

LANGLADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Museum Construction Resumes

Last spring the museum reopened after extensive remodeling that made the building handicap accessible, with new restrooms, replaced lighting and a repaired ceiling. But there's still work to be done. The addition and transformation of the interior have been well received, but we would be remiss if we ignored problems with the exterior of the original Carnegie Library, completed in 1905.

The original main entrance, facing Superior Street, is no longer the main entry but it still functions and is the most prominent feature of the façade encountered by visitors. It is also a major background for groups posing for photographs (along with the 440 locomotive). The years and winter weather have not been kind to parts of the facade, such as the concrete stairway and majestic pillars that frame the entry.

Similar problems exist on the south portico, which is the view one encounters when approaching downtown from the south on

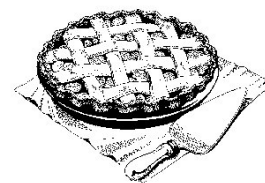
Highway 45. Not so visible to the public, but still a problem, is the rear door which provides access to the basement where there are displays and a storage area.

When the remodeling was completed, we stopped to catch our breath and celebrate. But then we began planning and budgeting. No work could proceed during the winter but we have been consulting with JAS Construction who did such an excellent job on the remodeling and were so good to work with. Once weather permits, they will be back to do the repairs to our over 100-year-old National Register of Historic Places Antigo treasure. During the construction, there should be no disruption of our regular museum hours, which beginning in May, will be on Tuesday through Saturday, from 10 am till 4 pm.



The front facade of the museum looks majestic but a closer inspection reveals badly needed repairs to the columns and stairs.

Calling All Bakers



Music in the Park is back along with refreshments to accompany the music. The museum will be serving on Monday August 15, when the MLC Band will be performing. We ask volunteers to bring donations of pies to the museum before 4:00 pm or to the shelter at City Park by 5:00 pm on that day (or to the Heinzen Pavilion in case of rain). Watch for further notices.

CURATOR:
Mary Kay Wolf

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:
President: Joe Hermolin
Vice-president: Lisa Haefs
Treasurer: Patricia Kennedy
Secretary: Mary Kay Wolf

OTHER DIRECTORS:
Dean Blazek
Fran Brown
Nancy Bugni
Glenn Bugni
Carol Feller Gottard
Chris Haedike
Diane Zuelzke

THANK YOU

Items Donated:

- Marjorie Beck:** Album of old Valentine cards, toy trailer
- Fran Brown:** Jim Rowe vase
- Kay Doran:** Torsion balance scale

Monetary Donations:

- Braun Woodland Foundation
Patricia Dellios in honor of Dean Blazek
Kretz Lumber Co.
Linda Marcussen

Membership Renewals:

- Fran Brown
Glenn & Nancy Bugni
DeDe Cromer
Lu Flemming
Elvera Frisch
Sheila Hall
Chris Haedike
Joe Hermolin
Ron & Judy Korn
William & Charlotte Kraft
Nancy Pelzer
Sandy Robrecht
Carol & Sam Steffan
Diane Zuelzke

Life Time Membership:

- Michael Hanousek
Reid family

New Member:

- Paul Grinde

LANGLADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

An Invitation to Launch

The Langlade County Historical Society is always looking for different ways to relate our history. Recently we have partnered with a group more tech savvy than museum staff and volunteers to establish a YouTube channel with short videos. The 4H Tech Changemakers (TCM) have created and edited videos covering a number of topics and more are planned. The TCM is a 4H group of high school students dedicated to helping people with basic computer problems.

The museum, TCM people, and Economic Development Corporation of Langlade County (EDCLC) invites the public to the official launch of the museum's YouTube channel on Thursday May 12 at 5:00 pm at the museum. We will serve light refreshments. TCM people (with computers) will be available to demonstrate the product of

their efforts and EDCLC will have information about broadband technology and local job opportunities in computer technology.

In addition to our web site and Facebook page, our forthcoming YouTube channel is yet another way you can learn of our history in the comfort of your home, But the historical society still welcomes in person visitors to the museum as our favorite way of interacting with people.



Three of the several students who worked on creating the museum's YouTube videos

A Special Visit

On March 29th, Representative Calvin Callahan toured the museum with museum volunteer Joe Hermolin and Angie Close, of Economic Development Corporation of Langlade County. The visit was initiated by Rep. Callahan's interest in learning more about our community's history and to discuss how preserving our history helps its downtown development. Together, the museum and Economic Development Corporation's Welcome Center are part of a revitalized downtown.



Representative Calvin Callahan met with museum volunteer Joe Hermolin and Economic Development and Welcome Center director to tour the museum. (Photo courtesy of the Antigo Daily Journal)

The Sweetness of Springtime

Beginning in March daylight hours get longer, daytime temperatures are consistently above freezing, and many Langlade County residents begin looking at their maple trees with renewed interest. Tapping for maple syrup has a long history in the Northwoods. For some it's done for fun, a family activity and a source of welcome gifts to family and friends but to others it is big business.

Long before European contact, the Ojibwe of the region tapped maple trees and made syrup. In springtime they would gather in regions where maple trees were plentiful and set up camps for extended stays. This formed part of the traditions and culture of the Ojibwe, as well as an important food source. Sugar camp signaled the approach of spring and the regathering of small groups of families which had separated during winter. Sugar camp still is an important part of Ojibwe culture. In precontact times, Ojibwe gashed a maple and using a sumac branch as a spigot, collected sap in a birch bark basket. Sap was then boiled down in kettles of birch bark and copper. Later, Ojibwe modernized by drilling holes using metal spigots,

and cast-iron pots to boil the sap.

European settlers throughout northern regions of the United States and Canada quickly learned to enjoy the taste of maple syrup. Initially it was produced for home use but eventually people in Wisconsin saw that there was a market for maple syrup. Producers in this area had long considering marketing their product. In 1934 they achieved success when the county agent, John Omernick, arranged for Land O' Lakes Creameries, America's largest dairy coop, to also handle the distribution of maple syrup. Initially it was difficult to get diverse maple syrup producers to agree on the uniform production methods and standards that Land O'Lakes insisted on. Through experimentation, it was discovered that the large vacuum pans used by the Antigo Milk Products Corporation to produce condensed milk worked well. Vacuum pan concentration of sap required lower temperatures than the open pans and thus more uniform and high-quality syrup. In 1934, with the help of scientists from Land O'Lakes and the University of Wisconsin, 47 local maple syrup producers formed the Antigo Maple Syrup Co-operative, associated with Land

O'Lakes, and produced 5,000 gallons of syrup. Producers projected that by its second year the coop could produce as much as 15,000 gallons, providing a major source of revenue to Langlade County residents.

The Wisconsin Magazine of History (spring 2022 issue) describes the Reynolds Sugar Bush of Aniwa. In the 1960s, this family run enterprise had become the world's largest single producer of maple syrup, collecting sap from a wide area that included people collecting sap as far away as from Polar. As with so many other businesses in the region, excellent rail connections helped and Reynolds sold much of its syrup to the Chicago market, including General Foods for their Log Cabin brand.

For many people tapping trees and making syrup is a family hobby and a sign of spring. But for some, it is a big business.

Note: Each spring the museum sells bottles of maple syrup in its gift shop produced and donated by board member Lisa Haefs and her husband Mike.

Recollection Wisconsin Google Analytics

The museum has been partnering with Recollection Wisconsin to have some of our archives made available online through the Recollection Wisconsin web site. This, in turn, is linked to the Digital Public Library of America and so any material digitized, described, and cataloged is made available, world-wide, for researchers and casual internet browsers. To date, we have posted many photographs and documents

related to the history of Langlade County, along with a few photos of particularly unique artifacts.

Google Analytics, which keeps track of what people view online (perhaps more than we know or wish to know) have recently provided information on how many have viewed material from the Langlade County Historical Society. For 2021 we received 16,379 views of our material. This is down

somewhat from the previous year (an all-time high of 18,897) but well above our average of about 12,000 since we began our partnership in 2013.

Our online collection may be viewed at: <https://recollectionwisconsin.org/institutions/langlade-county-historical-society>

The Wolf River: A Resource for Recreation

The Wolf River, which runs through eastern Langlade County has had many lives. For centuries it defined a trail used by Native Americans traveling through the dense forests in what is now Langlade and Menominee Counties. In 1863 there were concerns that British, siding with the Confederacy, might bring troops down from Canada. This led Congress to fund a road to move troops from the Michigan UP to Green Bay. That road, named the Military Road, followed the Wolf for a significant portion of its length. Not completed until the 1870s, it was never used for military purposes. However, it later served as a rout for settlers, trappers, and the timber industry.

In the late 19th and early 20th century the Wolf River was used to transport pine logs to sawmills and factories further south. To control the flow of logs during these log drives, several dams were built along the Wolf. It is estimated that in 1873, a peak year, half a billion board feet of

timber was floated down the Wolf to factories in Oshkosh.

Log drives are long gone but the Wolf River continues to play a major role in Langlade County - now for its recreational value. Getting to that stage was not straightforward. Log drives cause considerable erosion along river banks. The dams also created changes to the river's ecology. By the early 20th century work began to restore the Wolf. Dams were gradually removed and by 1926 the last one was gone. Rainbow trout were introduced and brook trout began to repopulate the river.

But as they say "setbacks happen". In the early 1930s a drought created the need to divert water for farm irrigation. The increased use of pesticides in the 1950s resulted in significant environmental damage and later, the threat of mines in the Crandon area, headwaters of the Wolf, created new concerns. But environmentalists remained active

and many issues were resolved. In 1967, Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall with help from Wisconsin senator Gaylord Nelson allocated \$500,000 to preserve a 90-mile stretch of the Wolf through Langlade and Menominee Counties. Almost 13,000 acres of shoreline land were purchased and protected. In 1968 Nelson, Udall and a group of dignitaries met at the Gardner Dam, greeted by the White Lake School band and prepared for a 4-mile trip in rafts and canoes led by professional guide Herb Buettner for the official opening of the restored Wolf.

The Wolf is now protected by the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Protection Act. It is one of only two rivers in Wisconsin so protected, along with the St. Croix/Namekagon. Many trout fishers, leisure rafters, kayakers and canoers, and participants in the annual Wolfman Triathlon, a major annual event, should thank those who worked so hard to restore the Wolf.



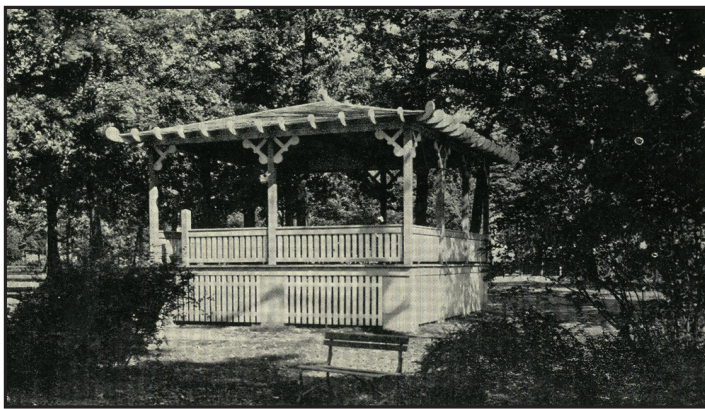
Scenes of family activities on the Wolf as it runs through the Menominee Reservation.

With winter a distant memory, it's time to plan summer activities. Here are some possibilities from the past

Top row: Left: the original City Park bandstand and venue for Music in the Park. Right: Going to the A&W Drive In (current site of El Tequila)

Middle Row: Left: boating on Mueller Lake near Polar. Right: Taking in a local ballgame, here a team from Ormsby

Bottom Row: Left: A resort hotel at Pelican Lake Right: Horse races at the Fairgrounds



ADDRESS:

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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

Thurs. May 12: 5:00 pm at the museum Join us to celebrate the launch of the museum’s YouTube channel created by 4H TechChangemakers (see page 2)

Mon. Aug. 15 the museum will be serving refreshments at the Music in the Park concert featuring the MLC Band

ITEM FROM THE MUSEUM:

This cedar strip fishing boat was made in 1945 by Antigo Boat Works which operated in Antigo from 1945 to 1948 then moved to Elcho and renamed Lakecraft Boat Co. It was used by the Hoppe family on Enterprise Lake until 1956, put into storage, and, in 2013,



restored by a family friend and donated to the museum.