

# THE EAGLE SPEAKS

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

AUGUST 2021



“OLD ABE”

www.chippewacountywihistoricalsociety.org

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1903

## History Center Design Celebrates Chippewa Area Roots

ROXANNE PAUKNER

A couple hundred years ago, the only thing at this spot on the earth was wilderness. What put Chippewa on the map? What brought most settlers to this area in the first place? The lumber mill. The trees of this wilderness brought people to harvest them, the mills were built to process the lumber, and the many other people and industries came to support those who came because of the lumber. Chippewa Falls boasted the largest lumber mill in the world under one roof!

For this reason, when the History Center volunteers began dreaming and planning for a newly constructed building to house the museum, there was a desire to have it look like the original lumber mill that was so instrumental in beginning our history.

But how could a building with a different mass, a fraction of the size, different materials, and an entirely different function mimic the lumber mill of over a century ago? This was the task given to the architect, to somehow design a building that would evoke that great lumber mill.



### There is still time

for you to donate to our new **CAHS building project** and join our group of distinguished donors. Please see page 9 for details.



# CALENDAR

## A Message From Your President

*History Center is closed to the public.*  
Due to the Covid-19 pandemic we have been closed to the public and will continue to be closed until we move to our new building. Monthly meetings have continued at remote locations or by Internet Zoom meetings.

The Chippewa County Genealogical Society is open by appointment for small groups Tuesdays, 9 am-4 pm.

**September 13**  
6:30 pm | CCHS Board  
- Heyde Center for the Arts

**September 21**  
9:30 am | CCHS Bi-annual  
Membership meeting  
- Heyde Center for the Arts

**September 28**  
9 am | "Capital Campaign Executive  
Committee - Raihle Law Office

**October 19**  
9:30 am | CCHS Board  
- Heyde Center for the Arts

**October 26**  
9 am | "Capital Campaign Executive  
Committee - Raihle Law Office

**November 16**  
9:30 am | CCHS Board  
- Heyde Center for the Arts

**November 23**  
9 am | "Capital Campaign Executive  
Committee - Raihle Law Office

**NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:**  
Jim Schuh . . . . . Author/ Editor  
Anne Keller . . . . . Author / Proofreader  
Jim Erickson . . . . . Author / Proofreader  
Mary Erickson . . . . . Author  
Dave Gordon . . . . . Author  
Frank Smoot . . . . . Author  
Roxanne Paukner . . . . . Author  
Elly Rochester . . . . . Design / Layout

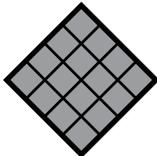
DAVE GORDON  
**M**y daily trips by the construction site are now only to count contractor vehicles at the site as signs of progress. The exterior of the building is not changing much these days but the work inside is at a fever pitch. Plumbing and electrical work is well along. Drywall is 60% complete. Fire protection is well under way. Elevator installation has begun. You now can enter the auditorium, Genealogy area, and begin to get a feel of the exhibit space and artifact storage space. Outside we are awaiting the installation of the green metal roof. It looks like two to three months before we get the keys.

Work continues on design of new exhibits. We now have space that we can start painting, putting together display cabinets, mounting photographs and information and all the things we haven't thought about yet. Frank and our intern, Elizabeth, have done a fantastic job of packing up about 95% of our collection.

The Board has begun the task of forming a new foundation to be responsible for the funding of the History Center and Museum. We need to develop the plan for the three corporations (Chippewa County Historical Society, Chippewa County Genealogical Society and Chippewa Area History Center Foundation) to operate together in the History Center. Also Frank is beginning his task as Director to develop operation procedures for the museum like days and hours open, admission fees, use of auditorium and meeting rooms fees, volunteer staffing and the many other things needed to operate a museum.

Exciting progress.  
*Dave* ✨

**Opening before you know it at  
the entrance to Irvine Park!**



**CHIPPEWA AREA  
HISTORY  
CENTER**

**WHAT'S YOUR STORY?**

**MUSEUM • GENEALOGY LIBRARY  
MEETING ROOMS • MUSEUM STORE**



2021

**HISTORY CENTER DESIGN** CONTINUED FROM COVER

While the size, massing, and materials are vastly different, and the lot and code restrictions aplenty, the interior use and exterior façade have successfully fulfilled the committee’s wish to have a building that would always stand as a reminder to why our city is here in the first place – the lumber industry.

Comparing the mill photo with the architect’s renderings, you can see the similarities designed into each of the new center’s elements, from top to bottom.

- Cupola
- Roof lines
- Windows
- Wood grain in reinforced concrete — looks like wood but won’t burn, like the old mills often did
- Pergola — designed to later have a deck when funding is available
- Base — raised the new building above the flood plain as required by today’s codes, and reminiscent of the stone under the original mill

Even with budget and modern code challenges, this building has a maximum of display space whose exterior really does mimic the old mill down by the river. It will always remind us of what brought us here, and take our imaginations back in time to everything that has come and gone before today. And that is what the history center is all about! ♣

# Donations



## Memorial Gifts

IN MEMORY OF:

- Dona Peterson from Jim Peterson
- Dona Peterson from Dan Peterson
- Dona Peterson from Mike Peterson
- Dona Peterson from Allan Peterson

IN MEMORY OF:

- Dona Peterson from Kris Terhark
- Dona Peterson from Deb Koteras
- Nancy Schuh from Jim Schuh



Don't forget to renew your membership!

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

### CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DATE

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE / ZIP

TELEPHONE

#### Type of Membership:

##### Individual

- \$25 (1-year)
- \$70 (3-year)

##### Family

- \$35 (1-year)
- \$100 (3-year)

##### Contributing Member

- \$60 (1-year)
- \$170 (3-year)

##### Life Membership

- \$500 (individual)
- \$750 (couple)

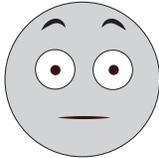
I would like to make an additional donation

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### MAIL TO:

Chippewa County Historical Society  
123 Allen Street  
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

Diane Hopkins Whelan manning the Chippewa County Historical Society history book sales booth at the Northern Wisconsin State Fair.



## Common Sayings with Historic Origins

### Rub the Wrong Way

Meaning:

To irritate, bother, or annoy someone

History: In colonial America, servants were required to wet-rub and dry-rub the oak-board floors each week. Doing it against the grain caused streaks to form, making the wood look awful and irritating the homeowner.

### Rule of Thumb

Meaning:

A common, ubiquitous benchmark

History: Legend has it that 17th century English Judge Sir Francis Buller ruled it was permissible for a husband to beat his wife with a stick, given that the stick was no wider than his thumb.

### Saved by the Bell

Meaning:

Rescued from an unwanted situation

History: As scary as it sounds, being buried alive was once a common occurrence. People who feared succumbing to such a fate were buried in special coffins that connected to a bell above ground. At night, guards listened for any bells in case they had to dig up a living person and save them "by the bell."

## Meet Our New Area History Center Treasurer, Diane Hopkins Whelan!

MARY ERICKSON

Diane, along with her late sister, Nancy Schuh, grew up in Eau Claire where they were involved in many activities. While helping sort out and clean their grandparent's farmhouse and out-buildings in Tilden, they came across many interesting letters from the 1800's about their family along with many photo albums. A spark was ignited and grew in both of them. Nancy's interest was mainly in old homes, buildings and artifacts. Diane became more curious about their family's genealogy and her research began.

Over the years Diane's search has taken her to Ontario, Canada, where some family members lived for many decades before settling in Chippewa County. She finds cemeteries a fascinating and informative way of gathering information and is eager and willing to help others trace their genealogy.

A few years before she retired from the University of Minnesota at Morris, (where she held the position of Executive Account Specialist) she purchased an older home in Chippewa Falls and commuted on weekends. Now she is a full time resident and enjoys restoring her home, working in the yard and trying her hand at Mideastern cooking. Taking a five mile walk daily, reading OLD newspapers and visiting area cheese shops are also things she loves to do!

As a result of her interest in genealogy and reading census records for over twenty years, she accepted a job with the Federal Government as a 2020 census enumerator.

Since joining the CCHS board as Treasurer in February 2020, Diane has been quite busy paying bills, depositing checks and keeping us on track as we move forward with our new building plans and the day to day operation of the Historical Society.

Chippewa Falls is lucky to have Diane as a resident and we happily welcome her to the CCHS Board of Directors as treasurer and friend. ♡



CCHS President, Dave Gordon (far left, center) explains lumberjack life to people on the left side of the mobile museum.

## History Center Update

FRANK SMOOT

As anyone who's driven down Bridgewater has noticed, the new Chippewa Area History Center has risen into the sky at the entrance to Irvine Park. But that doesn't tell the whole story.

First, those driving past can't tell that it's a beehive of activity on the inside, as electricians, drywallers, HVAC specialists, carpenters, and ironworkers are enclosing and finishing spaces. Unlike our present facility — which we've been grateful to have — the new History Center will have bountiful outlets and "data drops," where you can plug a computer into the worldwide web. It will have climate-controlled storage and fire suppression. It will have handicap access to every floor.

Second, those driving past can't tell that the building won't look like it does presently when it's finished. There's a kind of porch and deck to be added — the architectural name is "pergola" — which will make the building look even more like Chippewa Falls' Big Mill of old, which the building is meant to evoke. It will have a forest-green metal roof. It will have handicap parking near the building door. It will, we hope, someday, have pretty landscaping — perhaps even gardens maintained by area Master Gardener groups.

V&S Construction, our general contractors, are making great strides behind the high concrete walls, even though — like every other project in the U.S. at present — they're finding that getting building materials is a challenge, and those materials are coming at a premium. To name one example, fire-rated 5/8-inch plywood, which was about \$40 a sheet, is now about \$135 a sheet. V&S has been working with architects CBS<sup>2</sup> to make decisions "on the fly" that will lower costs and still get the CCGS and CCHS a brilliant building on budget and somewhat close to on-time.

We're often asked when we'll get the keys, or when we'll be open. That's a moving target at the moment. Today, on deadline for the newsletter, it seems possible we'll take possession of the building by sometime in October, but that's not a firm date. Whenever we get the keys, we'll then need to move collections and work spaces, install exhibits, populate the museum store with merchandise, and a dozen other major tasks.

Barring anything unforeseen, we certainly should be open by early next spring, earlier if possible. But, as soon as we get the keys, we'll have our own beehive getting the place full of Chippewa County's priceless history. There will be scores of opportunities to volunteer, and we'd love some help! 🐝

## Mobile Lumberjack Museum Momentum

JIM SCHUH

As you know, our museum has been closed due to Covid-19 and because we have been packing prior to our move to the new Chippewa Area History Center. Even though people cannot visit us, we have visited the community. Our Mobile Lumberjack Museum was displayed four days during May at The Past Passed Here and two days in May at Springfest. In July it was on display at the Northern Wisconsin State Fair for four days. People of all ages have enjoyed learning about the dozen lumberjack jobs, lumber camps and how the logs were transformed into lumber at the Big Sawmill in Chippewa County. 🐝





## COUNTY NEWS

### Stanley Area Historical Society

DAVID JANKOSKI, PRESIDENT

Our museum has been open since the first weekend in June and remains open until the last weekend in September. Our faithful volunteers have returned and we are thankful for their assistance. We are providing UW Eau Claire student Eric Mehnert, a summer internship. He also opens and closes for the weekend docents. Masks and sanitizer are available for anyone wishing to use them. Social distancing is not a problem as our visitor numbers are never large at any one time.

A generous donor took care of the remaining debt from the 2020 roofing project. In late May, students in the Stanley-Boyd High School Landscaping Class planned, selected the plants/bushes and completed beautifying an area between our 2012 addition and our Farming and Logging Building. It is a great improvement! New LED lighting has been installed throughout our buildings and the only remaining updates are to exhibit cases that are being redone, as they are opened for updating or changing.

A major new exhibit has opened this year and features our First Avenue business district during the 1950's and 1960's. In addition, a good number of wedding dresses from our collections are being exhibited. Additionally, the Foreign War's exhibit has been updated, what's happening in 1921 -100 years ago is featured, and Christmas gifts from Clark County cheese factories are displayed. The work group doing digitization of our collections work weekly at this laborious project. We are exploring the possibilities of SAHS using TheCLio software to push our resources out to the public.

The Stanley Area Historical Society invites you to visit on Saturdays and Sundays 1- 4 pm, until the end of September. We appreciate being able to share these highlights. ❖



## Have Fun, Make a Museum!

MARY ERICKSON

Two issues ago, waaay back in January, we had a feeling we might get the keys to the new Chippewa Area History Center in August, and open the doors by the holiday season. Well, it's August now. While the project is still moving along nicely, supply-chain challenges (as is the case everywhere in the U.S.) are slowing progress.

Now, press time, it seems possible we'll get our "certificate of occupancy" sometime in October. We'll need plenty of energetic volunteers at that time.

Being open more days means more volunteers will be needed to fill a variety of jobs. Early on: unpacking and helping set up exhibits. Later: working at the front desk and store, leading tours, and help in every department.

We'll hold an information meeting closer to our receiving the keys to the building. At this time the various opportunities will be described in more detail. Work hours are flexible.

If you enjoy working with a great group of people and have interest in Chippewa area history, this may be the place for you. Let us know and we will get some info to you. And, if your child or grandchild, parent or grandparent might like a fun, fulfilling job with a fun crew, make sure you tell them that we can use all the help we can get.

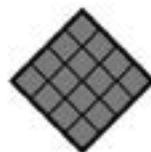
More information about volunteering will be in the next issue.

If you'd like to put your name down now, you may leave a message at CCHS at 715-723-4399 or send an email to Mary Erickson at [ericksonmarye@aol.com](mailto:ericksonmarye@aol.com) (don't forget the e after mary).

Whatever skills you have, we probably need them! ❖



# Volunteer Application



CHIPPEWA AREA  
**HISTORY**  
CENTER

My name: *first* \_\_\_\_\_ *middle* \_\_\_\_\_ *last* \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

My birth date: \_\_\_\_\_

My address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Best phone number to reach me: \_\_\_\_\_

My email: \_\_\_\_\_

An **emergency-contact** name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Best phone number to reach this contact: \_\_\_\_\_

*Check box(es) below if either of these applies. I'd like to use my hours toward...*

AN INTERNSHIP  COMMUNITY SERVICE

*Volunteers contribute in many different areas. Training is provided and work tasks are matched to museum needs and the interests and skills of the volunteer. **Please check all that apply:***

## I'M INTERESTED IN...

- Visitor Services (front desk/museum store)
- Library and Archival (scanning, filing, and cataloguing documents and photographs)
- Curatorial (preservation, moving, cleaning, categorizing artifacts, database work)
- Exhibit research and writing
- Public Programming (helping with events and programs for adults and children)
- Education (school tours, developing games/activities and standards-based content)
- Exhibit design and fabrication
- Shop and Fabrication (moving heavy items, cabinetry, metalwork, painting, other)
- Maintenance  Building  Grounds (lawn/gardens)
- Marketing (social media, distributing posters, etc.)
- Newsletter (writing, editing, photography, etc.)
- Other — please specify \_\_\_\_\_

## I'M AVAILABLE...

- Occasionally (for events)
- Any weekday
- Weekends
- Only on these days of the week:  
\_\_\_\_\_

## BEST TIMES FOR ME ARE...

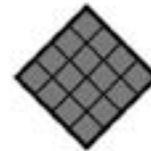
- Mornings
- Afternoons
- Evenings
- Any time

Please return to **Chippewa County Historical Society, 123 Allen St., Chippewa Falls, WI 54729**



# Getting to know you!

*All questions are completely optional.  
We'd just love to get to know you a little better!*



CHIPPEWA AREA  
**HISTORY**  
CENTER

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

What do you like doing when you're not working/volunteering? Your favorite hobbies or pastimes?

---

---

What do you **not** like doing especially?

---

How long have you lived in the area? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you know your family's history or roots? For instance, where your family or ancestors came from?  
Would you care to share a few details?

---

---

What made you think of volunteering at the Chippewa Area History Center?

---

---

List any names that you'd care to share:

Pets: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents: \_\_\_\_\_

Grandparents: \_\_\_\_\_

Children: \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any limitations that you would like to be sure we know about? (such as poor vision, can't sit for long periods, can't climb stairs well, have dyslexia, etc.)

---

What do you personally think you're really good at? That is, what skill are you proud of?

---

What's your favorite thing about Chippewa County?

---

---

What detail of Chippewa County's history do you think **everyone** should know about?

---



1996  
Wisconsin  
Historic  
Traveler, a  
guide to the  
Wisconsin  
Heritage  
Directional Sign  
Program.



Photo of  
Wisconsin  
Heritage  
Directional  
Sign for the  
Area History  
Center.



CHIPPEWA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

## GENEALOGY CORNER

ANNE KELLER, CCGS PRESIDENT

People who become involved with the Chippewa County Genealogical Society are those who like to find out the who-what-where-when-why about their own family trees. One of the ways to do this is to listen to the experience and advice of those who have already worked on their own family tree or subject that would be important in the overall story and that could lend expertise to their own story. Thus the CCGS has met (yes, with masks on) to hear speakers who have shared their experiences. We've heard about the area's historical markers, about various townships, about an adoption story, about the Women's Ku Klux Klan in Chippewa Falls, and about a not-so-prominent family, all subjects that might merge into someone's history. The CCGS meetings are usually held on the fourth Saturday of each month except for June, July, and December, when no meetings are planned. We look forward to seeing you at a future meeting. On the fourth Monday of August, the meeting and speaker follow an indoor pot-luck picnic. ☺

# The Wisconsin Historic Traveler - Wisconsin's Heritage Sign Program Ends

JIM SCHUH

With the upcoming move of the Area History Center to the new building, I began researching how we can best direct people to this new location. My first approach was to find out how the existing, brown Wisconsin Historic Traveler signs could be relocated.

During July 1996, while I was the Eau Claire Main Street Executive Director, I received a mailing from the Wisconsin Department of Tourism that included a letter introducing The Wisconsin Historic Traveler, a guide to the Wisconsin Heritage Directional Sign Program. The enclosed guide was "hot off the press." Area attractions in the guide included five Chippewa County listings: Area History Center (Chippewa Falls), Cadott Area Historical Museum, Cornell Pulpwood Stacker, Downtown Chippewa Falls Historic District and Stanley Area Historical Museum. Cabin Ridge Rides near Cadott and Jacob Leinenkugel Brewing Company were added to the list at a later date.

In early June 2021, I called the Wisconsin Department of Tourism who referred me to the Wisconsin Historical Society, who directed me to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. I was told the brown historic directional signs will be disappearing in the future. Their response was: "In August of 2013, the Department of Tourism indicated that they were no longer maintaining the Heritage Signing Program and instead have focused on other means to promote this tourism effort. As a result, no new Heritage Direction signs are allowed to be installed on state highways. We have allowed existing signs to remain in place until the end of their useful life." ☺

**There is still time for you to donate to our  
new CAHS building project!**

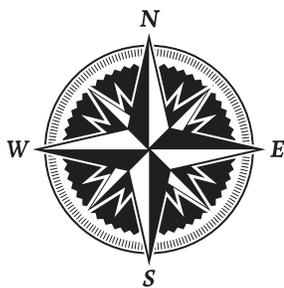
To donate to the Chippewa Area History Center Capital Campaign  
call 715-726-2376 or visit our website at:  
[www.chippewaareahistorycenter.org](http://www.chippewaareahistorycenter.org)



Back cover of the Official Travel Guide of Chippewa County, Wisconsin



Tour Guide  
Jim Schuh  
- History  
Tour Shuttle  
- Chippewa  
Falls History  
Coalition



## Directing People to the new Chippewa Area History Center

JIM SCHUH

Our proposal and request for new directional sign locations were submitted to the City of Chippewa Falls August 3. The Board of Public Works will review our request. This item is on the August 23 meeting agenda for consideration and recommendation to the City Council.

On a related note, the city is in the process of creating a "Way Finding Plan" for the entire city that will create signs directing people to all attractions in the community. The city will be working on creating this plan over the next year. At some point they will be reaching out to stakeholders for input. ➤

Proposed blue directional sign for Chippewa Area History Center



# Chippewa Falls History Coalition

JIM SCHUH

Thirteen years ago, in July 2008, this group was created and began meeting monthly and working together to increase activities, publicity and visibility of the historic attractions in the Chippewa area. The Chippewa County Historical Society hosted the meetings and many of our board members were involved. Coalition groups included:

1. Chippewa County Historical Society (CCHS)
2. Chippewa County Genealogical Society
3. Chippewa Falls Main Street
4. Chippewa Falls Museum of Industry and Technology (CFMIT)
5. Chippewa Valley Cultural Association (Heyde Center for the Arts)
6. City of Chippewa Falls Public Library
7. City of Chippewa Falls Parks and Recreation
8. Cook Rutledge Mansion

We began by discussing the need for a new area history center that could be climate controlled, handicap accessible and large enough to contain the artifact collections of our local museums. A new area history center with higher visibility location was also important. Several existing downtown vacant buildings were discussed as a potential location. None of the available structures suited our needs. Input from coalition members increased the awareness that a new museum location was needed.

To expand publicity and visibility, some of the groups decided to purchase a co-operative ad on the back cover of the Chippewa County Activities and Attractions Guide. Dividing the cost between the eight participating attractions made it possible to have the best possible visibility at reasonable cost. I coordinated the ads for the first several years. After 13 years the co-op ads are still being organized by the CCHS.

To increase historic offerings to the public, many of the local historic attractions were open during The Past Passed Here on Saturday, May 9, 2009. A small bus was rented to provide free transportation to the many historic attractions that would be open during the event. The bus ran a route from 9 am to 5 pm going to all locations every 30 minutes. Use of the History Tour Shuttle was not significant enough to continue this activity in the future.

The Chippewa Falls History Coalition met monthly for about a year. On-going communication among the groups improved and progress was made increasing activities, publicity and visibility of the historic attractions in the Chippewa area. ➤

These businesses support our newsletter. Stop by and let them know how much you appreciate them!



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# Chippewa County Historical Society

AREA HISTORY CENTER | 715-723-4399

123 ALLEN ST. | CHIPPEWA FALLS, WI 54729-2898

Non-profit Organization  
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Address Service Requested



Be sure to  
renew your  
membership!  
See page 3.

# THE EAGLE SPEAKS



AUGUST 2021

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