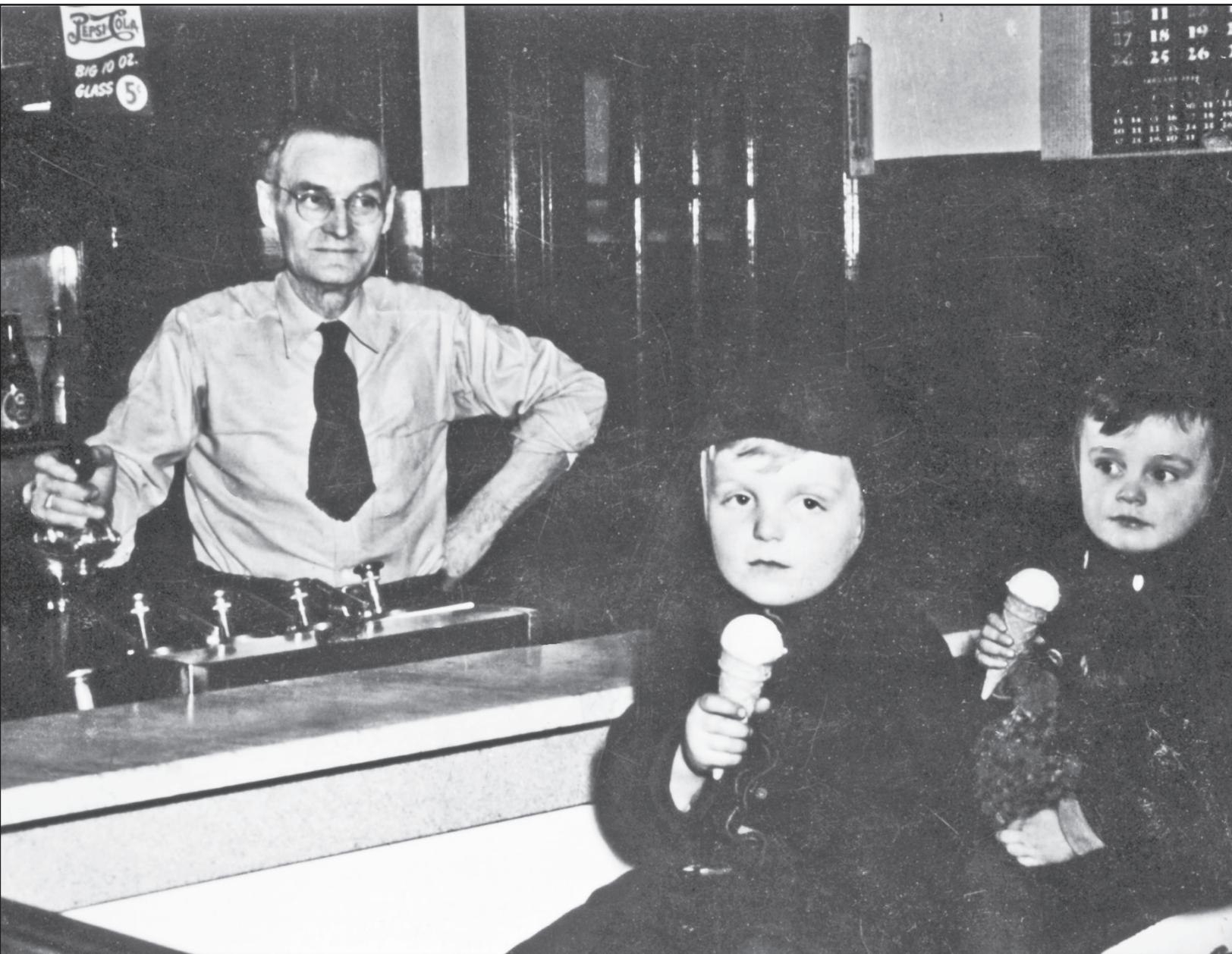


Artifacts



Winter treats? Olaf “Ole” Boger serves ice cream cones to Bobby Larson, front, and Peter Heeg in Port Edwards, c. 1950; President’s message, page 2; Amusing Clio, p. 3; Port Edwards by Lori Brost, 4-11; Two by Gene Johnson, 12-13; Wood Block by Phil Brown, 14-19; Bob Gleason and the Grand Avenue Bridge by Don Krohn, 20-21; Re-enacting & Jefferson Davis by Billy Parker, 22-23; Barns, 24-25; Greenberg Saga by Earle Garber, 26-27; Trouble in River City by Mario Koran, 28-29; Old Reuben, 30-31.



From SWCHC President Phil Brown

Three cheers for our amazing *Artifacts!* This issue means “Volume II” has been published for eight and a half years, a period that may have been the most productive ever for our historical society—thanks in great part to SWCHC Director Uncle Dave, Administrator Lori Brost and Museum Associate Holly Knoll.

But as *Artifacts* readers have been told before, we’ve been under heavy budgetary pressure since the national financial crisis of 2008. Yet we have, through economizing, do-it-yourselfing and a couple of timely contributions, been able to avoid the crippling cutbacks other non-profit organizations have experienced. That era was challenged as, at a special Saturday morning meeting April 14 the finance committee demonstrated to the Board of Directors that our level of spending was unsustainable. To achieve something resembling a balanced budget would require reducing operating costs by a third.

A spectrum of scenarios was presented and considered at the meeting. As always, preserving our beautiful Museum building was considered the number one priority as it has been since the former T.B. Scott Public Library was acquired in 1970. No significant reductions could be realized in this area.

On the list for possible cuts was this publication; but fortunately, *Artifacts* received considerable support and will continue to be published.

Inevitably, the three SWCHC positions had to be addressed next and with great reluctance, the position of Museum Associate was eliminated and Uncle Dave subsequently announced his retirement as Director. Fortunately, he agreed to continue as editor and publisher.

Speaking for all who had the privilege of working with her, I would like to thank former Associate Holly Knoll. Of the many servants of Clio, as Uncle Dave has called it, she has been one of the most energetic, thoughtful and dedicated.

Rest assured that SWCHC will continue to be a player in the history game. Stepping up to the plate is our Administrator, Lori Brost, who has performed admirably before and after the reductions. And as your president, I will continue to serve to the best of my abilities.

We have already begun to call on volunteers to fulfill the many necessary tasks that Dave and Holly performed. If this suggests an opportunity to become more involved be sure to contact Lori by phone or email—or stop by the Museum during office hours.



Still time to view Shiloh, the final exhibit of Uncle Dave and Holly Knoll, pictured.



To a muse:

Clio's Servant

By Uncle Dave

In my early years with the *Daily Tribune*, I received several droll and anonymous messages that said: "You must and will serve Clio."

As muse of history, her name (rhymes with Ohio) has been attached to software, cities, restaurants, dogs and offspring of academics. Annual awards for creative advertising are called Clio. A book about the State Historical Society of Wisconsin is titled, "Clio's Servant."

Though I didn't want to, I found myself serving the C-nag as ordered, enjoyable enough but not very lucrative, even in the affluent eighties, when Wisconsin Rapids could subsidize history as much as it wanted to. Rapids then as now was less than enlightened. My own math confirms that one per cent of our residents support the local historical society. The residents don't buy history books and the city counts only one building named to the National Register of Historic Places.

Back in the era of urban renewal, some 40 buildings on the West Side were razed in favor of the same number of storefronts in Rapids Mall. During the 20th Century, the historic courthouse, jail, a couple city halls, lots of schools, a favorite depot, dwellings and downtown buildings were speedily demolished. Recently, when a Civil War era house was flattened, the only conspicuous tear was shed by an English immigrant.

A share of the blame goes to me, the writer who didn't and doesn't want to be consumed by causes. The exception was helping start Wakely Inn Preservation, now Historic Point Basse, which has flourished by the efforts of others.

Fortunately, writing about old things has proven more durable than the old things themselves.

My local history enterprise began with a modest NEA grant to research my property in the town of Rudolph, the "old Monson place," followed by 32 years writing for the *Daily Tribune*. Consolidated

Foundation supported the 1983 *River City Memoirs* book and contributed to several ensuing volumes; the Community Foundation funded the 1999 *River City Memoirs VI*.

In 1983, Rapids mayor James Kubisiak, in an act of his brand of controlled folly, named me the first, and so far, only City Historian, complementing my position as first Director of the South Wood County Historical Corp., a role that was resumed six years ago.

Among those who found themselves on Clio's chain gang:

Ellen Sabetta, first curator of SWCHC, whose love for Wisconsin Rapids is forever faithful and true; "Doc Lee" Pomainville, robust male muse who was, like me, known to tell the same story twice.

Pamela Walker, director between my terms, who saw to it that "River City Memoirs" saw the light of day; Paul Gross, videographer and historian, still productive.

Phil Brown, current president, an accomplished antiquarian and raconteur; Lori Brost, administrator, managing her bailiwick with vigor and aplomb.

For special mention today, allow me to award a special "Clio" award in history to my former assistant, Holly Knoll, who responded with "big ideas and busy hands," the working title for our 2010 book about Mid-State Technical College.

UWSP grad Holly began as a volunteer at the Museum and worked with me on several personal projects prior to filling a newly-created staff position. Her column was a feature here and she was my best hope for organizing the "third floor" archives. For the 2012 season, Holly assembled an ambitious and significant Civil War exhibit.

As Phil said on page 2, Holly's position didn't survive the current bad economy. She has already moved on to another job—and life—as she and longtime fiancé Tyler Arndt were married June 9.

In a related matter, May 31 was my last day as SWCHC Director. I will continue as publisher of *Artifacts*, historian of River City and all-purpose lackey of you know whom.



Before the “Y”

Below, home of Mr. and Mrs. John Edwards Jr., built in 1866.

At right, same building when owned by the L.M. Alexander family.

Way back when



PORT EDWARDS, WIS.

Then & Now

By Lori Brost

Museum Administrator

Mill owner John Edwards built his beautiful house in 1866. After marrying Edwards' daughter, Lida, Lewis M. (L.M.) Alexander renovated it as their home. Later, it was split into apartments prior to being torn down for the John E. Alexander (son of Lewis) YMCA Community Center dedicated in 1958. After the original Paper Inn was torn down to make room for the 1961 NEPCO administrative building, a Paper Inn restaurant was located in the basement at the Y.

Then



Now



All 'before' photos are from the collection at the Museum.

A special thank you to Port Edwards historian J. Marshall Buehler for his time, patience and knowledge in making the 'now' photos possible.

In the early 1930s, Reiland Drug offered residents of Port Edwards a ground-level shopping experience. This building later housed the Post Office and was torn down and replaced with the new home for the Nekoosa-Port Edwards State Bank around 1977.



Now



Then



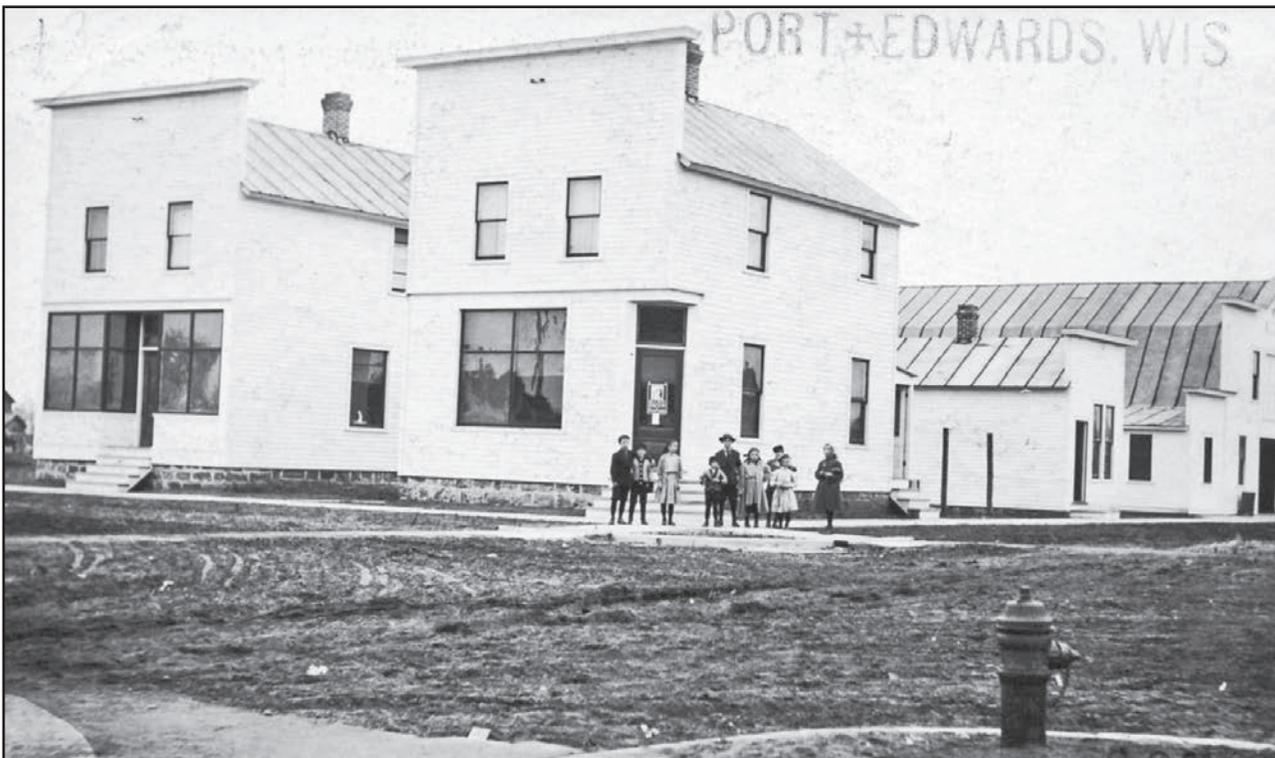
Now



The 1885 'poor farm' on Seneca Road was replaced in 1928 by the "poor house," built on a scenic site near the Wisconsin river. It was later named Edgewater Haven Nursing Home.

After center addition

White City store, a grocery and the Port Barber Shop building down the block (a confectionery and livery behind) were owned by Johanna Gutheil. Walls of the building below were removed and the two sides connected as shown above. Frank Miller of Rudolph purchased the group of buildings. August "Gus" Buehler, who had worked for Mrs. Gutheil, rented the space and ran the store starting around 1923. During the 1930s, the barber shop was merged with the store. (Mrs. Gutheil, who died in 1930, was the widow of Louis, a Civil War veteran.)



*Way
back
when*

On the site of the White City Store, Don Kincaid built and opened Don's Super Foods around 1969 which closed in the 1980s. A restaurant also operated here before the building was purchased for Complete Control in 1995. In 2011, Mark Hamus and Rick Rustad came in with Current Technologies.





John Alexander patterned the 1949 Port Edwards shopping center after one he had seen in the Milwaukee area. The ten units occupied lots that had been tennis courts, ice rink, village hall, bandstand and a root beer stand.

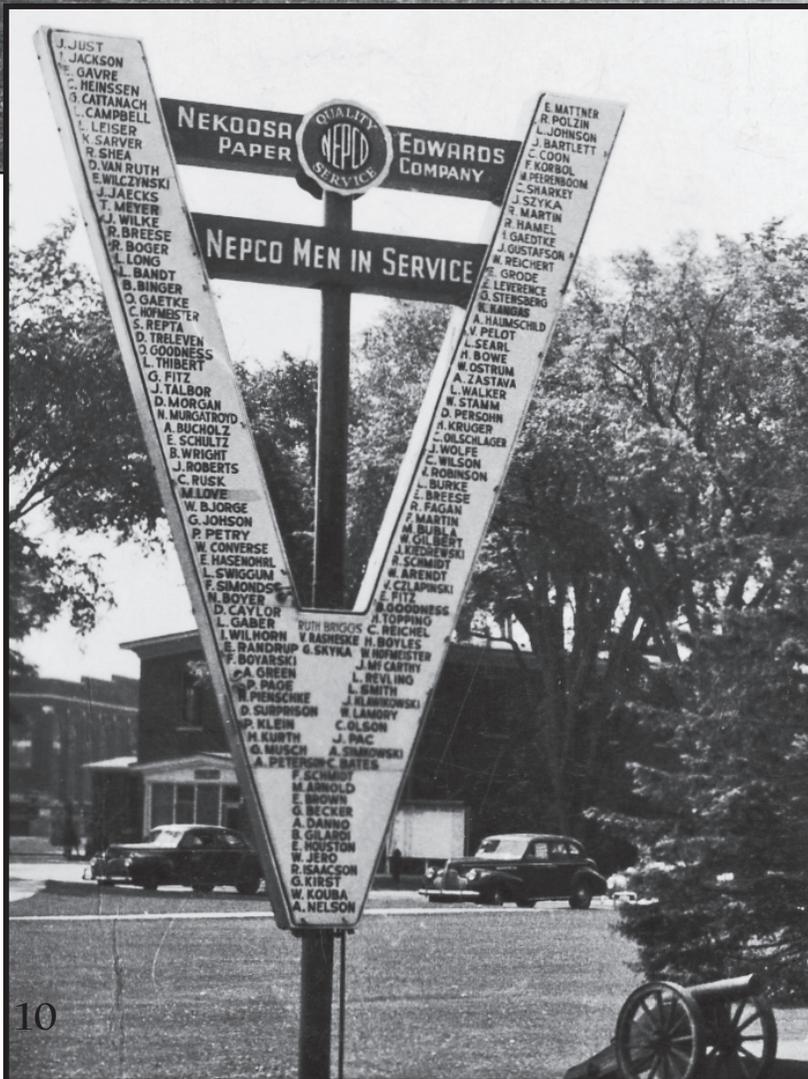
Now: looks almost the same.





At one time, Port Edwards was home to three ice cream stores. Ole Boger's place was located on the corner of Second and Market Streets. In later years, a pool hall was added. The building was torn down in preparation for the 1949 shopping center. (Ole's is where the cones on the cover were served.)





Port Edwards Hotel above was built in the late 1800s.

During the 1919 mill strikes, barracks for replacement workers were added next door. They would later become the White City Cafeteria and then the Paper Inn.

The Paper Inn also housed a bowling alley and restaurant, replaced in 1961 by the Nekoosa Edwards Paper Co. administrative building, now property of Domtar.

The V for Victory enlarged at left lists employees serving in World War II.



The building at far right above is the Port Edwards Hotel. Heading back upstream to the left is the old 1872 John Edwards sawmill office building with a general store on the right and the post office on the left. The large portion of the building is the original home office of the Nekoosa Edwards Paper Co., now the vacant land shown below. The 1961 office at right, owned by Domtar of Montreal, is now vacant.

Now



Gene Johnson

Rite of Tavern Passage

The years 1946-1947 had a whopper of an impact on me when viewed from the hindsight of old age. I was a 19-year-old virgin in more ways than one!

Working at Montgomery Ward as an all-purpose grunt earning 35 cents an hour, I helped unload freight with Bob Rivers, dressed window displays for the first floor department heads, and freelance-clerked the whole first floor, even selling phone orders for the booming mail order department of straw boss Vi Strauss.

During this period, a new employee came on the scene, but just where Dick Kreutzer fit into the sales force is now lost in time. Perhaps the sporting department.

Dick was one of the Kreutzer Brothers family that ran the secondhand store. About three years older than myself, he seemed to feel a need to “big brother” me in my very obvious late blooming immaturity.

At about five foot, five inches tall and slim as a willow, Dick portrayed his sophisticated masculinity through cigarettes and a classy postwar automobile, a Dodge sedan that featured Hydra-Matic Drive, an early form of automatic transmission. Perhaps it was my awe of his auto that reinforced his big brotherhood.

Since Ray Lecy had left for other employment, I had no social friends at Ward’s. How Dick and I ended up in my “rite of tavern passage” is a question.

Our family was poor, and perhaps for that reason was non-alcoholic. No beer or booze was at hand in our house and tavern visits during my life at home never took place.

On Friday nights, the Montgomery Ward store in Rapids was open until nine p.m., at which time the doors were locked, the floor hastily swept, and the lights put out.

On that very special Friday night, Kreutzer loaded me into his Hydra-Matic Dodge and drove out on Highway 54 east to “Buzz” McCarthy’s tavern on the wooded side of what was then a two-lane highway leading to Plover. The site is later remembered as that of Dahlke Auto Sal-

vage yard, now Badger Metals. Looking back, two things become apparent: Dick Kreutzer was known at the bar, and persons under the age of 21 were not a problem unlike within the Wisconsin Rapids city limits.

The “cool” Dick Kreutzer was served beer, and I, the youthful teetotaler, a bottled Coca Cola over ice. The garrulous proprietor was soon serving a whole bar full of patrons, young and old.

My recall of Buzz McCarthy is of a kindly florid-faced man, with a prominent red nose. As the diversified crowd lined up at the long hardwood bar, Buzz proposed a bit of entertainment, in the form of a modest gambling game with a dollar at stake per game.

During this era, the Thompson Anti-Gambling law was in effect in Wisconsin and law busts by the sheriff’s department were common, so the host evidently knew everyone present was not law enforcement oriented.

Buzz produced a deck of cards. Working from one end of the long bar to the other, he turned up a card in front of each patron, with the holder of the low card required to “ante up” the dollar prize for that game. The cards were picked up and reshuffled, and the deck cut by the person who provided the dollar.

As the customers called and hooted, hoping for the high card, each player received a new card faced up, to determine the winner. The ace was declared high, and numerical duplication was solved using the “Sheepshead” card game rating, in which clubs were highest, followed by spades, hearts and diamonds. I would guess there were 20 players at the bar. I was game winner once: a buck!

This single visit to Buzz McCarthy’s bar has been a special memory, and often recalled as we drove past the site of the tavern, which I believe burned down way back in the 1960s. “Cool” Dick Kreutzer married while I worked at Ward’s. I was now dating Irene Bautz, and we attended his nuptials together.

Soon after, I was fired from Montgomery Ward, and with many new Consolidated paper mill friends, lost track of my mentor Dick Kreutzer, a memorable co-worker in those classic post-high school employment years.

Gene Johnson

Ashley's Party

Shortly after returning from our 2010-2011 winter in California, the end of the Wisconsin Rapids District school year was upon us. With our local economy bottomed out, the 2011 valedictorian expectations were pretty shaky, closely mirroring my brother Roger's graduation in 1938 when the economy was still muted prior to World War II.

Nevertheless, we saw many street-parked automobiles in residential areas and noted neatly printed signs on intersections pointing the route to "Ashley's Party." So pervasive was the signage that Irene and I began to joke about it.

Neither Irene nor I recall a single high school celebration back in 1946, our graduation year. Both Irene's family and mine were small, but we had older siblings passing to adulthood before us.

The Gene Johnson graduation was an odd assortment of non-celebration. Our tarpaper covered homestead by then had an indoor toilet and telephone, and with my Dad's work elevation from W.P.A. to Badger Ordnance in Baraboo, we could afford to buy Ahdawagam yearbooks to remember my school years. A couple dozen graduation cards were made up for me in printing class by schoolmate Art Bodette. We were still poor so no announcement letters were sent out to relatives.

Only my mother attended the ceremony. That night we walked from Boles Street down Second Avenue and through the quiet town to Lincoln High together. Following the ceremony, we walked morosely home. It seemed my warm world of pleasing learning, school friends and structured life had ended. The rowboat had been pushed out into the lake of adult reality, something I was ill equipped for.

I guess my sad realization was apparent to my mother. As we slowly walked home, we verbally viewed my future, where she offered only reality.

In retrospect, my illiterate father was cowed by the education of his three sons, and appeared to find little joy in my graduation.

Irene's graduation too was missed by her father. Carl Bautz suffered severe migraine headaches

later diagnosed as pernicious anemia of the nervous system. Agnes Bautz and her sister-in-law Ann Miller attended the ceremony. Irene received a wrist watch as a graduation gift from her parents.

That night with her friend Madeline Bauer, Irene, the new graduate, walked in darkness down the hill to the old Methodist Church on Oak Street, and sat on the high concrete steps of the silent building, smoking forbidden cigarettes, in their personal 1946 rite of graduation passage. Madeline Bauer then had a sleepover with Irene at the Bautz house on Prospect Street.

Two other graduations in our family can be recalled; daughter Susan in 1978, and son Greg 1980.

Old Lincoln High was overflowing when Susan graduated. Here is how Sue recalls the night.

"I graduated in 1978, in a class of over 700 kids; We lined up outside the front yard of the school for the processional, which was an incredibly long line of red robes marching into the gym. I remember the heat, the smell, the long waiting, and getting the diploma and being DONE!"

Two years later, our son Greg also graduated from the 16th Street high school I had so fruitlessly opposed during my four years on the district school board (1967 – 1971).

These were Greg's recollections.

"After the ceremony we ended up at a stone quarry on somebody's property. It was a beer party, with quarter and half barrels of beer. Someone had their car trunk open so we had loud music, and there was a big fire going as was usual."

"I was just glad that school was over, no tears about that! The "new" Lincoln High School had no open campus, very few windows, no open parking, all the control issues. It made our crowd hate school!"

No effort was made to find the identity of the graduate "Ashley." Someone finally picked up the roadside signs of "Ashley's Party."

It's hard to envision a bright future for her or the 2011 graduates. Somewhere along the line, the rest of the world has caught up with America, or maybe it's the other way around, we have slid down the path of the Roman Empire.

Being There

Of all the artifacts at the South Wood County Historical Museum or in Phil's *Den of Antiquity*, my favorite items are the photographs. An old picture is like a time machine that brings the viewer back to another era.

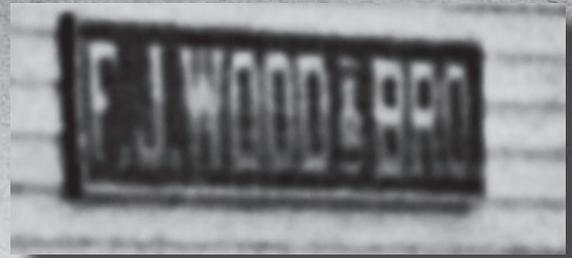
One of the oldest photographs we have in our collection dates to 1865-88. It shows the F.J. Wood general store on the southwest corner of what is now East Grand Ave. and Second Street South.

F.J. Wood was the son of county namesake Joseph Wood, and is likely standing in the street in front of his store, as enlarged below.

Phil Brown



ties



Detail from below



Wagon bridge at right was built in 1865 and washed out in 1888. A toll was sometimes required. A sign threatened a fine for riding (a horse) faster than a walk.



GRAND RAPIDS, WIS.
VINE STREET.



See following page (18) for commentary.

Den of Antiquities

Wood Block: Same Corner

By Phil Brown
SWCHC President

In the picture postcard on pages 16-17, postmarked Jan. 30, 1908, we see the Wood Block at left and a building we will refer to as the Post Office. These buildings replaced the old F.J. Wood general store shown on page 15 and are still standing. Vine Street became East Grand Avenue.

The Wood Block was built in 1894 and the old Post Office building in 1905. According to *River City Memoirs II*, the original occupants of the Wood Block were F.W. Kruger, east section, John E. Daly, center and J.R. Chapman, jeweler, west.

The second floor was used for offices and lodge rooms.

The jewelry shop passed from Chapman to A.P. Hirzy to E.J. Schmidt. Schmidt Jewelers is still at this location.

Daly Drug became Wood County Drug and Coyle's Drug until a 1947 fire. After remodeling, the Town Shop moved in, then Gleue's Shoes and, finally, Barty's Shoes. Nieman's Photography is in this section now.

Kruger's clothing store became Kruger & Cameron, Kruger & Warner, Kruger & Turbin, Schnabel & Turbin, Schnabel's, and Gordon's Better Clothing. In 1967, Don Arndt moved his photo studio in.

Rollie's Bar, in the Post Office building, moved to the basement in the Wood block in 1949. It later became the Speakeasy tavern.

Ownership of the building went from the Wood heirs to Ted Walrath to George Schmidt to James Retzlaff and now Jim's sons, Dan and Jeff, who currently own all the real estate on this corner, including the 1915 Elk's Club building and the 1917 Wood County Telephone Co. building.

Across Vine Street (Grand Avenue) from the Wood Block was the first home of the Wood County National Bank, founded by Franklin J. Wood, L.M. Alexander, T.E. Nash, Frank Garrison and E. Roenius in 1891. The new Wood County bank opened in 1911 on the former location of the Robert Farrish & Bro. store.

Notice that the wooden wagon bridge pictured on page 15 has been replaced by the metal dromedary bridge on page 17, dubbed for its distinctive two humps and replaced in 1922 by the concrete Grand Avenue Bridge we children of the 20th Century remember.

This corner of our town is surely one of the most recognizable and a perfect reminder of our colorful past.

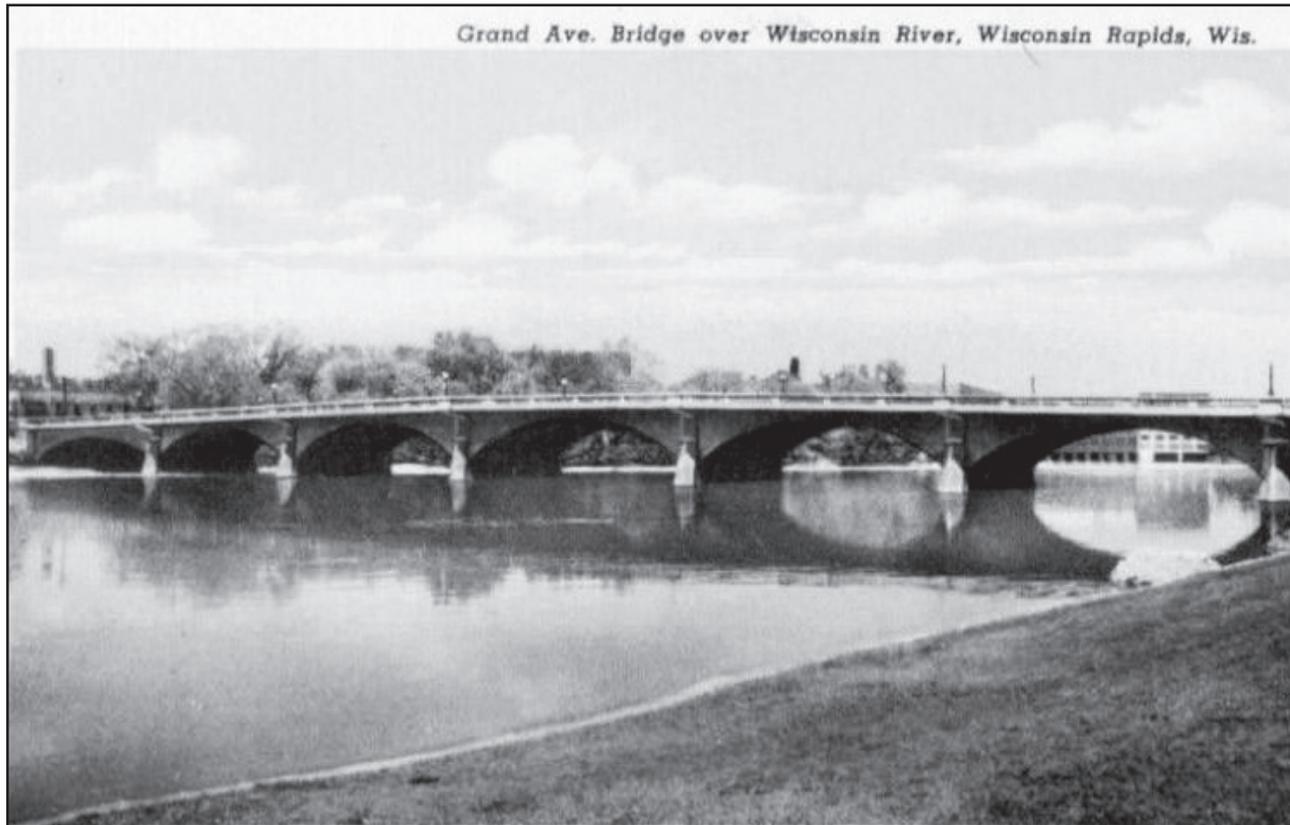


Elks' Club and Telephone Exchange. Wisconsin Rapids, Wis.

Former Elks Club, above, workers going postal, below



Validating a Rapids legend



Bob Gleason:

The day we flew under the Grand Avenue Bridge

By Don Krohn

Here's the story from someone who would know.

"We were flying up the Wisconsin River, maybe 25 or 30 feet above the water. Then Jere brought the plane even closer to the water and I saw the wheels hitting the water and turning.

"The Grand Avenue Bridge was right ahead of us and I thought Jere would bring the plane up to fly over the bridge, but he kept the plane flying straight at the bridge; then all of a sudden

we were flying under the bridge with the wings just missing the trusses on each side—probably a foot of clearance at each wing tip. I don't know how we made it through there but we did."

This was the description on an audio tape by friend Bob Gleason, describing an adventurous plane ride with local aeronaut Jere Witter who had a reputation for enjoying acrobatic flying in his biplane, "Scheherazade." Witter had been accused of flying too close to the Consolidated

smoke stacks and buzzing too close to people coming out of the Consolidated mill at quitting time. But until now no one had admitted to being with him when he made one of those legendary trips under the Grand Avenue bridge.

“I was about 14 years old and living on Nepco Lake,” said Bob. “My dad, Ed Gleason, was in charge of building Nepco Lake for the Nekoosa-Edwards Paper Co.

“I got a call from Jere. My parents and Jere’s parents, Isaac and Charlotte Witter of Wisconsin Rapids, were good friends. They had worked together in planning the design and construction of the Episcopal church.

“He asked if I would like to go for an airplane ride. Jere was a number of years older than I was, but we were friends and I would guess that he wanted someone to be with him when he made his special flight on that day. I think he wanted a witness to his special daredevil event.

“I immediately said, ‘yes,’ and jumped on my bike and hustled out to the airport.

“I got into Jere’s airplane and I asked,

‘Where are we going?’

“He said, ‘We’ll just buzz around for a little bit.’

“We flew over Nepco Lake and I got a good look at the lake from the air. We flew to Nekoosa and circled around for a time and then followed the Wisconsin River, flying over Port Edwards, up to Wisconsin Rapids, flying about 25 to 30 feet above the water.” Then, the bridge.

What did Bob’s parents think of the flying escapade?

“I didn’t have enough nerve to tell them about it right away. But I finally told my mother several days later and she was not happy about it. My dad wasn’t told about it for some time, and when he was, he was not pleased.”

Bob has made his home in California for many years, but returns to the family home in Port Edwards each summer to see friends and recall special times of his youth. Such as flying under the Grand Avenue Bridge—and being a member of the John Edwards basketball team that made it to the state championships.



Jere Witter

Billy Parker:
**Living History &
 the Public**

Asking the right questions



Civil War Re-enactor William Parker

Historical re-enactors cannot do what they do without the support of the public. We are volunteers that teach a certain time frame in history, be it civil war, fur trade, pioneers or other time periods. The events we have are normally run by charitable organizations such as museums, historical societies and even a few fire departments.

As re-enactors, we are there doing the things we love to do but we do it as volunteers. If the events don't get the public turnout or support, the event folds and we re-enactors don't get the place to play, learn and teach. Re-enactors have way too much time, money and research invested in the hobby to let that happen.

I wonder how much we are really getting through to the public. At events, I get asked a lot of questions and most of them don't even really pertain to the Civil War such as "Is that fire that you're cooking on real?" "Do you really sleep in them tents?" and "Are you hot in them uniforms?"

Normally I politely answer the question and they move on. But are they really learning anything about the time period I portray? I hope so but in my heart I don't think so.

I believe that the right questions would make all the difference. Instead of asking if that gun is real, ask, "How many shots a minute could a well trained soldier fire with it?" Ask us about the people we portray. Ask about Civil War cooking and food. We are there for you, to teach and learn.

At the right event you, the public, will also get a show that even Hollywood can't always replicate or do right. There are many events right here that Wisconsinites can go to: Historic Point Basse, Iola Military Show, Boscobel Civil War re-enactment, Wade House Civil War re-enactment, Lone Rock Civil War re-enactment, and Stevens Point Civil War days at Pfiffner Park, to name a few. To get times, dates and locations, they are all on the Internet.

Thank you for supporting your local re-enactors.

***Sometimes-Confederate
 Parker can often be seen
 at the Museum
 during visiting hours***

Confederate President Jefferson Davis

The Wisconsin Connection

By Billy Parker

In 1828, as a graduate of West Point and a young newly-commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, future President of the Confederate States of America Jefferson Davis was given his first assignment, to a military base at Fort Crawford, Wisconsin, near present-day Prairie du Chien.

Upon arrival at the fort, he was attached to the United States Regiment of Dragoons, soon to be renamed as "cavalry." His first stay did not last very long and in 1829 Jefferson Davis was sent to Fort Winnebago near present day Portage, Wis. He stayed at Fort Winnebago until 1831 when he contracted pneumonia and was sent back to Fort Crawford because of the better medical facilities there.

In 1832, with Davis stationed at Fort Crawford, the Black Hawk War began. While he did see some combat, Davis' big service to the U.S. came when Chief Black Hawk surrendered and Davis escorted him off to prison at Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis, Mo.

Also while in Wisconsin, Davis met the daughter of his commanding officer, Colonel Zachary Taylor, later a U.S. president. Sarah Knox Taylor would become his first wife

although without the approval of Col. Taylor. Many years later, during the Mexican War, and many years after she had passed away from malaria, Col. Taylor and Jefferson Davis would patch up the relationship and he would eventually become his father-

in-law's Secretary of War during the Taylor presidency.

I do believe that the reason Col. Taylor did not approve of the match had to do with the legend that surrounds Jefferson Davis that he had affairs and supposedly fathered a few children with local Wisconsin Indian women.

Although there is no evidence to prove that is true, it did happen a lot back in those days.

Skip ahead to after the Civil War and Jefferson Davis also had a Wood County connection and that was his guard at Fort Monroe, Virginia. William Upham was the officer of the guard during Jefferson Davis's time in prison.

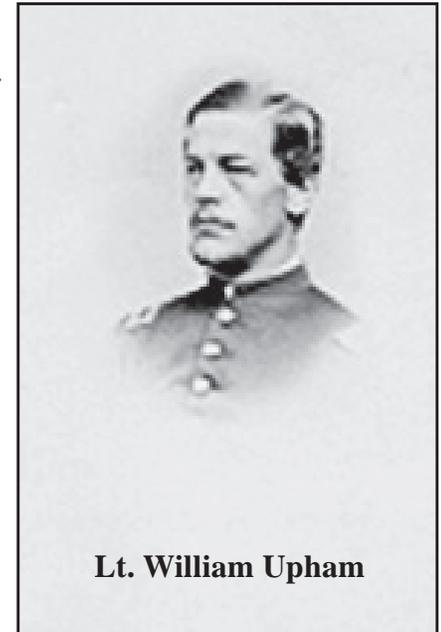
William Upham enlisted in the 2nd Wisconsin Infantry at the start of the war and was wounded at the battle of 1st Bull Run. He was captured and sent to Richmond as a POW.

In 1862 he was exchanged and sent to a hospital in Washington D.C. where he met Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln liked Upham so much that he got him into school at West Point.

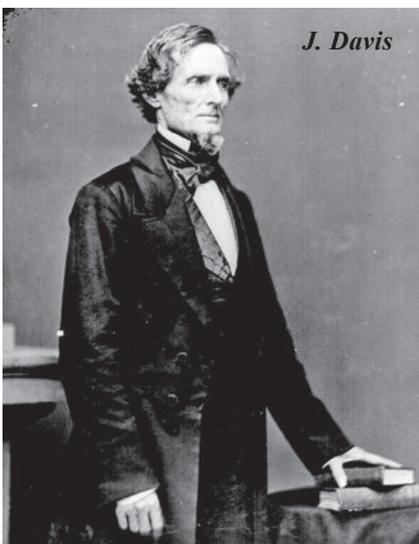
In 1866 upon graduation he was sent to guard Davis. In his memoirs, he noted that Davis was well conversed about all the Indian names in Wisconsin.

Upon leaving the army, Upham settled in Marshfield, building a profitable lumber business there and rebuilding Marshfield after the big fire in the 1880s that destroyed most of the city.

He also helped start many Grand Army of the Republic posts in Wisconsin including Post 22 in Grand Rapids, which he was a charter member of. He was also state commander of the GAR in Wisconsin and was the 18th Governor of the State of Wisconsin.



Lt. William Upham



J. Davis

Uncle Dave

From *River City Memoirs* in the *Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune*

Hallmarks of the Landscape

Gotta love a barn—if you have an ounce of agrarian soul in the hay bale you call a heart. Poets limn the classic lines, historians lament their loss and former farm kids relive precious moments in, on and behind the barn.

In the May issue of *Artifacts*, Mrs. Fletcher's grandson, Andrew, deftly captured the charm and character of farm buildings he found in our vicinity. The barns are mostly empty following the decline of what we used to call "farming."

In mid-20th Century, many owners of barns tried but couldn't make a go of it or decided they didn't enjoy being at the beck and call of cows. With the golfers of Rome, they left hard labor behind.

Many of the original barns were built for bragging and designed to last the farmer's lifetime and that of his descendents. Pride was displayed from the rock-solid foundation to post-and-beam timbers much like those of a German-Lutheran cathedral.

Even better, the design was practical.

A gambrel "barn roof" accommodated available lengths of oak or pine in its trusses. The shape enabled maximum storage of hay or straw, smartly placed above the feeding room.

Artifacts artist Andy Fletcher has a cousin who happens to be Wisconsin's premiere commentator on rural themes: Justin Isherwood of Plover. With Scooch Romundson and others, Isherwood

has photographed every known barn of Portage county and may turn his attention to Wood.

Typical 40-cow family farms like the Fifties version of the Isherwood place are mostly defunct. Several former dairy barns on the current Isherwood family potato plantation are used for storage or decoration.

In official jargon, the number of milk cow operations continues to decline in the United States while milk production and milk cow numbers rise, in part due to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). A recent local controversy surrounds a 3,500-cow, 6,000-acre dairy planned for the town of Saratoga.

But don't look for pastoral charm. Even before the surrender of the family farm to agribusiness, the barn was being replaced by a homely box we called a "pole shed."

The barn I refer to most was my maternal grandfather's.

He had bought the farm I knew and loved to replace a better one he had loved and lost in the Depression. His mostly-losing bouts with Mother Nature had left him with a bent back and broken heart.

But to city boys like me and my cousin, the barn was a playground: giant piles of hay and straw to jump in; fragrant silo to climb; granary to hunt for vermin; eaves chattering with sparrows; milking parlor washed with hard water and DDT.

Perhaps to employ its capacity as a government bathroom, I happened to stop at the Dairy Queen in Grandpa's town a few years ago. It was about a mile as the meadow-lark flies from the old farm.

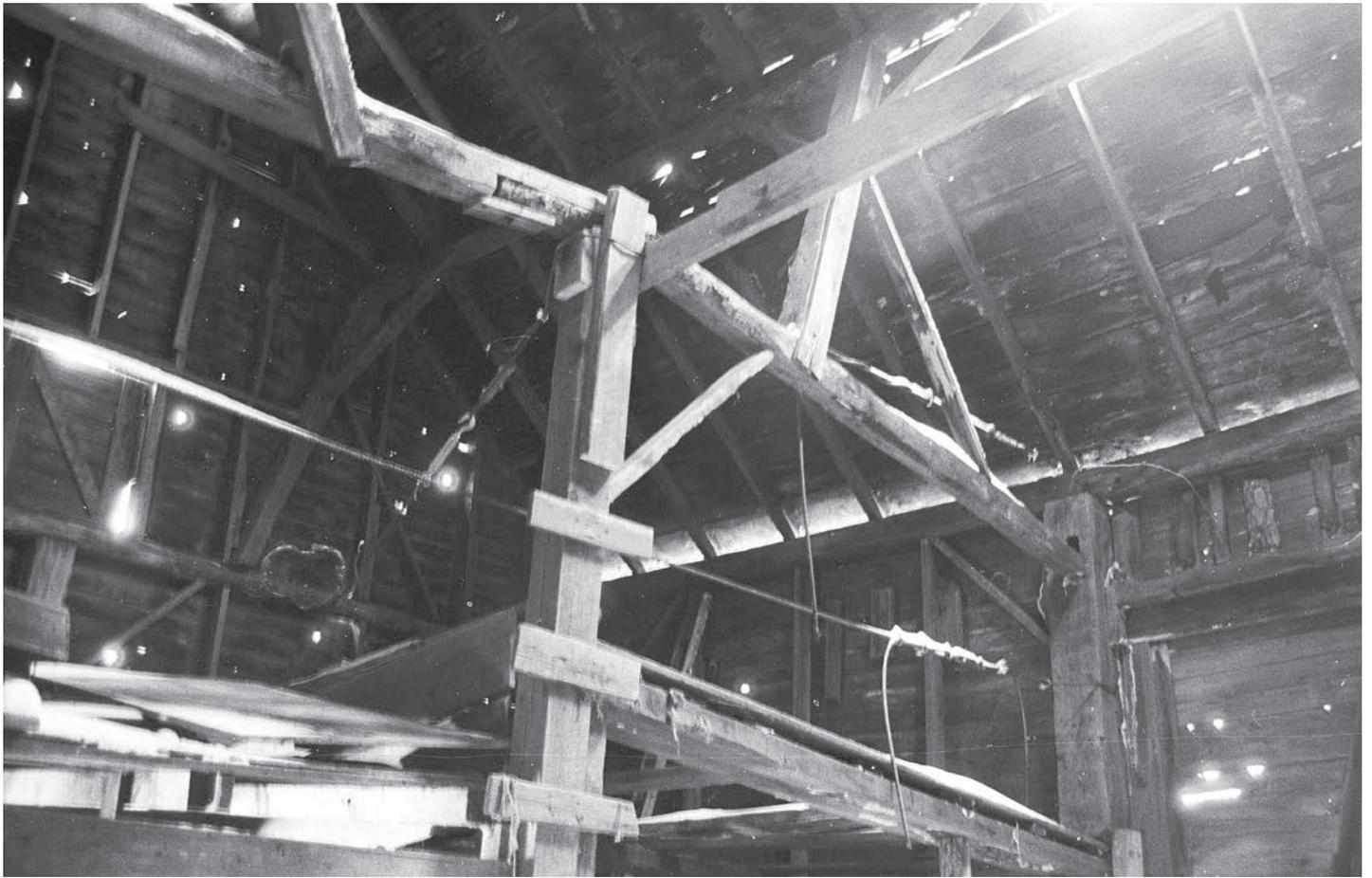
As excavation began for an expansion of the fast food franchise, thick, sticky clay was turned to the sun and I couldn't help thinking about how this was the stuff Grandpa and all the farmers had wrestled with. And I also couldn't help but notice that across the highway, a crop of pernicious weeds had sprouted—a subdivision for commuters.

That was a few years ago but now I can view a satellite photo of the same area and see that Grandpa's side of the road is not so much changed: cheese factory, quarry and his still-modest place with a recognizable circular driveway by the machine shed.

But across the road, pock-marked by craters, a bombed out zone. Not really; those are ponds for the luxury houses on the arcs and squiggles of a subdivision.

Isherwood and his crew have posted their appreciation: "Barns are the hallmarks of the landscape, the Raphaels and Rembrandts of our countryside—art done in timber frame and field stone.

"Every barn was someone's dream come true and some community's pride. Every barn has a story and the time is running out to make it heard."



Even the cobbled-up combination of timbers that made up the old barn on the Wakely Inn Preservation/Historic Point Basse property looked good. The structure has been razed as has the barn below, on Townline Road. These photos by Uncle Dave were made from negatives scanned by Hank Bruse in an ongoing Museum archives project.

Barns: Wakely & Townline *Two that bit the dust*



*Lower
three
photos
from
Town-
line
Road*



Moses: Greenberg Saga, Part 2

By Earle Garber

This segment is dedicated to Cathy Milgrom, Portland, Ore. Mrs. Milgrom's great grandfather, William Greenberg, settled in Necedah, Wis., during the late 1880s. William's brother, Abe, chose Centralia, then one of the twin cities of Centralia/Grand Rapids.

Genealogy is Cathy's hobby. My interest in the history of our community created a friendship that otherwise may never have taken place. It happened when Cathy purchased retired UWSP professor Mark Seiler's book "The Chosen Town." She called on Mark for help with her research and he directed her to yours truly.

From the first episode (*Artifacts* 33) we learned of (Charles) Abraham Greenberg's clothing store/s in the burgeoning community of Centralia under the name, "Golden Eagle." Local newspapers celebrated the opening, but within a few short months competition from Silverman's and the new Johnson & Hills, pushed Abe to receivership.

In 1887, after several months working at Silverman's, Abe left wife and children to seek his fortune in the gold rush of Republic, Wash., a new settlement in the Sierra Nevada mountain foot-hills.

Meanwhile back in Necedah, Abe's brother, William Greenberg, Cathy's great-grandfather, still owned a prosperous Necedah department store. He helped liquidate the inventory of his brother's store and added to his own until he needed a second building across the street. In 1904, William, with his sons James and Moses, decided to celebrate the store's fifteenth anniversary.

A fire in 1915 started in the Greenberg store and burned much of downtown Necedah. William incorporated, rebuilt and had his two sons, Moses and James (Cathy Milgrom's grandfather) run the store while William moved to Minneapolis to build homes and have his daughters find Jewish husbands.

By 1920, another fire closed the store and the property was sold. James and Moses followed William to Minneapolis.

About this time I met with *Artifacts* Editor (Uncle) Dave Engel, to discuss a comment Cathy Milgrom had made in one of her emails. She thought M.E. (Moses) Greenberg's company in Minneapolis had built a theater in Grand Rapids.

Dave responded with "check it out."

Being an amateur collector I returned to McMillan Memorial Library to print out newspaper articles about theaters. Then, I recalled an issue in *Artifacts* several years earlier about Frank and Henrietta Eckhardt building the Wisconsin theater.

The Museum's publication by Paul Gross confirmed Cathy's comment. In *Artifacts*, Volume II, November 2007, on page 30, the dark haired guy standing against the wall next to Henrietta Eckhardt is M.E. Greenberg.



His 1918 World War I draft registration said his name was Moses Ephraim Greenberg. He was manager of the William Greenberg & Sons department store in Necedah. His father was William Greenberg, by then residing in Minneapolis.

Census schedules show M.E. was still in Necedah in 1920, living with brother James. The 1930 census listed him as "Moe" E. Greenberg in Minneapolis, proprietor of an apartment building. The newly-released 1940 census shows Moses at age 55 as a contractor, still in Minneapolis, married with two children.

M.E. had become a distinguished builder and received national recognition for his Moorish style apartments and art deco theaters in around the Minneapolis/Saint Paul area.

Under Investigation: River City

I don't think it's hyperbole to say a way of life is ending in Rapids...

Dear Uncle Dave,

What a great name for you—Uncle Dave. We've only spoken a few times, but it was enough to see your charm: wisdom with a sense of humor—just quirky enough to tell a great story, but not so strange that I feared for my safety. Not much anyway.

I was born and raised in Marshfield—not far from Rapids, but in a slightly different culture. Paper mills weren't part of our daily vernacular. My parents ran a mom-and-pop cleaning business. Work was where they found their living, not their meaning. But still, business found its way into dinnertime conversations; it influenced how I saw the world. Like the landscape, it was a part of my identity that I inherited. I don't think I'm unique in this way.

I recently returned to Central Wisconsin to report a story for the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism. We traveled to Iron, Clark and Wood Counties, looking for the answer to why young people are leaving small towns faster than they've done in the past.

And more importantly, we are trying to find out why it matters.

Some people I've spoken to call the trend brain drain; some call it rural slide. The issue is not new. Young people have always left their hometowns in pursuit of greener pastures or fine ideals. What is different, as you so aptly pointed out, is that an increasing number of young people, who would otherwise prefer to remain close to home, are finding it necessary to move away in order to find work.



We came to Wood County for similar reasons that we visited cities in Iron and Clark Counties. We wanted to look at the mining country near Hurley, the farms near Abbotsford, and the mills of Rapids—areas teetering on the precipice of a changing industry. The mill that supported generations of workers through the years is no longer a sustainable solution for many high school graduates.

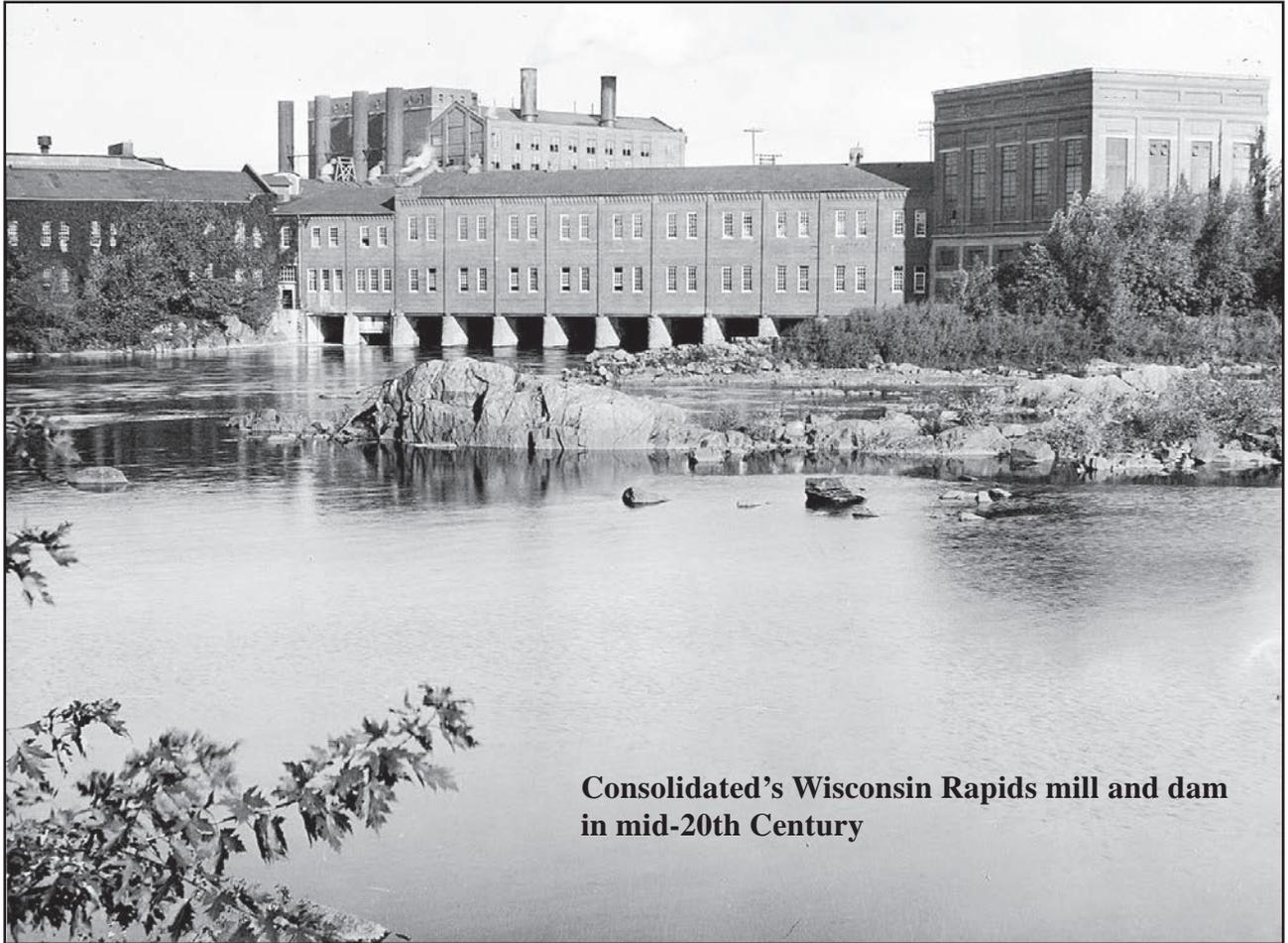
I don't think it's hyperbole to say a way of life is ending in Rapids. That statement may be bold to some—obvious to others. Change is immutable, and always occurring. Maybe the degree to which change is a negative depends on how well we welcome it, how willing we are to change ourselves.

In many ways, my recent trip to Wood County allowed me to see it for the first time. It's been a way to reconnect with where I came from and what I value. No matter how I grow, these things are ingrained. Wood County is a part of who I am.

As a state, can we maintain our identity, the things that made us great, while becoming something new? I believe so. I don't think it's our resources that made us who we are. I believe it's our spirit and character, our willingness to take whatever resources we have at hand and make a go of it. I believe that's who we truly are, and that's what we need to promote.

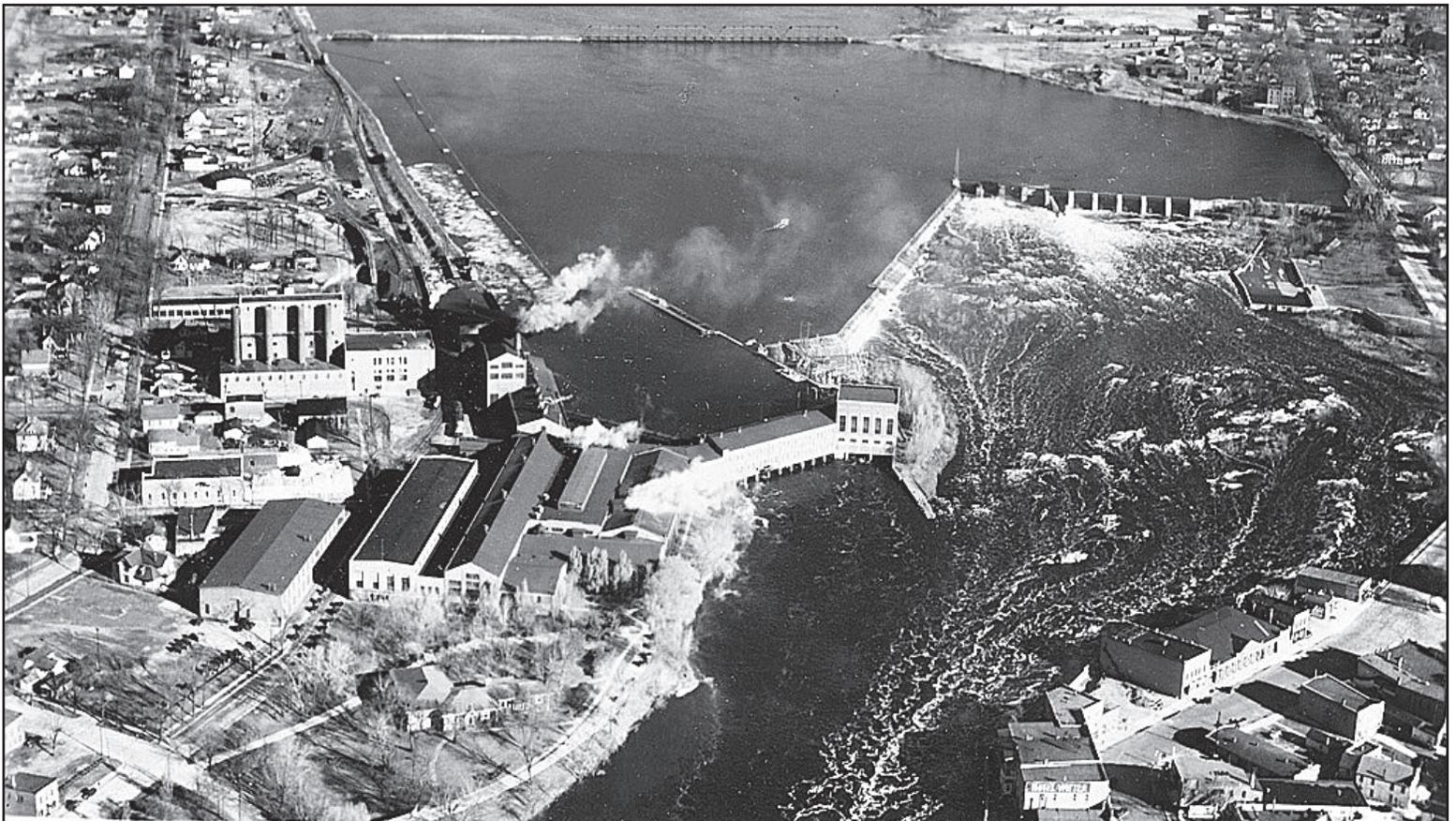
And so, Uncle Dave, I thank you once again for showing us around and taking the time to talk to us. I'll make sure you get a link to the final story. Thanks for all your help, and I'll see you in the funny pages.

Mario Koran



McMillan Memorial Library

**Consolidated's Wisconsin Rapids mill and dam
in mid-20th Century**



*If you're a certain age
he's a favorite character*

Old Reuben

Uncle Dave's less eccentric twin? Lookalike (see p. 3) inventor Lindstrom has been the subject of several River City Memoirs stories.

After he left the Vesper area, Lindstrom resided primarily with his nephew, Reuben Garrels, in Baraboo and died in a Lodi nursing home.

His mention here was prompted when, responding to an inquiry from a reader, Lori found this photo somewhere on the Internet. Its location has since evaporated into the cloud so if you find it, let us know.

Note the reference below to "8 corners" between Wisconsin Rapids and Vesper at the junction of county highways HH and F and Town Hall Road. Is that eight corners?

And who said Reuben was "old"?



Ruben Lindstrom - 8 Corners - Olsen's Grocery Store - Early 1940's

Patented July 2, 1940

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Artifacts, a local history magazine and newsletter for the South Wood County Historical Corp. welcomes contributions of writings and photographs relevant to the greater Wisconsin Rapids area. For a year's subscription and membership send \$20 to the address above. Questions? Contact Lori Brost, Museum Administrator and assistant editor, 715-423-1580. lori@swch-museum.com



Already another year?!

Annual Meeting
South Wood County Historical Corp.

All members encouraged to attend.

Monday, September 17, 2012

4 p.m.

At the Museum

Agenda to include:

- 1. Receive the report of the President
on the activities of the South Wood County Historical Corp. for 2012.***
- 2. Elect Officers and Directors.***