

THE EAGLE

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



SPEAKS

NOVEMBER 2012

www.chippewacountywihistoricalsociety.org

"OLD ABE"

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Over 100 Years of History

BY ARLEY ENGEL

While searching through *The Mason Companies* book of 100 years of history of the Mason Shoe Company, published in 2004, the first thing I noticed was the photo on the cover of the book. It gives us a good look at Duncan Creek, the dam on the creek and the flume that directed the creeks water to the west side, thus allowing it to power turbines to operate machines within the factory. After reading some of the early history of the Mason family. August Mason, one of the founders of the company, got his start in local lumber camps. He had come to this area from Germany in the 1850s and by 1890 he was a subcontractor to the larger lumber companies. They provided lumber to the mills and camp services such as food and housing for the lumberjacks. This was a profitable venture for August. It is estimated he made close to \$250,000 in his best year. He stayed in this trade until 1903, when most of the forest had been cut over and only small pockets of timber remained. Mason saw that lumbering days were numbered in the Chippewa Valley and he retired from lumbering.

August had four sons and two daughters to provide for, thus, he needed to invest in other ventures. His son John was set up with a dairy farm one-half mile from our home on 90th Street. A.C. Mason was given a hardware store on Bridge Street in Chippewa Falls. August Jr. received a medical education and B.A. (Bert) was to enter the shoe industry.



The Area History Center will be
closed for the holidays on
Tuesday, December 25 and Tuesday, January 1.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



CALENDAR

Dec. 11

9:30 a.m. CCHS Board Meeting

Dec. 18

Noon Area History Center
Birthday Lunch

Dec. 25:

History Center closed

Jan. 1

History Center closed

Jan. 15

9:30 a.m. CCHS Board Meeting

Noon Area History Center
Birthday Lunch

Jan. 22

1:00 p.m. The Past Passed
Here Planning Meeting

Feb. 11

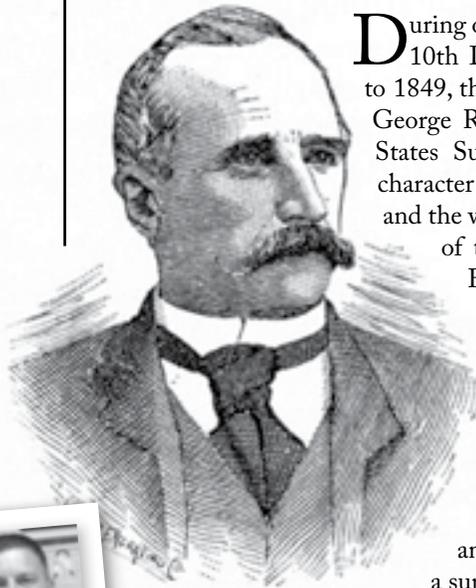
CCHS Bi-Annual
Membership Meeting



Dennis Mickesh
portraying Deputy
United States Surveyor,
George R. Stuntz

A Visitor from Our Past

BY JIM SCHUH



George R. Stuntz

During our Semi-annual Membership Meeting on September 10th Dennis Mickesh took us on a journey back in time to 1849, the year after Wisconsin became a state. He portrayed George R. Stuntz, who had been hired as a Deputy United States Surveyor to survey the new state of Wisconsin. In character and in costume he explained the basics of surveying and the work he would do in Chippewa County. Antique tools of the trade were shown, described and demonstrated.

He also told us of the activities going on in Chippewa Falls, towns down river and along the Mississippi River. His methods of travel included steamboat, poling flat boats, wagon trails and brushing many miles of paths through the woods. He portrayed local life and the advance of logging in this area.

In real life Dennis was our Chippewa County Surveyor for over 30 years so this was a subject near and dear to his heart. He is also in the process of creating a surveying exhibit on the third floor of the museum.

Richard (Rick) Wold, owner of Studio One Teleproductions videotaped the program and produced a professional 41-minute DVD, which he has donated to us. Rick also plans to have the program shown on Community Television (formerly Public Access TV), which can be seen on Charter TV channel 96.

Thank you to Dennis for an entertaining and educational presentation and to Rick Wold for recording it for us. ♡



Annually a History and Culture program is held at the Area History Center for participants in the Leadership Chippewa Falls community awareness program. On November 1 speakers enlightened 17 participants. Presenters pictured from left include CCHS President Dave Gordon, composer of songs about Chippewa Falls history Jerry Way and Tim Scobie who spoke about local culture and history. Missing from the photo is Roger Howard, president of the Geneological Society.

The Past Passed Here is Returning

We will hold our 10th Annual French fur trade and lumbering era re-enactment, *The Past Passed Here*, on May 8-12. About a dozen volunteers are holding planning meetings regularly. Once again our goal is to offer an exciting and educational field trip to 650 Fourth Grade students as a reinforcement to their local history curriculum. When student groups are not present the event is open to the public and offers everyone a "step back in time." We need more volunteers to assist us by serving food in our food booth, helping students and the public make souvenir necklaces, manning the main entrance and more activities. Contact co-chairs Mary Brown at 715-723-0619 or Marge Hebbing at 715-720-7877 to sign up or for more information.



NOTES FROM THE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

BY ANNE KELLER

Because we live in Wisconsin, it is a certainty that winter will be here soon! Therefore, we will lose several weekly Genealogical Society volunteers—snowbirds—to warmer climes. And, a few other key personnel have had health concerns, so... we encourage people who are interested in climbing family trees (some trees have nuts and some have squirrels, but they all have roots!) to volunteer a few hours each week (on any Tuesday) in our genealogy library. What could you do? There's always indexing to be done, or helping researchers who come for the day from anywhere/everywhere, or answering mail or email queries, straightening shelves, or helping to collate the newsletter. Just stop in... we'll find something that fits with your interests and talents.

In January we will have our annual election of officers. According to our constitution, three officers will be replaced: President, Secretary, and one Director. If you're already a member of CCGS, step up and let one of the current officers know that you'd like to be an officer too!

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

Over 100 Years continued from cover

The daughters Agnes and Anna inherited the family house and what money remained. The shoe business ended up being mostly sold through catalogs and by individual salesmen who carried sample cases of Mason Shoe products. To learn more on this business, stop by our History Center and check out our photos and books.

Speaking of catalogs do you remember the good old days when the Montgomery Ward or the Sears, Roebuck and Company catalogs served us in the country? When the new catalog arrived it was searched through by every member of our family, especially by us boys on long winter or rainy days. We snickered through the women's corset department. I think the nonchalance look on the ladies faces as they stood in their underwear impressed us the most and caused us to giggle more. Each catalog had a long life of use at our house, sometimes it was used to make a baby brother sit higher in the high chair so we could feed him a little easier. Sometimes it was used as a rest for mother's Coleman gas fired iron. Sometimes clean pages were torn out and placed along side of our plates as a catchall for fish bones, rabbit bones, pork rinds, prune pits, eggshells or anything else that wasn't swallowed but had reason to be on your plate. When a new catalog arrived the old one was given to us boys and we took turns cutting out our favorite pages such as guns, high top boots, horse harnesses with accessory jingle bells and sleighs or wagons.

If it happened to be the end of the growing season there was always some green tomatoes to be wrapped individually. I don't know if this helped ripen but if they did spoil, you had a neat container to carry them in as they were carried out to feed the pigs or chickens. Some of the neighbors tore them into little strips and put these strips on the floor under the chicken roost as bedding material.

Mother used to order wallpaper out of the catalog and change the looks of our rooms every so often. Dad used to say if she didn't quit pretty soon the house would be too small for all of us. Another use for the catalog was in the outhouse in the back yard. The index pagers were not too bad, but when you got to the shiny pages this was a different story. We were glad when cases of peaches were purchased and the wrapping from the peaches were placed in the outhouse! *That's all for now from Engel's Little House on the Wheaton Prairie* 🍎



SIXTY YEARS is a long time — and sixty years of business at the same location is an unusual situation. But that's what has happened here in Chippewa Falls. The Sokup Grocery, located at 624 Bridge street, this week is celebrating 60 years of business in the same location. Joe Sokup, 86, retired, opened the grocery there back in 1894. His son, Pete, is currently operating the grocery, together with Pete's son, John. And from the looks of things, they'll be celebrating anniversaries there for many more years to come.—(Herald-Telegram Staff Photo)

HISTORIC TIDBITS

1954 Herald-Telegram clipping...

"Sixty Years is a long time - and sixty years of business at the same location is an unusual situation. But that's what has happened here in Chippewa Falls. The Sokup Grocery, located at 624 Bridge Street, this week is celebrating 60 years of business in the same location. Joe Sokup, 86, retired, opened the grocery there back in 1894. His son, Pete, is currently operating the grocery, together with Pete's son, John. And from the looks of things, they'll be celebrating anniversaries there for many more years to come. (Herald-Telegram Staff Photo)" Pictured from left in this 1954 photo are Peter, John and Joe Sokup, the grandfather, father, and great grandfather of the current owner Pete Sokup.

Congratulations on 118 years of business in the same location! In 2014 you will double the above anniversary.



June 26, 1928 Chippewa Herald Telegram article titled: APPRECIATE GIFTS

"Charles A. Mandelert is in receipt of a letter from President Calvin Coolidge, at his summer home in Brule, thanking him in behalf of himself and Mrs. Coolidge for two coats sent as gifts by Mr. Mandelert. The coats are made of wool grown and manufactured in Wisconsin, and that they are appreciated is evidenced from the contents of the letter, which concludes as follows: "It is another evidence of the uniform friendliness and cordiality with which we have received in Wisconsin."

Members of the Mandelert family operated and owned the Chippewa Woolen Mill for more than 60 years. The mill was located at the present site of the Jacob Leinenkugel Brewing Co. Leinie's Lodge.





Joe Bowe

Committees in sync!



Chippewa County Historical Society Committee Members

A VOLUNTEER PROFILE

NANCY SCHUH

Joe

At the beginning of 2012 Joe Bowe had not even heard of the CCHS. He was retired from W.S. Darley & Co. and was busy managing his rental properties. Three months later Joe was intimately acquainted with almost every nook and cranny in this building.

Last March we took on the largest restoration project we had tackled since the Historical Society first moved into this building. From March 12th through the 23rd we had work crews from the Chippewa Valley Correction and Treatment Facility scheduled to help us out. We needed someone who had extensive building skills and who could be here to teach, supervise and motivate the volunteers every day for those two weeks. Board member, Skip August had a friend he thought would be perfect for the job and he was right—Joe was perfect. Joe and the crews accomplished an enormous amount of work during those two weeks. They tore out the old ceiling on the 4th floor. They insulated and then rebuilt the ceiling, they installed new light fixtures, patched sheetrock, built shelving, repaired water damage in several areas throughout the building, moved entire displays from one room to another. They painted and cleaned and installed slat wall, removed lots of dead bats and completed lots of other projects too numerous to list.

Joe enjoyed working with the crews. He said they were excited about the projects and their excitement was infectious. Joe felt the crews walked away feeling like they had some new skills and had more confidence in themselves. They invited Joe and the other volunteers from the CCHS to their graduation ceremony which Joe found very touching.

Going through the building for the first time Joe said he was fascinated with the architecture of the inside of the building and how well the rooms were preserved. While moving our School Room to the 4th floor Joe discovered a replica of the Henry School, from the Town of Lafayette that had been built by the late Jim Hakes. This was the first grade school Joe attended. Near the end of the project Joe's wife, Alice, joined him for a tour of the History Center. While giving them the tour our Photo Archivist, Lucy LeClerc discovered that her and Alice are actually related.

After the completion of this huge project Joe took a well-deserved break and flew into Canada with three friends to spend a week fishing. Joe's daughter Leah lives in Massachusetts and her husband is from Ireland. After the fishing trip Joe came home for a week and then left for a two-week trip to Ireland with his wife Alice, his daughter Leah, his son in law and granddaughter. Joe and Alice spent their 40th anniversary in Ireland. In August they took a trip to visit Leah and her family in Massachusetts and they also enjoy visiting their son Sean and his wife and two children in Holmen.

Joe has had a lot of experience as a volunteer most recently with the Holy Ghost Food Stand at the Fairgrounds, at Oktoberfest and at the church picnic. We are so thankful that Joe helped with our project. I know it sounds cliché to say we couldn't have done it without you... but Joe it is true, "we couldn't have done it without you!"

❖ Collection & Artifacts:

- * Nancy Schuh, Arley Engel, Lucyann LeClerc, Terri Stahr,

❖ Photography Sub Committee:

- * Lucyann LeClerc, Donna Bourget, Jeff Pritchard

❖ Building & Grounds:

- * Skip August

❖ Space Utilization Sub Committee

- * Steve Rasmus

❖ Education:

- * Marge Hebbbring, Catherine Lea, Evalyn Frasch, Ann Gordon, Rosemary Broeren

❖ Docent Subcommittee:

- Lalie Boos, Pat Ahneman

❖ Exhibits:

- * Arley Engel, Nancy Schuh, Lucyann LeClerc

❖ 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:

- * Jim Schuh, author & editor
Elly Rochester, layout & design
Nancy Schuh, author & proofreader
Column Authors: Arley Engel, Kathy Forsgren, Dave Gordon and Mary McKenna

- * Chairperson



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Looking for a unique Christmas Gift?

Give a CCHS membership and your gift will keep on giving all year long with our newsletters!

FEATURED ARTIFACT



An 1896 Thanksgiving menu from The Taylor, 203-207 North Bridge Street, Chippewa Falls, WI. J. D. Thomas, proprietor. This menu was donated in 1995 by Gene and Mable Quinlan. It had been saved by Jim Lavelle who had worked at the Taylor.

MEMBERSHIP FORM



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ADDRESS

CITY

STATE ZIP

TELEPHONE:

Types of Memberships:

- Individual (1 Year) \$20
- Family (1 Year) \$25
- Contributing Member (1 Year)..... \$50
- Life Member (Individual)..... \$125
- Life (Couple) \$175
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COUNTY NEWS

Stanley Area Historical Society

DAVID JANKOSKI, REPORTER

As usual we are busy at the Stanley Area Historical Society museum. The winter workers have returned and are accessioning donated items, working on plans for the 2013 season, and researching various topics of historical significance.

A publication that we have been working on for two years, "I Remember ... Stanley," should be for sale by the end of November. We have also provided ten pictures for a publication entitled, "Images of Clark County," which two individuals from Neillsville are producing.

In early September we learned of the need to immediately replace the roof on our 2001-2002 building. On September 27 a new roof was approved at a cost of \$13,500. I am pleased to report that as of October 23, the new roof was completed. In our December newsletter we will be soliciting funds to help with this unexpected expenditure. The shingles were defective and it was felt the roof could not have made another winter without causing damage to the building structure or its contents.

Six members of our historical society attended the West Central Regional Convention held in Thorp on September 7. There were only 26 attendees from the entire region—a very poor showing. The roundtable discussion was very interesting and educational as it related to programming that we all should be doing more of. A visit to the new Thorp museum was part of the tour offerings after the meeting. Thorp has done a very nice job in putting together a museum in a new location and they share the building with a most interesting telephone museum.

We have made some very ambitious plans for programs at our museum from May through October 2013 and we will share that calendar of events with you as they are finalized.



A Message From Your President

Well the ground at our place is covered with more leaves than we've had in some time. So I guess this means winter is on the way.

We had a well-attended semi-annual membership potluck on September 10. The annual election was held and the following people were reelected:

Dave Gordon, President (2014)
Kathy Forsgren, Treasurer (2014)

Directors
Jim Campbell (2015)
Wayne Meyer (2015)
Nancy Schuh (2015)

Dennis Mickesh portrayed George Stuntz the first surveyor to come to Chippewa in 1849. It was very entertaining and informative. See page 2 for more details.

I had the opportunity to attend the annual Local History and Historic Preservation Conference that was held in Madison the end of September. It was an excellent chance to dialogue with other Historical Societies members and attend some informative sessions including Fundraising Success Basics, PastPerfect 5, Building Museums: An Introduction, and The Public Internship.

After attending these sessions I brought the information back to the board and they approved purchase of the new edition of PastPerfect. I have also submitted proposals to the UWEC History Department for a couple of student interns.

Jim Schuh and I met with Janet Seymour, Field Service Representative, Northern Region, Wisconsin Historical Society, at the History Center in October. We toured the museum with her and got suggestions about our exhibits. Our discussion proved a number of suggestions that will help our Society with membership, volunteers, open hours, internships and recognition for *The Past Passed Here*.

Thanks to the Marker Committee and Gaber Signs designer, Cindy Hilger, a new marker brochure has been developed to replace an older one. It is a beautiful color brochure that describes the 50+ historic markers in Chippewa County. Jim Schuh authored a grant request and thanks to the William J. & Gertrude R. Casper Foundation we have received \$3,500. The grant will pay for the printing of the marker brochure and the remaining funding will be used to help offset the cost of replacing the roof on the History Center.

Xcel Energy and Focus on Energy offered to conduct an energy audit of local businesses and to replace all light fixture bulbs with energy efficient bulbs as well as other energy saving changes. Thanks to Skip August's coordination the Historical Society took advantage of this offer. Skip spent a full day with the electrician. The History Center is now brighter and using less energy. The cost was about \$400 and has a pay back of less than a year.

The Board of Directors established the Hall of Fame several years ago. Annually in the November newsletter the membership are given an opportunity to nominate people for induction into the Hall of Fame. The purpose of the Hall of Fame is to recognize the

**CHIPPEWA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

2012-2014

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

✧ **President**

Dave Gordon, 6854 182nd St.,
Chippewa Falls 723-2647 (2014)

✧ **Vice President**

Jim Schuh, 5432 178th St.,
Chippewa Falls 726-2376 (2014)

✧ **Recording Secretary &
Corresponding Secretary**

Mary McKenna, 217 W. Elm St.,
Chippewa Falls 720-9635 (2013)

✧ **Treasurer**

Kathryn Forsgren, 18498 122nd Ave.,
Jim Falls 382-5511 (2014)

DIRECTORS

✧ Lucyann LeCclair, 201 S. Rural St.,
Chippewa Falls 723-7468 (2013)

✧ Skip August, 18416 54th Ave,
Chippewa Falls 723-8493 (2014)

✧ Steve Rasmus, 936 N. Bridge St.,
Chippewa Falls 723-4339 (2014)

✧ Wayne Meyer, 622 S. 8th St.,
Cornell 239-6239 (2015)

✧ Nancy Schuh, 5432 178th St.,
Chippewa Falls 726-2376 (2015)

✧ Teri Stahr, 7493 County Hwy K,
Chippewa Falls 723-9007 (2013)

✧ Arley Engel, 5294 90th St.,
Chippewa Falls 723-5124 (2014)

✧ Marge Hebbing, 7361 203rd St.,
Chippewa Falls 723-5278 (2013)

✧ Jim Campbell, 110 Chippewa St.,
Chippewa Falls 723-5495 (2015)

Donations

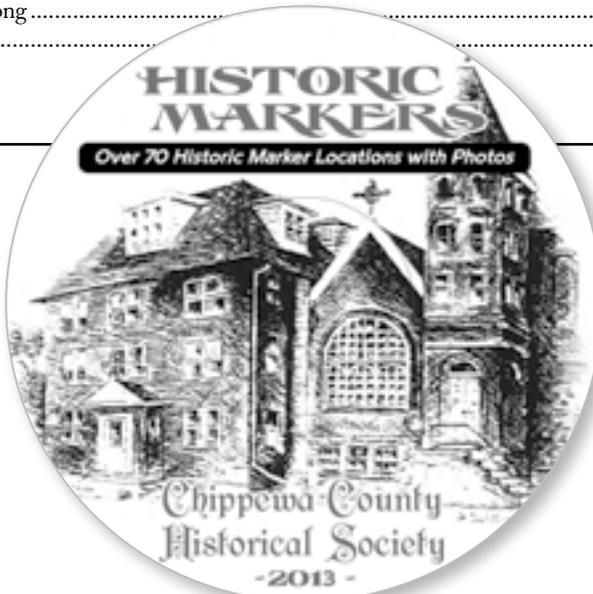


Lifetime Memberships

Paul & Joan Oman	\$175.00
Anonymous	\$125.00

Other Donations:

William J. and Gertrude R. Casper Foundation Grant	\$3500.00
Susan M. DeLong	20.00
Visitors	\$18.00



The Historic Marker Committee has just completed a CD which includes a PowerPoint slide show of our 53 historic markers, a Word document with marker text and photos, and a listing the 542 Wisconsin Historic Markers and locations. The CD package is Microsoft Office compatible and is available for \$10 at the Area History Center and other local retail locations including Country Treasures, Foreign 5 and Marge's Picket Fence.

Presidents Message continued from page 8

members, officers and directors who have made significant contribution the Chippewa County Historical Society.

Qualifications include but are not limited to:

- Served as an officer or director for at least one full term
- Contributed major artifacts, books or manuscripts to the Society's collection
- Donated a significant amount of volunteer time to the Society and/or its collection.
- Made a large monetary donation to advance the Society's mission
- Had a significant impact on the Society.

Please submit your nominations by December 31, 2012. We have a lot going on at the Area History Center. Stayed tuned for more exciting news. *Dave* ✧

Chippewa County Historical Society

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Our new improved website includes our purpose, organization history, description of our museum's exhibits, a calendar of events, our newsletters from 2007 through 2011, a link to *The Past Passed Here* website, a list of Board Members and contact information.



Facebook: www.facebook.com/ChippewaCountyHistoryCenter

You can see numerous photos of our events, post your comments and photos, visit and "like us". Click "About" to read about our mission, overview of the origination, membership levels and costs, regularly scheduled meetings and artifact donation information.

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THE EAGLE SPEAKS



NOVEMBER 2012

www.chippewacountywihistoricalsociety.org

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