers, diners, and private railroad cars.

He came to the Bryant area to log, but an injury halted that work; and he then devoted himself to making custom gun stocks. His reputation spread and he received orders from around the country as well as internationally. He wrote a

three volume collection of his ideas, complete with plans. Today these books are highly sought after. His favorite wood was imported walnut although he often worked with local walnut, local maple, and birch. He also made many of the tools he required for his woodwork-

Liberty Days



Antigo Liberty Days will be held this summer on June 22, 23, and 24. In addition to the military displays, USO show and hanger dance, this year organizers are planning a tribute to John Bradley, featured in the book and movie “Flags of Our Fathers” written by his son James Bradley.

Many local businesses will have tickets for this three day event. For a detailed listing of events, watch for announcements in the newspaper or consult the web site:

www.antigolibertydays.com

Liberty days organizers will be presenting a special tribute to John Bradley. People in the area who have stories or memorabilia relating to John Bradley are asked to contact the museum.

Life in a Logging Camp

Ada Moran, a cook in a lumber camp at the turn of the 20th century, described the camp.

After surveying: “ They try to build their shanties on the highest ground as close to the center of the tract of pine as possible. Then while some are cutting logs for buildings others are cutting roads and picking the shortest way to the landing. This must be done in the early fall or late summer. After the

camps are made, complete with cook shanty, bunkhouse, blacksmith shop, feed house and horse and ox hovels, the work begins.”

She described the bunkhouse: “The snow used to blow through the chinking of the logs and it was not uncommon to find two or three inches of snow on the beds when the alarm clock woke the cooks a little before 4 o’clock.”



Logging camp at Whiskey Hill near Kent

The Cost of Running the Museum

The Langlade County Historical Society operates the museum, which was a Carnegie Library, and is on the National Registry of Historic Places. The Society also maintains the Deleglise cabin, the caboose, and steam locomotive on the grounds.

We arrange changing displays, give group tours, particularly school classes and present programs to organizations throughout the community. We are a resource for researchers with our photographs and records.

While we receive a small amount of our operating costs from government agencies, the vast majority of our budget comes from private donations. A large bequest from the estate of Helen Thomany and donations from many others enable us to operate. A recent fundraising drive enabled us to purchase and restore a steam locomotive, but the museum runs at a deficit of about \$50 per day and our savings are rapidly depleting.

The Society will seek ways to raise money to cover our expenses; and we hope people will understand that, as a first step, we have decided to raise our membership fees slightly.



Due to problems with poor drainage, we had to raise the cabin and set it back on blocks so that it was off the ground. This summer we plan to landscape the area around the cabin and the locomotive.

Thank You to the Following for Items or Cash Donations

Pat Fischer & family: a Christmas wreath for the 440 locomotive

Lee DeWan: 1963 laptop computer

Barb Robinson: ad for Wm. Strong, Republican candidate for county clerk in 1932

Barb Palmer: Unity Evangelical & Reform Church booklet

Al Werie: Langlade County Directory

Ron Nonnemacher: Kodak camera and case, mileage chart book containing maps and charts

Red Turney: U.S. Army first aid bag

Robert Duerwachter: C&NW memorabilia originally owned by Bob Poss

Ernie Millisaps: Antigo Radar Base drill team helmet used by

Millisaps in 1961-1965

Mike Turney: From the Langlade Abstract and Title Co. old plat books, directories and records

Cash Donations from:
C.A.R. for a grant of \$1,000 to assist in the purchase and installation of a security system.

- New Members**
- Virginia A. Fitzhugh
 - Mary & Gene Herman
 - Mary (Baraniak) Josvai
 - Jeff Robinson
 - Cheryl Streeter

New Membership Dues

Individual, 1 year: \$25

Individual, 3 years: \$50

Family, 1 year: \$30

Family, 3 years: \$70

Junior (18 or younger), 1 year: \$3

Business, 1 year: \$100

Life Member: \$250



The Langlade County Historical Society is organized to preserve, advance, and disseminate knowledge in the history of Langlade County. We try to achieve these goals by maintaining the museum, the Deleglise cabin, a railroad caboose and locomotive on the grounds. In addition, we use our archives to prepare presentations for the public and assist researchers.

The Society is always looking for volunteers to greet visitors at the museum, to help organize and catalog our material, and to maintain our holdings. Anyone who can help on a regular basis or just from time to time is encouraged to call the museum. If you have an interest in helping preserve our past, we have a job for you.

Looking for Help: Joe Hermolin has a Powerpoint presentation of Antigo's Landmark buildings that he is revising and expanding into a booklet. He is interested in buildings that are currently standing and are important either because of their architecture, who lived there or because some important event took place there. If you have ideas to contribute or old photos we could copy please contact the museum.

Items from the Museum

Until George Eastman introduced his Kodak camera in 1888, taking photographs was complicated and cumbersome. His motto of "You push the button, we do the rest." enabled many beginners to take up this hobby. The No. 2 Brownie camera shown here was introduced in 1901 and continued selling until 1933. The original price tag was \$2. It was meant to be a children's camera and was simple to use as well as durable. Many of these 100-year old cameras still work.

This camera is one of many items in the camera room in the museum. It was donated by Ed Drab who used it to, among other things, document his years spent in the CCC camp near Elcho in the 1930's.

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