

LANGLADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Santa at the Museum

Santa Claus can cover a lot of territory on Christmas Eve, climbing up and down chimneys all night long. But sometimes, on the days leading up to Christmas, when he is at his busiest, the Wisconsin winter is too much for him. This past year he was scheduled to greet children eight times at the museum but two events had to be cancelled due to bad weather (his reindeer were snowed in). In spite of that, 226 children, accompanied by 231 adults visited Santa with their wish lists. This year the Historical Society had an additional collaborator for the festivities. The Antigo Public Library hosted story time on two Saturday afternoons where children were read Christmas stories by library staff and sang Christmas songs while waiting their turn to consult Santa.

Santa at the museum has become an annual tradition and this year, for the second time, it was held in the newly remodeled museum, in the area housing Economic Development's information bureau, with Santa stationed next to the original and newly restored fireplace. The event was sponsored in part by the Langlade County Historical Society, Economic Development of Langlade County, and the Antigo Optimist Club.



Top: A total of 226 children had an opportunity to give Santa their wish lists. Each were also given a small toy as a souvenir of their visit.



Bottom: Antigo Public Library Staff entertained Santa's visitors with story time and songs.

Annual Meeting Recap

This past November 17, the Langlade County Historical Society held its annual meeting at Hoffman Hall of St. John's Church. About 40 attendees heard an enlightening presentation by Matt Carter, executive director of the Dakota County Historical Society in South St. Paul Minnesota, about German POWs housed in Wisconsin during World War II (including several in Antigo). During the business portion of the meeting, Fran Brown, Carol Gottard, and Chris Haedike were reelected to three year terms on the board.

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:

LuAnne Barske: Correspondence between World War II German POW family and Antigo family

Heather & Mark Newberry: Women's hats (late 40s), axe head for making cedar shakes

James Roesner: Political memorabilia

Jeff & Cathy Shaffer: Margaret Studio plate (belonged to Margaret Shaffer)

Teresa Sprecher: Canon video camera

Monetary Donations

John Barker
Glenn & Nancy Bugni in memory of
Joe Schroeder
Timothy O'Brien
Patricia Ratzlaff
Beth Wagner in memory of
Connie Hubatch
James and Kathleen Wing

New Members:

Michael Clay
Pat McKinney-Rice

Member Renewals:

Fran Brown
DeDe Cromer
Sheila Hall
Ron & Judy Korn
John Melendy

Donations to Let's Make History (Building) Fund:

Joseph & Trudi Jordan
Antigo Junior Woman's Club
Wagner Oil

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The New Wisconsin History Center

Progress is being made in the construction of a new Wisconsin History Center, to be situated in downtown Madison, opposite the Capitol. After a few false starts, a plan has been developed and work is underway. While the new History Center will be at the same location as the current museum, it will have an extended footprint and have more than double the exhibit space. The new History Center will also emphasize a greater outreach to the over 400 local historical societies throughout the state (including ours). Digital technology will connect the center to students, residents, and local organizations throughout the state. By providing stories of the history of local communities such as ours to a statewide and national audience, the History Center will inspire tourism travel to communities throughout the state, sparking local economic impact.

The current museum is now closed, exhibits have been stored, and planning and construction at the site are well underway. The new History Center is scheduled to open in 2026 but the Wisconsin Historical Society's collection will not be sitting idle until then. The Society will be

partnering with communities across the state to share our history and provide unique, up-close access to Society collections. Through dynamic "pop-up" exhibits, art installations, and programs, the "museum without walls" will come to life in every corner of Wisconsin.

The Wisconsin Historical Society was the first in the nation to establish an affiliate program to assist local historical societies. As the 125 anniversary of the affiliate program approaches, the program has much to be proud of. It has grown from a couple of affiliates to over 400 organizations throughout the state. In this area, museums in Antigo, White Lake, Elcho, and Mattoon are part of the affiliate program. By working with the Wisconsin Historical Society, affiliates gain access to expert advice and opportunities to interact and share ideas with other local museums. In developing the new History Center in Madison, the Wisconsin Historical Society will emphasize the participation of local societies in its programs. These are exciting times to become involved in the promotion of our collective history.



Keeping Your Cool

One thing Langlade County has a lot of in winter is ice. And it comes in handy in the summertime. Antigo Lake, formerly known as Kellogg's Pond was the major source of what used to be used for food preservation in the times before refrigerators were common household appliances.

One region of the lake was dedicated to harvesting ice. The Healy Ice Company was located in the 300 block of Fifth Ave. It was begun by R. Healy in 1897 and eventually taken over by his son. In 1932 Healy reported that, in that year, he stored over 8,000 tons of ice at his two ice houses nearby for his patrons. In a rural economy, reliant on farming jobs, Healy was a major employer. A report from 1932 stated that in that year he employed 44 men, working round the clock in two 12-hour shifts.

Likely Healy's biggest single consumer of ice was the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad which had its division headquarters in Antigo. An ice house at the Antigo railyards bought and stored 3,500 tons of ice while an additional 14 rail cars of ice were shipped to the Watersmeet, Michigan for storage. Throughout summer, Chicago & Northwestern Railroad refrigerated freight cars transporting farm produce and air conditioned passenger cars travelling throughout northern Wisconsin, Minnesota, and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan were cooled with ice from Kellogg's Pond.

The ice house of the Chicago and Northwestern railyards in Antigo was such a landmark that when a company manufacturing accessories for model railroaders chose to market a kit, they chose the Antigo ice house as a prototype.

Many old-time Antigo residents may still recall going to the ice house at the railyards on a hot summer's day to snatch a piece of ice to suck on.



Freight shipped on C&NW cars throughout northern Wisconsin were cooled by ice harvested from Antigo Lake and stored in the C&NW railyards in Antigo.

Model railroads could purchase a kit of a railroad ice house based on Antigo's.

The Heat Goes On

The museum's addition and exterior have attracted many compliments since its completion two years ago. However, in order to function properly, a building needs remodeling behind the scenes as well. During the major remodeling of the past two years, we installed two new furnaces/air conditioning units to accompany the two existing units. Now, those old units have reached the end of their functioning life span and have to be replaced.

This became obvious to anyone visiting the basement displays and some areas of the main floor. Ductwork has been cleaned and new furnaces/ air conditioning have been ordered and should be installed in early winter. It's always a bit of a shock to be hit by unexpected major costs but the comfort of museum visitors, staff, and volunteers will be enhanced.

Langlade County's European Roots

Langlade County has been settled by many diverse groups. First Nations peoples have been here or thousands of years, before Europeans settled the region in the late 1800s. Now, of course, life in Langlade County is enriched by peoples from all over the world.

One prominent 19th century group were immigrants from various parts of Germany. In fact, well into the 20th century Antigo could boast, at different times, two German newspapers. A leader of that community in Langlade County and throughout the United States was Reverend Alfred Grimm. He was born in Pomerania, Germany in 1864. While still a young man he immigrated, with his family to New York City where his father worked or a number of years before bringing the family to Pella, Shawano County, Wisconsin.

Alfred continued his schooling, begun in New York, in Pella and then

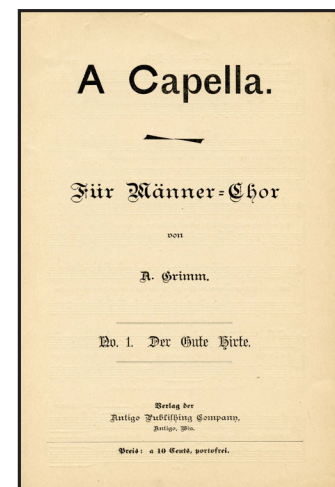
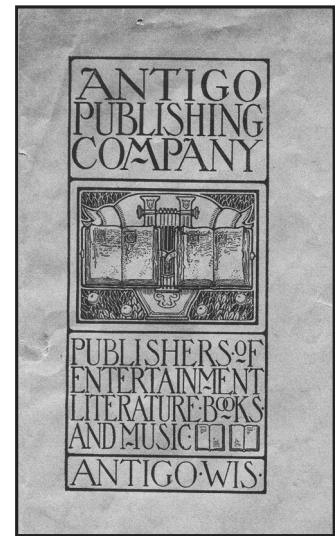


entered the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Illinois. While studying there he also acted as the vicar for congregations in Wittenberg and Antigo. After graduating in 1888, he served in Illinois for three years before becoming the pastor at Peace Lutheran Church in Antigo.

It was while in Antigo that he also began to take an interest on publishing. His books and music devoted to German cultural heritage became well known throughout the United States. They were generally popular fictions, some set in the Antigo area. He eventually decided to pursue publishing full time. He wrote at least 18 books, most under the pen name Alfred Ira. Several were translated into English. He also went on to become an editor of two nationally circulating journals dealing with reviews of recent publications dealing with German culture.

Under the pen name of E.J. Freund, Rev. Grimm wrote many short plays, in German and English, to be performed by church organizations. He also wrote many musical compositions, primarily for choir, but also several for band and orchestra. Some were written under the pen name E. Stern.

Reverend Alfred Grimm died on March 13, 1922, leaving a rich legacy, under a variety of names, of the German heritage throughout the United States.

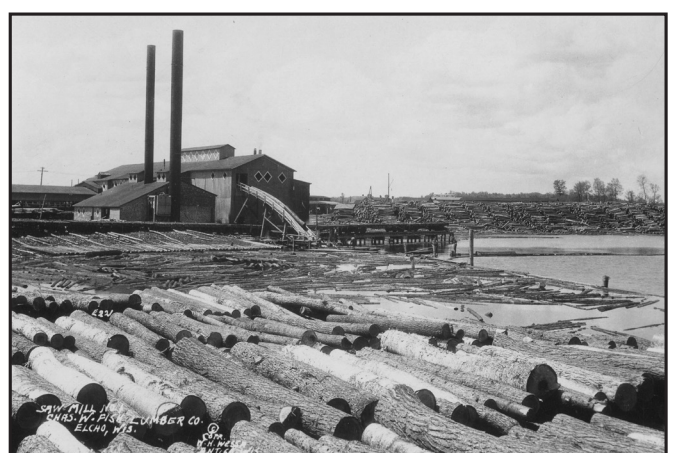


Reverend Grimm's publishing company's logo

Covers of two books of compositions of Rev. Grimm

Sawmills: An important part of the economy of Langlade County was (and still is) the lumber industry. There were many sawmills. Some did not last as long as others as regions became depleted of trees. Sawmills were also quite prone to fires. Here are a few.

*Top row: Left: Antigo Builders Supplies
Right: Weeds Mill Antigo
Middle row: Left: Heinemann's in Antigo
Right: Hirt's in Deerbrook
Bottom row: Left: A mill in Elton
Right: Charles Fish in Elcho*



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 old fire extinguisher was used at the English Manufacturing Company. Courtesy of the Antigo Fire Department.

