

THE EAGLE SPEAKS

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JUNE 2023



www.chippewacountywihistoricalsociety.org

"OLD ABE"

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Chippewa Area History Center Grand Opening

June 3, 11 am - 5 pm

See details ➡



MIKE HOWARD PHOTOGRAPHY

The new \$4.5 million Chippewa Area History Center, which houses the Chippewa County Historical Society Museum and the Chippewa County Genealogical Society Research Library, is designed to resemble an historic Chippewa Falls sawmill.

New Chippewa Area History Center Grand Opening June 3

\$4.5 million project result of a comprehensive community effort

MARK GUNDERMAN, MARKETING AND MEDIA COMMITTEE MEMBER

With the noon sounding of the historic Leinenkugel's Brewing Company steam whistle, the local Patriotic Council will raise the flag and the Grand Opening of the new Chippewa Area History Center will be fully underway on Saturday, June 3.

The center opens for public viewing at 11 a.m., with the flag raising and ceremony beginning at noon. The Grand Opening is free and open to the public until 5 p.m. with donations gratefully accepted.

Construction on the center began in the fall of 2020 on the new, three-story center located just outside Chippewa Falls' beautiful and historic Irvine Park at 12

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 ➡



CALENDAR

Meetings will be held at the new Chippewa Area History Center unless listed elsewhere.

June 1

9 am | Chippewa Area History Center Board

June 3

11 am - 5 pm | Chippewa Area History Center Grand Opening

June 20

9:30 am | Chippewa County Historical Society Board

June 27

The Past Passed Here Wrap Up Meeting

July 6

9 am | Chippewa Area History Center Board

July 11

11 am | Historic Marker Committee

July 18

9:30 am | Chippewa County Historical Society Board

August 3

9 am | Chippewa Area History Center Board

August 15

9:30 am | Chippewa County Historical Society Board

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:

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Wayne Krefting..... Guest Author
Janel Seaholm..... Guest Author
Mark Gunderman..... Guest Author
Elly Rochester Design / Layout

CONTINUED FROM COVER

New Chippewa Area History Center

Bridgewater Ave., with substantial completion coming in 2022. Moving exhibits and artifacts from a former convent at 123 Allen St. which the center had far outgrown took substantial time, with much new design of display areas taking place and new exhibits under development in the interim.

The new facility was ready enough for the public to enjoy a “soft opening” on Feb. 3, the anniversary of Chippewa County’s separation from Crawford County in 1845, but now the center is ready for a full public unveiling, according to Jim Schuh, Chippewa Area History Center board member who will emcee the grand opening event.

“The new Chippewa Area History Center offers a much more comprehensive look at different aspects of area history in a more open and comfortable setting that allows room for interpretive activities,” Schuh said. “We have so much more to share, including many items donated by local people from their families’ personal collections.”

The center features display areas about the lumbering industry, the Chippewa River, agriculture, military service, and local manufacturing. Other exhibits will feature the people of the area, including Native American tribes, fur traders and contributions of various immigrant groups.

The grand opening ceremony will include comments from Greg Hoffman, Chippewa Falls mayor; Chuck Hull, Chippewa County Board and Chippewa Falls City Council member; Janet Seymour of the Wisconsin Historical Society; Frank Smoot, Chippewa Area History Center executive director; David Gordon, Chippewa Falls Historical Society president; and Wendy Sullivan, Chippewa County Genealogical Society president.

Old time music by The Maple Ridge Band will begin at 11 am and Chippewa Falls musician and playwright Jerry Way will perform a few of his original songs about local history accompanied by Amanda Tanzer-Schafer on vocals and Jim Schuh on percussion following the opening ceremony.

Also commenting at the opening ceremony will be project architect Dave Paukner of CBS². Schuh noted that the building was designed keeping both local history and budgetary concerns in mind. “It is designed to resemble the old Chippewa sawmill that was one of the leading industries in the area for decades. Visitors will recognize the similarities by viewing a model of the sawmill inside the center,” Schuh said.

Another of the featured speakers will be Bob Hogseth, co-chair of the capital campaign committee. Hogseth was one of the leaders in the efforts to raise approximately \$4.5 million for the project. Unfortunately, David Raihle, CAHC president and co-chair of the capital campaign committee will be out of town and unable to participate. Also, as part of the festivities, children will enjoy games, gifts and surprises from a Chippewa Falls Fire Department firefighter in uniform.

“There are so many people to thank for making this possible,” Schuh said. “That especially includes the individuals, businesses and foundations that contributed financially to the efforts and to the people who donated materials for display. This has truly been a community effort.”

After the free grand opening, the multi-million-dollar Chippewa Area History Center housing the Chippewa County Historical Society Museum and Chippewa County Genealogical Society Research Library will be open from 11 am-5 pm Wednesday through Sunday. Research Library hours will be 11 am-3 pm Sundays, Thursdays and Fridays. Museum admission will be \$6 for adults and \$15 for families. ♦



◀ On September 12, 2013, the Chippewa County Historical Society hosted a group of about 40 Norwegians from Norway that visited several local sites with Norwegian ties, including the Bjerke 1881 log home. John Bjerke spoke about the history of his great grandfather's log home.

The Lives of Some Old Friends Are In Jeopardy

JIM SCHUH

The 1881 hand-hewn White Pine log home located in Irvine Park since 1979 needs major repairs. Overall, the structure is in remarkable condition except for the beams the building was placed on, which are rotting due to high moisture levels below the building. This is causing the floor to settle and become very uneven. The building will need to be jacked up so a new foundation can be installed. The chimney foundation is also failing and it will have to be removed prior to repair and replacement. Because the building is located under the canopy of several large trees, tree branches and leaves accumulate on the roof, causing moisture problems and damage to the cedar shake shingles. If the building restoration work is in the current location, similar moisture problems will continue in the future. There are similar moisture problems in the 1903 Sunny Valley one-room school that is located next to the log cabin. There are two Chippewa County Historical Society historical markers located at their current sites for more information about these buildings.

Moving the buildings closer to the new Chippewa Area History Center in Irvine Park would be an ideal solution to these problems. In the new location, electric power is available for dehumidifying the buildings. They would also be in a location where our volunteers could help maintain them and use the buildings for special events.

The Mitchell House Moving Company which originally moved the building to the park, has been requested to give an estimate for moving the buildings and also the total cost for moving and building new foundations.

The Chippewa Area History Center believes in this project and we encourage people to donate to the Chippewa Falls Parks & Recreation Department, specifying that the donation be for the move and repair of these buildings. We appreciate your support in saving these, our "old friends." ♡

In February of 1979 Clement Bayerl, a great-grandson of Ole Bjerke, donated his family's log home to the Chippewa County Historical Society. It was moved to the current Irvine Park site by the Mitchell House Moving Company and restored to pioneer standards by Mike Young. The Chippewa County Historical Society furnished the log home with period artifacts and in 1987 donated it to the City of Chippewa Falls for Irvine Park.

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2022-23

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COUNTY NEWS

Stanley Area Historical Society

DAVID JANKOSKI, PRESIDENT

Our museum has been cleaned! The docents are scheduled for weekends during June, July, August and September! Our summer Intern has been hired and will again be Melanie Schmidt, a graduate student at UW-Eau Claire! With those things accomplished, we are ready to open for our regular summer season the weekend of June 3-4. Our weekend openings will again be Saturdays and Sundays 1-4 pm.

With our floor refinishing project completed, we are now designing an exclusive space for our digitization work team. The enclosure will be in the lower level of our 2002 addition. We have volunteer labor to accomplish the work, so we will only need to pay for the materials. The project will entail building a wall, installing new lighting and putting in a drop ceiling. The work is projected to be accomplished in around three weeks.

Work continues on a major new exhibit that will feature businesses that were located on the southside (south of the railroad tracks) of Stanley in the 1950's and 1960's. Another project we are anticipating being worked on this summer is a more in-depth study of the extensive arrowhead collection that has been received by the museum. Over 90% of the collection reportedly came from farm fields in the Stanley area.

At the time of this writing, we have scheduled one program at the museum during this summer. On Sunday, July 9, we will be hosting a "Concertina Concert," beginning at 1 pm. Stanley area musicians, who still have the talent to make music with these instruments, will be our guests. In the Fall, Museum Director, Betty Plombon, is planning to again do a presentation on the operation of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in the Stanley area. Come visit! ♡

A Message From Your President

DAVE GORDON

As I write, this article we are ten days from the Grand Opening of the Chippewa Area History Center on Saturday, June 3rd. We have been very busy since my last message to you putting the finishing touches on the facility and CCHS Museum exhibits and CCGS getting their Research Library open. Jim Schuh and the Marketing & Media Committee have been planning a great celebration for the Grand Opening.

The sign on the front of the building says, "What's your Story?" and the new CAHC has a story to tell. It begins in 2016 with CCHS and CCGS purchasing the property at 12 Bridgewater Ave. We found a picture of the Chippewa Lumber & Boom Company, the Largest Sawmill in the World under one roof, and decided the new building should resemble it. Next came a campaign committee to raise funds from residents of the Chippewa Area. A Building Committee worked with CBS2 to design the building and then with Chippewa Area contractors to build the building. This was a community project involving many, many people. But as all stories go, there were four special characters in this story. Any similarities to real people are on purpose. The first character in the story is Dave Raihle. He joined the CCHS Board of Directors and quickly used his law degree for the project and his construction experience to oversee construction. Next, Bob Hogseth joined the project. He attended a campaign meeting and noticed the committee was made up of people who had moved to Chippewa, and it needed someone who was born here. He also said we did not need to hire an organization to raise the funds needed. Over lunch, Frank Smoot (a historian and developer of a new museum in Oregon) was asked to join the project with his great ideas for a museum. The fourth character in the Center's story is another Dave, Dave Paukner. He was the architect who said we were asking him to put 10 gallons in a 5-gallon pail because the lot was so small. What he did was design an 18,000 square foot, three story, two mezzanine building where you could see museum exhibits from anywhere in the building.

Well, that's the building's story and I'm sticking to it. Hope to see you at the Grand Opening. *Dave ♡*



Cook-Rutledge Mansion Upcoming events

Mark your calendar for two major fund raisers at the Cook-Rutledge Mansion, 505 West Grand Avenue, Chippewa Falls

Annual Thrift Sale: June 15 and 16 | 7 am-5 pm and June 17 | 7 am-noon (everything half price) There is a large selection of gently used household items, furniture, antiques, vintage, garden, sporting goods and holiday items. 100% of proceeds go to support the mansion. There will be Mansion tours all three days on the hour, no reservations are needed.

Daniel Adam Maltz Fortepiano Concert | July 28

Doors open at 7 pm | Concert at 7:30 pm | \$50/person | <https://volumeonetickets.org/events>



Flags 4 the Fallen

TIFFANY WOGAHN

To be honest, in high school, I was not a fan of history. "It's in the past. Get over it and look forward." Obviously, those were the thoughts and words of someone young who just doesn't have a clue. I am embarrassed to say that I uttered those words more than once.

You can't learn about the founding of towns, states, or nations without hearing about weapons and skirmishes. Soon weapons advanced and skirmishes became all out wars. With natives, with nations we were fleeing, and with each other. Soon we were sending our kids to fight on foreign soil.

After WWI, the "Lost Generation" tried to do everything they could to keep from having something so tragic to ever happen again. In that war, 8.5 million were killed and 21 million were wounded. Would you believe we found someone from Chippewa Falls that died in that war? His name is John Stickney. Would you also believe that 29 Chippewa Falls residents perished in WWII? We also lost 4 in Korea, 7 in Vietnam, and 2 in the War on Terror.

The more I'd research a person or place, the more I began to really appreciate history and those who have gone before us. One of my classmates took his love of history even further and became a history teacher at Chi-Hi! Because of him, Mr. John Kinville, we now have a group of students who identify, research, and contact the families and living relatives, rediscover the lives of the Chi-Hi fallen by organizing historical data, share research and findings, honor the fallen by placing Wisconsin flags at the grave sites of the Chi-Hi fallen, and return rubbings of servicemen's graves.

The high school club is called "Flags 4 the Fallen" which began in 2009. Mr. Kinville was approached, not long after the group formed, by a student researching the attack on Pearl Harbor. This student had found that Harry W. Kramer who lived on Wells Street in Chippewa Falls, was one of the first casualties of the war. After much more research, the group traveled to The National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific where Harry was buried. One of the most awesome and touching things about this is that Harry's great, great nephew was able to visit him on one of the class trips. He finally was able to spend time with this heroic ancestor he'd never known.

I thank Mr. Kinville and his students for all of their hard work to honor the people of this country who have made the biggest sacrifice of all to keep us safe. ■

◀The current *Flags 4 the Fallen* group is shown here. To support *Flags 4 the Fallen* you can purchase Mr. Kinville's book about Harry titled, "Chippewa Falls WWII Hero, Harry W. Kramer" and 20% of each book sale goes to the trip fund of the group. You can obviously send money as well to the Chippewa Falls Senior High School, c/o John Kinville-*Flags 4 the Fallen*, 735 Terrill Street in Chippewa Falls.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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☐ Lifetime Membership

Household \$5000/year

MAIL TO:

Chippewa County Historical Society
12 Bridgewater Ave.
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

Thank you!



JIM SCHUH, EVENT CO-CHAIR

Thank You to the dozens and dozens of volunteers who helped plan and coordinate this wonderful educational experience! Jim Falls Lions Club members ran our food booth again, the Chippewa Valley Correctional and Treatment Facility work crew helped with set up and pack up, as did many of our dedicated volunteers. Admission gate and popcorn wagon were well staffed. Souvenir medallions were again available to students and the public.

The event would not be possible without these generous 2023 sponsors:

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The Past Passed Here

JANEL SEAHOLM, CHIPPEWA FALLS AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

2023 *The Past Passed Here* was an excellent event to bring knowledge, curiosity, and excitement to over 600 3rd and 4th graders from the following school districts: Chippewa Falls, Holy Ghost, Augusta, Cadott, Fall Creek, Gilmanton, and Stanley Boyd. *The Past Passed Here* is the perfect event to “bring to life” what the students have learned in Social Studies classes throughout the year. The students loved being able to participate in different activities like throwing the tomahawks and atlatl, playing cat and mouse, having paddle races, sawing logs, and so much more. Students also learned about many aspects of the fur trade including voyageur life, cooking, immigration, family living, and different jobs like blacksmiths, lumber workers, farmers, and more.

There were many comments from both teachers and students that the re-enactors were very authentic, which created a high quality experience. On behalf of all of the schools, I would like to say thank you to *The Past Passed Here* Committee on your commitment to make this event such a huge success for our students. I heard once again this year from many teachers and students that this is their favorite event of the year! The opportunity for students to get this hands-on learning experience that truly engages them is something that is appreciated by everyone involved. 🍁





The Past Passed Here: A History Interpreter's Perspective

WAYNE KREFTING, FUR TRADE COMPANY CLERK

For many years at *The Past Passed Here*, I have interpreted fur trade history and its related material culture of records and writing — educating the public, especially through school days, about not only Wisconsin's past but also how that history relates to a wider world of the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. Enjoyable as meeting and interacting with Chippewa County's students, families, and individuals is, it's also the ability to present this history alongside some of the best interpreters and re-enactors I have known.

The Past Passed Here is one of the best run, engaging, fact-filled encounters the public can have with history, particularly for students. The local educators have done a good job of introducing this subject; the classes definitely show a level of understanding and knowledge. *The Past Passed Here* supplements this base of knowledge by bringing in interpreters who are not only extremely knowledgeable but also can capture the imaginations of the students, bringing history alive.

Much has changed over the years, especially staging in Allen Park (and dodging flooding) to the new venue across from the delightful history center. What hasn't changed is the commitment of the program, its staff, and the family of presenters providing a quality educational experience. ♣

◀ PAGE 6 ABOVE:

Volunteer Saul Japuntich explains the care and use of lumberjack tools including the two man crosscut saw.

PAGE 6 LEFT:

Students enjoyed competing in the canoe paddle obstacle course and race voyager game that Rod Gant provides.

▲ PAGE 7 ABOVE LEFT:

Seven interpreters relax after the first day of educating about 200 grade school children. Second from left is Wayne Krefting.

PAGE 7 ABOVE RIGHT:

Gail Bensen selling merchandise from the museum store at *The Past Passed Here*. She also made and sold popcorn from our popcorn wagon.

Introducing Gail Bensen

MARY ERICKSON

We happily welcome Gail Bensen to the Chippewa Area History Society Board of Directors. Gail comes to us with an impressive background. She earned her B.A. and graduated summa cum laude, from the University of Albany in New York, with degrees in history and English. She worked for Albany Law School for many years in various administrative positions. Prior to her work at the law school, she was associated with the airport division of Mountain View Coach Lines, Inc. and its successor, Empire State Shuttle Service serving JFK, LaGuardia and Newark airports. She is also a certified paralegal, a CRLA Advanced Level II Certified Tutor, experienced grant writer and editor for academic writing.

A native New Yorker, Gail moved to Chippewa Falls after retiring in January 2021. She lives with her son and his family in the town of Anson, has two sons, five grandchildren and four great grands! Besides being a member of the CCHS, Gail is also an election inspector for Chippewa Falls, senior vice president of the VFW Post 1038 Auxiliary and legislative chair of the VFW District 9. She is a member of Zion United Methodist Church and in her spare time enjoys being with family and friends, golfing, fishing, gardening and sewing.

Gail has already been working as a volunteer helping with *The Past Passed Here*, and at the center's front desk greeting visitors. We feel very fortunate to have Gail as a member of the Historical Society and member of its board. ♣



CHIPPEWA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

GENEALOGY CORNER

The Library Is Open, Come On In!

WENDY SULLIVAN

Once you've toured the new Chippewa Area History Center museum, be sure to stop in the Casper Research / Chippewa County Genealogical Society Library. The library is staffed and managed by the Chippewa County Genealogical Society and is open three days each week; Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays from 11 am-3 pm. It is located at the East end of the first floor, near the Model-T car.

What will you find in the library? The Chippewa County Genealogical Society was established in 1980 and, since that time, our members and volunteers have been collecting, organizing, and indexing the paper trail of Chippewa County family history along with information about local historic businesses and topics. We have a searchable electronic "master file" with more than 500,000 names from the books and records that we have indexed in the library. This is a great starting point for family tree research. Documents in the library include: area and family histories, books and newspapers, cemetery indexes, church records, census records, city directories, research guides, index of naturalization records, marriage license applications, maps and plat books, indexed obituaries, high school yearbooks, surname files, subject files, historic books about Chippewa County, and so much more. Best of all, we have volunteers who know the resources of the library well and can help guide you on your research or do the research for you. We look forward to seeing you soon and helping you research your own family and/or local history! ♡

Donations



Museum Exhibit Donations

- Donna and Bob Hogseth Family Falls Youth Endowment Fund through the Community Foundation of Chippewa County to enhance the Children Exhibits.
- Duane Bruley to enhance the Chippewa Marine display.
- Judy and Daniel Sperry to enhance the Charles Mower display.
- Donald G. Wolfe to support the cost of exhibits.
- Nancy Hebert to support the cost of exhibits.
- James and Arlene Wright Endowment fund through Community Foundation of Chippewa County to support the cost of exhibits
- Blue Marble Pizza in honor of Dave Zien for a veteran's motorcycle display

Donations Toward Cost of "The Eagle Speaks"

- Dean Arnold

Donation to *The Past Passed Here*

- Royal Credit Union
- Northwestern Bank

Memorial Donations to Honor Ted Iverson

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New Historic Marker for Olson's Ice Cream

MARY KLEUSCH, HISTORIC MARKER COMMITTEE MEMBER

The marker committee has approved and will be installing a new historic marker for Olson's Ice Cream. The earliest records of what is now Olson's Ice Cream at 611 North Bridge Street, date to 1910. At that time, it was a one and a half story dwelling. By 1924 it had been converted to a battery shop and, in 1929, an automotive service. In 1937 it housed the McGillivray Dairy which was sold to Albert Olson in 1944. Before coming to Chippewa Falls, Albert Olson and Ed Close started the Knapp Dairy in Knapp, Wisconsin, in the 1920s. When Albert Olson moved his family to Chippewa Falls in 1939, he began making ice cream in a small Chippewa Falls restaurant. Under Albert's ownership, the Bridge Street building became known as Olson's Creamland Dairy and eventually Olson's Ice Cream.

The Olson family lived in the apartment above the dairy. The dairy bottled, sold and provided home delivery of milk, cream and hand-made ice cream. In the mid 1970's the primary focus of the business shifted from milk bottling to the iconic Olson's "Homaid Ice Cream". Albert Olson was succeeded as owner and ice cream maker by his son Howard and later his grandson David. Howard also served as mayor of Chippewa Falls from 1979 to 1981. Since 2007, Olson's has been owned and operated by Linda, Dan and Jeremy Hunt and family members. ♡

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



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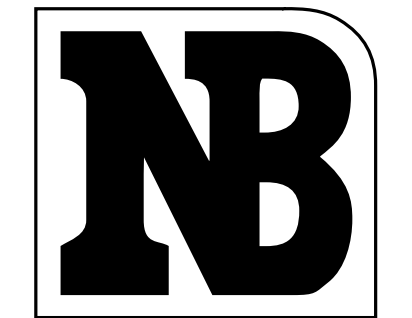
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Chippewa County Historical Society

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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.

Mail any comments or future articles to:
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