

# LANGLADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## CURATOR:

Mary Kay Wolf

## DIRECTORS:

Dean Blazek	Joe Hermolin
Nancy Bugni	Jim Klapste
Glenn Bugni	Terri Torgerson
Judy Grimm	Diane Zuelzke
Lisa Haefs	

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## LCHS Annual Meeting

This past November the Langlade County Historical Society held its annual meeting at the Veterans of Foreign Wars hall in Antigo. Over 60 people attended the dinner, meeting, and program.

In the business meeting Joe Hermolin and Nancy Bugni were each reelected to a three-year term and Diane Zuelzke was elected to replace Steve Bradley who is retiring. Steve will be missed on the board but has agreed to continue to serve as a “celebrity chef” at our summer “Railroad Picnic.”

Treasurer Glenn Bugni gave a brief financial report outlining progress on the Windows to the Past campaign designed to create a fund

specifically for building restoration. We are about 60% towards our goal. Another aspect of our finances involves operational funds for day-to-day running of the museum and its programs. At the moment we are running a monthly deficit of about \$1,000. While the situation is not dire, we must do more in the long term to keep our doors open and doing our programs.

The meeting concluded with a presentation by Joe Hermolin about Antigo based photographer Arthur J. Kingsbury. The photos shown were taken from a book entitled *Langlade County* which is for sale at the museum.

## Wisconsin Council for Local History

The Wisconsin Council for Local History is a statewide organization of over 380 local history groups. The Langlade County Historical Society is part of the Northwoods Region. Each year the Council awards grants to local museums for projects dealing with archives management.

This year the Langlade County Historical Society received a grant for the purchase of archival boxes for documents and acid-free clear pages for our photo collection.

Curator Mary Kay Wolf is busy organizing and indexing our archives. One of the missions of the museum is to provide material to researchers. People come into the museum or write and email us with requests for information and copies of photographs. While we try to fill these requests, it has been difficult at times because we must first organize our material and preserve it properly to have it accessible. In the near future we hope to be better able to fulfill this part of our mission.



*Curator Mary Kay Wolf is organizing the museum's photo and document archives to make them more accessible.*

## THANK YOU

### Item Donations:

- Ludwig Bauer: Mason jar  
Beth Bockes: Minutes from Antigo Women's Club, Fine Arts Department  
Jane Dreiske: Piano rolls (in memory of Freida (Helmig) Wendt)  
Jennie Helm: Shaving kit, prayer book of Stanley Flak  
Janet Larsen: Shoe lasts  
Mary Lukowicz: Military items, C&NW roundhouse crew and engine picture from 1916  
Karla Martinsen: Viewmaster viewer and slides  
Glen & Carol Remington: Butter churn  
Betty Sosnovske: Suitcase decorated with Japanese motif from Robert Sosnovske's WWII service  
Marlow Strehlow: Pocket compass used by railroad engineering crew

### Monetary Donations:

- James Aulik  
Lorraine Fellner  
James Wing  
John Zwicky  
Johnson Electric Coil  
Langlade County Genealogy Society  
Rotary Club of Antigo  
Jaqueline Wahleithner Family Trust

### Monetary Donation in Memorium

- For Patrick Diercks, Doris Kryka from Jim & Connie Hubach  
For Louise Schleis from Mary Schleis  
For Vida Solin from Marleen Sargent  
For Dora Stiglich from Dean & Polly Blazek  
For Jim VanOoyen from Dean & Polly Blazek

Special Thanks to Santa who visited with 341 children (and parents) at the museum before Christmas

### Membership

- Judy Grimm (renewal)  
Thomas McNeil (new)  
John Novak (new)  
Mark Totzke

## LANGLADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# The Queen Consort of Prussia

While the museum's mission is to preserve and present the history of Langlade County, some artifacts take us farther afield in geography and back further in time before Wisconsin even existed as a state. Two items on display came from different sources but commemorate a person who was an important figure in Europe's Napoleonic wars.



Duchess Louise of Mecklenburg-Strelitz (Luise Auguste Wilhelmine Amalie; 1776 – 1810) was Queen consort of Prussia. In 1797 her husband succeeded to the throne of Prussia as King Frederick William III. For the first time in Prussian history, the queen emerged as a celebrated public personality in her own right, as she occupied a much more prominent role than her predecessors. She was active in her country's government.



With Napoleon's rise to power in France, Europe was plunged into war. King Frederick William reluctantly entered the war in 1806 which was a disaster for Prussia. Napoleon demanded harsh peace terms. Frederick William sent his pregnant wife to negotiate better terms with Napoleon. Although unsuccessful, her efforts made her beloved in Prussia. The Order of Louise was founded as a female counterpart to the Iron Cross. Louise herself would be used for over the next 100 years as an example of the ideal German woman.

Many household items, including a commemorative plate and an antique bisque doll, on display in the museum, showed likenesses of Queen Louise.

**Becca Kaegi**, a local graphic artist, has offered her services as a volunteer for the Langlade County Historical Society.

Originally from Stevens Point and a graduate of UWSP, Becca was trained in graphic design and

has been working in the field for more than twenty years. She has a freelance design business called Onion Design.

The Langlade County Historical Society would like to thank her for her volunteer work.

# Winter Fun in Langlade County



Birkebeiner and its companion Korteloppet race held in Cable and Hayward, Wisconsin at the end of February.

It was with training for the “Birkie” in mind that, in 1986, a group of skiers coalesced around the plan of setting up a network of trails close to home. They obtained permission from the DNR to groom trails on some land that had been owned previously by two brothers, Art and Walter Gartzke. A spaghetti dinner fundraiser was held and some equipment purchased. Together with an old bed spring, a homemade tracker, and a personal snowmobile a single loop trail at Rabe Creek

While some animals go into hibernation for the winter and some people settle down in front of their televisions or computers, others in Langlade County, the “county of trails,” embrace the call of the outdoors. One of the more popular, and incidentally, cheaper activities

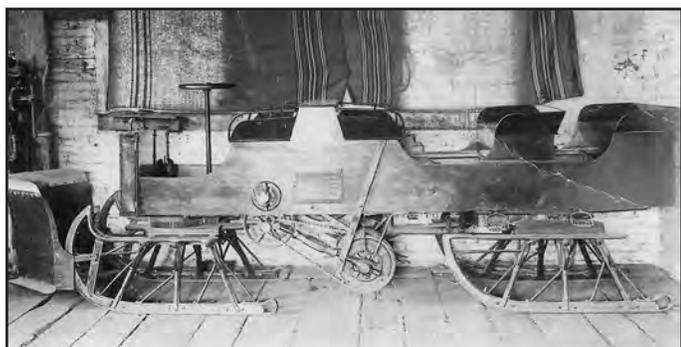


is cross country skiing. It can be done at a leisurely pace and as a family activity that is fun at all skill levels. Some people however seek the challenge of a race and there is no more challenging race in North America than the American

about 10 miles east of Antigo was the start of what would become the Gartzke Trail system.

The club officially incorporated in 1991 with Evelyn Barnes, Rebecca Frisch, Stan Koss, Cindy Martin, and Marv Schmeiser serving as officers

A warming shelter was built adjacent to the bridge crossing the flowage. It was erected by the Wisconsin Conservation Corps. The shelter was made possible through donations of time, money, and materials by club members and



local businesses. When it burned down in 1993, the process was repeated to give us today’s shelter.

The network of trails has been expanded over the years and now includes dedicated snow shoe trails as well. An early guide to cross country skiing in Wisconsin describes Gartzke Flowage as follows: “Gartzke Flowage is marked but not groomed and rated for the beginner. It is about a mile in length and offers a nice trip that covers some open woods and heavily forested creek bottom with springs. The parking area is not plowed. Shelter, water and toilets are not available.” We’ve skied a long way since those days!

**Photos from upper left clockwise:**  
A couple from Monico posed for a portrait by Kingsbury in their “one horse open sleigh.”

Before maintained trails, members of the Kraft family in Elcho shown here in the early 1950s and others just went out and broke trails.

Recreational snowmobiling was far from the minds of tinkers in early days trying to invent a working machine. This one was developed by Jake Healy on Antigo in 1909.

Skaters on Kellogg’s Pond in downtown Antigo were photographed by Kingsbury in the early 20th century.

# The History of Antigo Breweries



*Antigo Brewery and Citizens' Brewery were both established in the 1890s and closed with the onset of prohibition. The Antigo Brewery building became Kraft Cheese.*

of his death in 1894, two breweries were established in Antigo. The Antigo Brewery, founded in 1896, was on Edison Street and Ninth Avenue while the Citizens Brewery was founded in 1899 and operated on Superior Street near Sixth Avenue. Both breweries closed with passage of

**F**rancis Deleglise was adamant in his opposition to alcohol being available in the city he had founded and he was very successful in his efforts. While Antigo was a village, no liquor was legally available but some residents found ways to skirt the laws. With its incorporation as a city in 1885 the sale of liquor was legalized. The debate over the availability of alcohol continued for several years, going back and forth with Deleglise prominent in the prohibition movement. Yet, within five years



the 19th amendment or prohibition in 1919. The Antigo Brewery continued for a few years with the bottling of near beer before closing. In 1922 the plant was taken over by Kraft Cheese.



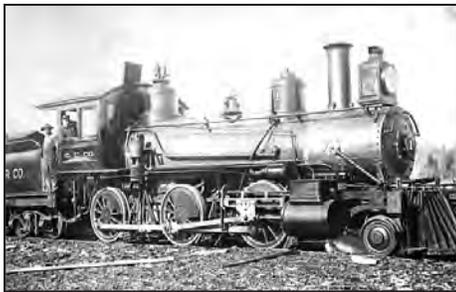
**Right:** Citizens' Brewery memorabilia such as bottles and coasters are in the museum.

**Lower left:** Citizens Brewery sponsored a float in the July Fourth parade around 1910.



# The Crocker Chair Company

The area in Langlade County known as the Crocker Hills is a favorite spot for outdoor enthusiasts. The name comes from the Crocker Furniture Company which, at the end of the 19th century was one of the largest chair manufacturers in the world. The Crockers were among the earliest furniture manufacturers in Sheboygan, a major center of furniture production. Captain



Watson D. Crocker, a Civil War veteran, and his father, Silas R. Crocker, produced chairs and other furniture in a number of partnerships beginning in 1866. The Crocker Chair Company was officially incorporated in 1880. With local lumber sources being depleted towards the end

of the 19th century, they moved some of their operations into the northwoods which was just beginning to be developed.

With vast land holdings around Elton the company had an ample supply of timber. The area became known as "The Crocker Hills." In 1890, the Crocker Chair Company took over the Herman, Becklinger and Herman furniture factory of Antigo. Fred and Julius Herman had established a saw mill in Antigo in 1881 and began furniture production in 1882. Their factory was located next to Spring Brook at about Seventh Avenue. The Crocker Chair Company expanded their factory in Antigo. By 1894 the company was operating two factory sites in Sheboygan as well as the factory and sawmill in Antigo. It employed a total of 900 workers and produced 2,000-3,000 chairs daily. Logging in the Crocker Hills provided an ample supply of timber. In order to bring the lumber to the factory in Antigo, they had their own railroad line running to the factory site.



*The Crocker Chair Company had its own railroad line bringing lumber from the "Crocker Hills" near Elton to its factory in downtown Antigo. The line operated from 1907-1922.*

Although the firm closed in the 1930s due to the effects of the depression, Crocker chairs are still highly prized on the antique market and reproductions of their catalogs have been printed.

# Antigo Visual Arts Update

Antigo Visual Arts has been busy on two fronts recently. AVA has organized and moved its collection of Vavruska paintings and Mayan rubbings to a new storage location. CoVantage Credit Union was gracious in allowing the collection to be stored at its office temporarily and Antigo City Gas has been equally generous in providing new storage space. The collection is being assessed and decisions on exhibitions are being worked out.

The original mission of AVA, to provide display space in the museum for local artists, continues to be the focus of AVA. From October 26 to January 12 three local artists were able to show and sell their work. This was one of six different exhibits mounted by AVA in the gallery at the museum since its inception in October 2011. Karen Aulik-Now, a member of the AVA board, together with others is developing plans for further exhibits in 2013.



*Volunteer Jory Shinnors was one of about a dozen volunteers helping AVA move its collection of Vavruska art works to its new temporary home at City Gas.*

**ADDRESS:**

404 Superior St., Antigo, WI 54409  
 Phone: (715) 627-4464  
 Email: lchs@dwave.net  
 web site: www.langladehistory.com

**MUSEUM HOURS:**

October 1 to May 1  
 Thursday to Saturday:  
 May 1 to October 1  
 Tues. 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**

**Sunday evening, January 20:** The museum will be offering refreshments at the Civic Music concert in the Volm Theater. Volunteers are asked to bring cookies or other snacks to the museum on Saturday, January 19 from 9:30 to 3 p.m. or to the concert.

**ITEMS FROM THE MUSEUM**



**Stovewood Cabin Model**

Traditional log cabins required long straight logs. Stovewood construction made use of irregular short leftovers. The style was found mostly in frontier settlements of German and Polish heritage. Wisconsin has over 60 such structures with a prime example being the Mecikalski Building in nearby Jennings in southwestern Oneida County.

404 Superior Street  
 Antigo WI, 54409