

LANGLADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Annual Board Meeting

Our 2018 annual meeting will take place on Sunday November 4 from 1pm to 4pm at the TimberHaven in Polar. There will be a dinner followed by a brief business meeting and a presentation entitled “A Stroll through Old Downtown Antigo”.

Details of the meeting are on a separate page in this newsletter. Downtown flourished with business and social life when Antigo was a major railroad hub, from the beginning of the 20th century to the 1950s and on into the 1960s and 1970s. But, like many smaller cities, downtowns have been affected by movement of retail sales to big box stores at the out-

skirts and to online retail outlets. With efforts underway to revitalize downtown, we should take pride in and perhaps learn from what was a thriving area with the variety of stores and opportunities for gathering and socializing.

The presentation will be given by board members Dean Blazek and Joe Hermolin. A few years ago Blazek and Hermolin assisted Antigo Middle School students to prepare a booklet entitled “Take a Walk Back in Time in Downtown Antigo”. The project was directed by teachers MS Umland and MS Darr and used information and photographs from the museum archives and Blazek’s recollections

of Antigo. Once the project was completed, at the end of the school year, one student exclaimed “Gee! Antigo used to be cool!” Perhaps we may help make it cool again.



Fifth Avenue in 1882 and in the 1960s

Bakers Needed:

On Wednesday November 7 the museum will be serving refreshments at the Civic Music Association concert at the Antigo High School. We would be grateful to Historical Society members attending the concert if they could bring some baked goods to the food stand prior to the concert.

Museum Board Elections

Each November three of the museum’s nine member board have their terms expire. This year Nancy Bugni, Joe Hermolin, and Diane Zuelzke have expiring terms. In addition there is a vacancy due to the resignation of Gary Whitman. Bugni, Hermolin, and Zuelzke have agreed to serve another term and Chris Haedtke has also agreed to serve. This is the slate of candidates recommended by the current board for election at our annual meeting. There will be an opportunity for nominations from the floor at the meeting.

CURATOR:
Mary Kay Morrissey Wolf

DIRECTORS:
Dean Blazek
Fran Brown
Nancy Bugni
Glenn Bugni
Carol Feller Gottard
Lisa Haefs
Joe Hermolin
Diane Zuelzke

THANK YOU

Items Donated:

- David Aspenson:** Sign from the White House Tavern in Antigo
- Richard Brock:** Indian beadwork examples, books
- Mike Donahue:** School books, Chicago & Northwestern hat, old money and stamps
- Darin Fisher:** Mess kit 1917-1918 of Roy Goodwill, mule bits, carpenter tools
- Shirley Jeffrey:** Logging photos including Antigo's Veneer Mill in 1947
- Sandra MacArthur:** Antigo High School yearbooks, UW-Madison book of 1925
- George Rock:** School book once owned by Richard Hanousek
- Mary Wilhelm:** Specialized centrifuge tubes for a Babcock milk fat tester

In Memorium Donations:

- In Memory of:** Florence Schumitsch from Dean & Polly Blazek
- In Memory of:** Marion Hoffmeister from Helen Morrissey

Monetary Donations:

Ron & Nancy Blood for the museum remodeling project

New Members:

John Melendy

The Hoffman House Hotel

From Antigo's beginnings Fifth Avenue was the center of downtown. One of its more important and elegant destinations was the Hoffman House Hotel.

The hotel was built by Joseph Hoffman, a German immigrant and pioneer resident of Antigo, who helped dig out stumps from the clearing that was to become Fifth Avenue. It was originally a path leading from the Delegle home (Antigo's first residents) to the Ackley family homestead and trading post (Langlade County's first white settler).

Built in 1885, the year the city of Antigo was incorporated, the hotel was originally named the Lake Shore House. It got its name from the Milwaukee Lake Shore and Western Railroad (MLS&W) which provided the first rail service to Antigo. The MLS&W depot was nearby and the hotel was a favorite gathering spot for travelers. The building had two stories with 18 rooms. In 1903 and 1907 renovations resulted in a brick veneer, an additional story, and more rooms. Since the Chicago & Northwestern had taken over the MLS&W Hoffman changed the name of his renovated hotel to The Hoffman

House. Further renovations in 1914 resulted in upgrades in the décor of the lobby, wainscoting, and windows with art glass lettering.

Joseph Hoffman's son, Frank, was born in 1884 and arrived in Antigo as an infant with his family. By 1903 he was managing the hotel with his father and when his father retired in 1914 after the major upgrade to the building's decor, Frank took over.

The hotel was a major destination due to its elegance and its central location. Well into the 21st century the Hoffman House continues to be a downtown landmark.



The exterior and interior bar of the Hoffman House in the 1920s

Promoting Antigo and Langlade County

There are several reasons to consider Francis Deleglise “The Father of Antigo”. The log cabin where he brought his family in 1878 from Appleton was the first home in what would become Antigo. (It now stands on the museum grounds.) In 1880 he was instrumental in convincing the Milwaukee Lake Shore and Western Railroad to come to Antigo in its northward expansion. When the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad took over the Milwaukee Lake Shore and Western and made Antigo a major hub the city grew significantly in prominence. Deleglise campaigned to make Antigo the county seat of the newly formed New County (later Langlade) and served in the state assembly.

Trained as a surveyor, Deleglise became a real estate developer and, together with his business partner W. Hutchinson, promoted the area, drawing new settlers to Antigo and surroundings. A 32 page booklet by Deleglise and Hutchinson, printed in 1884, makes interesting reading, pointing out what was available and what was considered important in the late 19th century. (The booklet is available for viewing on the Langlade County Historical Society’s web site: www.langladehistory.com or by visiting the museum.)

The title announces “Woodland Homes as they are and can be made in the New North of Wisconsin”. It proclaims “Proof that Prosperity will Reward your Labors and investments in NEW WISCONSIN” and lists many advantages of the area such as: “The soil is wonderfully fertile”, “The water cannot be excelled for purity”, “The timber is magnificent”, “The markets are the steadiest” “The society is the best in the west”, “Occupations are a multitude”,

“Recreation can be taken with pleasure and profit” and “Investments are safe and profitable”.

The booklet also claims that settlers would be free from concerns of such natural disasters as cyclones and that “No blizzards howl down upon his home while he sparingly smoulders in his scanty supply of fuel...and rarely is it that the storm seriously interferes with his daily avocation. ... None of the terrible malaras and scourges that sweep the South, with such dire, deadly results, break in upon the home circle, severing the fondest ties of earthly happiness.” The booklet asserts that for fifty dollars cash a new settler could buy 40 acres of land and with the timber harvested on that land and an additional 20 dollars cash one could build a comfortable home.

Deleglise and Hutchinson imagine a newcomer who comes to Antigo to look it over in 1894. He would walk through “this metropolis” and find broad graded streets, bustling industry (mostly saw mills), “intelligent and refined people”, a beautiful church, and a fine school. Antigo also has all the trappings of a bustling commercial urban area, including telephones and electricity. Most important to Deleglise himself, “NO SALOONS ARE TOLERATED.”

In 1884, when the booklet was published Antigo had a population of 1,949, up from 823 a year previously. They predicted that by the following year it would reach 5,000 inhabitants. One wonders what Deleglise and Hutchinson would think of Antigo and its surroundings today.



Front and back cover of Deleglise and Hutchinson’s booklet promoting Antigo (and their real estate business).

Langlade County Historical Society: A Case Study:

The museum has been slowly organizing its photographs and documents to make them available online through Recollection Wisconsin (www.recollectionwisconsin.org) This has been possible thanks to the assistance of a number of high school students and others who have volunteered time scanning photographs. Our efforts at the museum are now being used as a case study and an example of how museums and libraries in smaller Wisconsin communities can make their material available to a wider audience. The case study being used deals with our photographic collection of logging in the Northwoods. As Recollection Wisconsin personnel attend meetings and visit local museums and libraries trying to expand their reach, our logging pictures and how we scan and cataloged them will serve as a how-to-do-it demonstration.

Other parts of our online collection include photographs of First Nations people, railroads, soldiers from Langlade County in World War I, the Civilian Conservation Corps Camp 657 in Elcho, a Civil War diary of a soldier who participated in Sherman's March to the Sea, Civil War letters of Francis Deleglise. Soon to be added online are photographs of Antigo.

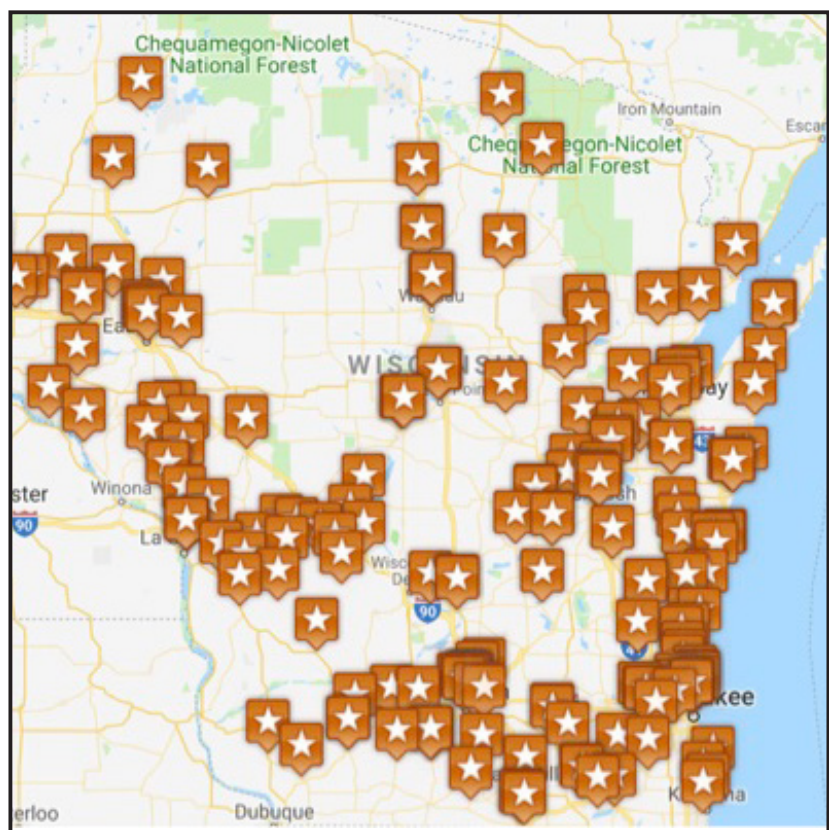
Another contribution in development by Recollection Wisconsin is Listening to War: Digitizing Wisconsin's Wartime Oral Histories The project, supported by a grant

from the National Endowment for the Humanities, will digitize, preserve and provide access to oral histories documenting the lives of Wisconsin veterans and civilians during wartime. One of the interviews is of Roland "Bud" McBain, a Langlade County resident who served in Europe during World War II.

Recollection Wisconsin has become the Wisconsin hub for the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) so our material is distributed to an even wider audience. Recollection Wisconsin has shared over 475,000 resources from 230 collections throughout the state. It has become part of 20 million resources from hundreds of contributors nationwide,

including the Smithsonian, the National Archives, the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library, all major organizers of the DPLA. This is a resource for genealogists, researchers, and educators. DPLA is putting together packages of Primary Source Sets that explore topics in history, culture, and literature for educators. Recollection Wisconsin is developing similar packages dealing with Wisconsin content.

Our photographs and documents are thus part of a large collection that is available online with the hopes that they may be used by many from their homes and that educators may have ready access to materials for the classroom.



Sites in Wisconsin that participate in Recollection Wisconsin

Parades on Fifth Avenue

Over the years Fifth Avenue was the center of activity in Antigo and the location for celebratory parades. Here are pictures of a few.

Top Row: The 50th and 75th anniversaries of the founding of Antigo (1928 and 1953)

Middle Row: WWI troops coming home in 1919, GAR parade 1921

Bottom Row: Circus parade 1906, July 4th 1908



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UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sun. Nov.4 from 1pm to 4pm: Annual meeting at TimberHaven in Polar
Wed. Nov. 7 evening: Refreshments at the Civic Music Association Concert at the Volm Theater

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

ITEM FROM THE MUSEUM:

Fetish Bags: Woodland Indians would create a small beaded bag (about 4 in. long) to celebrate the birth of a child. The bag contained the umbilical cord and was in the shape of the infant's animal clan. It was initially a plaything and later a reminder to the person of his or her roots and a reminder that they are always welcome home. These bags are a recent donation by Richard Brock and are part of our extensive Indian beadwork collection.



404 Superior Street
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