

# LANGLADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## Annual Picnic

Each year since 2007 we have celebrated Antigo’s railroad heritage and thanked the community for its support by hosting a picnic at the museum. This year’s picnic was also an occasion to announce plans for remodeling the museum itself.



Longtime favorite Charlie Kirsch was back with the band, *The Springbrookers*

It has been a long process but we feel we have arrived at a workable plan. At our annual meeting in November, 2017 we presented a plan to the general membership, hoping for some feedback – and we got it. While upgrades to the lighting, ductwork, and ceiling repairs had been high on our initial list, it became clear that handicap accessibility was a greater priority. This included access to the building, elevator access to all three floors and a handicap rest room. And so that, along with some badly needed foundation repairs, were moved to the top of the list. Improvements to the lighting, ceiling repairs, and ductwork on the

main floor will be our next step and improvements to the second floor and basement will be third.

Another stumbling block for the board has been assembling a team to oversee a project that is beyond the knowledge and skills of board members. In addition to revising our priorities we have decided to work with a new team of consultants. We will be working



Museum volunteers served food.

with Rod Cox, of the architectural firm Cox and Associates of Wausau, to develop a new plan. George Shinnars of Antigo Construction and Dave Kuhr of Tradewell Construction, both of Antigo, will work with the museum to implement plans developed by Rod Cox. Wherever possible, we will work with local subcontractors. The museum board has met with Rod Cox, George Shinnars, and Dave Kuhr and outlined an approach which will be more fully developed in the coming months. Major work will begin in the fall



Gary Kieper (shown here) was assisted by Steve Bradley.

when museum hours are reduced but some preliminary work will begin shortly.

There will be some disruption in the museum but we will try to minimize it. Once more detailed plans have been agreed upon fundraising will begin in earnest although we have already raised some funds. Based on the community support that our historical society received when we purchased and restored our steam locomotive and created our “railroad park” we are confident that we can move far down our priority list and make the museum building itself an even greater asset to Antigo.

**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:

**Chris Bachman:** Old Kenmore hand mixer

**Mary Bailly:** Doll house furniture, old recipe book

**Bridget Hagerty:** Clothing of 1890s, book by Sister Seraphine (sister of Tom Morissey) about the Sisters of St. Agnes (in memory of Margaret Sweetser-Hagerty)

**Janice Jorgensen:** old toys

**Michael Leslie:** Mess kit 1917-1918 of Roy Goodwill, mule bits, carpenter tools

**David Mortenson:** Antigo souvenir plate, glass container, centennial pin, Holy Rosary Society of Antigo ribbon of 1900

**Ratzlaff family:** Large photo of Langlade County Courthouse Vietnam War Memorial (in memory of Donald Ratzlaff)

**Dan Shafel:** Photo of 1920 Ackley White Sox baseball team

**Lyle Shackle:** Book on railroad history

## In Memorium Donations:

**In Memory of:** Donald Jahnke from Jim and Connie Hubatch

## Monetary Donations:

Braun Woodlands Foundation within the Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin  
Remington Foundation  
Sheldon Foundation

## Membership Renewals:

Elvera Frisch

## New Members:

Pat Kennedy  
Mike & Sue Zelinski

## Special Thanks:

To all who donated items for our rummage sale and helped on the day of the sale and all who baked pies and helped at our table at music in the park. Thanks to all who helped at our annual railroad picnic: especially celebrity chefs Gary Kieper and Steve Bradley, The Springbrookers band, art donors Karen Aulik-Now and Andy Kazukewicz for our raffle.

# Funding Museum Operations

As we begin a major drive to raise funds for remodeling the museum, it is still important to maintain our operating budget. Some major donors contribute significant funds for our operating budget but we must continue raising additional money where we can. Two recent spring and summer events were quite effective thanks to the generosity of the community. Our annual rummage sale was held on June 9th and was quite successful. Sales of items donated to the museum are important to pay the daily bills of running the museum. Equally important is the money raised by selling



Board member Diane Zuelzke makes a sale at the museum's rummage sale..

refreshments at community events such as Music in the Park.

Thank you to all who baked pies and brought them to the park.

# School Trips

As the school year winds down in spring, elementary school classes often make field trips to the museum, accompanied by teachers and volunteers. This year was no exception. While the museum itself and the locomotive generally attract considerable interest it seems that the cabin generates the most interest. Students are fascinated to learn what life was like in pioneer days with no electricity or indoor plumbing. They compare it to what their lives are like

now. After a tour of the cabin one girl commented "I am so grateful to be living today with all my conveniences." A classmate responded "They didn't even have flip-flops." The perspective of third and fourth graders always provides a boost to museum staff and volunteers.



Curator Mary Kay Wolf entertains the class with player piano tunes while volunteer Joe Hermolin describes daily life of pioneers in the Deleglise cabin.





# The Museum Makes Field Trips

If you want people to be aware of their history you can't always wait for them to come to the museum. So this past year parts of the museum went on field trips to community.



Pleasant View Elementary teachers felt that the museum had materials that could supplement classroom lessons and so we went there on three occasions to describe Francis Deleglise and the founding of Antigo, Antigo's general history, and logging history in Langlade County. Students were enthusiastic, especially when given the



opportunity to handle old logging tools. With many other artifacts at the museum suitable for the classroom, we hope to be invited back to Pleasant View Elementary and other classrooms in the next school year.

*Students at Pleasant View Elementary School try to handle logging tools such as a cant hook and hauling tongs*

History is not just for the classroom and students. This year, for the first time, we were invited to Breakfast on the Farm as part of June Dairy Month. A constant stream of breakfast attendees visited our display of old dairy farming related photographs and equipment. Some old-timers reminisced about old time practices while others, much younger, needed explanations of what they were looking at. Breakfast on the Farm is definitely an event the museum hopes to participate in again.



*At Breakfast on the Farm: learning how old milking machines worked, trying out a Babcock milk fat tester, and photos of past dairy operations.*



# A Summer Highlight:

Each year one of the highlights of summer is the Langlade County Fair and it has been so almost from the beginnings of Antigo. Census data show that from 1880 to 1890 Langlade County's population grew from 685 to 9,465. In that interval Antigo grew from a small settlement to a sizeable city with a railroad depot. It became the county seat. Part of the county's development was the formation of the Langlade County Agricultural Society in August of 1886. One of the first actions of the Society was to establish a county fair, which was held on October 4 and 5, 1886.



*Antigo's original Opera House on the 500 block of Superior St. was the site of the first fair in 1886.*

That first fair bore little resemblance to what fairgoers would later experience. It was held at Antigo's first Opera House, located on the west side of Superior Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. (The building was destroyed by fire and replaced by a new Opera House on Fifth Avenue.) At that first fair there was little space to show livestock but farm implement dealers did display equipment and there were presentations on agricultural topics. W. D. Hoard, founder of an agricultural journal and later a Wisconsin governor, was the featured speaker. That first fair was not all business. Planners organized horse races on a course that went south on Superior Street from the fair site to the Springbrook bridge at 10th Avenue.

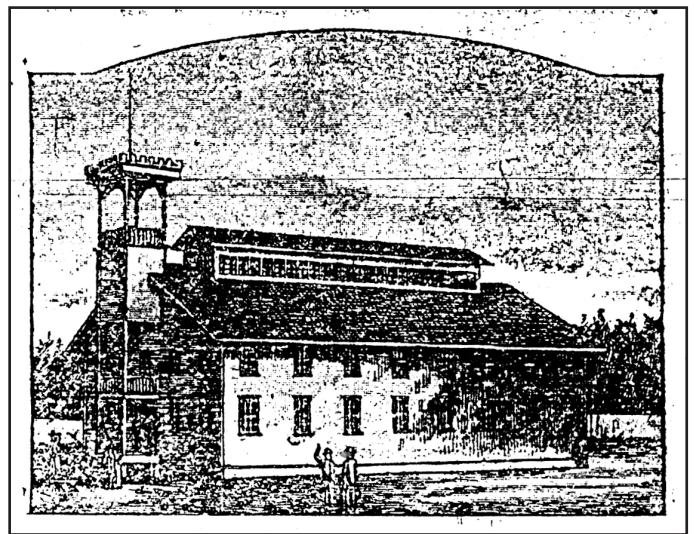
It was a great success and the Langlade County Agricultural Society took steps to expand the fair for the following year. A

major step was securing space for permanent space. The county board appropriated \$1,500 to be used to purchase 40 acres of land at the north side of Antigo for use as a fairground.

They then erected a building at a cost of \$1,300. On October 1, 1887 the second Langlade County Fair opened in its new venue and with a new exhibition building. The following year saw further expansion with the construction of a grandstand under the auspices of the Antigo Parks Association.

Many changes and additions have taken place in the fairgrounds

buildings and entertainment over the years since the initial 1886 display in the old Opera House on Superior Street but the fair continues to be a major summer event.



*1887 Fair Bldg: The success of the first fair led, in 1887, to the establishment of the fairgrounds and construction of a building for displays.*



# World War I 107th Trench Mortar Battery Company:

*This November 11th marks the 100th anniversary of the armistice that ended “The War to End All Wars”, as it was known then (World War I). Recruits from Langlade County formed the 107th Trench Mortar Battery Company. Below are photos of them while fighting in France. Photographs were taken by Antigo studio photographer William Wessa who was in the 107th and took a camera along.*



**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:**

A Babcock Milk Fat Tester: Invented at the UW-Madison this hand operated centrifuge was used to determine the fat content of milk. It is claimed that this device made more farmers honest than did the bible.



404 Superior Street  
 Antigo WI, 54409