

ARTIFACTS

Volume I

January 30, 1995



Annual Meeting Review

The Annual Membership Meeting of the South Wood County Historical Corporation was held on September 29, 1994. The primary agenda included election of Board of Directors. Those members elected to serve for a three year term include:

*Francis Daly
Joan Haasl
Gert Raprager
Nathalie Smart*

A review of activities for the year was presented by Pam Walker, Museum Director. The highlights of the year included building improvements, staff expansion and artifact organization. We are adjusting to a new in-ground sprinkler system and weathered our first experience of frozen pipes during a very cold winter (1994).

New shelving on the third floor allows for wonderful storage of artifacts as the staff is nearing completion of a building wide inventory. No exhibits were changed, but the front office space is now being converted and will allow for the creation of a museum gift shop for 1995.

A new volunteer coordinator, Carole Mielke, and five high school students provided staffing during the summer months in addition to our regular core of volunteers. We greeted 1506 total visitors, 1040 during regular hours, 41 attending meetings held at the site and 425 people who visited for school tours. The Museum remained open to the general public throughout the fall, closing the week of Thanksgiving. School tours continued until Christmas.

Following the Annual Meeting, the Board of Directors elected officers. Those serving are:

President: Marshall Buehler
Vice-President: Nick Brazeau
Secretary: Nathalie Smart
Treasurer: Cynthia Reisbeck

Other board members include: Catherine Boyce, Bud Daly, Paul Gross, Joan Haasl, Dan Meyer, Gert Raprager, Bud Wagner, Pamela Walker, and Betty Zimmerman.



From the Director.....



Welcome 1995!! I say this as I realize that January has already slipped away and the "winter work" scheduled to occur, still awaits for the onset of winter. Maybe this last snowstorm will align everyone's timeclock.

I've outlined the usual care-taking of artifacts and building maintenance items to keep the staff busy. Plus, we are creating a small museum gift shop scheduled to open Spring of 1995. We have a modest inventory of items that were selected to coincide with the exhibits. We have t-shirts and tote bags that have the SWCHC Museum logo printed on it. There are also stationary items featuring cranberries and plat maps. This will take a bit of time to develop, but I'm excited about this first-ever offering for our Museum.

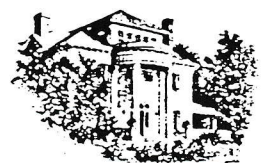
A new avenue for exhibits will be pursued this spring with the planned installation of a traveling exhibit available through the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. This exhibit features **Bird's Eye Views of Wisconsin Communities** and will be installed in the front room. We are making some slight modifications to the room to meet the display guidelines of the SHS.

We will also be rotating some more of the artifacts this winter, and catching up on the paperwork involved with the inventory process. We may have the opportunity to work with the high school volunteer program and develop a computer database for easier access of the artifacts. A high school student assisted in the data entry for the photo collection this past summer and it served as a good trial run.

Museum school tours will be conducted in late spring and the Museum will open to the general public in May. The office remains open during the winter and we will be happy to answer your calls.

The Board of Directors will be undertaking the challenge of strategic planning. This process will formalize ideas and objectives we hope to accomplish as we prepare for a new century. **Dennis Wessel** has been hired to consult on this project. He is from the UW-Marshfield campus and will begin meeting with Board members at the end of January.

We expect another exciting season. Take some time to discover or re-discover the **MUSEUM**.





1. Court House and Jail.
2. Brown High School.
3. Public School.
4. New Mill, Harlow & Son.
5. New Mill, John Babin.
6. Brewery & Machine Shop, John Babin.
7. Babin House, Wm. Babin.
8. Treasury, D. P. Merrill.
9. Babin House.
10. Green Bay & Milwaukee R. R. Depot.

BIRDS EYE VIEW OF THE CITY OF
GRAND RAPIDS.
WOOD CO. WIS.
1874.

11. First National Bank.
12. Bank of Grand Rapids.
13. Congregational Church, Rev. E. M. Webster.
14. Methodist Church, Rev. James Cole.
15. Catholic Church, R. E. Foster & Paul, Rev. Wm. DeLaher.
16. City Library, R. W. Loomis.
17. Printing Mill & Book Binding, John Babin.
18. Post Office, G. F. Wheeler, M. D. F. M.
19. Hotel, J. C. Worthington, Prop.
20. House, Mrs. Stephen Babin.

Wanted: An original copy of the Birds Eye Map of Grand Rapids [ca. 1874]

The SWCHC Museum seeks to reproduce this map (see above) to coincide with the scheduled installation of a traveling exhibit this spring, but must first locate an original map in good shape. We have already searched the collections of the State Historical Society and the National Archives with marginal results. If anyone has this document and would allow the Museum to borrow it, please call the Office at 423-1580.



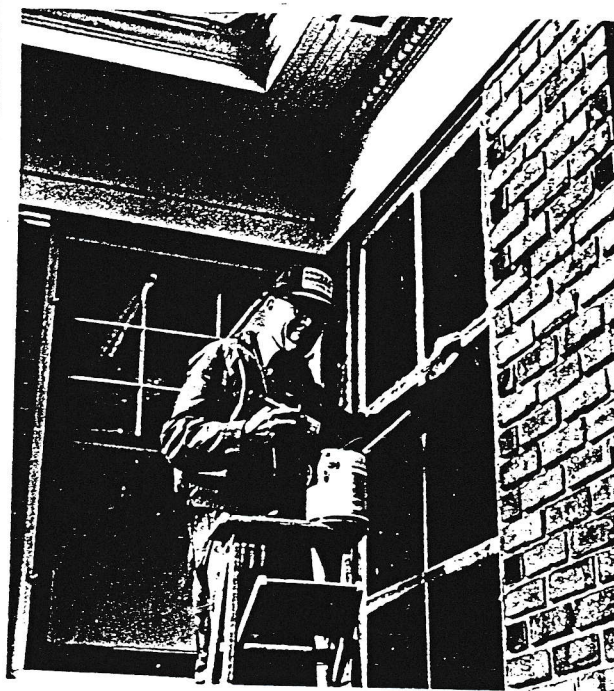
Roy Remitz Retires

Roy Remitz was feted at Christmas luncheon hosted by Pam Walker and Marshall Buehler in honor of his retirement. Roy was presented with a new hedge trimmer and a gift certificate for a local restaurant.

Roy has served as the buildings and grounds person for several years. The constant attention to the gardens is one of Roy's specialties, producing one of the most beautiful landscapes in the neighborhood.

It's hard to keep Roy from the Museum despite his official retirement. His wife Bernadine, is one of our museum staff members and he's been known to drive her to work (and check on everything else). He still helps shovel the sidewalk or carry artifacts from one room to the next.

Roy will be traveling to Czechoslovakia this spring with Bernadine where they will visit their daughter Ann. Thank-you for so many great years of service Roy!! We have been very lucky to have someone so dedicated.



ARTIFACTS

A publication of
South Wood County Historical Corporation
540 Third Street South
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Editor: Pam Walker

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CITIZENS NATIONAL BANK

It's all gone by now, the building having lasted longer than the bank did. Citizens National Bank of Wisconsin Rapids was organized in 1912 with 160 stockholders. The founder was Joseph Cohen, who was president up to the time of the bank's failure during the famous depression of the early 1930's.

Mr. Cohen was born in Russia, received his education in Austria and then moved to Milwaukee. There he was a store clerk for a while. He and his brothers moved to Neenah where they opened a general merchandise store. Finally, they moved to Grand Rapids, where they opened a general merchandise business. Mr. Cohen served two terms as mayor of Grand Rapids and was one of the charter directors of the local Chamber of Commerce.

The bank opened its doors on March 29, 1913, starting with a capital of \$100,000. and a surplus of \$10,000. The other officers, aside from Cohen, were G.W. Paulus, vice president; and D.B. Philleo, cashier. On July 17th, 1917. the bank completed and moved into the building that was just demolished. The bank's report of financial condition on Sept. 15, 1922 showed a capital stock of \$100,000. ; surplus of \$16,000. and undivided profits of \$9612.43. Deposits were \$659,189.21. Other directors were C. Briere, W. Herschleb, A. Hirzy, N. Anderson, W. Peters, J. Staub, D. McKercher and Dr. O. Mortenson.

After the bank failure in the early 1930's, the building stood empty for a few years before being converted into the Wisconsin Theater.

Have you noticed the little wooden house that is now visible? It is an old home that was hid for many years behind the theater building. We have been informed that there was a row of small frame homes along the street and the one that you can see back there was added onto in the front to become part of a business structure. Take a look some time as you drive past the now vacant lot.



ANNUAL FUND DRIVE UNDERWAY

Each fall the South Wood County Historical Museum begins an annual fund drive to raise monies for specific capital improvements. We have undertaken painting, exhibit construction and preservation with the funds. This fall we outlined additional building and landscape renovations that we will begin in spring.

Contributions from approximately 140 individuals and businesses have been received to date. Gift giving has been recorded in the following categories:

\$1 - \$99.....	108
\$100 - \$499.....	25
\$500 - \$999.....	2
\$1000 & over.....	4

We greatly appreciate all of the generous contributions that continue to support the South Wood County Museum.

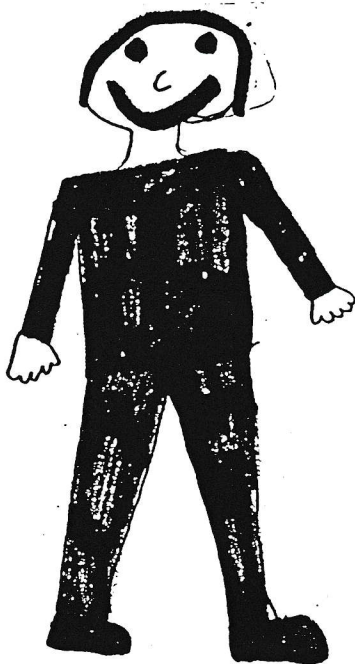


ALL 'BOARD!!!!

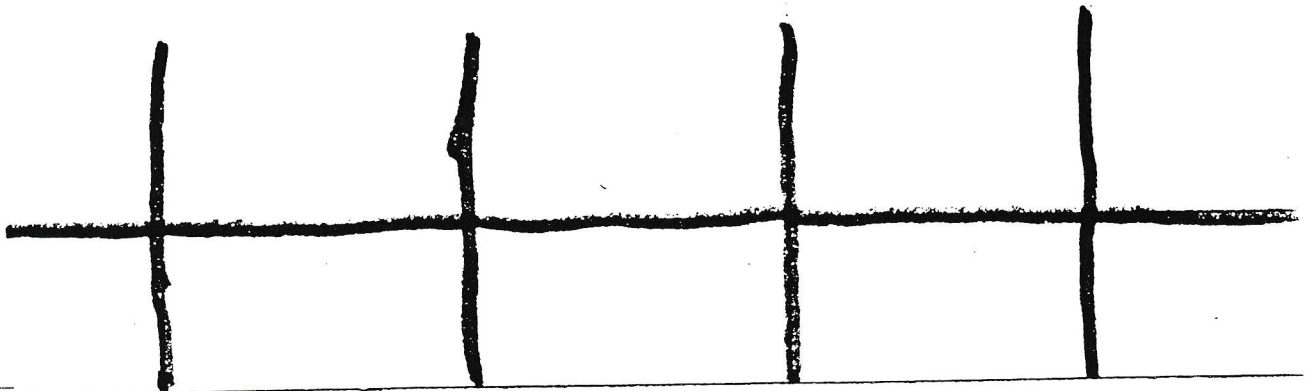
Mead School children touring the Museum this fall had a special treat when three costumed guides helped them discover the exhibits. Each class was greeted by the Museum Director and given a brief history of the building before being split into three groups.

All 'board!!! echoed from the basement as Train Conductor **Marshall Buehler** began his tour. On the main floor, the life-size surveyor, portrayed by **Rob Nurre**, was no longer an exhibit prop, but a guide recounting early exploration of Wisconsin. Visitors to the second floor were greeted by everyone's favorite grandmother **Bernadine Remitz**, who can honestly say she's used most everything in the exhibits sometime during her life.

The children were excited with this interactive presentation and wrote thank-you notes, including pictures to the Museum staff. They indicated they can hardly wait to visit again. And we can hardly wait to have them!!



Your friend
Erin Wilson



Dear Mrs. Walker

Thank you for telling us about the history of the museum. The museum is very pretty. I like the poles on the outside of the museum because it looks like the White House. We walked all the way to the museum. I had a lot of fun last Friday when we came. I liked the inside a lot too! You and your assistant did a very good job at showing us around the museum. I hope I can come back. I liked the museum very, very, very much!

Your friend,
Erin Wilson

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Dear Mrs. Walker

Thank you for letting our 3rd grade class come and see the museum. It was very fun! On Sunday I went again to see the things I missed. I like the school room the best because it was different than our school. I liked all the people that showed us around they were nice.

Thank you
Valerie
VanAsten

November 29, 1994

Dear Mr. Buelter, I like all of the
things down stairs. I like trains.

I have a brother who likes train
alot. I like your hat and suit.

My brother has a lantern and I do too.

My brother has a lock and hat.

I miss the museum.

Sincerely,

Shawn

November 29, 1994

Dear Mrs. Nurre,

I really liked the
museum. The tap measure
was really neat. I really
really liked it. When
you showed us the
thing that you look
through and you can
see real far.

Sincerely,
Marc Auclair



Tidbits from Bernadine:

After all the sorting and reading of paper documents, Bernadine thought the following of interest enough to share.

"These days all the snow-mobilers and other winter sports enthusiasts are bemoaning the lack of snow. In 1886 another group of people were also looking for snow, not for the sport but for their livelihood."

Old Dame Nature seems to be out of sorts. She will wear neither her summer, fall, nor winter robes. Winter fashions she has no taste for. Dame Nature....human nature is out of patience with you. Ye lumber men are modest men, and desire to log, skid, and saw, and do biz generally; and how they, such blushing men get about with any comfort, while you persist in your comfortable nakedness.

Put on your snowy night dress, behave yourself, do so at once.

--excerpt from the Wood County Reporter 1886

Winter opened upon us about the middle of November last year. This year on the 25th of October, so in about 6 years we may expect to be snowed in about July. This confounded Grant Administration is what ails the weather. If Horace Greeley has been elected last fall, we might have been enjoying green peas and cow slips now.

--excerpt from the Grands Rapids Tribune, December 18, 1873



Memorial Donation

South Wood County Historical Corporation was the recipient of a donation given in memory of Margaret Noel. Mrs. Noel and her husband Frank, have served as volunteers at the Museum. We appreciate this donation and are grateful for their past participation.

COMMENTS ON POSTAGE RATES

By now we are experiancing the new postal rated for letters. The rate went up by a hefty thirty percent. According to the HISTORY OF WOOD COUNTY book, the Grand Rapids post office was estabilished in 1845 with E.S.Miner as postmaster. Centralia also had its own postoffice at a very early date. The first postofföce was in Miner's general store. His business partner, John Warner, was deputy post master. It seemed hardly necessary to have an assistant since at that time the mail arrived only once a week and consisted of about a dozen letters and three or four newspapers. The Grand Rapids and Centralia post offices were consolidated when the two cities merged in 1900. Pigeon hole boxes rented for twenty-five cents a year and lock boxes for only a doller a year. And getting back to the postage rate. A penny stamp would get your letter out of the area and to any city in the country.

BEARSS MARSH

Bearss Marsh was the name of a plat surveyed on January 16, 1879, in Section 9 of Port Edwards township. The surveyor was E. Newman and he was engaged by J. T. Bearss and his partner Philip Alexander. Both men were cranberry growers. A train station was called Bearss Marsh and was located on the Chicago Milwaukee and Saint Paul railroad line. The purpose of this station was to transport cranberries. The attempt to found a village was not successful. The Cranmoor station was only a half mile further down the track. It was only logical for one of the stations to be closed and Bearss Marsh was the one to be given up. The siding at Cranmoor continued to be used well into the 1900's.

Additions to the Collection.....1994

Collecting artifacts is one of the primary objectives of SWCHC. We strive to broaden these collections by donations from local supporters. During 1994 we accepted the items listed below. We greatly appreciate the generosity of these donors.

Mabel Johnson.....Native American artifacts,
 clothing, postcards, school records, and other
 miscellaneous items.

Art Knoll.....Photo

Beverly Bruner Lau.....Wedding dress, related wedding
 items

Ilene W. Keller.....2 American flags

Pam Walker.....Franklin School Mother's Club
 Constitution and minutes, dress patterns

Marshall Buehler.....Blue Books

Nick Brazeau.....5 stereographs, 38 photos

Catherine (Steakel) LaBarge
Man's wedding suit

Beth Hetze.....Vacuum cleaner

Don Sprise.....3 photos, a painting, blueberry
 rake

Rolland Aubey.....2 Rotary Anniversary books

Robert Zellner.....3 books

H. M. Hughson.....Typewriter

J. Grace Hanneman.....Lady's and infant's clothing,
 linen items

Beaulah and Genevieve Otto
Shaving mugs, children's toys,
 Bible, magazines, miscellaneous items

G. D. Blessner.....Homemade fishing rod and chase

Rob Nurre.....2 books

William Schillinger.....Yearbook, photo, diplomas and
 certificates

Ethelmae Heler-Schulz...Photo, wedding dress and other
 miscellaneous wedding items

Aileen Norton Rubey.....Bible

Ernest Anderson.....World War uniforms and helmet

Victor Saeger.....Photo

Looking for a harbinger of spring?? Consider attending the Historic Pointe Bass, Inc. (*formerly Wakely Inn Preservation, Inc.*) Annual Meeting. **Michael Douglas , Director of the Villa Louis Historic Site** will be presenting *Interpreting the Fur Trade* on March 20, 1995 at 7:00 pm. The program will take place at the McMillan Library.

Trivia question? How many items have Bernadine and Karen Inventoried during 1994, which had no number previously (*i.e. A Found In Collection Item*)???

1452 Answer:



**SOUTH WOOD COUNTY
HISTORICAL CORPORATION**

540 Third Street South
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

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