

THE EAGLE SPEAKS



CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 2022

www.chippewacountywihistoricalsociety.org

"OLD ABE"

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Spring Morning on Spring Street 1896

CHIPPEWA HERALD REPRINT

The following is a shortened version of a long ago article in the Chippewa Herald. The drug store site is now the location of S.E.H.

Everyone stopped, stood, stared and struck a pose when the photographer set up his tripod and camera on a cold spring day in 1896. The scene looks west down the south side of Spring Street. The building at the left of the photo (then Eagle Drug or Goddard Watson Drug) was later called Muggah Drug.

It was a Saturday in the hustling, bustling, thriving young city of Chippewa Falls. Chippewa Falls had always been a good Saturday shopping center for as long as young James Agnew Watson could remember. That's why he came early to his father's drug store on the corner of Bridge and Spring Streets to get ready for the lumberjacks, housewives and farmers who would be flooding into town later that day.

Jimmy Watson stopped sweeping the sidewalk in front of the store and looked down Spring Street. Louis Stapleton had opened his drug store next door but had not swept his walk yet. Jimmy waved to Mr. Martin as he entered his big furniture store (at 7 & 9 W. Spring St.) to prepare for the day's business. Activity began to pick up along the

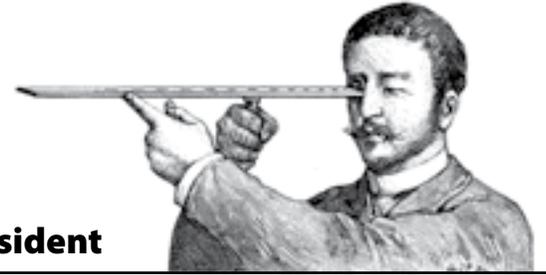
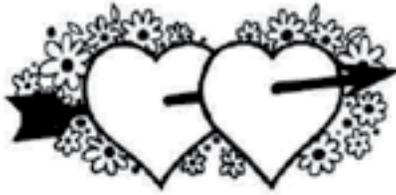


The Past Passed Here

will return

to Marshall Park and be open to the public May 12-15.

Please see page 7 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.

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

Note: Some meeting locations will change when we move to the CAHC.

- Feb. 15** | 9:30 am | CCHS Board
Heyde Center for the Arts
- Feb. 15** | 1 pm | The Past Passed Here
Area History Center
- Feb. 22** | 9 am | Capital Campaign
Committee | Raihle Law Office
- Mar. 14** | 6:30 pm | CCHS Semi Annual
Meeting | Chippewa Area History
Center, Bridgewater Ave
- Mar. 15** | 1 pm | The Past Passed Here
Area History Center
- Mar. 22** | 9 am | Capital Campaign
Committee | Raihle Law Office
- Mar. 22** | 11 am | Historic Marker
Committee | Area History Center
- Apr. 19** | 9:30 am | CCHS Board
Heyde Center for the Arts
- Apr. 19** | 1 pm | The Past Passed Here
Area History Center
- Apr. 26** | 9 am | Capital Campaign
Committee | Raihle Law Office
- May 12-15** | The Past Passed Here
Marshall Park
- May 17** | 9:30 am | CCHS Board
Heyde Center for the Arts
- May 17** | 1 pm | The Past Passed Here
Area History Center
- May 24** | 9 am | Capital Campaign
Committee | Raihle Law Office

DAVE GORDON

As I write this message, we are a few weeks away from getting the keys to the Chippewa Area History Center. That means we only have to move in and design and build the exhibits. I'm not sure using "only" is the right word. Could moving and exhibits be as much as designing and building a building? Probably not, but it is a close second.

CAHC gives the Historical Society the chance to tell the stories of Chippewa County before it was founded in 1845. The exhibits will take visitors through fur trading, lumbering, agriculture, The Northern Center, and the wide range of industry in the Chippewa Area. You can't tell the story of this area without including the people who lived here. CCHS's artifacts, photos and manuscripts will fill the museum and CCGS's research library will provide information about our heritage.

An 18,000 square foot building with three floors and two mezzanines is a major change for us and requires significant change in how we do things. First, the Chippewa Area History Center Foundation will be incorporated to own and operate the building and Museum. CCHS and CCGS will occupy the building. Frank Smoot, presently the Museum Developer, will assume responsibility for the building and Museum reporting to the Board of Directors of CAHCF.

The new building will help CCHS meet its Purposes and Objectives:

- To stimulate historical communication, education, interest and exchange of information to/with individuals and organizations.
- To provide instruction and/or assistance through educational programs, workshops and seminars to its members and the general public.
- To encourage the collection, preservation and maintenance of Chippewa County historical materials for public accessibility.
- To further inter-organizational communication and cooperation with all historical societies within the county.
- To operate the affairs of the CCHS facilities that houses the museum and library materials.
- To publish a regular newsletter.
- To cooperate with the Chippewa County Genealogical Society.

To name just a few: the new building will provide climate-controlled exhibit and storage space for preservation and maintenance. Auditorium and classrooms will help with education of individuals and organizations. The elevator and building access will provide public accessibility.

CCHS's move to the CAHC will allow us to focus on providing programs about our rich history to the public, maintaining our collection, and making the Museum and its exhibits interesting and ever-changing. This is our "Dream Come True." *Dave* ✪



Dave Raihle Jr.



Don't forget to renew your membership!

MEMBERSHIP FORM

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Introducing Our Vice President, Dave Raihle, Jr.

MARY ERICKSON

Dave was born and raised in Chippewa Falls, graduated from Chi-Hi, and received his law degree from Hamline University. He served in the military as a demolition specialist and, after finishing his active duty, he chose to stay in the Reserves for the rest of his military career.

While in high school, his family purchased a large Victorian home on the west hill and Dave helped paint that home. That's where his interest in restoring old buildings began. Not only did he paint several west hill Victorian homes, but also took an active interest in renovating the Sheeley House and the Cook-Rutledge Mansion.

His interest in history started early. "My dad had a passion for history, especially that of the Chippewa Valley. I credit my father and grandfather with developing my interest in celebrating our history and preserving it. One area I developed (as a result of the military) was the restoration of military vehicles. As a result, I have accumulated a fairly significant collection of World War II era vehicles."

Dave was a Boy Scout and continues his interest in that organization. And, he serves on several boards in the area including Boy Scouts, HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital Board, the Main Street Board, the Historical Society Board, and others.

He, and his wife, Rita, enjoy traveling, especially "off the beaten path." He's hunted in Africa, Alaska, the Northwest Territories and much of western United States. They have two children, Trey and Alexis. Daughter Alexis plans on moving back to Chippewa and joining the family law practice. She will be the fourth-generation lawyer in the Raihle family representing over 100 years of legal service to the Chippewa Area.

Dave has been invaluable in helping the Historical Society navigate the many legal questions of purchasing property and building our new History Center. When asked of his thoughts for the center, he said, "My hope for the History Center is that it becomes a gathering point for our community and visitors to our area that would help share the history of what has made our community great!"

We share that hope and thank Dave for his devotion to the Chippewa area and the 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

\$ _____

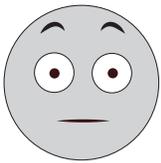
MAIL TO:

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



The new Chippewa Area History Center is inching toward completion.

FRANK SMOOT



Common Sayings with Historic Origins

Bury the Hatchet

Meaning: End a quarrel or conflict and become friendly.

History: During negotiations between Puritans and Native Americans, men would bury all of their weapons, making them inaccessible.

Big Wig

Meaning: An important person, especially in a particular sphere

History: Back in the 18th century, the most important political figures would wear the biggest wigs, hence today influential people are called "big wigs."

In late January, CCHS Vice President Dave Raihle met with contractors and Architects from CBS² to start the process of creating a "punch list" for the building.

A punch list details all the random, annoying pieces still to be done on a large project with many moving parts. These items might be as substantial as reinstalling huge glass panels, or as small as making sure the motion-detectors turn on the lights at the right time or touching up nicks in the paint incidental to moving around the building during construction.

As you might imagine, a punch list can be long and complicated and, while many items may be small, they can add up to several weeks of work.

Beyond that list, a few more-substantial items need to be completed.

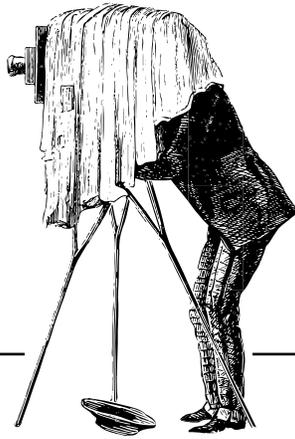
A history center with irreplaceable collections needs a sophisticated fire-suppression system, one that keeps the pipes overhead empty of water under normal circumstances (so that a broken sprinkler head wouldn't ruin a precious artifact or ten,) but fill quickly with water when smoke or heat or both are detected. The piping is currently installed beautifully, but still needs to be configured to bring it to a "museum quality" level of operation. It's a complicated adjustment and will take a bit of time.

Also at press-time, stainless-steel railings for the most-prominent staircases and landings were on-site but not yet installed. Once installed, they will secure glass panels, which will keep everyone safe but allow a great view from above, below, and all around the place. This installation will also take a bit of time, of course.

The construction of a building like this can seem like that dream where you're walking down a hallway and the end of the hallway keeps receding. But the end of that hallway is actually nearing.

When we reach the end of that hallway, we'll turn down another hallway, one that will allow us to move collections safely into storage, install exhibits, outfit the museum store, and get people and their equipment settled into their new offices. If everything goes smoothly with that, a stroll down that hallway should take no more than 90 days or so.

The bottom line, then, is there's a good chance we should still be able to open to the public by late spring or early summer. It's tempting to think of that as the finish line for the building, but it's much more helpful to think of it as the starting line for the History Center. ♣



CHIPPEWA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

GENEALOGY CORNER

ANNE KELLER, CCGS PRESIDENT

It is hoped that, when the time comes for moving the Genealogical Society Library into our new building, the process will go smoothly and all books will be placed on specific shelves that are appropriate to the subject. Our CCGS library has grown during the past forty years and resources on a variety of subjects pertinent to family-tree climbing can be easily found and used. About two years ago, it was decided that all historical and genealogical books should be maintained in one library, not in a separate library for each organization. Therefore, any books that have been found (during the packing process) in various corners in the current building will have been identified and placed on the appropriate CCGS shelf alongside books with similar subjects. What's your story? Perhaps it has already been published! 📖

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:

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Anne Keller Author / Proofreader
Jim Erickson Author / Proofreader
Mary Erickson Author
Dave Gordon Author
Frank Smoot Author
Marge Hebbring Guest Author
Tom Larson Guest Author
Elly Rochester Design / Layout

SPRING STREET CONTINUED FROM COVER

busy street as the sun came up. Two teamsters, dressed in long, black coon coats, hurried down the street to take on a couple at Pete Morey's and Dick Kunsman's Saloon at 29 W. Spring.

An express wagon, drawn by a white horse, rattled along the frozen street until it came to the corner drug store to unload supplies that had arrived on the Soo Line.

Mr. A.B. McDonell, in his long cape coat, black hat and waistcoat, stopped at the corner of the Lumberman's National Bank at the NW corner of Bridge and E. Spring. He was proud of his bank. It had showed a capital of \$100,000 and a surplus of \$50,000.

Edward Rohan, superintendent of the Chippewa Falls Water Works and Lighting Company, stopped at the drug store for a handful of cigars. In a booming voice, he told Jimmy "more and more people are coming in to apply for hook ups for that good water from Big Eddy Springs."

During his rounds of dusting the merchandise, Jimmy Watson glanced at last night's issue of the Chippewa Herald, the city's leading daily newspaper. In the want ad section, Vesper Morgan was advertising a brick dwelling at 218 Spring St., for sale for only \$1800.

Up and down the street, business was becoming more brisk. A dray load of barrels from Leinenkugel's Spring Brewery rolled down the streets to the saloons.

Jimmy jingled a few coins in his pocket. "The White Rat" was playing at the Opera House and maybe he could offer to sweep their floors in exchange for a ticket.

An excited, eight-year-old boy pushed open the drug store door and yelled, "come on out, they're taking pictures." Photographer, Dave Brown, was setting up his big camera on the bank corner. Men were lining up and staring into the one-eyed lens. Things were certainly happening on Spring Street today. 📷

Donations



Contributions in Support of Historical Markers David Jakoski
National Register Marker Grant for West Hill Sign Pomeroy Foundation
New Museum Exhibit Donation Gabor Signs
The Past Passed Here Grant Ann Marie Foundation
Donations Toward Operating Support
Arthur Weiss, Nancy Sweet, Gail Nadreau, William Zimbehl,
Sharon and David Raihle, Nancy Pickerign
Memorial Donations Friends of Cath (Devine) Lea



COUNTY NEWS

Stanley Area Historical Society

DAVID JANKOSKI, PRESIDENT

We held our Annual Meeting on January 22. Election of Officers and Board of Directors included: Sharon Wundrow, Secretary, Jim Ericksen, Treasurer, and Board Members Cheryl Kern-Simirenko, Betty Plombon and John Pozdell. Despite COVID-19, 2021 was a good year. Our museum was open weekends during June, July, August and September, our finances held up, our tuck-pointing project is totally paid for, and our summer intern worked out well. Most of our volunteers have returned to work at the museum, however our Digitization Work Group could be enhanced with two or three more volunteers to photograph artifacts, scan photos, and create records in Past Perfect.

We hope to be able to recruit another intern from the UW- Eau Claire Public History Program for the summer of 2022. Our 2021 intern Eric Mehnert, designed a Logo for SAHS and it was adopted at our Annual Meeting. He was a very good tour guide and helped out wherever needed.

We have another first to report. Our January 2022 newsletter was published in color. After many positive comments, continuation of publishing in color was approved at our Annual Meeting.

We are happy to report that our museum buildings escaped any tornado damage, although they were without electricity for three days and we had to monitor the heat situation to insure no frozen pipes. Our historic Stanley Depot was severely damaged and it remains to be determined if it is structurally sound enough to be repaired/rebuilt. The NE corner of the structure was blown out and much of the roof is gone or badly damaged. Across the street from the depot, the historic Ford Garage was a total loss. This was the first EF2 tornado to hit the City of Stanley and we hope it is the last! ❄️



Kevin Schwetz, left, recently delivered 20 marker houses that he completed for his Eagle Scout project for troop 13. He obtained donations from Raihle Law Office, Knights of Columbus, Kiwanis and Northwestern Bank. His parents are Mike and Becky Schwetz. Kurt Gabor, owner of Gabor Signs right, provided guidance for the project.

Historical Marker update

TOM LARSON, MARKER COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Here's an update of the 2021 workings of your CCHS Historic Marker Committee of Kurt Gabor, Jim Schuh, Jim Erickson, Chuck Nagel, Frank Smoot, Joe Neise, Mary Kleusch and myself.

- We now have 64 CCHS historical markers placed within Chippewa County with the most recent additions of Marker #63 – Lake Wissota Hydroelectric Dam to be installed this spring, in the Town of Lafayette Wayside Park and Marker #64 – St. Charles Catholic Church to also be installed this spring at the church on Pearl Street.
- With our existing 64 markers now in good physical shape along with the busy times of our dedicated volunteers, we did take a year off of any maintenance rebuilding and re-painting of the markers
- We did receive a generous donation of 20 brand new wooden marker houses from local Troop #13, built and painted Boy Scout Kevin Schwetz completing his Eagle Scout project.
- We continue to support and promote the National Yellowstone Trail (YT) Historic Highway system as it passes through Chippewa County. A new YT highly visible, yellow painted rock was installed in the yard of Holy Ghost School on the south side of Chippewa Falls where the YT original road turned from Main Street onto Greenville Street.
- Our CCHS Marker program computer PowerPoint presentation was greatly updated and has now become part of the Chippewa Falls School District's popular Community Education Lunch & Learning program. See their recent mass mailing brochure for details and schedules for this upcoming Spring 2022 program offerings.
- In 2021, a section of the Chippewa Falls West Hill was officially designated by the National Register of Historic Places as a Residential Historic District. Mary Kleusch, a west hill resident at 720 Central Street, worked with the Pomeroy Foundation and was successfully awarded a \$1,140 grant for a National Register of Historic Places plaque. The 24" x 36" plaque should be received by March 15. Mary got permission from Cook-Rutledge Mansion board to place the plaque there. Our committee will create a marker showing the historic district map. Mary Mart and Jim Schuh attended a meeting with city staff requesting new street signs at the 28 intersections in the historic district. The cost per intersection is \$100 with a total cost of about \$2,800. We are now looking at some possible funding sources for purchasing these signs.
- Two new CCHS marker signs have officially been requested and are currently being researched for placement in 2022. One is by Matt Hansen, Chippewa County Forest Administrator, for the Old Abe Bike Trail in the Town of Anson and one by JoAnne Stutgen for the newly rebuilt Notre Dame Catholic Church Grotto at the intersection of High and Allen Streets. ❄️



The Past Passed Here Returns to Marshall Park

101 Bridgewater Ave.
(Next to the Bernard F. Willi
municipal swimming pool and
across from the new Chippewa
Area History Center)

May 12-15

Thursday & Friday | 3-6 pm
Saturday | 10 am-6 pm
Sunday | 10 am - 3 pm

Admission: \$5

Family: \$15

Age 5 and under: free



Volunteers needed for setting up
and other tasks. Call co-chair,
Jim Schuh 715-726-2376.

Early Chippewa County

MARGE HEBBRING

In learning the history of Chippewa County, I was surprised by just how huge it was when it was created in 1845. The northern boundary stretched all the way to the headwaters of the Chippewa River. To the south, it went as far as Iowa, to the west to the Mississippi River, and to the east, as far as Brown County. The counties eventually carved out of it include Sawyer, Rusk, Barron, Dunn, Burnett, Washburn, Clark, Chippewa, Eau Claire, Buffalo, Pepin, Gates and parts of Taylor and Price. "Chippewa" is the name French fur traders gave to the Ojibwa. The federal government recognized the name as the Lake Superior Chippewa; six tribes in Wisconsin still use that name.

The area was once covered with pine forests. Those forests were so dense you couldn't see the horizon. And, if you wanted to see the sun, you would have to look straight up through the canopy of trees. The rivers were so clean that you could drink the water. Native Americans living there usually camped on the riverbank so the water would be readily available for drinking, bathing, and cooking. Fish were abundant and the many plants growing near the water provided food and medicine. Animals in abundance were a source for food, clothing, and tools. No one wasted anything and everything made from the earth went back to the earth.

The written history of Native Americans in the original Chippewa County began with the families who settled there. Although the area was populated throughout by many Ojibwa, there were few written stories until fur traders arrived and married into Ojibwa families. ♣





Saying Goodbye to the Convent

MARY ERICKSON

As time draws near for our move to the wonderful new building, we look back with nostalgia and gratitude for time spent in this historic building at 123 Allen Street.

This building was erected to serve as a convent for the Teaching Sisters of Notre Dame in 1881, as the cornerstone shows. The building is a bit unusual in design with several sets of stairs, a silent butler going between floors, a door bell system for some rooms and a large built-in ice box in the back entry, to name just a few things! Each sister had her own small, sparsely furnished room and each floor had a sitting room where she could do her needle work, read and prepare lesson plans. There's a large kitchen and dining room and what was a laundry and dishwashing room. The fourth floor was used for storage and had a few bedrooms where, in winter, some farm family students stayed during the week because with snow and cold, it was hard to get to school. Father Goldsmith was the young priest serving at the time of construction. He died at a young age and his remains are encrypted in the lower level of the building, below the Goldsmith Chapel.

The Chippewa Falls Historical Society took occupancy of the convent in 1990 after a contract was made between the Society and the La Crosse Diocese. At that time, the Chippewa County Genealogy Society was invited to share quarters. After some repairs and a bit of updating, the museum began to take form. Artifacts were collected and exhibits began to be set up in various rooms. Volunteers helped keep the process going and each year more was accomplished. By 2017, fourteen rooms housed exhibits such as the Lumber Tools exhibit, an old-fashioned kitchen, Civil War artifacts and collection, Trading Post, Railroad Depot, Nun's bedroom, Founder's Room and several others.

On second floor the Genealogy Society has its library where much research about families, events, and places is done. This is a great asset for Chippewa. There, volunteers are happy to help people with their search for all kinds of information.

During the many years at the convent, volunteers have had a wealth of meaningful experiences including leading tours and explaining Chippewa's rich history, becoming excited over interesting items donated, setting up exhibits, doing research on items and people, and having fun with each other at their monthly birthday and weekly lunches. They laugh about some of the challenges this building has given them, but with real caring and love for this special place, even when having to wear heavy sweaters and down jackets on cold days because of the undependable heating. It has served as two homes: one for the nuns, and later for the Historical Society. However, what the future holds for this building is uncertain at this time.

The packing for our move is almost completed and the building just doesn't look the same with empty rooms and boxes stacked to the ceiling. But the memories of our days here are great and will be relived as we unpack and set up exhibits in our new home. New exhibits are being developed and the Society is excited for the community and visitors to the area to enjoy them and learn more about the Chippewa Valley!

So, we say, "Goodbye and thank you for all the good years in the old convent building . . . truly a special place." ❁

TOP:

A nun's bedroom had a sink and very sparse furnishings.

BOTTOM:

Grandma's Kitchen exhibit included many items from the mid 1900s.



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MISSION: COLLECT, PRESERVE, INTERPRET AND
SHARE THE RICH HISTORY OF CHIPPEWA COUNTY

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