

# LANGLADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## Annual Meeting Will Not Happen

The Langlade County Historical Society, in accordance with our by-laws, holds its annual meeting in November. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic we have decided this would be unwise. While many other local historical societies around the state are hosting virtual meetings, we have decided that a virtual meeting would be unproductive. Instead we will delay a gathering until our remodeling project is complete in the hopes that it will be safer then.

One business item at the annual meeting is the election of three of-

ficers to our nine- member board. This November the terms of Dean Blazek, Glenn Bugni, and Lisa Haefs will have expired. All have expressed a willingness to continue and the current board recommends that they be re-elected. An insert enclosed in this newsletter will serve as a ballot. You may complete the ballot by voting for up to three candidates (including write-ins) and mailing them to the museum before November 23.

Annual meetings are an opportunity to give members progress updates. Much of the work has recently been

directed towards the remodeling and this is highlighted in this newsletter. Programs outside the museum are in development but have been suspended for now.

These meetings have also been celebrations of our past year's accomplishments, plans for the upcoming year, and opportunities to learn more about our local history. We hope to be able to continue this tradition in the near future.

## An Added Feature in the Museum

When the museum reopens after remodeling there will be major changes in space allocation. The Antigo Visual Arts (AVA) gallery, where local artists display and sell their work, will be relocated to the second floor.

The Langlade County Historical Society has entered into an agreement with Langlade County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to host a Welcome Center in the space previously occupied by AVA. This puts the Society on a more financially secure footing and will benefit local economic development by providing both residents and tourists with access to information about events and attractions within the area. EDC is developing plans for the space



*EDC Plan 1*

*Award winning designer Tom Gallenberg (center) outlines his vision for the Welcome Center to Angie Close (left) of the EDC and to Mary Kay Wolf (right) the museum curator.*

of the Welcome Center, working with local, award winning, designer Tom Gallenberg to create a space in which to learn what the county has to offer and to ask questions.

Our current historical displays will be rearranged with more space for rotating exhibits. This should attract return visits by museum patrons.

**CURATOR:**  
Mary Kay Morrissey Wolf

**DIRECTORS:**  
Dean Blazek  
Fran Brown  
Nancy Bugni  
Glenn Bugni  
Carol Feller Gottard  
Chris Haedtke  
Lisa Haefs  
Joe Hermolin  
Diane Zuelke

# THANK YOU

## Let's Make History Project from June 23 to Sept. 14, 2020

Glenn and Nancy Bugni in memory of  
Howie Wagner  
Patricia Ratzlaff  
Dr. Roy and Karen Thomas  
Wagner Oil  
White Lake Historical Society

This is truly a generous community and also one that has always taken pride in its history and worked for its preservation.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and our remodeling project we have had to curtail our programs and museum hours. This has also diminished our contributions and fundraising which are vital to operating the museum, its programs, and perhaps achieving all of our remodeling goals.

We are thankful to all who have contributed so generously up to now. These are difficult economic times but we continue to rely on your help and are confident that we will get back to functioning in the near future. Thank you for your support.



### The Coronavirus that Stole Christmas

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and our remodeling the museum board has decided it would be unwise to host Santa at the museum this year. This has always been a highlight for volunteers and staff who enjoy being Santa's helpers. We trust that we will continue the tradition next year.

## LANGLADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# Remodeling Update

Driving on Superior Street in downtown Antigo one can't help but notice the spectacular progress recently in the remodeling of the museum. The addition housing the elevator and restrooms has attracted a lot of attention, especially since it fits so well in style with the old Carnegie Library building, completed in 1905. When completed

the addition will also contain space for rotating exhibits.

Interior remodeling and allocation of space are still works in progress. Plans and cost estimates are being developed by architect Rod Cox. The major focus is on ceiling repairs, improved lighting on the main floor and the AVA Gallery, and updating the heating and air conditioning. Fundraising continues and how much of our remodeling goal we achieve depends on further fundraising success.

If you wish to help us achieve all our remodeling goals or learn more about the plans and giving specifics contact the museum at 715-627-4464 or Nancy Bugni at 715-610-2290 or Lisa Haefs at 715-499-2974. You may also consider a tax-deductible gift to: Let's Make History, c/o Langlade County Historical Society, P.O. Box 215, Antigo WI, 54409.



*Top: The north side of the building as it appeared in the early spring of 2020 before construction and in late summer when the addition was almost complete.*



*Bottom: Great care was taken to match the bricks of the addition to match the original and preserve the original northern window.*



# The Importance of Voter Turnout

In any election voter turnout is critical. It was especially true for a local referendum in 1881 to select the county seat of newly formed Langlade County.

The future county's first white resident was Willard Ackley who, in 1853, established a trading post at the fork of the east and west branches of the Eau Claire River. Still, much of the early development took place near the Wolf River and along the Lake Superior and Military Trails designed to connect Green Bay to the Keweenaw Peninsula. By the 1860s several settlers had established stopping places and stores for travelers and for loggers. In 1872 one early settler, Charles Lazerlere, erected a hotel in what is now the town of Langlade. Villages sprang up where Hollister, Lily, and Langlade now exist.

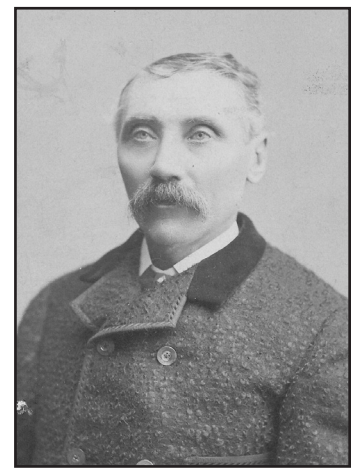
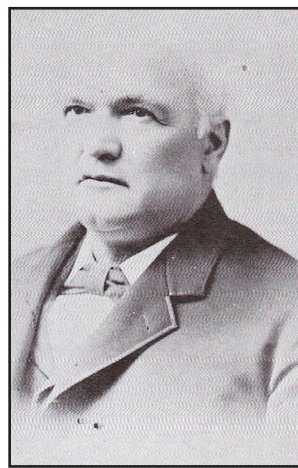
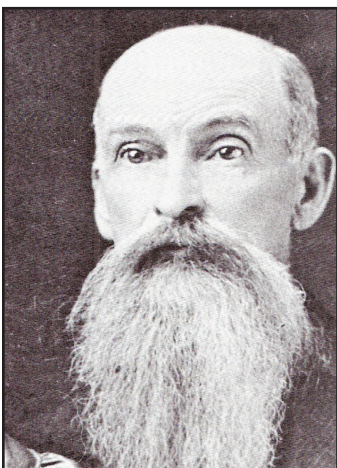
Another early businessman, Squire Taylor, built possibly the county's first sawmill and became a real estate speculator based in Lily. He is referred to as the "Father of Langlade County" for his efforts in 1879 to have Langlade County established. Francis Deleglise came to what is now Antigo as a timber cruiser in 1877. He too became a real estate speculator and promoter of his area. The coming of the railroad was a major development for Antigo but in the late 1870s it was still far behind Lily, Hollister, and Langlade in population and development.

In 1880, while legal aspects of New (later renamed Langlade) County were being considered, a group led by Taylor met to select a county board and declared the Town of New at the junction of the Wolf and Lily Rivers as the county seat. The Antigo group was furious and threatened court action. The Taylor group agreed to a referendum in the spring of 1881. Lazerlere's hotel in Langlade was to be the polling site. The Taylor contingent was confident that the loggers in the area would sway the election their way.

The Antigo group spread the word that they were discouraged and held little hope of winning so they would not even make the 22-mile trek to vote. The Taylor group was delighted since they didn't have to make the effort to get out the vote.

The night before the referendum the Antigo group departed for an overnight hike, picking up voters along the way. They got near the polling station and hid in the woods until about an hour before the polls closed. Then the Antigo men stepped out to vote, too late for Taylor to recruit the local loggers. Antigo won the referendum by six votes.

While disputes between the Antigo group and the Wolf River group continued, the first county board meeting in Antigo took place in May of 1881 in Niels Anderson's store.



*Pictured from left to right: The conflict over where to locate Langlade County's county seat pitted Charles Lazerlere and Squire Taylor on one side and Francis Deleglise and Niels Anderson on the other.*

# The Deeglise Cabin: Home of “The Father of Antigo”

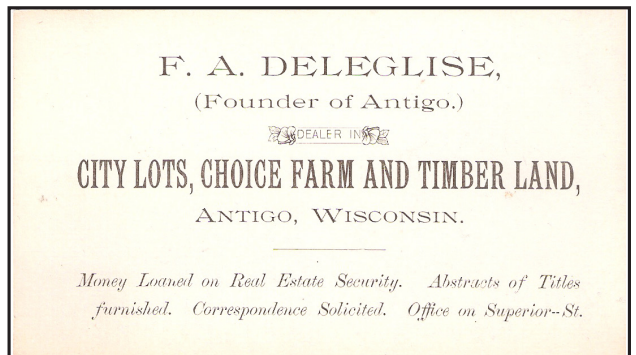
The log cabin sitting on the south side of the museum grounds attracts a great deal of attention from local residents and motorists driving north through town. It has always been a highlight of elementary school field trips. Years ago, one of those students was fascinated by the cabin and maintained that interest into adulthood. Antigo native and now Seattle based architect, Julie Blazek, has written a booklet exploring the history and significance of Antigo’s first home.

Julie Blazek first wrote about the Deeglise cabin in 1988 while a student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee’s Urban Planning and Architecture School for a course entitled American Vernacular Architecture. Years later, with encouragement from her father and longtime Langlade County Historical Society supporter and director Dean Blazek, she expanded on her original paper using material from the museum archives with help from Joe Hermolin and material available on the website of Recollection Wisconsin.

That booklet is now available at the museum and online through the Langlade County Historical Society web site. It describes the cabin, how it came to be built, some of its very interesting interior furniture, and the history of its preservation from its original location on the banks of Spring Brook to its current location on the museum grounds.

This particular cabin is important since it is the early Antigo residence of Francis Deeglise and his family. Francis Deeglise is considered “the Father of Antigo”. The cabin is a typical example of the lifestyle of pioneer life in the Wisconsin Northwoods in the late 19th century when the area came to be home to white settlers. Julie Blazek’s manuscript places this particular structure in the context of the history and the settlement of northern Wisconsin.

The historical society is thankful to Dean Blazek for all his past and ongoing efforts to support the museum and for encouraging and funding the publication of his daughter Julie’s manuscript. The booklet will be valuable to many, including future students visiting the cabin on school tours.



**Cabin Move1914**

*In 1914 the original Deeglise home was saved from demolition and moved from the banks of Spring Brook to the library (now museum) grounds. This may be the first example of a Wisconsin community acting to preserve part of its history.*

**Card**

*Francis Deeglise’s real estate business card. He is considered “The Father of Antigo”.*

**Repairs**

*Terry Laib worked on the 1998 restoration of the cabin and has since done repair work.*



# Things We Miss: Wait till next year

*Activities at the museum have been curtailed due to the CORVID-19 pandemic and our remodeling (with fundraising continuing). We hope soon to reopen with revised display areas and to host special events again such as some of these from recent years.*

**Top Row:** School trips are always a hit with students and volunteers

**Middle Row:** Santa visits the museum around Christmas, picnics and music in summer on the museum grounds

**Bottom Row:** Tours of historic Antigo (here for Pine Meadow residents), displays at public events (here dairy history at Breakfast on the Farm event)



**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,  
 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:**

This chest of drawers was made in Appleton by cabinet maker Francois Bernard who came to Wisconsin from France in 1854. Francis Deleglise and his wife Mary Bor likely acquired it after their marriage in 1856. They brought it with them in their move to Antigo in 1879. Family history states that at the first Catholic mass celebrated in Antigo this chest of drawers served as an altar.



404 Superior Street  
 Antigo WI, 54409