

THE EAGLE

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



SPEAKS

NOVEMBER 2009

www.chippewacountywihistoricalsociety.org

"OLD ABE"

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Fourth grade students negotiate an obstacle course of logs while balancing a tin cup full of water on a canoe paddle. The first one to cross the finish line with water in their cup wins the paddle race.



**The Area History Center
will be closed**
for the holidays on
Tuesday, December 22 and
Tuesday, December 29.



The Chippewa County Historical Society Presents "The Past Passed Here"

JIM SCHUH

Two organizations, La Voyagers Duval Du Chippewa and Chippewa Falls Main Street, created The Passed Past Here in 2003. The event won the Wisconsin Main Street 2005 Best Cultural Preservation Project Award. The CCHS has been part of this event since its inception. We have a lumberjack and antique tool display that is assembled and coordinated by Arley Engel and we have also been a financial sponsor. During a recent 2010 planning retreat the Main Street Board of Directors decided to discontinue coordinating this event and it was offered to the CCHS.

At our October meeting the CCHS Board of Directors voted unanimously to take over the leadership of this exciting, educational event. The Past Passed Here will be held in May 2010, during the week prior to Mother's Day. Fittingly May is National Historic Preserva-

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2007-2009

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

❖ **President**

Dave Gordon, 6854 182nd St.,
Chippewa Falls (08) 723-2647

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Jim Schuh, 5432 178th St.,
Chippewa Falls 726-2376 (11)

❖ **Recording Secretary &
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Mary McKenna, 217 W. Elm St.,
Chippewa Falls (08) 720-9635

❖ **Treasurer**

Kathryn Forsgren, 18498 122nd Ave.,
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❖ Wayne Meyer, 622 S 8th St.,
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❖ Teri Stahr, 7493 County Hwy K
Chippewa Falls 723-9007 (10)

❖ Arley Engel, 5294 90th St.,
Chippewa Falls (07) 723-5124



Arley and Dave ride the buffalo!



Log sawing contest.

The Past continued from cover

tion Month. This will be an opportunity for us to enhance the historic focus and to recreate the experience of living in Chippewa Falls during the 1700s, 1800s and early 1900s.

The event began seven years ago in Allen Park which is the actual site of French fur trade era camps. This was later the location of the largest sawmill in the world under one roof, the former Chippewa Lumber & Boom Company. The events' name, The Past Passed Here, was selected to celebrate and reflect the significance of this rendezvous and lumbering era site.

All 400+ fourth grade students from Chippewa Fall's parochial and public schools will participate in half-day, hands-on activities during school hours Wednesday – Friday. During these times the “camp” is closed to the public due to school regulations. Teachers have commented that this excellent historic re-enactment reinforces the local history curriculum that the children have been studying during the school year. Our goal is to raise funds to cover the student's admission cost. Financial sponsors are needed to match a \$2,500 startup donation generously pledged by a CCHS lifetime member family.

The event will take place May 5th through May 9th. It will be open to the public on Thursday, (May 6th) and Friday, (May 7th), 3-6 p.m., Saturday, (May 8th) 9 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sunday, (May 9th) 9 a.m. - Noon, which is Mother's Day. As usual there will be a \$3 admission fee charged to help cover the costs of operations.

Adults and students alike will enjoy this step back in time, wandering among authentic re-enactor camps and participating in activities and camp competitions including cat & mouse, canoe paddle races, hawk throwing, sawing competition and souvenir medallion making. Demonstrators in the past have included blacksmiths, brain hide tanning, spinners and weapons exhibits. Food vendors have featured old-fashioned candy, fry bread, kettle corn, buffalo burgers, root beer floats and voyager stew. Merchants have a variety of items for sale including beeswax candles, reproduction antique clothing, leather, animal furs/skins, beads, jewelry and toys.

Community volunteers are needed to make this event a success. There are a number of ways you can help from manning the admission gate to assisting with medallion making or performing live music that would be appropriate to these time periods. We are also looking for church groups or service clubs to operate food booths featuring fare that would have been available during the late 1800s or early 1900s. For more information contact event co-chairs Mary Brown at 715-723-0619 or Jim Schuh at 715-726-2376. ❖



CALENDAR

Silo Filling—It is the Season

ARLEY ENGEL

One day last week we heard the noise. It was our neighbor Tom Goulet's equipment running in a field just down the road from our house. We saw him go by a little earlier with the big four wheel drive tractor, a chopper and a large self unloading wagon. It seemed like he had just got in the field, when the noise started. It was the special humming noise that a chopper makes when it is cutting the corn into silage.

This is a sound that brought back memories of 1947, when we got our new Fox one row chopper with a 40 hp continental engine. With this engine it meant that we could travel faster in the fields, as we used 11/2 ton trucks to haul the silage to the blower which blew the silage up into the silo. We started doing custom work for neighbor farmers in 1947. Dad had purchased a new 1947 International KB5 truck earlier in the year, and built a 14 foot box with 5 foot side boards and a tail gate that was hinged at the top, meaning the bottom would swing out and we would brace it up with an 8 foot 2x4. Then we would go to the cab and take out the big crank for the Little Giant hoist. This was a hand crank hoist that would raise the front of the box about 5 feet. At this time we would hook a tractor to a pair of cables that run to a false end gate at the front of the box. This tractor would pull the load back and we would keep raking the silage down with a 90 degree angled fork into the blower. This was a much improved method compared to the good old days when all the neighbors got together to fill silo.

If we go back only 2 years to 1945, we were part of a silo filling crew. The Wall brothers, Frank, George and Ed had the silo filler. The rest of the crew included Charles and Robert Goulet, Clifford Goulet, Wilfred LeDuc, Joy and Clayton Lynn, my Dad Ray Engel, Don Kraft, George Rooney, George Blaeser, John, Bernard and Virgie Lynn and Ed Baier. At this time the corn was cut with a corn binder, the binder tied the corn in bundles and would drop the bundles on the ground. The farm that was first on the list to have their silo filled, would cut enough corn a day ahead to keep the crew busy for a full day, or at least enough to fill their silo if it was a smaller silo. We usually left the silo filler pipes overnight and then refilled the next day, as the silage would settle or pack down maybe 5 to 7 feet overnight. We would then move to the next farmer down the road.

After talking with my old farmer friends at breakfast on October 12, 2009, I was informed that I should tell of the pride these farmers had in their teams of horses. I did remember that Charlie Goulet had bridles on his horses that had plumes of feathers mounted on on the top strap, almost like you would see on horses in the circus. Plus Charlie and Clifford had fancy shiny black harnesses with a lot of extra white celluloid rings, just like ordering extra chrome on a car. Each farmer had something special about their team and also their wagons. I remember the Schneider family had breaks on the rear wheels of their wagons. This was necessary where there were steep hills to help hold the wagon from pushing the horses out of control of the load.

November 17, 9:15 a.m.

CCHS Board Meeting

November 17, Noon

Area History Center Birthday Lunch

November 24, 1 p.m.

The Past Passed Here Planning Meeting

December 15, 9:15 a.m.

CCHS Board Meeting

December 22, 1 p.m.

Area History Center Closed for Christmas Holiday

December 29, 9:15 a.m.

Area History Center Closed for New Years Holiday

January 19, 9:15 a.m.

CCHS Board Meeting

January 19, 10:30 a.m.

Historic Marker Committee Meeting

January 19, Noon

Area History Center Birthday Lunch

All meetings are at the Area History Center 123 Allen Street unless otherwise noted.

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, Wisconsin.

Mail any comments or future articles to 123 Allen St., Chippewa Falls, WI 54729. 715-723-4399.

Chippewa County Historical Society
123 Allen St., Chippewa Falls, WI
Open on Tuesdays | 9am-4pm

FEATURED ARTIFACT



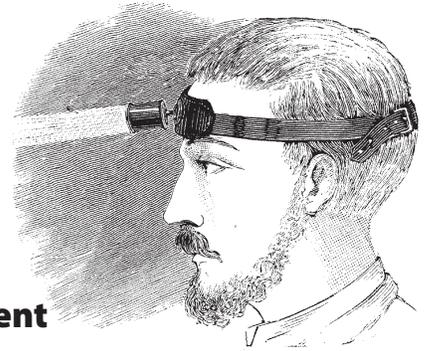
The Victorian Doll House

Recently Lorraine and John Pontius donated a beautifully crafted three-story Victorian doll house complete with an attic. It has two bedrooms, kitchen, dining room, living room, bathroom, and hall with two staircases leading to the second and third floor.

John helped with the wiring (all the wall and ceiling fixtures light up along with lamps) and the assembly of the dollhouse itself. Lorraine did the major portion of the work. The project took three years and the doll house donated to us was their last one made. The first three went to their daughters, Mary and Linda and granddaughter, Jenna.

Unique items in the house are a miniature French horn, an instrument their daughter Mary played in high school. There is a portrait of their family hanging in the doll house along with daughter Linda's wedding picture that is on the stairway. Linda did the needlepoint in the living room. ♣

A Message From Your President



“Time flies when you’re having fun.” I can’t believe it’s time for another newsletter. A lot has happened since I wrote to you in the August newsletter.

The Board of Directors at its October meeting established an Honorary Lifetime Membership. This membership will be granted to people in the community who have made major contributions to the Society by committee membership, service, and/or financial support. The Board granted the first Honorary Lifetime Membership to Kurt Gaber. Kurt has served on the Historic Marker Sub Committee for about ten years.

Kurt and his daughter have repaired and maintained many of the fifty markers. He has continued to improve the design and life of our markers. He also has provided much support in using his business skills of sign design and graphics to meet various sign needs of the Society.

The Society received a letter from Ayres Associates, who The City of Chippewa Falls has hired to study what should be done with The Marsh Rainbow Arch Bridge. The famous Chippewa Falls landmark does not meet the standard width requirements of bridges and the bridge built in 1916 has deteriorated and may be replaced or closed to vehicular traffic. Jim Schuh our Vice President is heading up our effort to maintain and preserve the Bridge. The Society will continue to monitor the project and support options that will preserve this important landmark.

The Past Passed Here has been an educational and community event for the last seven years. Chippewa Falls Main Street has produced the event and decided it can no longer can do that. I asked Jim Schuh to called together interested parties who might want to take over the event. It was the unanimous opinion of the group that this was an important educational event for the fourth graders of the Chippewa School District. Mary Brown and Jim Schuh volunteered to act as co-chairs of this event and Mary and her husband Dennis donated seed funds to help keep the event going. The group asked the Chippewa County Historical Society if they would put their name on the event. The Board of Directors agreed to do this provided the Society does not have any substantial financial commitment. I’ll keep you informed of the progress of this event which happens in May 2010.

The Semi-annual Membership Meeting was held in Irvine Park. The food was great and the program by Tom Larson, chair of the Historic Marker Sub Committee, highlighted the historic markers that the Society has placed throughout our County. Elections were held with the following results: Jim Schuh–Vice President, Mary McKenna–Secretary, Nancy Schuh–Director, Wayne Meyer–Director

Dave ♣



Chippewa County Historical Society

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October 22, 2009

Richard Rubenzer, PE
Director of Public Works/City Engineer
Utilities Manager
City of Chippewa Falls
30 West Central Street
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

Chris McMahon, PE – Project Engineer
Ayres Associates, Inc.
2433 Oakwood Hills Parkway
Eau Claire, WI 54701-7698
715-834-3161
mcmahonc@AyresAssociates.com

Dear Gentlemen:

Thank you for your letter notifying the Chippewa County Historical Society (CCHS) about the informational meeting scheduled for this evening. CCHS President, Dave Gordon requested me to attend this meeting because he was scheduled to be out of town. I recently had a scheduling conflict arise and therefore I cannot attend this meeting. Please accept this letter as a formal request from the CCHS Board of Directors. A letter was submitted approximately two years ago stating the board's preference to preserve this important bridge.

We request that the City of Chippewa Falls maintain and preserve the circa 1916 Marsh Rainbow Arch Bridge. Please select the option of limiting vehicle access and preserving this highly visible historic structure.

The CCHS Board strongly encourages the city to save this bridge from demolition. The bridge is architecturally significant and is a local landmark. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. The Chippewa County Historical Society has recognized the importance of the bridge with a historic marker that is located next to the bridge along the Duncan Creek Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail.

The image of the bridge appears on Downtown Chippewa Falls welcome signs and in many community promotional publications. Building and business owners in the downtown have invested millions of dollars in historic building restorations and architecturally compatible in-fill construction that compliment the early 1900s building stock located in the Bridge Street Commercial Historic District that is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Your October 5th letter states that this is the first of several meetings intended to gather information and concerns regarding options to be considered. Please continue to notify us about upcoming meetings. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Jim Schuh, Vice President

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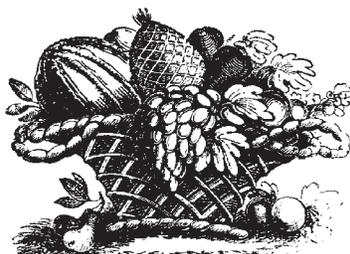


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Silo Filling continued from page 2

These farmers had names for their teams, our team included Prince a white horse and Roy a black one. Clifford's team was a pair of sorrels, Cub and Cornel. Charlie's team were Dolly and Bess. Bob Goulet stated that every spring his father would clean and oil the harnesses for their team. Each farmer seemed to have something special that the others all admired.

As this silo filling was going on the farmer's wife supplied very tasty meals, usually dinner. The menu included such things as roast beef or baked chicken, mashed potatoes, green beans, carrots or peas, plus usually 2 kinds of pie, apple, blueberry or maybe pumpkin or one of my mother's favorites, lemon meringue. They also served us maybe 2 kinds of cookies or many times there was 2 or 3 kinds of cake. The biggest treat was the great meals that all the farm wives came up with and we got to meet some very interesting people. The ladies that come up with these delicious meals include Beatrice Wall, Emily Goulet, Sylvia Goulet, Agnes Le Duc, Marjory Engel, Molly Lunn, MaryAnn Kraft, Doris Rooney, Ida Blaeser, Sylvia Baier. We all wondered what would be served at the next meal. It was hard work filling silo but the good neighbors made it all worthwhile.

That's all for now from Engel's Little House On the Wheaton Prairie.

PS. I can not stop with this story with out telling about Grandpa Bert Engel, his job was working inside the silo running the distributor pipe. This is a device attached to the end of the filler pipe, and is shaped like a funnel. There is a long rope attached to this device so the operator can pull different directions to get the silage to go to the outer area of the silo. The reason to do this is to stop the silage from piling in the center and then the corn cobs roll to the outside. This does not allow for good compaction, so a man was put in the silo to operate the distributor pipe and tramp the silage to prevent spoilage. This silo man was also responsible to move the silo doors as it was filling. As the silage got near the height of the open door he would climb out into the silo chute and take a door from above the open door and move it down to the opening, then climb back into the silo and continue spreading and tramping the silage. This was a very boring job as brother Eugene and I found out after Grandpa Bert passed away in 1944. We had to take turns in the silo. it wasn't nearly as much fun as working in the field driving horses on the bundle wagons. 🐾



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- * Nancy Schuh, Arley Engel, Lucyann LeCleir, Terri Stahr, Gail Willi, Jeff Pritchard

Photography Sub Committee:

- *Lucyann LeCleir, Donna Bourget

❖ **Building & Grounds:**

- *Steve Rasmus

Space Utilization Sub Committee

- *Steve Rasmus

❖ **Education:**

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Docent Subcommittee:

- Lalie Boos, Pat Ahneman

❖ **Exhibits:**

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Historic Markers Sub Committee:

- * Tom Larson, Jim Schuh, Arley Engel, Kurt Gaber

❖ **Finances:**

- *Skip August, Kathy Forsgren

❖ **Membership:**

- *Shirley Liedl, Mary McKenna

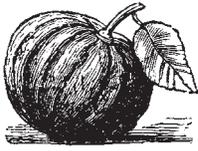
Telephone Subcommittee:

- *Mary McKenna

❖ **Publicity:**

- *Jim Schuh, Wayne Meyer
Newsletter Design: Elly Rochester

* *Chairperson*



COUNTRY NEWS

Stanley Area Historical Society

DAVE JANKOSKI, REPORTER

Veteran's Programs A Success

The Stanley Area Historical Society has completed a very busy summer and fall. Fall highlights included six WW II veteran's programs that were held in August and September. Attendees numbered over 350 and they were not disappointed as they heard very personal and emotional stories from more than 30 veterans, most in their late 80's or early 90's. It was a great way for our community to recognize their military service and to record their stories. All the speakers and their family members, who accompanied them, were treated to a soup and sandwich luncheon. It has been decided that the gallery of exhibits that were installed to commemorate WW II will be maintained another year, so if you missed visiting us in 2009, you can come see the exhibits in 2010.

Work on our new building continues. The only remaining work on the interior is the completion of the new exhibits, which is progressing nicely. Exterior work still remaining are connecting sidewalks, brickwork around the new entrance and building a walkway to the Farming and Logging Building. Financially, we are still in need of about \$7,000 to complete the project and have it totally paid for.

Winter volunteers have resumed doing research, working on upgrading some old exhibits and planning for the grand opening of our new building on July 10-11, 2010 during which we are also planning a reopening of our Farming and Logging Building, where exhibits have been cleaned, updated and relabeled.

Thanks to donations, our two computer stations have been upgraded and we have a new copy machine. These machines greatly enhance our ability to record and store our collections and help us better serve those who visit looking for family and personal history. ❖



Dave and Ann Gordon

A VOLUNTEER PROFILE

MARY MCKENNA

Dave

Dave Gordon wasn't always the President of the Chippewa County Historical Society. He was born in Orange, New Jersey in January 1940. Kearny, New Jersey was home for the first ten years of his life. Going to Grandma's for Sunday dinner and to watch one of the early black and white television was a high light of the week. Little Silver, New Jersey was the next stop. Summers at the beach swimming in the cold Atlantic Ocean are fond memories. At 13, his parents announcement that they were moving to Minneapolis, Minnesota was not well received.

Life adjusted to the new home in Robbinsdale. The concern of relatives in New Jersey about the wild Indians in Minnesota proved untrue. Sports continued to be an important part of Dave's life. He played basketball and baseball in high school. Went on to swim and play baseball in college at Macalester College in St. Paul. His interest in engineering took him to the University of Minnesota to study civil engineering. While finishing up his degree, he heard his name called out walking to class one fall day. The caller was Ann Lindsey, a friend he had met at Macalester. Ann soon became Dave's primary interest, which led to a December engagement and an April wedding in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin.

The Vietnam War assured Dave he would be drafted following graduation so he volunteered to join the Navy. He and Ann packed up their worldly possessions and headed for Newport, Rhode Island to Officer Candidate School. Air Intelligence and the Civil Engineer Corp filled the next five years. The Gordon family grew with the addition of Jeff and Ginny. Following his Navy career Dave joined The Procter & Gamble Company in Cincinnati, Ohio. Facilities Management and Construction at P&G's research facilities in Cincinnati was Dave's focus. During this time Ann returned to college to get her Masters degree in Community Planning. She started her career as a transportation planner in the Regional Council of Governments in Cincinnati.

Dave returned to night school to pursue an associate degree in Broadcast Management Arts from Southern Ohio College. An opportunity presented itself at P&G, which gave Dave the opportunity to manage the group that did internal communications for the company. Managing artists, photographers and videographers proved quite a challenge.

As Jeff and Ginny grew, the interest in sports became a family activity. Competitive swimming occupied much of the family life. Dave and Ann watched both Ginny and Jeff swim in high school. Jeff took to swimming and won three Ohio State Championships and then went on to swim at the University of Michigan. Ginny also swam in high school, and her senior year her relay team went to State.

After kids in college and two weddings, Dave and Ann settled down to an empty nest. Two grandchildren, Lindsey and Nick,, added to Dave and Ann's activities. In 2000 Dave and Ann retired and started spending May through October at Lake Wissota on the property

Donations



Betty Plombom shown accepting the *Hall of Fame* plaque from president Dave Gordon at the annual fall membership meeting, on September 21, 2009 at the Irvine Park meeting room. She was unable to attend the February membership meeting when the other five *Hall of Fame* inductees were honored for their service.

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Dave continued from page 8

Ann's grandparents had purchased in the 1930s. The original summer cottage was just usable in the summer, so Dave and Ann built a year round summer home on the property. Little did they realize that four years after retirement it would become their permanent home. Ginny and her family announced they were moving to Raleigh, North Carolina, and several months later Jeff and his wife moved to Sacramento, California. As a result Dave and Ann sold their home in Cincinnati and made Chippewa their home.

The Chippewa Chapter of Ann and Dave's life has been one of volunteering. Both have been active in First Presbyterian Church. Ann is currently President of The Lake Wissota Improvement and Protection Association and is on the Design Committee of Chippewa Falls Main Street and the Resources Development Committee of the Community Foundation of Chippewa County. Dave is on the Board of Directors of the Open Door Clinic and the Board of Trustees of The Chippewa County United Way. Dave's involvement with the Chippewa County Historical Society began when Freddie Glass Jensen suggested that Dave consider being on the Board of Directors of the Historical Society. He was then asked to fill the position of vice president. Upon the untimely death of Jim Schumacher, former President of the Historical Society he assumed his present role of president, one that in a short time has seen the growth of our organization.

Dave is a marvel to observe as he manages to juggle the responsibilities of a "full plate" of community projects. We feel fortunate that he made Chippewa Falls his permanent home and that he and his wife, Ann, are so willing to serve our community. 🍷

Chippewa County Historical Society

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NOVEMBER 2009

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