

Spring 2017

LANGLADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Summer Plans

Starting on May 9th the museum will switch to summer mode with expanded hours and two planned special events. The museum will be open from Tuesday through Saturday, 10am to 4pm. The Deleglise cabin and 440 Locomotive will open for tours. These are both locked for the winter and some items are moved into storage. To tour the cabin or the locomotive and caboose register at the museum desk during regular hours.

Summer is also a time for special events at the museum. On Saturday June 3rd the city-wide rummage sale takes place and the museum will once again take part, selling items at the museum grounds from 8am to 1pm. Last year poor weather forced us to move the sale indoors but it still was a success.



The Railroad Picnic celebrates the importance of the railroad to Antigo's history.



Poor weather forced the rummage sale indoors last year but it was still a great success.



We are accepting donations to sell at the museum. If you have any hidden treasures in your attic or garage please consider donating them to the museum. Drop off items or call us at 715-627-4464 during regular museum hours. (Sorry, we cannot accept large appliances or clothing.) This is one of our major fundraisers and helps cover operating costs.

On Wednesday July 12 we will host our annual railroad picnic, starting at 5pm. This has become an Antigo tradition. It originated after our purchase of the 440 Locomotive in 2005 and its restoration in 2007. The restoration and development of the "Railroad Park" were celebrated at a picnic at the museum

to thank the community and recognize our railroad heritage. This year we will again be serving brats, burgers, potato salad, beans, ice cream and soft drinks. Music will be provided by Brian Hayes and Charlie Kirsch. The cost for the event will remain at \$6.

We hope to see everyone at the museum this summer.

CURATOR:
Mary Kay Morrissey Wolf

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

THANK YOU

Items Donated:

- Mrs. Elon Case: Infant seat from 1060s
Cindy Hardin: Book on history of deer hunting in Wisconsin
Nancy Keller: Wicker doll carriage
Toni Thomas: L.C. Smith & Bros. typewriter belonging to Gerald Benishek
Judy Wanca: Photos, old calendar

Memorial Donations:

- In memory of: John Schroeder from Dean and Polly Blazek

Monetary Donations:

- Remington Foundation
Sheldon Foundation

Membership Renewals:

- Rod Barta
Fran Brown
Don & Mary Mollet
Fred & Kathleen Kelm
Red & Judy Turney
James VandelHey
Gary & Nancy Whitman
Diane Zuelzke

Remodeling Planning Continues

The board continues to meet with Funktion Design Studios of Wausau to develop remodeling plans for the museum. Funktion has reviewed the current status of the building and current building codes. Lighting options have been considered which will, particularly on the main floor, maintain period style and function for museum displays. Less elaborate lighting plans are being considered for the second floor and basement, partly due to technical considerations. In addition, electrical and heating/cooling options are being reviewed.

At a recent meeting with the board Funktion presented plans for possible reconfiguration of floor plans that will ultimately make the building

handicap accessible with an elevator. This is something that we have long sought.

After a lengthy presentation to the board in March, Funktion will now narrow down some parameters and prepare a more detailed analysis, including cost estimates. The board will then determine what may be financially reasonable and best fits our needs as a museum. We hope to be able to present a plan to the community by May or June.

Shoppers at our rummage sale on June 3rd and picnickers on July 12th are encouraged to discuss plans with board members who are present.

Andrew Carnegie and the Library

Antigo's library/museum is designated a Carnegie Library. But how did a Scottish immigrant steel magnate from Pittsburgh have his name associated with Antigo?

Carnegie was born in Scotland in 1835 of humble origins and, with his family, settled in the Pittsburgh area when he was 12. He became a telegraph operator at 17 and then went to work for the Pennsylvania Railroad. He began investing in railroads and by 1875 entered business. He saw the importance of steel to the railroads and that is where he directed his interests. He was very successful. In 1901 he sold his Carnegie Steel Corporation (later U.S. Steel) to J.P. Morgan making him America's richest man at the time.

He devoted the rest of his life to giving away his money to various

worthwhile causes. These included, among others, Carnegie Hall, Carnegie Endowment for World Peace, Carnegie Mellon University, and the Carnegie Institution for Science. He is perhaps best known for funding over 3,000 libraries throughout the U.S., Canada, and England. He was inspired by the generosity of a merchant in Pennsylvania who opened his private library to local working boys when Carnegie was a telegraph operator. He credited this access to books, which his family could not afford, with establishing his career path.

Many people gained access to books in Carnegie Libraries, including residents of Antigo. Antigo's Carnegie Library is one of the few still standing in Wisconsin which is open as a public building.

Langlade County History Online

Operating the museum is one way of promoting the history of Langlade County. Another is through the internet. The museum does maintain a web site and Facebook page to provide information about new displays and special events. We also partner with two other organizations to get the word out into cyberspace.

WI101: Our History in Objects (<http://www.wi101.org/>) This is a collaborative public history project organized by the UW-Madison History Department that includes both an interactive online exhibit and programming on Wisconsin Public Radio (WPR). Wisconsin residents nominate objects of interest or importance to their communities, then research, write, and illustrate the history of those objects. Up to now the museum has provided two sets of stories to the site. One featured a pillow sham made for a CCC enrollee by his sister. That led to stories about the CCC program, particularly Camp 657 in Elcho. A second set of stories featured a bowling pin made at the Vulcan factory in Antigo. It was connected to a series of stories about the company, the cultural significance of bowling in the U.S. and Japan, and the importance of the timber industry to the region. To these two sets of stories we now add a third. Mepps, an Antigo based distributor of fishing lures is an important player in the evolution of the sports fishing industry and tourism. So is Suick lures. These companies and a brief history of the Wolf River are featured in the latest addition to WI101: Our History in Objects. [RecollectionWisconsin](http://recollectionwisconsin.org) (<http://recollectionwisconsin.org>)

WI101 is not our first entry onto the “information superhighway”. Since 2012 the museum has been collaborating with the site **Recollection Wisconsin** to make some of our archives available online. This primarily includes photographs but also letters and diaries as well as photographs of artifacts and scans of newspapers.

In 2016 12,435 visitors to the site learned about our history and used some of our material in their own research.

Recollection Wisconsin brings together digital resources from libraries, archives, museums and historical societies from around Wisconsin. It is now the Service Hub for the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) meaning that the over 200 collections from around the state that are available through Recollection Wisconsin may be accessed through the DPLA, joining the over 15 million items that have been documented, cataloged and available online.

Sources on the Museum’s Web Site

In addition to collaborating with WI101:Our History in Objects and [RecollectionWisconsin](http://recollectionwisconsin.org) the museum posts presentations that we have prepared on our own web site. Narrated slide shows last about 20 minutes are available through our web site on the following topics:

Kraftwood Gardens: The Kraft family operated a cheese plant in Antigo and made Kraftwood near Elcho their summer home. Six acres of formal gardens were open to the public and were a major tourist attraction from the 1930s through the 1950s.

Antigo Landmarks: This is a tour of current sites and buildings in Antigo that relate to Antigo’s history.

The Railroad: From the early 20th century to the 1960s Antigo was a railroad town and the Chicago & Northwestern’s Ashland Division headquarters. The railroad played a major role in Antigo’s history.

Logging in Langlade County: The pine forests and their economic potential first brought settlers to Langlade County. Timber products are still an important part of the economy. This tells of the early days of logging.

Indian Beadwork: Decorative beadwork was an art form practiced by American Indians throughout North America. This presentation highlights our museum’s collection, a diverse collection and generous donation from Richard Brock.

Medical Care: From a few doctors in the early 20th century to “house hospitals” of the 1920s and early 1930s to the building of a major hospital in 1933 the evolution of medical care in Antigo reflects the development of medical science.

Civilian Conservation Corps Camp 657: Based in Elcho, the camp was one of many nation-wide that provided training and employment for young men, corrected the environmental damage of clear cut logging, and established recreational sites. It is arguably one of Franklin Roosevelt’s most successful Depression era programs.

The Deleglise Family: Francis Deleglise worked as a timber cruiser following his Civil War experience and brought his family to what would become Antigo in 1878. He was an important figure in Antigo’s establishment.

The museum also has a Facebook page where we post current announcements.

Duchac Family

Langlade County, like much of Wisconsin, was first settled by European immigrants. For some, coming to Langlade County from Eastern Europe was not their first American stop.

One prominent early pioneer was Joseph Duchac Sr. who arrived in the area in the late 1870s, just as Langlade County was being settled. He would become important in helping others from his native Bohemia settle here.

His granddaughter Mary Ann Masterton provided a lively account of his role in the county's history. His parents left their native Bohemia with Wisconsin as a destination. They crossed the Atlantic to New Orleans and boarded a steamship headed up the Mississippi and got as far as St. Louis. There Mrs. Duchac went into labor; the captain refused to take the family further and so Joseph Duchac was born in St. Louis in 1852. The family eventually made it to Manitowoc.

Joseph Duchac went to work as a farm hand at age of 14 in order to learn English and then travelled extensively as a timber cruiser for Weyerhaeuser, as far as Winnipeg, Manitoba. In 1878 he came to Langlade County, settling in Neva. He would later move to Antigo and became a surveyor and real estate developer in both Neva and Antigo. He also became involved in local politics, serving on the Neva school board and in the county board. Joseph Duchac was responsible for recruiting many recent immigrants

to Langlade County, particularly to the area around Neva and Summit Lake. The story goes that he would travel to Chicago with a horse and wagon. There he would mingle with other Bohemian immigrants. Many would have preferred to farm but ended up in Chicago. He spoke to them in their native language, extolling the virtues of farming in Langlade County. He would recruit settlers and bring them back to his

home in Neva, putting them up for several days as he showed them around. His 10 children often complained of being exiled to the barn while potential clients got to sleep in the family home. It is through the recruiting efforts of Joseph Duchac Sr. that so much of the Neva area was settled by Bohemian immigrants.

Joseph Duchac Sr., a pioneer in Langlade County and his descendants were an important part of the local history. Some family stories have been collected on taped interviews with his granddaughter Mary Ann Masterton as part of an oral history project at the museum. We hope to be able to continue with interviews of other people who have first hand accounts of Langlade County history. The project is still in its infancy.

Left: Three of Duchac's sons served in World War I, one in the navy and two in the 107th Trench Mortar Battery Company. One, shown here, was Carl was an airplane pilot in the 107th TMB.

Below: Joseph Duchac Sr. in his office



Antigo Loves a Parade

In 1953 Antigo celebrated the 75th anniversary of its founding with a parade on Fifth Ave.



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

UPCOMING EVENTS

Rummage Sale Sat. June 3 8am to 1pm
Railroad Picnic: July 12th 5pm-

JOSEPH DUCHAC'S SURVEYOR'S COMPASS:

Joseph Duchac Sr. was a pioneer settler, developer, particularly around Neva and surveyor, (see story inside). This was his compass.



404 Superior Street
Antigo WI, 54409