



## Langlade County Historical Society Newsletter *Fall, 2009*

**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

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### Annual Meeting: November 12

The annual meeting of the Langlade County Historical Society will take place on Thursday, November 12, at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Antigo.

The speaker will be Fred Berner of the Antigo Daily Journal, which has been published since 1905. He will recount the history of the Antigo Daily Journal and the importance of local newspapers in small communities.

Details for this event are in an insert in this newsletter.

At the annual meeting three board members' terms will expire. These are Joe Sveda, Nancy Bugni, and Joe Hermolin. Nancy Bugni and Joe Hermolin have agreed to serve another term. The nominating committee recommends that Nancy Bugni and Joe Hermolin along with Steve Bradley be elected to the board for three year terms.

At the meeting other nominations will also be accepted.

### Elton: Home of Crocker Lumber

Elton today is little more than an intersection on the highway where the speed limit drops. But in the early 1900's, it boasted a hardware store, hotel, three general stores, a school, two churches, four dance halls, and seven taverns.

In 1882 the railroad expanded north to Antigo and in 1907 a spur line extended to Elton. Elton had a depot, roundhouse, water tank, and coaling hoist. The rail lines enabled transport of timber

and wood products in and out of the area. Elton became a thriving lumber town. The Crocker Chair Company owned much of the timber land in the area and had their own trail system going to their five lumber camps. They had a sawmill in Elton and a chair manufacturing company in Antigo.

The rolling countryside around Elton, carved by glaciation, is still called the Crocker Hills.



*Top: The sawmill in Elton  
 Bottom: Engine of the Crocker Chair Co.*

# Antigo Milk Products Cooperative

When the Antigo Milk Products Co-op was formed in 1931, it was a bold experiment. Small, neighborhood co-ops did exist but a county wide organization was rare. Dairy farming was an important part of the local economy and much of it was directed toward cheese manufacturing. Small plants, some co-ops, dotted the countryside. There were 31 cheese factories and two creameries.

Kraft Cheese came to Antigo in 1923 and established what was, for a while, the largest cheese factory in the world. Local farmers and businessmen were concerned by Kraft's domination, but small dairy operations were too inefficient to compete.

In 1928 a group formed a co-op. Langlade County's

Agricultural Agent, John Omerick, and officials from the University of Wisconsin helped lay the groundwork. After many months of planning, assessing markets, and surveying farmers' and public opinions, the co-op was formed in April 1930. Construction of a plant along the rail lines was completed by early 1931 and the first load of milk was delivered on March 26, 1931.

The co-op faced several difficulties initially, including problems at the plant, the depression, and a drought. But by 1934 it was clearly a success in terms of milk prices received by farmers and help offered in improving milk quality. The Antigo Milk Products Co-op served as a model nationwide for how farmers could work together.



*Top: The main plant of the Antigo Milk Products Cooperative on Dorr Street  
Bottom: The offices of the Antigo Milk Products Coop which today house the Antigo Unified School District offices*

# Francis Deleglise and the Promotion of Antigo



*Francis Deleglise fought to keep Antigo dry; but on the centenary of Antigo's founding, Point Brewery put a picture of his cabin on its beer cans.*

Francis Deleglise is considered the "Father of Antigo." He first brought his family here in 1879 while working the northwoods as a timber cruiser with his home base in Appleton.

Once his family was settled, he purchased a lot of land platted and promoted the area. He convinced the expanding railroad to come through here.

Together with a business partner, Hutchinson, he promoted the region as a place to settle. The museum has a collection of inquiries from prospective settlers and copies of many of his replies. People came here for a variety of reasons. One thing Francis Deleglise stressed was that Antigo was a family-oriented town and that bars and liquor sales were prohibited.

# Annual Picnic and Roof Replacement

In August the museum held its summer picnic at our Railroad Park. In what is becoming a summer tradition, Mike Haefs and Steve Bradley worked the grill; this time assisted by Gary Kieper.

The weather cooperated, Antigo Tree Toppers 4H club served ice cream, and the Pine Tones provided music.

The picnic served to announce the next major project at the museum which is to replace the roof.

Our museum is a local landmark but the roof is in very poor repair. We will replace it with a copper-colored metal roof that should be maintenance free for decades to come.



*Roof repairs are underway.*



*Scenes from this year's picnic:  
Top: Chefs Gary Kieper, Steve Bradley and Mike Haefs at the grill  
Bottom: Antigo Tree Toppers 4H serving ice cream  
Left: Sarah Young and daughter Claire on the museum steps*

## Thank You

**Richard Allgaier:** Carpentry tools.  
**Brad Anderson:** City ledgers  
**Shirley Barta Estate:** Photos, railroad items, women's club items, air patrol uniform  
**Steve Bradley:** Gold Star Mothers material  
**Dan Delancey:** Boy Scout shirt  
**Kay Doran:** St. John's golden jubilee book  
**Eliot Jensen:** C&NW depot and track blueprints  
**Janet Larsen:** Cow bells, shavers, shaving mirror  
**Judith Laub:** Religious pictures  
**Bruce Leitzke:** Lantern  
**Karen Lutgerding:** Labor board documents  
**Jane Martinson:** WWI letters of Harry Zwicky  
**Helen & Ed Morrissey:** books, Deleglise's desk, ladies hats

**Mike Rammer:** Railroad tools, JFK campaign poster, war ration coupons, history of A. Rammer  
**Beth Schuelke:** 1881 WI atlas, 1882 dictionary  
**Enid Simon:** 1911 AHS pennant, IOOF badge, house photo  
**George & Charlie Steed:** Railroad agent hat  
**Tom & Mary Strasser:** Doll, photos, railroad material, bread & cake cabinet  
**Whiting family:** Portrait of Judge Whiting, clothing, movie projectors  
**Cash Donations:**  
 Shirley Barta Estate  
 Olive Fraser  
 Braun Woodlands Foundation, Inc.  
 Community Association of Retirees  
 Langlade Co. Genealogy Association  
 AHS Class of 1954

**New Member:**  
 Kathy Butcher

**Membership Renewals:**  
 Joan Braun, Grace Franc, Sheila Hall, Sharron Hanson, Thomas Krief, William Mattek, Dr. & Mrs. McKenna, Don & Mary Mollet, Ed & Helen Morrissey, Kenneth & Carol Powell, James & Sandra Robrecht

**Special Thanks:**  
 Toni Thomas who gardens at the museum as our Master Gardener.

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www.langladehistory.com  
Museum Hours:  
Wednesday to Saturday:

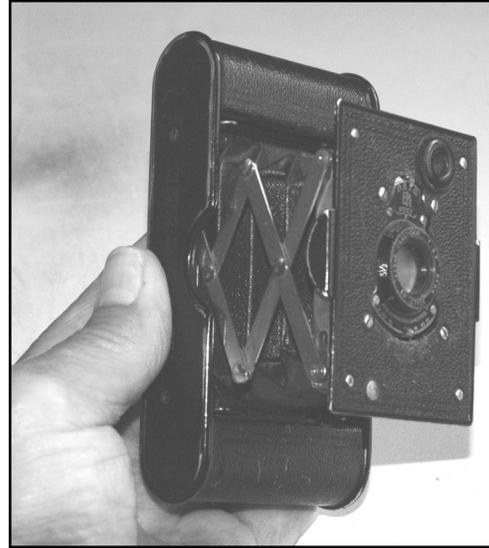
**New Membership Dues**

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

**Items from the Museum: William Wessa's Camera:** William Wessa was a noted local photographer in the early 20th century. When the U.S. entered World War I, he signed with the 107th Trench Mortar Battery Company. He chronicled the company during training and in action in Belgium and France. His daughter, the late Betty Fogeltanz, bequeathed his camera and photographs to the museum.

**Upcoming Events**

**Annual Meeting:** Thursday, November 12, at Knights of Columbus. Fred Berner of the Antigo Daily Journal will be the featured speaker.



*Vest Pocket Kodak Camera used by William Wessa when with the 107th TMB Company*

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