

Summer 2016

LANGLADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



School Tours before Summer Break

Each spring the museum hosts field trips from area schools. This past May we hosted five separate trips and a total of 177 students, accompanied by 18 adults, from six different schools. They ranged from high school sophomores and juniors from White Lake to grade two from Antigo Public Schools. Whatever their level of understanding of history, they all found something interesting about the past. Many students seemed encouraged to come back during the summer with parents and

siblings for a more leisurely tour of the displays. Their eagerness always boosts the enthusiasm of museum volunteers.



We always welcome opportunities to work with schools – at any level. A couple of years ago a history class at the Antigo High School was studying the impact of federal programs during the great Depression. Teachers wanted to make the material relevant to the Langlade County residents and used material from our museum. Some of this material is in the museum and much is available through our web site.

Annual Rummage Sale Fundraiser

One of the museum's major annual fundraising efforts got off to a rough start this year. Our participation in the city-wide rummage is supported by the generosity of donations from the public. This year donations came in as usual but the night before and morning of the sale saw heavy rains. Curator Mary Kay Wolf, with help, scrambled to rearrange the museum displays to accommodate the sale items. It was crowded but we managed to do a fairly good business. The sale continued inside the museum for several days during the following week. With the sale extended we managed to earn about as much as usual and were quite pleased with the final sales. We thank all donors. We also apologize to those who came to tour the museum and were greeted by tables of items for sale but they all seemed to understand. Sales from this event are essential to our programs.



Museum Remodeling Update:

Planning continues, albeit slowly, on the remodeling of the museum's main floor. What started as a project to change the lighting has since expanded to include replacing the ceiling as well as the heating and air conditioning. It was deemed advisable to develop an overall comprehensive plan, using an earlier Historic Structure Report, to coordinate various aspects of the remodeling and insure that it is done right and is compatible with other future remodeling. This means that planning will continue deliberately and remodeling will not begin this fall as originally hoped.

CURATOR:
Mary Kay Morrissey Wolf

DIRECTORS:
Dean Blazek
Fran Brown
Nancy Bugni
Glenn Bugni
Judy Grimm
Lisa Haefs
Joe Hermolin
Gary Whitman
Diane Zuelzke

Recollection Wisconsin

Items Donated:

- David Backmann: Framed wedding certificate (in German) of 1900
- Rick Bartletti: Antigo related baseball memorabilia
- Dean Blazek: Photo albums, History of Langlade County book
- Don Guse: Antigo souvenir pennants
- Eva Hohensee: WWII letters, photos, political information
- Faith Hunt: Doll with cradle, doll quilts
- Hanus family: Mannequin heads
- Jerry Lund: Fishing ruler promo from De Byles Store, Antigo, outdoor guide to Langlade County from 1973
- Jeff & Cheryl Marx: Photos of Antigo scenes, Antigo High School cheerleader cones
- Virginia Rettinger: WWII uniform of Alvin Rettinger
- Lucienne Stege: Wedding dress and veil
- Todd Toburen: Photo negatives from studio of Clarence Toburen, studio equipment

Monetary Donations:

- Ye Olde Craft Shoppe
Sheldon Foundation
Mark & Donna Zittel, Scott & Joann Robertson
in memory of Betty Zittel

Membership Renewals:

- Sharon Hanson
Elvera Frisch

New Members:

- Joseph Jordan (Lifetime)

Visiting Tours:

- White Lake High School
East Elementary 4th & 5th grade
West Elementary: 2nd & 4th grade
Crestwood School
Mattoon School
Cub Scouts

Since 2012 the museum has been working with an organization called RecollectionWisconsin (formerly Wisconsin Heritage Online) to make some of our material available online. We have posted some of our photographs and documents as well as photographs of some of our artifacts on the site <http://recollectionwisconsin.org> There has been enough positive feedback to plan to prepare more material for the site. The limiting factor at the moment is manpower.

RecollectionWisconsin is a collaborative statewide initiative sponsored by the Milwaukee Public Library, University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, WiLS, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Historical Society, and Marquette University.

During 2015 our material was viewed a total of 11,578 times, quite an increase from the 2,661 visits to our material posted on the site during our initial year of 2012. Our first contribution was the photographs of local Indians taken by A.J. Kingsbury. Since then many other parts of our collection have been posted but there is still much to organize, prepare, and document for posting.

Dissemination of this material should become even wider in the near future. RecollectionWisconsin has been designated as the Wisconsin hub for the Digital Public Library of Wisconsin (DPLA). The DPLA brings together material from libraries, archives, and museums throughout the country and makes them available to the world. For most of American history, the ability to access materials for free through public libraries has been a central part of our culture. This should become even more inclusive and conveniently accessible through a home computer thanks to the efforts of DPLA.

RecollectionWisconsin has been working with DPLA for over a year and is getting closer to launching all of its collections, including ours, onto the DPLA portal (<http://dp.la>). If all continues smoothly it should be launched by this summer.

RADD to the Rescue of our Old Files

The museum has begun collaborating with a new group at the Laboratory Library at the School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS) at UW-Madison. They are setting up equipment for digitizing audio cassettes, VHS tapes, floppy disks and other outmoded media formats. Recovering Analog and Digital Data (RADD) is just getting started and looking for possible demonstration projects. This new program promises to help local museums on limited budgets to retrieve material saved on formats that can no longer be readily accessed.

Our first effort in working with RADD will be to transfer a 16mm film taken by local photographer Clarence Toburen at the Menominee Nation to digital

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Young Antigo students on museum field trips this past spring were fascinated by what life was like before everything they now take for granted existed: from stereoscopes to shoe store fitting assistance, classroom layout, football pads, the railroad depot, and, of course, the cabin.



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files. The museum also has some 8mm films of Kraftwood Gardens which will get attention from RADD once they are better staffed and are better able to handle multiple requests from various organizations.

We are also sorting through our collection of 35mm slides and VHS tapes to select those that are interesting but at risk, in order to digitize them. Who knows what treasures of local history are buried in these items?

Kraft Cheese in Antigo

The Kraft Cheese Company started in 1903 when James Lewis (J.L.) Kraft left the family farm in Canada to seek his fortune in Chicago as a cheese merchant. Business was good and he convinced many of his brothers to join him. When J.L. Kraft expanded beyond the Chicago area in the 1920s he opened a second plant in Antigo. It took over the facility at Edison and Ninth that had previously been the Antigo Brewery. It had closed due to prohibition.

For many years Kraft Cheese was a major Antigo fixture and even today the facility continues its prize winning cheese manufacturing, first as Antigo Cheese and then as Sartori. But, in 1982 Kraft's head office thought that the Antigo production was too costly and threatened closing it unless a solution could be found to its waste management problems.

The problem was solved by John Kriha who was the plant manager at the time. John Kriha was born in Aniwa in 1927, graduated from Antigo High School in 1945, and served in the army, in Europe at the end of World War II. Afterwards, on the GI Bill, he attended college majoring in agriculture and economics. He first worked at Kraft's Minnesota plant before transferring to Antigo in 1954 to become plant manager.

In Antigo he developed improvements in the production of parmesan

cheese and blue cheese and Kraft thrived under his supervision. But in 1982 Kriha was summoned to Chicago for a high level conference. Cheese production requires extraction and concentration of milk proteins leaving whey as a waste product. Whey removal was costing Kraft \$480 a day and Kriha was told that the cost was unsustainable. Kraft was in danger of closing. They had no solution to the problem but if John could solve the dilemma the Antigo plant would continue operation.

Kriha thought whey might be used as fertilizer and discussed the matter with DNR officials. It had never been tried before and there were some environmental concerns but Kraft was granted permission to try under certain conditions: primarily that the material was spread over wide areas and not allowed to concentrate in any one spot. Some milk haulers were willing to do the job for about \$50/load but Mike Waldvogel agreed to do it for \$28.50/load. At 50 loads per day it was an expense that Kraft was

willing to bear to keep the company operating. Waldvogel had to incur some initial expense to get trucks and install sprayers that could eject the material for 300 yards. The experiment was a success. Waldvogel profited from the venture, farmers were able to fertilize fields, the Kraft Cheese Company was viable in Antigo, and plant employees kept their jobs. The concept is still working today, in a number of states as well as Langlade County.

John Kriha passed away in the fall of 2015. During his final months he was gracious enough to sit for taped interviews where he described several aspects of his work making Kraft Cheese the vital business it was to Antigo. The interview, it is hoped, will be indexed and become part of a new and developing oral history project at the museum.





Recently the museum received a priceless donation of negatives from photographer Todd Toburen. Many were taken decades ago by his father Clarence "Tubby" Toburen. We are slowly organizing the collection. Meanwhile, here are some scenes from Antigo's past.
 Top row: Left: Antigo Café, 1945 ; right: C&NW roundhouse
 Middle: Left: Powell's Night Club, 1939; Right: Car Hops at A&W 1952
 Bottom: Left: Schlitz Women's Bowling Team 1945; Right: Sinclair Service Center 1940

ADDRESS:

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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,
Tuesday to Saturday

10 a.m. to 4 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

Wed. July 13:

Railroad picnic - 5:30pm to 8pm at the museum

Mon. Aug. 29:

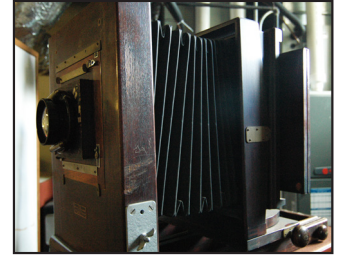
Pies at Music - 5:30 pm at the museum

THE MUSEUM NEEDS BAKERS

Can you bake a cherry pie (or any other type of pie)? On Monday, August 29, the museum will be serving at the concerts in the park series beginning at 5:30. We ask members to bring pies to the museum on Monday between noon and 3p.m. or to the concert venue (City Park or the fairgrounds pavilion in case of rain) at 5p.m.

ITEMS FROM THE MUSEUM

Clarence "Tubby" Toburen's studio camera: A recent acquisition, this camera took formal portraits in Toburen's studio. Clarence Toburen also travelled with a lighter camera, on land and in the air, documenting life in Langlade County and environs. How many graduation pictures might have been taken using this camera?



404 Superior Street
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