

# THE EAGLE

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



# SPEAKS

FEBRUARY 2015

www.chippewacountywihistoricalsociety.org

"OLD ABE"

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Sunday dinner in the home of a typical American family.



## Company Invited for Dinner Next Sunday

ARLEY ENGEL

Do you remember the excitement of company coming to dinner back in the late 1950s and early 1960s? On the farm we were never flush with extra cash during this period of time but we did raise a big garden and had plenty of beef, pork and chicken if we needed to put up a big meal. Of course this included fresh milk and eggs. Plus we had access to berries, fruits and a large selection of vegetables from the garden. I especially remember the small red potatoes that were so tender that peeling was not necessary. Boil them till done and then add a little cream and butter for a tasty treat. We might even mix up some green peas in the cream sauce.

It makes me hungry to think about the roast beef sliced in chunks about 1¼ by 2 inches thick. It was so tender that for small pieces you could cut them with your fork. Small

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

**Monday, February 9 | 6:30**  
**CCHS Bi-Annual Membership Meeting**  
**Area History Center Library**  
 Presidents Progress Report | Hall of Fame Inductions | Program: Retired Fire-chief, Tom Larson, presents *History of Chippewa Falls Fire Department* slideshow



## GENEALOGY CORNER

### Webinars to View at Home

JUDITH RUBENZER

Are you interested in learning more about how to do genealogy research? Maybe you are trying to break through a brick wall. You are in luck. Take advantage of internet webinars to learn how to do genealogy research. Geoff Rasmussen from Legacy Family Tree hosts a genealogy webinar almost every Wednesday at 1:00 p.m. CT.

The presenters are professionals and topics vary from how to set up a filing system, legal issues such as copyright, emigration and immigration, how to research in specific countries or nationalities, what types of records to research and much, much more. Each presentation lasts for one hour. After that prizes are given out and audience questions take one-half hour.

Go to: [www.familytreewebinars.com](http://www.familytreewebinars.com) to access the site. Click on Upcoming Webinars to see the schedule and to sign up. The webinars are free at the time they are broadcast and for seven days. After the free period, you need to have a subscription.

Click the tab for Webinar Library to find past webinars. The benefit of a subscription is that each presenter provides a handout for his/her webinar.

Legacy Family Tree has almost two hundred webinars on its website. Some remain free and anyone can view these at any time. If you have questions, you can access the Frequently Asked Questions page at [www.familytreewebinars.com/innerpage.php?id=10](http://www.familytreewebinars.com/innerpage.php?id=10)

So ... have some fun learning something new about genealogy. Take advantage of the opportunities on the internet to obtain new ideas for doing genealogy research. Who knows ... you just might learn how to break through that brick wall of yours. 🍷



If the Sunday dinner gang was big enough, the kids got "special seating."

### Sunday Dinner *continued from cover*

chunks of fat clung to the edge to provide more flavor and making it easier to swallow. We might also have a bowl of red beets boiled in water and then coated with sweet butter with salt and pepper added. In the summer there would be fresh tomatoes, washed, sliced and served raw with salt and pepper to taste.

If we were having chicken it would be taken hot from the oven to be sliced and passed along with stuffing and gravy and don't forget the cranberries. Mother had some friends at Holcombe, Wisconsin, that called us each fall when the cranberries were at the peak of harvest to invite us to their land on the Fischer River to pick our own cranberries. Another treat was the homemade dill pickles from the basement of grandmother's house or in the summer we could have fresh picked cucumbers, sliced and salted to taste.

All of this food was often enjoyed at our farm with members of Mother's side of the family. Her sister Ruth with her husband Butch and their 6 children: Jack, Judy, Jane, Joyce, Wally and David plus the 7 of us made a fair sized crowd around our dining room table. This was even one or two more than we fed at corn shredding time when local farmers got together to help each other out in the fields. *Many happy memories from Engel's Little House On The Wheaton Prairie.* 🍷

### Thank you to the Wisconsin Historical Markers Program

RE: Historic Markers:

Dear Jim,

I have been working on a project the past 2 1/2 years to photograph and document online the historical markers of Wisconsin. I was in Chippewa Falls in September, specifically to photograph the Historical Society's historical markers. This link still needs to be updated with all the sites I visited in September, but, in total, I have photographed 115 markers / sites in Chippewa County, including those of the Chippewa County Historical Society:

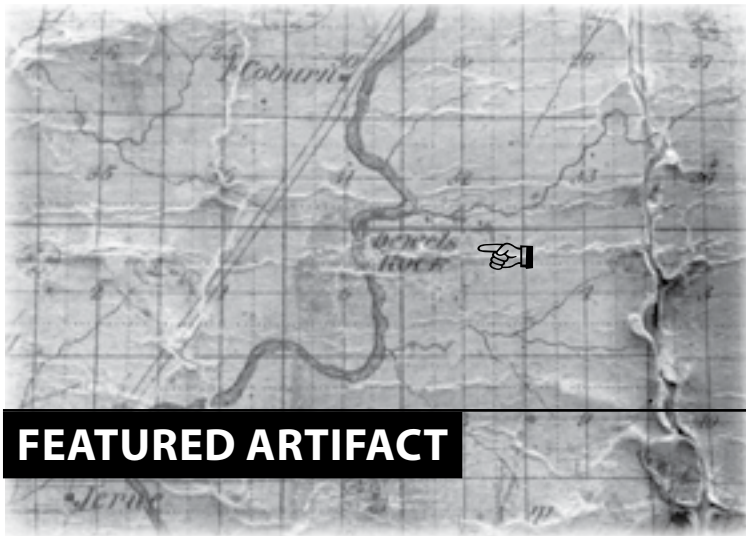
[wisconsinhistoricalmarkers.blogspot.com/2014/10/chippewa-county-markers-sites.html](http://wisconsinhistoricalmarkers.blogspot.com/2014/10/chippewa-county-markers-sites.html)

Thank you for your time regarding the markers I could not locate. I am hoping to get back to your area in the spring, and will look forward to meeting you and to visiting the remaining sites. For me, the warmer weather can't come quickly enough :)

All the best,

Melinda Roberts, Wisconsin Historical Markers





This Chippewa County 1873 map section shows Dewets Rock, which is located about two miles east of Cadott on the Yellow River.

Committees in sync!



### Chippewa County Historical Society Committee Members

## FEATURED ARTIFACT

# What the Heck is Dewets Rock?

JIM ERICKSON

**D**ark. Musty. Echoing stone walls. I could almost taste the age of this crypt of a room deep in the bowels of the History Center.

Neck hair on end? I won't admit feeling fright, but this lowly place was where I started a "new volunteer" assignment at the Center. Asked to unroll, identify and tag some large documents stored in cardboard shipping tubes, I was led to an expansive table in the dank room. Historically speaking, most documents were fairly new. But one yellowed tube I left to open last.

Finally getting to it, I could see a tattered edge inside the tube lip. While first documents didn't need "museum" handling, for this one, I slipped on the gauzy, white gloves. Feeling a little silly with Mickey Mouse hands, I was comforted some by being alone. At least with no one alive. Didn't know if any spirits were present, but sometimes my body tingled the way it used to in old Alfred Hitchcock movies.

Ah, what was in that last tube? Carefully sliding the paper onto the table, I could see its edges had broken into some small, even tiny, bits held only by the cloth backing. I smoothed what was a roughly yard square map, and looked for the little detail box in the corner. Dated around 1873, it recorded early Chippewa County. I had a little trouble finding Chippewa Falls (before Wissota) in a falling-apart section. But I did, and then pored over the whole map. A promotional piece bordering the entire left side told of the vast opportunities here in 1873.

Next, I started searching the rivers. Found that Jim Falls was James Falls Saw Mill on this map. And so many mills on every streamlet back then. Woops! What was that? In a distinct crook of a small creek, I spotted the label, "Dewets Rock." What was so noteworthy about an old rock in the middle of a creek? Or maybe on an outcropping forcing a creek bend. And outstanding enough to have a name equal to mills, towns, and swamps. Well, I had no idea.

Was it a place where some guy Dewet was crushed by the rock? Or an old, easily found site for trading furs and tobacco? Maybe a marker for a shallow spot where you could cross safely in a covered wagon, ox cart or farm wagon? I figured someone in the Boyd vicinity must know, but when I mentioned it, all I got was blank stares. And some looks like, "Who gives a fiddle about an old rock, anyway?"

Now I'm a bit lazy when it comes to locating historic(?) rocks in mid-winter. But this spring, I'll don (such a silly word for putting something on) my boots, Indiana Jones pants, and faux IJ fedora. Then, with GPS and high-energy bars, I'll start my trek to the mysterious Dewet. Probably through some dairy farmer's pasture. What'll I find? Stay tuned..... ❄️

#### \* Collection & Artifacts:

- \* Nancy Schuh, Arley Engel, Lucyann LeCleur, Teri Stahr,

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- \*Lucyann LeCleur, Donna Bourget

#### \* Building & Grounds:

- \*Skip August

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- \*Mary McKenna

#### \* Publicity:

- \*Jim Schuh

#### \* Newsletter:

- \*Jim Schuh, author & editor Elly Rochester, layout & design Nancy Schuh, author & proofreader

Column Authors: Arley Engel, Kathy Forsgren, Dave Gordon Jim Erickson

- \* Chairperson



## CALENDAR

## A Message From Your President

### Feb. 9

**6:30 p.m.** CCHS Bi-Annual Membership Meeting

### Feb. 10

**10:30 a.m.** Historic Marker Committee

### Feb. 17

(Membership meeting took place of Feb. Board Meeting)

**Noon** Area History Center Birthday Lunch

**1:30 p.m.** The Past Passed Here Planning Meeting

### Feb. 28:

**9 a.m. - 1 p.m.** Museum Open—Fourth Saturday

### March. 17

**9:30 a.m.** CCHS Board Meeting

**Noon** Area History Center Birthday Lunch

**1:30 p.m.** The Past Passed Here Planning Meeting

### March 28:

**9 a.m. - 1 p.m.** Museum Open—Fourth Saturday

### April. 21

**9:30 a.m.** CCHS Board Meeting

**Noon** Area History Center Birthday Lunch

**1:30 p.m.** The Past Passed Here Planning Meeting

### April. 25

**9 a.m. - 1 p.m.** Museum Open—Fourth Saturday

### May 7 - 10

The Past Passed Here in Allen Park

It seems like I just wrote a message to you for “The Eagle Speaks” yesterday. I guess time flies when you’re having fun. There are many things going on at the History Center these days. Two items I want you to know about.

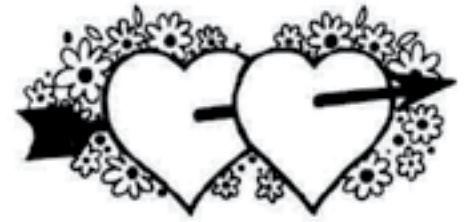
A special part of our February 9, 2015 Membership Meeting is the induction of people who have made significant contributions to the Chippewa County Historical Society into the Hall of Fame. The Board of Directors at their January 20, 2015 meeting elected Bob Barnier to the Hall of Fame. Bob was president of the Society from 1990 to 1998. While Bob was President the Society moved from the First National Bank into our present home—The Notre Dame Convent. The job of restoring the building after it sat unoccupied for about seven years was begun with many hours of volunteer work. Bob got a \$5,000 donation from the Chippewa County Board in 1994 to help our Marker Program, which now has over 50 historic markers throughout Chippewa County. In 1996 the Society completed the restoration of the Goldsmith Chapel.

The Board also elected Mistress Mary and Iron Knees to the Hall of Fame. Actually they will be inducted in the Hall under their given names Mary and Dennis Brown. Mary and Dennis stepped up when Chippewa Falls Main Street decided not to continue running The Past Passed Here about five years ago. Their donation of funds to give the Society money to keep the event going was important. It was however not as important as their taking over agreeing to produce the event. The event grew under their leadership despite wind, rain and Duncan Creek flooding. The event remains financially solvent and has provided 4th graders in the Chippewa School System and surrounding communities a look at a significant part of our history. While Mary and Denise have retired from their lead role they remain involved and we expect to see Mistress Mary and Iron Knees as re-enactors at future Past Passed Here events.

The other news is about the Future Museum in Chippewa. The Board of Directors of the Chippewa County Historical Society, Chippewa County Genealogical Society and the Chippewa Falls Museum of Industry & Technology will meet on February 16, 2015 to discuss the possibility of construction of a new museum in Chippewa. Seven people from the three organizations formed a committee to pursue a new museum. They have written a business plan to share with the three Boards. In addition the committee will talk about a proposed location, preliminary floor plan and the possibility of a new non-profit corporation to operate the new museum, which will house the three history groups.

Look forward to seeing you at the Membership Meeting on Monday, February 9 at 6:30 p.m. at the History Center. You do not want to miss Tom Larson’s history of the Chippewa Fire Department. *Dave* 🍷

# Donations



## COUNTY NEWS

### Donations in Memory of:

Sharon Zenner ..... Charles & Bernadette O'Donnell

### From:

### Donations in Honor of:

All the Loyal Volunteers.....David & Patricia Jankoski

### Other Donations:

Thomas & Nancy Chisholm  
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 Chippewa Falls Area Chamber of Commerce  
 Grant from the CFCC for The Past Passed Here  
 Joe Joas Fund at the CFCC

### Lifetime Memberships:

Kevin & Lynda Koehn ..... Family Lifetime Membership  
 Patrick & Susan Quinn ..... Family Lifetime Membership

### Stanley Area Historical Society

DAVID JANKOSKI, REPORTER

We are surviving the cold and snowy winter and our volunteers continue to show up faithfully on Tuesdays. Our winter work is mainly focused on changing exhibits, cleaning, accessioning new donations, collections work and refinement, filing, and census work. Our Digitization Committee has begun the long and arduous process of digitizing our collections. We were able to purchase all new equipment and Past Perfect Software for the project, thanks to member donations and two grants. The end result will hopefully be getting our collection records into a data base and photographing our collections.

Our 2015 construction project was begun in mid-January and the end result will be additional exhibit space being added in our north gallery room and new storage facilities for wedding dresses. Remodeling creates dust so we will be busy once the construction is completed !!

In early December we mailed our semi-annual newsletter and the challenges presented by new bulk mailing regulations have been overcome due to the hard work of our newsletter editor Betty Plombon.

Our Annual Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, January 31, when we will be reflecting back on 2014 and declaring it another successful year of operation. Our biggest goal for 2014 was the successful transition of investments into funds that produce more income to help cover increased annual operating costs.

Happy winter --- stay warm. ❄️

# Exhibit Updates

MARGE HEBBRING

The exhibit committee has been working to update the museum and remodel several exhibits...

The lobby has been cleaned and a new light fixture has been installed. The Allen Room has been rearranged to provide a chronological overview of the history of Chippewa Falls by introducing the first founders including Jean Brunett and the Allen and Des Maries families.

After many hours of planning, we have decided to move the Native American Room to the third floor. This will allow us to display the Allen beadwork in a way that will help to better preserve and protect this precious artifact. Several items from the Native American room will become part of a new display about the Fur Trade era. The new room will provide an overview of the tribes that lived in this region and how they were affected by the business of the Fur Trade. The new display will showcase fur trade items, compare and contrast Plains and Woodland Indian beadwork designs and housing structures and explore tribal history and culture through the use of arts and crafts, storytelling and music. Every May, the CCHS sponsors a Fur Trade Re-Enactment called The Past Passed Here. This event brings history to life for over 600 4th grade students and hundreds of visitors every year. Soon the third floor will present the history of our county in a more chronological way from the Fur Trade to surveying and on to the Civil War display.

From World War I to the Northern Wisconsin State Fair and on to logging and railroading, our museum offers a memorable experience to our visitors.

Tours are conducted every Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. ❄️




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Travis Dewitz's Photo of Eric's Diamonds & Excite-Wellness Studio

# Photo Documentation of Current Historic Architecture

JIM SCHUH

On January 6, 2015 local professional photographer, Travis Dewitz, posted a link on our CCHS Facebook page saying: "Something your Facebook fans may love to see. I would love if you shared the link." His photo documentation of most of the historic buildings in Chippewa Falls includes more than 450 images. The project introduction begins by saying: "This Historic City Series features Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. I graduated from Chi-Hi and wanted (to) really document its rich history."

The narrative begins by reviewing the area's early history mixed in among his current photos of buildings. The CCHS photo archive includes more than 8,000 historic photos. A few relating to Travis Dewitz's historic narrative were shared on our Facebook page.

Thirty years ago, in 1985, an Intensive Architectural and Historical Survey project report was produced including more than 1,000 photos of buildings at that time. That report is available at the CCHS. The current "snapshot" of how local buildings appear, provided by Mr. Dewitz, is a very helpful reference tool for the CCHS. Thank you to Travis and we hope our Facebook friends enjoy his project also!

[www.dewitzphotography.com/eau-claire-wi-photographer/wisconsin-historic-city-series-the-view-from-chippewa-falls-mainstreet/](http://www.dewitzphotography.com/eau-claire-wi-photographer/wisconsin-historic-city-series-the-view-from-chippewa-falls-mainstreet/)

Thanks to retired Jacob Leinenkugel Company brew-master, Dale Buhrow, for sharing his family photos of the Wisconsin Ice Company! About 20 wonderful photos show various tasks of harvesting and storing ice. We are considering creating an exhibit about ice making and delivery using these donated photos. We have two ice harvesting saws to display. Does anyone have iceman tongues that they would donate or lend us for a new exhibit?



## Wish List

### For new exhibits:

- ♥ Ice man delivery ice tongs
- ♥ Helland Violin (Chippewa Falls)
- ♥ Gustave Caesar Violin (Chippewa Falls)

### French fur trade items:

- ♥ A Cross of Lorraine (large if possible)
- ♥ Native American Beadwork
- ♥ Trade blankets
- ♥ Trade silver
- ♥ A C

### For photo archives:

We will scan pictures if you don't want to leave them.

- ♥ Chippewa Canning Company, 800 block of E. Grand Ave
- ♥ Any old corner or neighborhood grocery stores: Brule's Grocery, McPhee Grocery, Butenhoff's Grocery, Misfeldts Grocery, Crystal Grocery Store, Morris Grocery, Cote Grocery, National Tea Co. Food Store, Bert Dumars, O'Grady Grocery, Felber's Grocery, Perrenoud Grocery, Ed Gehl Grocery, Potter Grocery, R.W. Gutknecht, Redard Bros. Grocery, Johnson Grocery, Red Owl Stores, Melvin Johnson Grocery, Schwaners Food Shop, Krueger Grocery, Sokup's Grocery, Lange Food Shop, Super A&P Store, Leidholt Store, Willette Grocery & Meats, Maloney Grocery Store, Willi Grocery, Marquardt Grocery



## HEARD ABOUT TOWN

### 2015 Marks Many Milestones

Founded in 1970, the Chippewa County Historical Society will celebrate our 45-year anniversary this year. Our partner organization, the Chippewa County Genealogical Society turns 35 and we have both been in current location, the former Notre Dame convent, at 123 Allen Street, for 25 years! We are planning a joint special event to celebrate these mileposts in September.

### Gordy's County Market increases support of local non-profits.

Gordy's grocery receipts dated up to January 31, 2015 will be eligible for the traditional 1% reimbursement by non-profits until March 31, 2015. Gordy's script will now be available to local non-profit organizations at a 5% discount. Groups like the Chippewa County Historical Society will then be able to sell the script (Gordy's Gift Cards) at full price to our supporters. The script can be utilized for Gordy's Express Gas, Gordy's Valley Spirits and Gordy's County Market grocery purchases. Stop in at the Area History Center during open hours to support us by purchasing Gordy's Script prior to going shopping and or filling your gas tank! Thank you to Gordy's for increasing their support to us!

### The Past Passed Here

Planning is in full swing for our 12th annual living history event. We are in need of volunteers to help May 6 to 10 on school days and when the event is open to the public during the weekend from. If you can help we have a variety of tasks. Please contact Jim Schuh 715-726-2376..

### WHAT WAS HAPPENING 100 YEARS AGO AT THIS TIME . . .

## Planning to Build a Company Town

JIM SCHUH

It was foreseen that the task (of building the Wissota Dam) would employ a large force of workers and it would take many months of time. So, a regular town was laid out, for the housing of the employees, adjacent to the site of the proposed improvement. The groundwork of the town planning was the water and sewerage system. Pure water was taken from springs above the dam site and distributed into every building; and a complete sewerage system was laid down to empty its wastes into the river at a safe distance downstream from the camp site.

The structures included a modern home for the superintendent of construction; bungalows for engineers and foremen living on the job with their families; bunk-houses and a central dining room for the working men; and separate houses made available for workers with families. The bunk-houses were heated by steam, conveyed under-ground from the source of supply; lighted by electricity, and their lavatories were supplied with hot water. The commissary facilities included a kitchen of large size, backed up by a cold storage house for meats, an ample grocery supply and root-houses for the storage of vegetables. The dining room was of capacity sufficient to seat 350 persons at a time, this being about half the force employed. The meals were served on china, with a waiter to each twelve persons.

In the bunkhouses standard double-decker iron beds with mattresses for each person were provided. Each employee was required to bathe and have his linen washed weekly. The sheets on the bunk-house beds were renewed with the same frequency, with an additional renewal each time a new tenant called for their use. Gambling and liquor supply were taboo. Reading and recreation rooms were attached to each bunkhouse. For the camp, as a whole, a tobacco shop, a billiard and poolroom and an assembly room in which recreational features were provided, were established and maintained. These features varied from exhibitions of "Movies" and amateur exhibitions to really pretentious concerts provided by considerate residents of the adjacent city of Chippewa Falls.

A hospital with six beds, a pharmacy and a resident physician provided for emergency cases, and the general run of minor ailments with which the usual proportion of so large a force might be afflicted. For the inevitable casualties, first aid was provided by the resident physician; while the services of a leading surgeon of the neighboring city and the facilities of a modern general hospital in the same place were at the disposal of employees whose cases called for surgical treatment or continued hospital attention. There were not a few children of school age in the construction camp at Wissota. For these a standard Wisconsin school house was built and a teacher provided by the Wisconsin - Minnesota Light and Power Company, this being the first recorded case of a district school maintained in Wisconsin without a tax levy."

The forgoing information was taken from *The White Coal of Wisconsin* a book written by John A. Russell in 1918 for Kelsey, Brewer & Co.





Chippewa Falls High School students work together to produce an event held at honoring WWII veterans from Chippewa Falls.

## Consultant Comments: Educational Collaboration

NATHANIEL GREEN


Working at Chippewa County Historical Society brings many rewards. But few are as satisfying as being able to help educators in the Chippewa Valley. On December 27, Todd Kornack, a high school history teacher at Chippewa Falls High School, participated in an event honoring veterans from Chippewa Falls, accompanied by two of his history students. Chippewa County Historical Society provided several newspaper articles from the 1940s, to put on display for the event.

The newspapers were on display along with several other artifacts loaned from a private citizen. The copies were duplicates of newspaper editions CCHS has archived, and they were laminated, so visitors could handle them. According to Mr. Kornack, the World War II veterans from Chippewa Falls were moved by the display. "Some of them even remembered reading the story in the newspaper!" Kornack said.

Mr. Kornack and I will be working closely together in the future, when his American Club begins research on Edward Rutledge, Chippewa Falls businessman and philanthropist. Educational projects like this are so important for CCHS because they demonstrate the variety of ways the work of the dedicated volunteers at the Historical Society benefits our entire community. I am particularly proud of this event because it gave people in the community—veterans as well as students—a chance to interact with historical artifacts in a hands-on way. "Some people were a little nervous about touching them," Kornack noted about the laminated newspapers. But after awhile, people were reading the stories, and trying on the helmet a private citizen donated. That physical experience is so important, Mr. Kornack observed, because it reminds students that what they're studying really happened.

Of course, many items at CCHS can't be handled by the public. But every item is a physical reminder of a real past that real people experienced—a reality that can be difficult to glean from a textbook alone. One of our goals for 2015 is to bring that history to the people of this community through educational projects like this one. We're off to a great start! ♣

### Company Town continued

 Caption for image at the top of page 8: The Company Town was built to house the 700 workers and their families prior to construction of the Lake Wissota dam. The buildings included a dining hall, hospital, school and homes. This classroom photo was dated April 28, 1916.

During the next few years each issue of our newsletter will feature an article on the 1913-1917 formation of Lake Wissota. Xcel Energy has provided the Chippewa County Historical Society and the Lake Wissota Improvement & Protection Association 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. ♣

# CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## 2014-2015

### OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

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