

THE EAGLE SPEAKS

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 2017



"OLD ABE"

www.chippewacountywihistoricalsociety.org

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Lake Wissota Pictorial History Book

BY ANNE KELLER

Next summer, Lake Wissota will be 100 years old! There are so many facets to the lake – the history before it, building it, people living near it, taverns and supper clubs, grocery stores, marinas, sports and environmental groups – all of these have had an impact on the lake's story. The Chippewa County Historical Society has endorsed publishing a book about the lake's diversity; it is well "on its way" to becoming reality. It will be the result of hours of research, interviewing people, writing and rewriting, finding or taking appropriate pictures, and a lot of suggestions by a lot of people. The plan is that it will be available for purchase in early summer. Its volunteer authors, Jim Schuh, Donna Bourget, and Anne Keller meet weekly and look forward to its publication and your response to it. See more about the Lake Wissota Centennial Celebration on page 5.

Monday, February 13 | 6:30 pm

CCHS Bi-Annual Membership Meeting
at the Area History Center
President's Progress Report &
Hall of Fame Inductions

PROGRAM:

Historic Bohemian Hall and Bohemian
Immigrants to Chippewa County

Details on page 3.



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Mandelert Family – Hugh’s Story

JIM MANDELERT

The last installment ended with the Woolen Mill passing out of the family. Hugh was working there as a consultant. I want to pick up Hugh’s story from when he was sent to Hill School in 1945 for his senior year. Hugh met a noted artist (NA), Paul Wesscott and his wife, who ran the school’s hobby department. They recognized his talent and encouraged Hugh to go to art school. He went to Minneapolis Art Institute and spent summers with Jerry Farnsworth (NA) at his studios at Cape Cod and Sarasota. He also studied at the Art Students League in New York under John Carrol and Jan Corbino. By this time, Hugh’s grandfather, C.A. Mandelert, had died and left money in his will for education. Hugh used his funds for a six-month art tour of Italy and France, returning home in the fall of 1949. Hugh settled in New York in 1950. He first tried portrait painting but that did not work out. Friends suggested he apply to commercial art studios. Hugh worked twenty years in drapery and wallpaper design, fashion coordinating and advertising and package design. He also dabbled in painting on the side.

It was during these years in New York, Hugh ran with a crowd that enabled his heavy drinking. Part of that crowd was the creative staff of Jack Parr’s Tonight Show. Hugh once told how he was invited to watch a show from the control booth. It was an especially funny show but he did not dare laugh because it might come over the network. Hugh traveled by train to come back home for Christmas. That was when my sister and I would get unique presents from ‘Unca-Hu’. There were always family and friends that were glad to go on a ‘bender’ with him.

In 1972, Hugh woke up in Bellevue Hospital with the delirium tremens. After coming down from the DTs, the hospital put Hugh into rehabilitation classes. The fellow addicts were in bad shape from very potent drugs. It was this experience that caused Hugh to decide to end his alcohol and tobacco addiction ‘cold turkey’. After being released, Hugh called his brother Joe to come and help him get out of New York and come ‘home’. Hugh moved in with Joe and Katie, living in their basement.

Hugh found a job as the Director of the Red Cross. He moved out of the basement and into an upstairs apartment at 108 West Cedar St. It was there he decided to start a new career as an art instructor at Chippewa Valley Vocational School and as a fine art artist selling through local galleries. The instructor position lasted from 1973 to 1977 when the Vocational School canceled avocation programing. Hugh gained notoriety through one-man-shows at the Veldman Galleries of Milwaukee and the Fanny Garver Gallery



👉 Historic Bohemian Hall—a few miles north of Cadott.

Monday, February 13
6:30 pm | Area History Center

CCHS Bi-Annual Membership Meeting

Presidents Progress Report &
Hall of Fame Inductions

PROGRAM:

Historic Bohemian Hall & Bohemian
Immigrants to Chippewa County

SPEAKER:

JoAnn Parks



Please join us for our Bi-Annual meeting. Our speaker will be JoAnn Parks. Her presentation will be on the historic Bohemian Hall and Bohemian Immigrants to Chippewa County.

A first grader in the one-room White Pine schoolhouse, JoAnn Parks began her schooling, and her journey to live as one of Chippewa County's own. Having Bohemian and Norwegian immigrant grandparents influenced her to become involved with the historic Bohemian Hall. For years! This Hall, a few miles north of Cadott, has long been associated with the Western Fraternal Life Association, an affiliation that is unique in itself. And, it has been a place where JoAnn has held several offices and had many responsibilities. Evidence of this is ultimately reflected in her being recognized as Fraternalist of the Year.

After graduating from Cornell High School, she went on to receive a UW-Eau Claire BA in Geography/Cartography, a CVTC Assoc. Degree in Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and a USM-Hattiesburg Master GIS Certificate.

Now somewhat retired, she is currently Treasurer of the Town of Arthur, Lodge Correspondent and District President.

of Madison. In 1987 Hugh gained national recognition for being featured in American Artist magazine for his one-man show at Mohonk Mountain House in up-state New York. In the 1990's, Hugh entered into a marketing arrangement with Wilder Graphics to promote his artwork in digital format through sales of mugs, T-shirts and post cards. A great number of his paintings were digitally photographed.

On August 26th, 2001, a retrospective of Hugh's work was held at the Chisholm house on Park Place in Chippewa Falls. The family had many of Hugh's paintings to display. The Mayor declared the day "Hugh Mandelert Day". What most people did not know is that Hugh was in poor health. Years of smoking and drinking had left his arteries in poor shape. Hugh's doctors had scheduled surgery the next month to repair the worst damage to his major arteries. On October 2nd they were not able to repair his arteries and Hugh McKellar Mandelert was declared dead.

Several years later, Hugh's agreement with Wilder Graphics ended. Hugh's brother Joe wanted to continue Hugh's legacy and support the Chippewa Valley Cultural Association (CVCA) of which Hugh helped to create. Taking the digital images Wilder Graphics had and having new digital images made of paintings here in Chippewa Falls, 280 digital images were loaded into a large touch screen computer and given to CVCA. They benefit from sales of digital reprints. Another important part of his legacy continues in the influence he had on the dozens of artists in Chippewa Falls who attended his painting classes. 🍷

FEATURED ARTIFACT

Painting by Hugh Mandelert

Hugh Mandelert painted the image shown on page 2 in the early 1970's when he was the Director of the Red Cross.

Ellen Devine believes Hugh painted this to symbolize the Red Cross's battle to eradicate Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis (the 3 headed dragon). Along with this painting we have great photos of Hugh taken while he lived in New York. We are working on a Hugh Mandelert display that should be completed in time for our Bi-Annual meeting on February 13th. 🍷



CALENDAR

**History Center open every Tuesday
9 a.m.-4 p.m.**

Feb. 13:

6:30 pm CCHS Bi-Annual Membership Meeting (see page 5)

Feb. 21:

(Membership meeting took place of Feb. Board Meeting)

10:30 am Historic Marker Committee

Noon Area History Center Birthday Lunch

1:30 pm The Past Passed Here, Planning Meeting

Feb. 25:

9 am - 1 pm Museum Open Fourth Saturday

March 14 (moved from the 21st):

9:30 am CCHS Board Meeting

March 21:

Noon Area History Center Birthday Lunch

1:30 pm The Past Passed Here, Planning Meeting

March 25:

9 am - 1 pm Museum Open Fourth Saturday

April 18:

9:30 am CCHS Board Meeting

Noon Area History Center Birthday Lunch

1:30 pm The Past Passed Here, Planning Meeting

April 22:

9 am - 1 pm Museum Open Fourth Saturday

May 11 - 14:

The Past Passed Here in Allen Park

A Message From Your President

We've just been through snow and below zero degree temperatures as I write this message. We do live in Wisconsin. The Society continues to move forward. There is a lot going on at the History Center.

Our collaboration with UW-Eau Claire Department of History ended with the class presentation. Ten Board and Society members braved the snow to go to Eau Claire to listen to the student presentations. They had chosen four areas for their study: Exhibits; Collections; Digital Media; and Education and Outreach. They did an outstanding job. See Jim Erickson's summary of their recommendations for us to consider for action in this issue. We hope to continue our relationship with the History Department of UW-Eau Claire, which is a win-win for the Society, students and faculty.

The new computers have arrived. The Tech Soup organization (of which our Society is a member) supports non-profits with low cost computers and software that are donated to Tech Soup by manufacturers. We purchased six rebuilt computers for about \$400 each and some software. Jim Lindberg has volunteered to set them up. Donna Bourget, our photo archivist, has the biggest smile because her old computer belongs in the archives because of its age.

The Chippewa Area History Center project continues. CBS², a Chippewa engineering firm, volunteered to do a topographic study of our property on Bridgewater Avenue. This was to answer questions about flood plain issues. The study showed we have no problem with the flood plain but it did point out that the building will need to be set back on the lot as far as possible. The eight foot elevation difference between the building and street will dictate the location of the building. A concept with this new information is being developed. Work continues on getting ready to start the capital campaign in April. We have received about \$31,000 toward the new museum. We have contracted with the Community Foundation of Chippewa County for a restricted pass-through fund to manage the capital fund donations.

With the help of Wendy Sullivan, we are in the process of relocating administrative control of the Society and The Past Passed Here websites to Chippewa so we can update them more easily. We are also establishing a Chippewa Area History Center website to keep everyone informed about the Capital Fund Campaign.

Recently mailed was the Case Statement for The Chippewa Area History Center Capital Campaign. It provides more detail about our new museum project. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Hope to see you at our bi-annual meeting on Monday, February 13 at 6:30 pm. *Dave* 🍷

PHOTO ON PAGE 5:

In this June 8, 1917 photo a wooden corral holds derbies in place while in the background a launch pulls brush and logs away from the new dam.



Lake Wissota Centennial Celebration Picnic

BY JIM SCHUH

Plans for the picnic are coming together very nicely. The event will run Saturday, July 29, 10 am–2 pm. Businesses, clubs, organizations and volunteers are stepping up and becoming involved.

Our preliminary plans include the following tentative schedule:

- 10:00 Numerous Educational Displays and Exhibits
- 10:45 Welcome and introductions
- 11:00 Musical Concert Set 1, "THE SWAMPERS: Wissota in the Making"
- 11:45 Decedents of Dam Builders and Sponsor recognition
- 11:50 Dignitary Speeches: Xcel Energy President, Mark Stoering and others
- 12:15 Musical Concert Set 2, "THE SWAMPERS: Wissota in the Making"
- 12:55 Wrap-up and Thank You
- 1:00 Picnic – Lake Wissota Lions Club cooking and serving

You will be able to sign up for activities:

- Take pontoon rides leaving from the State Park beach area
- Tour the Wissota Dam
- Tour Kamp Kenwood facilities

Enjoy the Lake Wissota State Park, it will be open all day with free admission because of our event.

If you want to volunteer or make a sponsorship donation contact Jim Schuh 715-726-2376. 🍷

Wissota Looking Back 100 years

What's at the Bottom of Lake Wissota?

Omaha Rail Line – Unknown Local Newspaper - January 17, 1917

The order for discontinuing the Omaha through the Paint Creek swamp reached the Chippewa Falls agent Saturday and a crew of workmen was dispatched at once to remove the rails. They continued their work Sunday and Monday tearing up as fast as possible in order to save the rails from the rising waters of the big pond.

"Lake Wissota Dam Sixty Years Old This Year"

Ralph Christoffersen, Chippewa Herald – February 3, 1978

PULLED UP BY THE ROOTS The lake rose gradually in late 1916 and into 1917. Ice formed around trees and when water continued to rise slowly, trees were literally pulled up by the roots because the ice wouldn't release its grip and the water pressure was not to be denied.

Farmers drove onto the ice to harvest the wood. A nice stand of pine, Charles Clark owned south of the old Anson Road – on the west side of the lake, Tom Bresena bought it for use as lumber and cut it from the ice. George Shafer and his family salvaged wood and logs on the east side of the lake but that is another story.

ROONEY'S LAKE On the west side of the lake between the dam and Larson's Landing is about where Rooney's lake was located, according to my guess. It was a favored hunting and trapping spot prior to the 1916-1917 seasons. We picked blueberries in the woods near the lake but kept a sharp lookout for the Rooney bull, which was supposed to be around. Mr. Rooney pastured his cattle on the bottoms. Very few people have heard of Rooney's Lake, which now lies at the bottom of Lake Wissota but when mentioned it to Gene Harm, of Cadott, he said that his dad had worked for Mr. Rooney in the summer time. – Winters and springs. Gene's dad worked in the woods. It's a small world after all!

Note: Eugene Harm donated most of the artifacts in our Lumberjack Exhibit. He was an early member of the Chippewa County Historical Society and the Cadott Area Historical Society. His father was the boss of lumberjack camps in northern Wisconsin.

From 1913 through 1917 Lake Wissota went from concept to completion. During the next few years our newsletter will review this process and progress. Xcel Energy has provided the Chippewa County Historical Society and Lake Wissota Improvement & Protection Assn. with written materials and approximately 1,000 images of dam construction in Chippewa Falls. We greatly appreciate their support of sharing this information with residents and members of our non-profit organizations. 🍷

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(If we have missed anyone please let us know)



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Committees in sync!



Chippewa County Historical Society Committee Members

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Dan Hillman..... Shirley Hillman

In Honor of: **From:**

Charles O'Donnell's 90th B-day..... Patrick & Susan O'Donnell

Contributing Memberships:

Judy Gaier Jim Lindberg

Building Fund:

Ameriprise	Chippewa County Abstract and Title
Anonymous	Vanguard (Dan and Jacque Daniel)
Don Bichner	Tricia Warns
Joe Mandelert	Scott Holst
Jim & Nancy Schuh	Neil Goodall

Miscellaneous:

P.E.O. Sisterhood
Thank you to Anne Keller for donating a new microwave to replace our "historic" microwave.

* **Collection & Artifacts:**
*Nancy Schuh, Mary Erickson, Teri Stahr

* **Photography Subcommittee:**
*Donna Bourget

* **Building & Grounds:**
*Skip August

* **Education:**
* Marge Hebbing, Jerry Way, Catherine Lea, Evalyn Frasch, Ann Gordon

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* **Newsletter:**
*Jim Schuh, author & editor
Elly Rochester, layout & design
Nancy Schuh, author & proof reader
Jim Erickson, author & proof reader
Jim Mandelert, author

* *Chairperson*



On December 7, Xcel Energy offered tours of the Chippewa Falls Hydro plant. Xcel Wisconsin-Michigan President, Mark Stoering, and Mayor, Greg Hoffman, addressed the crowd. Company mascot, Ready Kilowatt lead the countdown to the relighting. The restored historic NSP sign once again dominates downtown skyline.

Jim Lindberg has taught students the skills of the Cat and Mouse balance game for the last 13 years at *The Past Passed Here*.



The Chippewa County Historical Society Presents Its

14th Annual The Past Passed Here May 11-14, 2017

Open to the general public:

Thursday, May 11, 3 - 6 pm

Friday, May 12, 3 - 6 pm

Saturday, May 13, 9 am - 6 pm

Sunday, May 14, 9 am - 4 pm



Adventure Awaits!

JIM SWANSON

Adventure awaits at the Past Passed Here in Allen Park where Voyageurs, Indians, Lumber Jacks, River Pigs, and Lumber Barons all came together. Allen Park is on the banks of Duncan Creek in Historic Downtown Chippewa Falls.

The voyageur songs echoed in the morning mist as the canoe brigade made its way up the Chippewa River to the landing on Duncan Creek. A band of Anishinabe were waiting at the confluence of the two rivers so the parties could commence trading. This historical trading ground is now known as Allen Park in downtown Chippewa Falls and you and your family can now relive the by-gone fur trade era during the Past Passed Here. Additionally, there is a museum and camps commemorating the logging era in Chippewa Falls.

The Past Passed Here features many individual camps that represent various aspects of the fur trade era and lots of hands on activities. In the camps, visitors may find demonstrations on blacksmithing, cooking, antique muzzle loading fire arms, spinning, and brain tanning. Hands on activities could include tomahawk tossin, cross cut saw competition, and primitive archery. The re-enactors and demonstrators are happy to answer any and all questions visitors may ask. It's easy for each family member to find fun and exciting things to do while exploring the Past Passed Here.

Shopping with a historical twist also happens at the Past Passed Here. Traders and merchants sell old time candy, clothing and lots of other items associated with the voyageur era. Visitors can also get Olson's Ice cream, buffalo burgers, voyageur stew, fry bread and popcorn.

The ancient historical grounds of Allen Park are located in downtown Chippewa Falls next to the intersection of highways 124 and Business 29. In addition to being the site of numerous rendezvous between voyageurs and the various Indian tribes, Allen Park was also the location of the world's largest saw mill under one roof.

More than 600 fourth grade students from Chippewa Falls parochial and public schools, as well as other area schools participate in full day hands on field trips to the Past Passed Here Wednesday through Friday. Due to school rules, the rendezvous is closed to the public while the students are learning and exploring. Teachers commented that this excellent historic re-enactment reinforces the Wisconsin history curriculum that the children study during their fourth grade year.



Boom Log Saved!

JIM SCHUH

Our rare Boom Log was saved from further deterioration! Thank you to Xcel Energy for helping to move it to a barn owned by our volunteer Pat Ahneman. Now the log can dry out and be treated with a wood preservative. In the future we hope to include the log in a lumbering display at the new Chippewa Area History Center.



Hey, Look Me Over...

JIM ERICKSON



CHIPPEWA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Those song lyrics might be just what we asked of the students in the Museums in America Capstone class project at UW-Eau Claire not too long ago. We were enthusiastic about their participation in the project where we wanted them to take a look at our museum and offer their thoughts and recommendations. And then we were eager to attend the presentations on the subject by over a dozen young men and women. At the presentation, excited groups of four or more stood ready to tell what they had found. Pleasing to all, the groups appeared poised, knowledgeable and engaged. They had examined the Chippewa Area History Museum from many perspectives and were now ready to comment upon what was working well, what needed improvement, and what were some possible new directions.

So what did they tell us? First up was the Exhibits group—they discussed the museum's displays involving Native Americans, Lumbering, Railroads, the Civil War, Grandma's Kitchen, Children's Exhibits, and more. Further, they conveyed some ideas about unique temporary exhibits. They talked about oral histories, special items in the museum's collection, the sawmill and other possibilities. Education associated with exhibits, such as the children's exhibit, was recognized, but pursuit of enlarging the offerings was encouraged. All good feedback from a younger perspective.

Two important facets for the next group, the Collections group, were the establishing and putting into practice, limitations on acceptance of items into the collection, and handling of surplus artifacts.

Next, the Digital Media group provided some ideas on the engagement of the museum's potential audience through such avenues as Facebook, GoFundMe, and Instagram. Another idea was to continuously update the current website with fresh looks and, with iPhones being ubiquitous, (OK, I had to go to my thesaurus to find this fancy word that just means that practically everyone over two years old has one and knows how to use it) the website should be made vibrantly viewable on the millions upon millions of smartphones. Oh, and a smart, new logo that can tell so much about who and what we are. And is immediately recognizable!

Finally, the Education and Outreach group suggested enhanced promoting of the educational reenactment known as "The Past Passed Here." That would include making it known through advertising and the like at local events. Other promotional areas involved partnering with various specialized departments at institutions of higher learning; seeing how to become involved with National History Day; and correlating items appearing in actual exhibits with the History Center's popular, well-done education kits.

One more important element embraced by all was to actively involve the Center in many other types of community outreach, such as roundtable discussions on varying historical topics and open houses during Pure Water Days. And further, establishing a Youth Advisory Board as an outreach to explore potential museum offerings designed especially for a younger audience.

After a solid questions and answers period, the informative session concluded with compliments to the students and faculty for their fine efforts. And all felt that collaborations such as this one were especially fruitful to everyone involved. ♣

GENEALOGY CORNER

GARY SWARTZ

President, Chippewa County Genealogical Society

Older plat maps are excellent sources to use when you're trying to find information about where your family lived or who their neighbors were or how big their farms were. The Chippewa County Genealogical Society has several; one of the most important, because of the years when the county was established, is 1888. It now has an excellent index, thanks to the work of a faithful group of volunteers working together to check (and recheck) for accuracy. We learned how to find and use the information from this plat book during our January meeting, Then, during our February meeting we will learn about researching a Swedish family.

Join us any Tuesday – we'll find a project for you or help you climb your own tree. Then enjoy our meetings on the fourth Saturday morning at 10:00 am during every month except June, July, and December. ♣



Chippewa County Historical Society

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FEBRUARY 2017

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The Eagle Speaks is published quarterly by the Chippewa County Historical Society, a non-profit organization established to promote and stimulate historical interest in Chippewa County. Mail any comments or future articles to: Chippewa County Historical Society, 123 Allen St., Chippewa Falls, WI | 715-723-4399



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