

# OBHS News

Newsletter of the Old-Brule Heritage Society, Inc. ©2001  
Founded in 1998 to Preserve and Share the Heritage of the Old-Brule Region.

Volume III, Issue 1

February 1, 2001

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**OUR NEXT REGULAR MEETING WILL BE HELD WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2001  
AT 7 P.M., AT THE MAPLE COMMUNITY CENTER.**

**For our program our Vice President, Chuck Zosel, has agreed to speak on  
“The History of the Brule River State Forest.” See his article later in the newsletter.**

We also will hold the drawing for our first raffle. Tickets will remain on sale up to the time of the raffle.

**Prizes: a \$200.00 Grand Prize, \$100.00 First Prize, and \$50.00 Second Prize.**

**Proceeds from our Valentine’s Day raffle will go to support our annual Northwestern High  
School Scholarship and for the preservation of the Davidson Windmill.**

**WELCOME ALL! (and Good Luck!)**

**The Brule History 2001 Calendars are still available. Proceeds benefit the publication of  
the history of Brule. Please submit orders to Brule History Research Group, P. O. Box 114,  
Brule, WI 54820. Cost is \$7.50 which includes postage and handling.**

### *From the President*

By the time this newsletter reaches you the *Duluth News Tribune* might have published an article on the Davidson Windmill, and maybe will have said something about our organization. Also, on Monday, January 22nd your president, representing the Douglas County Historical Society, appeared on the morning show on Channel 3 TV in Duluth with Rebecca Wood and Shannon Casey. I had an opportunity to bring the Windmill again before the public as well as our organization. This valuable exposure will help the day we reach out for financial help in building the windmill endowment.

Not so fortunate as the mill is the Jardine Resort which until this fall still stood not far from the Iron River Bridge on Highway 13 along the South Shore. A gentle mound slightly lifting the blanket of snow and a couple of vent pipes are all that mark the grave of the establishment which brings back fond memories to many. The former landmark and northerly oasis saw many a wedding dance, party, pool game, and fine trout dinner. Besides Harry Jardine who moved his earlier business north to the shoreline around 1950, Vince Lombardo, Ed and Fern Benedict, and the Ted Kinney family were among those who made northern travelers feel at home here for half a century. This part of our region’s past will also be missed.

—Jim Pellman (715) 363-2453, <musketeer6@juno.com>

## DECEMBER MEETING REVIEW

We held our latest regular meeting on Wednesday, December 12, 2000 at the Maple Community Center beginning at 6:00 p.m. "Old Christmases" was our program theme. Norma Lind arrived early with table ornaments and covering. A fine group of 27 was in attendance for our meeting, and for our program we videotaped a round table "conversation," in which those who wanted to shared recollections of Christmas' past.

Thanks to Delores Pellman for supplying the coffee, to Norma for her generous contributions in all respects including a large hot dish, and thanks to all who brought food and refreshments for another gathering at which was demonstrated our group's cooking skill. We appreciated the old ornaments members brought to share. Also, many thanks to the Town of Maple for use of their community center, and to Chuck Z. who again handled the video camera.

### PRESIDENT COOLIDGE BIOGRAPHICAL VCR TAPE

The tape we ordered from CSPAN on the life of President Calvin Coolidge has arrived. The tape is available to check out for use. For those not familiar with our region's history, Silent Cal, while President, stayed the summer of 1928 at the home of a friend on the Brule River. Superior Central High School became the Summer White House. American Aviation Ace of Aces, Richard Ira Bong of Poplar (one of the communities carved from Old-Brule), as a young man on the family farm, watched the government mail planes flying overhead on their way to the Brule River landing strip., inspiring in him a desire to fly. Please see Jim P. to check out the tape.

### THOUGHTS ON THE BRULE RIVER STATE FOREST

by Chuck Zosel

*In anticipation of Chuck's talk we welcomed this information on his background and on the program he will give. Chuck was born and raised straight west of here in Wadena, Minnesota of German heritage. He graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in forestry management in 1963. After two years in the Navy and one year as a forester on the west coast, Chuck, and his wife Eve, moved to Wisconsin to work for the Conservation Department in 1966. Living in various locations, the last 20 years in Lake Nebagamon, they raised 5 children. He retired from the Department of Natural Resources at the end of 1998 and now operates a small service business. Chuck strives to make Jesus Christ Lord of his life. Some of his special interests are family, church, x-c skiing, hiking, nature study and canoeing. We have been fortunate since our earliest days to have Chuck serving the O-BHS as an active committee worker and as our Vice President.*

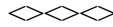
What comes to mind when you think of the Brule River State Forest? Maybe trout fishing, maybe canoeing; "The River of Presidents"; A scenic attraction that draws tourists from far and wide; a trackless domain of wildlife and forests, a playground of elite wealthy old families? - Or maybe a piece of our local real estate unfairly controlled by the infamous DNR, an arm of the faceless bureaucracy from Madison?

In my nearly 20 years as superintendent of the Brule River State Forest, I have come to see the state forest as the guardian of a bundle of the most precious natural and historical resources in our part of the country. Its story begins as far back as the time of the glaciers. Waters rushing from the mother of Lake Superior, brimming full with glacier melt waters thousands of years ago. Over 400 feet higher in elevation than the Lake Superior we

know today, this lake found a weak spot in the copper range and poured southward, carving the unique spillway we know today as the valley of the Brule River.

This act of God created the basis for the special place we know today with its cold, consistent flow of clear water dancing madly over rocks and ledges toward Lake Superior, the very offspring of the giant which carved its steep sided valley. This creative act left the land now called the Brule River State Forest with four distinct ecosystems, which provide habitat for different plants and animals. Its artesian springs, provide the excellent water quality needed to sustain a trout and salmon fishery. These factors combined with its unique geology have combined to provided the resources which made and continue to make the Brule an attraction to people from the earliest Native Americans to today's modern generation X.

Indians, explorers, fur traders, prospectors, recreationists, businessmen, lumbermen, conservationists and pioneers have all made their mark on the Brule. Come, see, look into the history of this special place. The state forest is key to preserving and maintaining the heritage and identity of a special part our own area.



## Calendar:

2001 Annual Dues are still being collected. Please contact Treasurer, Alice Christensen, or President, Jim Pellman.

**February 11th**, Sunday , 2 PM

DCHS History Sunday, \$2 non-Douglas County Historical Society members.

Jim Pellman presents "The Creation of Towns in NE Douglas County."

Maple Community Center, Highway 2

**February 14**, Wednesday, 7 PM

Regular Bimonthly Meeting. O-BHS "Valentines" Raffle. Chuck Zosel will talk on the history of the Brule River State Forest. Business meeting.

**March 24**, Saturday

Deadline for contributions to O-BNews.

**April 11**, Wednesday

Regular Meeting.

**May 11**, (Tentative Event)

Davidson Windmill Fundraising Campaign Kickoff.

## Area History: No. 15

*The following excerpts are from W. H. Stennett's (Auditor of [railroad] Expenditures, Chicago), A History of the Origin of the Place Names Connected with the Chicago and Northwestern and Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railways, published in Chicago in 1908. The latter railroad, the C, St.P, M & O, commonly called "the Omaha," was organized in 1880 and in 1908 operated 1729 miles: 758 miles in Wisconsin, 473 in Minnesota, 102 in Iowa, 308 in Nebraska, and 88 in South Dakota. The first portion of the road was started in Minnesota in 1865, and, after court battles, many sections of land in the Old-Brule region were granted to the Omaha in 1882 as part of its Federal and State land grant incentive for railroad building. The Omaha's main lines radiated from Minneapolis and St. Paul and its*

*right of way through Douglas County is currently part of the Wisconsin Central system.*

*In his book Stennett mentions the following sites among many others throughout these rail systems, some places now renamed or no longer in existence. He gives the following interesting name origins:*

**Beebe**, Douglas County, was named for Dr. C. V. Beebe of Superior, Wisconsin.

**Bennett**, Douglas County, was named for Richard Bennett, who at one time had a side track here for use in his business.

**Drummond**, Bayfield County. This village was started in 1882 and was named by W. A. Rust for F. H. Drummond, General Manager of the Rust, Owen Lumber Co., that owned large interests here.

**Hawthorne**, Douglas County, was started in 1885 and was named by D. E. Roberts for W. B. Hawthorne, the “operator” of the first logging camps in the vicinity. *[Roberts was a Superior lawyer and regional investor. He also took minutes for the first annual town meeting of Maple on April 2, 1907.]*

**Hayward**, Sawyer County, was named in 1881 by and for A. J. Hayward who owned a sawmill here before he platted the town.

**Hines**, Douglas County, was named in 1902 for Edward Hines of the Edward Hines Lumber Company, large operator in lumber in the vicinity. Before this name was given the place, it was called Holmes for a former lumber dealer here.

**Holmes**, Douglas County. The abandoned name for **Hines**.

**Mastodon**, Iron County, Michigan, was named from the Mastodon iron mine that was opened here. It was named because bones of an extinct mastodon were found when sinking the shaft for the mine.

**Rockmount**, Douglas County, was named from a nearby rock mound, and as also the post office that was established here before the days of the railroad. In early days the village was called “Aminicon” from the river of that name that flows nearby.

**Sauntry**, Douglas County, was named for C. S. Sauntry, a large lumber manufacturer of Stillwater, Minnesota, who owned large interests near here.

**Sioux**, Bayfield County. Named for the Dakota, or Sioux tribe of Indians. The word Sioux is an abbreviation of the Ojibway Indian name *Nadowessiou* for the tribe and means “little snakes” i.e., “enemies.” The Algonquin name for the Sioux Indians was *Nadowessinag*, meaning “snake” or “snake-like ones,” “enemies.” The whites corrupted the name to Sioux.

**Solon Springs**, Douglas County. This place is named Solon Springs by and for Thomas Solon, who discovered and owned the medicinal springs at this point. The place was started in 1883 and was named “White Birch” from the abundance of white birch (*Betula populifolia*) trees that grew hereabouts. Its present name was adopted in 1896. It is asserted that two rivers, one flowing south and the other north [the Brule and the St. Croix], have their source in these springs.

**South Range**, Douglas County. This name merely indicates a point on the turntable of the rod [transit?].

**Superior**, Douglas County. The first location here was made immediately after the repeal of the Missouri Compromise by a company of pro-slavery Southerners with J. C. Breckinridge of Kentucky as its leading spirit. The intention was to make a summer resort where the Southerners could escape the heat of the southern summers and would be free to take their slave servants with them, which they would not do if they went to the eastern watering places. This city was named for the Superior Land Company, that started the place in 1853-4, from the great lake on which it is located. The name of the lake is a translation of the original French name, *lac*

*Superieur*, “upper lake.” This great lake was discovered by Stephen Brulé, the dauntless woodsman, pioneer and interpreter, who was finally killed and eaten by the Huron Indians.

**Wascott**, Douglas County. This name was made out of the names W. A. Scott. Mr. Scott was for many years a managing officer of the railroad that runs through this place.

**Washburn**, Bayfield County. This town was established in 1883 by the Bay Land and Development Co., and was named for W. D. Washburn, U. S. Senator from Minnesota and a large flour mill owner in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

**Wausau**, Knox County, Nebraska. This town was started in 1890 and was named by two Lutheran ministers, named Fogelstrom and Torell respectively, for Gustavus Vasa, the first Protestant King of Sweden. [Sweden-Finland at that time.] The spelling WAUSAU was adopted to correspond with what was certain to be the pronunciation of the name VASA. [In Finnish the letters “V” and “W” are also interchangeable.] Before its present name was adopted the town was called Thorson for its earliest settler.

### WEB SITE NOW ON LINE

Again a reminder that computer volunteer, Mr. Dave Short of Poplar has been working on our web site and has had a preliminary site in operation for several months now. It's web address is <http://discover-net.net/~dshort/> . Check it out! Is anyone interested and willing to take on the calendar updates? **Thanks Dave, Audrey, & Jackie.**

### Area History: No. 16

**Lynn Laitala**, Editor of the *New World Finn* forwarded a request for information to your president which came via the Brule History Research Group. The writer wanted to know something about Finnish architecture in the region. This is the heart of my reply. Jim P.

#### ***Re: Wisconsin Finnish Architecture in the area south of western Lake Superior***

*Dear Gerry,*

*I'm sorry I couldn't get to your letter of December 7th and its request for Finnish architectural information sooner.*

*There are few places still standing uniquely associated with the Finns who once lived here in large numbers in the "Old-Brule" region. This region was the principal area of settlement of rural Finns in the northwestern part of Wisconsin. The early town of (old) Brule extended from Superior's city boundaries on the west, all the way to the Douglas and Bayfield counties' boundary on the east, and from the south shore of Lake Superior south to Lake Nebagamon. The Finnish cultural area straddled Douglas and Bayfield counties' boundary extending eastward into Oulu of Bayfield County and north from there onto Bark Point on Lake Superior.*

*Of course there are many homes which enclose Finnish log craftsmanship, but most have been long sided over. These broadly scattered homes in the north of Maple, in Waino (north Brule) and in the Oulu area are in many cases still marked by the presence of sauna out buildings. As for institutional structures, most are not uniquely Finnish. An old school on Highway FF a miles or so west of the Brule River, north of the modern unincorporated village of Brule, was called the N. P. Johnson School. This was eventually a two room rural school that dates from just after the turn of last century (c. 1900). N. P. Johnson was an ethnic Finn whose family had moved to the Norway coast from the Tornio River area of Sweden. From there N. P. (Nils Peter) and his father eventually found their way to Michigan's mines and then to this region.*

*The recently abandoned Maple Corner School on Highway F two miles north of the unincorporated village*

of Maple, a brick structure dating from about 1921 at its original dimensions, served a principally Finnish population and represented the sweat and toil of the local Finnish dominated farming community which for all practical purposes is now gone. Just north of this building about 1/2 mile is the Independent Apostolic Lutheran Church, where an independent Laestadian fellowship still worships monthly. The branch of American Laestadianism this group represents is among the so-called "Pollarites" or "Evangelicals." Lay minister John Victor Pollari from Veteli, Finland, being a builder from the Kuorikoski family in Finland, farmed, drilled wells and raised his own family in Maple and had much to do with its founding, construction, and early remodeling. He died on a preaching trip to Upper Michigan in 1945.

The Maple Finnish cemetery is just north of this and gives testimony to the large numbers of Finns who gave their lives to the settlement of this region. The north half of the cemetery holds those who were members of the Finnish National Evangelical Lutheran Church which was once situated in the center of the joint cemetery. The building was abandoned and moved in the 1970s. It had been an early temperance hall, moved to the church-cemetery site once the local chapter closed early last century. The south half of the cemetery holds the remains of local Apostolic Lutherans.

The local Maple Farmers' Cooperative building with its additions, built in 1941, still stands in the unincorporated village of Maple, but the Cooperative ended in 1990 with the decline of local dairy farming and the passing of the Finnish speaking generation born about 1900. The new owner of the building, a local businessman, has not found a use for the building, except for storage after his purchase of the structure about 1995. The first building of that Cooperative was across U.S. Highway 2 from the present building and had been a saloon from the turn of the 19th century logging boom in the region. It went through use as a chicken coop for a later owner and then became the Farmers' Coop business site in 1914 shortly after it gained its state cooperative charter. The feed mill portion of the cooperative was sold to M. J. Widdes of Carlton County, Minnesota, who has been doing a successful business supplying the needs of rural patrons, some now raising beef herds.

Another cooperative still exists in Maple, Cooperative Services, which had dealt in fuel, and petroleum products and earlier in building supplies over a broad area regionally. Its business is confined now to the supply of liquid propane and heating oil and to service of home furnaces using these fuels. It also has a Cenex 24 hour automated gasoline pump station on high traffic U.S. Highway 2. The building was remodeled in the 1950's or 1960's without distinct architectural features.

In the unincorporated village of Brule the Cooperative Store building there still stands but now houses new businesses. The Cooperative Store in the unincorporated village of Wentworth in the Town of Amnicon on U. S. Highway 2 still stands but has undergone remodeling to become the Amnicon Town Hall. Likewise the Oulu Cooperative Store on Highway B in Bayfield County has served as a storage building for an Auction House and has sustained vandalism to its plate windows. North of the store building is the Independent Apostolic Lutheran Church building of the Oulu Congregation which shares services with the Maple Laestadian congregation.

The Brule River Cooperative Park, once located on the road that turns toward the Brule River just south of "Jack and Edna's Tavern" on Highway H once had several buildings, but once this cooperative activity lost support the facility was sold and then disappeared when the DNR purchased the site to expand its Brule River State Forest holdings.

The "Finn Halls" are all gone as well, one lasting into the 1940's on Harju Road in Maple, and another in the Waino area of northern modern Brule, a unique round hall.

In the City of Superior the Central Cooperative Creamery building on Tower Avenue in South Superior still stands but Central Cooperative Wholesale and the creamery business have long departed the scene. The Työmies Printing Building has recently been renovated to become another north Tower Avenue establishment.

*All in all, the picture is pretty bleak for the architectural record of the Finns in this region. Road signs and grave stones give evidence of strong Finnish presence, but even the gambrel roofed barns, coming a generation or so after the earliest Finnish structures in the region from the 1880's and 1890's, are buckling and falling, or are being burned to satisfy the requirements of insurance agents before they will write home owners' policies. The Old-Brule Heritage Society is scrambling to capture some of the record and the history that is now being erased. We have recently acquired from survivors in the homesteading Davidson family the Davidson Finnish Windmill, an atypical structure in the region. Building began about 1901 on the structure and it served local farmers for about 25 years before technology, and improved transportation ended it's use in a supplemental family business.*

*It does stand yet to symbolize Finnish-American inventiveness, resourcefulness, and a typical independent and self-reliant spirit, and will remain as long as enough support can be generated. It is on the National Register of Historic Places, and this spring we plan to hold a fund raiser to build an endowment to maintain it in perpetuity. The structure can be seen on the high bank overlooking the Amnicon River Valley just off State Highway 13 in the Town of Lakeside, about 10 miles east of Superior's city limits. The O-BHS has established a fund for its maintenance.*

*One reference that might be useful is the Master's Thesis of Thorpe Langley who taught at the University of Wisconsin, Superior. The original thesis had several pictures taken at the time of the thesis, about 1931, which show the Finnish farming settlement of Maple at that time. Also it should be mentioned that representative buildings from the Finnish cultural area in Oulu were disassembled and shipped to Old World Wisconsin at Eagle. Oulu's Ed Pudas was hired for the task and rebuilt building portions that needed restoration using traditional methods.*

*Best wishes on your research and travels.*

*P.S. There is one more obvious site that I should have mentioned, the Waino Pioneer Chapel. It is located in northern Brule on the Tuura Road which intersects Highway H from the east. A community association now maintains the property. The O-B News included an article on the building in Volume II, Issue 1, February 1, 2000.*

The **CESA Virtual Museum Team**, had the pleasure of accompanying five Northwestern fifth graders on a field trip to the Area Research Center at the Superior Public Library on January 4th, and later to the Archive Room of the Douglas County Historical Society. This was during their holiday vacation break which is a sign of the dedication of the students (and the school staff) to the work of creating a "museum on the web." Students who joined **Mike Denny, Michelle Byholm, and Jim Pellman** on field trip day were **Anna Amys, Lillian Cain, Greg Schmude, Orrin Botten, Randy Lefto.**

### **Quick notes and additions:**

**Fire Proof Room: Construction Update. Work is proceeding on the Maple Community Building fire rated room. The work crew on our first day was Marvin Haukkala, Doug Montavon, Gary Saari and Jim Pellman. Paul M. Hakkila joined us on our second work day after his vacation cruise. Your president attended the Douglas County Land and Development Committee meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 30 to ask for an extension until March 30th, and this was approved. The County is paying a matching half of the non-labor portion of the project. Application has to be made in March for any new projects to be constructed this year. Ideas?**

**Norma Lind offers the following notes which should be added to the life story of Valentine Aho which was featured in the June 1, 2000 issue of the O-BNews, Volume II, Issue 3. Valentine rang the Waino**

church bell night and day during a forest fire south of the community. (This fire skirted around the Coop Park and thus the pines were saved.) The bell gave the firefighters a sense of direction. He also was the official bell ringer for the church. When someone died he would ring once for each year so you could guess who had died. He also had a bulletin board where he would give news of births, etc. He died July 25, 1955 at the age of 88.

### CENTURY FARM AND HOME AWARD PROGRAM

The Century Farm and Home Program originated as part of Wisconsin's Centennial Celebration, a 23-day Wisconsin State Fair which also gave birth to the Alice in Dairyland program. Each year over a hundred properties are honored. Last year marked the 26th year Hillshire Farm has proudly sponsored the Century Farm Program. Thus far 7232 Century Farms have already been honored since the program began in 1948. Other farms or homes in our area may be eligible for this honor. Forms for 2001 have arrived.

Please contact Jim Pellman for forms.

**We wish Board Member Marvin Haukkala who has been in St. Mary's Hospital in Duluth a speedy and complete recovery, and hope the same for our Treasurer, Alice Christensen.**

**Congratulations to the Superior Public Museums on their first newsletter at the start of this year. We hope it grows into a scholarly journal and historical forum with the uniqueness of Superior's past as its focus.**

**Also, thank you to all of you who have renewed your memberships for 2001. We cannot thank you enough for your continued support. One member we will truly miss in the coming years is Cliff Swenson. A loyal supporter of our groups' efforts from the beginning, he had become a true friend.**

**Anyone interested in joining the Old-Brule Heritage Society is encouraged to attend any of our meetings and programs. To join they may contact any member or the President at the return address below, or call him at (715) 363-2453, our Secretary, Hope Swenson, at 364-2296, or our Treasurer, Alice Christensen, at 364-2535. Our annual dues are \$15.00 for individuals, and \$25.00 for families, payable at the time of our annual meeting in September. Higher levels of support are also available.**

**New Members and Visitors are WELCOME!**

**Old-Brule Heritage Society, Inc.**

Post Office Box 24

Maple, WI 54854