



Langlade County Historical Society Newsletter *Fall 2008* **Museum Events: Annual Meeting: November 13**

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Curator:

Mary Kay Wolf

Board of Directors:

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

The Langlade County Historical Society will hold its annual meeting on Thursday November 13th at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Antigo. The evening will begin with cocktails at 5pm, then dinner at 6pm. Dinner will be chicken and beef tips at a cost of \$17.50 per person.

At 7pm there will be a brief meeting updating members society activities and voting for the three board positions whose terms are up. This will be followed by a presentation about Kraftwood Gardens by Joe Hermolin.

Those interested in the meeting and presentation

only are encouraged to arrive at 7pm.

In other museum news we helped a local 4H club do a display at the fair, had a display at Kretz Forestry Field Day, have presented a talk on the CCC Camp in Elcho to several groups, and did several DVD's together with Antigo High School.

Below: The main house at Kraftwood Gardens on Enterprise Lake. Kraftwood was the vacation home of the Kraft family and open to the public.

Details on the society meeting and presentation are inside.



Logging in Kempster



The Borth sawmill was built around 1900 and was once part of a complex of several buildings in Kempster. Borth Lake is named for Frank Borth.

Frank Borth came to Wisconsin as a boy from Germany with his family in 1862. By the time he was nine he was helping support his family working in logging camps. In the 1880's he worked for the railroad to help clear the right of way to Kempster. When the railroad decided to go through Antigo Kempster faded in importance.

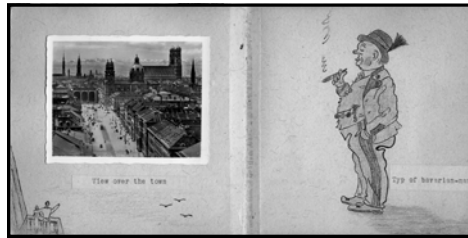
Frank Borth and his brother Albert logged at Kempster

with 60 yokes of oxen and 20 teams of horses. Around 1900 they opened a sawmill.

He logged for over 60 years and was one of a few loggers to cut the same area twice, in 1885 and 1925.

Frank Borth introduced many new techniques to Langlade County including skidding tongs (instead of chains), ice roads and devices for loading logs onto flat-bed rail cars.

The Story of a Long Term and Long Distance Friendship



Annemarie Kuntz sent a small photo album, including sketches, that described her family and area in Munich. Above are some pages from that book.

During World War II as many as 20,000 German prisoners of war (POW's) were kept in about 40 camps in Wisconsin. One of those camps was in Antigo. Some worked in the pea canning factory in the southern part of town.

One soldier, Rolf Kuntz, became friends with Gladys Neufeld. After the war he wrote her describing his trip home and repatriation. Rolf's sister Annemarie wrote Gladys to thank her for the kindness she showed her brother. That letter began a friendship between Gladys in Antigo and Rosemarie in Munich that lasted 25 years.

In a series of letters now held by Gladys's daughter Shirley Schroepfer and lent

to the museum Annemarie describes the hardships of the postwar recovery. She thanks Gladys for the gifts of clothes and foodstuffs that the Neufeld family sent in spite of their own efforts to establish a comfortable home life for the Neufeld family. A pair of new shoes for Annemarie's birthday was particularly welcomed and so was a can of lard and can opener, complete with instructions. Some items were exchanged with other families. Without a currency in the early post war years a well established barter system evolved.

Although Gladys Neufeld and Annemarie Kuntz never met the collection of letters are a sign of a lasting and close friendship.

Beer and Cheese: Two Wisconsin Traditions

Francis Deleglise, the founder of Antigo, worked diligently to keep the city alcohol free. Not long after his death in 1894 Antigo got its first brewery, in 1896.

Located on the south side of Antigo on Edison St. the Antigo Brewery was Antigo's first. It continued in business until prohibition was declared in 1919. Antigo Brewery tried to continue with near beer for a few years but soon closed.

In 1922, the Kraft Cheese Company, which was based in northern Illinois, was looking to expand. It chose to come to "America's Dairyland" and decided that an abandoned brewery made a good cheese processing factory. For about 70 years Kraft Cheese was a major employer of people in Antigo and cows in the countryside as they were proud to say.

When Kraft Cheese was purchased by Philip Morris in the 1990's they decided to



The Antigo Brewery, built in 1896, became Kraft Cheese in 1922. Photograph by A.J. Kingsbury

close the Antigo plant. The workers took it over and ran it as Antigo Cheese. It is now Sartori Cheese.

Antigo High School

The start of the school year is a good time to look back at Antigo's high school in the past. The first high school was a wood frame building standing on the site of the current museum. It opened in 1883 and the first graduating class consisted of

one student. The student body grew quickly and by 1890 a larger brick school was built at where the middle school stands today. That school burned on a bitterly cold morning of January 6, 1916. Classes for the 260 students were held in various

churches, businesses, lodges and the Palace Theater while a new building was erected at the same site. That building opened for classes in the spring of 1917 and served as the high school until the current school was built. Today the old high school, with modifications, is the middle school.



Clockwise from the upper left: Antigo's first high school on Superior St., Antigo's second high school before the 1916 fire, the same school after the fire of 1916 and the rebuilt school on the same site that is now the middle school.

Thank You to:

Donations

Anonymous: Piano cover, clothing
 Thomas Clauder: Railroad memorabilia
 Barbara Croisant: Czech & Slovak heritage materials, books
 Jane Donahue: C&NW railroad material
 Angeline Fisher: Material relating to performing on WATK radio
 Jeanette Fondow: Picture postcards
 Audrey Heinzen: Household items
 Roger Hendershot: Railroad material
 Iolene Holland: Books, household items
 Kay Kapusta: 8mm movie projector
 Judy Karpf: Household items with the Elcho bank logo Sharon Knight: Lace collars David & Melodyne Koles: Braided rugs
 DiDi McKenna: Misc. items, photos
 Thelma Nonnemacher: School items
 Carol Pecore: Handmade hoe

Gary Pillar: Fireman's jacket, field data book
 Phillip Ralph: Photos, postcards, misc. items
 Raymond Rath: Books on the Rath family
 Peter Sarris: Dr. Donahue medical license, photos
 Pete Solin: Indian arrowhead stone
 Richard Strasser: Baseball uniforms of Antigo Candies and Bryant Spuds, book of U.S. presidents
 Phyllis Veselak: Crocheted party dress
 John Warner: books, misc. items
 Michael Worman: Laundry box for travel.
 WI Hist. Society: 8th grade diploma

Cash Donations:

Eleanor Goepfert estate
 Edward and Elaine Simon
 Braun Woodlands Foundation Inc.

New Members:

Mark Peddecord
 Teresa Sprecher

Membership Renewals:

Georgina Auner
 Jerry and Gale Demlow
 Sally Jensen
 Mary Josvai
 Ronald Koepke
 Jeff and Cheryl Marx
 Don and Mary Mollet
 Helen and Ed Morrissey
 J. Marilyn (Hunter) Preiss
 Vivian Simon
 Phyllis Veselak
 Theodore Weaver
 Bill and Helen Williams (Northern Building Maintenance & Supply)

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Museum Hours:
Wed. to Sat.: 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

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

Upcoming Events

Annual Meeting: Thurs. November 13th. See enclosure inside.

Display of Campaign Material: Some of Jim Roesner's campaign memorabilia is on display in the museum lobby during October and November.

Langlade Co. History on DVD: In collaboration with Antigo High School and Cable 3 TV, DVD's on various topics are now available for viewing.

Items from the Museum:

With the elections approaching we look back to campaign buttons of "Fighting" Bob LaFollette; one from a campaign for governor and the other from his presidential run in 1924.

Fighting Bob is well known in Wisconsin politics serving as a congressman, governor and senator. In 1924 he ran for president for the Progressive Party.

The left button says: "I AM FOR BOB FOR GOVERNOR"



Buttons courtesy of Jim Roesner